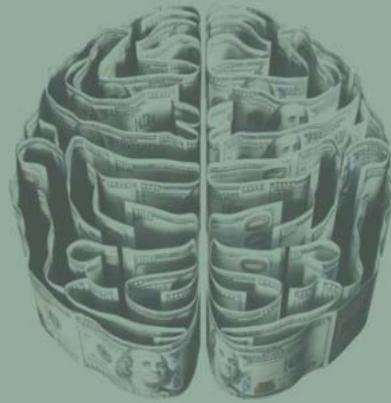


**SPEAK  
ON**

# **THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF RACISM**

# INTRODUCTION

Dr Haben Ghezai (Clinical Psychologist )



# OVERVIEW

What is race and racism?  
Racial trauma  
Effects of racial trauma  
How to support survivors of racial trauma  
How organisations can support?

- Race is not a scientific concept but a socio-political one.
- It emerged during the colonial exploration and conquest which brought Europeans into contact with groups from other continents. The rise of the Atlantic slave trade incentivised the categorisation of particular groups.
- The concept of 'White' was only introduced to unite certain European groups living in the US who were fighting each other and were at the same time a numerical minority in comparison to the African slaves and natives.

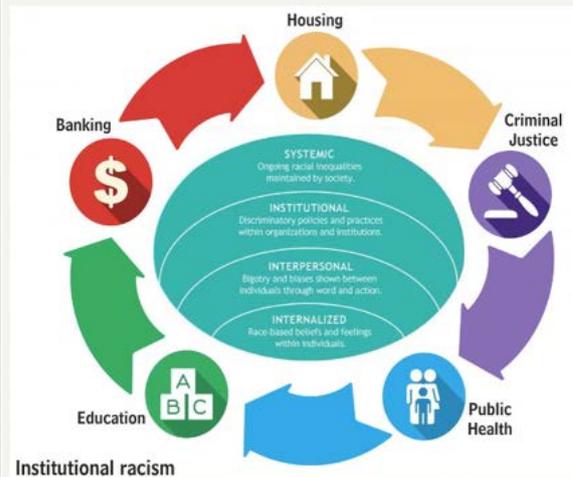
# THE CREATION OF 'RACE'?

# THE CREATION OF 'RACE'?

- Hence it served a political and social function.
- All European immigrants did not become white at the same time (Irish, Italians Jews). Becoming 'white' involved giving up some of their culture to adopt culture of majority 'white' in order to get the privileges of belonging to the White group.

# WHAT IS RACISM?

- Discrimination against a people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial group.
- It is based on beliefs that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities and qualities that distinguish them as inferior/superior.
- Socially hierarchical system embedded within systemic policies, laws and practices that provide different goods, services and opportunities in society based on race.
- Conveys power, dominance and privilege of one group over the other based on race.



**Overt White Supremacy  
(Socially Unacceptable)**

Lynching  
Hate Crimes  
Blackface The N-word  
Swastikas Neo-Nazis Burning Crosses  
Racist Jokes Racial Slurs KKK

**Covert White  
Supremacy  
(Socially  
Acceptable)**

Calling the Police on Black People White Silence Colorblindness  
White Parents Self-Segregating Neighborhoods & Schools  
Eurocentric Curriculum White Savior Complex Spiritual Bypassing  
Education Funding from Property Taxes Discriminatory Lending  
Mass Incarceration Respectability Politics Tone Policing  
Racist Mascots Not Believing Experiences of BIPOC Paternalism  
"Make America Great Again" Blaming the Victim Hiring Discrimination  
"You don't sound Black" "Don't Blame Me, I Never Owned Slaves" Bootstrap Theory  
School-to-Prison Pipeline Police Murdering BIPOC Virtuous Victim Narrative  
Higher Infant & Maternal Mortality Rate for BIPOC "But What About Me?" "All Lives Matter"  
BIPOC as Halloween Costumes Racial Profiling Denial of White Privilege  
Prioritizing White Voices as Experts Treating Kids of Color as Adults Inequitable Healthcare  
Assuming Good Intentions Are Enough Not Challenging Racist Jokes Cultural Appropriation  
Eurocentric Beauty Standards Anti-Immigration Policies Considering AAVE "Uneducated"  
Denial of Racism Tokenism English-Only Initiatives Self-Appointed White Ally  
Exceptionalism Fearing People of Color Police Brutality Fetishizing BIPOC Meritocracy Myth  
"You're So Articulate" Celebration of Columbus Day Claiming Reverse-Racism Paternalism  
Weaponized Whiteness Expecting BIPOC to Teach White People Believing We Are "Post-Racial"  
"But We're All One Big Human Family" / "There's Only One Human Race" Housing Discrimination

