

# Beyond ACE's: The Impact of Racism on

## ▶ Those We Serve

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# Questions to ponder...

- ▶ What is the impact of ongoing adverse childhood experiences?
- ▶ How might historical trauma inform our interactions with people from marginalized cultural groups?
  - ▶ What are some of the cumulative affects of being seen as “less than?”



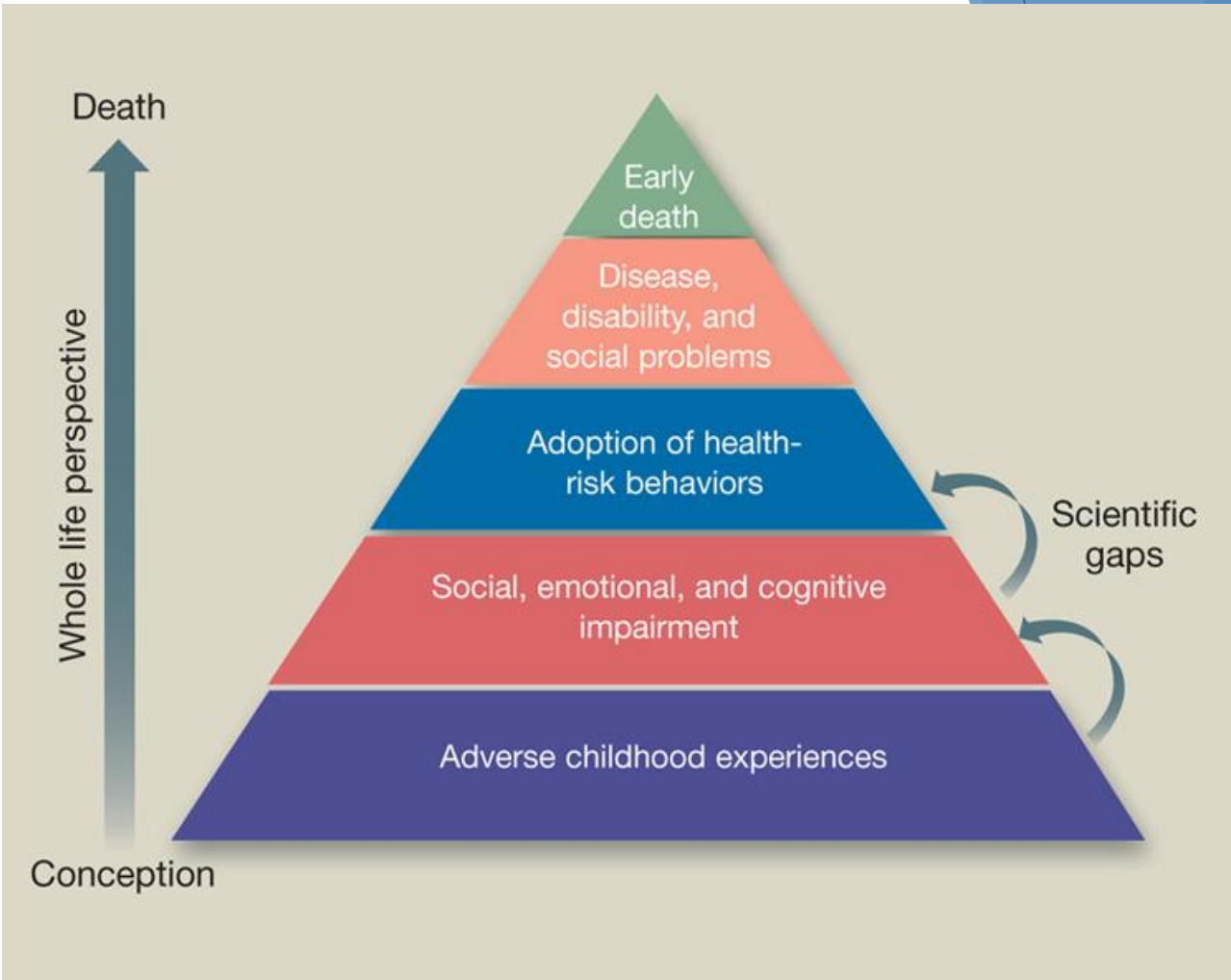
- ▶ From Critical Race Theory...
  - ▶ Racism as normal in American society and calls for strategies for exposing it in its various forms;
  - ▶ The significance of experiential knowledge and employing storytelling to analyze the myths, presuppositions, and receive wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities “one-down”;
  - ▶ Challenging traditional and dominant discourse and paradigms on race, gender, and class by showing how these social constructs intersect to affect people of color;
  - ▶ A commitment to social justice;
  - ▶ A transdisciplinary perspective.

# Starting Assumptions



**Disclaimer**

# Adverse Childhood Experiences



- ▶ Collaboration between Kaiser Permanente and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- ▶ Involved 17,000+ patients
- ▶ Interested in childhood maltreatment, family dysfunction and current health status. *Certain risk factors increase likelihood of poor health outcomes*
- ▶ Correlation between the number of ACE's and chronic health issues

# ACE Study Participant Demographics

Demographic Information	Percent (N = 17,337)
Gender	
Female	54.0%
Male	46.0%
Race/Ethnicity	
White	74.8%
Hispanic/Latino	11.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.2%
African-American	4.5%
Other	2.3%
Age (years)	
19-29	5.3%
30-39	9.8%
40-49	18.6%
50-59	19.9%
60 and over	46.4%
Education	
Not High School Graduate	7.2%
High School Graduate	17.6%
Some College	35.9%
College Graduate or Higher	39.3%

ABUSE

NEGLECT

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Physical



Physical



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Emotional



Emotional



Mother treated violently



Substance Abuse



Sexual



Divorce

# Ace Study Categories

# Effects of Trauma



Changes in brain neurobiology



Social, emotional and cognitive impairment



Adoption of maladaptive, injurious coping strategies



Severe and persistent health and social problems, including early death



Impairment in forming relationships



# Trauma Informed Care



Instead of  
asking...

“What’s wrong  
with them?”



We should  
consider...

“What has  
happened to  
them?”

