Unpacking Institutional Racism in Psychiatry

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# Outline

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The Problem

“When people like me, they like me "in spite of my color." When they dislike me; they point out that it isn't because of my color. Either way, I am locked in to the infernal circle.”

Frantz Fanon
Black Skin, White Mask
**Problem**

Direct Patient Care

"You're so pretty. I wish you weren't Black."

"It's not a race thing, can I see your attending instead?"

"He's so loud, that N-word."
Problem

Example

Workplace Experiences

"We know you think we are racist!"

"Can you fax this for me?"

"I'm walking on eggshells at this point, sigh."
**Problem**

**Example**

Leadership Experiences

"You can't just tell people they are racist."

"Things are moving too fast, we have to slow this down."

"You have to go back to the drawing board, the consensus has spoken."
The “Problem” Woman of Colour in the Workplace

**Problem**

Walk with Me: A Woman of Colour’s Journey in Nonprofit Organizations

Adapted from "The Chronicle of the Problem Woman of Color in a Non-Profit" by the Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

www.coco-net.org
The Task

“Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn’t fit in with the core belief.”

Frantz Fanon
Black Skin, White Mask
The Task

"Increase the cost of racist behavior"

Types of Racism

1. **Degree**
   Taking actions that people of color view as overtly prejudiced.

2. **Degree**
   Opposing or turning one’s back on anti-racism efforts, often justified by the demonization of the people courageously tackling racist behavior.

3. **Degree**
   When employers, educational institutions, and governmental entities do not unwind practices that disadvantage people of color in the competition with whites for economic and career mobility.
Types of Racism

2
Degree
Opposing or turning one’s back on anti-racism efforts, often justified by the demonization of the people courageously tackling racist behavior.

Active Resistance
- Being critical
- Fault-Finding
- Ridiculing
- Appealing to fear
- Using facts selectively
- Intellectualization
- Blaming/accusing
- Sabotaging
- Intimidating/threatening
- Manipulating
Types of Racism

Degree Opposing or turning one’s back on anti-racism efforts, often justified by the demonization of the people courageously tackling racist behavior.

2 Degree

- Stalling
- Undermining
- Starting, nurturing, or not dispelling rumors
- Raising objections, particularly away from the change agents
- Agreeing verbally but not following through
- Failing to implement change
- Procrastinating/dragging feet
- Feigning ignorance information, lack of knowledge or skill, or an immediate need to attend to other matters
- Withholding information, suggestions, help or support
- Standing by and allowing the change to fail
Nourishment of Racism

Narrow Focus on the Individual

Narrowly focused on the individual making systems and structures invisible or seemingly irrelevant and reducing a focus on collective actions to address racism

Ahistorical Stance

Acting as if the present were disconnected from the past and as if the current distribution of advantage and disadvantage were just a happenstance preventing a proper definition of the roots of the problem and its solutions
<table>
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<th>Nourishment of Racism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Myth of a Zero Sum Game</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggests there are only winners and losers fostering competition over cooperation, masking the costs of inequity, hindering efforts to grow the pie</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Myth of American Exceptionalism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-valuing of America as distinctly superior such that a false sense of entitlement makes us disinterested in learning from the experiences of other nations</td>
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Seeing the Water: Seven Values Targets for Anti-Racism Action
Camara Phyllis Jones, MD, MPH, PhD
Nourishment of Racism

Limited Future Orientation
Limited investment in the impacts of actions and inactions on the future

Myth of Meritocracy
Often evident in denying the existence of racism despite the uneven playing field that has been structured and is being maintained by racism (and sexism, heterosexism, capitalism, and other systems of structured inequity)
Nourishment of Racism

White Supremacist Ideology

False belief that there exists a hierarchy of human valuation by “race” and that puts “White” people at the top of this fictional hierarchy as the ideal and the norm.

white supremacy: constructs and maintains a racial ordering of humans and resources that, through various acts of violence or deprivation, justify and enforce the racial dominance of whites.
Nourishment of Racism

White Supremacist Ideology

False belief that there exists a hierarchy of human valuation by “race” and that puts “White” people at the top of this fictional hierarchy as the ideal and the norm.

white privilege: preferences white people, actively and passively, by providing and permitting white people disproportionate access to, and benefit from, resources associated with social and economic mobility, such as home-ownership, education, wealth, insurance, and health care.
Nourishment of Racism