# SOME STATISTICAL EXAMPLES OF RACISM?

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT BEING BLACK, AND YOUR PROXIMITY TO WHITENESS WILL IMPACT:

- What area we are likely to live in
- Likelihood of getting a job
- The type/length of prison sentence you get
- Physical health treatment you receive
- Whether or not you will be impacted and die from covid-19
- Educational grades you receive & likelihood you will be expelled
- Whether you get consumer credit
- Types of diagnosis you receive by mental health professionals

Statistics/data can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2020) - <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/race-report-statistics>

TRAUMA IS DEFINED AS:

"A stressful event that present extraordinary challenges to coping and adaptations" (DSM - 5)

This definition, may led us to accept that racism and all the challenges and barriers it presents to progressing through life, can be defined as its own type of trauma.

Racism,  
in all  
its forms,  
is trauma.

# WHAT IS RACIAL TRAUMA?

Racial trauma refers to race based stress, as a result of:

- real or perceived experiences of racial discrimination
- threats of injury
- humiliation
- shaming events
- witnessing harm to others

Allows us to think about the effects of racism on the individual's mental and physical health.

Effects of racial trauma can last across generations.



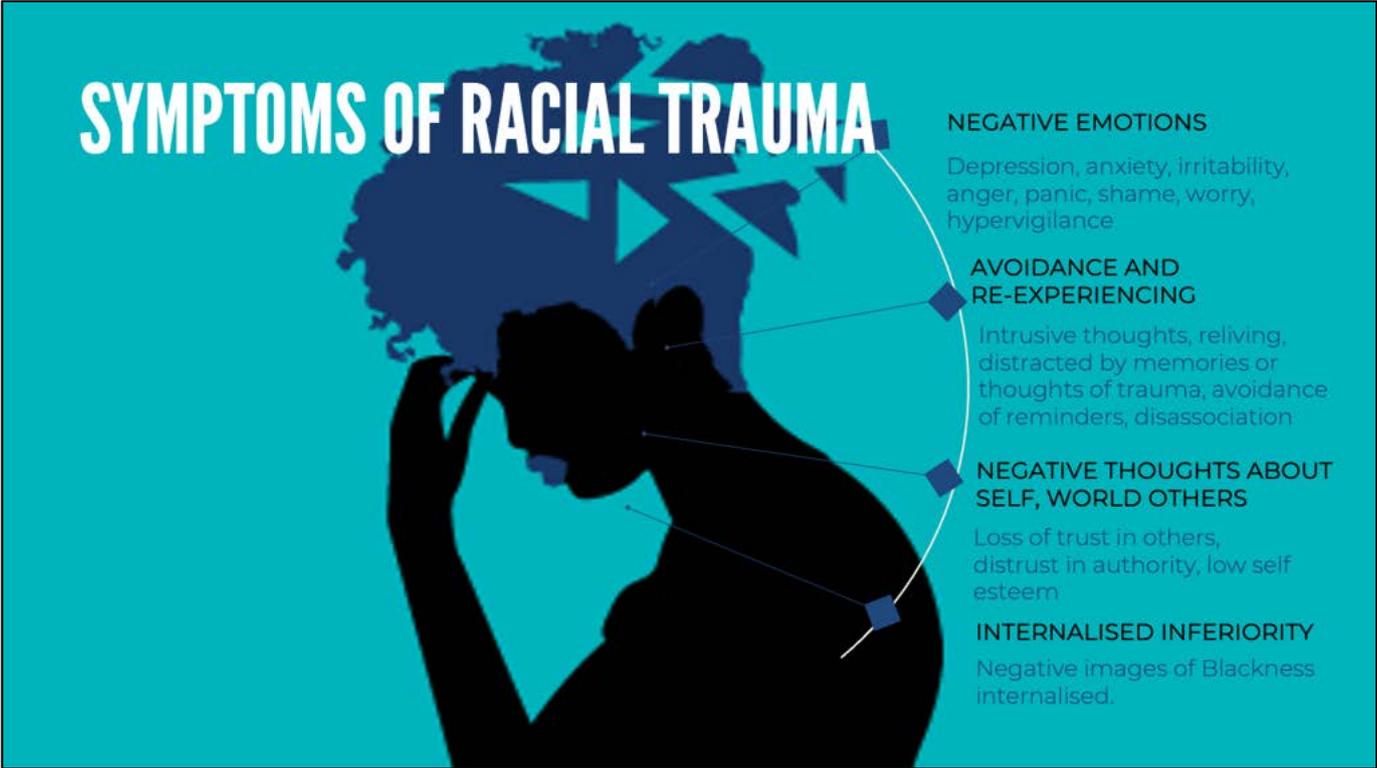
Gas lighting can retraumatize.

