

# Cultural Awareness and Mental Health First Aid

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Black Mental Wellness

**March 18, 2021**



Central East (HHS Region 3)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# MHTTC Network

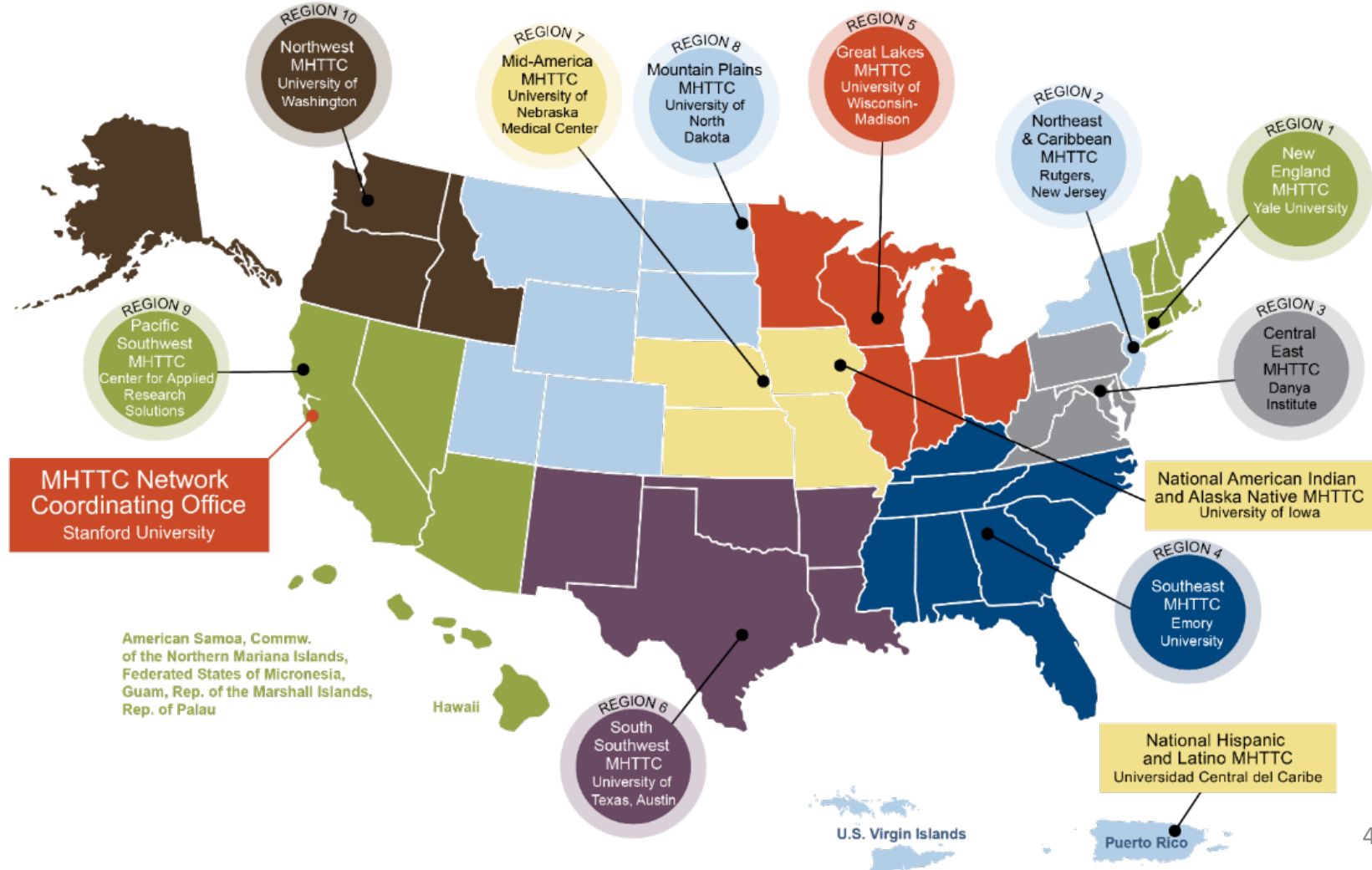


MHTTC

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MHTTC Network



# MHTTC Purpose

The MHTTC Network vision is to unify science, education and service to transform lives through evidence-based and promising treatment and recovery practices in a recovery-oriented system of care.