White Supremacist Ideology

False belief that there exists a hierarchy of human valuation by “race” and that puts “White” people at the top of this fictional hierarchy as the ideal and the norm.

white hegemony: establishes and enforces racial hierarchies in which white people nearly exclusively hold decision making power.
Nourishment of Racism

White Supremacist Ideology

False belief that there exists a hierarchy of human valuation by “race” and that puts “White” people at the top of this fictional hierarchy as the ideal and the norm

white normativity: naturalises power asymmetries between white and nonwhite people as primarily meritocratic
Resistance to Racial Diversity

**Formal discrimination** involves behaviors that are illegal, overt, and obvious, and include examples such as excluding individuals from employment, advancement, resources, access, or other opportunities sometimes resulting in organizational discrimination cases.

**Interpersonal discrimination** involves the display of behaviors that are legal, more subtle, and often nonverbal in nature. There is typically no course of action to pursue for a victim facing interpersonal discrimination because the behaviors are often ambiguous, legal, and interactional in nature.
### Resistance to Racial Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Exclusion</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
<th>Social Distancing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Failing to involve people in activities, networking interactions, business meetings or decision-making.</td>
<td>Individuals might choose to maintain increased social distance from, reduce interaction times with, or smile less often at stigmatized targets.</td>
<td>Networks are central for one’s mobility, promotion, and emergence as leaders. Those who are excluded from these opportunities may find their career gets stalled compared to their colleagues who were able to participate in these opportunities.</td>
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Navigating Dominant and Subordinate Racial Identities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage I</th>
<th>Attitude toward Self</th>
<th>Attitude toward Others</th>
<th>Common Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naïve (Ages 0-4)</td>
<td>Oblivious and unaware. Beginning to learn social group memberships and social status as members of the dominant groups.</td>
<td>Oblivious and unaware. Beginning to learn social group memberships and social status as members of the excluded/target groups.</td>
<td>“Why is that person’s skin so dark?” “Why is their hair different?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE II Acceptance</td>
<td>Attitude toward Self</td>
<td>Attitude toward Others</td>
<td>Common Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive (unconscious internalization of superiority)</td>
<td>Oblivious, denial of differences, doesn't think of oneself as white, sees oneself as &quot;normal,&quot; good, unprejudiced, colorblind. Unaware that they think of themselves as superior.</td>
<td>Disinterest or naïve curiosity, open to people of color, &quot;Let's just all get along.&quot; Racists are sick and &quot;out there.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Let's be friends.&quot; &quot;We're alike.&quot; &quot;I don't see color.&quot; &quot;We're all just human.&quot; &quot;You're so articulate.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active (become more entrenched in assumed superiority)</td>
<td>Express superiority more directly. Feelings of tension and guilt may be denied by defending &quot;rugged individualism&quot; and &quot;bootstrap theories.&quot; Feelings of anger and fear.</td>
<td>Defensive, blames the victim, justifies the actions of own group. Behaviors may shift to modern racism. Tends to scapegoat others.</td>
<td>&quot;People of color are responsible for issues and my discomfort.&quot; &quot;There aren't race problems, just trouble-makers.&quot;</td>
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# White Racial Consciousness & Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE III Resistance</th>
<th>Attitude toward Self</th>
<th>Attitude toward Others</th>
<th>Common Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive (something happens, becomes aware of racism and the impact on oneself and others)</td>
<td>Questioning, acknowledging, wants the ideals of racial &quot;tolerance&quot; but may be unwilling to confront one's own racialized biases and privileges.</td>
<td>Curiosity, may romanticize people of color. May try to disassociate with whiteness and be with and &quot;act like&quot; people of color. Comfortable with intercultural approaches but not with issues of white unearned privilege and power.</td>
<td>&quot;I accept all minorities. I just don't feel comfortable around her.&quot; &quot;I want to help those people.&quot; Over-familiar, exoticize people of color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active (develop an awareness of their whiteness which is not necessarily positive)</td>
<td>Shame and denial that feed each other in a cyclical fashion, earlier beliefs about &quot;liberty and justice for all&quot; are shaken, may become overzealous.</td>
<td>Confusion, helplessness, anger. May distance oneself from confronting issues and from one's own group.</td>
<td>Discomfort, avoidance of contact is a strategy, or may want to be &quot;adopted&quot; by people of color.</td>
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# White Racial Consciousness & Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE IV Redefinition</th>
<th>Attitude toward Self</th>
<th>Attitude toward Others</th>
<th>Common Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Commitment to learning about one’s ethnic / racial background)</td>
<td>Emphasis on own growth, lots of relationship-building around being white with other white people, becomes interested in one’s own ethnicity, desire to feel good about being white.</td>
<td>May see other white people as the problem, wants to speak up but afraid to alienate others. Open to the anger of people of color, willing to see people of color more authentically and learn from them.</td>
<td>More possibilities for deeper, more authentic relationships. Questioning one’s identity: Who am I and who do I want to be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE V Internalization</td>
<td>Development of a positive white identity, challenging racism daily, sees oneself as anti-racist and working daily to understand white privilege, sees and analyzes issues at four levels.</td>
<td>Very accepting, actively connecting with people of color and other white anti-racist allies, seeking and developing authentic relationships across differences.</td>
<td>Analyzing issues at four levels, working at the intersections of multiple forms of oppression, working as allies across similarities and differences. Working for systemic and cultural change.</td>
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</table>

