Building a Welcoming Innovation Ecosystem

RAINFOREST ALBERTA

If we are the new economy, are we leading through diversity and inclusion?

Also - why are we having this conversation?

01

We can only change what we know and what is measured. What are the trends across our support organizations and tech companies? Who is leading in inclusion? Who is working to change the numbers?

02

Undestand our biases. How do they inform our language, marketing, and messaging? Where are we seeking engagement from? How are we being intentional? Where are our blindspots?

03

Host and participate in training specifically for diversity and inclusion. Walk the talk on diversity and inclusion.

04

Be humble, honest, vulnerable, and empathetic. Admit failures, ask for help, seek understanding.

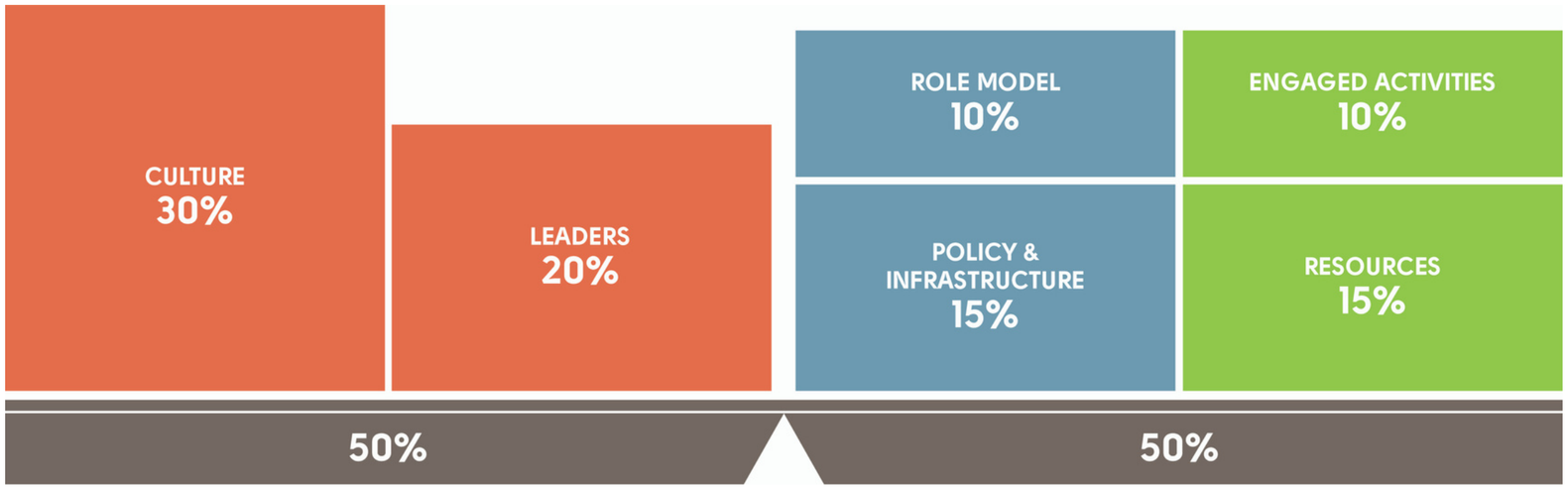
RAINFOREST ALBERTA

PILLAR FOUNDED

RAINFOREST ALBERTA

30% CULTURE

It is the **shared values** and actions of members in the community which ultimately determine the success of new initiatives. In the Rainforest, our culture is defined by the Social Contract. The contract sets the **expectations for behaviour** and is reinforced when each member acts accordingly.



REFLECTING ON THE PILLARS

RAINFOREST ALBERTA

20% LEADERS

Leadership roles are both assigned and assumed, formal and informal. Leaders must have a clear understanding of the motivations, experiences, and **perspectives of all participants** for the collective potential within the innovation ecosystem.

10% ROLE MODEL

They embody characteristics that others wish to emulate. They are builders, influencers, and connectors, or they may be emerging changemakers who can transform an ecosystem through inspiration

10% ENGAGED ACTIVITIES

Activities that promote innovation and actively encourage engagement across a **diverse array of participants** are an essential part of a thriving innovation ecosystem.

