

Navigating the Trauma of Racism as a BIPOC Service Provider



Jaha Martin, LCSW



Nate Fields

Session Description

This session explores challenges faced by BIPOC providers in homeless services delivery, underscoring the need for equitable systems. Emphasizing race as a key factor in homelessness highlights the urgency of reckoning with the role of being a co-conspirator in dismantling systemic racism, even within agencies that perpetuate oppression. This session aims to foster awareness, dialogue, and actionable steps toward creating inclusive approaches to addressing homelessness within BIPOC communities.

Objectives:

Analyze how racism in the US contributes to higher rates of homelessness, poverty, and PTSD. Historical injustices, systemic racism, and economic disparities have created inequity. BIPOC service providers may face challenges rooted in this trauma. Social service systems often perpetuate racism through biased policies, unequal resource distribution, and insufficient DEI practices. Addressing these root causes requires systemic changes and increased awareness to break the cycle of racial trauma.

Evaluate how implementing change to combat racism requires a multifaceted approach. Successful homeless service delivery involves addressing systemic barriers and prioritizing community engagement. Utilizing trauma-informed care models and incorporating the perspectives of individuals with lived expertise are crucial elements for effective change. Inclusion of diverse voices ensures a more comprehensive and equitable approach to creating policies and systems that benefit everyone.

Create self-care strategies to foster resilience and manage the impact of racial trauma. Establishing action plans to become co-conspirators that seek meaningful relationships with those they support and are intentional in eroding barriers of injustice to support racial equity work that improves homeless service delivery and systems collaboration for BIPOC providers.

Liberated Space

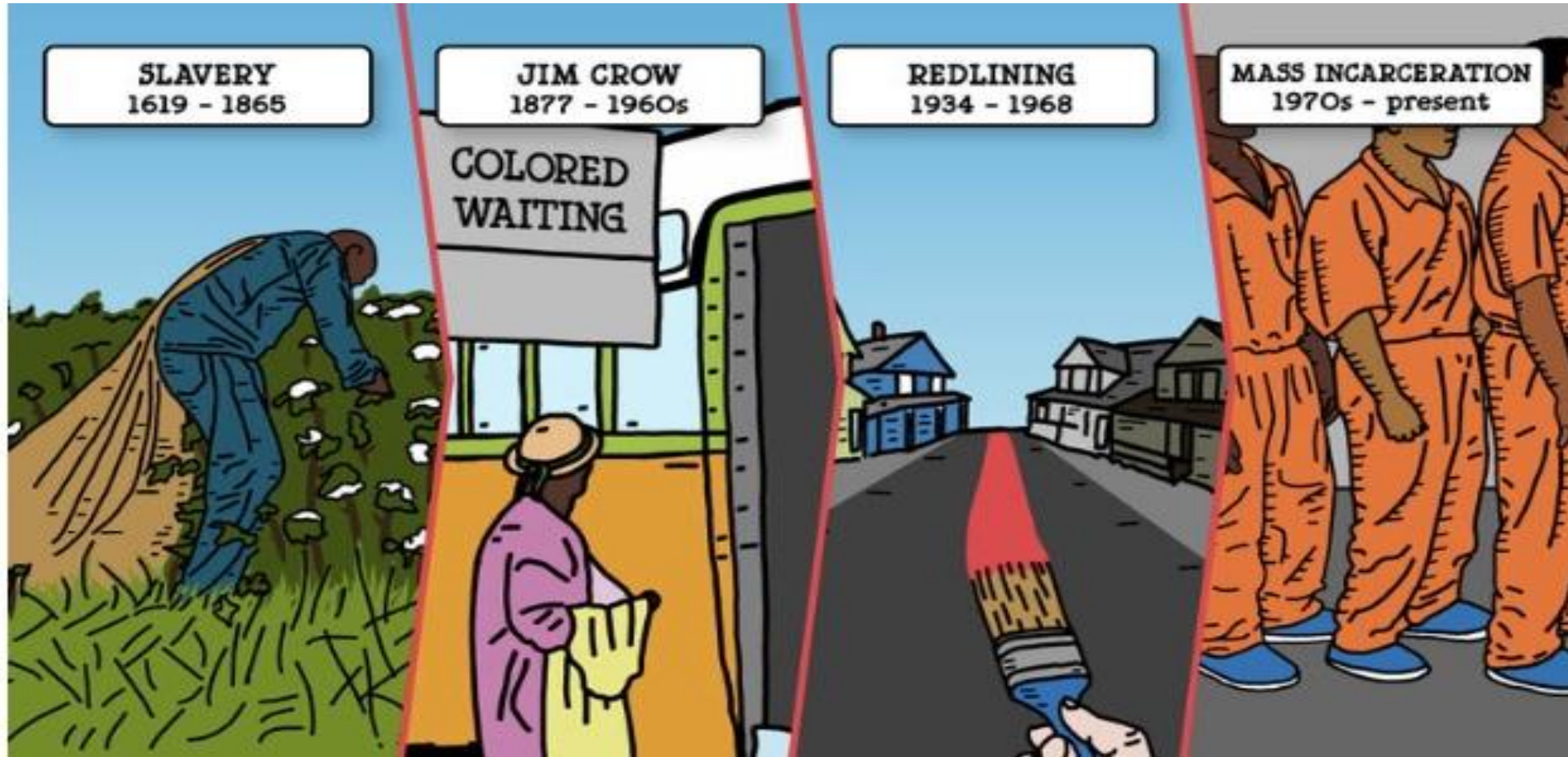
A liberated space is a space grounded in community and love. It is a space where we are free (libre) to be human along one another. And since to be human is to err, a liberated space is a space where a mistake, or a transgression will not cost us our freedom. In a liberated space, we will process whatever intentional and unintentional hurt/pain is caused by our words/actions and that is caused upon us. A liberated space is a space where everyone works as team to restore that which has been broken. We all play a part in doing so. In a liberated space, we all hold each other accountable for doing so.

