

Pocket
Book

Feminist
Privacy

This pocket booklet is part of a study by PurpleCode Collective on privacy, which the full report has been published under the title “Feminist Privacy: Cross-Dimensional Autonomy and Agency” (2025). While the book containing the research report elaborates in detail feminist perceptions in defining privacy, this pocket booklet invites readers to unpack the meaning of privacy as we understand it.

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Content

I. Why are the Perspectives of Women and Minority Groups Important in Defining Privacy? **02**

II. In Your Opinion, What is Privacy? **04**

A. Creating Your Bubble of Privacy **05**

B. The Taboos of Privacy **14**

C. Reflective Questions **17**

D. Interpreting Privacy: Unpacking Privacy **19**

III. Unpacking Privacy: Understanding Various Dimensions and Violations **20**

A. Dimensions of Privacy **22**

B. Stories of Various Forms of Privacy Violations **26**

IV. Understanding the Impact of the Violation **37**

V. Promoting Respect and Appreciation for Privacy **42**

Glossary **48**

References **49**

I. Why are the Perspectives of Women and Minority Groups Important in Defining Privacy?



By documenting and learning from the diverse experiences of women and gender minorities who have endured oppression, which deepens our understanding of privacy, including its connection to safe spaces. Amid evolving discourses on privacy, this pocket booklet prompts us to critique power relations that often exploits society's ignorance to perpetuate majority narratives.

PurpleCode Collective believes that privacy is a vital key for women and minority groups to celebrate other rights, such as freedom of expression, exercising agency that influences the freedom of choice and opinion, as well as controlling narratives and feeling safe. Defining privacy becomes important because most violence against women is a violation of women's privacy. Some forms of online gender-based violence (OGBV), for example, attacks women's privacy. A transwoman who experiences discrimination based on her gender identity also experiences a violation of privacy regarding her choices. Therefore, rather than providing tips on how to protect ourselves so that our 'privacy' is maintained and 'safe', this pocket booklet emphasises that privacy is not a mere individual issue, but rather a collective work to be fought for together.

II. In Your Opinion, What is Privacy?



A. Creating Your Bubble of Privacy

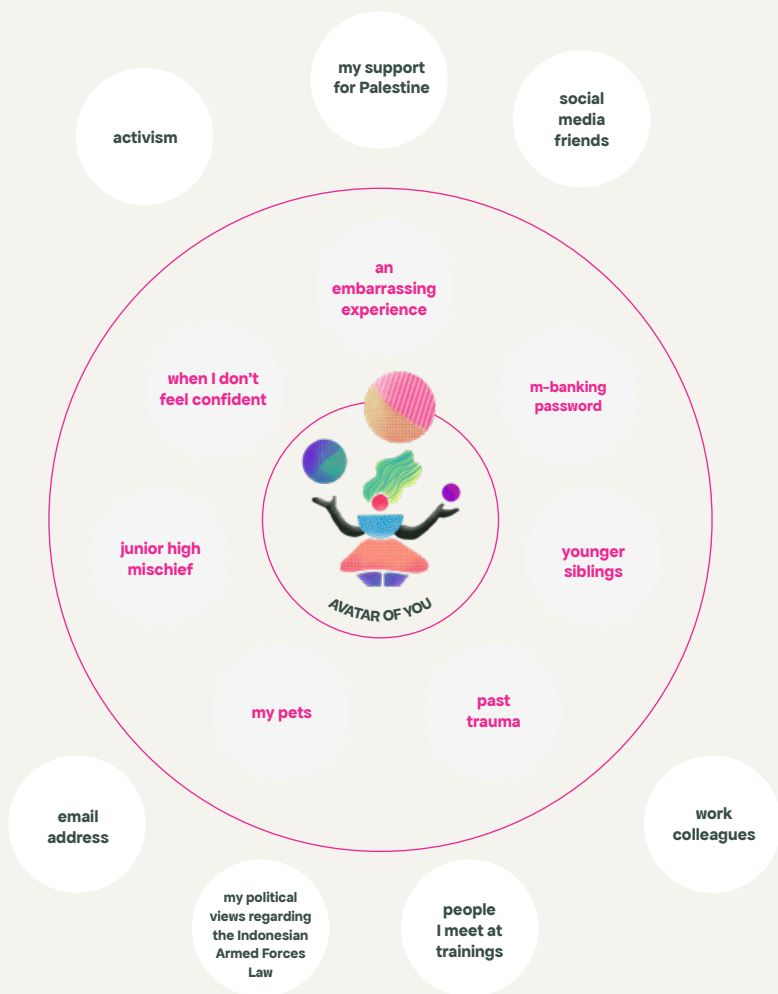
Before delving into privacy from a feminist perspective, let's imagine or visualise privacy according to our own experiences! We will play Bubble of Privacy, a method developed by Feminist Tech Exchange (FTX) and endorsed by [Association for Progressive Communications \(APC\) in 2022*](#).

Get coloured pens or pencils ready to fill in this Bubble of Privacy!

- ♥ On the page provided in this pocket booklet, draw an emoji or character that represents you in the blank circle.
- ♥ Write down some things about yourself inside and outside the circle.
- ♥ The things you write down can include information about yourself, the people who know or don't know about that information, various feelings that you have experienced, your activities or your experiences.

