A guide to help you check your privilege
"Privilege is when you think something is not a problem because it's not a problem to you personally."

- David Gaider
Let's use a brilliant example that a high school teacher once used. In a classroom, he had his students take a piece of scrap paper and crumple it up. He moved the dustbin to the front of the room.
He told everyone that they were all the population of one country, and that all of them had a chance to become wealthy and move to an upper class. To move to the upper class, all they had to do was to throw their crumpled paper into the bin, but while sitting in the seat.
The students at the back said it was unfair – obviously, because the students in the rows before them had a better chance.
Everyone took their shots, and — as expected — most students in the front made it, not all. Only a few students in the back of the room made it.
The teacher then told them that the closer they were to the dustbin, the better their odds. The ones who complained about fairness were the ones further from the dustbin. People in the front of the room were less likely to be aware of the privilege they had. All they saw was a few feet between themselves and their goal. This is what privilege looked like.
WHAT DOES "CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE" MEAN?

To be compassionate about the struggle one has faced

To understand what another person faces

To reflect on the ways your background differs from others'

Not to defend yourself, but to be open-minded and respectful of another
Sometimes, we use certain words that we think are okay.

So it becomes important to focus on the words we use or choose to use,

But the truth is, the same words can mean something painful to someone else.

And acknowledge and respect that we all come from different backgrounds.
Crazy
A person who doesn’t agree with you, or has different ideas from you is not necessarily crazy. The actual meaning of crazy refers to a person who acts strangely or in a threatening manner, being mentally ill.

Instead of "crazy" to denote someone who doesn't share the same ideas as you, say: Irrational, illogical, uninformed, unreasonable, not making sense, mistaken, misinformed, not thinking, ignorant or misled.
Mental / Insane:

A person who acts violently or aggressively need not necessarily be mental or insane – which are both clinical terms to depict degrees of mental illness.

Instead of mental / insane to denote someone who acts violently, or aggressively, use entitled, violent, aggressive, toxic, rough, rude, mean, cruel, selfish, inconsiderate, without compassion, jerk, ruffian, nasty.
Retarded:

Retardation is a medical / clinical term to depict someone who is less advanced in mental, physical and social development. It is unfair to call anyone retarded except in the medically accepted term.

Avoid calling anything or anyone “retarded”. Be respectful and mindful.
Spastic:

Spastic is used to denote a person who has been affected by cerebral palsy. It is unfair to call anyone retarded except in the medically accepted term.

Avoid calling anything or anyone “spastic”. Be respectful and mindful.
Lame:

Lame does not mean something uncool, stupid or pathetic. It means impaired or reduced mobility due to a physical disability.

To denote something uncool, instead of lame, use uncool, not up to the mark or even can be better.
OCD:

OCD, or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, is actually a disorder, a mental illness and it means so much more than a desire to remain organized. Don’t trivialize something major. Differentiate between being particular about certain things and OCD - and be a sensitised human being.
Gay does not mean stupid or unmasculine. Do not call something “gay”, or use an attribute to ascribe that someone is gay. Nothing in the world is a solely homosexual attribute to brand it gay.

Sexuality is a personal attribute and one has every choice whether to come out or not. Remember, gender is fluid – and just because a man wears pink or a woman cuts her hair short or a person identifies with aspects of both genders does not mean you can call them gay.
Avoid using the word “straight” to denote heterosexuality. It makes it appear as though all other sexual orientations are anomalies, or are “crooked” or “not straight”.
**Pussy:** A pussy is a cat. It has nothing to do with a vagina, and has nothing to do with being a coward.

**Dick:** Dick is a name, and has been used as a short form for the name Richard. It has nothing to do with a penis, or a male chauvinist.

Never use body parts to denote a person or an identity. For instance, do not call one a pussy / boob to denote emasculation.
Fat is a macronutrient that releases energy. Stop calling a person fat to shame them. Unless you are a doctor who has examined a person and is aware of their vital parameters vis-à-vis weight, height, BMI and Body Fat Percentage, don’t presume a person is overweight or obese from their appearance alone.
Skinny / Skeleton / Toothpick / Matchstick:

Someone being thin or skinny is not your business. Unless you are a doctor who has examined a person and is aware of their vital parameters vis-à-vis weight, height, BMI and Body Fat Percentage, don’t presume that a person is anorexic, undernourished, malnutritioned or a weakling.
Coloured:

Coloured means to have a colour, and in the larger sense, means distorted or to influence unfavourably. If white is also a colour, why are we attributing the tag of coloured to everyone who isn’t white?

Instead, make the effort to find out the person's place of origin, and what nationality they choose to identify as.
Avoid using “guys” as a reference to a group of people that comprises people of different genders. Although it might be taken in one’s stride as a generic term of reference, it is important to understand how it normalizes the reference only to males as a premium, herding everyone into one slot regardless of their gender identity.
**Tranny:**

Tranny is not okay for a cisgender person to use. The word comes with a history of violence, oppression and harm directed at transgender bodies and the use of the word loosely by a cisgender person is insensitive.
- Encourage the equalization of words that contain men / man. For instance, fireman or chairman can be turned into firefighter and chairperson.

- Avoid mentioning someone’s gender unless absolutely necessary to do so. Unless gender and related matters - appearances, dressing, parenthood - are relevant to your point, it is best to leave them unmentioned.

- Avoid using occupational stereotypes. For instance, do you use female pronouns for nurses and male pronouns for scientists?
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Avoid using the word "victim" as it makes it appear like one is helpless or rendered helpless by the occurrence of a given incident. Use either “survivor” or “person experienced ___”

Never describe sexual assault or assault of any kind as belonging to the survivor. Make it responsibility and perpetrator oriented.
www.whatprivilege.com

Lindsay Holmes, "We Need To Change The Way We Talk About Mental Health" (September 6, 2016)

BuzzFeed, "This Teacher Taught His Class a Powerful Lesson About Privilege" (November 22, 2016)