(positive white identity based in reality)
# Racially Minoritized Racial Consciousness & Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE I Naïve (Ages 0-4) (whiteness unmarked and unnamed)</th>
<th>Attitude toward Self</th>
<th>Attitude toward Others</th>
<th>Common Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oblivious and unaware. Beginning to learn social group memberships and social status as members of the excluded/target groups.</td>
<td>Oblivious and unaware. Beginning to learn social group memberships and social status as members of the dominant groups.</td>
<td>Unaware of the complex codes of appropriate behavior for members of their social group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE II Acceptance</td>
<td>Attitude toward Self</td>
<td>Attitude toward Others</td>
<td>Common Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive (Racial identity defined through the eyes of the white culture)</td>
<td>Unaware that they have unconsciously absorbed many of the beliefs and values of white culture. Shame, ambivalence.</td>
<td>Assimilate to be accepted by white people, actively or passively distances themselves from other people of color, idolizes whiteness.</td>
<td>“White is right.” “Some people of color are too preoccupied with race.” “I am a person of color, but it does not really mean much to me in my life.” Questions the competence of people of color in positions of authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active (Consciously identify with whites and their ideology)</td>
<td>Consciously internalizes learned inferiority. Learns to limit self based on internalized stereotypes. Plays host to their own oppression.</td>
<td>Collusive, actively accepts the harmful effects of the dominant. Isolates from other members of group. Seeks out approval of dominant group.</td>
<td>Opposed to civil rights laws and affirmative action because they “People of color are less successful due to their own laziness and pathological culture.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGE III: Resistance</td>
<td>Attitude toward Self</td>
<td>Attitude toward Others</td>
<td>Common Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive (Something happens, becomes aware of racism and the impact on oneself and others)</td>
<td>Begins questioning previously accepted “truths” about the way things are. Become more skilled at identifying the oppressive premises woven into the fabric of all aspects of their social experience.</td>
<td>Confusion, helplessness, anxiety, anger. Feels the impact of social rejection by white people, begins to see the impact of differences across race.</td>
<td>Racial inequity, injustice and invisibility slowly become more apparent. “Why are there so few people of color in positions of leadership?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active (develop an awareness of their whiteness which is not necessarily positive)</td>
<td>Begins to recognize differences across race, may conclude that many White people will not view them as equal and begins to view oneself as a member of a group targeted by racism.</td>
<td>Experience increased and sometimes overwhelming anger, pain, hurt, and rage. Often adopt a posture as anti-white. Identity is defined in opposition to the oppressor.</td>
<td>Avoidance of contact with white people is a strategy. “Why did it take me so long to learn about the injustices against my people?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Attitude toward Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage IV</td>
<td>Pride, everything of value must be racially or ethnically based or relevant to one's</td>
<td>Rage, white-centered anger begins to dissipate, other's thoughts and feelings across race</td>
<td>&quot;I'm Black, Latino, Indian, Asian and I'm proud.&quot; Self-confidence connected to knowledge of racial and cultural history and background. Compassion with self related to racial/ethnic understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redefinition</td>
<td>cultural/ethnic background. Glorification of cultural/ethnic background, explores</td>
<td>are not as important. Do not see interaction with whites as useful in their quest for a positive or nurturing identity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Commitment to learning about one's ethnic / racial background)</td>
<td>culture/ethnicity in community with other people of color, emerging security in a newly defined and affirmed sense of self.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage V</td>
<td>Resolution, empowerment, emphasis on own growth, lots of relationship-building around</td>
<td>Accepting of others, actively connecting with people of color and other anti-racist allies, seeking and developing authentic relationships across differences, hearing and making connections across oppressions.</td>
<td>More possibilities for deeper, more authentic relationships, Seeing issues at four levels, working as allies across similarities and differences. Committed to the work of intersectionality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td>one's own ethnicity, desire to feel good about being a person of color.</td>
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"What matters is not to know the world but to change it."