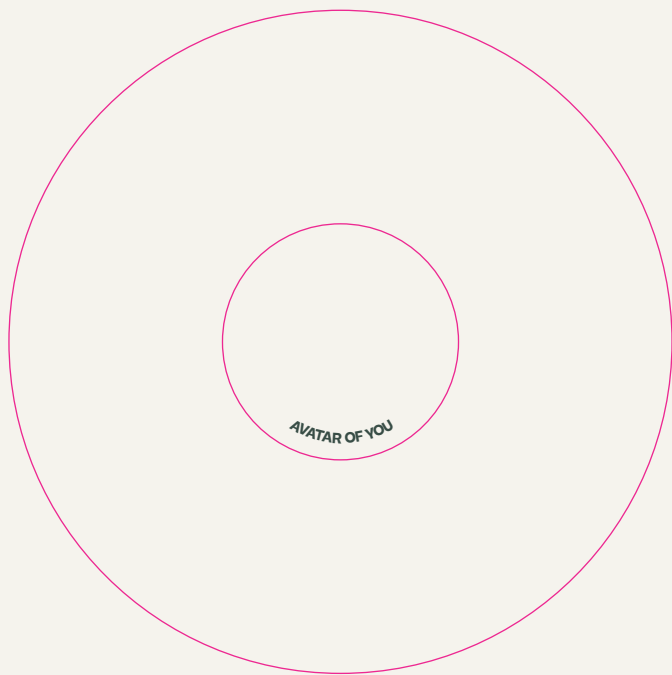
Don't worry, there are no right or wrong answers or placement in the circles.

