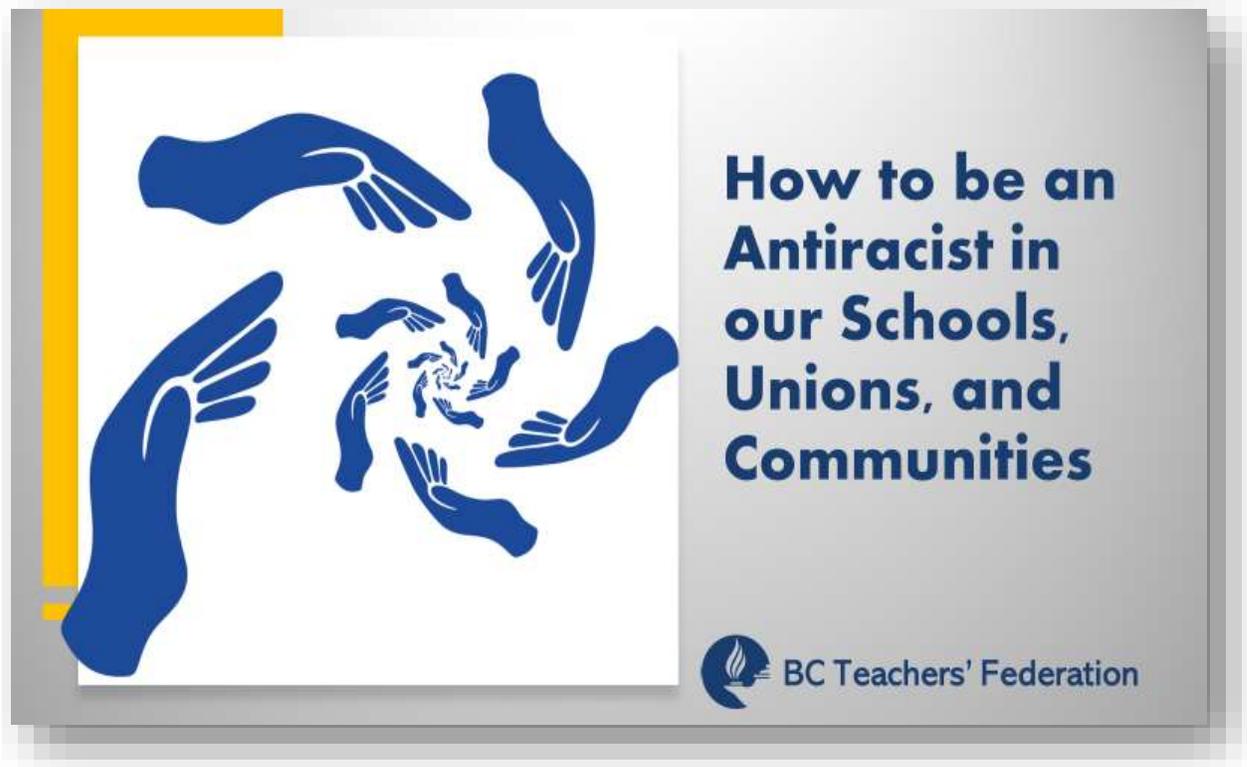


**How to be an Antiracist in our Schools,
Unions, and Communities
Virtual Workshop
(3 hours, including off-screen working session)
Handouts**



Revised July 2020

**BC Teachers' Federation
100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2**

Stream of Consciousness: What is Racism?

Racism is...

Definitions

White supremacy: The academic term used to capture the all-encompassing dimensions of White privilege, dominance, and assumed superiority in mainstream society. These dimensions include ideological, institutional, social, cultural, historical, political, and interpersonal.

Oppression: The discrimination of one social group against another backed by institutional power. Oppression occurs when one group is able to enforce its prejudice throughout society because it controls the institutions. Oppression occurs at the group or macro level and goes well beyond individuals. Sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and heterosexism are forms of oppression.

Discrimination: Action based on prejudice. When we act on our prejudices, we are discriminating.

Prejudice: Learned pre-judgement about members of social groups to which we don't belong. Prejudice is based on limited knowledge or experience with the group. Simplistic judgments and assumptions are made and projected onto everyone from that group.

