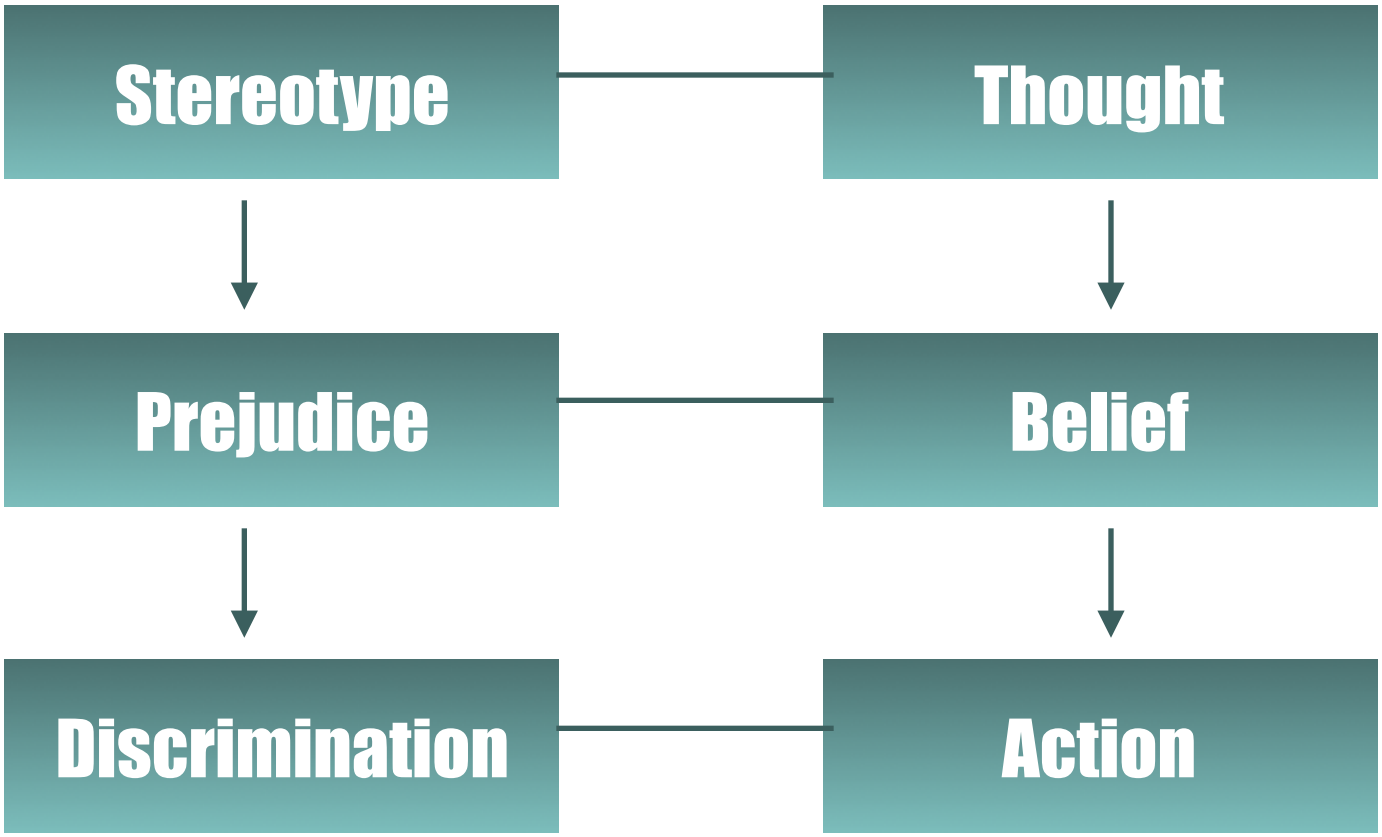
BEYOND DUALITY:
YOGA AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Session 4: Social Justice
Part II - Racism

Community Agreements

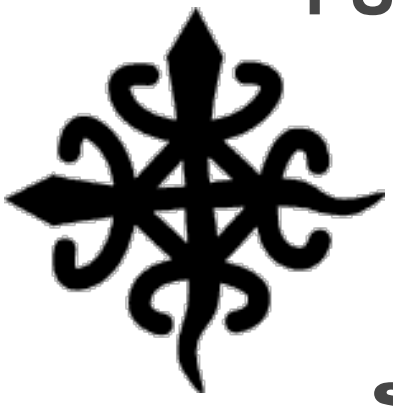
- All voices are Welcome. Remember that part of sharing is sharing time.
- Communicate using "I" statements. Please take personal responsibility.
- Always take a breath before responding.
- Come to this process with a sense of curiosity and wonder.
- Assume that we all have the best intentions and are doing the best we can.
- Notice any tendency to want to avoid conflict, often when we stay with conflict with compassion and curiosity, resolution is possible.
- Make self-care a priority, ask for support when you need it.