Micro-aggressions can be more harmful than blatant acts of racism.

Can lead to internalized racism – impacting individual and collective self esteem.

Has a more powerful risk factor for development of psychological distress than stressful life events.

# SYMPTOMS OF RACIAL TRAUMA

The infographic features a teal background. On the left, there is a black silhouette of a person's head and shoulders in profile, with their hand resting on their forehead. Behind the head is a stylized brain diagram with several arrows pointing outwards. The title 'SYMPTOMS OF RACIAL TRAUMA' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the top left. On the right side, there are four text blocks, each preceded by a small teal diamond icon. A white curved line connects these diamond icons, starting from the top right and moving downwards. Arrows point from the diamond icons to the brain diagram and the silhouette.

## NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Depression, anxiety, irritability, anger, panic, shame, worry, hypervigilance

## AVOIDANCE AND RE-EXPERIENCING

Intrusive thoughts, reliving, distracted by memories or thoughts of trauma, avoidance of reminders, disassociation

## NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT SELF, WORLD OTHERS

Loss of trust in others, distrust in authority, low self esteem

## INTERNALISED INFERIORITY

Negative images of Blackness internalised.

# HOW TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF RACIAL TRAUMA

## DO:

- I'm sorry to hear you had to go through that.
- That must have been difficult.
- How are you feeling about it now?
- What can I do to help you?
- What has helped in the past

## DON'T:

- Are you sure it's racially motivated?
- What other reasons could there have been for the other person's attitude/behaviour?
- Isn't it your perception that has led you to feeling this way?
- That happens to everyone!

## IMPACT:

They feel listened to, validated, supported, you believe them and acknowledge what happened is not their fault.

## IMPACT:

They feel rejected, you don't believe them, like they created the problem and it's their fault.

# HOW INDIVIDUALS CAN SUPPORT

- Educate yourself on racism and anti-racism.
- Ask yourselves who are the 'belongers' in our service / team / office.
- Often organisations focus on more diverse recruitment, but not if you are bring in a diverse workforce into a hostile environment.
- Notice the space – who will recognise the space as for, and welcoming of them.
- Notice if and how we talk about people, about privilege, about racism.
- Use White privilege and call out racism.
- Start conversations about race and racism & continue these conversations.
- Create spaces for to continually thinking about your own experiences, in relation to others – Promote self-reflexivity within the organisation.

- Ask yourselves who are the 'belongers' in our service / team / office
- Often organisations focus on more diverse recruitment, which is great, but not if you are bring in a diverse workforce into a hostile environment – you don't drag people into a sinking ship.
- Notice the space – who will recognise the space as for, and welcoming of, them
- Notice if and how we talk about people, about privilege, about racism
- Use your white privilege and call out racism
- Start conversations about race and racism & continue these conversations
- Create spaces for to continually thinking about your own experiences, in relation to others – about promoting self-reflexivity in organisations.
- Educate yourself on racism and anti-racism.