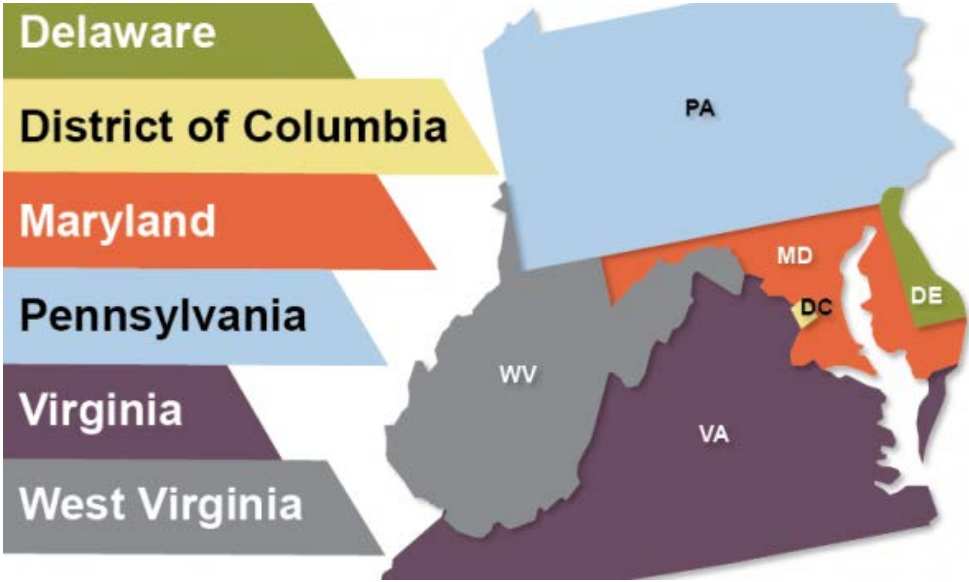


# Central East MHTTC Goals

## Funded by SAMHSA to:

- **Accelerate** the adoption and implementation of mental health related evidence-based practices
- **Heighten** the awareness, knowledge, and skills of the behavioral health workforce
- **Foster** alliances among culturally diverse practitioners, researchers, policy makers, family members, and consumers
- **Ensure** the availability and delivery of publicly available, free of charge, training and technical assistance

# Central East Region 3



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# Evaluation Information

As part of receiving funding through SAMHSA to provide this training, the Central East MHTTC is required to submit data related to the quality of this event. At the end of today's presentation, please take a moment to complete a brief survey about today's training.





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# Cultural Awareness and Mental Health First Aid





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# Black Mental Wellness, Corp.

- **Dr. Nicole L. Cammack:**  
President & CEO
- **Dr. Danielle R. Busby:**  
Professional Relations & Liaison
- **Dr. Dana L. Cunningham:**  
Community Outreach & Engagement
- **Dr. Jessica S. Henry:**  
Program Development & Evaluation





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# Black Mental Wellness, Corp.

## The Mission of Black Mental Wellness

- To provide information and resources about mental health and behavioral health topics from a Black perspective
- To highlight and increase the diversity of mental health professionals
- To decrease the mental health stigma in the Black community





# OBJECTIVES

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- Identify the role of culture in shaping interactions with others and mental health
- Define concepts associated with culturally responsive care
- Discuss strategies for incorporating culturally responsive practices within Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)



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**REMEMBER:**  
A NATION'S CULTURE RESIDES IN THE HEARTS AND IN  
THE SOUL OF ITS PEOPLE.

