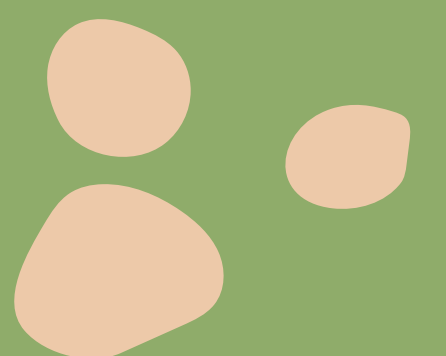


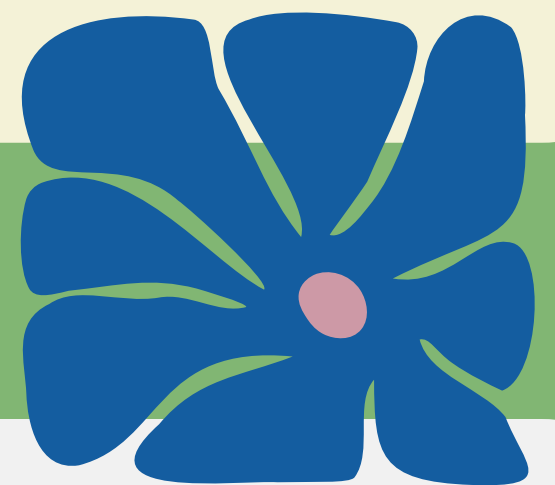
# Power Flower Tool

Understanding our Power, Privilege, Trauma,  
and Marginalisation.



# Purpose of this tool

This tool can be used to reflect on and acknowledge your position in relation to power, privilege, trauma, and marginalisation, with the aim to promote a fuller understanding of the different aspects of your identity and facilitate discussion around how the impacts of some of those aspects may be felt more strongly in current society.



# Why use this tool?

Our position, identity and experience influence our choices and decisions. There is a systemic exclusion of various communities and multiple identities in discussions and decision-making, with some of these identities not seen or heard and, in some instances, silenced (with no acknowledgement). Reflecting on our entitlement, orientation and judgement before making choices and decisions can help us to understand how power and privilege is wielded in society.

Helping one another untangle the personal from the structural can help us move forward with our struggle to seek justice and facilitate sustainable social change. Embedding reflection and acknowledgement on one's positionality within decision making structures can create effective and lasting systems change. There is calling for owning our choices and understanding why we made them and what we might do differently to be embedded into our practices.

# How to use this tool?

The invitation with this tool is to follow the steps in order and use the reflective questions and exercises within to reflect and acknowledge your position in relation to power, privilege, trauma, and marginalisation, and how it might influence and impact our choices and decisions. The steps are:

**Step No.01** (page 4): Reflect on the set of questions and make notes under each.





**Step No.02** (pages 5-6): Complete the “Power Flower” activity.

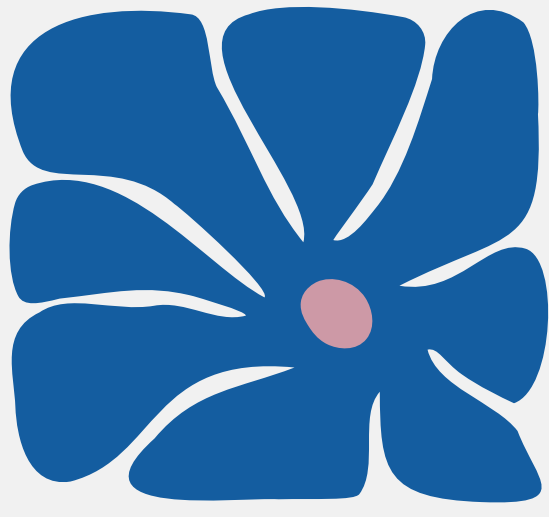
**Step No.03** (page 7): Reflect on the set of questions in your pair and make notes under each.

**Step No.04** (page 8): Reflect on the set of questions in your pair and make notes under each.

**Step No.05** (page 9): On your own, reflect on the previous answers and on the final questions and compile notes.

## You will need:

-  Paper, pen or something suitable to take notes of reflections.
-  A space that you feel comfortable reflecting in.
-  Someone to join you to reflect in Steps 3 and 4.
-  A total of 3.5 hours (suggested).



