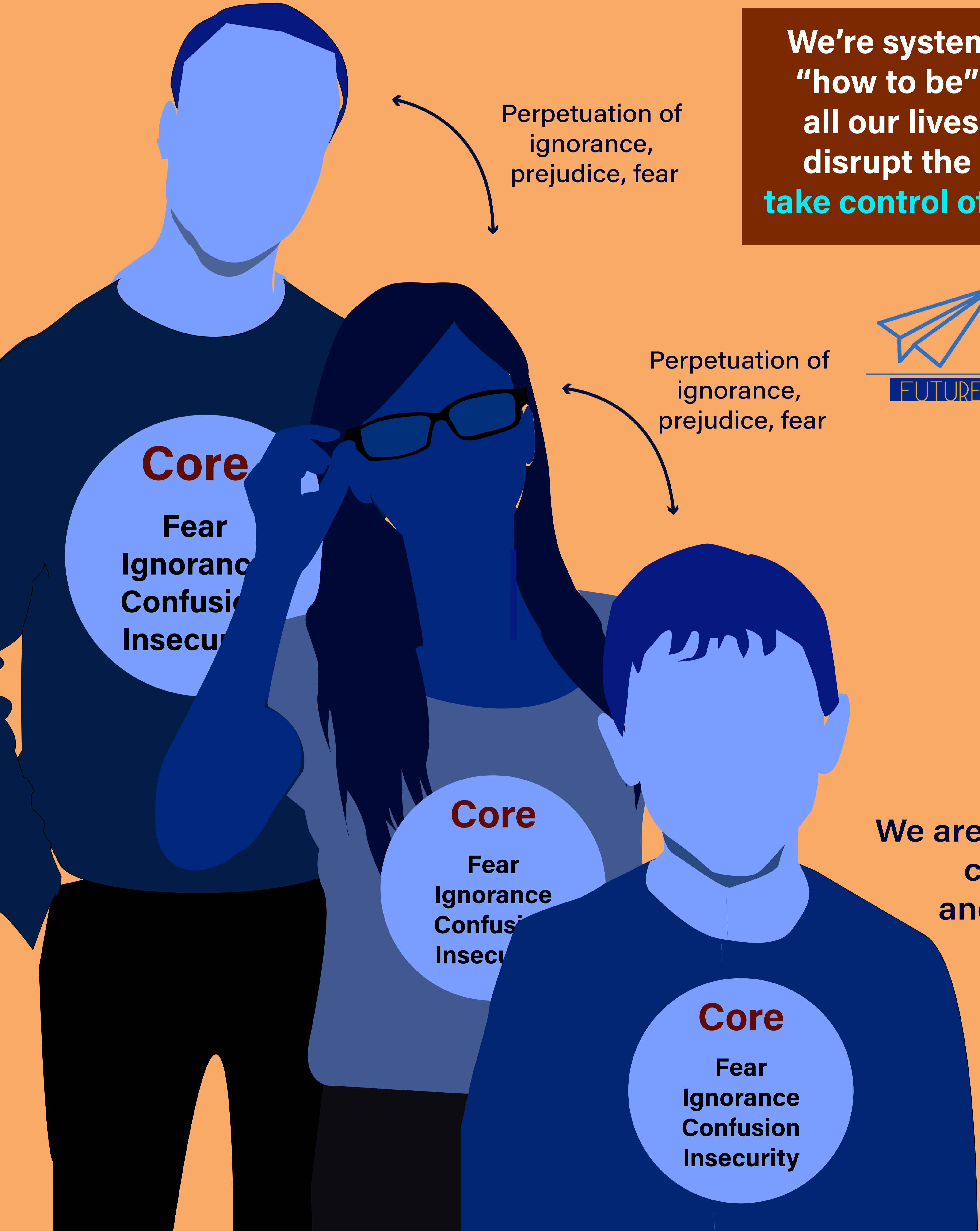


BREAKING THE CYCLE OF OPPRESSION:

A short exercise in understanding the "Cycle of Socialization," how to unlearn the narrative we've been taught to believe, and disrupting the process of systemic oppression. →