Racial Trauma Defined

- **Racial trauma**, a form of race-based stress, refers to People of Color and Indigenous individuals' (POCI) reactions to dangerous events and real or perceived experiences of racial discrimination. Such experiences may include threats of harm and injury, humiliating and shaming events, and witnessing racial discrimination toward other POCI.
- Although similar to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), racial trauma is unique in that it involves ongoing individual and collective injuries due to exposure and re-exposure to race-based stress.

Source: American Psychological Association (APA)

Legacy of Racism



Source: SOURCE: Ben & Jerry's – Justice ReMix'd Campaign, Driven Studios Inc.

Systemic Racism And Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs:



False Belief: We are all born with an equal opportunity to get our needs met

Truth: Generational trauma, systemic racism and inequality result in many fighting for some needs others are gifted with.



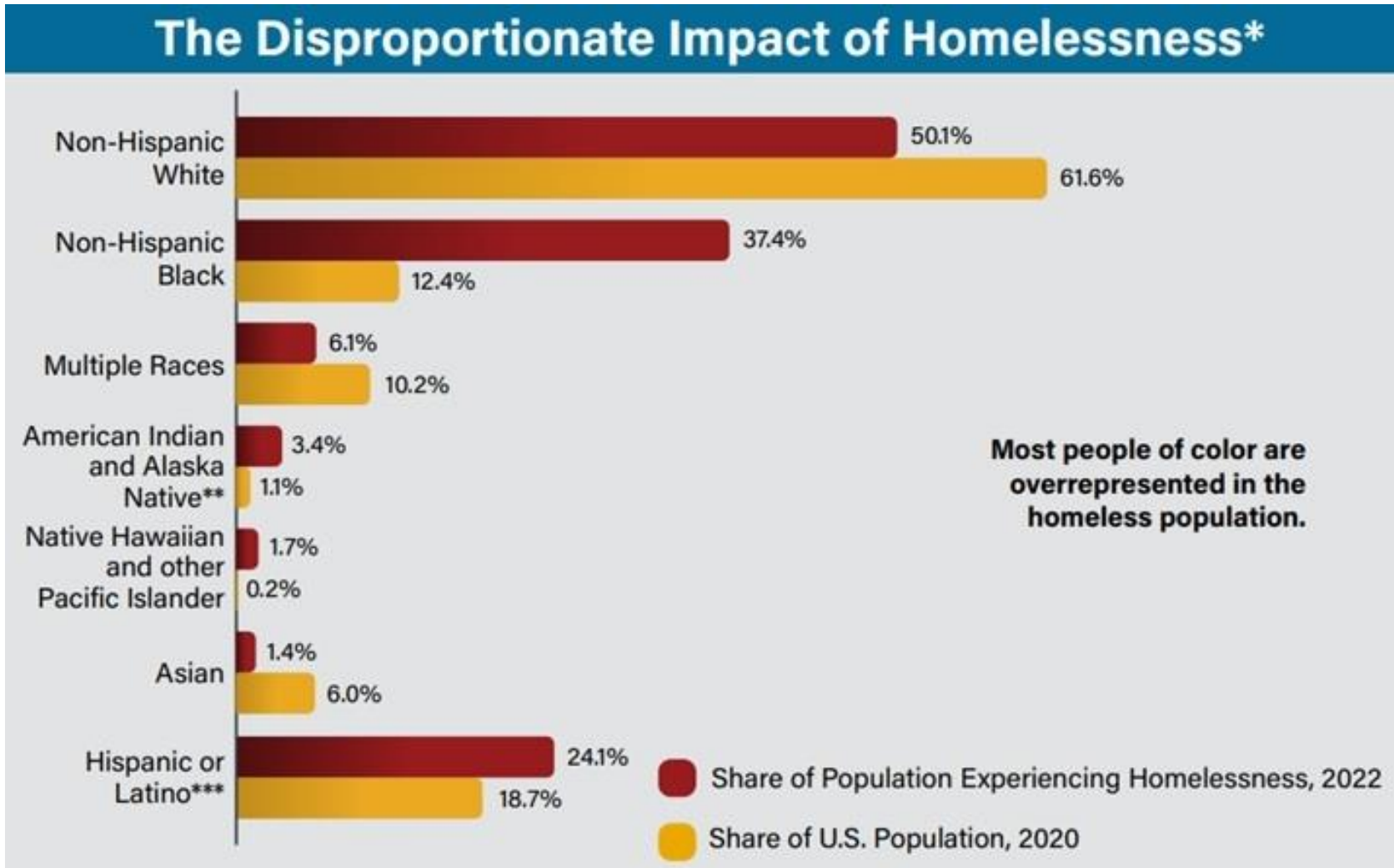
These aren't just needs for the individual, they're needs for the community too.

