



Coaching with Identity in Mind

THE FIFTH DOMAIN | A MODEL OF COACH INQUIRY

The ACTO Conference 2019

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Context

- **Over the past few years, as there was an increase in media coverage of traumatic, unjust events impacting marginalized groups, we noticed:**
 - An increase in our coaching clients' attention to issues of difference
 - The prominence of social movements such as Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, PRIDE and Disrupt Aging surfacing in coaching conversations
 - A lack of sufficiently culturally competent coaches who could manage these dynamics effectively
- We became interested in this phenomenon and began our research in 2016
- What we have learned from these preliminary data has helped us develop the model we will share with you today

Initial Findings (Coach Survey 2016 and 2019)

92% of respondents describe their practice as a “partnership” with the Coachee

78% report coaching mostly Executives or Leaders; 64% say their coaching supports “professional development”

84% say they encounter issues of diversity, inclusion and belonging “some of the time or often”

48% report not feeling “competent” in this area or feel a need for more development

27% recall specific course work related to diversity, inclusion and belonging in their ACTP Coaching Program

56% say current “coach competencies” do not take into account issues of diversity, inclusion and belonging



97%

Of respondents believe that Diversity and Inclusion competencies are necessary for coaches working in today's global environment

Unconscious Bias Process

- **11 million pieces of data per second**



- **Consciously aware of 40**

- Unconscious brain manages by using associations and filters to interpret data
- Misinformation, including biases and stereotypes, are stored in the brain – often creating faulty assumptions

Worldview Mismatch

It seems like every night the news is about...you know... another police shooting of a young black man or boy. I feel challenged to talk about how I'm feeling with people at work, so I just shut down.

- Coachee

Group Level

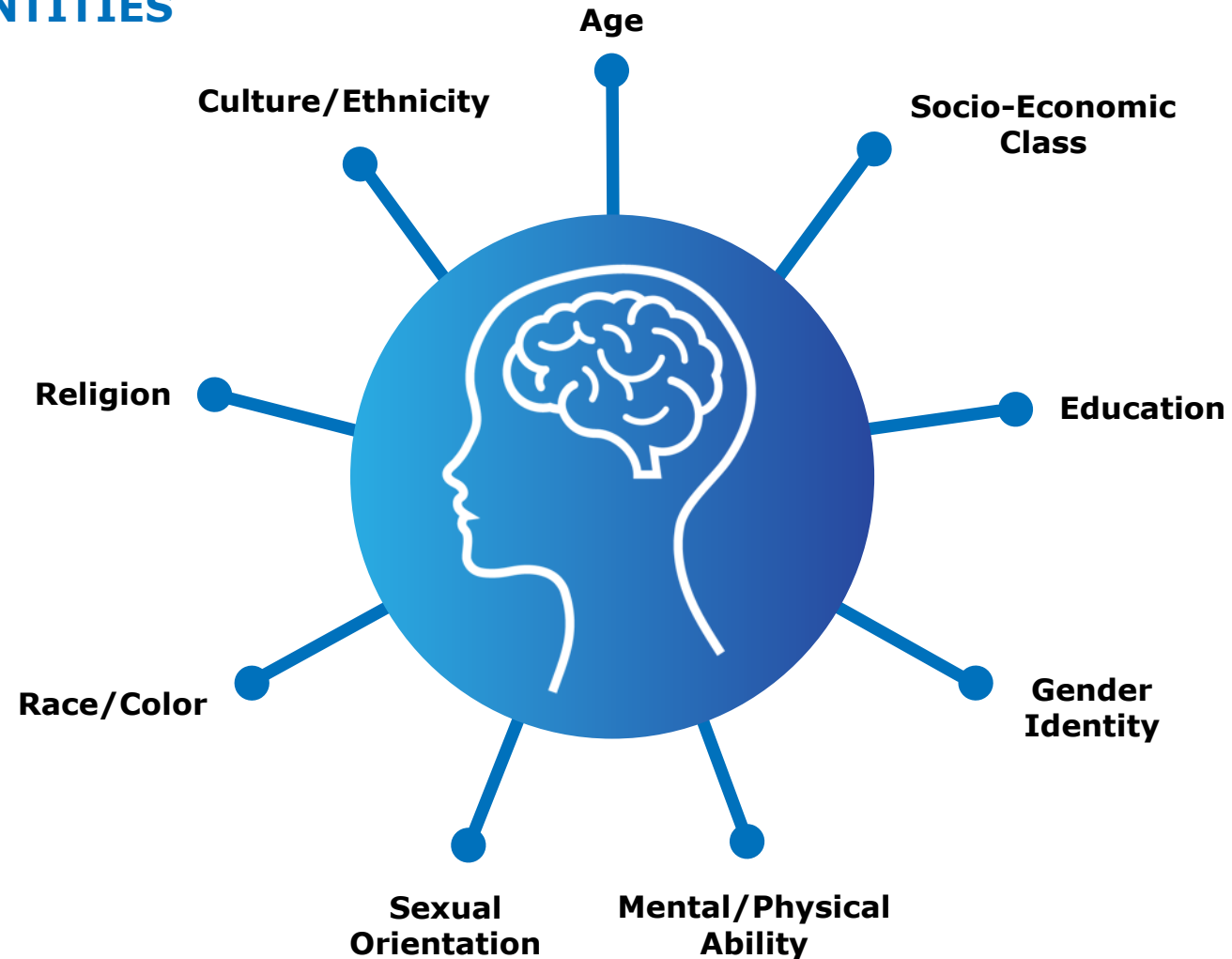
Do you think this is related to the pattern we've discussed relating to self-doubt and how this sometimes affects your ability to find your voice?

