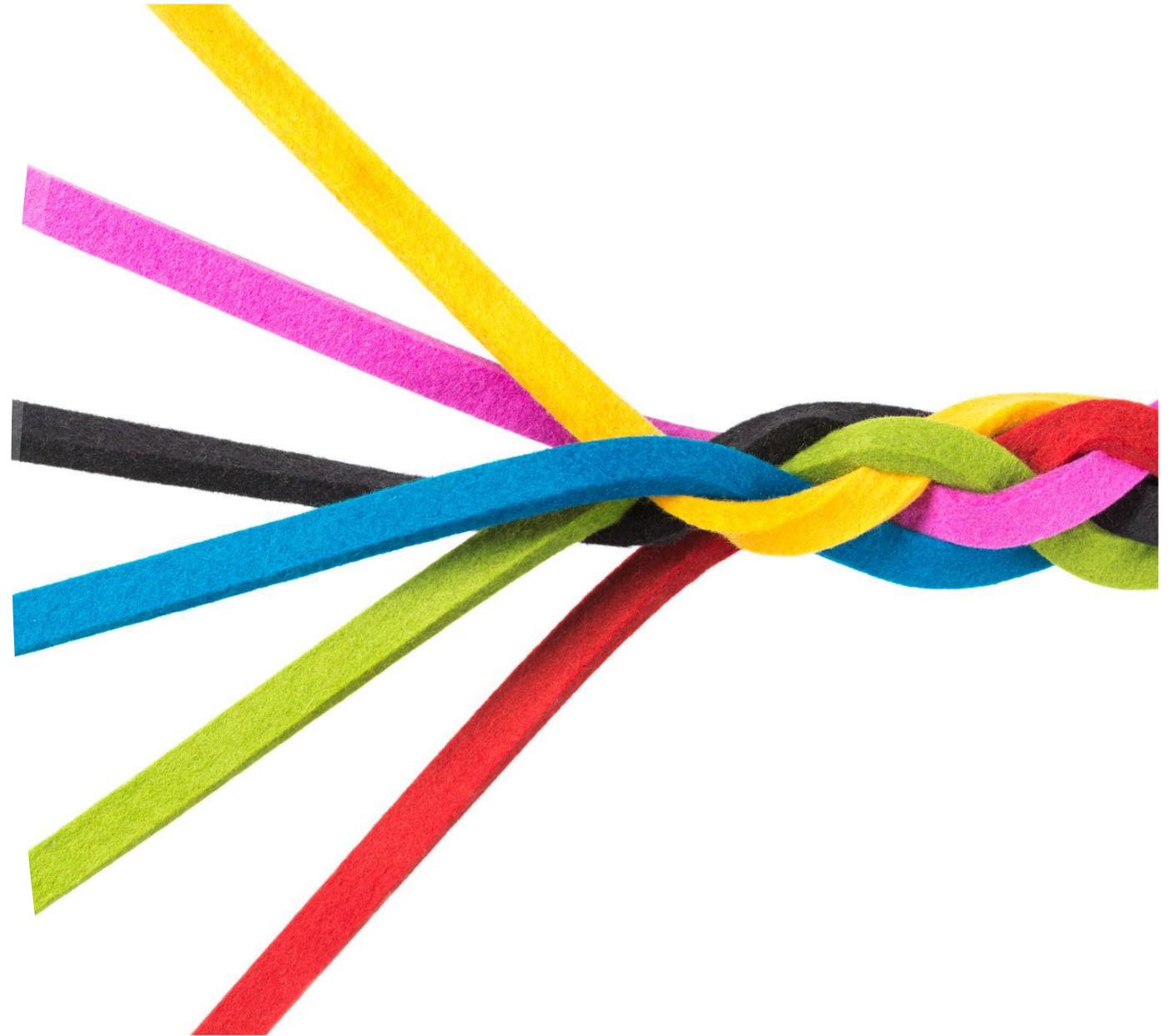




# Using Cultural Humility to Enhance Cross-Cultural Counseling Skills

**DR. KYAIEN CONNER, PHD, LSW, MPH**

**APRIL 9, 2021**



# Webinar Goals

- ▶ Identify the three main forms of racism and how they impact mental health
- ▶ Explore historical trauma and race-based trauma and their impact on health and mental health
- ▶ Differentiate between cultural competence and cultural humility
- ▶ Questions you can ask to assess your own level of cultural humility
- ▶ Identify strategies using cultural humility to build rapport with clients from diverse backgrounds
- ▶ Q & A

# Ground Rules for Webinar...

- ▶ Let's have a conversation
- ▶ Respect for other points of view
- ▶ No question is a bad question
- ▶ Feel free to interrupt me at any time
- ▶ Use non-stigmatizing language
- ▶ It is ok not to agree
- ▶ Take care of yourself

# A little Bit About Me.....



- ▶ Education
- ▶ Professional Experience
- ▶ Research
  - ▶ TIMB: Stories from the Black Community
  - ▶ PCORI Grant
  - ▶ NIMH R01
- ▶ Social Justice



What are the identities that best describe you?

ICEBREAKER FOR PRESENTATION  
(CHAT BOX)



## Social Identities

- ▶ Encompasses who we are and includes many facets
  - ▶ Race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, abilities, citizenship status, job status, etc.