♥ Here is an example of a bubble of privacy for illustration

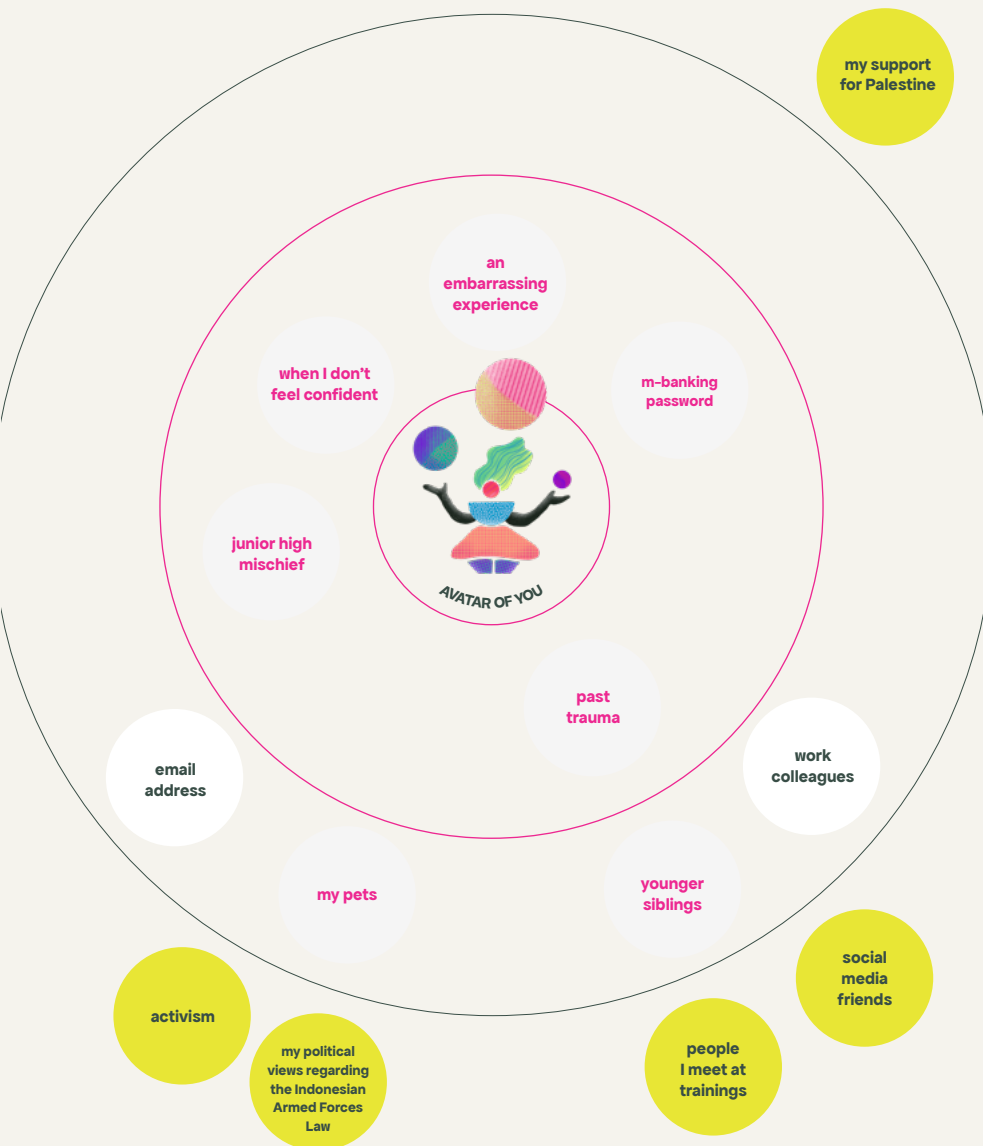




MY BUBBLE OF PRIVACY

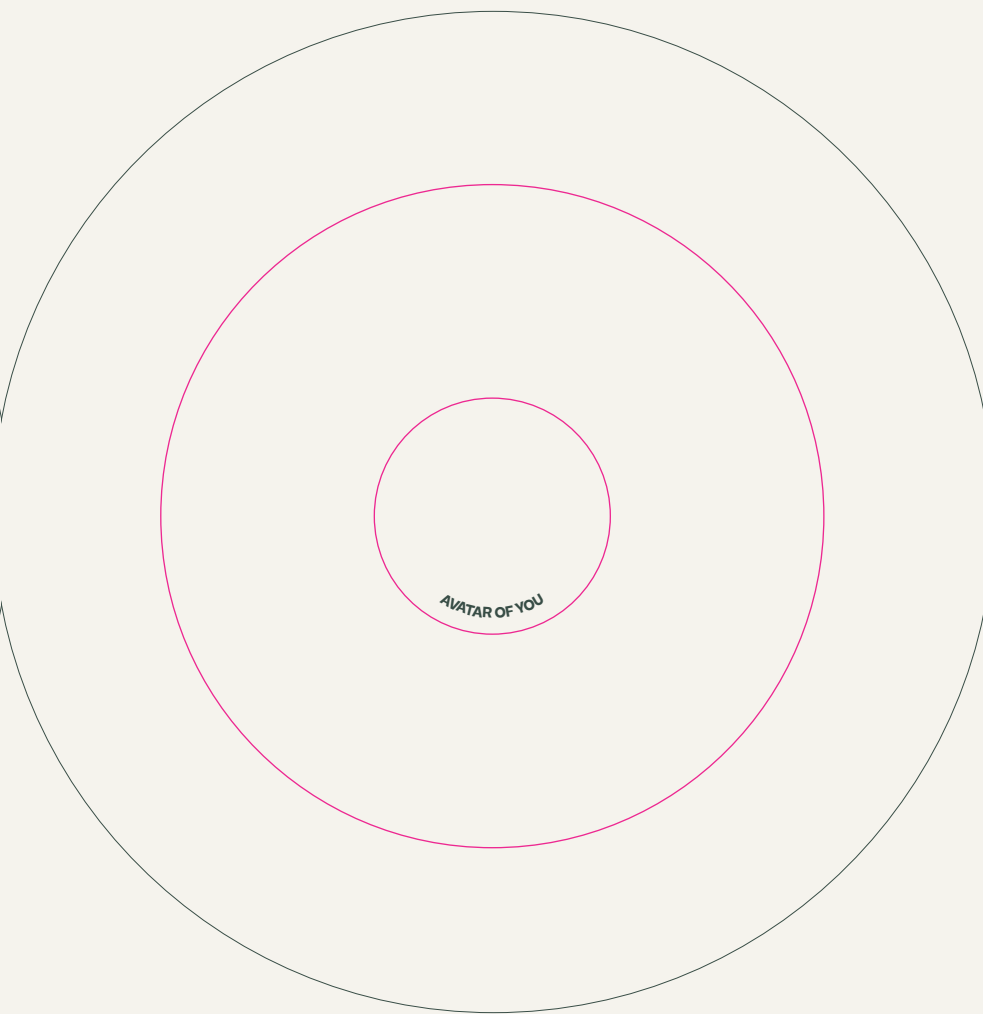


- ♥ Next, you can draw one more circle outside of the first circle. Then, write down some information that you would like to add, or change where you placed the information inside the first, second, or even third circle.

