Creating Inclusive Relationships Series
Part IV The Trauma of Racism

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WE RE DIVINE
WHERE THE JOURNEY BEGINS

The Trauma of Racism. This session will increase your understanding of Race Based Trauma and its cumulative effects of racism. Such effects have been linked to feelings of anxiety, depression, as well as other physical, mental, and emotional health issues. This workshop will introduce the term Racially Evoked PTSD deriving from centuries of microinsults, microaggressions, racial biases, and historical and intergenerational trauma experienced by marginalized communities.

Defining Racial Trauma & Racial Battle Fatigue

- **How may you and/or your company be contributing to brown body fatigue? How will you use your privilege, power, status, and role to distribute the cycles?**
- **What is your role and responsibility in unpacking the impact?**
- **Consider how (racial, bias) history influence your perspective and the persons response.**
- **What do youth need?**

Guidelines for Today

Life begins at the end of your comfort zone

Neale Donald Walsch

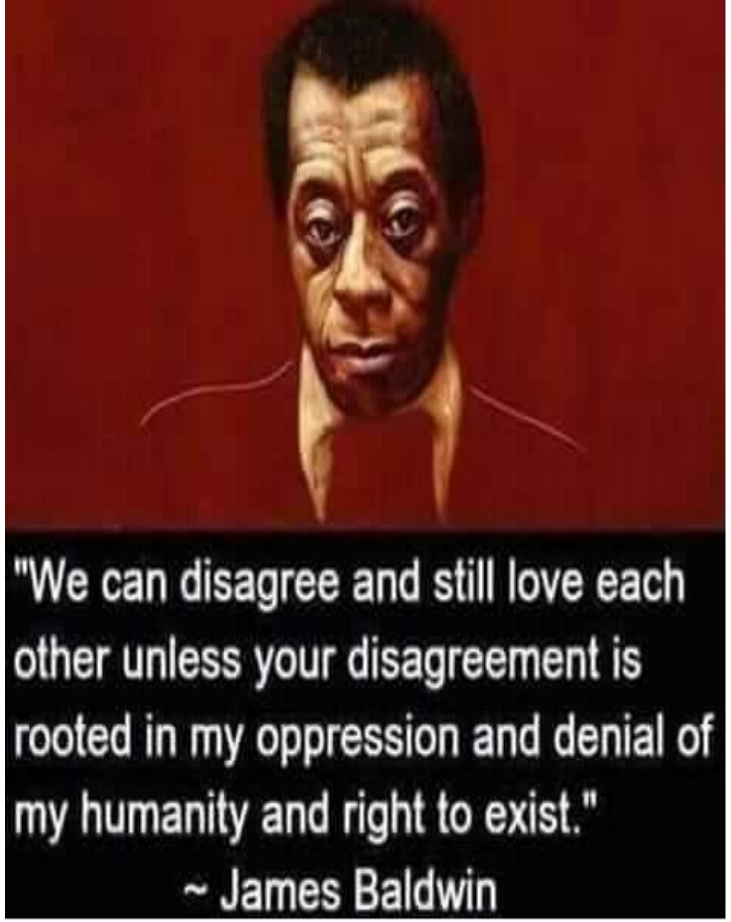
Addressing " differences" is not about "being comfortable" it is about discovering one another, breaking habits that create barriers.-*Unknown*

Allows us to:

- Make a Commit to the process…IT'S A JOURNEY!
- Trainings alone are not effective, cognitive and behavioral

Flexible approach

- An environment that supports Making & Owning mistakes and learning from them.
- You are asked ***SIT IN THE EXPERIENCE & LEAN INTO "DISCOMFORT"***; acknowledging that the natural stress responses of Fight, Flight or Freeze will occur
- Building tolerance for discomfort and **Opportunities for Growth**
  - What happens when you experience "DISCOMFORT"?
  - What are you willing to risk? What have you already risked?
- **Open to learning and unlearning**-as we are experiencing something new, different.
- Listening to understand
- Defense mechanisms are either put up or brought down
- Opting out is not an option



Black pain-Taking control of your inner world

The anger that lies below our awareness; the pain we have adapted too or accepted.
Rosedale, Queens Being Black in 1978

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkAGG8M2kQU

https://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2020/06/04/jazmine-scott-children-crying-george-floyd-protest-intv-mxp-vpx.hln

Racial Trauma

Traumatic events that occur as a result of witnessing or experiencing racism, discrimination, or structural prejudice can have a profound impact on the mental health of individuals.

Result from major experiences of racism; **Workplace discrimination**, hate crimes, or it can be the result of an, accumulation of many **small occurrences** such as everyday discrimination and microaggressions.