# What is Race?

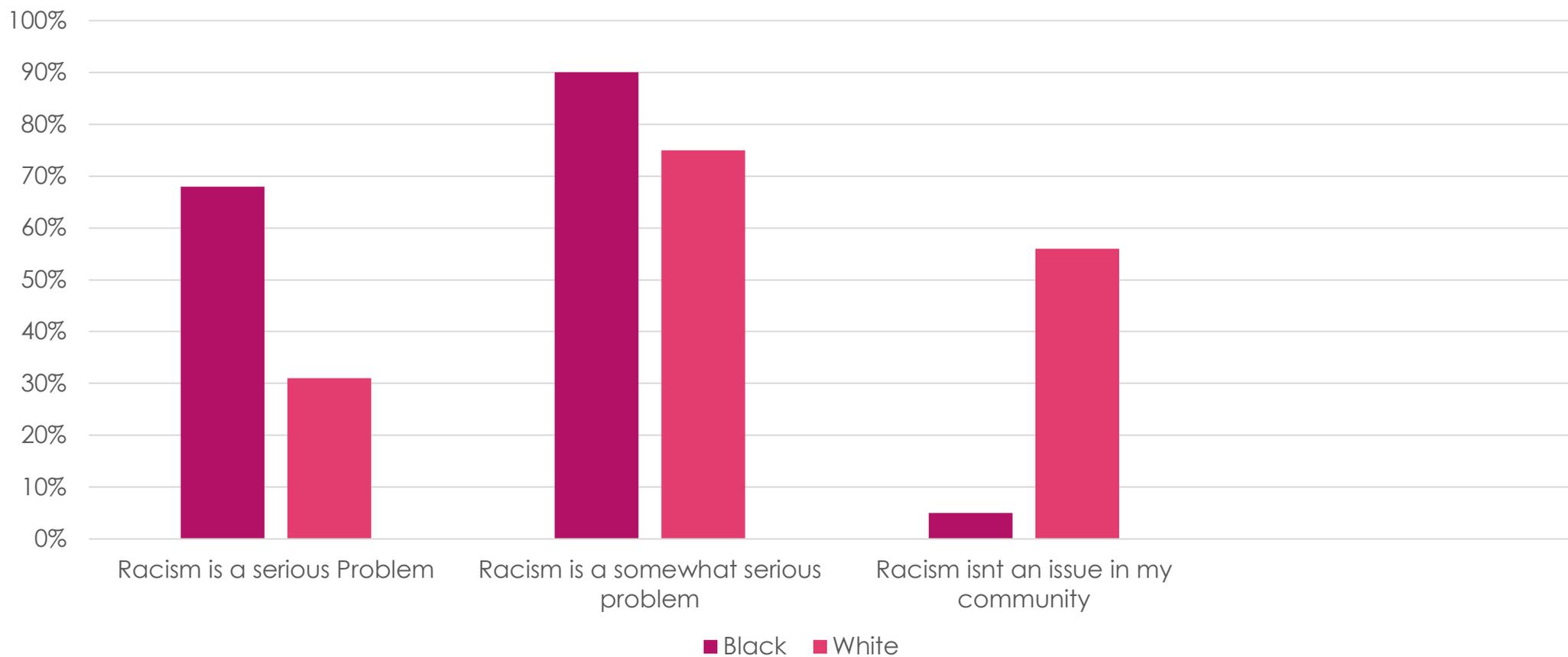


# Defining Racism

- ▶ An organized system of oppression that disadvantages certain racial groups designated to be inferior compared to those designated as superior
- ▶ Racism= Prejudice + Power
- ▶ Occurs on 3 levels:
  - ▶ Institutional/Systemic
  - ▶ Personally Mediated
  - ▶ Internalized