- Coach

Individual Level

Bias at the “Group Level”

SOCIAL GROUP IDENTITIES



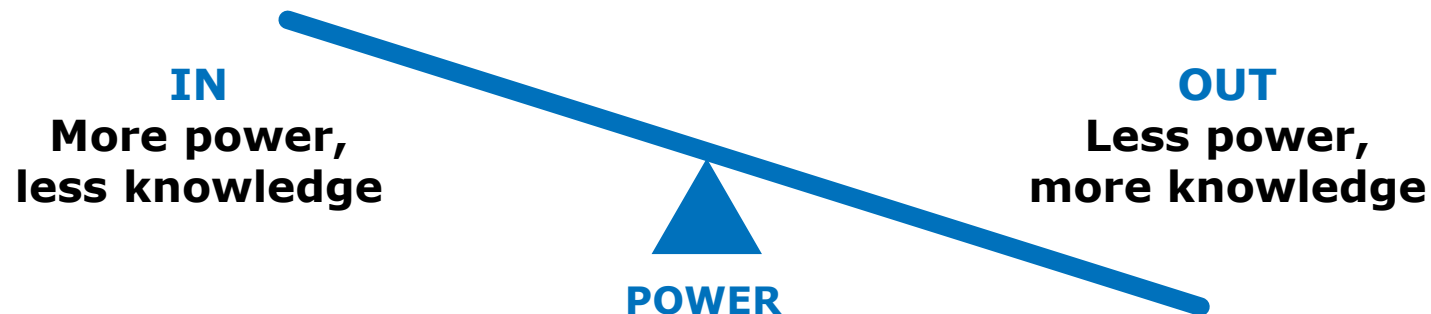
Group Power Dynamics

IN-GROUPS (Dominant)

