

# Session 1 Internalized Racism

How is racism internalized by the oppressor and the oppressed?

Wednesday June 30th 6:45-8:00





**INDIGENOUS LAND  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

# Session NORMS

- **Speak from your perspective** – Speak from a personal place, using “I” rather than “we,” “you” or generalities. Individual perspectives should not be taken as truth.
- **Trust intent and name impact** – Trust that no one in the group intends to harm or to offend and if you feel that something was offensive explain why. Impact matters more than intent.
- **Step up, step back** – Be willing to step up and share your thoughts. Be mindful of how much you and others are speaking and try to take a step back as well.
- **Experience discomfort** - Discomfort is inevitable in dialogue about race. It is not talking about these issues that creates divisiveness. The divisiveness already exists in our society. It is through dialogue, even when uncomfortable, that healing and change begin.
- **Expect and accept non-closure** - There are no easy answers or quick solutions when it comes to talking about the racial inequities in our society.

# Introductions



## Share

1. Your Name
2. A couple “areas of influence” where you can have an impact on racial awareness:  
(your family, parent, grandparent, your work, school staff, medical staff, volunteer, groups of friends, organizations you belong to...)

Cultural Celebrations

Black is Beautiful

# Today's Learning

<p>1. PRIVILEGE</p> <p>White Privilege</p>	<p>3. OPPRESSION</p> <p>Racist Oppression</p>
<p>2. INTERNALIZED PRIVILEGE</p> <p>Internalized White Superiority</p>	<p>4. INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION</p> <p>Internalized Racist Oppression</p>

# What Is White Privilege?

- The default; “to be white in America is not to have to think about it” (Robert Terry).
- Expect to be seen as an individual; what we do never reflects on the white race.
- We can choose to avoid the impact of racism without penalty.
- We live in a world where our worth and personhood as white people are continually validated.
- Although hurt by racism, we can live just fine without ever having to deal with it.

Source: [Dismantlingracism.org](https://dismantlingracism.org)

## White Privilege is not...

White privilege is *not* the suggestion that white people have never struggled. Many white people do not enjoy the privileges that come with relative affluence, such as food security.

And white privilege is *not* the assumption that everything a white person has accomplished is unearned; most white people who have reached a high level of success worked extremely hard to get there. Instead, white privilege should be viewed as a built-in advantage, separate from one's level of income or effort.

Your Task for the next slide:

On each of the post-it notes given to you, write a word, phrase, example or draw a picture that represents Internalized White Superiority.

3 minutes

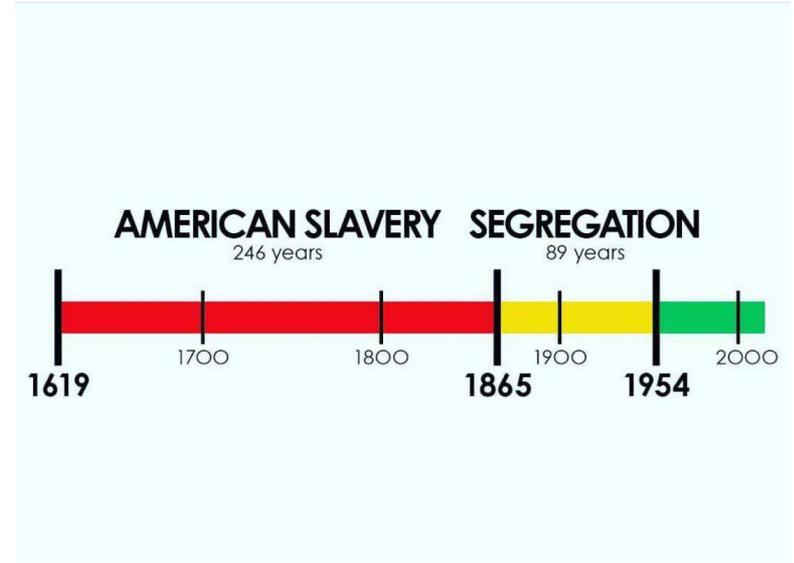


# Internalized White Superiority

- My world view, is the universal world view; our standards and norms are universal.
- My achievements have to do with me, not with my membership in the white group.
- I have a right to be comfortable and if I am not, then whoever is making me uncomfortable is to blame.
- I can feel that I personally earned, through work and merit, any/all of my success.
- Equating acts of unfairness experienced by white people with systemic racism experienced by People of Color.
- I have many choices, as I should; everyone else has those same choices.
- I am not responsible for what happened before, nor do I have to know anything about it; I have a right to be ignorant.
- I assume race equity benefits only People of Color.