# Racial Differences in Beliefs about Racism

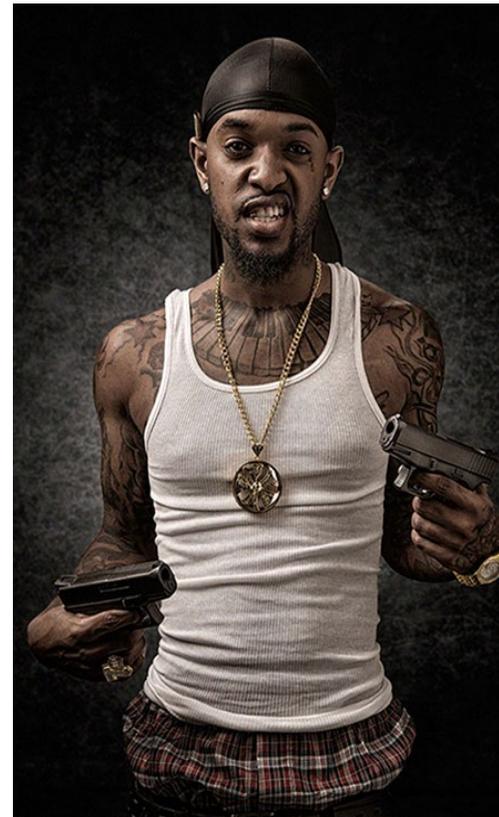




# The Role of Bias!

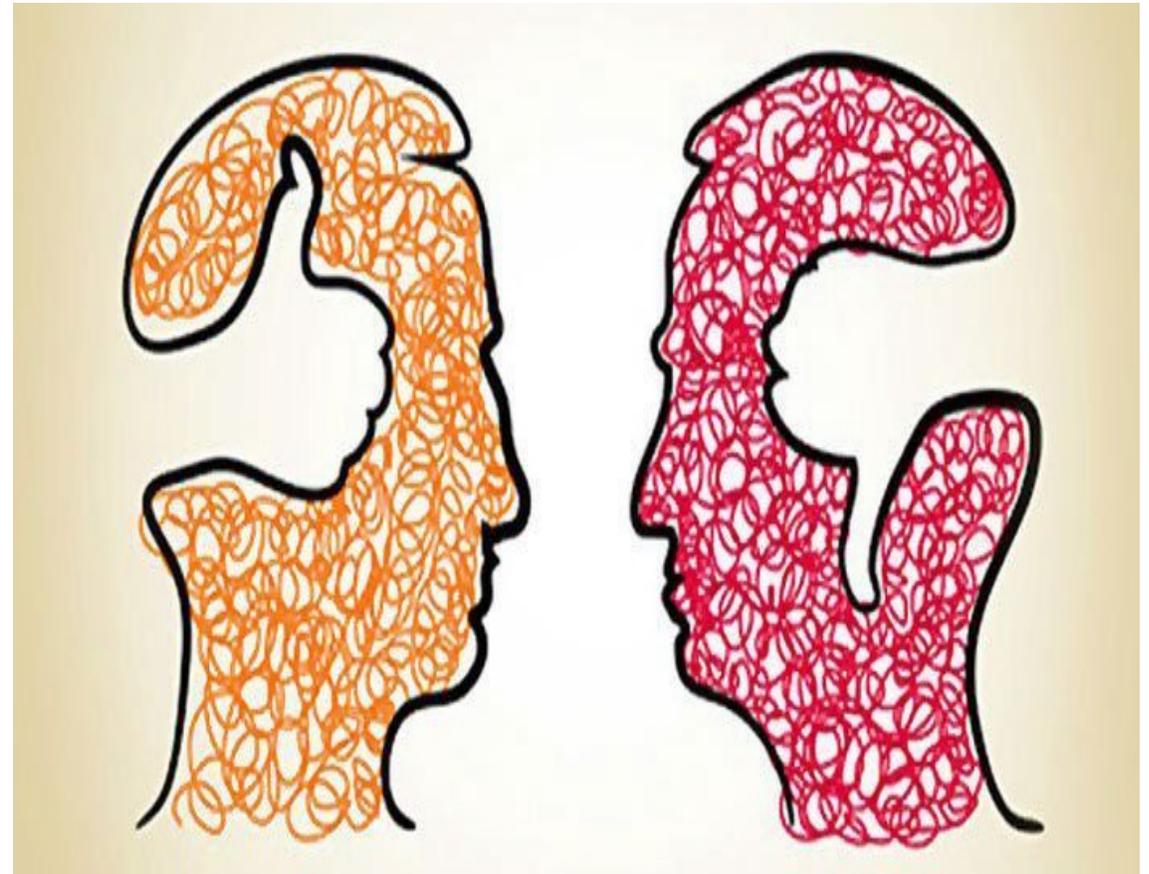
# Racial Socialization & Racial Identity Development

- ▶ Racial socialization refers to the ways that the media, caregivers and communities teach children about race
  - ▶ Direct or indirect messages about people, institutions, and ideologies
  - ▶ Impacts how you see yourself and others and biases that you have developed
- ▶ Racial socialization and identity development for people of color and white people are often different



# Bias

- ▶ Biases are normal and universal
- ▶ Everyone has a prejudice for and towards people, places, and things
- ▶ However, not everyone has the same level of self-awareness about their biases.
  - ▶ It is the lack of insight and awareness that can be dangerous.





# Understanding Bias

## Implicit Bias

- ▶ Automatic
- ▶ Unaware of bias
- ▶ Involuntarily activated
- ▶ Not easily acknowledged
- ▶ Unconscious attitudes and stereotypes that can manifest in the criminal justice system, workplace, school setting, and in the healthcare system
  - ▶ Racial profiling, racist mascots, confederate flags

## Explicit Bias

- ▶ Deliberate
- ▶ Aware of bias
- ▶ Voluntarily accessible
- ▶ Can be acknowledged
- ▶ Conscious attitudes and stereotypes that can manifest in the criminal justice system, workplace, school setting, and in the healthcare system
  - ▶ Hate crimes, burning crosses, racial slurs



# Implicit Bias Cont.

- ▶ Universal
- ▶ Pervasive
- ▶ Does not necessarily align with beliefs
- ▶ Tend to favor our in-group
- ▶ **Malleable** – we can change how we think and our biases through introspection and continued work



# Understanding the Impact of Historical and Race-Based Trauma



# Race-Based Trauma

- ▶ The cumulative negative impact of racism on the lives of people of color.
- ▶ Racial trauma can result from:
  - ▶ Major experiences of racism such as workplace discrimination or hate crimes,
  - ▶ Accumulation of many small occurrences, such as everyday discrimination and microaggressions.
  - ▶ Impact of historical trauma