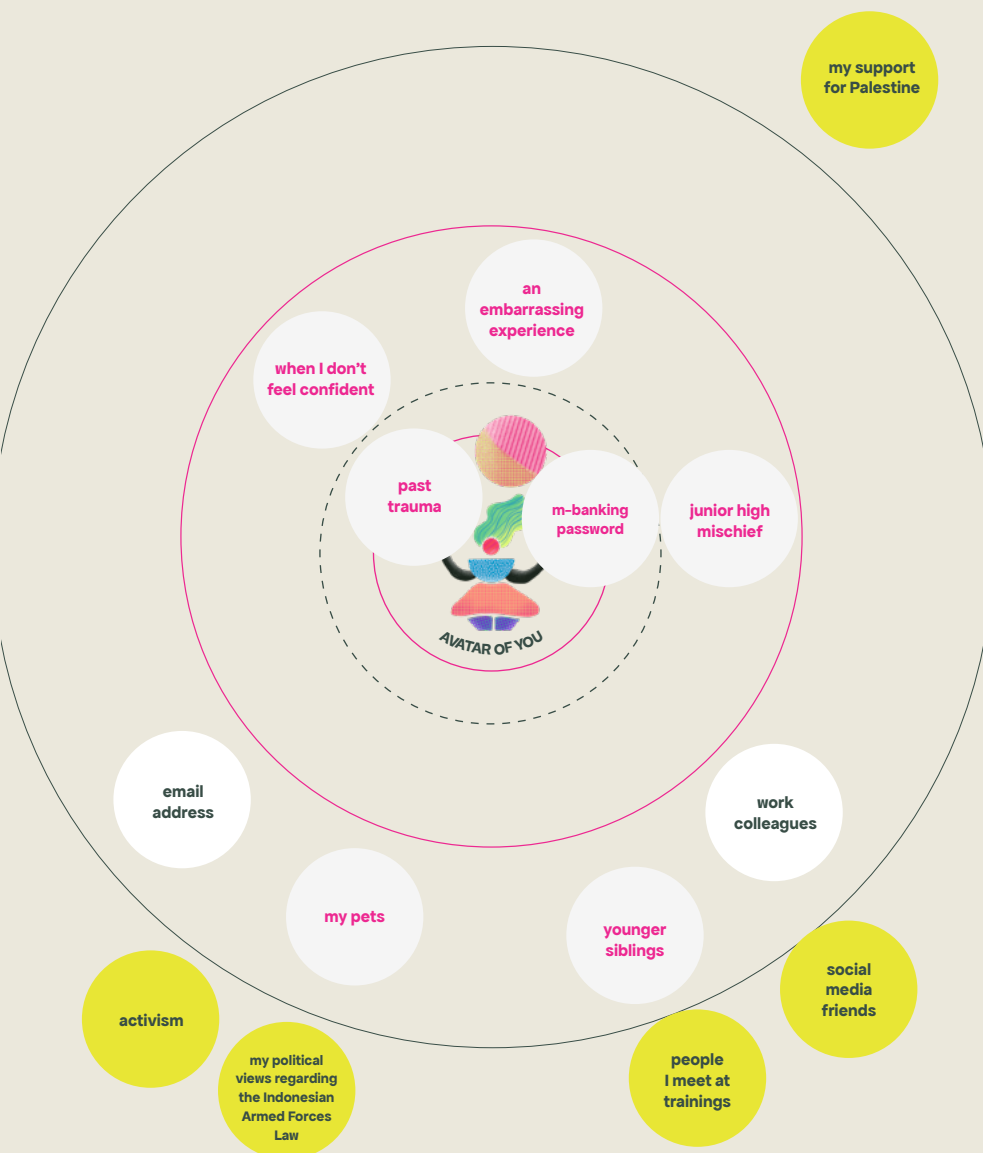




MY BUBBLE OF PRIVACY



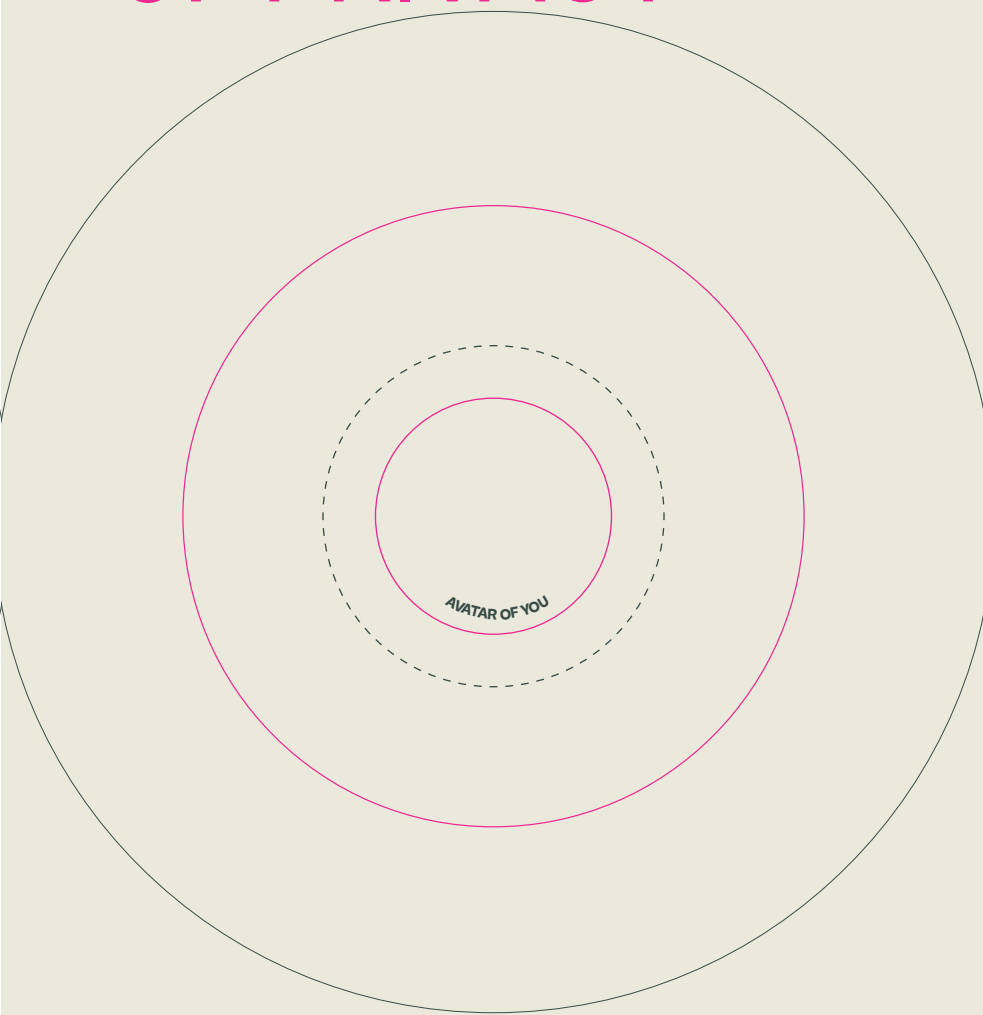
- ♥ Finally, you can draw one more circle outside of the second circle. Like the previous step, you can change where you placed the information on the first, second, third, and outer circles.



- ♥ Now you can see your bubble of privacy according to your own experience!



MY BUBBLE OF PRIVACY



AVATAR OF YOU

To further understand how you define your bubble of privacy, you can answer some of these questions:

How would you classify the things inside and outside of the circles?

Save your bubble of privacy to read the rest of this pocket booklet!



Privacy Through a Feminist Lens

Various literature from multidisciplinary fields to legal foundations attempt to define what privacy is.

These range from a rights-based approach to recognition as a legal norm. There are also several typologies of privacy that aid in understanding it better. From a feminist perspective, there is no single definition of privacy since its meaning and perception stem from the diverse identities and experiences, including oppression that is experienced by individuals and groups.

Therefore, it is very important to define privacy by unpacking the taboos of privacy.

B. The Taboos of Privacy

Historically, along with a dominating conservative perspective, the term 'privacy' is defined as something taboo and secretive. This prevailing perspective is also used to review experiences and values of marginalised communities considered to oppose social norms. As a result, in the name of 'protecting privacy', women and minority groups are often denied choices, and their information is even restricted. In other words, the concept of privacy, synonymous with taboo, is often used as a tool to control or restrict.