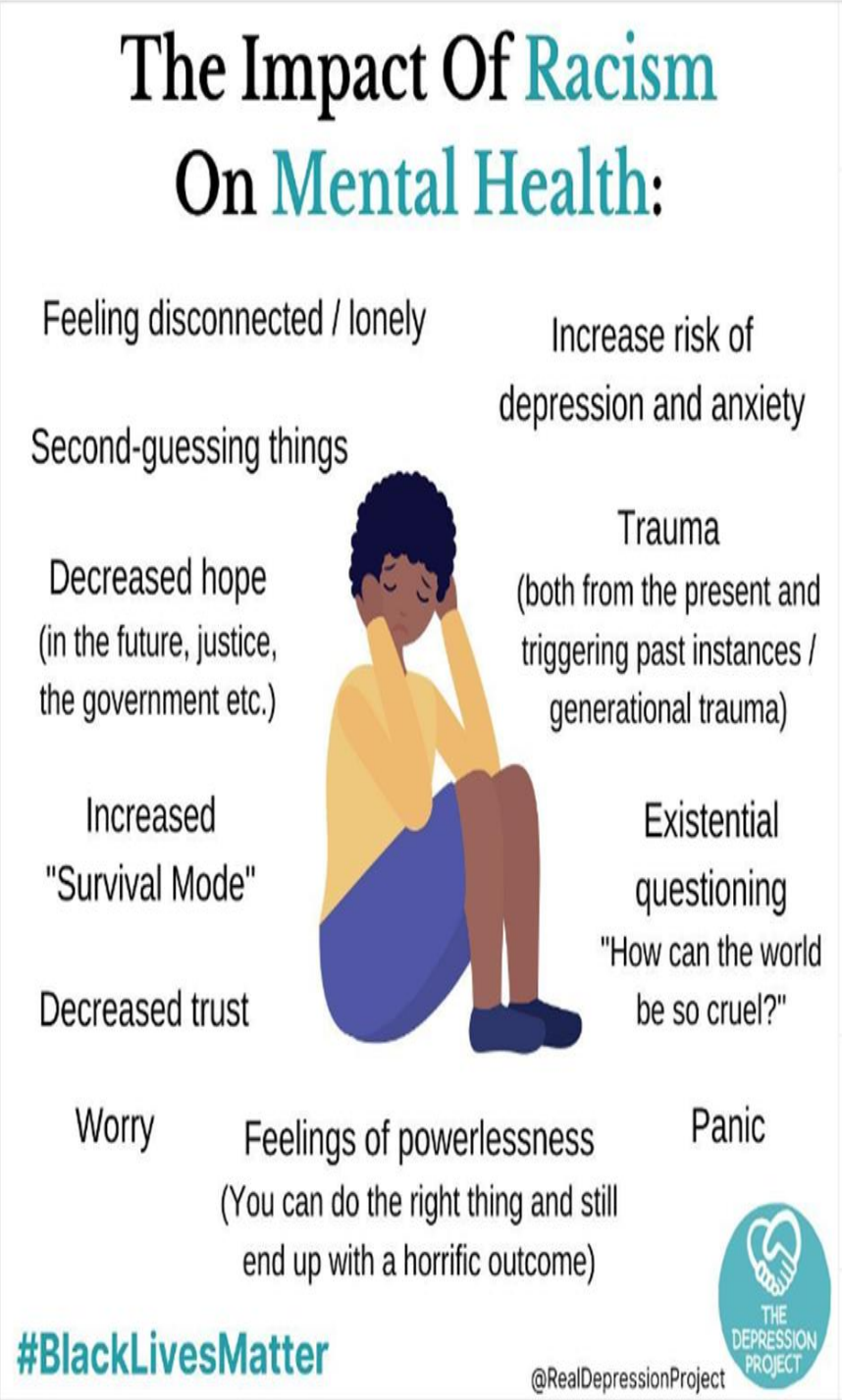
Symptoms:

- Intrusive (recurring thoughts)
- Avoidance (push people away)
- Arousal (irritability) and with symptom clusters of anxiety, anger, depression, low self-esteem, shame, and guilt. Carter (2007)

The source of hurt is often **confused with distracting secondary symptoms like rage and feeling of hopelessness; acting out behaviors in children.**

- We fail to reorganize the ways in which race is entangled with suffering.
- Consider the emotional history ?
- Consider how (racial, bias) history influence your perspective and the persons response?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fV2nzrLH93o Racial Trauma- New Amsterdam



