Overview

Racial trauma represents the emotional, physical, and psychological wounds of racially and ethnically diverse groups who have experienced or witnessed race-based stressors or discrimination (Coping with Racial Trauma, 2020). Race-based traumatic events on or off-campus may cause distress for students and put them at risk for increased levels of PTSD, anxiety, depression, and other forms of mental distress. In this webinar, sponsored by NACADA’s Social Justice Advising Community, the presenters will discuss the multifaceted effects of racial trauma on academic coaching, advising, and programming and recommend strategies to incorporate traumatic stress management resources into advising practice.

References


SELF-CARE ACTIVATION STRATEGIES

**Journaling:** Writing can be an effective way to process and understand our emotions. Consider keeping a journal, writing on sticky-notes or on your mobile device (although studies have shown that our brains flow more freely with pen and paper. Here is one practice to try:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I’m fearful of...</th>
<th>Is this fear true?</th>
<th>If true, what can I do or tell myself to better cope?</th>
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**4-7-8 Breathing Method:** We are always breathing. While it is true that we need to breathe to stay alive, few of us are conscious about how well we are breathing. Taking deep breaths helps us relax and decreases stress.

**STEPS:**

- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of 4.
- Hold your breath for a count of 7.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of 8.
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

Extracted from: [https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/self-care](https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/self-care)
RESPONDING TO MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BIAS

(Can be used alone or in combination)

► RESTATE OR PARAPHRASE.

“I think I heard you saying__________(paraphrase their comments). Is that correct?”

► ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OR MORE INFORMATION.

“Could you say more about what you mean by that?” “How have you come to think that?”

► ACKNOWLEDGE THE FEELINGS BEHIND THE STATEMENT. Express empathy and compassion.

“It sounds like you’re really frustrated/nervous/angry… ”

“I can understand that you’re upset when you feel disrespected.”

► SEPARATE INTENT FROM IMPACT.

“I know you didn’t realize this, but when you __________(comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because…………………………………………. Instead you could __________(different language or behavior.)”

► SHARE YOUR OWN PROCESS.

“I noticed that you __________(comment/behavior). I used to do/say that too, but then I learned…”

► EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS.

“When you __________(comment/behavior), I felt __________(feeling) and I would like you to…”

► CHALLENGE THE STEREOTYPE. Give information, share your own experience and/or offer alternative perspectives.

“Actually, in my experience……………………………”

“I think that’s a stereotype. I’ve learned that……………………………”

“Another way to look at it is……………………………”

► APPEAL TO VALUES AND PRINCIPLES.

“I know you really care about……………………….Acting in this way really undermines those intentions.”
► **PROMOTE EMPATHY.** Ask how they would feel if someone said something like that about their group, or their friend/partner/child.

  “I know you don’t like the stereotypes about ______ (their group), how do you think he feels when he hears those things about his group?”

  “How would you feel if someone said that about/did that to your sister or girlfriend?”

► **TELL THEM THEY’RE TOO SMART OR TOO GOOD TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.**
  “Come on. You’re too smart to say something so ignorant/offensive.”

► **PRETEND YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND.** As people try to explain their comments, they often realize how silly they sound.

  “I don’t get it…….” “Why is that funny?”

► **USE HUMOR.** Exaggerate comment, use gentle sarcasm.

  “She plays like a girl?” You mean she plays like Serena Williams?” Or Mia Hamm?

► **POINT OUT WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON WITH THE OTHER PERSON.**

  “I’m tired of hearing your Muslim jokes. Do you know he’s also studying ______ and likes to________? You may want to talk with him about that. You actually have a lot in common.”

► **W.I.I.F.T. (What’s in it for them).** Explain why diversity or that individual/group can be helpful/valuable.

  “I know you’re not comfortable with______ but they can help us reach out to/better serve other groups on campus/in the community.”

  “In the real world, we are going to have to work with all sorts of people, so might as well learn how to do it here.”

► **REMINDE THEM OF THE RULES OR POLICIES.**

  “That behavior is against our code of conduct and could really get you in trouble.”

Building a Trauma-Informed Advising Practice for Racially & Ethnically Diverse Students

Erica Brown-Meredith, Longwood University
Shantalea Johns, Wayne State University
Quentin Alexander, George Mason University
Locksley Knibbs, Florida Gulf Coast University

Session Objectives

To define and describe trauma.
To define and describe racial trauma.
To explain the impact of racial trauma on racially & ethnically diverse students.
To discuss strategies for advising racially & ethnically diverse students, who may experience racial trauma.

Learning Outcomes

Participants can identify signs of racial trauma.
Participants can apply strategies in advising to help students cope with racial trauma.
Participants can identify resources to assist students who experience racial trauma.
WHAT IS TRAUMA?