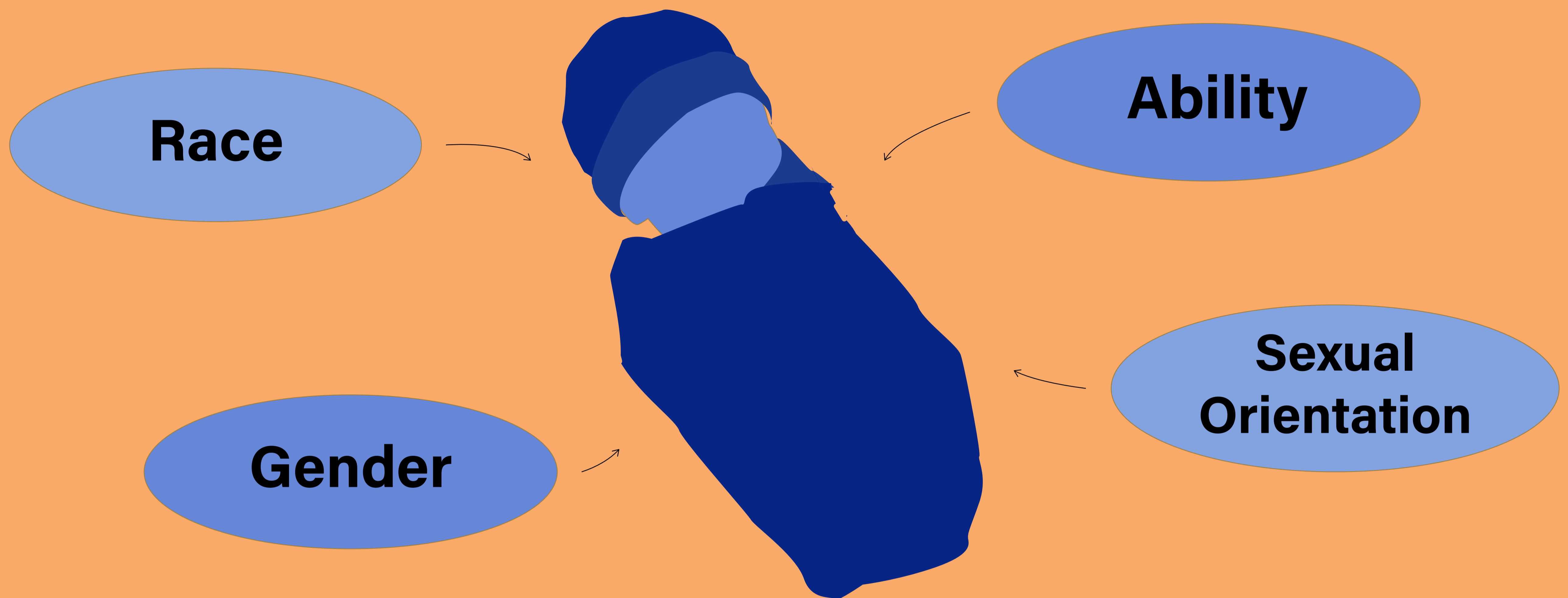
We're systemically trained "how to be" our identities all our lives - how do we disrupt the process and take control of our own lives?



We are all responsible for creating true equity and inclusion. It's not going to be easy, but we can start by initiating these important processes. →

1. The Beginning

Humans are born into a pre-existing system of oppression and taught to recognize ourselves in terms of assigned social identities.



At this stage, we are innocent. We share no responsibility for the identities assigned to us, nor blame for the privilege we've been granted.