USING APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY ALLOWS US TO PARTICIPATE AND LEARN KNOWING...

Demographic labels do not perpetuate stereotypes but rather help to identify gaps in services and programming as it pertains to various demographics.

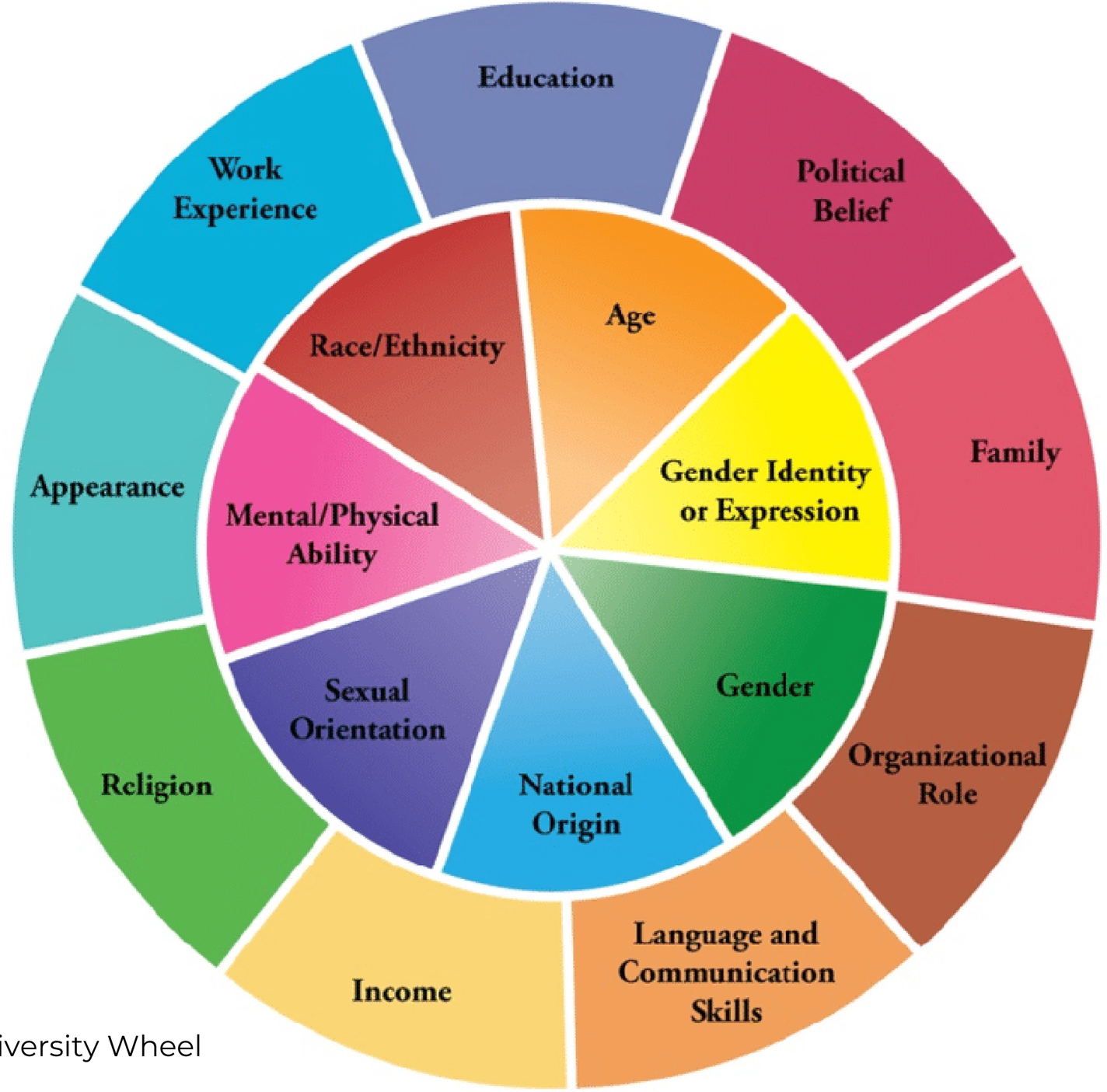
Research shows that when we see people like ourselves (physically in appearance including skin colour and gender) in positions of leadership and as role models we are more likely to see ourselves having those same opportunities.