This is evident from women's experiences in accessing their reproductive health rights. In certain indigenous cultures in Indonesia, menstruation is considered sacred to the female body (or those medically assigned female at birth). The sacrality associated with menstruation prevents women from publicly speaking about it. From an early age, women are taught to protect themselves, especially when they reach puberty—which is generally marked by their first menstrual cycle. Girls are told to hide their menstrual pads when menstruating. In addition, there are numerous frightening myths regarding menstruation that lead to prohibitions on certain activities during menstruation, such as: no washing hair, no climbing mountains, or having to wash away blood stains on their clothes thoroughly for fear of spirits following them, and so on. This sacralisation of menstruation shows that women's private bodily spaces are considered taboo by heteronormative societies. This sacralisation and concealment ultimately serve to control and restrict women's access to certain aspects of their bodies.

Some forms of discrimination that are experienced by the queer community is an example of how heteronormative societies attempt to control the privacy of minority groups.

Gender diversity and sexual orientation as identities, are forms of individual privacy. However, when the choice regarding sexual identities is seen as different from societal norms, society restricts or attempts to control it through different forms of discrimination, including structural discrimination through policy. Such discrimination also affects indigenous communities and practitioner of belief.

From the examples above, we can understand several important elements in critiquing privacy that is taboo:

● **Power Relations.**

It is crucial to always be aware that there are groups who hold greater or more significant power that can dominate information and knowledge. Groups with dominant power that stand on heteronormativity and misogyny feel that they have the authority to decide what is 'normal' or not. This domination makes diversity and characteristics of minority groups are considered taboo and abnormal.

● **Control and Agency.**

Furthermore, these dominant powers attempt to control and influence the diversity of information, knowledge, and experiences. Often, they utilise their authority structurally to legitimise discrimination.

From this experience of oppression, personal or private life for women and other minority groups is considered political. Therefore, it is important to understand that privacy is not merely an individual issue, but rather a collective movement.

C. Reflective Questions

01. **Take a moment to reflect, are there experiences and knowledge that are considered taboo by the society in which you were born and raised?**
02. **Is the knowledge or experience that is considered taboo is related to self, experience, or body of minority or marginalised groups?**

03.

How and where do you adapt to those norms? Can you feel the power dynamics in those experiences? Are those experiences negatively impacting minority groups?

04.



When seeing your bubble of privacy, is there any information in your inner circle that is considered taboo by the society in which you were born and raised?

D. Interpreting Privacy: Unpacking Privacy

Defining privacy means unpacking the taboo that all this time hegemonises and underlies social norms that are discriminative and non-inclusive.

Privacy should not be a term or concept to restrict, but rather to liberate and to honour diversity.

Unpacking the meaning of privacy can be done by documenting each experience, including the oppression related to the body, ideas, identities, perspectives, and the beliefs of every individual and group that need to be recognised and protected.

In this case, privacy should also go beyond the meaning of individuality and ownership, considering the indigenous community recognises the term 'communal privacy'.

Privacy can also be defined as freedom and a form of agency and control towards the domination of heteronormative values.

In addition, privacy is also closely associated with individual and group security as a whole.

III. Unpacking Privacy: Understanding Various Dimensions and Violations



Considering privacy is often considered as something abstract, there are two ways to understand privacy, that is:

**recognising its types of dimensions
in our everyday lives,**

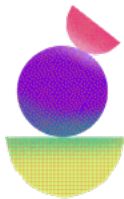
and

**understanding the forms of violations
experienced by oppressed minority
groups.**

Both approaches will help us in redefining the meaning of privacy and the factors that contribute to its acknowledgement.

A. Dimensions of Privacy

From the many typologies and dimensions of privacy, PurpleCode Collective's research partners describe experiences of privacy violations in 5 (five) dimensions:



bodily privacy



spatial privacy



decision-making
privacy



associational
privacy



digital data
privacy

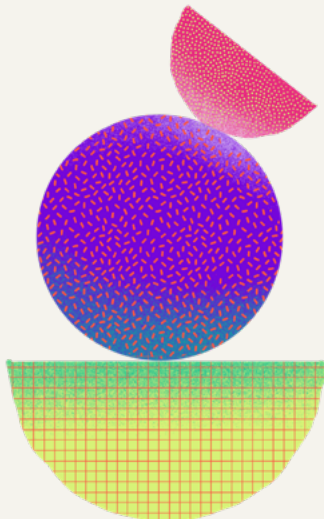
As you have written in your bubble of privacy, below are some reflective questions that can help you understand further the types of dimensions of privacy that exist in our lives:

BODILY

How do you choose your clothes?

How do you choose healthcare services for yourself?

Do you want to have children?



SPASIAL

Do you always lock your doors and gates? If so, which areas do you think are important to lock?

When do you have space for yourself?

How do you protect your space and areas?



DECISION MAKING

In what areas can you make decisions about yourself?

What factors influence you in making decisions about your life?



RELATIONAL/
ASSOCIATION

Do you believe in and exercise certain beliefs and join certain organisations, communities, or collectives?

How do the views, ideas, or activities from your association influence you in building relationships?

Do you believe in ideas or a certain political ideology and how do the ideas or political ideology influence your everyday life?



DIGITAL DATA

Which data do you share willingly on your social media, whether it's about yourself or other people?

Are you aware of the consent for the collection, storage, and merging of data when accessing technology and internet platforms?



Every answer to the reflective questions above is valid based on each person's experience with their diverse identities. Of course, there are no right or wrong answers.

There are four important elements that can guide us in reflecting on privacy. These elements help us see the factors that influence types of dimensions of privacy on our everyday lives.

♥ Decision Making

How do you make decisions regarding those types of dimensions of privacy in your everyday life?

♥ Information Transparency

Do you feel like you have sufficient information to support you in decision making regarding those types of dimensions of privacy in your everyday life?