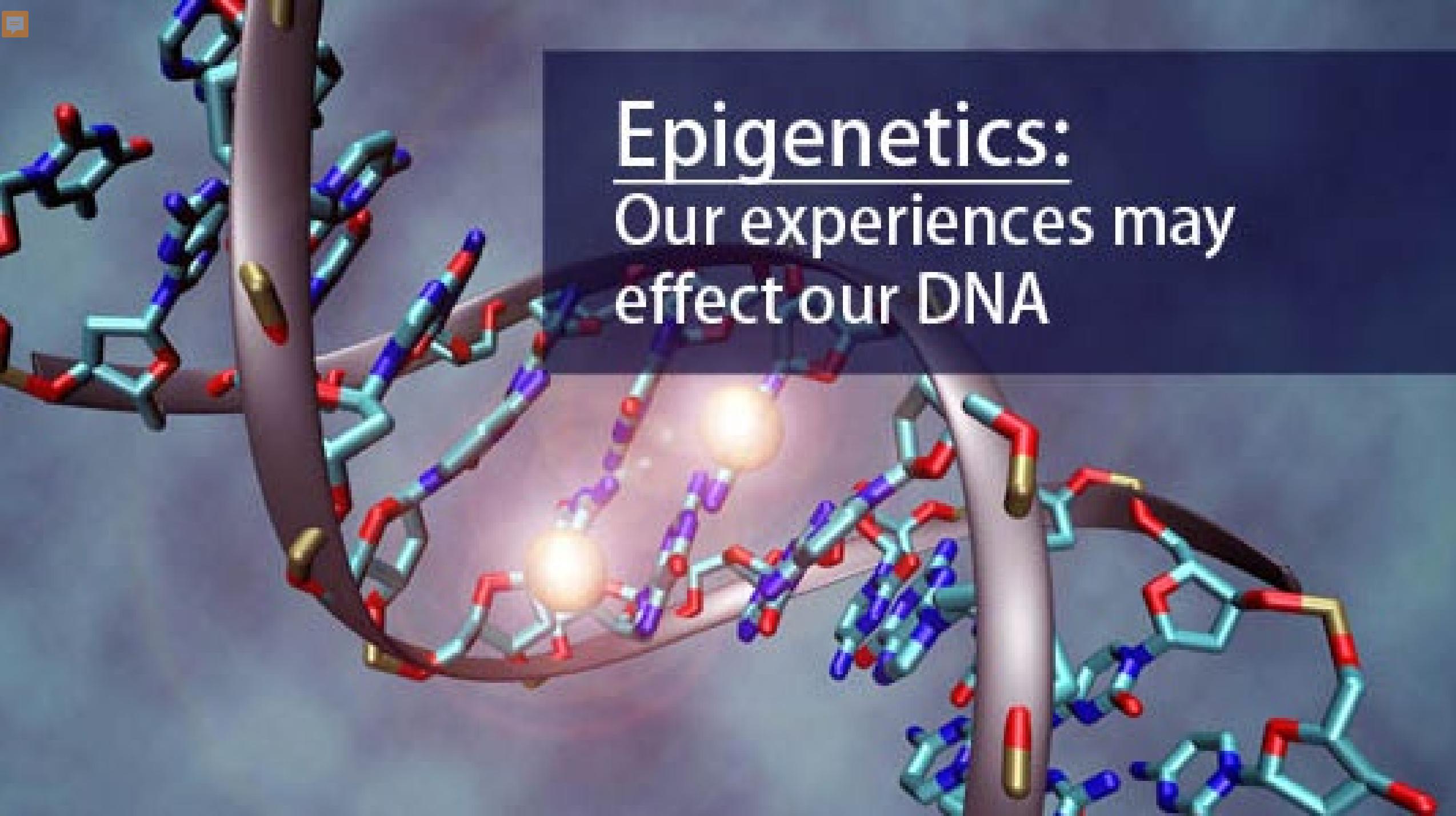


# Historical Trauma

- ▶ Historical trauma is an event, or a set of events, that happen to a group of people who share a specific identity.
- ▶ “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over one’s lifetime and from generation to generation following loss of lives, land and vital aspects of culture.”
- ▶ Each individual event is profoundly traumatic and when you look at events as a whole, they represent a accumulation of sustained cultural disruption and community destruction.

# Historical Trauma

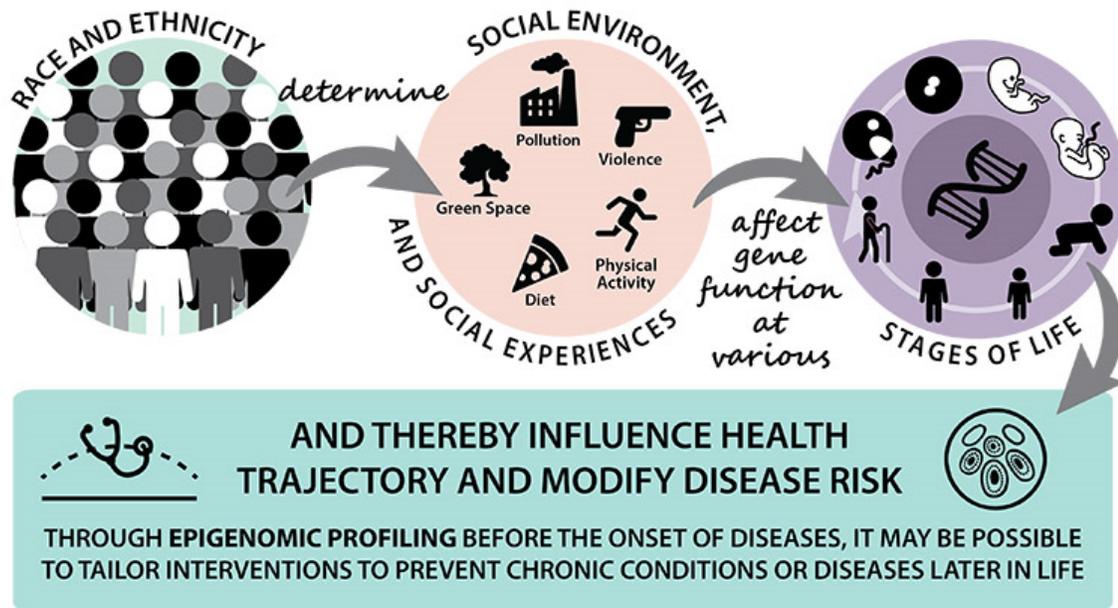




Epigenetics:  
Our experiences may  
effect our DNA

# The Impact of Historical Trauma

## What is Social Epigenomics?



- ▶ For Black people, multiple historically traumatic events occur over generations and join an overarching legacy of assaults.
- ▶ This higher stress vulnerability may also impair a person's ability to cope effectively with current stressors as they arise.

