

## Unpacking Racialized Trauma



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## THE ROSE THAT GREW FROM CONCRETE

**Did the rose belong here?**  
 How did it thrive despite the cold, un-nurturing environment?

Did you hear about the rose that grew from a crack in the concrete? Proving nature's laws wrong it learned how to walk without having feet. Funny it seems but, by keeping its dreams it, learned to breathe FRESH air. Long live the rose that grew from concrete. When no one else even cared.

You see you wouldn't ask why the rose that grew from concrete had damaged petals. On the contrary we would all celebrate its tenacity. We would all love its will to reach the sun. Well we are the rose; this is the concrete and these are my damaged petals. Don't ask me why? Ask me how?

-Tupac Shakur

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## Unpacking Our Cultural Assumptions & Biases

- If we Assume our way of understanding reality is correct, we almost never will stop to examine our assumptions, lens or biases.
  - What cultural norms, expectations do you assume?
  - Whose norms is it? Who enforces the norms?
- **What happens when you experience "DISCOMFORT"?**
- **INTENT VS. IMPACT** is the message you intended to get across vs. the one that was understood by the receiver. When communicating **IMPACT** trumps **Intent**. We tend to judge ourselves on our intent and others on their impact.
- **Why asking questions is important!**
  - We get the opportunity to "**Check for Accuracy**" and **challenge our assumptions**
  - We get the opportunity to "**Reflect!**" It's more than information sharing, it is experiencing others culture through their lens and internalize what we learn.

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## Culture Messages

Becoming culturally **Responsive!** **What is your role**  
**Every aspect of who we are, is influenced by culture.** The key to cross-cultural success is to develop an understanding of, and a deep respect for differences.

### What if we looked at ourselves?

- What (cultural) messages did you receive growing up?
- Did any of the messages have biases?
- Based off your experiences (unconsciously or consciously) has any of those messages lead you to make assumptions or lead to cultural misinterpretation?
- What is the impact of those biases and/or cultural misinterpretations?

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## The Cost of (Implicit) Biases/Cultural Misinterpretations

### White woman's tears



**Emmett Louis Till-14-year-old**  
 Lynched in Mississippi in 1955, accused of flirting with or whistling; violated the strictures of conduct for an African-American male interacting with a white woman in the Jim Crow-era South.

About 1 in 1,000 black men and boys in America can expect to die at the hands of police, according to a new analysis of deaths involving law enforcement officers. That makes them 2.5 times more likely than white men and boys to die during an encounter with cops. —Los Angeles Times 2016

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**"Every system is exquisitely designed to produce the results it gets. If you want to change the results, you have to change the system."** Very little in a system, if anything, is accidental. That's the bad news AND the good news...if we change the systems, we can make a difference. —Frances E. Kendall, Ph.D.

- What systems impacts our work? How?
- How does your role influence systems?
- What changes do we desire in our system?
- Can you think of any patterns in our "system" that leads to an action we seen over and over again? Is it intentional? Unintentional?
  - Why have we always done it this way?
- What if we took a look at ourselves, our individual contributions? What patterns emerge?

When problem solving stumbles, the most frequent cause is not in the problem solving effort itself, but rather in the critical steps that *lead up to* the problem solving...

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## PRIVILEGE

Unearned benefits given to members of one social group as a result of the systematic targeting or marginalization of another social group.

Privilege is benefits that people **don't earn**, but get just because of who they are or are perceived to be.

## OPPRESSION

The **systematic targeting or marginalization of one social group by another social group for the benefit of the more powerful social group.**

Oppression happens when a group of people, categorized by a shared identity, experience or trait, with more **systemic power** (people with privilege) **use their power to harm** a different group of people.

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## Marginalize

To put or keep (someone) in a **powerless or unimportant position** within a group. Marginalized groups are made to feel as if they are less important than those who hold more power or privilege.

### THE DO-NOTHING APPROACH!

- Becoming more than ally to marginalized groups. **Takes Courage**
- **Ownership-owning your privilege; Do your own work!**
- **Rewriting your policies and practices to be culturally inclusive and reflective?**
- Be willing to accept correction!
- Seek out & include marginalized voices and perspectives



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## Power and Privilege in the Workplace?

### Who holds the power?

- Whose responsibility is it to shift? Why?
- Who will "sit with discomfort" the most and why?