# Trauma Informed Care

## Traditional Paradigm

- Clients are sick, ill or bad
- Clients behaviors are immoral and need to be punished
- Clients can change and stop immoral destructive behavior if they only had motivation
- Manage or eliminate client behaviors
- Staff should come to work every day at their best and perform to leadership's expectations
- System of care should be created to minimize short-term costs and contain immoral behaviors

## Trauma-Informed Paradigm

- Clients are hurt and suffering
- Client behaviors are survival skills developed to live through the trauma but are maladaptive in normal society
- Clients need support, trust and safety to decrease maladaptive behaviors
- Provide opportunities for clients to heal from their trauma
- Leaders need to create strong organizational culture to combat trauma and stress associated with work with traumatized clients
- System of care invests in healing trauma, saving money over the long-term



# Culture

A broad concept; includes a set of learned beliefs, traditions, principles, and guides for individual and collective behaviors that members of a particular group commonly share with each other. Cultures operate on both a conscious and less-conscious level, organizing our perception and understanding of the world in very subtle ways.

- ▶ Culture serves as a roadmap for how we see and interact with the world
- ▶ More than race/ethnicity; includes gender identity, age, geographic location, birth order, SES, education, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc.

## Cultural Conversation/Questions

- ▶ Identify the influence culture has on you
- ▶ Identify the important groups which contribute to the formation of your cultural identity
- ▶ Encourage discussion
- ▶ Discover triggers
- ▶ Explore your unique identity and how that identity impacts engagement/relationship with others

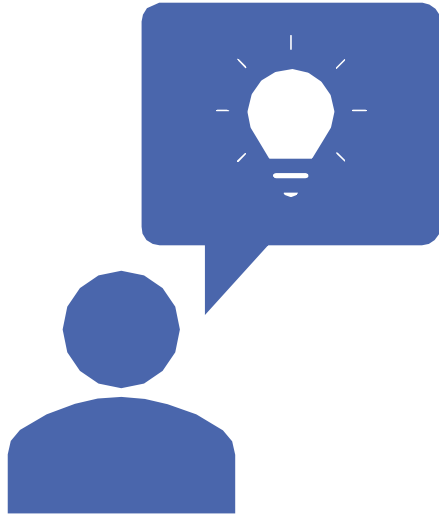
- ▶ What are the things you treasure/appreciate about your cultural heritage? Why is this important to you?
- ▶ How do practices from your cultural heritage influence your work?
- ▶ Did you grow up in a diverse environment? Who was present/absent?
- ▶ When you were growing up, what did you learn about values, conflict, faith and beliefs, work, family obligations, responsibilities, etc.?
- ▶ What were you taught about how to dress and talk?
- ▶ How many of these lessons do you hold on to?
- ▶ Does your cultural programming make it easier or more challenging for you to embrace people of different backgrounds?
- ▶ What messages have you chose to reject? (what motivated your decision?)
- ▶ Where have you made shifts in your understanding of the world and how did that happen?

## Cultural Conversation/Questions

# Cultural Identity

- ▶ Identity is influenced by positive or negative experiences in a social setting, especially for marginalized individuals, identity can get facilitated, or compromised;
- ▶ It is possible for identity to evolve to higher levels of functioning despite challenging life experiences;
- ▶ The social construction of race, and the history of slavery, segregation, exclusion, and the negative sociopolitical history of a nation can negatively influence identity development with race-related trauma and stress over several generations

# Cognitive Dissonance



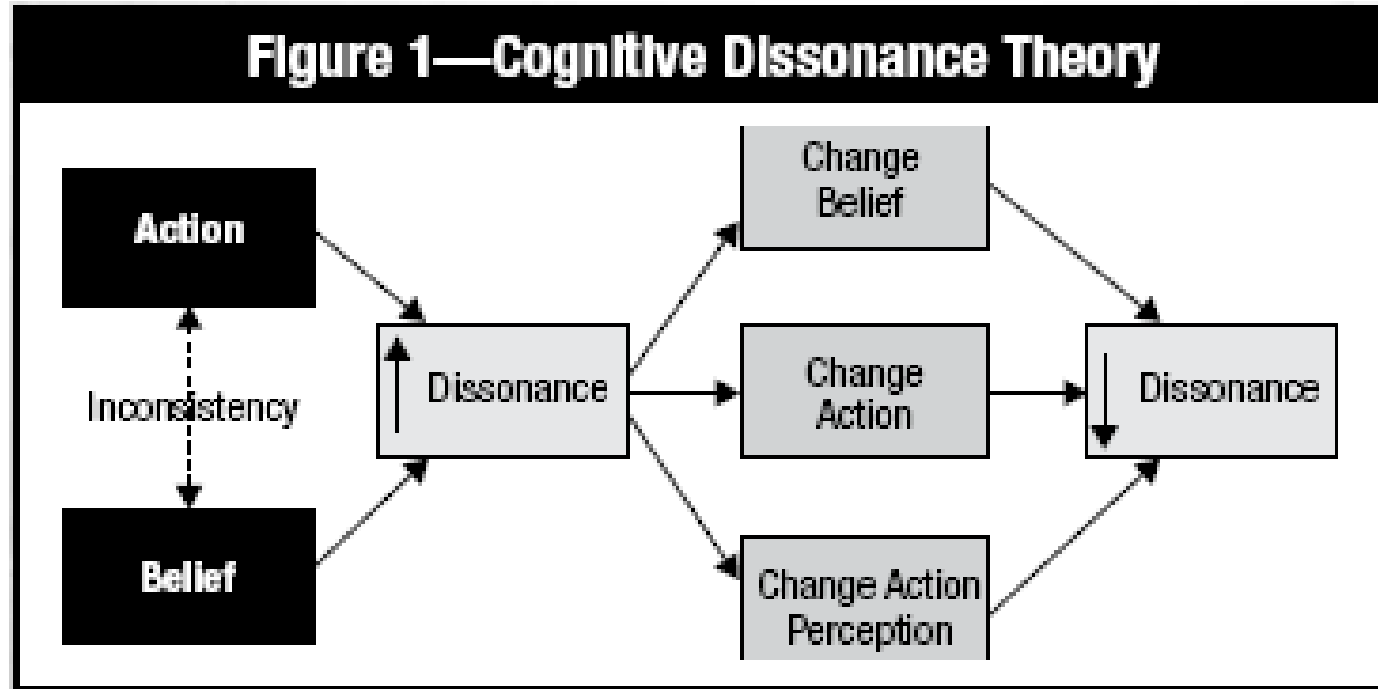
- ▶ A situation involving conflicting attitudes, beliefs or behaviors. This produces a feeling of discomfort leading to an alteration in one of the attitudes, beliefs or behaviors to reduce discomfort and restore balance.
- ▶ *The dominant ideology struggles to understand how someone could experience something different. When challenged with a perspective that is inconsistent with the dominant perspective what is the response?*
  - ▶ *What are some things that inhibit dominant ideology from “seeing?”*
    - ▶ *Inattentional Blindness, also known as perceptual blindness, is a psychological lack of attention not associated with any vision defects or deficits*



