

## Intersectionality in relationships

**Guest: Zayna Ratty**

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**Jaia Bristow - [00:00:09]**

Hello and welcome back to the Relationship Super Conference. My name is Jaia Bristow, and I'm one of your hosts. And today, I am very excited to be joined by Zayna Ratty. Hello, Zayna. Welcome.

**Zayna Ratty**

Hello. How are you doing?

**Jaia Bristow**

I'm good. I'm so excited to have you on board. Thank you for joining us.

**Zayna Ratty**

Thank you for asking me.

**Jaia Bristow**

So, Zayna Ratty is an LGBTQIA+ Gender, Sex, and Relationship Diversity (GSRD), Race and Ethnicity Hypno-Psychotherapist, relationship coach, presenter, columnist and trainer, based in Oxfordshire, UK. A Pink Therapy GSRD Awareness endorsed trainer, Zayna was the first person of color Chair of Oxford Pride' and Diversity Equity Inclusivity and Accessibility (DEIA) Lead at the National College of Hypnosis and Psychotherapy. Zayna is also a columnist at *Ox Mag* and co-host of the *Beyond Monogamy with Zayna and Jonathan* podcast. An advocate for raising awareness of marginalized groups within society, Zayna's charity, Diversity Consulting Work and private therapeutic practice explore how race, gender, sexuality, and relationship diversity create a prism of intersecting identities.

So we'll be talking about these intersecting identities. Let's start off with, why is considering intersectionality important when thinking about relationships?

**Zayna Ratty**

Thank you so much. Welcome, everybody. I know that sometimes these types of topics could be really challenging, but thank you for being here today.

Relationship should be about equity, and that isn't always necessarily achieved without people thinking about it, for instance. So, in relationships, and I find this in my practice and in my lived experience, that when you have people who are from different both race, cultural and ethnicity backgrounds, you find that there is a dissonance that's created there. There's something that isn't spoken to. And we'll talk about this a little bit later about issues being raised around this, because it's not being talked about. And quite often in relationships and in lots of areas of our lives, depending, obviously, where you live, it can be a monocultural default.

So people just assume that everybody has had a similar lived experience, everybody has a similar belief system. And actually when we don't, and we then enter into relationships with people who aren't exactly the same as us, we can find it really difficult. This kind of unseen difference can really be an area for projection.

So we are seeing, and I call it, through a lens. We are seeing other people's lives and lived experiences through our own lenses. And if we don't consider a) we have a lens of our own and we aren't completely a blank slate, but also that we could be making assumptions, for instance, about somebody else's attitude, experience, then what we are doing is creating difficulties and creating barriers in relationships.

A study of I think it was about 4000 people found (and this will be on slide one) that a typical white person, for instance, mixes with about 50% fewer people from other groups as you might expect, given where they live. So there was a reason for that happening. There are those invisible walls and barriers that are being created by societal conditioning, by lived experience, by expectations.

Now I'm from a multi heritage background. And multi heritage people are the fastest growing ethnic minority in the UK and was predicted to be the largest minority group by last year. These issues that we don't talk about, that we don't confront and have challenging conversations around, they evolve gradually over time. It isn't necessarily something that comes along and is there immediately. It's affected by emotions, experiences, perceptions, as well as our cultural, social, structural backgrounds and heritages. What we need to do is to consider that people are different to us. And that starts with knowing yourself, and then you can begin to be congruent and to sit with other people where they are.

#### **Jaia Bristow - [00:04:43]**

Brilliant. As someone who also has a multi heritage or multiethnic background, I really appreciate you talking about this. And Kevin Patterson, who is one of the speakers on this conference as well, talks about his experiences of being a black man and navigating interracial relationships. So when you're talking about intersectionality, is it all about race and ethnicity? What else do you include?

#### **Zayna Ratty**

So there was a diagram which will be somewhere. And it's not all about race ethnicity. It's about things like social stratification or classes, as some people would call it. It's about structurally embedded advantage. Does one person in the relationship have it and one person doesn't? It's about status exchange? That's not just about money. It's not just about earning potentials. It could be academic. It could be topography. It's about relationship diversity. Does the person who you're with have a different relationship structure to you, or have they grown up amongst a familiar model that is different to you?