*-Mahatma Gandhi*





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# Exploring Culture and Mental Health



# CULTURE

The characteristics and knowledge of a group of people

- Language
- Religion
- Customs
- Cuisine
- Social habits
- Music/Art





# INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

Influence of Culture	MHFA Considerations
How people view health and illness	What is the individual's view of mental health and wellness? Who do they believe is at risk?
Which conditions are stigmatized and why	Does the individual have a stigmatized view of mental health or specific disorders and/or symptoms?
What people believe about the causes of disease and mental health disorders	What is the individual's belief about the cause of mental health and their onset of symptoms?
Where people seek help and how they ask for help	What mental health referrals and resources are you providing? Are they culturally-relevant?
How symptoms are experienced and expressed	Does the individual report physical symptoms (e.g., aches and pains) and experience difficulty describing their emotions?



# INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

Influence of Culture	MHFA Considerations
How people interact with health care providers	Is there a language barrier? What are possible challenges associated with communication?
The degree of understanding and compliance with treatment options	Are there any language or cultural barriers that may be impacting compliance with treatment?
The perceptions of the amount of control they have in preventing and controlling disease	Who or what controls the onset and course of their mental health?
What is the Influence of family dynamics, including support among family members	How may the individual's family influence their perceptions of mental health treatment and services?
How accessible the health system is, as well as how well it functions	Will the individual encounter any obstacles to receiving mental health services?