#BlackLivesMatter

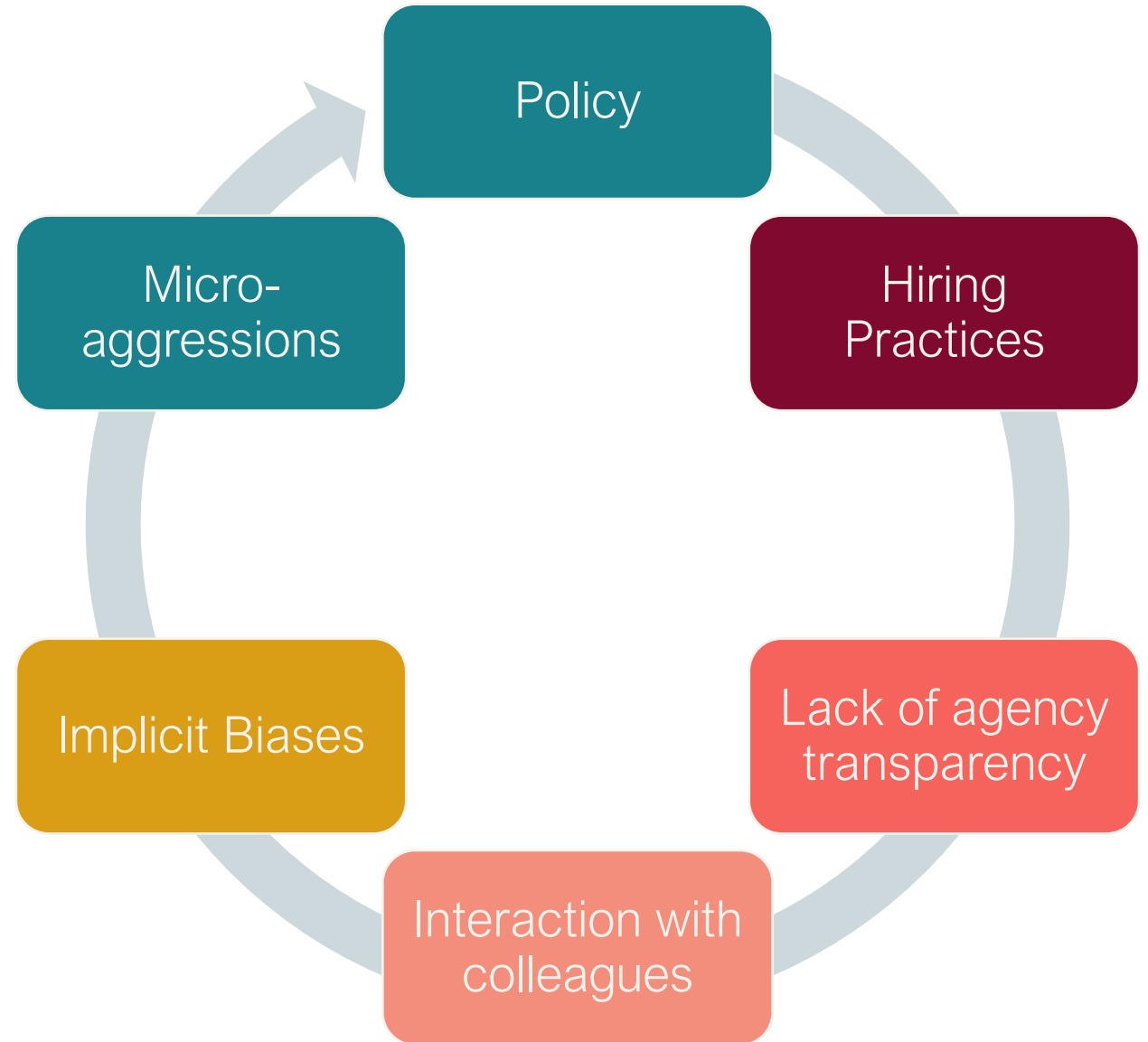
@RealDepressionProject



The Impact of Homelessness on People of Color



How has racial trauma shown up within providers and agencies?



Dismantling systemic racism within agencies that perpetuate oppression

- Decenter Whiteness
- Agency Policies & Structure
- Who is on the Board of Directors, Agency Leadership, and Staff
- Leadership Accountability
- Moving from Allyship to Co-Conspirator
- Incorporate lived expertise
- Creating trauma informed space for BIPOC providers



**The myth of race-neutral policy |
Economic Policy...**

www.epi.org

Radical Self Care

Radical self-care is the assertion that **you have the responsibility to take care of yourself first** before attempting to take care of others. It's necessary to fill your cup first, then to give to others from the overflow. This is what gives you the capacity to heal and to move forward into your next chapter of life.



RADICAL SELF CARE: ANGELA DAVIS - YouTube

www.youtube.com



Radical Self-Care | Indiana
State University

www.indstate.edu



“To those fighting for justice, keep pushing. Don’t ever give up. Strategize, pull others in. You can’t do it by yourself.”

Dr. Merlie Evers Williams
Civil Rights Activist and Journalist

Thank you!

Jaha Martin, LCSW

Jaha.Martin@va.gov

Nathaniel Fields

Nathaniel.Fields@nola.gov