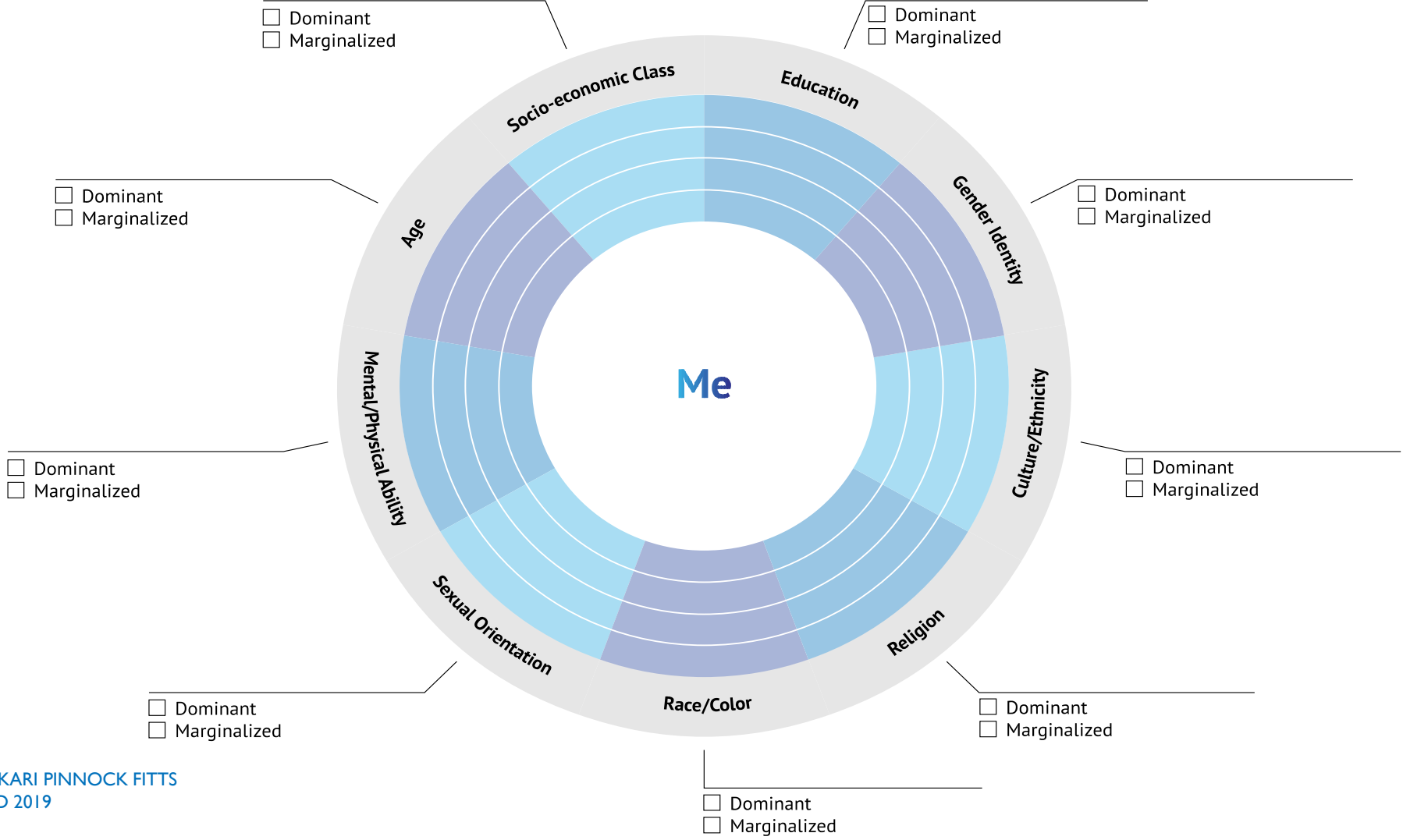
- Make and fit in with the rules & norms
- Inherently have more access to resources, power, and control
- Privileged by the system/culture (lack of disadvantage)
- Are blind to their in-group status
- Focus on individual acts

OUT-GROUPS (Marginalized)