# Examples

**Racial Stereotyping:** Sandra, age 27, was attending a Montessori conference in Kansas City and kept noticing a small Filipina woman carrying a baby-changing tote around and wondered if she was part of the hotel cleaning staff. She was surprised to find out that she was the main speaker for the conference — a world expert on Montessori in public schools.



**Reverse Racism:** “Affirmative action had a role years ago, but today it’s just reverse racism; now it’s discriminating against white men.”

**Belief in an equal playing field:** “America is the land of opportunity, built by rugged individuals, where anyone with grit can succeed if they just pull up hard enough on their bootstraps.”

## Small Group Discussion 10 minutes



1. In what ways were you taught White Superiority?
2. In what ways have you personally held one of the beliefs of Internalized White Superiority?
3. When and where have you witnessed Internalized White Superiority?

# Racist Oppression

- Historically constructed and systemic (not just personal or individual)
- Penetrates every aspect of our personal, institutional, and cultural life
- Includes prejudice against people of color in attitudes, feelings, and behaviors
- Includes exclusion, discrimination, suspicion, fear or hatred of people of color
- Sees a person of color only as a member of a group, not as an individual
- Includes low expectations by white people for children and adults of color
- People of color have fewer options, choices

Your Task for the next slide:

On each of the post-it notes given to you, write a word, phrase, example or draw a picture that represents Internalized Racist Oppression.

3 minutes



# Internalized Racist Oppression

- Carry internalized negative messages about ourselves and other people of color
- Believe there is something wrong with being a person of color
- Have lowered self-esteem, sense of inferiority, wrongness
- Have lowered expectations, limited sense of potential for self
- Have very limited choices: either 'act in' (white) or 'act out' (disrupt)
- Have a sense of limited possibility (limited by oppression and prejudice)
- Cycles through generations

## The “Doll Test” Article

Read and then answer 1 or 2 of the following questions in small groups.

(5 minutes total)

1. What surprised you?
2. What did you notice?
3. What did you wonder?
4. What did you learn?

# How Internalized Racist Oppression Manifests in Individuals

- Self-Doubt
- Sense of Inferiority
- Self-Hate
- Low Self Esteem
- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Apathy
- Addictive Behavior
- Abusive and Violent Relationships
- Conflict Between Racial Groups
- Mediocrity
- Violence and the Threat of Violence
- Destruction of Culture
- Division, Separation, Isolation

The most potent  
weapon of the  
oppressor is the mind  
of the oppressed.

Steven Biko

## Small Group Discussion 7 minutes

1. How has this learning about Internalized Racism been helpful to you?
2. When and where have you noticed yourself or others blaming someone who is likely a experiencing Internalized Racist Oppression?
3. How might you make a change, within your sphere of influence, that might have an impact on Internalized Racist Oppression?

Reflection and Summary 2 minutes of writing time

How might you describe or depict *the racist fog that surrounds both the oppressor and the oppressed and what it looks like when it becomes internalized* to someone else who was not here tonight?

\*use your post its or revise them to fit new or deeper learning

# Today's Learning: One possible summary...

White Privilege	Racist Oppression
Internalized White Superiority Can lead to a sense of ENTITLEMENT	Internalized Racist Oppression Can lead to a Sense of SELF DOUBT OR HATE

## Call to Action! Educate, Donate, Affiliate

***Educate:*** In what ways might you learn more about racial injustice and racial healing within your spheres of influence and beyond?

***Donate:*** To whom might you donate or how might you invest in racial equity within your spheres of influence and beyond?

***Affiliate:*** Who might you affiliate with who works on racial equity within your spheres of influence?

# The Most Dangerous Action?



# Thank you!

Thank you for all those who attended in person or on zoom tonight!

Thank you to the team involved in planning for tonight: Elizabeth S, Elizabeth C, Tara, Anne, Tara and Nancy

Upcoming Meetings:

**Wednesday July 28th 6:45-8:00**

Topic: Institutional Racism

**Wednesday August 25th 6:45-8:00**

Topic: Interpersonal Racism