It takes a community to be aware of the changes needed to be reflective of our collective society and to create a sense of belonging for all persons.

Diversity: how would you describe it?

Diversity

The unique makeup of each individual as expressed by the combination of their traits and experiences.



John Hopkins Diversity Wheel

Diversity

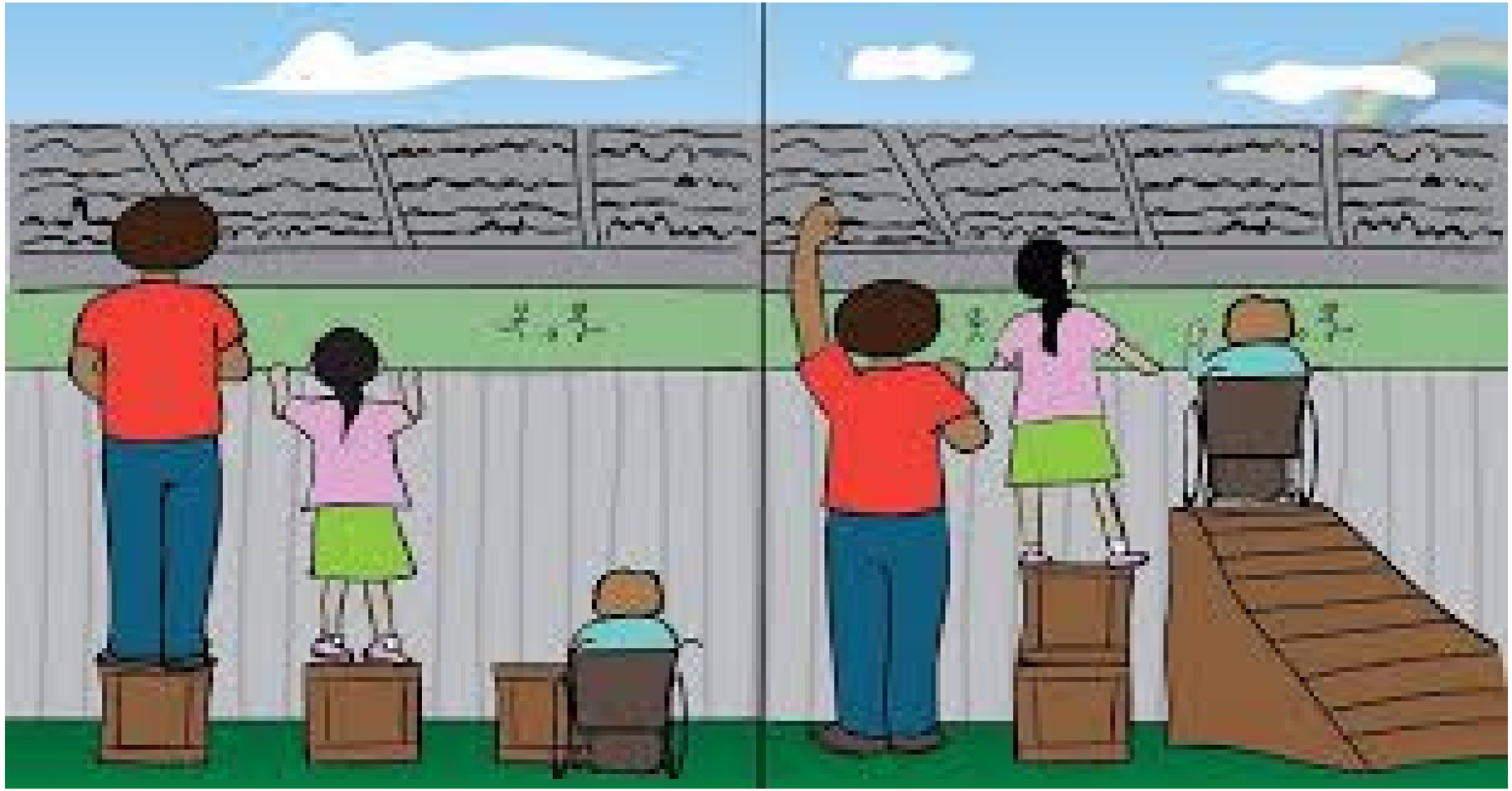
What is a characteristic that makes you unique?