♥ Customary Norms or Regulations

Are there customary norms or even regulations that regulate those kinds of things?

♥ The Feeling of Safety

Do you feel safe with the decisions, information, and regulations regarding those types of dimensions of privacy in your everyday life?

Privacy from a Feminist Lens

One meaning of privacy for PurpleCode Collective Research Partners is collective or communal privacy owned by indigenous communities. For indigenous peoples, privacy is not merely an individual right, but also respect for the collective, including respect for their space.

Therefore, the relationship with the daily living environment ecosystem is a personal matter based on cultural values and beliefs. This personal relationship is not limited to individualistic ownership, but rather collective respect. This was expressed by one of the research partners from *Kasepuhan Cipta Gelar*.

The way they interpret their relationship with the land and rice is in line with their religious teachings.

B. Stories of Various Forms of Privacy Violations

Feminist privacy narratives attempt to view privacy from the perspective of the oppressed experiences of minority groups, most of which constitute privacy violations.

Here are some privacy violations experienced by minority groups in Indonesia.

1. The Stories of the Practitioners of Belief (*Nusantara Religions*)

The existence of a religion column in the electronic Identity Card (KTP) causes discrimination against the Practitioners of Belief.

Based on the Population Administration Law (UU Adminduk) Number 23 of 2003, their rights are still served and recorded in the population data system. They are also permitted to leave the religion column on their electronic ID cards blank, considering that indigenous beliefs and faiths are not included in the six (6) religions recognised by the state. However, leaving the column blank or marking it with a dash (-) on electronic ID cards has led to widespread discrimination.

A believer of *Ugamo Bangsa Batak* from Medan, South Sumatera claimed he was rejected for a job because the religion section in his ID card was blank. A similar thing also happened to his friend who was unable to access business loan from financial institutions such as banks and cooperatives because his religion was questioned. In Brebes, Central Java, a believer of the indigenous faith *Sapto Darmo* was denied permission to bury their deceased family member in the public cemetery.

Following this series of discrimination, in September 2016, four petitioners from several practitioners of belief or *Nusantara* religion groups filed a petition at the Constitutional Court to remove the regulation regarding the blanking of the religion section in the *UU Adminduk*. After the petition was granted, the Constitutional Court ruled that the religion section on the applicants' KTP or family cards could be filled in as "*penghayat kepercayaan*" (practitioner of belief) without specifying the name of their religion or belief. However, it turned out that there were still difficulties for these groups in

registering their marriages at the Civil Registry Office. This had an impact on the difficulty of accessing birth certificates for children of couples who were indigenous practitioners.

In addition to discrimination in administrative matters, indigenous faith groups also often experience intimidation and even raids when practicing their beliefs. These experiences cause the practitioners of belief to live in fear and feel physically and psychologically unsafe in their daily lives.

2. The Stories of Transwomen in Public Toilets

A transwoman claimed to receive cynical, suspecting, and scrutinising looks from head to toe when entering the restroom in a shopping center. Quite a few of them also received verbal violence such as rejection or microaggression (covert bullying), such as preventing transwomen to use the restroom, or standing next to a transwoman who was about to use the restroom.

The discrimination was not only experienced by one or two transwomen, but it was a collective experience. Therefore, many transwomen often consider restrooms a political space that they need to reclaim.

3. The Stories of Women's Experiences in Accessing Information About Reproductive Health

After experiencing menstruation, adolescents who were assigned female at birth (AFAB) often receive advice to take care of themselves

In Indonesia, there is a lot of misinformation circulating about menstruation, such as the belief that women who are menstruating should not wash their hair or take a shower. Additionally, menstruation is considered taboo, so much so that even purchasing menstrual products, such as sanitary pads, must be done in secret. Another story comes from a woman who visited an obstetrician-gynaecologist (obgyn) for a consultation about reproductive health. Before the examination, the doctor asked several personal questions, such as her marital status. Not stopping there, the doctor gave her a moral lecture about sexual activity outside of marriage. There is also the experience of a woman who was reported by a midwife for having an abortion. These experiences show that women often receive inaccurate information about their bodies and reproductive organs. In addition, women also face discrimination, which makes them reluctant and even afraid to undergo reproductive health checks, ultimately leaving them without accurate information about their own bodies.

While reading about the privacy violation above, you can answer some reflective questions below:

01.

Reflect on what power underlies the privacy violation experienced by the partners from the three groups above?

02.

What do you think were the factors that prompted those violations?

03.

What types of privacy dimensions do you think had an impact on the victims of these violations?

04.

**Can you imagine these violations
happening to you or somebody you know?**

Circle back to your
bubble of privacy, have
you ever been forced to
give out something or a
piece of information from
your small circle?

Do you think
it was a
violation?



Understanding the Complexity of Privacy Violations

Although it feels familiar because it is present in everyday life, privacy has its own complexities, especially when it comes to violations.

There is an imbalance of power and dominance that allows some parties to control individuals or minority groups. These violations occur in various contexts, such as families with children, corporations with employees or consumers, states with citizens, and so on.