# Cognitive Dissonance

- ▶ The mental conflict that occurs when beliefs or assumptions held are contradicted by new information. When presented with new information, in order to decrease the dissonance our responses will fall on a continuum





# Cognitive Dissonance

IT'S NOT DENIAL

I'M JUST VERY  
SELECTIVE  
ABOUT THE  
REALITY  
I ACCEPT



# What is power?

- ▶ “It is the ability to tell people what the problem is, who is responsible, and what should be done about it. That’s what power is”

Kevin Phillips

Type of Oppression “ism”	Variable	One - up	One - down
Racism	Race/Ethnicity Color	White	People of color: (African, Asian, Native, Latino/a) etc.
Sexism	Gender	Men	Women, Transgendered
Homophobia/ Heterosexism	Sexual Orientation	Heterosexuals	LGBTQ Individuals
Religious oppression/ anti-Semitism/ Islamaphobia	Religion	Christian	Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Etc.
Classism	Socioeconomic Class	Owning, upper and middle class, managerial	Renting; poor working class, wage workers
Elitism	Education level/ Place in hierarchy	College-educated Top 20-40 schools	Non college- educated; less prestigious schools
Xenophobia	Immigrant Status	U.S. Born	Immigrants
Linguistic oppression	Language	English	Non-English speakers
Ableism	Physical or Mental ability	Able-bodied persons (mind/body)	People with disabilities
Ageism/adultism	Age	Adults	Elders: 40+; children, youth

Adapted from “What if I Say The Wrong Thing?  
25 Habits for Culturally Effective People”  
By Verna A. Myers

# Racism

- ▶ Racism is a complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the “white race.” These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group (whites). A simpler definition is ***racial prejudice + power = racism***
- ▶ **Institutional Racism**: a pattern of social institutions – such as governmental organizations, schools, banks and courts of law – giving negative treatment to a group of people based on their race.
- ▶ **Internal Racism**: The personal conscious or subconscious acceptance of the dominant society’s racist views, stereotypes and biases of one’s ethnic group. It gives rise to patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that result in discriminating, minimizing, criticizing, finding fault, invalidating and hating oneself while simultaneously valuing the dominant culture.
- ▶ **Structural Racism**: The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantages whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by white supremacy – the preferential treatment, privilege and power for white people at the expense of Arab, Asian, Black, Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander and other racially oppressed people.

- ▶ Racism is a chronic life stressor; racial stress is cumulative
  - ▶ Racism takes a psychological, physiological and socio-economic toll on people of color.
  - ▶ Racial and ethnic minorities have health that is worse overall than the health of White Americans.

## Why Considering Racism Is Important

# Trauma of Racism

The trauma of racism is the result of chattel slavery, Jim Crow, lynching, de facto and legal discrimination, oppression, employment discrimination, poverty, social alienation, hate crimes, demonization of non-white cultures, discriminatory child welfare practices, mass incarcerations, unjust imprisonment, racially biased criminal justice systems, mandatory sentencing, inhumane treatment within societal institutions, unethical medical experimentation on ethnic and racial minorities, forced sterilization of black women, the school to prison pipeline, inferior schools and education, the achievement gap, the sequestering of minority students in special education programs, racial housing segregation, inhumane housing conditions, and discriminatory policing.

(McSilver Institute for Policy and Research, 2015)



# Microaggressions

- ▶ Everyday verbal, non-verbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership

I'm sorry that you were offended by my racist, sexist, and/or homophobic remarks. You're obviously not smart enough to understand my sense of humor.



# Types of Microaggressions

- ▶ **Microassaults** are more overt than the other forms of microaggressions and come in the form of verbal or nonverbal attacks or avoiding behaviors, such as a white woman not getting on an elevator with a black man.
- ▶ **Microinsults** are behaviors or statements that are rude or insensitive by degrading a person's racial heritage or identity, such as telling a Latinx person that they are so articulate or following a teenage African-American boy around a store.
- ▶ **Microinvalidations** are when a Caucasian person negates or denies another person's thoughts, feelings, or experiences as a person of color by telling them racism no longer exists or to stop complaining about their race and move forward.

# Racism & Health

- ▶ Institutional discrimination can restrict socioeconomic attainment and group differences in SES and health.
- ▶ Segregation can create pathogenic residential conditions.
- ▶ Discrimination can lead to reduced access to desirable goods and services.
- ▶ Internalized racism can adversely affect health.
- ▶ Racism can create conditions that increase exposure to traditional stressors (i.e., unemployment)
- ▶ Experiences of discrimination may be neglected psychosocial stressor.

# Effect of Racism Across Domains

- ▶ Self-Esteem
- ▶ Speech and language
- ▶ Interpersonal Relationships
- ▶ Sexuality/Sexual expression
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Coping strategies (adaptive behavior)
- ▶ Family structure/roles
- ▶ Social support systems
- ▶ Willingness to seek help
- ▶ Educational outlook
- ▶ Peer relationships
- ▶ SES, neighborhoods, etc.
- ▶ Acculturation/assimilation

# Why Race Still Matters

## Distinctive Social Exposures

- ▶ Other aspects of racism
- ▶ High levels of stressors
- ▶ Greater clustering of multiple stressors