So intersectionality can be about... When I do a DEIA training, I encourage people to think about their own intersectionality. The *Oxford Dictionary* explanation of intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations. So that's race, class, gender, and they're all regarded as creating overlapping systems of discrimination, disadvantage, oppression.

So when we think of intersectionality, it's not the fact that we are different in disability, geography, culture, income, sexual orientation, gender identity, education, race and ethnicity. It's actually those structures that are in place, that structurally embedded advantage, that means that some people maybe have an advantage over others.

#### **Jaia Bristow**

That makes a lot of sense. And so race and ethnicity are commonly regarded as interchangeable terms. I myself often just say race and ethnicity together. So, is there a difference? And what might that mean in terms of relationship procedure?

### **Zayna Ratty - [00:07:03]**

So there is a difference. And you're absolutely right. Most people will say race and ethnicity and we'll put them together and go, well, it's exactly the same thing. Whereas ethnicity is more directly related to culture actually, in that ethnicity is about a network of people in a given geographical region. So, in theory, if you live in the UK, then you will belong to a similar ethnic group, which doesn't make a lot of sense to a lot of people. But when you then add in the explanation that race is genetic distinction from other people, so you can actually be similar ethnicity and different races.

And that's what can create a dissonance in relationships, because you think that you've lived in the same place all your life, you have, for instance, encountered the same adverts when you were younger, you have a shared experience, and you do. If your race is different, there is another layer of this in your relationship that maybe you aren't considering might have an effect on it.

If we look at culture, culture is complex. So it's knowledge, it's art, it's morals, it's law, it's customs, it's culture. I suppose you could say in America, for instance, Halloween is a much bigger thing than it was in the UK. That's increasing, obviously. But are we both experiencing the same thing simultaneously? Not. Different geographies, different cultures, different customs. So they will be different.

So when you are looking at people, even of a similar race, if you grow up in a different place and this happens a lot in multi-heritage relationships, in that people can feel that they are not one, nor the other. So where do you actually fit? What cultures and heritages and laws and belief systems do you follow? And actually, are you following ones that are different to your partner? If you are, and you're not talking about it, then that's when that hierarchy, that's when that dissonance is created between the pair of you.

I would always say, never assume that because you've grown up in the same place that you have exactly the same culture, even if you share the same race.

### **Jaia Bristow**

I think that's so important. And I really appreciate the distinction and the way that one can have the same ethnicity as someone, but not the same race, but also the same race as someone and not the same ethnicity, and will have certain shared experiences, but not all of them.

And, for example, one of my really close friends, she's also mixed multiethnic, but lives in Los Angeles and grew up in the US. And we have certain things where we have so much more in common than with my other British friends, for example, but then also moments where our experiences just differ so much because of that cultural upbringing.

And then once we factor in other intersections, including age is I think a big one, and exactly where we grew up and parents and lifestyle and all these other things. Then, of course, we have different experiences, and it's so important to talk about them, as you say. So I really appreciate you bringing this in.

So, how can knowing about the intergenerational history of our partners help our relationships to flourish?

### **Zayna Ratty**

Knowing about intergenerational history and helping relationships to flourish can also be about knowing about the intersections of the global majority. So, I use terminology like "global majority" as opposed to "ethnic minority," because if you are looking at the amount of people on Earth, and basically doing a calculation, then actually people that would be called or traditionally be called an ethnic minority are actually in the global majority, which in itself is what we call a reframe in therapy.

It's how can we think about something that could possibly be construed as negative into something that can be construed as positive?

So looking at the diagram in front of you, there are four things to think about. And this kind of then went into me making up my Ethnicity Relational Map, which you'll be seeing a little bit later. But if we're looking at things like minority stress, minority stress is experienced by people of the global majority.

