

WHAT INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION OR PREJUDICE CAN LOOK LIKE

With a focus on anti-Semitism and Sexism, but intersectionally applicable to Racism, Ableism, Transphobia, Homophobia, Classism, Adulthood, more...

(in no particular order, certainly not comprehensive!)

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A reminder: none of these behaviors are our fault; these behaviors are developed in response to oppression.

- *afraid of showing our full selves
- *disdain of Jewishness and Jewish issues
- *blaming/criticizing/attacking other Jews
- *shame and disgust at being Jewish/at Jewish appearance
- *believing anti-Semitism is not important
- *difficulty taking a stand against anti-Semitism
- *desire to separate from other Jews
- *believing one is not like other Jews

- *self-loathing
- *disliking other Jews
- *blaming Jews for anti-Semitism
- *believing there are 'good' Jews and 'bad' Jews
- *adopting behaviors to please the dominant group
- *believing that Jews are bad
- *fearing visibility as a Jew
- *deep down believing that Jews are unworthy, do not deserve to exist
- *as Jewish women, believing everyone's needs come before our own

- *feeling a need to control
- *mistrusting anyone who is not Jewish
- *criticizing other Jews for speaking out
- *embarrassed by Jews who are "too Jewish"
- *acting out victimization, as if the whole world is against us
- *acting as if having been victimized justifies any behavior by Jews
- *fearing for survival
- *expressing fear through anxiety, worry, insecurity, nervousness, impatience and/or hypervigilance, sense of urgency

- *feeling unwanted
- *feeling that nothing we do is enough
- *competing with other Jews
- *isolating and feeling isolated
- *disliking our bodies
- *feeling that we don't look "cool enough"

- *trying to please others so we will be liked or loved
 - *trying to control our behavior so that we don't appear too pushy, bossy or controlling
 - *believing that our value correlates with what we Do, not with who we Are
 - *compulsively striving for perfection: hard on ourselves, hard on each other
 - *believing that we are supposed to represent all Jews
 - *believing that some Jewish women are too whiny, obnoxious, needy, annoying, difficult, or controlling
 - *anxiety about not drawing attention to ourselves as Jews when we're in mixed groups
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- *fearful that we are taking up too much space
 - *when the only Jew in a group, feeling slightly apart from everyone else
 - *feeling powerless, like a victim
 - *trying to avoid humiliation at all costs
 - *trying to appear strong and 'together,' even when we feel weak, uncertain or afraid
 - *assimilating, to try to pass to escape the prejudice of anti-Semitism
 - *difficulty playing or relaxing
 - *feeling unsafe in the world
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- *feeling helpless
 - *feeling despairing
 - *overworking, so that we will be "useful" (so that we won't be killed)
 - *having a hard time getting close to others
 - *when a group of us are together, acting out our internalized oppression onto each other, dividing us from each other
 - *believing that we are responsible for the entire universe

I can be sure that anytime I feel intolerant of, irritated by, impatient with, embarrassed by, ashamed of, 'not as black as,' 'blacker than,' better than, not as good as, fearful of, not safe with, isolated from, mistrustful of, not cared about by, unable to support, or not supported by another black person, some pattern of internalized racism is at work.—Suzanne Lipsky