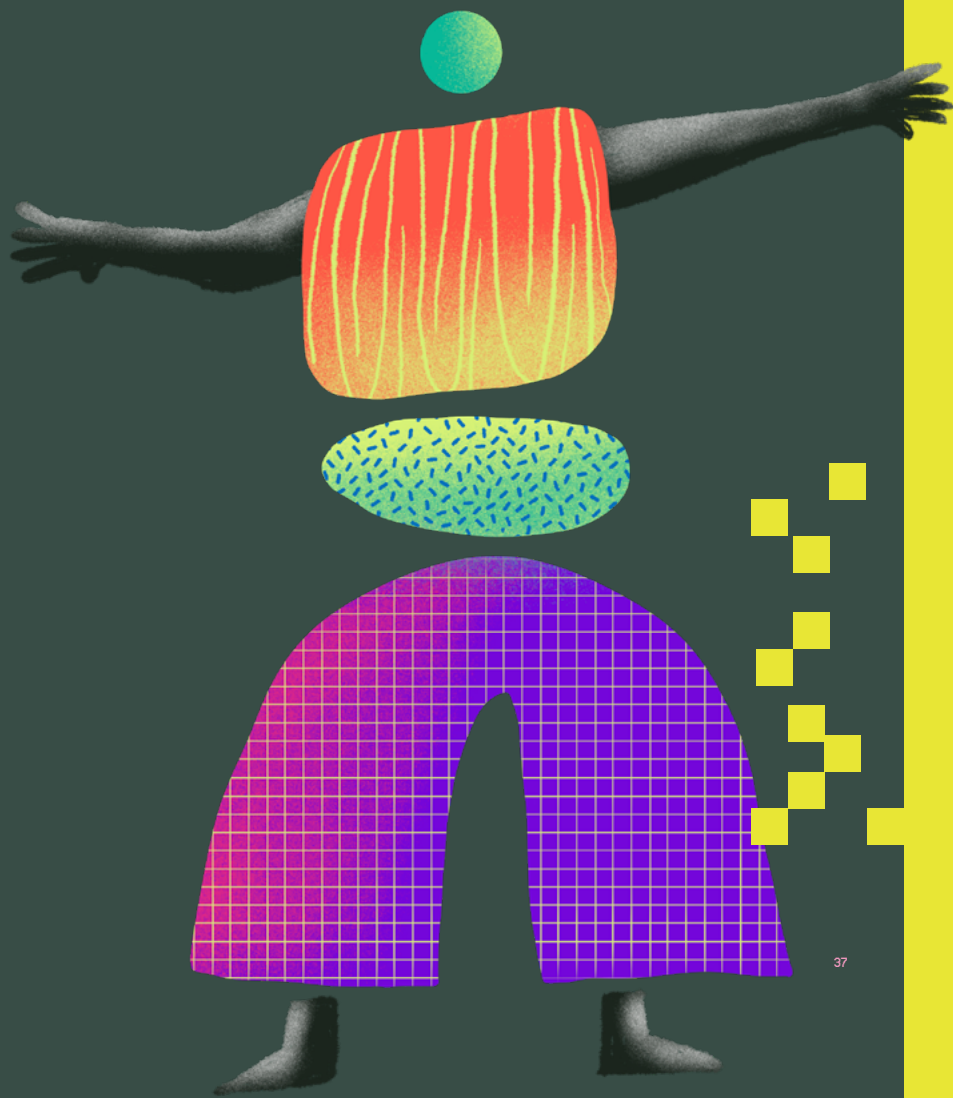
Privacy violations can occur in every dimension of privacy, such as physicality, decision-making, association, space, and data. Each violation does not stand alone but is intertwined. This means that privacy violations regarding lifestyle choices or beliefs can have an impact on spatial violations.

The experience of privacy violations based on a particular identity is not a violation of privacy against a single individual. Therefore, these violations must be viewed structurally. As experienced by transgender women in accessing public toilets, the experience of discrimination is not only experienced by one person, but by a group with a transgender identity. In a more general context such as digital technology, recent cases of personal data leaks are not merely the fault of individuals who do not protect their data or passwords. It is a systemic failure in the protection of personal data by both private parties and state institutions.

To overcome this problem, we need an intersectional approach that can encourage the creation of inclusive policies and protect privacy rights fairly.

IV.

VI. Understanding the Impact of the Violation



Amira has planned several activities to spend a quiet weekend after a busy week at work. She will wake up early and start her day with some exercise. Then, she will go to the mall to buy daily necessities and spend the afternoon and evening at a cafe to meet some old friends.

After exercising in the morning, she tries to upload her productive morning activities with selfies on her social media accounts. After uploading them, she gets ready to go to the mall and meet her friends. In between, she checks her social media again. She is stunned and returns to her room. "Wow, you have a great body, I saw you taking a walk in the park this morning. Let's get to know each other!" She received this message from an account she didn't know. The sender's profile, which used a photo of a man named XXXI34GUS, didn't help Amira recognise him. The message from a stranger made her feel uncomfortable. She became reluctant to continue with her plans.

The park where she exercised in the morning was only 2 kilometers from her house. She hesitated to leave the house because she was worried that the person behind the stranger's account was still around. Shortly after, she took out her phone and sent a message to her friends, "I feel sick all of a sudden. I don't think I can hang out this afternoon." She removed her makeup and changed her clothes.

After reading the message, she just wanted to stay home. However, she still felt afraid because she was worried that the stranger might suddenly appear in front of her house.

01.

Is there a privacy violation in Amira's story above?

02.

If so, what privacy violations did Amira experience?

03.

In your opinion, what impact did these privacy violations have on Amira?

PurpleCode Collective's research on privacy reveals that privacy violations against women and minority groups impact three aspects of life:

♥ Agency

Privacy violations that restrict access to information, knowledge, and services fundamentally hinder social participation and decision-making. This has a major impact on individual and collective agency, especially for women and minority groups who experience psychological problems and fear because of the violations that occur.

♥ Security

Privacy violations have an impact on the security of women and minority groups. Security is understood not only as physical security, but also as the right to psychological security.