Minority stresses are processes including the experiences of prejudice, of the expectations of rejection. So we're looking at dating apps, for instance, and people go, oh no, I don't want to date you because you have a particular heritage or multi heritage or religion or faith. Those are the types of places where people go into and have an expectation of rejection. I don't want to date this particular person, with this particular lived experience.

So if people were in those places, they will hide and conceal. Concealment is one of the leading causes of psychological distress. So if you're going into a topography, into a space, and you find that actually, you're probably going to be rejected in it, and that could actually mean you've been rejected before. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're always going to be rejected in that space. But you still have minority stress from it. You still have that expectation of it.

If you are concealing, if you're hiding, if people have phobias. So when I'm marking kind of DEIA essays, for instance, and people are thinking about, okay, so this particular person I have a fear of, purely because of what they're wearing, maybe, purely because of the car they're driving, purely because they either have access or don't have access to Internet or a computer or a mobile phone. All of these people will undergo what we call minority stress.

One of the ways that we conceal and hide in spaces is something called code switching. Now, that means it's a self protective action. Basically, I need to make sure that I am safe in this space. So you will go into the space, you will risk assess. Is this safe? Is this a safe space, or not? We find it, for instance, in the LGBTQA+ community, if you're going into a space, do you hide a part of yourself?

When we're thinking about people of the global majority, those are things you can't conceal. You can't hide what you look like. If somebody speaks to you on the phone, for instance, you can appear however you wish. When you're in person, you can't hide that.

However, we may play up and play down other parts of our personalities. Our GSRD status, for instance, if you go into a situation where you feel that most people are monogamous, but you're not, you then draw back in, you conceal. You might use terms like partner and make sure you don't put an s on the end, for instance, because when you start to begin to use plurals and people pick up on that, then that can leave some very challenging and difficult conversations.

We could look at the racial inequality. So these are hierarchical, so that's somebody's at the top, and somebody's at the bottom, and other people are in the middle. There's social challenges there. There's legal challenges there. We're experiencing at the moment around immigration, and something which obviously an election a few years ago was won upon the very notion of immigration and restricting it. And I think if we think back to what race and ethnicity actually is, then maybe we should be reevaluating the terminology around immigration.

It can be about policy mechanisms. It can act upon various layers of oppression in racial inequality. If you think about the fact that about 3% of psychotherapists in the accrediting body that I belong to identify as a member of the global majority, or BAME some businesses call it, 3%, that's not many people at all. What are the processes? What are the inequalities that prevent people from training, for instance, that prevent people from being accredited, and then being able to go on and share in their own lived experience with a community which is exceedingly lacking in mental health care.

## **Jaia Bristow - [00:16:14]**

Right.

## **Zayna Ratty**

We can look at microaggressions. The office joke, the water cooler moment, and admittedly, we've all been kind of out of that topography for quite some time now, but those off-the-cuff remarks, they're a little bit like paper cuts. You have one, a little bit sore. Take no notice of it. You get another, and another, and another. And this has a compound effect on people.

Are we really thinking about, if somebody has stood behind me in a queue, and I'm saying something, I'm telling a joke, and I think it's funny, if somebody else don't think it's funny or if somebody else maybe find it offensive, maybe find that they are a victim of my words.

So there are things that we can do when we're in communication in relationships, where we are thinking about the levels of minority stress and how that is different for different people.

The levels of microaggressions. I've seen it where I've had mixed-heritage couples, where one has thought maybe something wasn't a microaggression and the other person thought it was. How do you deal with those? Well, you have to be open and honest about it. And go, I didn't know. I didn't know that would affect you how it affected you.

## **Jaia Bristow**

And I think that's really important what you're saying about not just being open and honest, but acknowledging, I didn't know. Because for me, for example, I've been in relationships and someone said something that's been offensive to me, because, again, of all these things you're mentioning, my history.

Someone once called me, I think the term was "special breed," which with my background, I was very, very uncomfortable to hear. And I've had the word "breed" and "mongrel" and things like that thrown at me and "bastard" my whole life. And my mother, who was also mixed, was called a "half-breed" growing up, and all these insults.

