Peggy McIntosh, Associate Director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, describes white privilege as 'an invisible package of unearned assets, which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, code books, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks' (McIntosh, 1989).

White privilege results from identifiable racial hierarchy that creates a system of social advantages or 'special rights' for whites based primarily on race rather than merit. Whiteness in and of itself confers both real and perceived powers that are not conferred on people of colour on the same basis.

Manifestations of white privilege - e.g. having little fear about ignoring the perspectives and powers of other races - need to be approached not as unproblematic, but interrogated and calculated as moments in a regime of power and knowledge that advance particular race or community interests over others, thus, perpetuating inequities.

**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION WEEKLY**

**UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF WHITE PRIVILEGE**

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**WORD OF THE WEEK**

**Anam Cara**

(Gaelic expression)
In the Celtic tradition, there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship, an idea of soul-love: the old Gaelic term for this is *anam cara*.

‘Anam’ is the Gaelic word for soul and ‘cara’ is the word for friend. In the Celtic world, *anam cara* thus refers to a ‘soul friend’, someone to whom you reveal the hidden intimacies of your life.