Inclusion

Enabling full and active participation across a spectrum of activities and participatory processes.

It is the actions we take stemming from the beliefs we hold.

Equality vs Equity.



THE QUESTION WAS... DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING, WITH AN OTHER OPTION IN CASE I MISSED AN UNDERREPRESENTED/MARGINALIZED DEMOGRAPHIC

- The Choices: Racialized Person, Indigenous, Metis, LQBTQ+, Physical Disability, Mental Disability, Single Parent
- Senior was a category that wasn't a choice and it shouldn't have been.

However, in the 'other' option these were some of the responses...

- normal
- just a guy
- a normalized white person
- a normal person
- white male that feels minimized
- just regular

IF YOU SAY YOU'RE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING....

- normal
- just a guy
- a normalized white person
- a normal person
- white male that feels minimized
- just regular

THEN YOU ARE, BY DEFAULT, SAYING THE FOLLOWING GROUPS ARE NOT "NORMAL"

- Racialized Person
- Indigenous
- Metis,
- LQBTQ+
- Physical Disability,
- Mental Disability
- Single Parent
- Senior

This is called 'Othering' - it is used to reinforce the 'status quo'

For those who identified as 'guy/male' it makes women the 'other', the not 'normal'

What makes a person normal to start with?

Definition of Normal: Conforming to acceptable and recognized standards?

We need to ask...
who decides the acceptable and recognized standards?

IF YOU'RE HERE AND IDENTIFY AS THE FOLLOWING, HOW DOES HEARING SOMEONE SAY THEY ARE NORMAL/REGULAR/MINIMIZED WHITE MALE MAKE YOU FEEL?

Racialized Person, Indigenous, Metis, LQBTQ+, Physical Disability, Mental Disability, Single Parent, Womxn

OPEN COMMENTS, A SAMPLING

These labels just perpetuate stereotypes. Let's focus on success, not excuses not to succeed.

A person. Personally, I find identify politics toxic and often an indicator of spaces I don't want to participate in - not to say that is the case with rainforest, but just want to call it out as I suspect I'm not the only one who feels this way. I like ideas, perspectives, sharing and collaboration, not divisive labels.

Why did you ask the last question, I identify as being or having..... that is plain weird question.....

OPEN COMMENTS, A SAMPLING

Totally unrelated to Rainforest, but I'm not a big fan of the pronoun question. I think it's pandering to a tiny minority of the population which is making a lot of noise. Extremist right/left wing groups have lobbied for things since the dawn of time, and our society tends to ignore these fringe ideologies over time. If enough people speak up and say it's nonsense, then our collective views will change. Nobody is brave enough to call it nonsense publicly (probably myself included) for fear of being demonized, but anyway, shared my thoughts. :)