Session 3 Review



RACISM:

WHAT IT IS & WHY IT IS



FUNTUNFUNEFU - DENKYEMFUNEFU "Siamese Crocodiles"

Symbol of Democracy and Unity

The Siamese crocodiles share one stomach, yet they fight over food. This popular symbol is a ADINKRA SYMBOL reminder that infighting and tribalism is harmful to all who engage in it.

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DEFINITION

Racism is… The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others.The exact definition is controversial both because there is little scholarly agreement about the meaning of the concept "race".

The American Heritage College Dictionary http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism

Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race

1. Race is a modern idea.
2. Race has no genetic basis.
3. Human subspecies don't exist.
4. Skin color really is only skin deep.
5. Most variation is within, not between, "races."
6. Slavery predates race.
7. Race and freedom evolved together.
8. Race justified social inequalities as natural.
9. Race isn't biological, but racism is still real.
10. Colorblindness will not end racism.

Race: The Power of an Illusion – California Newsreel; www.pbs.org/race

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Racism is a philosophy based on a contempt for life. It is the arrogant assertion that one race is the center of value and object of devotion before which all other races must kneel in submission. It is the absurd dogma that one race is responsible for all the progress of history and alone can assure the progress of the future. Racism is total estrangement. It separates not only bodies but minds and spirits. Inevitably, it descends to inflicting spiritual and physical homicide upon the out-group."

From Where Do We Go Now: Chaos or Community, 1967

DEFINITION

Racism is…

Actions, practices or beliefs, or social or political systems that consider different races to be ranked as inherently superior or inferior to each other, based on presumed shared inheritable traits, abilities, or qualities. It may also hold that members of different races should be treated differently.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism

RACISM:
WHAT IT IS & WHY IT IS

"Dygenesis refers to the fact that if you have people with low IQs having more babies than people with high IQs, or having them at younger ages, you end up with a downward pressure on what you could call the human capital of the country.

And this is the kind of argument that was made by eugenicists in the past and was used as the justification for all kinds of elaborate schemes to encourage smart women to have babies and discourage not-so-smart women from having babies. Dick and I say, "OK, let's look at the data"—this is chapter 15 if I remember correctly, "We will look now at the data on dygenesis." And what we say is, "Well, there IS downward pressure."

Interview with Charles Murray, Author, 'The Bell Curve'

RACISM:
WHAT IT IS & WHY IT IS

Citing the work of Charles Murray, author of the controversial book , Bell Curve, Rep. Ryan said….

"There is a tailspin of culture, in our inner cities, in particular, of men not working and just generations of men not even thinking about working or learning the value and the culture of work. So there's a real culture problem here that has to be dealt with."

Paul Ryan, Chairperson, House Budget Committee & 2012 GOP Vice Presidential Nominee

DEFINITION

Racism is…

A policy, system of government, etc. based on a doctrine that inherent differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievement, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior.

Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

WHITE PRIVILEGE

"I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group. My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person or as a participant in a damaged culture. Whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative and average ….so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us". I see a pattern running through the matrix of White privilege, a pattern of assumptions passed on to me as a White person. My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make."

Dr. Peggy McIntosh is the associate director of the Wellesley Centers for Women and Author of the 1988 essay "Unpacking the Knapsack of White Privilege".

Food For Thought

"Racism is when you have laws set up, systematically put in a way to keep people from advancing…to stop the advancement of a people. Black people have never had the power to enforce racism, and so this is something that white America is going to have to work out themselves. If they decide they want to stop it, curtail it, or to do the right thing…then it will be done, but not until then."

- Spike Lee, Interview, 1990

Activity

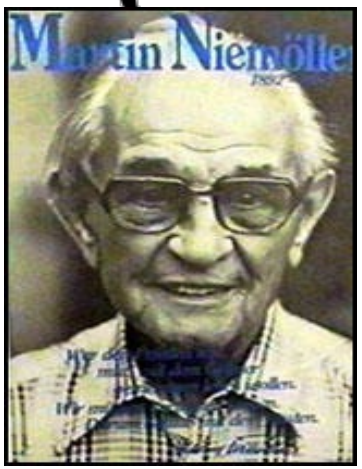
It is Saturday morning. You get up, go in the bathroom, look in the mirror and scream!! Your skin color has changed and you are now _____! You will spend 24 hours in this new skin color. Think seriously about this. Describe how your day-in-the-life will be different based only on the color of your skin.

DEFINITION

Racism is…

Power-based and flows from power to lack of power. It is directed from majority to those not in the majority and has its roots in economics. It can also be measured.

DiversityInc.com – Ask the White Guy



Food For Thought

"First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a communist;
Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out --because I was not a socialist;
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out--because I was not a trade unionists;
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because
I was not a Jew;
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak out for me."