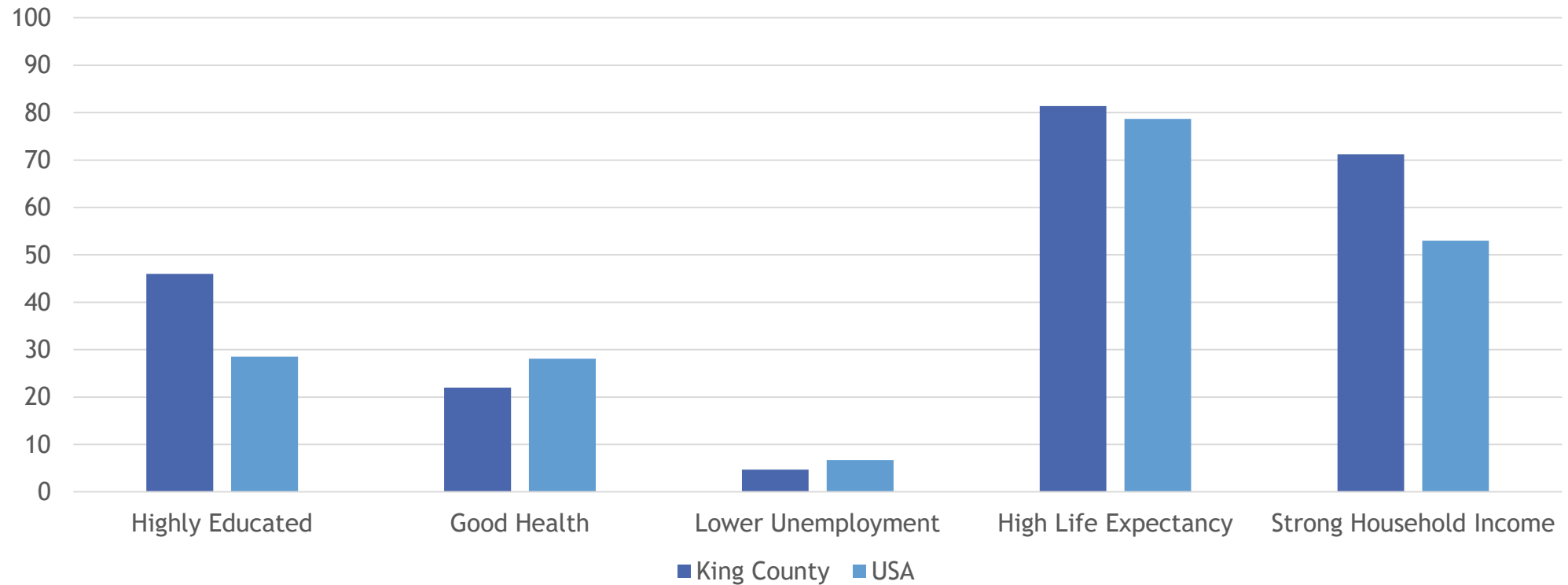
- ▶ From King County (April 2015)
- ▶ At a glance, King County is a great place to live, learn, work and play
  - ▶ Highly educated
  - ▶ Good Health
  - ▶ Diverse and Global Community
  - ▶ Lower Unemployment
  - ▶ High Life Expectancy
  - ▶ Strong Household income

# Social Determinants of Health



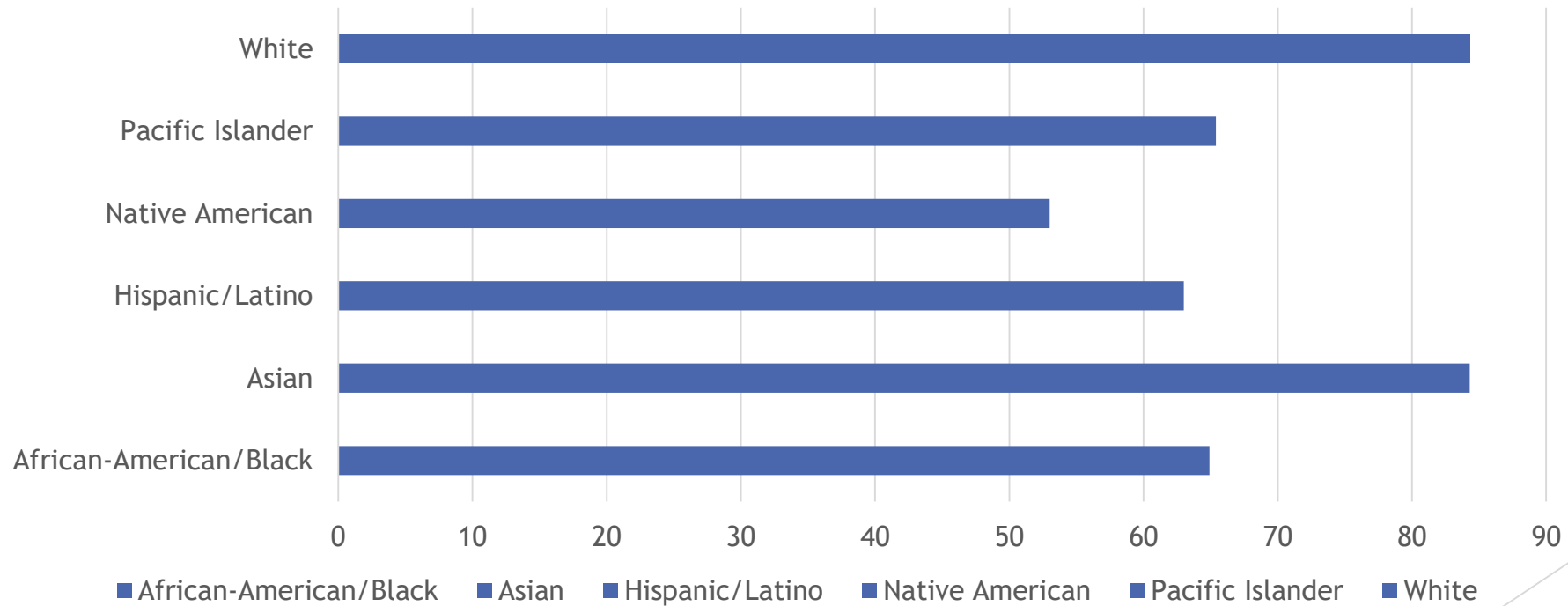
# Social Determinants of Health King County 2015