# Historical Trauma and Black People

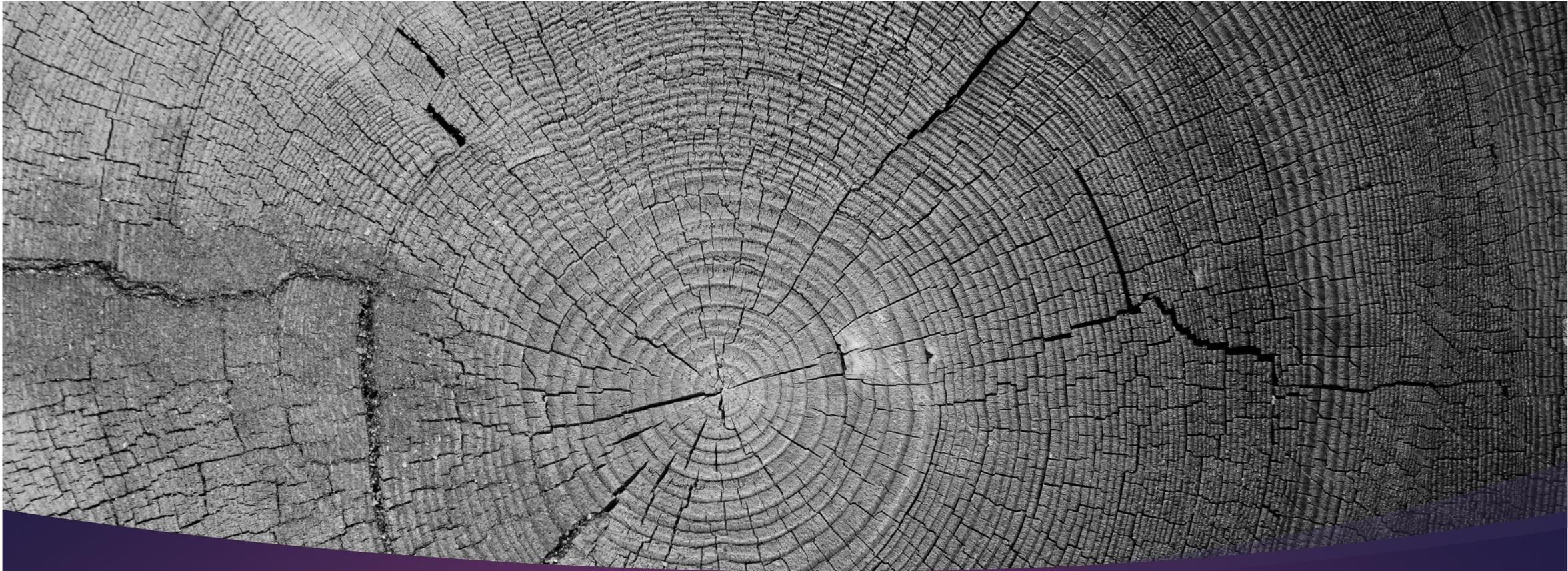


- ▶ There is growing body of evidence connecting biological and psychological expressions of historical trauma to the vast array health disparities leading to poor health outcomes for African Americans today.



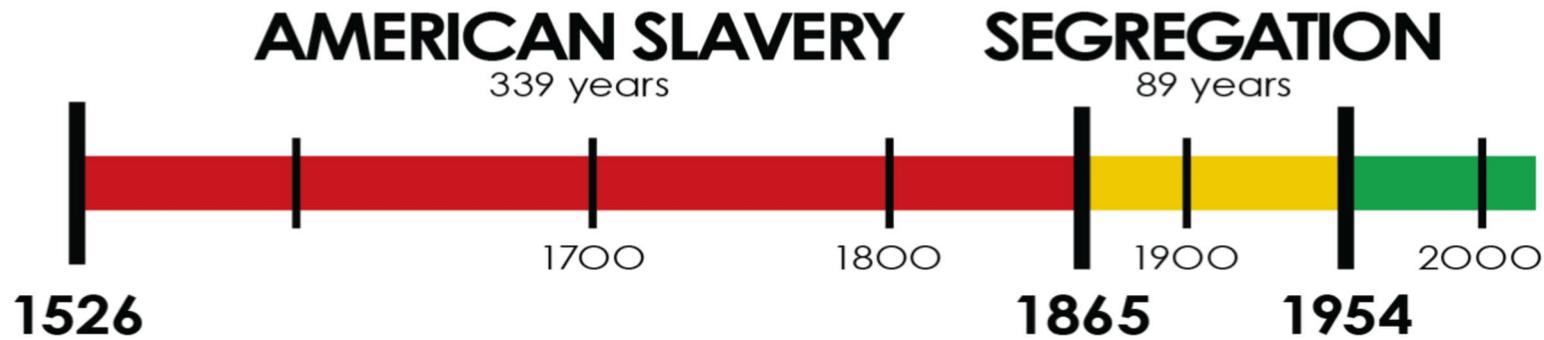
# Black Health Disparities impacted by Historical Trauma