## Important Note:




The reflective questions and exercises within this tool may also reveal aspects of our identity that you may often not be aware of. Sometimes the unveiling can cause pain, anger, or even denial. For example, a person who feels personally powerless is confronted by the fact that regardless of how they might feel, they are seen as wielding quite a bit of power by others. On the other hand, someone who feels personally responsible for not having succeeded may be freed from self-blame when they see that there are structural reasons holding them back.

Helping one another untangle the personal from the structural can help us move forward with our struggle to seek justice and facilitate sustainable social change.

There is emotional labour in this reflective process, and we invite you to recognise that this tool will raise to the surface your relationship with discomfort and self-care.




There are not any right and wrong answers when it comes to reflecting with this tool, but it is an opportunity to pause and learn about ourselves, about understanding more of who we are in relation to ourselves, others and systems.

# Step No. 01

-  Self-Reflection.
-  Suggested time: 1 hour.
-  Reflect on the set of questions and make notes under each.

1. What are your powers and privileges? How do these make your life easier or not?
2. Can you reflect on a time you may have felt marginalised and/or experienced trauma because of your own identity (e.g. race, education, class, disability etc.)? How were you supported through this?
3. Where are your boundaries in relation to social justice and change and what do you do when lines are crossed? What do you embrace? What do you tolerate? What do you reject?
4. How have these lines shifted over time? What has helped shift them?
5. How do we learn to listen more? What are the different ways in which you listen and share?
6. How do we share our stories so we can help everyone understand more?

## Step No. 02

-  Self-Reflection.
-  Suggested time: 30 minutes.
-  Complete the power flower exercise (on page 6).

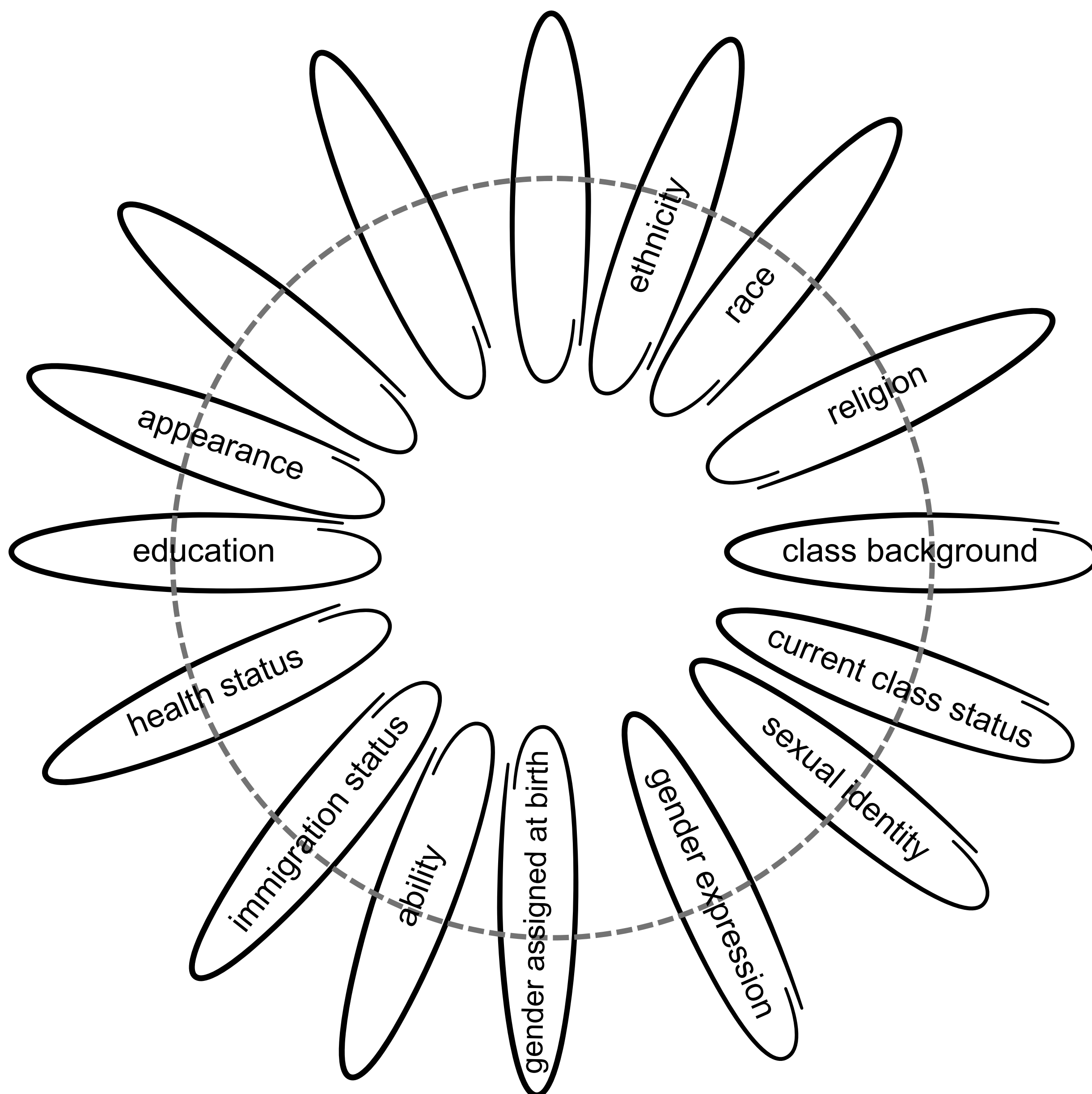
In the power flower diagram, there is a bird's-eye view of a flower with 15 petals in total. For 13 of the petals each has an identity category. These are; ethnicity, race, religion, class background, current class status, sexual identity, gender expression, gender assigned at birth, ability, immigration status, health status, education, appearance. The remaining 2 petals are blank for you to fill in any other identities you like to use.