At a glance, King County is a great place to live, learn, work and play



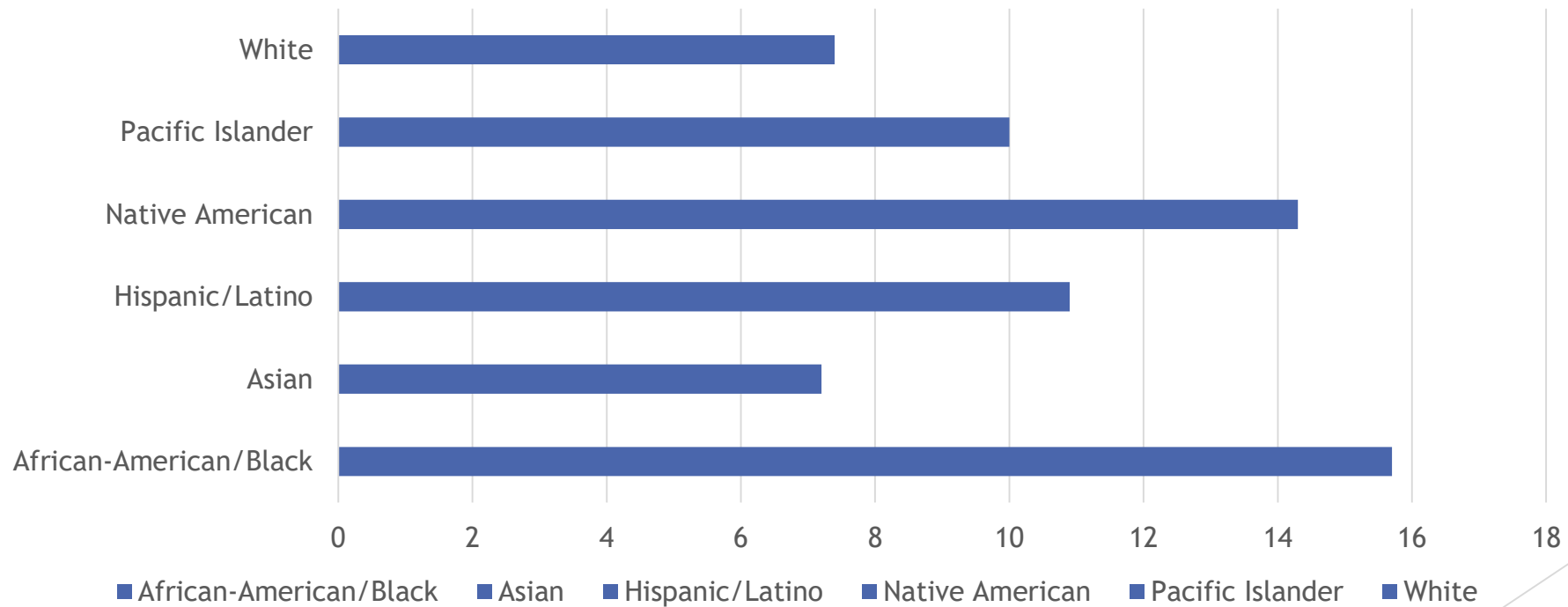
# Social Determinants of Health

## On-Time High School Graduation Rates



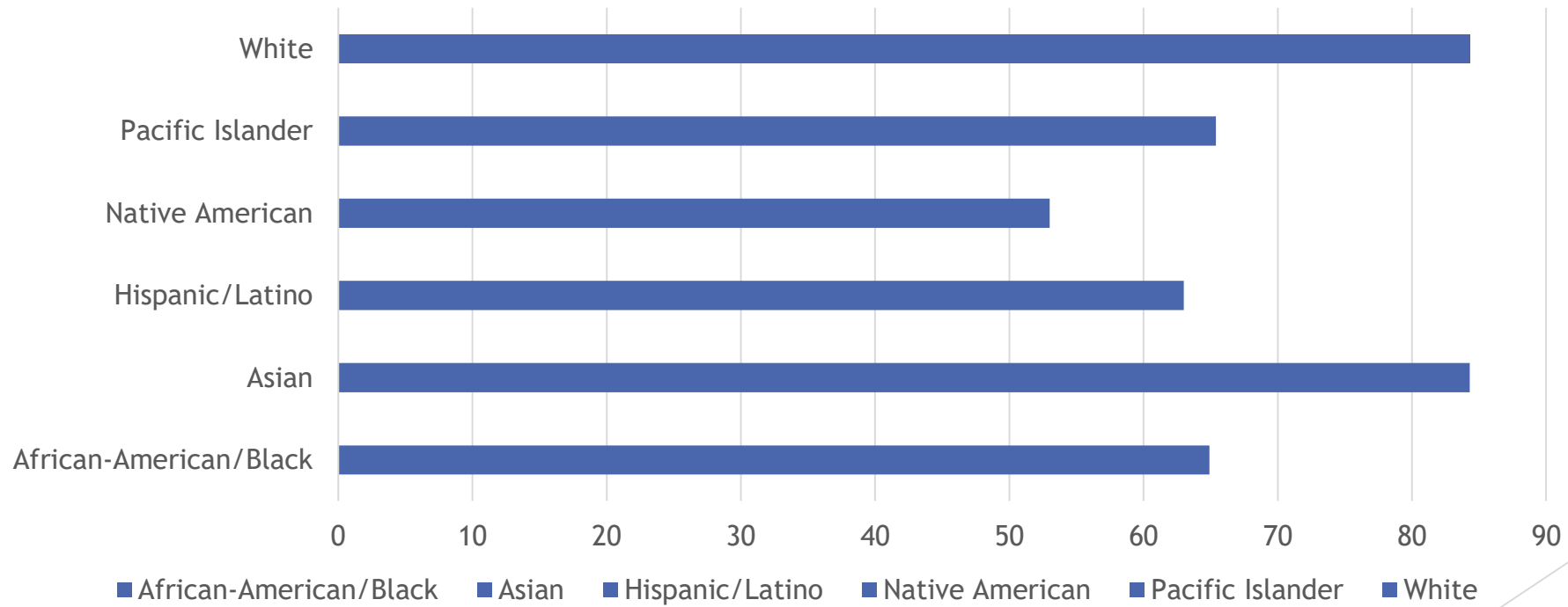
# Social Determinants of Health

Unemployment (2010-2012)