And when I said to the person, I knew their intention, the way they said it, I knew their intention wasn't to hurt me. But when I mentioned that it was painful, their reaction is actually what was painful rather than saying, I'm so sorry, I didn't know, I will do better. Because, of course they couldn't. They come from, not only are they white, but they come from a lot of sort of privileged social, privileged categories.

But their reaction was to become defensive at that moment. And that's what was very painful, more than actually the initial comment, which I realized was not an insult, even though I have heard it as an insult before. So I think that's so important when you talk about that need for communication and honesty and that ability to say, oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know. Because as you say, when we have different races or ethnicities or any kind of other different intersecting identities, we don't know what the other person's experience is like, unless we're willing to listen.

## **Zayna Ratty**

Yeah, absolutely. And I think even when we're talking about language and the use of a language, so I don't use the word "privilege," I use "structurally embedded advantage," for instance, because when you use words like "privilege" people will quite often just shut up shop, and you will have lost their engagement, because they feel attacked. When somebody feels defensive, it's very difficult to get them what we call "back in the room," to be able to engage in a challenging conversation. These conversations are not easy to have.

**Jaia Bristow - [00:19:44]**

Absolutely.

**Zayna Ratty**

When you meet someone, you meet them, you go, hi, I quite like you. And vice versa. And then you begin to see each other. You don't actually sit down and talk about it. And I think people are beginning to do more of this. So talking about attachment styles, talking about previous relationships, even talking about sexual health. We're talking about test results. We're talking about regular testing. All of these things should be part of relationships.

What have you done? What have you not done? What would you like to do? What do you not like to do? And so much of it is forgotten because we get quite caught up. Some of us get caught up in the relationship escalator, and some of us don't. But we still get caught up.

For instance, in polyamory, there is something called NRE which is new relationship energy. It's that kind of, you're upbeat, everything's wonderful. The person that you're with is amazing, and they can't do anything wrong. And even their worst traits are endearing or quirky or cute. And you then get to a point in the relationship where that early chemical, mostly chemical reaction has died down, and you have to build and sustain a long lasting relationship. And you can't, because there's so many differences there that you haven't even thought about initially.

**Jaia Bristow**

I think that's so important. And again, that recognition of language being different. And I sometimes talk about language as art, because it's intended by the speaker or the artist, and then interpreted completely differently by the receiver, the listener, the person viewing the art. And no matter what the intention of the speaker is, that's not necessarily how it's going to be received by the other person or people. So I think that's so important. And that mismatch sometimes that can happen, which again, is influenced by our history. And it's what causes so much conflict in the world.

My housemate and I, once, (it's one of my favorite stories,) she was going to the supermarket and asked me if I needed anything, and I asked her if she could pick me up some cloves, the spice. And she misheard and thought I said, clothes, like items of clothing.

And we proceeded to get into this argument where she kept being like, well, the supermarket doesn't sell clothes. And I was like, how do you go and check every aisle? And we were getting more and more frustrated with each other. And she's like, I don't need to go and check every aisle to know that it doesn't sell clothes. And I'm like, but have you checked? Like, how do you know, it's a big supermarket!

And again, it's that thing of when two people think they're talking about the same thing, and actually it's completely different. And okay, there it was two actually different things with similar sounding words. But sometimes we use the same words and they mean different things to different people, and the experiences impact all of that. So I really appreciate everything you're sharing.

**Zayna Ratty**

I think we'll always remember that there is a space between your mouth and somebody else's ears.

**Jaia Bristow**

That's useful.

## Zayna Ratty - [00:22:52]

And things can change and adapt and move. And when you're saying something, actually think about it, even though I don't have the bandwidth to talk about this right now, I need to go away and think about what I want to communicate here, and how I can communicate that to you, so that it is landing, how it is meant. We always think that a conversation should be like a game of tennis, back and forth and back and forth, and actually knowing that we can be empowered enough to step back and go, we can't talk about that right now. I need to go and think about where I sit in all of this. Don't just go on social media, for instance, and try and work out where you sit. Go and do some thinking about it. Go and do some introspection about it. What do I really feel? What are the experiences? What's my societal conditioning?