Internalized oppression: Believing in, and acting out, (often unaware of) the constant messages circulating in the culture that you and your group are inferior to whichever group is dominant in relation to yours, and that you are deserving of your lower position.

Intersectionality: The understanding that we simultaneously occupy multiple social positions and that these positions do not cancel each other out; they interact in complex ways that must be explored and understood.

Stereotypes: Reduced or simplified characteristics attributed to a group (elementary school teachers are nurturing), or a feature of some members of a group that stands out (Canadian speech patterns, American eating habits).

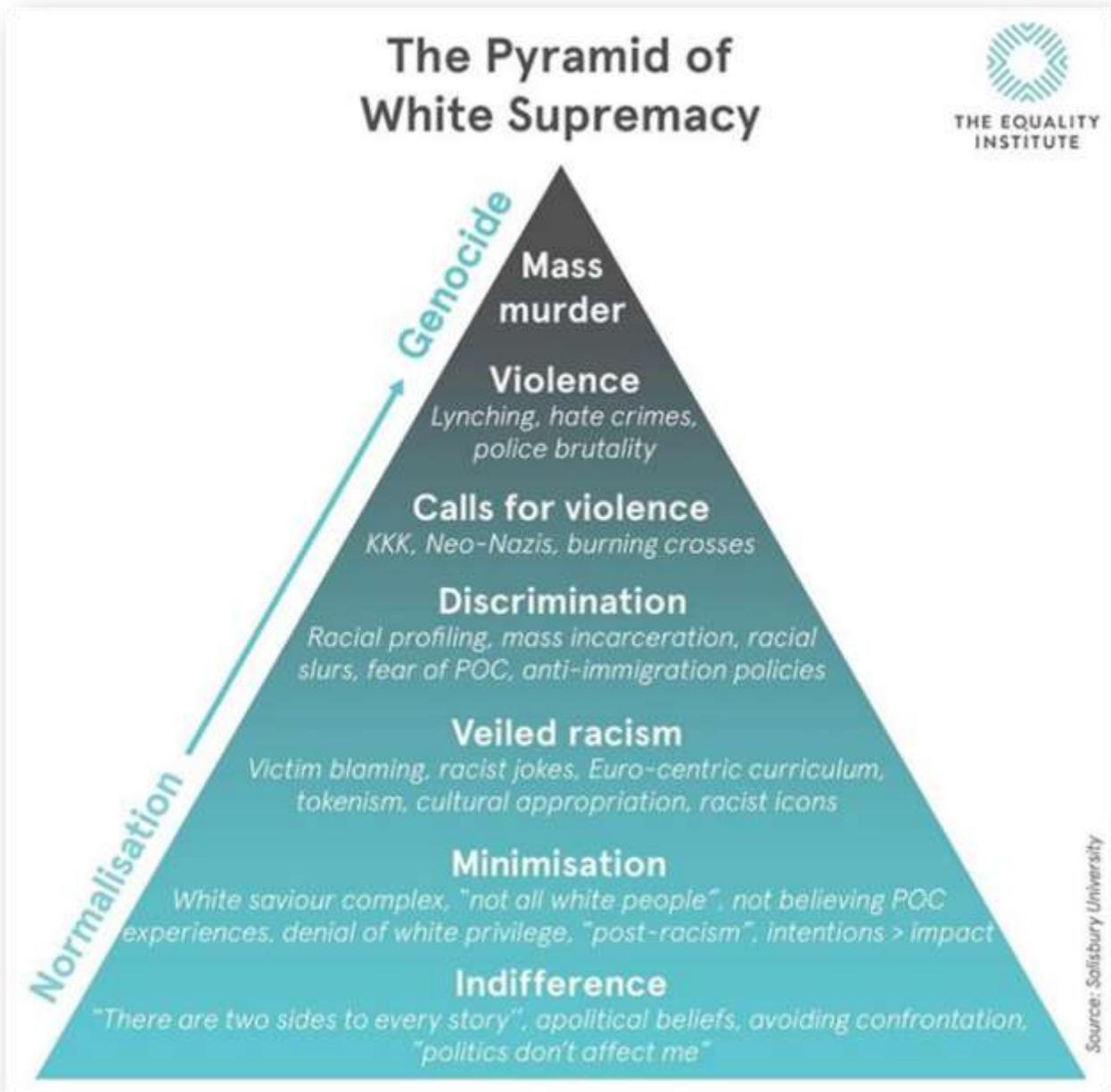
Privilege: The rights, advantages, and protections enjoyed by some at the expense of, and beyond the rights, advantages, and protections available to others.

