

# The Person-First Lens: Abstract

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Once oppression has been identified, the Integrity Process calls for an inquiry (or “dismantling”) of the subject to determine the roots of oppression and recommendations for the best course of action to build or restore integrity. In the past, individuals and institutions have often been viewed with a culturally-based “default” human being or lens in mind. This often results in the identification of “outliers” that are “deviant” from the “norm”.

Here, the Person-First Lens provides for viewing individuals and their constructs with universally-based information, rather than culturally specific, philosophical, religious or political ideologies. It’s designed to help us examine the practicality of our concepts, systems, relationships, technologies and institutions, particularly when attempting to empower individuals and their constructs with information, tools and opportunity to operate at their greatest capacity.

**The Person-First Lens tells us that in order to truly eradicate oppression, we must have an:**

- 1) Understanding of the Universal Purpose of Life
  - a. The Integrity Model tells us that the universal purpose of life is for each one to reach their own unique, highest and fullest potential.
- 2) Understanding of the Structure of Human Beings, including the Spectrum-Based View of Human Bodies, Abilities, Emotions, Cognition, Etc.
  - a. In order to address and eradicate oppression, human beings must be viewed in universal terms rather than with a “default” or “normal” archetype.
  - b. The Integrity Model recognizes human beings have a basic universal structure encompassing the body (physical being), mind (cognitive and behavioral being) and soul (spiritual and/or emotional being).
  - c. Universal human characteristics, including bodies (skin color, skin type, facial features, eye color, hair color, hair type, weight, immune systems, sexual and digestive organs, etc.), abilities (physical, mental, cognitive and emotional), sexual and relational orientation (attraction--or non-attraction--to others) and self-expression (how one presents themselves to others), as well as others, should be observed and understood in a spectrum or continuum rather than in a binary or categorically distinct framework to more easily eradicate oppression. A spectrum-based lens provides more precise and accurate information.
  - d. Specifically, human physical, emotional, mental and cognitive abilities are spectrum-based and can and are likely to change throughout an individual’s lifespan.

- e. The universal culture of human beings is to adopt traditions, behaviors and communication patterns that best promote survival and thriving in a specific time and place, and in direct relation to physical and social environmental factors.
- 3) Understanding of Basic Human Rights
- a. In order to eradicate oppression, the Person-First Lens requires the acknowledgement and acceptance of basic human rights.
  - b. These include, from the moment of birth, the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as well as autonomy and ownership of one's own body, mind and soul.
- 4) Understanding of Basic Human Needs
- a. Based on the previous work of Abraham Maslow, the Person-First Lens recognizes human beings have universal needs, including physical needs (air, shelter, water, food, immediate medical care), sense of security (ability to feel safe, form trust and make prediction-based decisions), sense of belonging (being a part of something larger than oneself, love, community, connections), self-esteem (internally-based sense of self, rather than validation-based), and thriving (living at one's highest and fullest potential).
  - b. This also includes the expansion of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs as identified in the Integrity Model and the Person-First Lens, including affection, sexual expression, gratification, digestion and others that have yet to be identified.
- 5) Understanding of the Basic Human Evolutionary Process
- a. This includes learning and obtaining new information, technologies, resources and growth patterns, as well as understanding the decision-making process of human beings (i.e. information available at the time of decision is what impacts the course of action).
- 6) Understanding Basic Human Responses
- a. In order to address oppression, particularly in oneself and within systems and policies, we need to understand natural human emotions and responses.
  - b. This includes needs-based responses, oppression-based responses, and thriving-based responses.

## **Acknowledgements:**

This publication of the Person-First Lens is an introductory abstract. The Person-First Lens used by All People Thriving is an original compilation of research and education from a wide school of sociological and psychological instruction intended specifically for use with the Integrity Model and for the eradication of oppression.

*Last Revision: June 10, 2019*