### Workplace Bullying: Deliberate, with the intent to oppress the target

- Discrimination may be based on competence. The bully is inadequate and areas
- Bully is driven by Envy; it is for control
- When confronted the "Bully" play the victim role!

Have you been: Deprived of recognition? Constantly interrupted, ignored or drowned out when speaking?

### Be the difference that makes a difference!

- What are you willing to risk and/or sacrifice for change? Comfort? Privilege? Power?
- What are you actively willing to commit to doing (differently) to eliminate racial biases and create an inclusive culture?
- What are you willing to commit to doing to expand your ability to navigate across lines of differences and communicate effectively?
- What happens when you do nothing?

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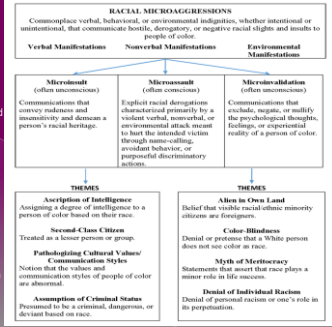
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**Microaggressions are the everyday** verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

The first step in addressing microaggressions is to recognize when a microaggression has occurred and what message it may be sending.

**Microinvalidations:** Communications that subtly **exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a marginalized individual**

**Microinsults:** Verbal and nonverbal communications that subtly **convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity**. An example is an employee who asks a colleague of color how she got her job, implying she may have landed it through an affirmative action or quota system (Loom De-wald in the Classroom, UCLA Diversity & Faculty Development, 2014).



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Racialized Experiences, Stereotypes &

**STEREOTYPE**

**STEREOTYPE**

"We all use stereotypes, all the time, without knowing it. We have met the enemy of equality, and the enemy is us."

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**Racial Trauma**

What is 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.

Racial trauma (also known as race-based traumatic stress) refers to the stressful **impact or emotional pain of one's experience with racism and discrimination** (Carter, 2007).

Common traumatic stress reactions reflecting racial trauma include **increased vigilance and suspicion, increased sensitivity to threat, sense of a foreshortened future, and more maladaptive responses to stress** such as aggression or substance use (Comas-Fitz, 2016).

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

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**Trauma can show up Historically**  
**(Collective) Trauma**

**Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome** is a condition that exists as a consequence of centuries of chattel **slavery followed by institutionalized racism and multigenerational oppression**

**Resulting** the etiology of many multigenerational adaptive -survival behaviors in African American communities. Some positive reflecting resilience, and others that are harmful and destructive.

**Historical (Collective) Trauma:** is **trauma upon trauma that occurs in history to a specific group of people causing emotional and mental wounding both during their lives and to the generations that follow** (Native American Children & Family Services Training Inst., 1999)

Theory of **P.T.S.S.** was developed by Dr. Joy DeGruy as a result of twelve years of quantitative and qualitative research.



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- Learned helplessness distorted sense of self.
- What happens when you identify with the oppressor?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwM5tpw2XMA>
- This speech was delivered in 1965 in Selma, Alabama while Martin Luther King Jr. was held in jail for his famous march on Selma. Malcolm gave this speech to young protesters who received it very well.
- DIVIDE AND CONQUER** – the perverse strategy that helped white masters keep slavery in practice for centuries

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**Intergenerational Trauma Can Be Inherited**

Happens when the **effects of trauma are not resolved in one generation.**

When trauma is ignored and there is no support for dealing with it, the trauma will be passed from one generation to the next.

Family Experiences - Leaves a Mark on Your Genes

TRAUMA, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION WHEN EPIGENETICS FAILED ME. MY PROTECTIVE FACTORS PREVAILLED ME

Epigenetics is the study of potentially heritable changes in gene expression. Epigenetics Controls Genes. Certain circumstances in life can cause genes to be silenced or expressed over time. In other words, they can be turned off or turned on (becoming active). Our environment and lifestyle impacts our gene expression.

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In 1891, the government issued a "**enforced attendance**" law that enabled federal officers to forcibly take Native American children from their home and reservation.

The American government believed they were rescuing these children from a world of poverty and depression and teaching them "life skills".  
—Tabatha Tooney Booth, from the University of Oklahoma



**Carlisle Pennsylvania Indian Boarding School**  
 Between 1879 and 1970, 300,000 to 500,000 Native American children were taken from their families, often by force, and were placed in **boarding schools** where they could learn "white" ways.