Allyship: An active, consistent, and challenging practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to work in solidarity with a marginalized group.

Sources:

All terms except "allyship": from *Is Everyone Really Equal: An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*, O. Sensay and R. DiAngelo, Oct. 15, 2011

Definition of allyship: PeerNet BC <http://www.peernetbc.com/what-is-allyship>



Source: Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (SPAN) and Ellen Tuzzolo

Strategies for Success

- 1. State your intentions.**
 - Be clear and specific, e.g., “I want to talk to you about comment/behavior X, because...”
- 2. Remember your priorities.**
 - Are you intervening because there is a need for immediate action?
 - Do you want to help someone understand racism?
 - Are you righting a wrong? Has there been a previous incident that you are trying to address?
- 3. Do your research.**
 - Before you step in to talk about race and racism, it’s important that you educate yourself by reading and engaging with resources by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC). This is not an invitation to ask BIPOC folks in your life to be the expert in antiracism.
- 4. Avoid oppressing other groups in your antiracism work.**
 - For more information, see the Privilege Wheel in your poster handouts package.
- 5. Be prepared to face defensiveness.**
 - This item is covered in Handout 5, Dr. Robin DiAngelo’s “Change the Rules of (White) Engagement.”
- 6. Avoid using “you.” Stick to “I” statements.**
 - Remember the definition of racism. Racism is a position, not an identity!
- 7. Invite others to be open to learning.**
 - Antiracism is not about “winning” the conversation. Ask yourself: are you trying to be right? Or trying to do better? Think back to items 1 through 6.
- 8. Do not force BIPOC into discussions of race.**
 - Recognize when it is appropriate to support a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Person of Colour) and when it will cause further harm. For example, if someone says something problematic in front of a BIPOC colleague named Jerome, avoid saying, “I don’t think Jerome appreciates that comment, do you, Jerome?” Speak for yourself, not for Jerome.
- 9. If you are White, avoid speaking on behalf of BIPOC.**
 - If you are BIPOC, speak up when you feel safe to take a risk or supported by others. There is strength in numbers, but we must also be courageous. BIPOC does have power!

Adapted from: “White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement,” Dr. Robin DiAngelo, (www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/diangelo-white_fragility_and_the_rules_of_engagement.pdf) and *So you want to talk about race*, Ijeoma Oluo (2018), pp 45–48.

Rules of (White) Engagement

Dr. Robin DiAngelo outlines a number of defensive strategies employed by White people when they are faced with feedback about their racist behaviour, which she calls the Rules of White Engagement. Because of the pervasiveness of the system of White supremacy and superiority, it is not only White people who play by these rules; BIPOC people can also employ these strategies. Giving feedback to others when their racist behaviour needs correcting is not easy. But silence is complicity.

It is far more common for sincere white people to agonize over when and how to give feedback to a fellow white person, given the ubiquitousness of white fragility. White fragility works to punish the person giving feedback and essentially bully them back into silence. It also maintains white solidarity—the tacit agreement that we will protect white privilege and not hold each other accountable for our racism. When the person giving the feedback is a person of color, the charge is “playing the race card” and the consequences of white fragility are much more penalizing. – Robin DiAngelo

Activity

Examine the “Rules of White Engagement.” Using Ijeoma’s Oluo’s *Strategies for Success*, or other strategies you know, create some responses to the defensive answers you may get when trying to address racism and racist ideas.