- ▶ Cardiovascular Disease
- ▶ Diabetes
- ▶ Hypertension
- ▶ Cancer
- ▶ Obesity
- ▶ Infant Mortality
- ▶ Life Expectancy
- ▶ HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Severe and Persistent Mental Illness



# Is Historical Trauma about the Past?

# THE BLACK EXPERIENCE



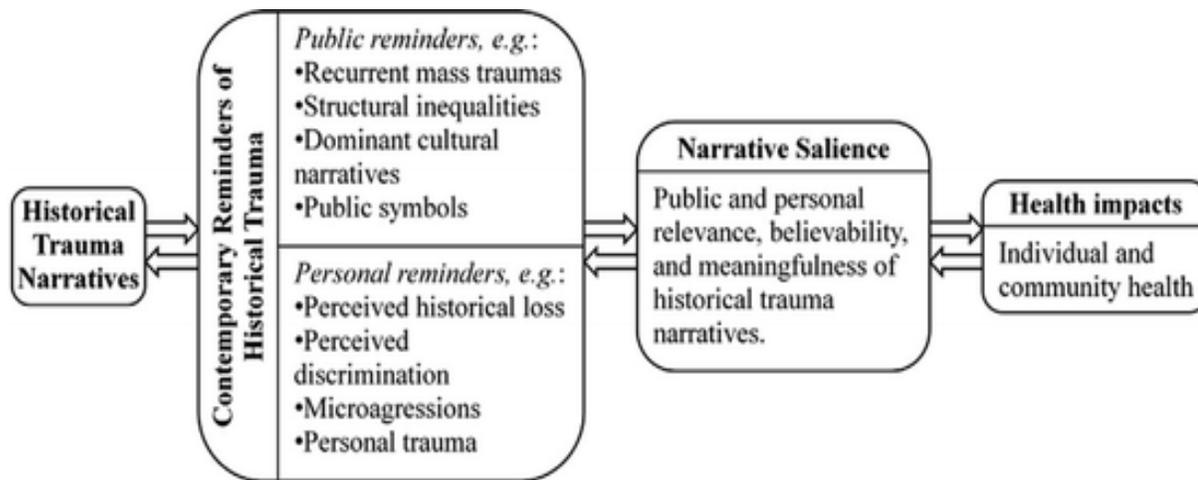
Civil rights struggles and killings of innocent blacks  
Crack cocaine pumped into black communities  
Mass incarceration of blacks  
Residential segregation  
School-to-prison pipeline, tracking, intra-school segregation, etc.  
Institutional racism  
Health disparities