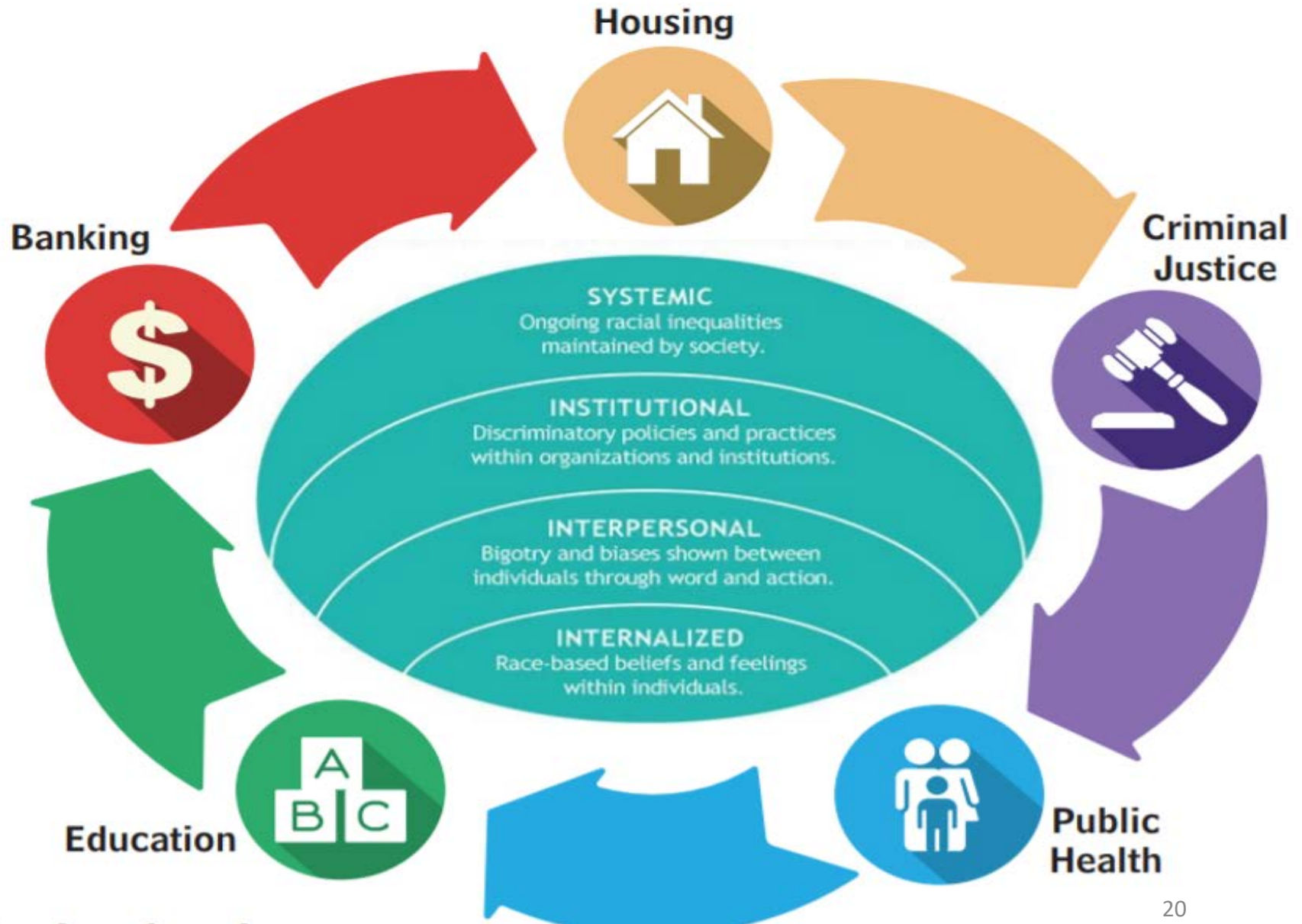


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# The Impact of Racism & Racial Trauma on Mental Health



# TYPES OF RACISM





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# RACISM IMPACTS CULTURE

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- Shapes our policies and practices
- Perpetuates a culture of superiority and inferiority
- Increases disparities in health, employment, education, and income
- Leads to cultural mistrust



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# What is Racial Trauma?





*Dangerous or frightening race-based events, stressors, or discrimination that “overwhelm one’s coping capacity and impacts quality of life and/or cause fear, helplessness, & horror...” (Carter, 2007)*



# TYPES OF RACIAL TRAUMA

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- Direct Trauma
  - Pulled over by the police (e.g., stop and frisk)
  - Denied adequate health care and treatment
  - Denied opportunities (housing, employment)
- Vicarious Trauma
  - Witnessing systemic racism (overrepresentation of racist arrests and policing practices)
  - Viewing the repeated killing and harassment of unarmed Black and Brown people in person, on television, or the internet
- Transmitted Trauma/Stressors
  - The genocide, slavery, and massacres of a race of people (e.g., African, Jewish, Native Americans)



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# COMMON TRAUMATIC REACTIONS

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- Avoidance of people, places, or things
- Nightmares/flashbacks
- Increased fear and anxiety
- Increased depression
- Increased aggression and anger
- Impulsive/reckless behavior
- Impaired relationships
- Difficulty with concentration and task completion
- Easily startled or jumpy
- Sleep and/or eating disruptions
- Withdrawal/emotional numbing
- Inconsolable crying



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# COMMON HEALTH RISKS

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## **Physical Health**

- Blood pressure
- Cardiovascular disease
- Hypertension
- Abdominal fat
- Sexual functioning
- Breast cancer

## **Health Risk Behaviors**

- Cigarette smoking
- Substance use
- Risky sexual behaviors





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# What might this look like?