# HOW ORGANISATIONS CAN SUPPORT

- Provide spaces to educate employees.
- Do not leave thinking about Diversity and Inclusion or Education of racism to minority groups.
- Ensure that the task of running and contributing to diversity and inclusion is not something that is expected to be done as an 'ADD ON' to existing work loads.
- Ensure the work & support to be provided is quantified.
- Allow for funding within this support & for change.
- Ensure there is investment from senior management.
- Resists the idea of an endpoint or 'arrival' – being anti-racist and providing effective support is an ongoing process – targets should be continuous and ongoing.
- Resist a hierarchy of knowledge – good ideas can come from anywhere.

- Organisations similarly can and should provide spaces to educate employees
- Do not leave thinking about diversity and inclusion or education of racism to minority groups– this create a burden upon them which is tiresome and can be retraumatizing.
- Ensure that the task of running and contributing to diversity and inclusion is not something that is expected to be done as an 'ADD ON' to existing work loads – this is an example of 'Office Housework' which is often invisible, undervalued, under supported and not taken into consideration when thinking about promotions or rises in pay. It reduces the time spent on normal job role and capacity for people to take on this work.
- Ensure the work is quantified – the steps taken to address racism and support individuals need to be quantifiable and allow for accountability within the organisation – allow for real actions and real targets.
- Allow for funding within this support – change and support takes time and money (training, resources and speakers cost money).
- Ensure there is investment from senior management - the best way to ensure change and support is sustained is by ensuring there are leaders that push for it. Senior leaders hold a strong voice and more importantly hold power.
- Resists the idea of an endpoint or 'arrival' – being anti-racist and providing

effective support is an ongoing process – targets should be continuous and ongoing.

- Resist a hierarchy of knowledge – good ideas can come from anywhere



**“Not everything that is  
faced can be changed;  
but nothing can be  
changed until it is faced”**

- JAMES BALDWIN

# Q&A

<h1>BREAK</h1>	

**SPEAK  
ON**

# **HOW TO BE AN ALLY TO YOUR ICV COLLEAGUES**

# OVERVIEW

Being an ally  
How to be an active ally to your ICV partner  
How to interact with ICV colleagues and navigating sensitivity around racism  
How to have difficult conversations about racism with colleagues, client and authority figures  
Q&A

# HOW TO BE AN ACTIVE ALLY TO YOUR ICV PARTNER



## WHAT IS AN ALLY?

The Rochester Racial Justice Toolkit, defines allyship as a process in which "a person of privilege works in solidarity and partnership with a marginalized group of people to help take down the systems that challenge that group's basic rights, equal access, and ability to thrive in our society."



In other words, allyship involves a person from a non-marginalized group — an ally — who uses their privilege to advocate for a marginalized group.

## HOW TO BE AN ALLY

- Educate yourself.
- Listen and amplify.
- Have difficult conversations.
- Sign petitions, support policy reviews, research and changes.
- Get involved and support.
- Be aware of your implicit biases.

Source: <https://guidetoallyship.com>



### **Educate yourself.**

Read, listen, watch, attend events.

### **Listen to — and amplify — Black voices.**

Important

To better understand the realities, listen to what people are saying, whether it's a conversation, social media, videos, articles, podcasts or other content.

Listen, pay attention, ask questions — and make sure to remember that a key part of listening is knowing when to stay silent and creating space them to speak.

### **Have difficult conversations.**

I mean confronting the ways that racism perpetuates in your own community. This is not a pass to speak to people who are traumatised by racism about racism, chances are, they don't want to talk about something they've lived their whole lives that you've just realised. Also, it's upsetting to be asked to talk about something so upsetting when you haven't chosen to.

Have these discussions with people who need to learn about racism, it can be uncomfortable and difficult, but they're important to have in order to spread awareness and educate others on issues of everyday racism.