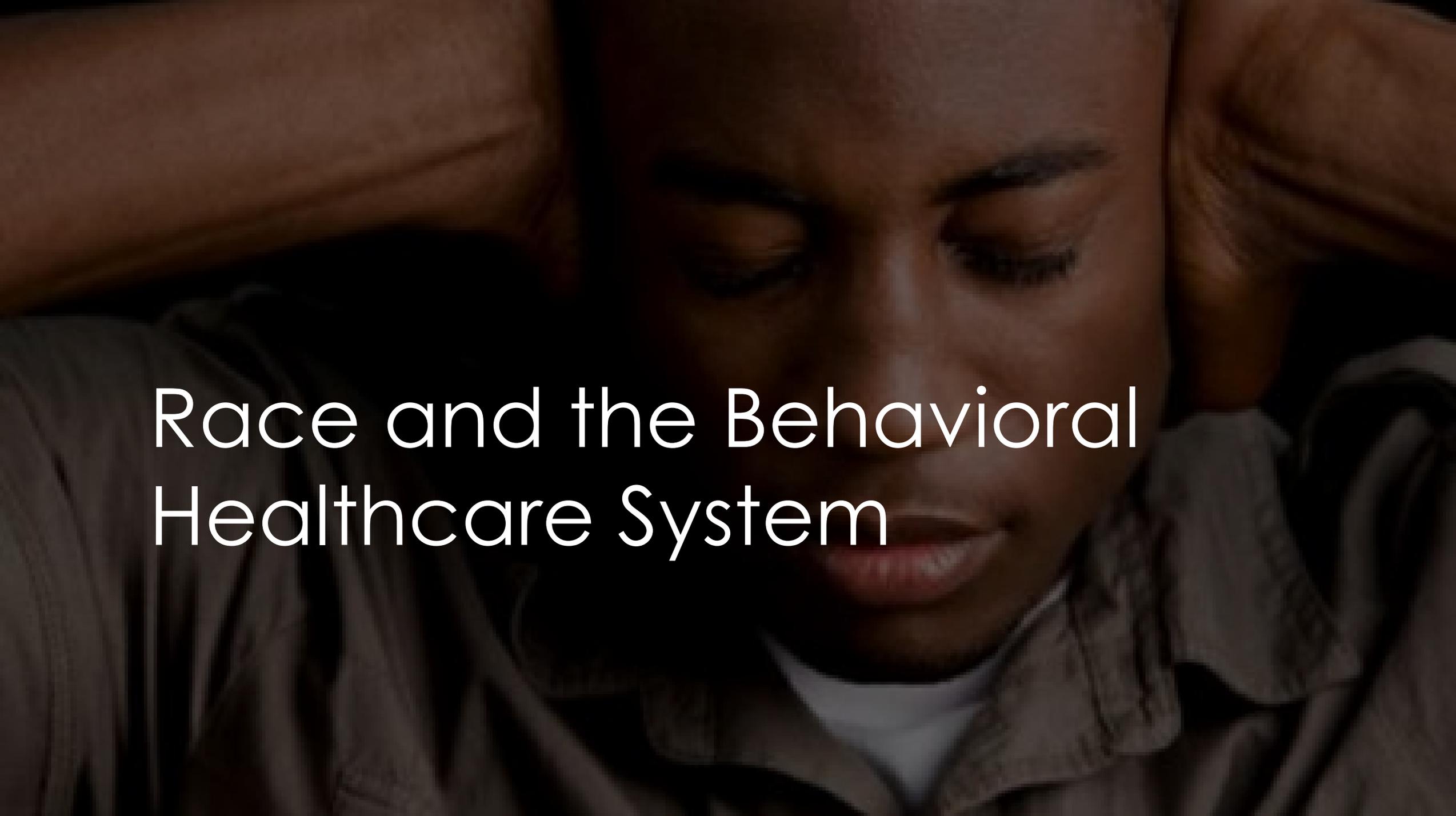
# Race Related Stress Model

- ▶ Historical Trauma
- ▶ Racism-related life events
- ▶ Chronic contextual Stress
- ▶ Collective experience of racism
- ▶ Vicarious Racism
- ▶ Daily racism micro-stressors= microaggressions

# Race Trauma and Impact on Mental Health



- ▶ Intrusive thoughts
- ▶ Altered arousal state
- ▶ Avoidance or numbing
- ▶ Mood symptoms
  - ▶ Depression
  - ▶ Anxiety
  - ▶ Anger
- ▶ Negative coping
- ▶ Physical symptoms



# Race and the Behavioral Healthcare System



# Mental Health Symptoms

- ▶ According to the Office of Minority Health, Black adults in the U.S. are 20% more likely than White adults to report persistent symptoms of emotional distress, such as sadness, hopelessness, and feeling like everything is an effort.
- ▶ While prevalence rates are largely similar, Black adults more likely to report severe and persistent illness that is resistant to treatment.
- ▶ Black adults living below the poverty line are more than twice as likely to report serious psychological distress than those living above it.



# Mental Health Service Utilization

- ▶ Despite the need, only 1 in 3 Black adults who need mental health care receive it.
  - ▶ Half the rate of non-Hispanic Whites
- ▶ More likely to delay seeking assistance until symptoms are severe or in crisis.
- ▶ More likely to terminate treatment prematurely
- ▶ More likely to be seen in the ER for issues likely treatable in outpatient settings.



# Racial and Ethnic Minorities and SMI

- ▶ Use of psychiatric emergency services rather than community support services
- ▶ Involuntary hospitalizations as a result of seeking care
- ▶ Emergency treatment as a result of interactions with law enforcement
- ▶ Over-diagnosis of schizophrenia
- ▶ Higher doses of antipsychotic medications
- ▶ less likely to receive interventions for co-occurring depression.



# Under-Utilization of Treatment

- ▶ Overall, despite the need...racial and ethnic minorities are less likely than their white counterparts to seek mental health treatment, to attain mental health treatment and to be retained in mental health treatment.
  - ▶ WHY?

# Barriers to Mental Health Treatment...

- ▶ Race, ethnicity, culture, language, geographic region, and other social factors affect the perception, availability, utilization, and even outcomes of mental health services.
  - ▶ Physical Barriers
  - ▶ Psychological Barriers
  - ▶ Cultural Barriers
  - ▶ Treatment Barriers

# Physical Barriers

- ▶ Cost and Insurance
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Transportation/childcare
- ▶ Available community services
- ▶ Timeliness of service availability
- ▶ Disproportionately in groups with little access/lack of quality care



# Psychological Barriers

- ▶ Stigma and shame
- ▶ Negative attitudes about treatment
  - ▶ Attitudes stem from confidence in the treatments and providers, belief in god and spirituality, and myths held about MH treatment.
- ▶ Fear
- ▶ Mistrust of mental health services and providers:
  - ▶ Past negative experiences with the mental health treatment system
  - ▶ Can be personal or experiential (e.g. Tuskegee)
  - ▶ Research findings suggest that minorities have reason to mistrust...

# Cultural Barriers

- ▶ Language barriers
- ▶ Cultural norms about help-seeking
- ▶ Interventions may not always be in line with cultural norms and values:
  - ▶ e.g. Individualism, self-determinism, assertiveness
- ▶ Clinicians must be aware of cultural formalities
  - ▶ e.g. Personal contact, family members, closeness, eye contact
- ▶ Lack of cultural competence among providers



# Treatment Barriers

- ▶ Many members of racial and ethnic minorities groups use alternative or culturally traditional forms of health care.
  - ▶ Often not integrated into mainstream treatments
- ▶ Misdiagnosis or lack of culturally responsive instruments
  - ▶ Ex: Schizophrenia
  - ▶ Differences in metabolic rates of psychotropic medications
- ▶ Lack of Racial Match
  - ▶ And/or lack of attention to racial differences
- ▶ Microaggressions in counseling sessions



BLACK LIVES MATTER



Cultural awareness, competence and humility are strategies for helping us work effectively with diverse populations...

# Cultural Awareness

- ▶ Having a firm grasp of what culture is and having insight into intracultural variation
- ▶ Understanding how people acquire their cultures and culture's important role in personal identities and every aspect of one's life.
- ▶ Cultural awareness helps you modify your behaviors to respond to the needs of others while maintaining a professional level of respect, objectivity and identity.