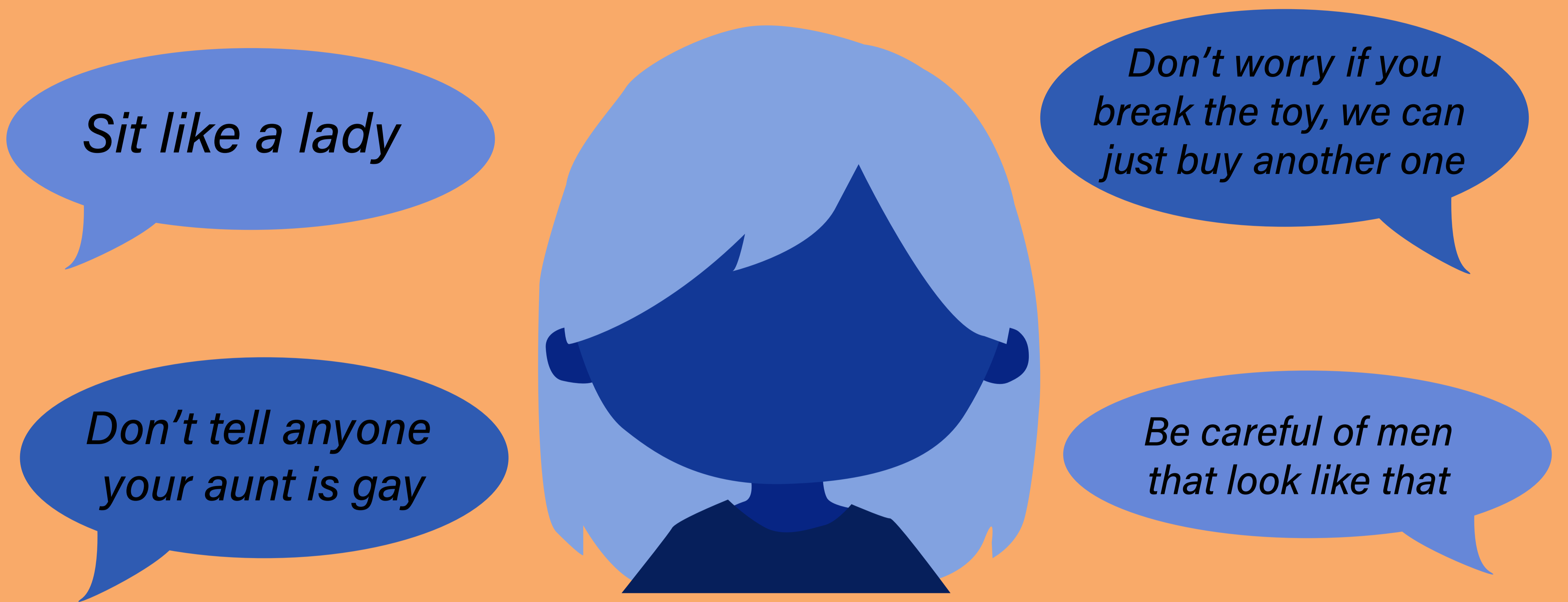
Identities fall into 2 categories:

AGENT (dominant)	TARGET (subordinate)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The "norm" around which assumptions are built▪ Given attention and recognition▪ Can "name" others▪ Access to option and opportunity without realizing it <p>E.g. White, male, cisgender, wealthy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Little is known about them - either they're invisible or defined by misinformation▪ Disenfranchised, exploited, and victimized by structural obstacles <p>E.g. non-White, female/nonbinary, gay</p>

Both groups are dehumanized by being socialized into prescribed roles without consciousness or permission.

2. First Socialization

We are socialized by the people we love and trust (parents, family): they teach us how to perceive ourselves and how to relate to others.



We unconsciously conform to the rules, roles, and assumptions that are most socially accepted as “normal.” How we’re socialized often defines how we act and how we are accepted into our peer groups as we age.

This is not all bad. For example, a feminist parent may pass on non-stereotypical roles to their children, but a racist parent may pass on racist beliefs to their children.

Teachers and caretakers also play a role in shaping our perceptions and worldviews.

How to Start Challenging the Narrative

Who are you really?



TRY THIS!

Test the accuracy of your worldview

1. Choose one of your social identities (race, religion, gender, etc.)
2. Come up with 10 things you learned, or know to be true, about being that identity

(Do this before swiping!)



REFLECT:

Did you select an identity for which you're an Agent, or a Target?

Reminder:

AGENT (dominant)	TARGET (subordinate)
E.g. White, male, cisgender, wealthy	E.g. non-White, female/nonbinary, gay

Most likely, you find it easier to list learnings for targeted groups than agent groups – we don't often question the systems that favor us.