And knowing, and I guess that kind of leads us into the next slide about knowing about intergenerational history, and knowing that of our partners, and how that can help our relationships to flourish. Ask questions. Share your life experiences. They don't always have to be of the amazing times where you climbed a mountain or you achieved something fantastic. They could be the times when you are, you don't know who you are. You don't know where you're going. You've made mistakes. Everybody has made mistakes. Everybody is flawed. Nobody is perfect here.

But knowing about people's histories and knowing about their intergenerational histories, what was the relationship like between your parents? Did you have two parents? Three parents, one parent, no parents? That relationship modeling will have an effect on the relationships that you are having, and you've had, and the ones at your house.

And it's not just about romantic or sexual relationships here. It's every relationship in your life. If you have had a really great model, I'm the daughter of a single parent, and you do have to think about these things. How was the modeling?

How was the division of labor? Well, there wasn't. The division of labor was between my mother and my grandfather and my grandmother. So it wasn't between my mother and my father. Those things affect our relationships.

How do we see relationships? What do we put up within relationships? Knowing the difference between a compromise and a micro-compromise. We should all be navigating together and making micro-compromises to having great relationships. If we're making massive compromises of who we are, then we really ought to think about whether we should be in that relationship at all.

We should be getting comfortable talking about the forms of, maybe of even our own oppression. Looking at our identity facets, finding out our own intersectionalities and our own intergenerational histories, and bringing them to the table in relationships.

Being upfront about your societally conditioned stereotypes. We don't get away from making stereotypes. We're humans. Our brains work on patterns. So when we spot a pattern, we think it's going to repeat itself. So if you have feelings about something, whatever they are, make sure you voice them in a relationship.

And never make assumptions about how something might land. Ask, check in. Never make assumptions about what somebody else is thinking or meaning or needing. This all needs to be out there on the table.

Find emotional support from people who have been in intersectional relationships. This is something. Intersectional relationships are going to be something that is going to become the usual. And even in that, I use the word "usual" as opposed to "normal" because there is no normal. We need to move away from labeling, from putting people in boxes. Are labels helpful? Yes, they can be helpful to navigate towards a more authentic self. But you also need to know that you don't need to fit the entirety of the label. Talk about your own relationship with yourself, and with everybody else, and your own intersections.

This is what I mean by, it's almost a little bit like lasagna. Nobody is just one sheet. Everybody is vegetables, meat, sauce, cheese. And we need to treat each other and ourselves as such.

### **Jaia Bristow - [00:28:04]**

And when you say, soon it will become usual for everyone to be in intersectional relationships, or for the majority, do you not feel like that's already? Even when we take into account gender, for example, we have Dr. Alex Iantaffi talking about gender roles in relationships and the impact whether you're dating someone of the opposite gender or the same gender or a different gender. And whether again, there's the gender, there's the ethnicities, there's the age differences, there's the class differences, there's all these different elements, cultural differences depending on the country one grew up in. So do you not feel like, well, that already is? If we're taking intersectional as quite a large umbrella term, do you not feel that already is the most usual thing?

### **Zayna Ratty**

It should be. But I don't think it's given... I think people don't look at it enough. Even in relationships now, there is still that division of labor, and usually unfair division of labor, depending on who is earning, who is doing the primary caregiving to children, who is looking after the house, and things like that. So there is still this division, and we all slot into it without challenging it. And I guess that's what this is about.

This is about taking that step back and going, and is what I am doing right now, is that what everybody else does? Is that the reason I'm doing it? Because if it is, this should be about tailoring your relationship to yourself, to your own lens. Roles. Gender pay gap still exists. Ethnicity pay gap still exists. We don't live in a world where there is equity. And we also live in a world where people who might have that structurally embedded advantage a) don't want to admit it; b) don't want to claim any kind of responsibility for it; and c) don't want to recognize that, actually, they're probably the only people that could change it.

