How Race & Bias Operate Today

A Real Conversation To Understand Race, Racism and Bias; and Its Impacts on the Lives of Black, Brown & White People
Implicit Bias and Racism

This brief presentation on race, racism and implicit bias is adapted from multiple sources, including the Racial Equity Institute Dismantling Racism Process Workbook and the Community Building Initiative’s group guidelines for conversation. I have added some of my own work and philosophy on the racial dynamic in our country and our community that drives race, racism and implicit bias. This work represents some of my own biases as it relates to these issues in America. Some of you will agree with what is presented, while others may disagree and that is fine. My hope is to create a safe space where we can engage in a group conversation, and answer questions, centered on your reactions to the material presented. This is not a debate or a problem-solving conversation. We are not trying to come to a singular conclusion but rather to express and better understand the multiple realities that may be in the room today. Hopefully, this the beginning of a conversation, not an end. I look forward to our time together.

~ Willie Ratchford ~
What We Hope You Will Take Away Today

- A Different Understanding of Race & Bias
- How Implicit Bias Shows Up In Your Personal Spaces
- The Power of Race & Ism
- How Bias & Race Show Up As Oppression
According to Alison Powers, Manager, Cooperative and Community Initiatives:

“Racial Equity Communities of color have experienced historical and structural disinvestment, which has led to an unprecedented racial wealth gap, historically low home ownership, and exploitative work environments that keep individuals and families of color from achieving shared prosperity.”

This session will provide opportunities for you to:

- Hear historical truth
- Speak your own truth
- Lean into discomfort and paradox
- If requested, honor confidentiality: “What is said here stays here; however, what is learned here leaves here”
- Think for yourself
Self Portrait

• Name
• What you value about life
• Important people in your life
• Your values – one word
• Favorite food
The power of five little pieces of paper...

Values and what is important to you.
Mentally, physically and emotionally…

What does it feel like?
Exploring “ism”

Mental, Physical and Emotional Damage
Treated differently because of who you are

- SEX
- RELIGION
- NATIONAL ORIGIN
- COLOR
- DISABILITY
- FAMILIAL STATUS
- AGE
- RACE
- SOCIAL STATUS
- GEOGRAPHY
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION
What Is Race?
“A specious classification of human beings created by Europeans, during a period of worldwide colonial expansion, using themselves as the model for humanity for the purpose of assigning and maintaining white skin access to power and privilege.”

Racial Equity Institute
“There is no such thing as race, we made it up.”
Racism

How do you define racism?
Racism Defined

“Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call race), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and their respective communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources and human capital.”
History of Racism

401 years of racial segregation starting with the first slaves brought to the new world in 1619...
History of Racism

356 years of government sanctioned laws that were purposely designed to benefit white people and disadvantage people of color...
History of Racism

250 years of brutal and inhumane slavery...
History of Racism

35 years of Black Codes by many southern states (after the Civil War ended) which equated to de facto slavery...
100 years of the KKK and the terrorism and lynchings its members committed against Black and Brown people...
History of Racism

90 years of Jim Crow...
History of Racism

60 years of separate but equal...
History of Racism

35 years of redlining, housing, insurance, and banking discrimination...
What Do You Think Has Been The Impact of Racism on Black and Brown People in Our Country?
Systemic, Institutional and Constructed (Structural) Racist Oppression

- Racism in our country is historically constructed, systemic and its institutional
- Penetrates every aspect of our personal, governmental and cultural life
- Includes prejudice against racial, ethnic, low-wealth persons and other minority groups in attitudes, feelings and behaviors
- Includes exclusion, discrimination against suspicion, fear or hatred of persons in a racial, ethnic or income group
- Sees a person only as a member of a group, not as an individual
- Includes low expectations by White people for children and adults of color and low-wealth
- Low-wealth people and people of color have fewer options, choices
Internalized Oppression

- As people of color or low-wealth, we carry internalized negative messages about ourselves and other POC
- We believe that there is something wrong with being a person of color or low-wealth
- We have lowered self-esteem, sense of inferiority, wrongness
- We have lowered expectations, limited sense of potential for self
- We have very limited choices: either act in (white) or act out (disrupt)
- We have a sense of limited possibility (limited by oppression and prejudice)
- Cycles through generations
How Does It Show Up Today?
People of Color Are Disproportionately & Adversely Impacted By:

- Poverty
- Homicides
- Infant Mortality
- Police Shootings
- School Dropout Rates
- Lack of Home Ownership
- Police Stops and Profiling
- Incarcerations
- COVID-19
- Negative Healthcare Outcomes
- Drug Arrests and Addictions
- Exploitative Work Environments
- Historical and Structural Disinvestment
- Low Wage Jobs
- Low Property Values
- Poor Schools

And, The List Goes On and On
Does Our Audio Match Up With the Video?

BLACK LIVES MATTER

ALL LIVES MATTER
What Black and Brown People Want?

**Equality**

The assumption is that everyone **benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

**Equity**

**Everyone gets the supports they need** (this is the concept of “affirmative action”), thus producing equity.

**Justice**

All three can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic, institutional and structural barriers are removed.
WHAT IS BIAS?
Bias Defined

The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner

Implicit - activated unconsciously, involuntarily, and/or without one’s awareness

Bias - denotes people’s responses along a continuum of possible judgments including favorable and unfavorable assessments

Pervasiveness - Substantial research has established that implicit biases are robust and pervasive
Understanding Bias

Prejudice & Stereotyping

• How do you define bias?

• How do you define prejudice?

• How do you define stereotyping?
Understanding Bias

Have a nice day
Bias/Racism

Linguistics
Profiling/Bias

Implicit/Unconscious
Bias/Racism
Understanding Bias

Explicit Bias:

• Expressed directly

• Aware of bias/operates consciously

• Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building - “No Children”
Implicit Bias:

- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias/operates sub-consciously
- Example – an employer paying a man more money than a woman doing the same work
Implicit Bias

How Does Implicit Bias Show Up for You?

- Personally
- At Work
- In Social Settings
- In the Community
The Power of Personal Stories

what's your story?
Personal Reflections:

- When or how did you first realize that you were a member of a particular identity group?

- What significant or key experiences have you had in which you’ve felt different as a result of membership in this group? Or treated differently because of your membership in this group?

- How have these experiences shaped your personal views and philosophy about race and bias?

- How do your personal views and philosophy about race and bias affect your relationships with persons of other racial groups?
How Are You Leaving?

Based on your experience here today, how are you leaving?