Privilege Statements

Consider the following:
I have come to see privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. Privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks. (McIntosh, 1999, p. 1)

With this definition in mind, circle up to ten statements that you believe are true for you.

1. I make a dollar to every seventy-eight cents a woman makes.
2. I feel safe walking down the street at night without a fear that I will be sexually assaulted or raped.
3. I can speak about my political beliefs without being considered overly religious.
4. When I go shopping, I can do so without being followed or harassed.
5. When I am out in public, I do not have to worry that people may think I am a terrorist.
6. The academic calendar revolves around my religious calendar/holidays.
7. When I watch TV, I see people of my race widely represented in a positive manner.
8. I believe no one thinks I am unhealthy, unfit, or unemployable because of my body type.
9. I can be reasonably sure that when I wear a symbol of my religion, people do not fear me.
10. I can criticize my government without being seen as an outsider.
11. I can be talkative or moody without it being attributed to my gender.
12. I can slap another man's rear end after a football game and say "Good Game" without it being attributed to my sexuality.
13. I can turn on the TV and see family units similar to mine depicted positively on TV.
14. I have traveled to other countries and toured several states in the United States.

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15. When I testify in a court of law, I am sworn in on my religion’s holy book.

16. I can enter every building on campus without worrying about the route I take.

17. I am sure that no one thinks I am unintelligent because of my accent.

18. I can buy new clothes, go out to dinner, or see a dentist, doctor, or lawyer when I need to.


Now consider the following questions:

- What are the social influences that affect your identity?

- Had you thought about this before? If so, what causes you to think about these things? If not, how will you think about this in the future?

- How does this knowledge of yourself influence your leadership?

- Do you know this information about people with whom you work? If so, how? If not, how might you learn it?