Start the conversation with your family members, friends, and loved ones, share things you've learnt, (there are positive things too), confront them about any problematic behaviours or language you encounter.  
Begin to talk to your kids about race and racism early.

**Sign petitions, support policy reviews, research and changes.**

Ongoing, effective action is one of the most important parts of being an ally. Signing petitions, supporting policy reviews, research and changes is a huge one.

**Get involved and support**

Volunteering or finding ways to support volunteer organisations  
Support black-owned businesses – can be sharing information or buying from a business

**Be aware of your implicit biases**

## SELF – REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS ON RACE AND RACIAL IDENTITY:

- When did you first become aware that you are "Black/White"?
  - How did you become aware of this?
- What messages have you heard growing up which have shaped how you view your racial identity?
- What stories/images/ideas/beliefs have shaped how you understand 'Blackness' and 'Whiteness'?
  - What feelings and emotions do you feel when others talk about 'Whiteness'?
  - What feelings and emotions do you feel when others talk about 'Blackness'?
  - How does 'Whiteness/Blackness' impact your day-to-day life?

# **HOW TO HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACISM WITH COLLEAGUES, CLIENT AND AUTHORITY FIGURES**



Questions to Haben



## DO'S

- Understand your racial/cultural identity
- Acknowledge and be open to admitting your racial biases and privileges/advantages
- Validate, encourage, and express admiration and appreciation to participants who speak when it feels unsafe to do so and facilitate discussion of feelings
- Approach the conversation with respect.
- Put aside your preconceptions
- Embrace the discomfort of not knowing and find out what you don't know
- Listen and be open to questions
- Internalize what you've learned and commit yourself to change

## DON'TS

- Centre yourself: "I can't believe you think I'm a toe-stepper! I'm a good person!"
- Denial that others' experiences are different from your own: "I don't mind when people step on my toes."
- Derailing: "Some people don't even have toes, why aren't we talking about them instead?"
- Refusal to centre the impacted: "All toes matter!"
- Tone policing: "I'd move my foot if you'd ask me more nicely."
- Denial that the problem is fixable: "Toes getting stepped on is a fact of life. You'll be better off when you accept that."
- Victim blaming: "You shouldn't have been walking around people with boots!"
- Withdrawing: "I thought you wanted my help, but I guess not. I'll just go home."

## DO'S

- Centre the impacted: "Are you okay?"
- Listen to their response and learn.
- Apologize for the impact, even though you didn't intend it: "I'm sorry!"
- Stop the instance: move your foot
- Stop the pattern: be careful where you step in the future. When it comes to oppression, we want to actually change the "footwear" to get rid of privilege and oppression (trainers for all!), but metaphors can only stretch so far!

Source: <https://guidetoallyship.com>

**DON'T BE SCARED TO GET THINGS WRONG**



## DON'TS

Don't: Be a Whatabout: A person that distracts from a salient point by using a false equivalency or a marginally related tangential point.

Don't: Use your Black friends and family members to point out how non-racist you are or to prove anything

Don't: Tone police

Don't: Make excuses for people being too old or young

Don't: Refer to black people are "blacks". Black people is the correct term to use.

Don't:

Be a Whatabout: A person that distracts from a salient point by using a false equivalency or a marginally related tangential point.

By saying... "Well whatabout..."

If someone is telling you something that happened to them, listen. Whatabouting devalues what people are telling you.

Don't:

Use your Black friends and family members to point out how non-racist you are or to prove anything

You can still have Black friends and be overtly or covertly racist. Because you may subconsciously may separate them from other black people.

Being active is the way you show your beliefs

Don't:

Tone police

Don't tell people their reacting in the wrong way

It's a daily barrage that can be felt deeply or numb you

Allow people to feel the range of feelings

Don't:

Make excuses for people being too old or young

People aren't too old to change or too young to learn

Black, Asian, Jewish people and people from marginalised communities, as children learn about and experience racism from a very young age and never age out of discrimination.

Don't:

Refer to black people as "blacks". Black people is the correct term to use.

# HOW TO PROCESS WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING ABOUT RACISM

Questions to Haben

# Q&A

	<b>THANK YOU</b>