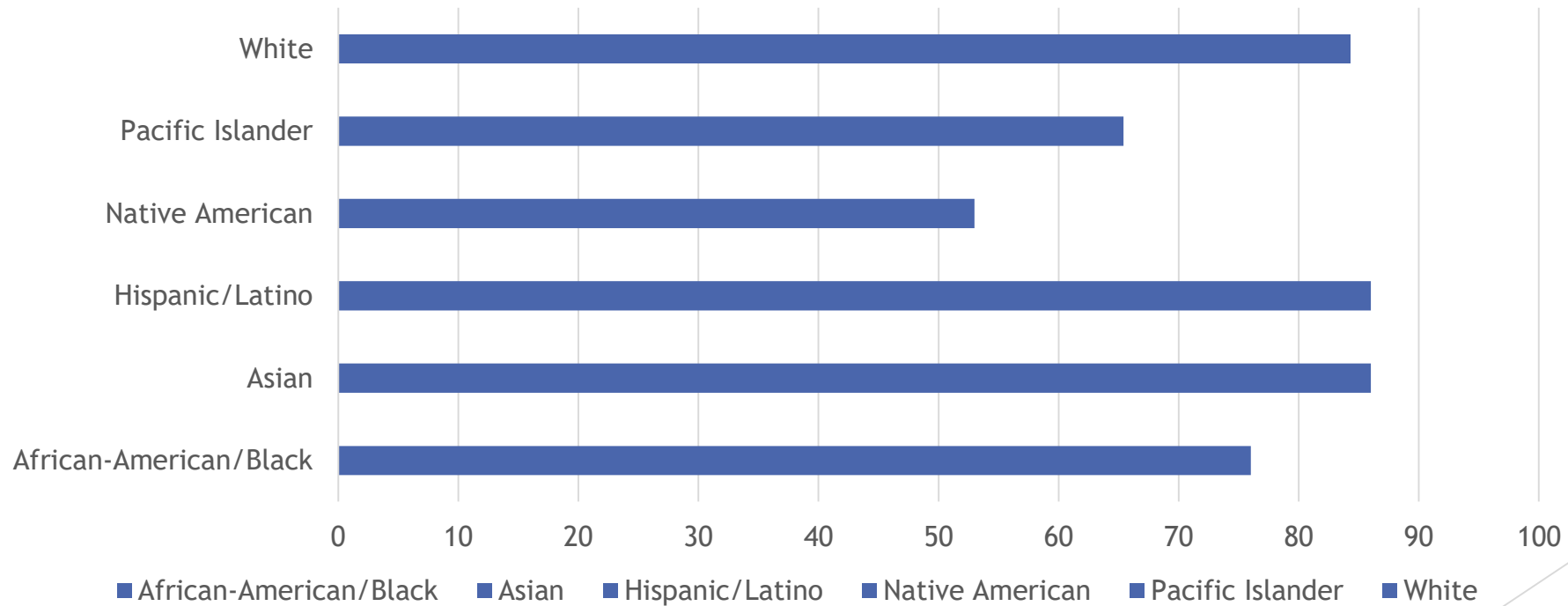
# Social Determinants of Health

## Annual Household Income



# Social Determinants of Health

## Life Expectancy



# Place Matters

- ▶ Residential Segregation: legacy of racism (as is the forced removal of indigenous peoples)
- ▶ The institutionalized isolation and marginalization of racial populations has adversely affected life chances in multiple ways.



# Place Matters

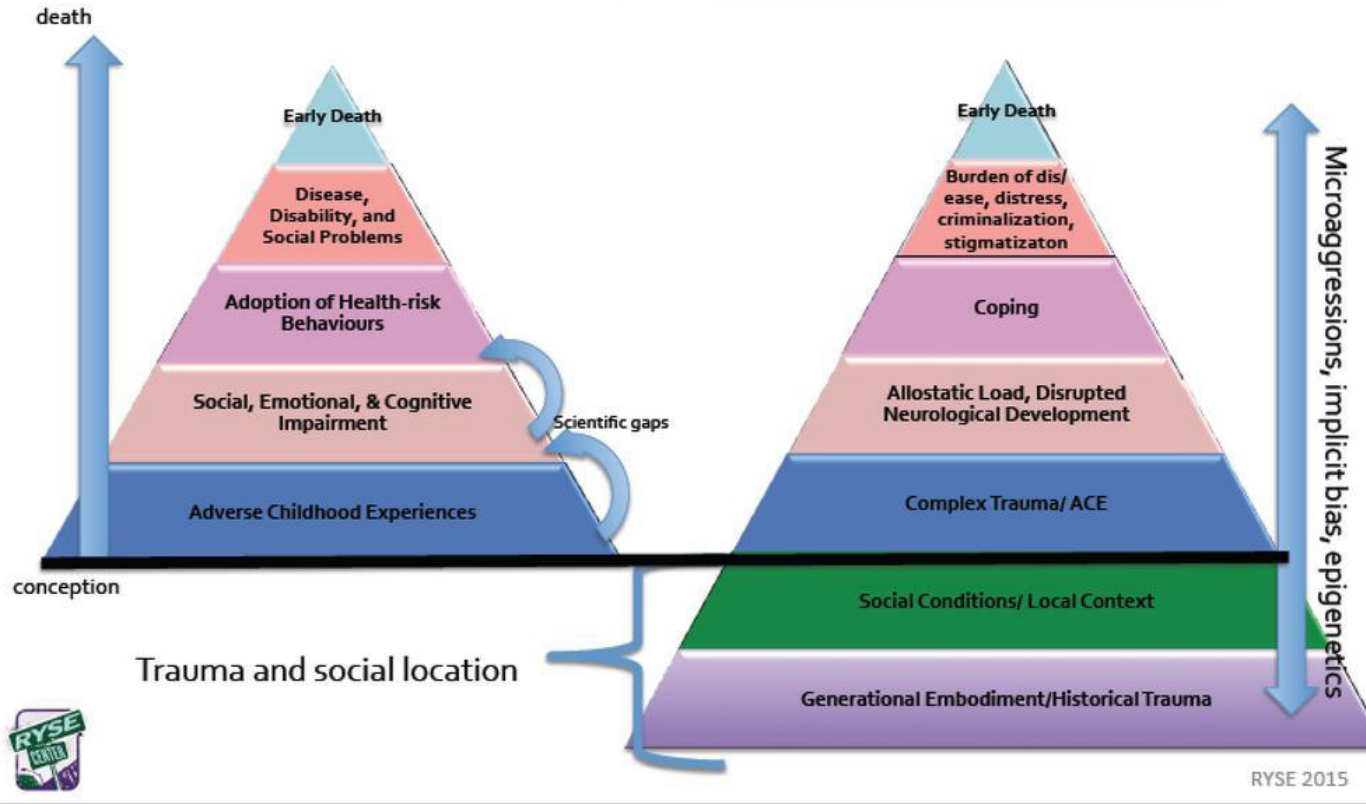


- ▶ Redlining: the practice of denying home loans and mortgages to people of color, was an explicit practice in Seattle until the late 1970's.
- ▶ Segregation determines SES by affecting quality of education and employment opportunities.
- ▶ Segregation can create pathogenic neighborhood and housing conditions.
- ▶ Conditions linked to segregation can impact the practice of healthy behaviors and encourage unhealthy ones.
- ▶ Segregation can adversely affect access to medical care and to high-quality care.
- ▶ (Williams & Collins, Pub Health Reports, 2001)