♥ Freedom of Expression

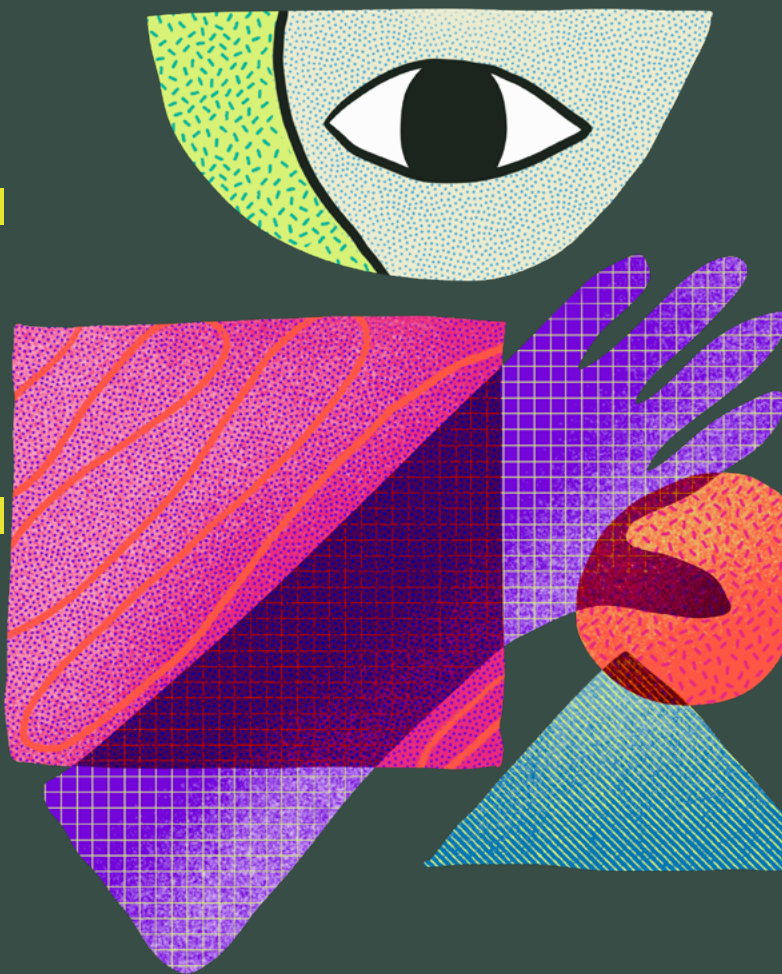
Experiences of violations have an impact on the freedom of expression of women and minority groups. Freedom of expression as a fundamental right is restricted by regulations and norms that are not inclusive and discriminate against minorities. Therefore, we must collectively encourage the creation of spaces for all individuals to express themselves without discrimination.

If you have experienced coercion to give out a piece of information from your inner circle to the outer circle, you can reflect:



How does that influence security, agency, and your freedom of expression and opinion?

V. Promoting Respect and Appreciation for Privacy



After unpacking the restrictive and controlling narrative of privacy, it is important to collectively imagine a liberating privacy.

The following are key elements in achieving a feminist approach to respecting and valuing privacy:

Consent

Consent is key to respecting and valuing a person's privacy and agency. We can begin practicing consent in our daily lives by, for example, knocking on the door when visiting someone's room or house, even if they are a family member, as a sign of respect for their personal space. In our digital lives, we can start by asking for permission before taking, recording, or uploading photos or videos of other people.

In a broader context, a culture of respect for consent must be integrated into privacy processing systems in handling personal data, which is also carried out by the state in population administration and corporations.

Laws and Policies that Protect Minority Groups

The state still has an important role in ensuring the protection of privacy. From a human rights lens, the state has a responsibility to respect, honour, and protect human rights, including the right to privacy. Laws and policies play a dual role in encouraging and preventing privacy violations, especially for gender minorities. One way to do this is by passing the Anti-Discrimination Bill to change the culture of privacy violations against certain groups by society and the state. In the context of personal data, derivative regulations and adequate guidelines are needed to protect the privacy of the most vulnerable minorities.

Privacy is Collective Work

The responsibility for protecting privacy has long been assigned to individuals. In contrast, feminist privacy offers the need for collective work by various parties, with different responsibilities and roles, in respecting and valuing the right to privacy.



To understand more about the experiences of minority groups in defining feminist privacy, you can read PurpleCode Collective's research titled [Feminist Privacy: Cross-Dimensional Autonomy and Agency](#)⁷.



Glossary

Glossary

THIS GLOSSARY IS INTENDED TO HELP READERS UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT DESCRIBED IN THIS POCKETBOOK. A MORE COMPREHENSIVE GLOSSARY CAN BE FOUND IN THE RESEARCH REPORT FEMINIST PRIVACY: CROSS-DIMENSIONAL AUTONOMY AND AGENCY (2025).

Agency: An individual's ability to act according to their own will (without coercion or threats).

Heteronormativity: The belief or view, mindset, or framework of action based on heterosexuality (romantic-sexual relationships between men and women) as a necessity and is considered the most appropriate for humans.

Hegemony: The domination or influence exerted by one group (usually the ruling group) over another group, not only through physical force, but also through ideological, cultural, and social control.

Practitioner of Belief (Nusantara Religion): The term or phrase 'penghayat kepercayaan' (practitioner of belief) originated from the government's term for ancestral religions or indigenous religions that existed before the establishment of the Indonesian state. The term '*aliran penghayat dan kepercayaan*' (faith and belief traditions) often implies that their status is different or lower than that of other religions. In this study, PurpleCode Collective uses the term Nusantara Religions as a form of respect for the diversity of belief systems and faiths.

Misogyny: Hatred, aversion, or prejudice against women

Microaggression: Verbal, behavioral, or environmental acts that are brief but demeaning, conveying hostility, contempt, or negativity toward marginalised groups.

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