### **Jaia Bristow**

There's a lot to reflect on. There's a lot that's resonating. I think, again, having those intersections myself, also a mixture, I'm interracial, not interracial, I'm from an interracial family, so I'm multiracial, I'm multiethnic. But even the cultures that I grew up in aren't necessarily the cultures that are the same as my heritage, for example, and the ones and all of that.

So there's a lot of intersectionality, and again, around sexuality, around relationship styles, all of this kind of thing. So I think some of us are forced to think about these kinds of thing and talk about these kinds of things because no matter which relationship I'm in, it will always be an intersectional relationship, an interracial relationship because of who I am.

But it's true that for those who are part of the, I wrote it down, I love the way you say it, the structurally embedded advantage, or those from a big, more homogeneous group, or who are in the "norms" (and I put that in quote marks, of course), then maybe it doesn't get thought about and talked about as much. So I think it's so important to be having these conversations.

### **Zayna Ratty**

And it's important for people to be able to reflect upon their own experiences and important for people to go, actually, no, I don't know that. Should it be up to your partner to do all the education? No. And actually, it shouldn't be up to any person of the global majority to educate anybody about their own lived experience. But it does happen. And that's what I mean in this sharing of experiences. Learning doesn't only go one way. And so if you are having a conversation of sharing your lived experiences, and the person that you are with is also sharing, then you are having dual education.



This was what it was like for me growing up, or this was what it was like for me growing up. Yes, there are differences, but there will be similarities. It doesn't matter if you have all the structurally embedded advantages in the world, or none. We are all going to encounter human issues. There will always be something that joins you together.

Whether that is the ability to go, well, I want you to go and read some Audre Lorde, I want you to go and watch this documentary, or, look at this poem, or even read the things that I've written about safety and how a lot of that is about structurally embedded advantage.

If we are sharing those things, it's not just one person going, well, it's this, it's this, it's this, it's this. Because that's not what a relationship should be, ultimately.

### **Jaia Bristow - [00:33:09]**

I love that. And I think that's true, again, not just in romantic relationships, but all relationships, whether friendships, romantic relationships: the opportunity to share stories and learn from each other and listen to each other. It's really, really beautiful. And so we've touched upon this a little bit already. But what can happen if we aren't aware of the intersectionality in relationships and ourselves? What are the dangers?

### **Zayna Ratty**

The dangers can be biased, both unconscious and conscious. And we can have biases within relationships, with our partners, very, very easily. And if we aren't aware of those, they go unchecked. They grow. They mutate. They become resilient after a while. And we need to pick them out. We need to point them out. And go, have we really thought about this? Why might I feel this way?

We really have to be embodied at these types of moments because if you are having a visceral, physical reaction to something, ask yourself why.

Even if that means you're using the phrase, I don't have the bandwidth right now. I need to go away and think about this. This is all ultimately about self growth. Nobody gets to the top of Maslow, nobody gets to enlightenment. But what we can do is we can all be a work in progress. Realize that perfection does not exist. It's an unattainable goal. But what we can do is strive to be the best that we possibly can in every relationship in our lives.

We could look at... It could lead to discrimination. If you are in a workplace, for instance, and you're looking at workplace discrimination, you are protected by the Equality Act. However, it doesn't mean that discrimination doesn't happen in the workplace, just like it does on dating apps, just like it does on forums and social media. It can cause psychological distress. It can cause relationship issues. It can cause communication difficulties. If somebody doesn't want to start a challenging and uncomfortable conversation, because maybe they think that the other person isn't listening, then you won't start that conversation at all.

It doesn't mean it goes away. It just means it gets repressed, and it stays there. And that can turn to resentment. It can lead to you reacting as opposed to responding. So reacting is something that we do off the cuff. But it's something that doesn't have an emotional bit to it. So you have a response, which is something that is considered, not only when it comes out of your mouth, but also when it goes into other people's ears. And it also has an emotional bit to it.