# Trauma and Social Location

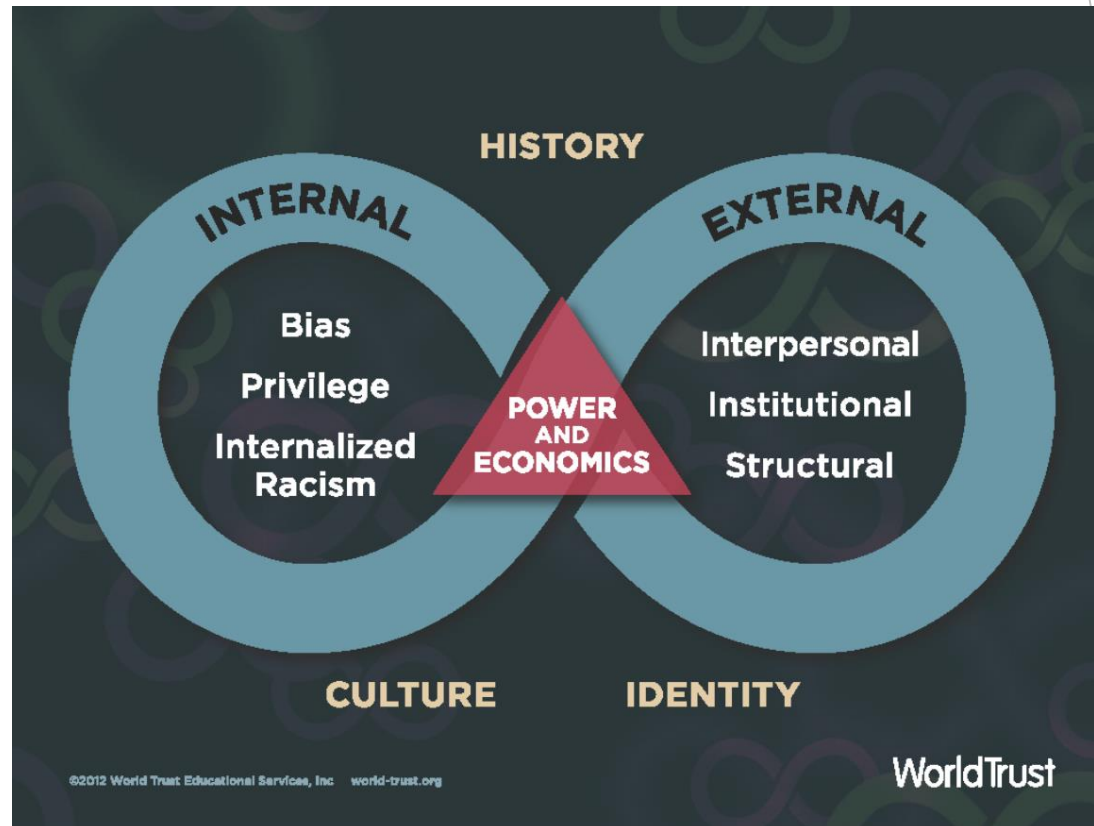
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Historical Trauma/Embodiment





## The System of Racial Inequity







# Trauma

# Trauma

Why is thinking about racism important?

- ▶ Racism is stressful
- ▶ Racism is a leading and contributing factor to many health disparities within the United States
- ▶ Psychological, physiological and socioeconomic toll
- ▶ Stress from racism includes discriminatory harassment, racial harassment and racial discrimination

Racism is a chronic life stressor

- ▶ Lifetime prevalence of PTSD is higher
- ▶ Disproportionately affected by behavioral health challenges
- ▶ Higher reported rates of moderate to severe depressive symptoms

Racial stress is cumulative

Experiences of harassment, discrimination and poor treatment compound and lead to poor health outcomes.

# Stereotype Threat



A situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of confirming negative stereotypes about their social groups

- ▶ Produces anxiety/raises blood pressure
- ▶ Over-stimulates the brain/mimics multi-tasking
- ▶ Can heighten emotional centers and dampen analytical ones



# Cultural Competence

A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. Operationally defined, cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to improve quality of services, theoretically producing better outcomes.

- ▶ Assumes a certain standard of understanding (competence) that can be learned (and measured) about different cultural groups, i.e., you can “master” other cultures
- ▶ Risk: increase in stereotyping

# Cultural Competence

## Key Components

- ▶ Awareness
- ▶ Attitude
- ▶ Knowledge
- ▶ Skills



# Cultural Humility

A lifelong process of self-reflection, self-critique, continual assessment of power imbalances, and the development of mutually respectful relationships and partnerships. It is a process that requires humility as we bring into check the power imbalances that exist in the dynamics of relationships.

- ▶ To practice cultural humility is to understand that culture is, first and foremost, an expression of self and that the process of learning each individuals' culture is a lifelong endeavor, because no two individuals are the same; each individual is a complicated, multi-dimensional human being.
- ▶ There are power imbalances inherent to relationships; it is imperative that we acknowledge and challenge the imbalances for respectful relationships.

# Cultural Humility

Cultural Humility encourages the examination of power, privilege and stereotyping to create a broader, more inclusive view of the world.

- ▶ Values of Cultural Humility
  - ▶ Openness
  - ▶ Appreciation
  - ▶ Acceptance
  - ▶ Flexibility

# Cultural Humility

## Three main components

- ▶ Lifelong commitment to self-critique/evaluation
- ▶ Fix power imbalances
- ▶ Develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others

