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| **Dominant Cultural Identity Development** |

Using the template below, record examples of your own self-talk (recalled or creatively reconstructed) for each of the stages of dominant cultural identity development. Be as honest as you can. If you progress to a row where your experience and self-perception does not align with the stage in the model, stop! In the remaining rows, write an aspirational self-statement to capture what you see as the essence of that stage. Choose one of these aspirational self-statements to repeat and carry with you in an effort to internalize this message.

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| **Phase I: Uncovering of Culturally Oppressive Components of Identity** | | |
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| **Stage** | **Description** | **Self-Talk** |
| Contact | Satisfaction with the status quo and lack of awareness or denial of racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, and other forms of cultural oppression by the dominant population. |  |
| Disintegration | Exposure to circumstances that make it difficult to continue to deny the existence of cultural oppression and one’s role in that oppression; this leads to confusion, disorientation, and fractured loyalties. |  |
| Reintegration | Retreat into active valuing of dominant cultural identities and denigration of non-dominant populations with consequent reduction in anxiety and increase in socially acceptable forms of sexism, racism, and so on. |  |
| **Phase II: Development of Positive, Culturally Sensitive Identity** | | |
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| **Stage** | **Description** | **Self-Talk** |
| Pseudo-Independence | Rationalization of one’s own group norms and designation of others as racist, sexist, homophobic, and so on. Separation of self-identity from other group members who may be guilty of cultural oppression and of expecting nondominant groups to conform with dominant cultural norms. |  |
| Immersion | Active, committed search for understanding of one’s own identity as part of the dominant European, heterosexual, able-bodied, male culture. Honest quest for information, self-evaluation, and redefinition of self. |  |
| Emersion | Solidarity with like-minded individuals who are also seeking a culturally sensitive personal identity and searching for ways to oppose oppression. |  |
| Autonomy | Thoughtful analysis of cultural factors in self and others, in organizational and systemic contexts, and actions that support non-oppressive practices. |  |
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**Adapted from:**

Helms, J. E., & Cook, D. A. (1999). *Using race and culture in counselling and psychotherapy: Theory and process.* Allyn & Bacon.