BIPOC OR RACIALIZED PERSON

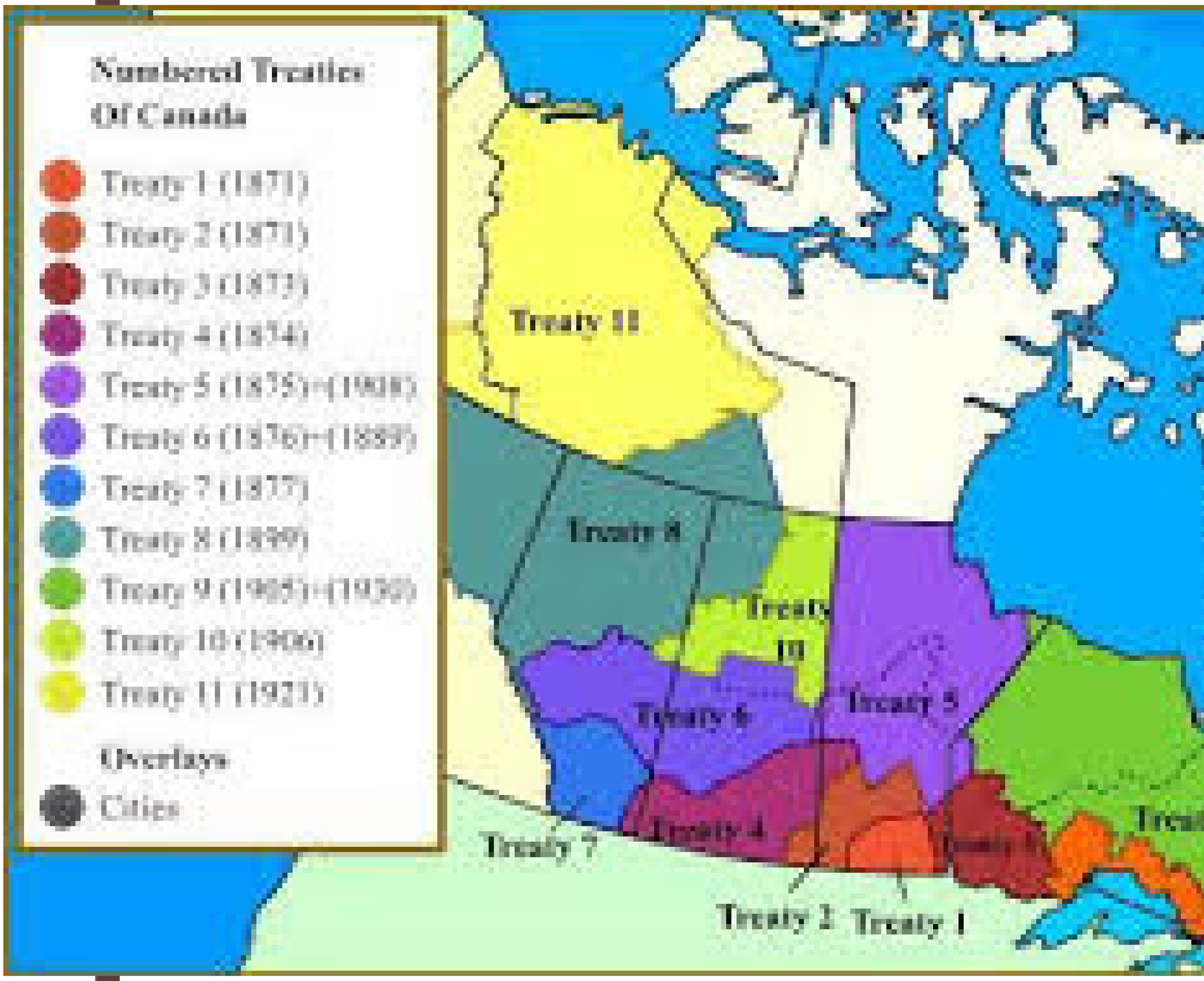
Black, Indigenous, Person of Colour

Also May be Known As (just a few):

- Latino or Hispanic
- Asian
- Middle Eastern
- African, African-Canadian
- East Indian
- Metis

Why not Visible Minority?
>a minority implies a majority, and the majority rules (see othering)

Region 6
Region 5
Region 1
Region 4
Region 2
Region 3
Peace River
Slave Lake
Lac La Biche
Bonnyville
Edmonton
Calgary