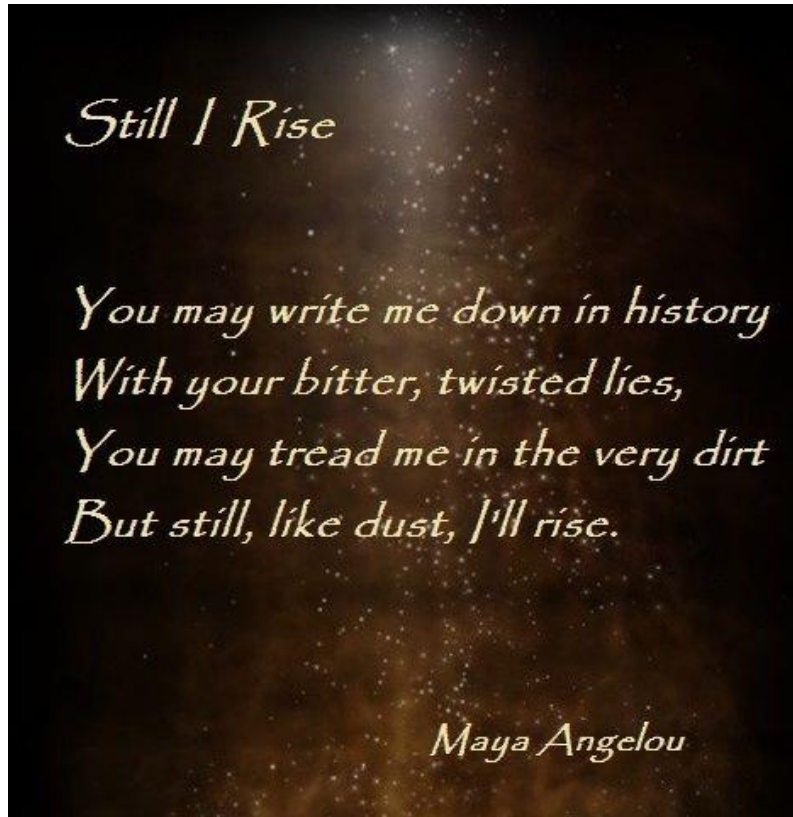
	Cultural Competence	Cultural Humility
Goals	To build an understanding of minority cultures to better and more appropriately provide services.	To encourage personal reflection and growth around culture in order to increase awareness of service providers.
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introspection</li> <li>• Co-learning</li> </ul>
Shortcomings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforces the idea that there can be “competence” in a culture other than one’s own.</li> <li>• Supports myth that cultures are monolithic.</li> <li>• Based on academic knowledge rather than lived experience.</li> <li>• Believes professionals can be “certified” in culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging professionals to grasp the idea of learning with and from clients.</li> <li>• No end result, which may create some struggles for those in academia and medical fields.</li> </ul>
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows people to strive to obtain goal.</li> <li>• Promotes skill building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages life-long learning with no end goal but rather with an appreciation of the journey of growth and understanding.</li> <li>• Explicitly addresses power.</li> </ul>

## Cultural Competence vs. Cultural Humility

# Exploration of Strengths

- ▶ Strong kinship bonds
- ▶ Strong work orientation
- ▶ Adaptability of family roles
- ▶ Strong achievement orientation
- ▶ Strong religious/spiritual orientation

# Ethnic Identity Development

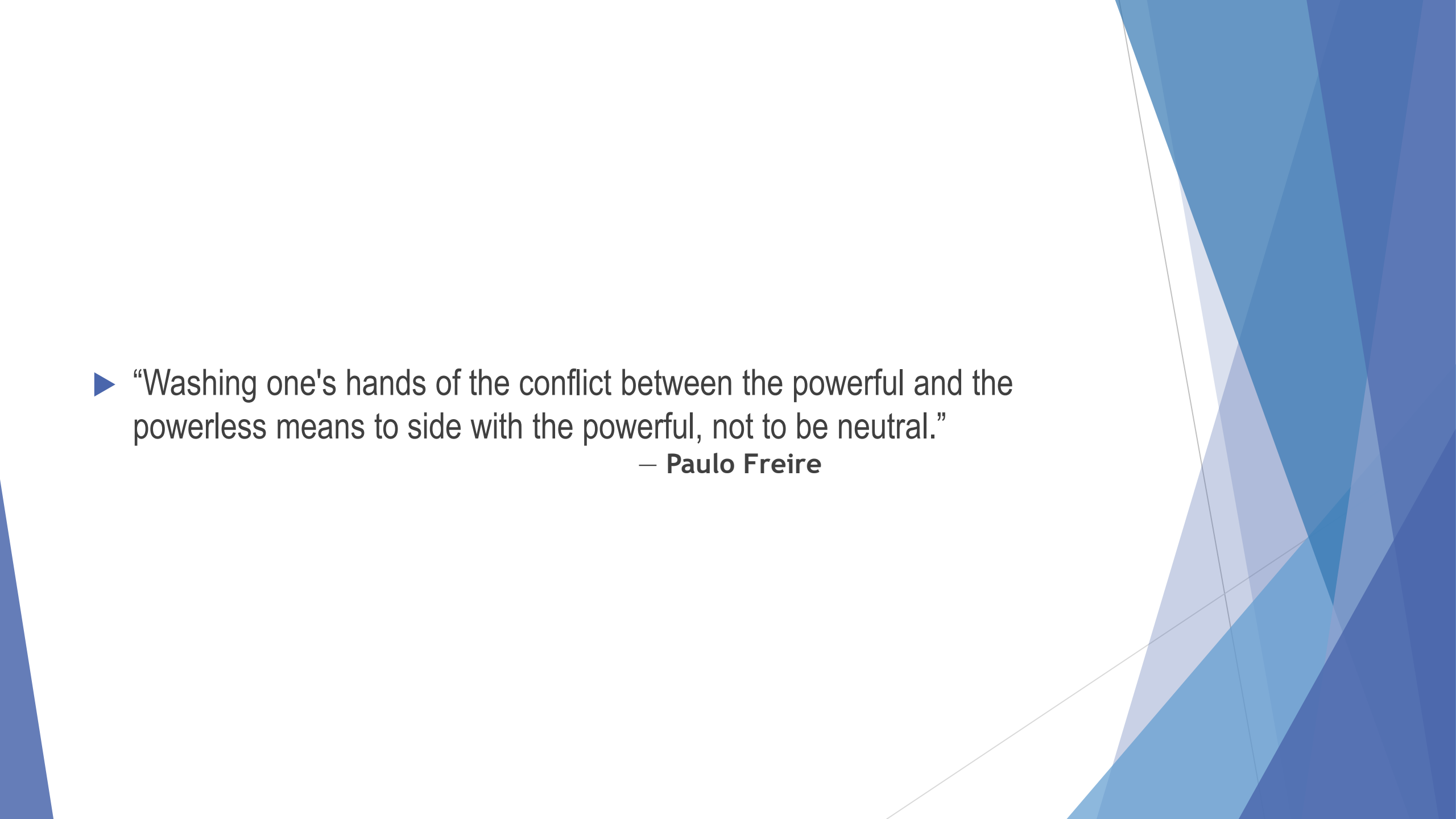


- ▶ Self-Identification
  - ▶ Positive view of self
  - ▶ Increased confidence in own abilities
  
- ▶ Sense of belonging
  - ▶ Understanding of the world and their place in it
  - ▶ Pride in one's ethnic group

# Healing The Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma

Adapted from Kenneth V. Hardy, Ph.D

- ▶ Affirmation and Acknowledgement
- ▶ Create space for conversations about race
- ▶ Racial storytelling
- ▶ Validation
- ▶ Naming
- ▶ Rechanneling Rage

- 
- The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light to dark, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect.
- ▶ “Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.”  
— Paulo Freire





## Contact Info

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