**Abled-Privilege Checklist**

The following activity was adapted with permission from the developer, Lydia X. Z. Brown, a disability justice writer and activist. The full checklist can be found at: Brown LXZ. Autistic Hoya’s Brief Abled Privilege Checklist. Lydia XZ Brown Laboring for Disability Justice & Liberation: Resources website. Updated March 2016. Accessed May 2020. Available at: [https://autistichoya.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/brief-abled-privilege-checklist-mar-2016.pdf](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__autistichoya.files.wordpress.com_2016_03_brief-2Dabled-2Dprivilege-2Dchecklist-2Dmar-2D2016.pdf&d=DwMFAg&c=iORugZls2LlYyCAZRB3XLg&r=tMGCqjgXIGf-sxliXVfOmDqBfA-iOq2LmsH8AyCOUaY&m=BpYUs5GgCRMwz420aSxx-HgdOtgxkU0E1MgFjJFLVLA&s=N1xvolOYA2PD38dz00lpkG4jSiklnPXheY4HnbYcxEc&e=)

The checklist we are about to read is meant to serve as an **educational tool**to help people with and without disabilities become more aware of everyday interactions or observances that are impacted by **ableism**. Ableism is an entire way of thinking and doing that harms disabled people by treating some types of bodies and minds as valuable, worthy, and desirable, and others as undesirable and unworthy. Ableism is embedded in legal, social, and political institutions, as well as in commonly accepted and unquestioned attitudes and assumptions.

**Like all examinations of privilege, this abled privilege checklist is limited.**Even if you don’t have a disability, you might not experience some forms of privilege described on this list because of another identity or experience you have. Likewise, even if you do have a disability, you might still experience some forms of privilege described on this list because you don’t have another type of disability. This checklist is not meant to be exhaustive or complete, but rather to give a good and meaningful overview of a variety of disability experiences marked by ableism. In particular, this checklist is meant to help non-disabled people gain more critical consciousness of how ableism systematically advantages and values certain types of bodies and minds in the most ordinary ways, at the expense of others.

We begin this activity with a brief reflection to keep in mind:

**Understanding Privilege**

By Bev Harp

**Privilege is not your fault.**It is an artifact of systems that favor some people over others, systems that have evolved naturally to meet the needs of the majority, but have failed to provide adequate accommodations for those outside it.

**Privilege is not, in itself, a terrible thing.**Having any form of privilege does not make you a bad person. Just about everyone has some form of privilege. No, that doesn’t mean it all somehow “balances out.” A person can have, for example, white privilege, male privilege, heterosexual privilege, and able-bodied privilege without having class privilege. Other forms of privilege can act as a cushion against many of the harsher realities endured by those who belong to multiple disenfranchised groups.

**The statement that privilege exists is not an accusation or attempt to blame.**It is an invitation to see your experiences and the experiences of others in a new light. It is not an admonition to change the world, but a simple tool with which to begin considering if, possibly, some changes might be worth working toward.

**ABLED PRIVILEGE CHECKLIST**

**Instructions**: As you read through this list, notice which statements stand out to you. Consider which of these statements apply to you, to people you know, or to patients you have met. Which statements have you previously considered and which introduce unfamiliar concepts?

1. Strangers talk directly to me, and not to whoever happens to be with me, because they assume that I am capable of understanding and responding.
2. I can choose to sit where I want when I go out to an event, restaurant, movie theater, or religious service.
3. I'm not considered a burden on my family or society for being born.
4. Strangers will generally not ask me very personal, invasive medical questions. If they do, they are considered rude and their questions are considered inappropriate and embarrassing.
5. I don't have to educate every new doctor or health care provider about how my brain or body works.
6. My type of body or brain is not used as a metaphor for brokenness, suffering, mediocrity, or ignorance.
7. When I get grades from a class, they represent how hard I worked, and not whether or not I had accessible exams, instruction methods that work with my brain, or assignments that I was capable of doing.
8. I don't have to worry that my body movements will result in being beaten, tasered, or arrested by the police, especially if I am also white.
9. If I decide not to have children, no one will assume that my brain or body must be the reason why; if I do have children, people won't question whether it was responsible or ethical to add another person to the world who might end up being like me.
10. I don't have to worry about a job interviewer's reaction to the way I talk or move, or to my adaptive equipment or service animal.
11. If I don't have a college education, people won't assume that it's solely because of my brain or body.
12. When someone says that all they want is a “healthy” baby, I know they mean a baby whose brain or body will be like mine.
13. If I want therapy from a psychologist, licensed social worker, or other counselor, I know I can find therapists whose brains or bodies are like mine, or who at least understand people with brains and bodies like mine.
14. People assume that I am able to have and express romantic and sexual desire.
15. I don't have to worry about being sent to an institution or having my legal and political rights taken away when I would otherwise become of age to be a legal adult.
16. I don't have to choose between working to earn and save money and keeping my life-sustaining supportive services.
17. I will not be left to die in the hospital from treatable conditions like pneumonia because of negative assumptions about my quality of life, or a belief that I would be better off dead.
18. If I become street homeless, I can go into any shelter or housing services agency, and can expect their building and services to be accessible to me.
19. When I’m using the internet, I can access all of the material on most websites.
20. People don't ignore me or act nervous because of how I communicate. They will also generally be able to communicate directly with me in the same way that I communicate.
21. If the power goes out, I can still breathe.
22. If I make a mistake, other people won't use it against all other people with brains or bodies like mine.