Reaction is off the cuff. It's like the meme about if somebody texts you and they're drunk, then you're the person they're really thinking about. When we've got those levels of protection diminished, like if we are using alcohol, then what happens is those bits of ourselves come out that maybe we keep hidden.

Similar thing when we're reacting. It's a primal reaction to danger or fear. We then can go into the fear response, and I'm not going to go into that because that's a whole thing on its own. But the different

types of fear responses, are we appeasing someone? So again, that's communication difficulties because we're not having the conversation. Are we just agreeing with someone? Are we fighting? So are we leaving that conversation, and not taking it to a conclusion for us? It doesn't need to be an ultimate conclusion.

So there are lots of issues in relationships if we're not aware of our intersectionalities, both ours and everybody else's. We could have unforeseen status exchanges. And what that is is us just not recognizing that there is difference, that there could be a status exchange, that somebody else's status might be elevated or decreased in a certain topography, just because of the person that we're with.

If you are in a space that you feel comfortable and safe in, that doesn't necessarily mean that any partner or friend, or whoever you have with you, feels exactly the same way.

### **Jaia Bristow - [00:37:51]**

Makes a lot of sense. Zayna, I'm mindful of time. But before we come to an end, you mentioned your ethnicity relational map. Could you talk us through that and why you created it?

### **Zayna Ratty**

Yes, so this is the last slide. And I created the Relational Ethnicity Map just because I wanted, I really like diagrams, and I wanted a way for people just to bring these conversations into a relationship. If they present this and go, can we talk about some of these things? It's a way in, but it's a way in that's not necessarily direct. You can say, oh, yeah, I've seen this thing, can we talk about it? Whether you agree with it or not. Conversation and communication is key.

So it talks about historical and intergenerational trauma. So you're not only experiencing trauma in your life, but you could also be experiencing a parent's trauma, your grandparent's trauma, your great grandparent's trauma. And that will have a drip down effect on how you react and respond in situations.

It's talking about racial inequality. There is a racial inequality. It's something that you cannot say, it happened hundreds of years ago, for instance. The line that I hear quite often is that slavery ended ages ago. Why are you not over this? And quite often my response for that will be, the payments made to the slave owners, we only finished paying the interest off on those payments in 2015. So most of the people that are around now paying their taxes like good citizens, actually have been paying off the interest for payments to release slaves. It's not that long ago. You can't argue, really, that we should be over it because we're still experiencing it. We've only just paid it off.

I think we should also... In the center of this diagram, it says, Distal to Proximal. So Distal to Proximal means from "away" to "towards." So we push these things away. We don't talk about them. And what we should be doing is we should be making them proximal. We should be bringing them in, turning them towards ourselves, and thinking and feeling and conversing our way through some of these things. Because it also says on there about status exchange. There quite often is a status exchange. We talked briefly about age, for instance. If somebody is seen as older, they may be seen as more distinguished or whatever. And actually that has an effect in relationships, every type of relationship.

So thinking about disadvantaged people who belong to the global majority, how there is a status difference, a status dissonance in relationships. And also thinking about that racial and ethnicity based stress and trauma. Remember race and ethnicity are different things, so you can both experience them simultaneously and separately. It's that, it is a true lasagna of things to be thinking about. So the map was created so that people can look at it and have a really easy and non judgmental way of thinking about these really complicated subjects, so that people can have a better intersectional relationship than they may have had previously.

**Jaia Bristow - [00:41:28]**

Wonderful.

Well, thank you for sharing that with us, and thank you for everything. I've learned a lot in this interview, and I'm sure our listeners have too. Before we come to an end, how can people find out more about you and your work?

**Zayna Ratty**

They can look me up. My website is [Zayna.net](http://Zayna.net). Nice and easy to remember. My email is Zayna@therapist.net. And I'm on [Twitter](#) and Instagram and [Facebook](#), and that's [@zrtherapy](#).

**Jaia Bristow**

Fantastic. Well, thank you so much, Zayna. I'm so glad to have had you on board.

**Zayna Ratty**

Thank you for inviting me. Take care, everyone.