Rules of Engagement (i.e., defensive excuses)	Responses
<p>Don’t do it.</p> <p>Do not give me feedback about my racism under any circumstance, but if you do, I expect you to...</p>	
<p>Use proper tone.</p> <p>Proper tone is crucial—feedback must be given calmly. If there is any emotion in the feedback, the feedback is invalid and does not have to be considered.</p>	

<p>Trust that I'm not racist.</p> <p>There must be trust between us. You must trust that I am in no way racist before you can give me feedback on my racism.</p>	
<p>Be sure we have no other issues.</p> <p>Our relationship must be issue-free—if there are issues between us, you cannot give me feedback on racism. Our unsettled business nullifies your right to call me out.</p>	
<p>Give it immediately.</p> <p>Feedback must be given immediately, otherwise it will be discounted because it was not given sooner.</p>	
<p>Give it privately.</p> <p>You must give feedback privately, regardless of whether the incident occurred in front of other people. To give feedback in front of anyone else—even those involved in the situation—is to commit a serious social transgression. The feedback is thus invalid.</p>	
<p>Be indirect.</p> <p>You must be as indirect as possible. To be direct is to be insensitive and will invalidate the feedback and require repair.</p>	

<p>Keep me safe.</p> <p>As a White person I must feel completely safe during any discussion of race. Giving me any feedback on my racism will cause me to feel unsafe, so you will need to rebuild my trust by never giving me feedback again. Point of clarification: when I say “safe” what I really mean is “comfortable.”</p>	
<p>Don’t forget how I am oppressed.</p> <p>Giving me feedback on my racial privilege invalidates the forms of oppression that I experience (e.g., classism, sexism, heterosexism). We will then need to focus on how you oppressed me.</p>	
<p>Focus on my intentions.</p> <p>You must focus on my intentions, which cancel out the impact of my behavior</p>	
<p>Don’t misunderstand me.</p> <p>To suggest my behavior had a racist impact is to have misunderstood me. You will need to allow me to explain until you can acknowledge that it was your misunderstanding.</p>	

Adapted from *White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement*, Dr. Robin DiAngelo
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiE28Wbk6DqAhXEHzQIHdcdDaoQFjAAegQIAhAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.uua.org%2Fsites%2Flive-new.uua.org%2Ffiles%2Fdiangelo-white_fragility_and_the_rules_of_engagement.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1_KPtuFuTzfAPHBd-tqyi0

Resilience-building Scenarios

Practise building resilience by responding to the following scenarios you may encounter or may have encountered from other adults in the school system.

Scenario	Response
I didn't learn anything about Aboriginal cultures. I don't know how to begin.	
Doesn't talking about racism create racism?	
I don't see race; I treat all the people the same way.	
But that happened a long time ago and can't we just get over it?	
I can't find any resources on residential schools.	
When I have a problem, I ask (racial minority colleague) to deal with it...	
But they are not like the other (racial group members), they...	
I don't think of myself as White or a settler.	
But I teach all different cultures in my classroom. If I teach about Aboriginal peoples, I have to teach about all of the cultures.	

Adapted from Dr. Shauneen Pete's PowerPoint, BCTF Issue Session on Racism, Nov 7, 2019.

Recommended Resources to Continue your Learning

1. Read a book. Start a local book club:

So you want to talk about race, Oluo (2018)
How to be an Antiracist, Kendi (2019)
Me and White Supremacy, Saad (2020)
My Conversations with Canadians, Maracle (2017)
The Skin We're In, Cole (2020)
What does it Mean to Be White, DiAngelo (2012)
White Fragility, DiAngelo (2018)

2. Explore a YouTube video channel:

- Pam Palmater: Education for Resistance
 Focuses on education people about current issues impacting Aboriginal people.
www.youtube.com/channel/UCTeExnsj_hu87OwPCHcBcjA
- “Decoded”—Weekly MTV series where host, Franchesca Ramsey uses humour to discuss “uncomfortable” topics like race and popular culture.
www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnvZ3PbKApGM-hHuQ9INc5oSKsusjn0Z6
 Sample “Decoded” videos:
 - “Microaggression Mosquito”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450&t=1s
 - “How do you Handle Racist Jokes”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bg1aTLsS69Y

3. Subscribe to a podcast

- Codeswitch
www.npr.org/podcasts/510312/codeswitch
- Media Indigena
www.mediaindigena.com
- All My Relations
www.allmyrelationspodcast.com
- Good Ancestor
www.laylafsaad.com/good-ancestor-podcast
- Scene on Radio, Seeing White Series
www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white
- Intersectionality Matters with Kimberle Crenshaw
www.aapf.org/podcast