# PUT YOUR RESPONSE IN THE CHAT

Which way of greeting are you more comfortable with?

A



C

B



D



# Cultural Competence

- ▶ The term cultural competence is used to describe a set of skills, values and principles that acknowledge, respect and work towards optimal interactions between an individual and the various racial, ethnic and cultural groups that an individual might encounter.
- ▶ Cultural competence comprises four components (MCC's):
  - ▶ Cultural Awareness
  - ▶ Attitude towards cultural differences,
  - ▶ Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews,
  - ▶ Cross-cultural skills



# An example of the Importance of Cultural Competence

## Dominant Values

- ▶ Self is the priority = Take care of #1
- ▶ Time (linear; use every minute)
- ▶ Be aggressive/assertive
- ▶ Skepticism and logical thinking valued
- ▶ Have a rule for every contingency
- ▶ Discipline your own children

## Traditional Native American Values

- ▶ Tribe & extended family before self
- ▶ Time – a right time/place, non-linear
- ▶ Be patient
- ▶ Great mystery – the intuitive honored
- ▶ Few rules are best, loose written and flexible
- ▶ Children are a gift to be shared with others and can be disciplined by the community



# Moving from Cultural Competence to Cultural Humility

- ▶ **Definition:** A lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs, values, biases and cultural identities.
  - ▶ Lifelong learning & critical self-reflection
  - ▶ Recognizing and challenging power imbalances for respectful partnerships
  - ▶ Listen, ask questions and be open to cultural differences



# Cultural Competence VS. Cultural Humility

Attributes	Cultural Competence	Cultural Humility
View of Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group traits</li><li>• Group label associates group with a list of traditional traits and practices</li><li>• De-contextualized</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unique to individuals</li><li>• Originates from multiple contributions from different sources</li><li>• Can be fluid and change based on context</li><li>• Different combinations</li></ul>
Culture definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minorities of ethnic and racial groups</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Different combinations of ethnicity, race, age, income, education, sexual orientation, class, abilities, faith, and more</li></ul>
Traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Immigrants and minorities follow traditions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Everyone follows traditions</li></ul>
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Majority is the norm; other cultures are different</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Power differences exist and must be recognized and minimized</li></ul>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of stereotyping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of respect</li></ul>
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Differences based on group identity and group boundaries</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual focus of not only of the other but also of the self</li></ul>
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A defined course or curriculum to highlight differences</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An ongoing life process</li><li>• Making bias explicit</li></ul>
Endpoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Competence/expertise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexibility/humility</li></ul>



# Multicultural Orientation and Cultural Humility

- ▶ MCO consists of two major domains: the client's perception of the counselor's level of *cultural humility*, and the degree to which the counselor addresses culture and *cultural opportunities* in the session.
- ▶ Take advantage of cultural opportunities
  - ▶ An essential feature is rooted in the client's perspective.
- ▶ Emerging research on MCO demonstrates that adopting an interpersonal stance that is focused on cultural opportunities and cultural humility has a positive effect on client outcomes and offers a practical framework for cultural engagement with clients in sessions.

# Take a few minutes to think about the following?

....

- ▶ How does my cultural identity and privilege limit my ability to see or understand lack of privilege and marginalization?
  - ▶ Have I fully come to terms with my own privilege?
- ▶ What are my gut reactions to clients who have different cultural backgrounds than my own?
  - ▶ What are some biases I may hold?
- ▶ How do I create space for or welcome clients to explore their cultural identities?
  - ▶ Or, have I told clients I don't see their color?
- ▶ How open am I to my clients' feedback about my level of cultural competence and cultural responsiveness?
  - ▶ Do I even ask?

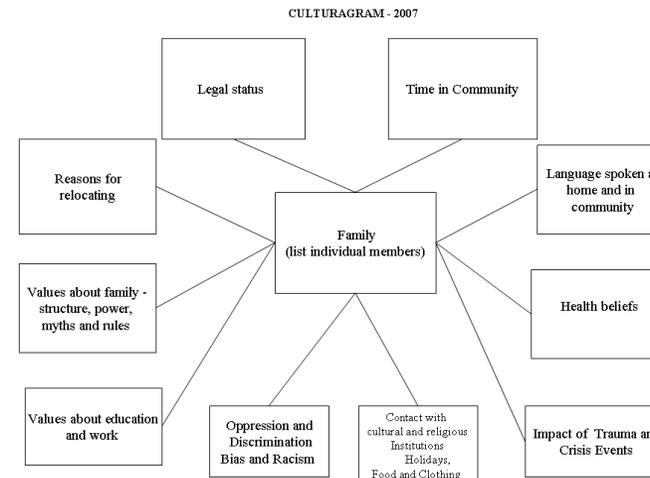
# Using Cultural Humility to Enhance Cross-Cultural Counseling Skills

## Cultural Humility in Practice

- ▶ For yourself
  - ▶ Continuous self-assessment
  - ▶ Use what you know to teach others
  - ▶ Don't be defensive, even the best clinicians make mistakes
- ▶ For your clients in session :
  - ▶ Approach issues of race and diversity upfront
  - ▶ Take advantage of Cultural Opportunities
  - ▶ Use dynamic sizing
  - ▶ Create a culture of feedback

## Tools....

- ▶ Social Identities Wheel
- ▶ Culturagram
- ▶ Race-based trauma inventory



Q & A

Thank you!!!!!!

Dr. Kyaien O. Conner

[KOCONNER@USF.EDU](mailto:KOCONNER@USF.EDU)