On each petal there is an axis of differentiation/marginalisation to power/privilege. If you feel marginalised in that particular category you colour the inside half of the petal, closest to the centre of the flower. If you feel you are privileged in that particular category you colour the outside half of the petal, at the tip of the petal. You can also colour the full petal if you feel both privileged and oppressed in a certain category.




## Step No. 02 (continued)

There are lines on the outside edge of the petal if you would like to add how you would name yourself in that category.

You could use the template on page 6 by printing the image or you may choose to draw your own flower and give each petal a different size/name depending on how important each category is to your experience of the world.



## Step No. 03




-  Paired Reflection.
-  Suggested time: 30 minutes.
-  Reflect on the set of questions in your pair and make notes under each.

You do not need to discuss your power flowers but reflect on the experience of doing the activity and how these reflections may impact our choices and decisions if you are in a position of power or privilege. There are some suggested prompts you could use but you may wish to develop your own:

1. What feelings emerged for you during the exercise?
2. How does the exercise help with untangling the personal from the structural?
3. What is the difference between how you saw things in the past, how you see things now and how you would like them to be?






# Step No. 04

-  Paired Reflection.
-  Suggested time: 1 hour.
-  Reflect on the set of questions in your pair and make notes under each.

As a pair reflect on the three questions together by listening and sharing experiences and dreams. The aim is to help each other by listening to our different experiences of power and trauma, how we experience it as an individual, and how society and institutions continue this sometimes unchallenged.