*What type of behaviors might be demonstrated by someone experiencing racism?*



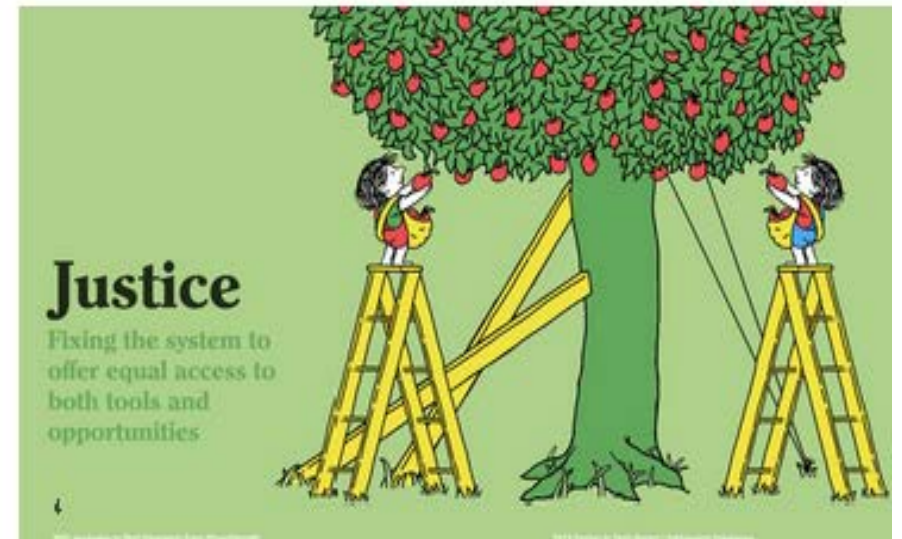
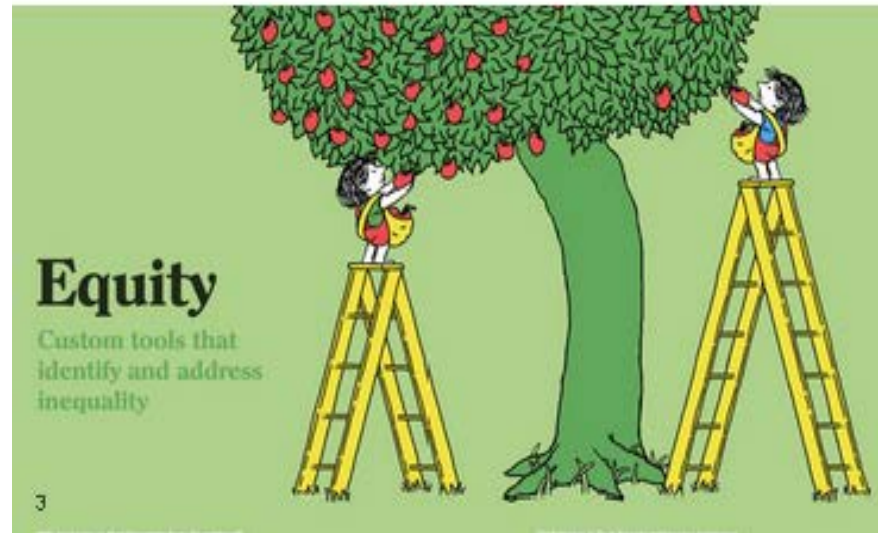
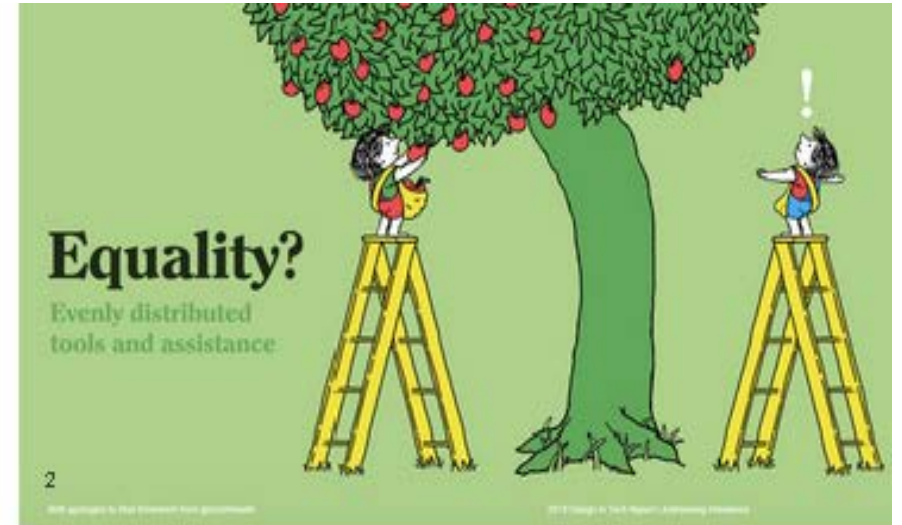
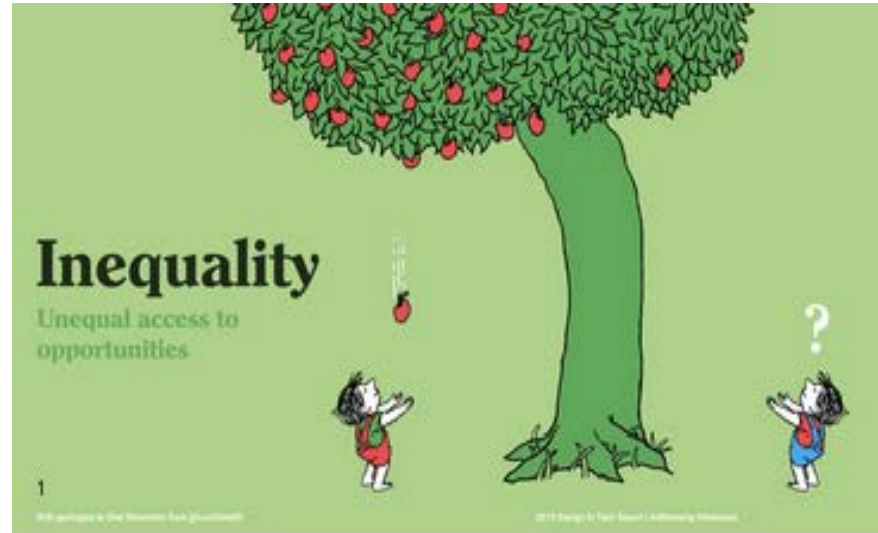
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# Inequities & Disparities on Mental Health