A negative life event or series of events or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Stimulus ➔ Filter ➔ Cortex ➔ Interpret ➔ Emotion ➔ Behavior

TRIGGER

RACISM

Racism Defined

Structural Racism

Racial in Higher Education

Stereotypes, Implicit Bias & Microaggressions in Higher Education

Trauma Informed Advising

RACISM DEFINED

Racism Describes a System of Power and Oppression/Advantage and Disadvantage Based on Race


STRUCTURAL RACISM

- Prejudice
- Xenophobia
- Internalized Oppression
- Privilege
- Belief about Race Influenced by Dominant Culture
RACISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Racist Assumptions
- Beliefs & Behaviors
- Conscious & Unconscious Bias

STEREOTYPES, IMPLICIT BIAS & MICROAGGRESSIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

IMPLICIT BIAS

Stereotypes, or characteristics attributed to specific groups of people, are not necessarily true for every member of that group. They may not be true for everyone within that group.

STRICTLY CALLED AS ASSUMPTIONS, STEREOTYPES OR MICROAGGRESSIONS, THEY CAN AFFECT INDIVIDUALS' PERCEPTIONS, BELIEFS, AND BEHAVIOR.

TYPES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Microinjury
- Microinvalidation
- Microassault
- Microexclusion

RACIAL TRAUMA DEFINED

Operational Definition of Racial Trauma
Signs of Racial Trauma
Impact of Racial Trauma
Effects of Racial Trauma

RACIAL TRAUMA

IMPACT OF RACIAL TRAUMA

Emotional & Physical Symptoms
BIPOC Students Experience Due to Everyday Occurrences/Exposure to Stressful Experiences of Racism/Discrimination.
**SIGNS OF RACIAL TRAUMA**
- headache
- memory loss
- body ache
- guilt
- insomnia

**IMPACT OF RACIAL TRAUMA**
- Negative mental health
- Increased hypervigilance
- Suspicion & increased sensitivity to threat
- Sense of a foreshortened future
- Maladaptive responses to stress
- Negative mood & depressive symptoms
- Hypertension

**DESENITIZATION TECHNIQUES IN ADVISING**
- Role of Advisor in Coping
- Culturally Competent Advising Strategies & Interventions

**Neuroplasticity**
Neuroplasticity is the ability for the brain to physically rewire itself. By changing your mindset through practices such as meditation, gratitude, acting selflessly, etc. you cause your brain to change physically and make new neural connections.
**VICARIOUS TRAUMA TOOLKIT MODEL**

Work-Related Trauma Exposure = Vicarious Trauma

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**PRACTICE OF EMPATHY**

Empathy - a form of social communication that recognizes and responds to another person's thoughts or feelings with an appropriate emotion (Hybels & Weaver, 2009).

Protective Factors of Resilience - resilience used to mitigate threatening situations as a means of protecting:

- Black girls & science classes
- Familial expectations/pride

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**SYSTEMATIC DESENSITIZATION TECHNIQUES**

**Step One:** TEACH RELAXATION SKILLS

A. Diaphragmatic Breathing
B. Visualization
C. Progressive Muscle Relaxation
D. Meditation and Mindfulness Techniques

**Step Two:** CREATE HIERARCHY OF FEARS

E. Identify Most Frightening Level of Fear (Scaling from 1-10)
F. Identify Least Frightening Level of Fear (Scaling 1-10)
G. List All Levels of Fear Between 1-10 by the Amount of Fear they Trigger
H. Develops Ways to Expose Student to Fears
I. Begin Exposure Training

**Step Three:** SLOWLY EXPOSE STUDENT TO FEARS

J. Address Levels of Fear Progressively Starting with the Least Frightening Fear

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**MY ROLE ADDRESSING RACIAL TRAUMA AS AN ACADEMIC ADVISOR**

1. Learn About the Impact and History of Systemic Racism.
2. Create and Support Safe Environments for Students to Express and Share Experiences.
5. Encourage and Empower Students as Leaders.
COPING WITH RACIAL TRAUMA & STRESS

TRAUMA-INFORMED ADVISING FRAMEWORK

Listen
Validate
Support

Accommodate
Advocate
Join

DAILY SELF-CARE TIPS

Take breaks to meditate through yoga, music, painting, or art therapies.

Take care of your body and get moving to boost energy, anxiety, or sadness.

Eat yourself to healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Find new ways to safely connect with family and friends, get support, and share feelings.

SELF-CARE ACTIVATION

Building a Trauma-Informed Advising Practice for Racially & Ethnically Diverse Students

Presenters:
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