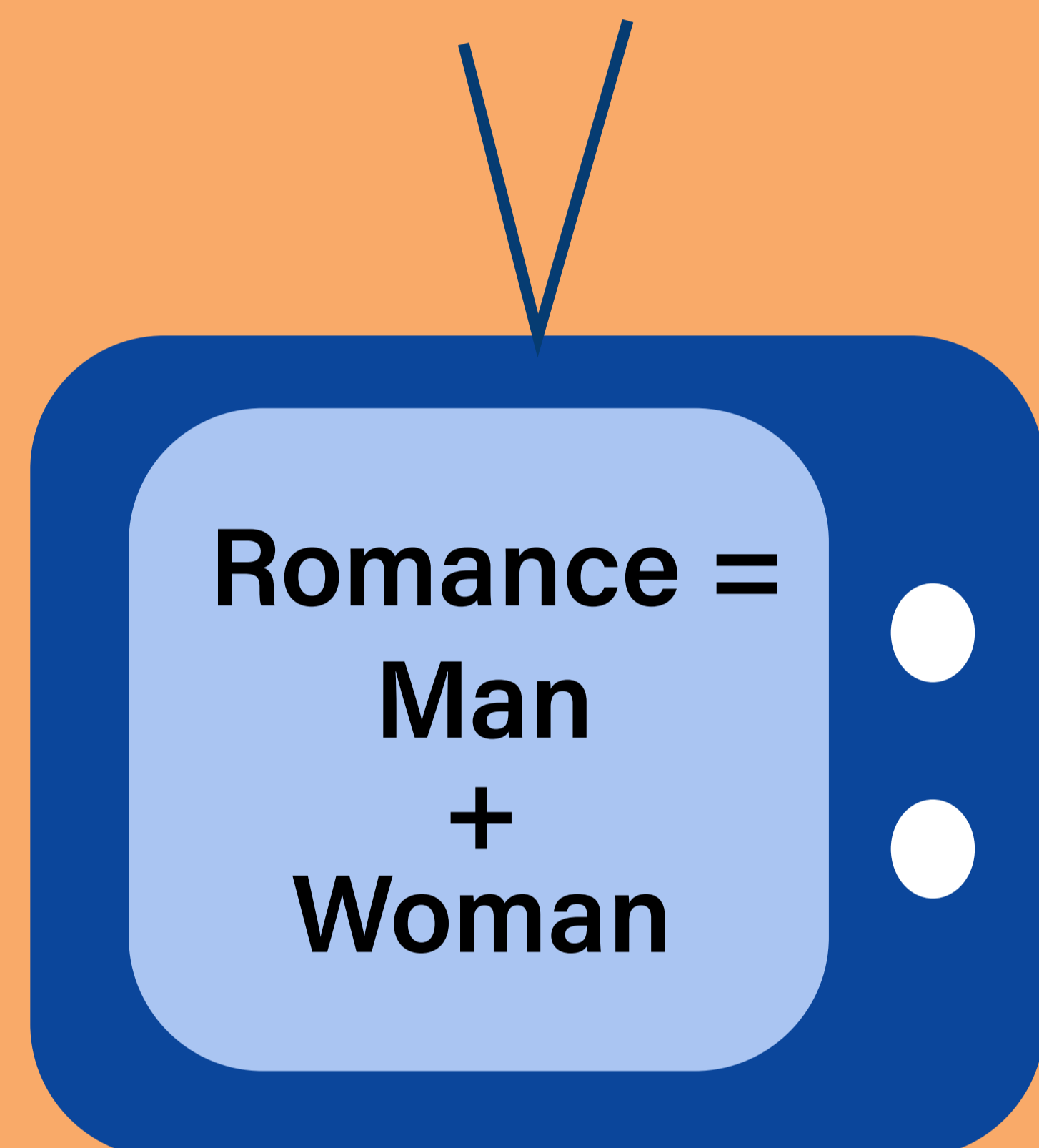
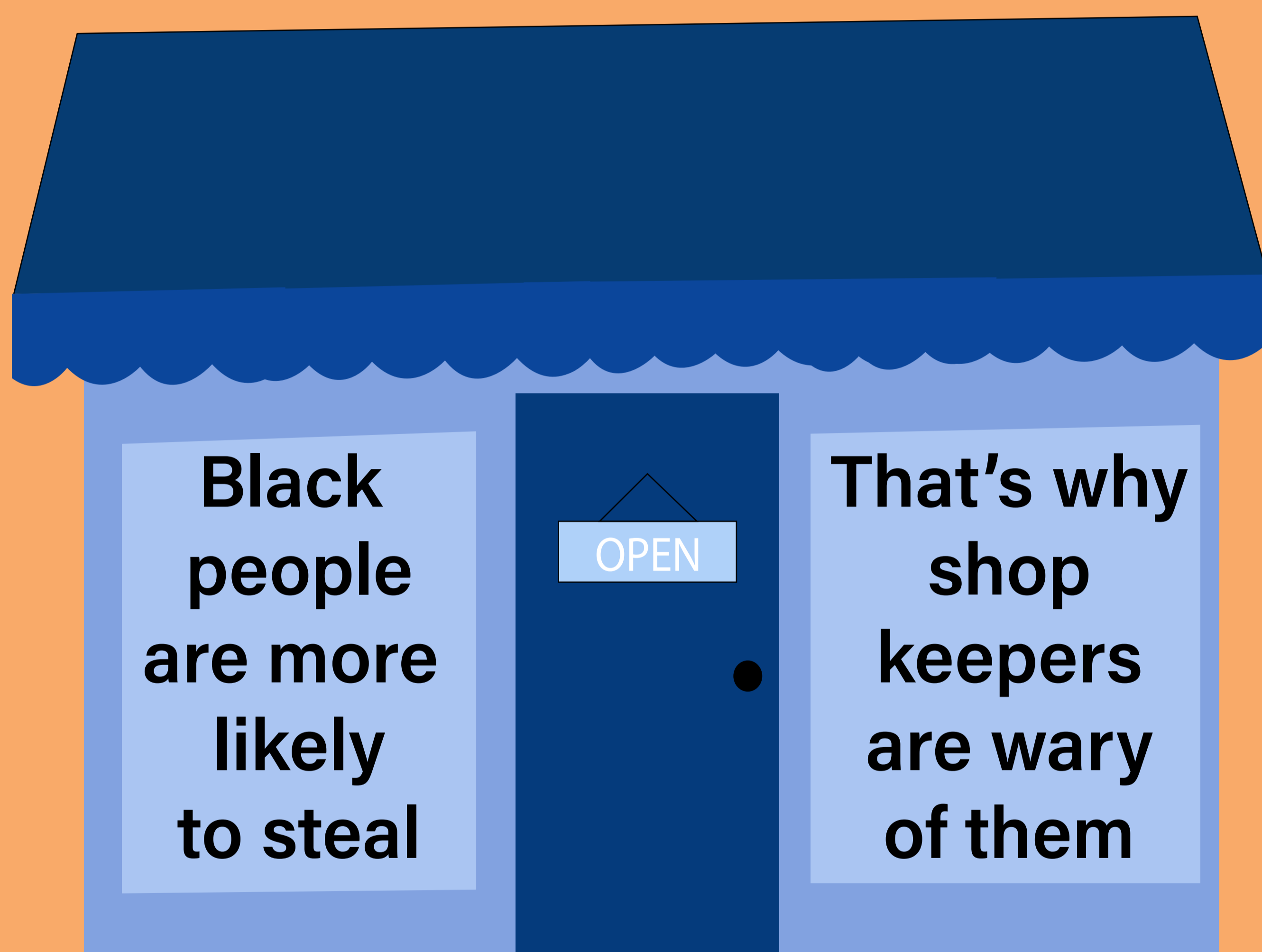
But it's necessary to recognize both agent and target groups if we're going to affect real change.



3. Institutional and Cultural Socialization

The institutions we interact with and the media we consume teaches us who gets preferential treatment and who gets picked on.

These assumptions are woven into every structural thread of the fabric of our culture. And dominant cultures do just that, they dominate. Learned behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs of the dominant culture tend to de-value the “other” subordinate groups.



If we're members of the groups that benefit from these rules, we may not notice that they aren't fair.

If we're members of the groups that are penalized by these rules, we may have a constant feeling of discomfort.

We're inundated with unquestioned and stereotypical messages that shape how we think and what we believe about ourselves and others.