Frantz Fanon
Black Skin, White Mask
Leadership

Center Racial Equity

- Awareness of racial identity and associated history
- Valuing of disaggregated data
- Reflective and critical of taken-for-granted practices and their racial consequences
- Exercises agency to support racial equity
- Views the workplace and clinical setting as racialized spaces and actively self monitors interactions with racially minoritized global majority members
Leadership Center Racial Equity

**Solutions**

1) Establish a shared vocabulary

2) Identify race equity champions at the board and senior leadership levels

3) Name race equity work as a strategic imperative for your organization

4) Open a continuous dialogue about racial equity work

5) Disaggregate data

6) Develop an Organizational Racial Equity Plan

For Washington Civil Legal Aid Organizations and Partners for Equity & Justice Everywhere
Leadership

Dance with Resistance

- Explicitly Redefine the Boundaries and Rules for Acceptable Behaviors
- Create the Conditions for Conversations to Explore Differences
- Model an Understanding of and Relative Comfort with Diversity
- Be Authentic and Use Personal Experiences Strategically
Solutions

Leadership

Generative Dialogue & Presence

Politeness

Breakdown

Inquiry

Flow
The goal of a diversity initiative should be to reduce invidious distinctions based on group memberships.

Goal of diversity initiatives should be to make sure that people are able to enter and work in niches where their differences from others would be most useful to the organization.

Involves emphasizing the ways in which differences can contribute to mutual learning and growth, both for the members of the organization and the organization as a whole.
Solutions

Commit to an Accountability Culture

Accountability - being responsible for yourself, your intentions, words, and actions.

Accountable Spaces

- Fair distribution of bravery
- Real time change through action
- Equal onus on ALL to behave equitably and inclusively

✓ Transparency: Clarity about goals, desires, intentions, organizational structure, rationale for decision-making, and weaknesses.
✓ Participation: Actively engaging with people about the decisions that affect them (stakeholders).
✓ Reflection and Deliberation: Intentionally revisiting conversations to re-evaluate what the work has looked like and where it is headed.
✓ Responsiveness: The ability to make amendments and adjustments to issues raised by reflection and deliberation from leaders.
Strive for Organizational Justice

**Organizational Justice**

**Definition:** Overall perception of what is fair in the workplace

**Example:** I think this is a fair place to work

**Distributive Justice**
Perceived fairness of an outcomes

**Procedural Justice**
Perceived fairness of process used to determine outcomes

**Interactional Justice**
Perceived degree to which one is treated with dignity and respect
Leadership ranks hold a critical mass of racialized minorities, whose perspectives are shifting how the organization fulfills its mission and reinforcing the organization’s commitment to race equity.

Internal change around race equity is embraced. Staff members are supported in managing and integrating the changes, and the organization demonstrates courage to advance external outcomes.

Staff, stakeholders, and leaders are confident and skilled at talking about race and racism and its implications for the organization and for society.
Organizational Transformation

- Cultural norms and practices exist that promote positive and culturally responsible interpersonal relationships among staff. Individuals are encouraged to share their perspectives and experiences.

- Programs are culturally responsive and explicit about race, racism, and race equity.

- External communications reflect the culture of the communities served.
Communities are treated not merely as recipients of the organization’s services, but rather as stakeholders, leaders, and assets to the work.

Expenditures on services, vendors, and consultants reflect organizational values and a commitment to race equity.

Continuous improvement in race equity work is prioritized by requesting feedback from staff and the community.
"CHANGE IS HARD BECAUSE PEOPLE OVERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF WHAT THEY HAVE—AND UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF WHAT THEY MAY GAIN BY GIVING THAT UP."

JAMES BELASCO AND RALPH STAYER
Thank You

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