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# EQUALITY VS. EQUITY





# EQUALITY VS. EQUITY

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[Kevin and Jamal Systemic Racism Video](#)



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# MHFA – LISTEN NONJUDGMENTALLY

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- A person's experience with racism or discrimination
- Whether an individual has been treated unfairly because of race or ethnicity
- A person's belief about how minorities or people of color are treated
- How an individual copes with or manages their experiences with racism or inequities



# DISPARITIES IN CARE

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## **Culturally diverse individuals and communities:**

- Have less access to, and availability of mental health services
- Are less likely to receive needed mental health and substance use services
- Often receive a poorer quality of care
- Are over-represented in restrictive levels of care (foster care, residential, juvenile detention) and more likely to have interactions with juvenile justice/police due to harsh disciplinary practices in schools
- Higher rates of misdiagnosis of psychotic disorders in Black and Latinx





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# DISPARITIES IN CARE

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## **Scenario:**

You encounter a 25 year old Black man who is pacing back and forth and screaming, “White people are the devil and are all out to get me.” He appears really upset and everyone around him is nervous and scared.

**What is your initial reaction? What do you think his diagnosis is?**



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# Culturally Responsive Care



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# KEY COMPONENTS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CARE

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- Cultural Awareness
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Cultural Competence
- Cultural Humility
- Anti-Racism





# ENHANCING CULTURAL AWARENESS

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## Knowledge of Self:

- Knowledge of your own culture
- Understand how your values influence your behavior and choices
- Awareness of your biases and prejudices
- Understand how you have benefited from unearned privileges

## Knowledge of Other Cultures:

- Awareness of traditions, communication styles, values, and respectful methods of engagement
- Awareness of the historical and structural systems of racism and oppression
- Understand the social and political context of the community/individual



# WHO ARE YOU?



## Reflection Questions:

1. How do your identities inform or impact your perspective when engaging with others/training?
2. How might they limit your perspective when interacting with others who are different?
3. What privileges have you been granted because of your identity?