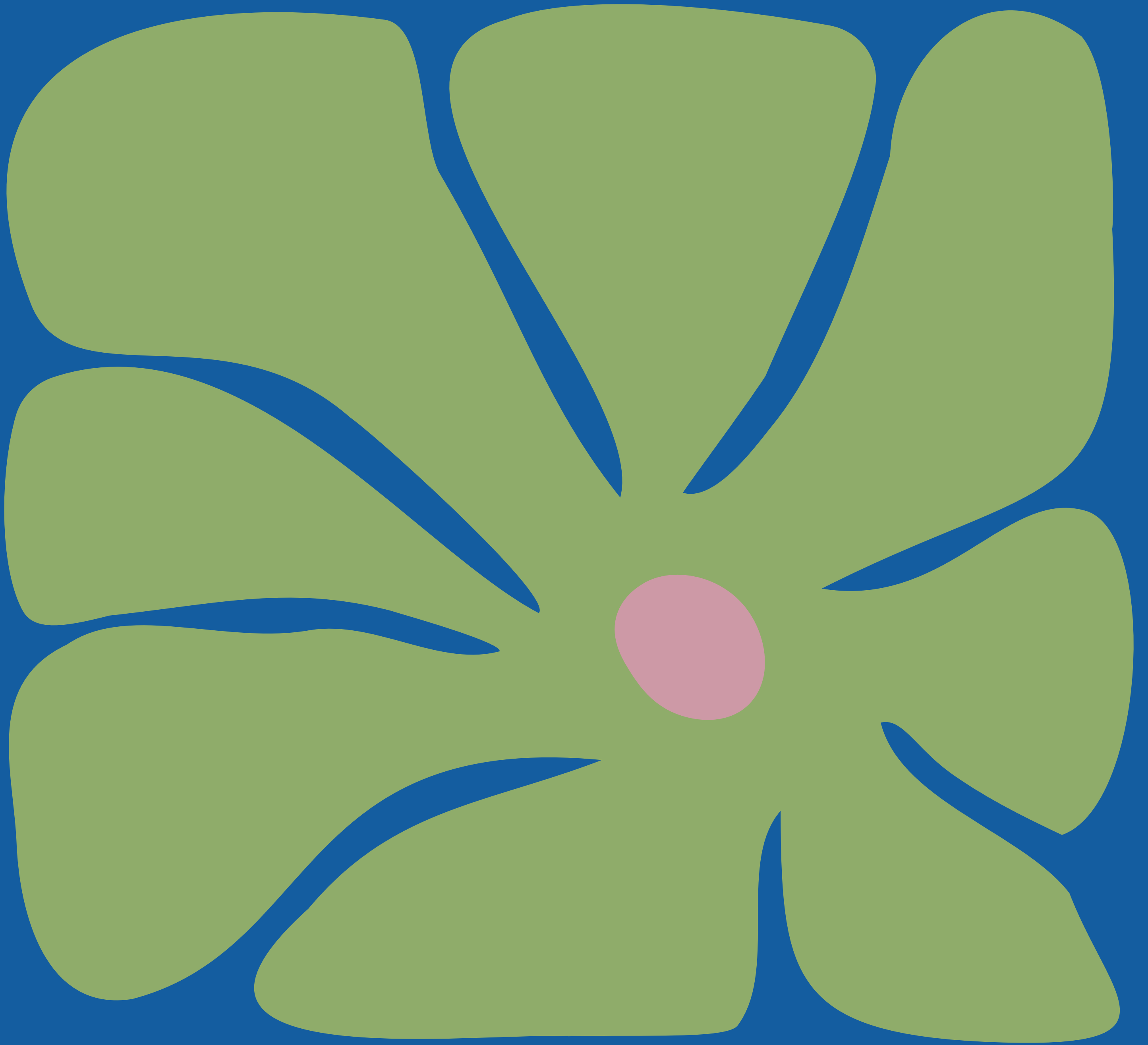
1. What are the powers and privileges/vulnerabilities and trauma you hold and feel in relation to a. the team and b. communities you work with? What do these mean when we make decision as a group? What do these mean when we move or share resources (e.g. financial)?
2. How do we disrupt our own thinking and ways of doing things? What are we disrupting? What is our relationship and comfort level with disruption?
3. How might we support empowerment and sustainable social change in our roles?

# Step No. 05

-  Self-Reflection.
-  Suggested time: 30 minutes.
-  Reflect on the previous answers and on the final questions and compile notes.

The final step is an invitation to think about the previous four steps in relation to the following questions:

1. What learnings are you taking from this reflective activity?
2. What are you letting go of?



This tool was adapted by [Social Action Inquiry Scotland](#), using the Power Flower within Educating For a Change\*.

\*Rick Arnold, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin and Barb Thomas, Educating for a Change, Between the Lines.



**Social Action  
Inquiry Scotland**