Racial Battle Fatigue

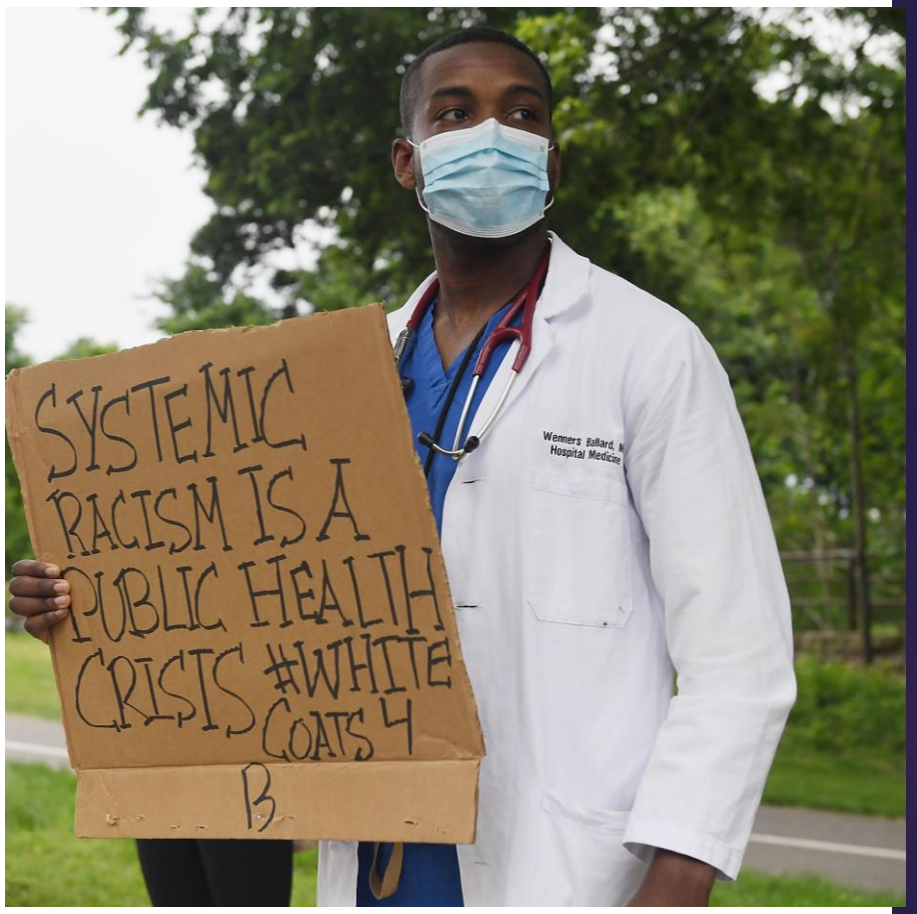
Dr. William A. Smith of the University of Utah

Racism is often preserved as a <u>personal threat/battle</u> and after facing that <u>threat/battle</u> continuously in predominately white spaces, People of Color may experience RBF and are left mentally, physically, and emotionally drained.

*"Cumulative result of a natural race-related stress response to distressing mental and emotional conditions"***.**

- These conditions emerged from constantly facing racially dismissive, demeaning, insensitive and/or hostile racial environments and individuals."
- **Causes people of color to experience** various forms of **mental, emotional, and physical strain which can lead to psychophysiological symptoms.**
- When RBF goes **untreated or dismissed this stress-related psychological and physiological disease can be lethal and can kill gradually** and stealthily through hypertension and poor health attitudes and behaviors.

The National Traumatic Stress Network



THE ROSE THAT GREW FROM CONCRETE

- What does the rose represent?
- What is the rose experiencing?
- How do you think the rose survived?
- What will happen if the rose continues to exist in this condition?
- What does the rose need to thrive?
- How does the image relate to our topic of Racial Fatigue; Disrupting the cycles of Racial Oppression, Power and Structural Inequality ?

White Fragility

According to DiAngelo (2018)

"There is a tendency among members of the dominant white cultural group to have a defensive, angry, or dismissive response to evidence of racism".

The ability to "**opt out**" of stress-inducing situations is counterproductive to racial conciliation, racial-awakening and dismantling of racialized trauma. together.

You can make a choice on how to respond.

Let's consider this from a difference lens would we expect a victim of a sexual crime or abuse to console, support and provide rehabilitation for their perpetrator?
The answer is no! *So why do we do the same* ***for victims of racialized trauma****?*

Why do we expect them to heal the wounds of the perpetrator? It is essential to health and wellbeing of marginalized communities, for members of the white dominate culture to ***own* their inherited contribution** to Racial Trauma (**Trauma re-enactment**) and commit to addressing the "complex patterns of racism.

This **dual responsibility** of providing a safe space for the white culture to talk about racial trauma while attempting to overcome their own traumatic experience.

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INTENT VS. IMPACT
Good Intentions Is Not Enough

INTENT & IMPACT are often not the same. When communicating IMPACT trumps INTENT.

- We tend to judge ourselves on our intent and others on their impact..
  - I am experiencing you as this…
  - This is how I have been experiencing you, I just wanted to check in with you about that.
  - This is currently the impact on how I have been experiencing you, is this your intent?

Promote Compassion & Self Accountability vs. Assuming Good Intent

- Do my actions allow others to assume good?
- Am I consistent; as Consistency Proves Authenticity!
- What are my expectation of others? Are they realistic? What is their capacity and skillset?
- Who should do the shifting and adapting?

How do I hold space exactly? Holding space is about how we learn to be with others without judgment.

- It doesn't require you to be anyone other than who you are, although a lot of times people must learn to let go of their own beliefs to really hold space for another.
- Demonstrate a willingness to be vocal and visible in communicating and promoting the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and intercultural communication.
- Influence and enact organizational change.
- Make the DEI initiative a top priority, and a part of the culture.