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# ENHANCING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

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- Demonstrate value and respect for other cultures
- Adapt your behavior and communication patterns
- Understand and respond appropriately to cultural differences
- Adapt delivery of services and supports





# VALUES

People-Oriented vs. Task Oriented	Informal vs. Formal	Base Decisions on Logic vs. Feelings
Individualistic vs. Collectivistic	Flexible vs. Prompt	Direct vs. Indirect Communication
Risk Tolerant vs. Risk Averse	Focus on the future vs. Present	Masculinity vs. Femininity
Results vs. Relationships	Being vs. Doing	Competition vs. Cooperation
Personal Control vs. Fate	Equality vs. Equity	High vs. Low Expression of Emotions



# SCENARIO

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There is a participant in my training who arrived late and comes back late from our breaks. That is not the only problem. When I ask him a question, he goes on and on and on and makes the rest of the class wait and wait. I want to tell him to get to the point. It got to the point where I have to cut him off because he loses track of the time he is taking up in class on his issue. I tell him that if he wants to continue talking about it, he'll have to do it on the break or after the class. He doesn't understand our concept of time. We are on a strict schedule and things have to be done by a certain time. I don't like it at all. I hate it.



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# APPLYING CULTURAL AWARENESS AND SENSITIVITY

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## Reflection Questions:

- Describe the situation
- Without using adjectives, identify the behaviors of the trainer and the participant
- Identify the core values of each character
- What would be a good way to respond?



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# ENHANCING CULTURAL HUMILITY

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- Recognize and address power imbalances
- Engage in critical self-reflection
- Individual is viewed as the expert
- Hold systems accountable



# SCENARIO

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You encounter a young girl who is suicidal and depressed. Her mother says that depression isn't real and it is just the result of the devil and evil spirits. In their family, it is not common for people to seek counseling services and help-seeking is not supported in their community.

**How would you proceed in a culturally responsive way?**



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# ANTI-RACISM

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## Quotes from Dr. Ibram Kendi:

- Being an anti-racist involves much more than simply declaring, “I’m not a racist.”
- “To be an anti-racist, you must recognize that there are racial disparities and inequities in our society, and then you must ask, ‘What’s the cause of those disparities?’
- “Americans have long been trained to see the deficiencies of people rather than policy. It's a pretty easy mistake to make: People are in our faces. Policies are distant. We are particularly poor at seeing the policies lurking behind the struggles of people.”
- “Like fighting an addiction, being an antiracist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination.”





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# EXAMPLES OF ANTI-RACISM

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- Voting on important issues that impact your community
- Holding police with records of excessive force accountable
- Working to dismantle policies that negatively impact people of color
- Advocating for access to high quality and equitable mental and behavioral health services for all
- Speaking out about injustices
- Amplifying voices of color
- Examine discipline policies in schools
- Identify appropriate assessment and placement practices
- Ensure curriculum is inclusive of all students



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# ANTI-RACISM and MHFA

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- How can you engage in anti-racism as a MHFA Trainer?
- Are there adjustments you need to make as a trainer when addressing specific communities or populations?
- What information about systemic inequities and injustices do you need to share with your training participants?
- What personal reflection do you need to engage in?
- What or who can you become an advocate for?
- Whose voices can you amplify?



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# SUMMARY

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- Culture has an impact on engagement with mental health care services
- Racial trauma impacts mental and physical health
- The history and impact of inequities and disparities must be acknowledged within all systems
- Increased awareness of your identity and values and those of the community you are engaging with can improve cross-cultural communication
- Identify an action step you can take that will improve your ability to engage with diverse groups as a MHFA Trainer



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# RESOURCES

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[Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence](#)

[Teaching Tolerance](#)

[Stanford University RaceWorks Toolkit](#)

[Anti-Racist and Related Resources](#) (compiled list)

[Embrace Race](#)



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# CONTACT INFORMATION

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[Black Mental Wellness website](#)



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[Email Dr. Henry](#)

[Email Dr. Cunningham](#)



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# Appreciation



# Contact Us



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MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

*a program managed by*



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