

# Intersectionality

The Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) conducted a Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities. In the final year of the project, the NCCC responded to interests and needs of the CoP state teams that asked for a focus on racial equity in intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by creating a Racial Equity Learning Community. The NCCC team identified two terms — disability justice and intersectionality — and in partnership with persons with IDD, created a set of materials to define these terms and share what they mean within the context of their lived experience.

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a lawyer and civil rights advocate, introduced us to the term intersectionality in 1991. She wrote about how a person who because of their membership in multiple social groups may experience discrimination, oppression, and marginalization. Her work focused on Black women.

Since 1991, the term intersectionality is used in multiple ways by many in health, mental health, and human services. Sometimes those who use the term intersectionality confuse it with multiple cultural identities and omit the important defining factors of discrimination, marginalization, and oppression.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color*. *Stanford Law Review*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (Jul., 1991), pp. 1241-1299.



**LUTICHA ANDRE DOUCETTE** is a Black, disabled, queer author of “Cultivating An Intersectional Mindset,” owner & CEO of Catalyst Consulting Associates LLC, artist and changemaker. Her writing has appeared in *Toxicon*, *Yes! Magazine* and the *New York Times*. Luticha shared her thoughts on intersectionality with the NCCC.

“Intersectionality: while this is one of the principles of disability justice, I know that Dr. Crenshaw said that it isn’t a hard and fast rule. For me, intersectionality is the ‘isms,’ the systems of oppression that we internalize, and act out against each other in punitive ways. They destroy community and relationships and, in turn, keep White supremacy culture alive.”

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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