The motto of the Indian Boarding schools was:  
**"Kill the Indian, Save the Child."**  
<https://youtu.be/cotPCjAD6U0>

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When We Allow History to Repeats Itself...

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WHEN WILL WE STOPPING TALKING ABOUT THE PAST?




HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

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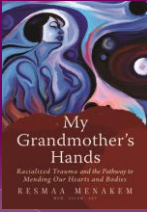
**My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Mending of Our Bodies and Hearts**

by Resmaa Menakem

The body is where our instincts reside and where we fight, flee, or freeze, and it endures the trauma inflicted by the ills that plague society.

In this groundbreaking work, therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of body-centered psychology. He argues this destruction will continue until Americans learn to heal the gen ...more

- How Slavery's Legacy Affects the Mental Health of Black Americans -BY ALMA CARTER- 2015
- Race-Based Traumatic Stress Injury Model- Carter's (2007)



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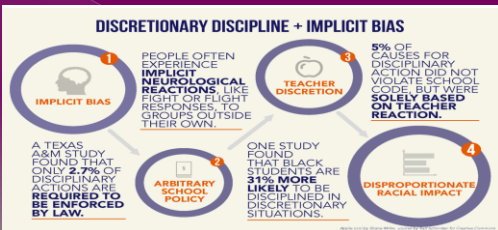
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**The Role of Implicit Bias in the School-to-Prison Pipeline**

**DISCRETIONARY DISCIPLINE + IMPLICIT BIAS**



1. **IMPLICIT BIAS**: PEOPLE OFTEN EXPERIENCE **IMPLICIT NEUROLOGICAL REACTIONS**, LIKE FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSES, TO GROUPS OUTSIDE THEIR OWN.

2. **ARBITRARY SCHOOL POLICY**: A TEXAS A&M STUDY FOUND THAT ONLY **2.7%** OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS ARE **REQUIRED TO BE ENFORCED BY LAW**.

3. **TEACHER DISCRETION**: **5% OF CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION DID NOT VIOLATE SCHOOL CODE, BUT WERE SOLELY BASED ON TEACHER REACTION.**

4. **DISPROPORTIONATE RACIAL IMPACT**: ONE STUDY FOUND THAT **BLACK STUDENTS ARE 31% MORE LIKELY TO BE DISCIPLINED IN DISCRETIONARY SITUATIONS.**

Photo courtesy of @BlackLivesMatter, @TeachingTolerance, and @EducationCivilians

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**The influence of Cultural/Racial Disparities**

What is the source of our pain?  
Where does our pain go?

Mass incarceration  
Missing parents  
Self Blame



**MOTHERS BEHIND BARS:**  
A study by the Center for Children, Families, and the Justice System found that mothers in prison are more likely to be Black, have lower education levels, and are more likely to be single parents. The study also found that mothers in prison are more likely to have children who are in foster care or in the juvenile justice system.

© 2018. Photo by The Black Room

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"Kindergartner's view of the world"

Children's Bureau for Equality 19, 2014, gammasquare.com/childrensbureau.com



New York Times story: As a tutor, "A little black kid looked up to me and one day asked, Is jail a good place to be? I asked why would you ever ask that? He said: My daddy is in jail and he said he get's three meals a day! And sometimes my mom can't make food and I'm hungry!"

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What do we need?  
Ownership: Recreate the narrative!



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It Takes a Village...Community & Collaboration



*It takes a village to raise a child is an African proverb that means that an entire community of people must interact with children for those children to experience and grow in a safe environment. The villagers look out for the children.* Wikipedia

"If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together."

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### Today's A New Day! Chin Up!

"I am my brother's keeper" means. With two minutes left in the game, center Moses Brown made a less than perfect pass that resulted in a lost possession. His team was down by two points and as the ball drifted out of bounds, so did Brown's spirit. As he made his transition to defense, his head and shoulders dropped in unison. And that's when the magic happened. Almost without missing a beat, UCLA's point guard Jaylen Hands walked over to Brown, placed his hand under his chin and tilted his head back up where it belonged.




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgkG1TgkQ88>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgkG1TgkQ88>

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### THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

*Be The Difference That May Make A Difference*





**Thank You!**

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