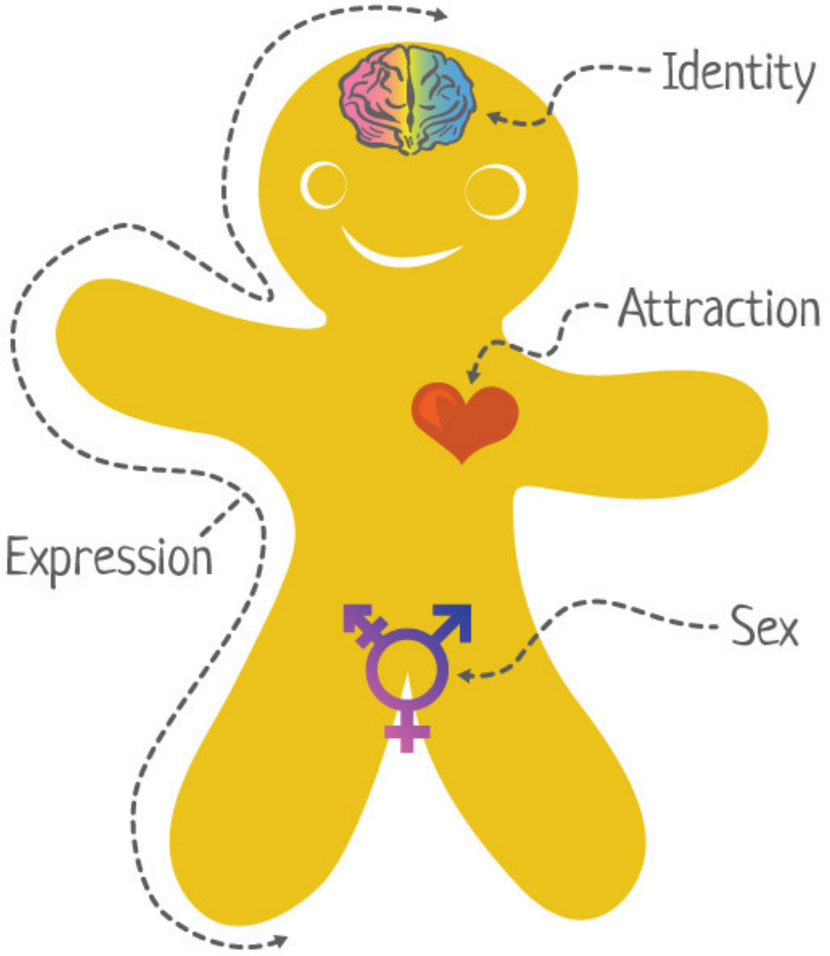

Numbered Treaties
Of Canada
Treaty 1 (1871)
Treaty 2 (1871)
Treaty 3 (1873)
Treaty 4 (1874)
Treaty 5 (1875)-(1908)
Treaty 6 (1876)-(1889)
Treaty 7 (1877)
Treaty 8 (1899)
Treaty 9 (1905)-(1930)
Treaty 10 (1906)
Treaty 11 (1921)
Overlays
Cities
Treaty 11
Treaty 8
Treaty 10
Treaty 6
Treaty 5
Treaty 4
Treaty 7
Treaty 2
Treaty 1

LGBTQ2IA+

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Trans, Transgender, Trans Identified
- Queer
- Questioning
- Two-Spririt
- Intersex
- Asexual
- +

The Genderbread Person v3.3

by it's pronounced METROsexual .com



Gender Identity

- Woman-ness
- Man-ness

Gender Expression

- Feminine
- Masculine

Biological Sex

- Female-ness
- Male-ness

Sexually Attracted to

- (Women/Females/Femininity)
- (Men/Males/Masculinity)

Romantically Attracted to

- (Women/Females/Femininity)
- (Men/Males/Masculinity)