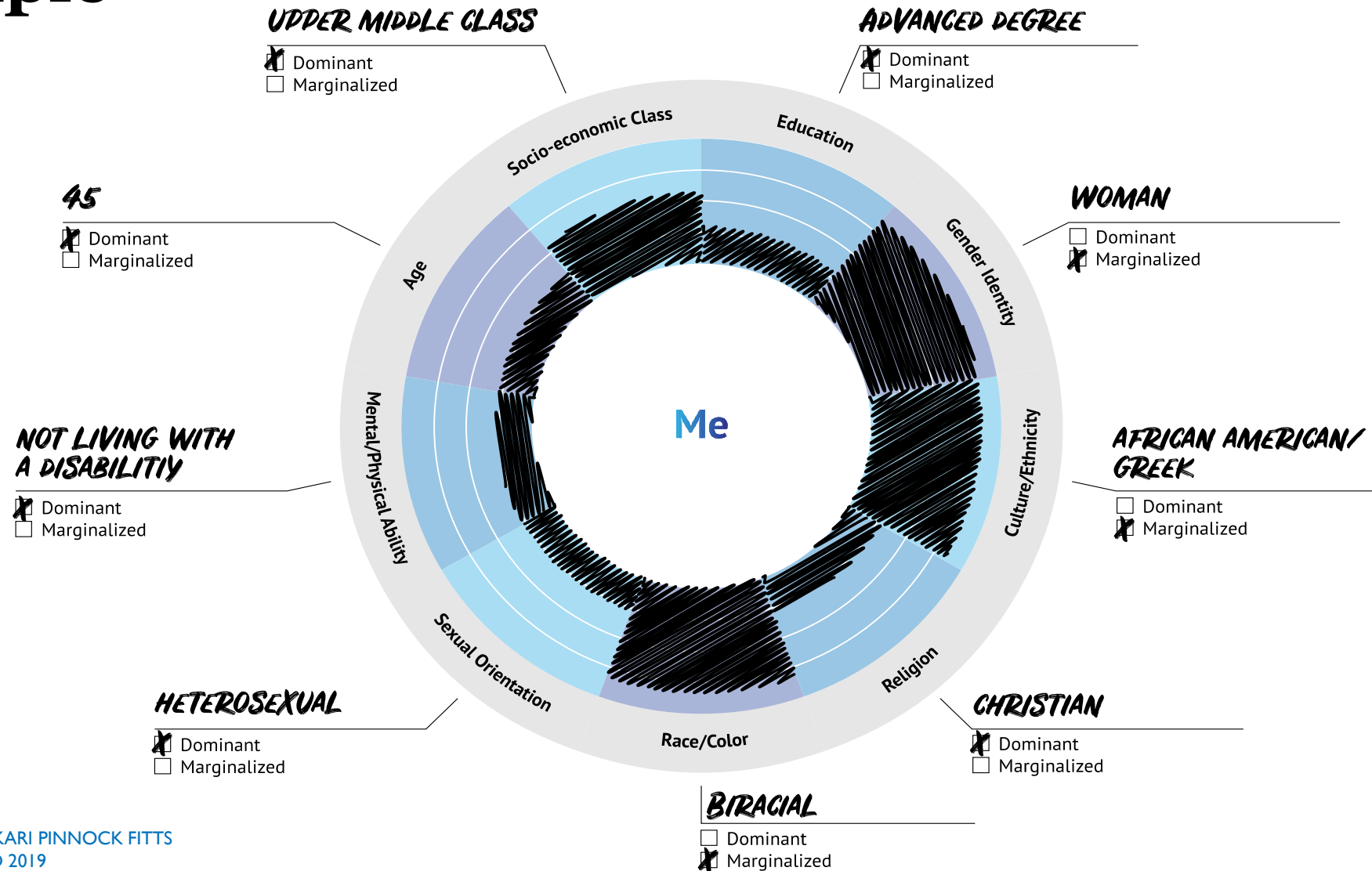
- Adapt to fit into in-group norms
- Have to work to get access to resources, power and control
- Disadvantaged by the system/culture
- Very aware of out-group status
- Experience cumulative impact of macro and micro-inequities



Group Identity Wheel



Example



The Flow of the Fifth Domain

Sensing the flow

- Checking my guiding principles, belief systems and world views (mine and the Coachee's)
- Recognizing my biases and values
- Questioning if what I am hearing may be a "social group identity cue"

Entering the flow

- Naming what I notice
- Noticing what I want to ignore
- Collaboratively exploring what data are important
- Holding space for an emergent conversation to unfold

Navigating the flow

- Probing for power dynamics related to group identity
- Exploring emotional self-awareness/ image management
- Using cultural cues to navigate the terrain of the conversation
- Leaning into vulnerability and "Use-of-Self"

Fifth Domain Checklist



- From what I know about my/my Coachee's group identities, what might be my blind spots?
- What is my worldview & what are my most closely held values?
- How confident am I in my ability to navigate a conversation about identity? How will I develop competence in this area?

- What are our beliefs about what makes a good coaching relationship?
- What are our respective social group identities & worldviews? Where do they differ or overlap?
- What are the in-group or out-group power dynamics that could potentially play out in this coaching relationship?

- What are the norms for addressing our different perspectives, worldviews, and biases?
- How will the Coach/Coachee navigate blind spots?
- How will the Coach intentionally check their biases throughout the engagement?

- Coach/Coachee periodically check in on norms.
- Coach/Coachee navigate and process different perspectives throughout the engagement.
- Coach periodically check biases with Coachee and re-establish common ground.

Scenarios

You are the coach in the assigned scenario.

1. You are sensing a need to explore something related to the Fifth Domain (Self-identity) with your Coachee. How will you name what you are noticing?
2. What are the in-group and out-group dynamics at play in this scenario?
3. How might your own social group identities, biases, values and worldview play into how you have this conversation?

Navigation Summary

Become aware
of my
unconscious
biases and
work to reduce
them

Challenge my
worldview and
consider how it
may differ from
that of my
client

Help to
navigate
conversations
related to the
client's
identities

Thank You!

Please fill out our feedback form!

Stay in touch:

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