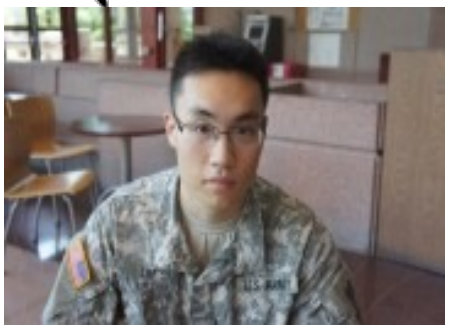
~

Martin Niemoller- prominent Protestant Pastor who opposed the Nazi regime, spent the last 7 years of Nazi rule in concentration camps – Germany 1937

Food For Thought

"If my theory of relativity is proven successful, Germany will claim me as a German and France will declare that I am a citizen of the world. Should my theory prove untrue, France will say that I am a German and Germany will declare that I am a Jew."

~ Albert Einstein



Food For Thought

"So I came to where I live now when I was like in sixth grade. I couldn't speak English because I just came from Korea, this kid was like, "GO BACK TO CHINA!"

It was so offending, because first of all, I'm not even Chinese. I get so pissed off when people are like, "Are you Chinese?"…It might be hard to distinguish between Asian races, but seriously, if that's the case they shouldn't even try."

DEFINITIONS

Individual Racism - an individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviors and is a "form of racial discrimination that stems from unconscious and unconscious, personal prejudice." (Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 329)

Systemic Racism - the policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups (Indian Residential Schools, Jim Crow Laws, Internment Camps). It manifests itself in two ways:

1. institutional racism: racial discrimination that derives from individuals carrying out the dictates of others who are prejudiced or of a prejudiced society (criminal justice system, federal housing authority, banks).
2. structural racism: inequalities rooted in the system-wide operation of a society that excludes substantial numbers of members of particular groups from significant participation in major social institutions (sport of golf, gifted classes).

http://www.ucalgary.ca/cared/formssofracism

Activity

*Institutional racism is about both the past and present. Select a few of the following dates and compare them with dates of current societal occurrences. Tell how they contradict, explain, and/or interact with each other:

1776 – Declaration of Independence claims "All men are created equal".

1787- Three-Fifths Compromise counts each Black slave as 3/5s of a person.

1942 – President Roosevelt signed executive order ordering the relocation of all Americans of Japanese ancestry to Concentration Camps.

1954 – Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court Decision mandates school integration.

1955 – Emitt Till, a 14-year old Black Boy, is tortured and murdered in Mississippi for whistling at a White girl.

1965 – Voting Rights Act abolishes racial disenfranchisement; Malcolm X murdered; Watts riots (LA) injures over 1,000 ; U.S enters Vietnam War.

2014 – U.S. Dept. of Education Civil Rights Data Collection released findings noting that Black pre-school children accounted for 18% of total population but 42% of suspensions and expulsions;

RACISM:
WHAT IT IS & WHY IT IS

Food For Thought

"Racism as a form of skin worship, and as a sickness and a pathological anxiety for America, is so great, until the poor Whites—rather than fighting for jobs or education--fight to remain pink and fight to remain White. And therefore cannot see an alliance with people that they feel to be inherently inferior."

Jesse Jackson is a civil rights leader, ally of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and community advocate.

How racism effects children: Internalized racism

The myth that young children are blind to race is just that—a myth!

Internalized racism is when one is conditioned to believe that whites are superior. (defense/ reversal)

A well-known example proving this is the 1947 Clark Doll Test, illustrating the negative effects of stereotyping and racial segregation. When given the choice between a black doll and a white doll, the black children disproportionately chose the latter. The dolls were identical except for skin color. Dr. Clark asked the questions in this order:

"Show me the doll that you like best or that you'd like to play with,"
"Show me the doll that is the 'nice' doll
"Show me the doll that looks 'bad',"
"Give me the doll that looks like a white child,"
"Give me the doll that looks like a coloured child,"
"Give me the doll that looks like you."

Th[illegible] its conclusions were used in the 1954 Brown vs. the Board of Education case, which led to the desegregation of American schools. In subsequent tests done in the 2000's, the results were the same with the only difference occurring when Barack Obama became U.S. President.

Food for thought

INCIDENT

Once riding in old Baltimore,
Heart-filled, head-filled with glee,
I saw a Baltimorean
Kept look straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small,
And he was no whit bigger,
And so I smiled, but he poked out
His tongue, and called me, “Nigger.”

I saw the whole of Baltimore
From May until December;
Of all the things that happened there
That’s all that I remember.

Countee Cullen, May 39, 1903-January 9, 1946), an American poet and leading figure in the Harlem Renaissance wrote this poem at age 8.

Food for thought

"You've got to be taught to hate and fear,
You've got to be taught from year to year,
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear,

You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade

You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate

You've got to be carefully taught."

~

Lyrics from South Pacific, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Songwriters

Food For Thought

"Kindness and compassion toward all living things is a mark of a civilized society. Racism, economic deprival, dog fighting and cock fighting, bull fighting and rodeos are cut from the same fabric: violence! Only when we have become nonviolent toward all life will we have learned to live well ourselves."

Cesar Chevez, (March 31, 1827-April 23, 1993) was an American farm worker, labor leader and civil rights activist, who, with Delores Huerta, co-founded the United Farm Workers.