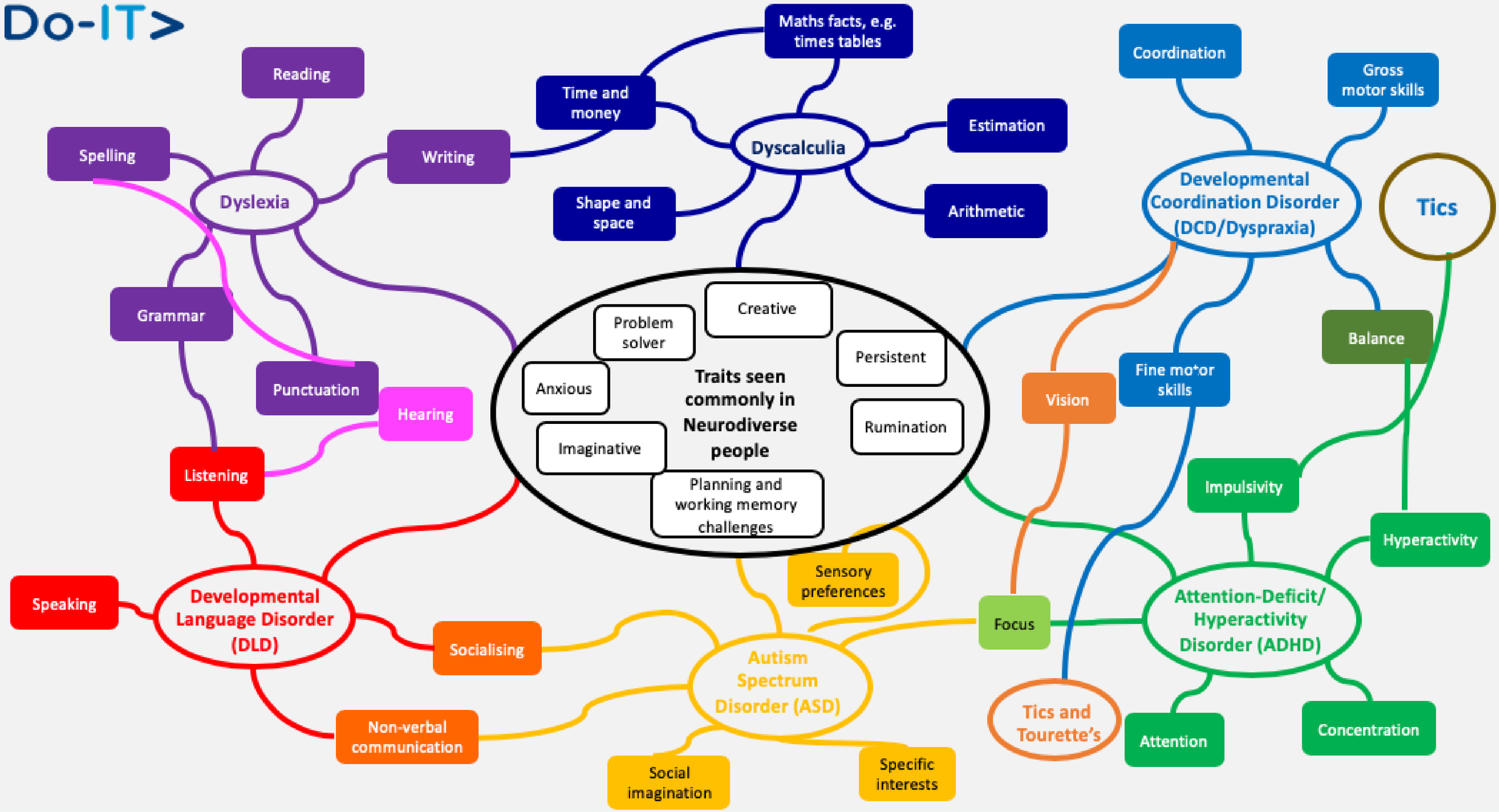
NEURODIVERSE vs MENTAL-DISABILITY

Mental Disability: Major genetic differences causing changes to cognitive ability

Neurodiversity: Variety in ways the brain operates leading to categories such as:

- Autistism Spectrum
- ADHD
- Dislexia

Do-IT>


Traits seen commonly in Neurodiverse people
Creative
Problem solver
Persistent
Anxious
Rumination
Imaginative
Planning and working memory challenges
Dyscalculia
Maths facts, e.g. times tables
Time and money
Estimation
Shape and space
Arithmetic
Dyslexia
Reading
Spelling
Writing
Grammar
Punctuation
Hearing
Listening
Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
Speaking
Socialising
Non-verbal communication
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Sensory preferences
Social imagination
Specific interests
Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD/Dyspraxia)
Coordination
Gross motor skills
Vision
Fine motor skills
Balance
Tics
Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
Impulsivity
Hyperactivity
Focus
Tics and Tourette's
Attention
Concentration

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Both visable and non-visiable:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Speech
- Limbs

Can be situational, temporary, permanent

Permanent... Temporary.... Situational

Touch

One arm | Arm injury | New parent

See

Blind | Cataract | Distracted driver

Hear

Deaf | Ear infection | Bartender

Speak

Non-verbal | Laryngitis | Heavy accent

AS A COMMUNITY WE CAN MOVE FROM:

RAINFOREST ALBERTA

REFLECTION & FEEDBACK

WHAT IS BELONGING?

01

It is subjective to each person, based on past experiences and the current situation.

02

It is how individuals relate to each other and to groups.

03

A sense of belonging through strong social networks is related to good health.