

## Leading for Race Equity Impact Glossary

If there are any other definitions that you are looking for, please check the [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#)<sup>1</sup> or search them online.

- 1. Anti-Black:** The Council for Democratizing Education defines anti-Blackness as being a two-part formation that both voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. The first form of anti-Blackness is overt racism. Beneath this anti-Black racism is the covert structural and systemic racism which categorically predetermines the socioeconomic status of Blacks in this country. The structure is held in place by anti-Black policies, institutions, and ideologies. The second form of anti-Blackness is the unethical disregard for anti-Black institutions and policies. This disregard is the product of class, race, and/or gender privilege certain individuals experience due to anti-Black institutions and policies. This form of anti-Blackness is protected by the first form of overt racism.<sup>2</sup>
- 2. Anti-Racism:** is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.<sup>3</sup>
- 3. Calling in vs. calling out:** ‘There are moments when "calling someone out" is appropriate, to stop words or actions that are actively hurting someone. But, often, it's effective to instead "call someone in." When we call someone in, we acknowledge we all make mistakes. We help someone discover why their behavior is harmful, and how to change it. And we do it with compassion and patience.’<sup>4</sup>
- 4. Diversity:** Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note that many activists and thinkers critique diversity alone as a strategy. For instance, Baltimore Racial Justice Action states: “Diversity is silent on the subject of equity. In an

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<sup>1</sup> MP Associates, “Racial Equity Tools Glossary” (Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and World Trust Educational Services, October 2021), <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-h0EWxqHAZUfheFvuFRtVpEz5ODSxul6/view>.

<sup>2</sup> “A Vision for Black Lives: Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, & Justice” (The Movement for Black Lives, 2017), <https://whitesforracialequity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/BLM-vision-booklet.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “Race Reporting Guide” (Race Forward, June 2015), [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward\\_V1.1.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward_V1.1.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Maya Hu-Chan, “Why You Should Be Calling Someone In, Not Calling Them Out,” Inc.com, November 30, 2020, <https://www.inc.com/maya-hu-chan/calling-in-vs-calling-out-how-to-talk-about-inclusion.html>.

<sup>5</sup> [Racial Equity Tools](#) and [UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Glossary of Terms](#)

anti-oppression context, therefore, the issue is not diversity, but rather equity. Often when people talk about diversity, they are thinking only of the “non-dominant” groups.”<sup>6</sup>

5. **Equality:** Evenly distributed access to resources and opportunity necessary for a safe and healthy life; uniform distribution of access to ensure fairness.<sup>7</sup>
6. **Equity:** The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically marginalized and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unfair conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.<sup>8</sup> *Equality* is treating all people the same, regardless of their different circumstances and/or needs.<sup>9</sup>
7. **Generational Trauma:** Similarly, generational or intergenerational trauma is a phenomenon in which the descendants of a person who has experienced a terrifying event show adverse emotional and behavioral reactions to the event that are similar to those of the person. Essentially, the effects of trauma can be transferred from one generation to the next.<sup>10</sup> Generational trauma is an ‘emerging line of research and clinical work in psychology and related disciplines that is exploring whether and how mass cultural and historical traumas affect future generations.’<sup>11</sup>
8. **Healing:** ‘Healing means we begin to unlearn the stereotyped racial messages we internalized about our own race and the race of others. It means we as individuals learn to recognize the wounds that racism creates in us, whether we are White or a People of Color and whether we are conscious of these nicks and tears to your psyche or not.

Healing means we open your eyes to the costs of racism, which are pretty much everywhere, and we work to stop participating, either knowingly or actively, in the system of racism and white supremacy that was designed to favor some people and not others. We learn to notice how your race drives the differential privileges and access to needed resources you might receive.’<sup>12</sup>

9. **Inclusiveness:** Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.<sup>13</sup>

*[Note: This term is often used interchangeably with inclusion, which more often refers to the practice of educating people with disabilities in the same classrooms as those who do not live with disabilities.]*

<sup>6</sup> “Baltimore Racial Justice Action,” Baltimore Racial Justice Action, accessed December 6, 2021, <http://bmoreantiracist.org/>, <https://bmoreantiracist.org/resources/our-definitions>.

<sup>7</sup> Kranich, Nancy. [“Equality and Equity of Access: What’s the Difference?”](#) American Library Association, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> [Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture](#), Equity in the Center

<sup>9</sup> “RISE Module: Equality vs. Equity | RISE,” accessed December 7, 2021, <https://risetowin.org/what-we-do/educate/resource-module/equality-vs-equity/index.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Mirel Zaman, “What Is Intergenerational Trauma?,” accessed December 7, 2021, <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2020/06/9848448/what-is-intergenerational-trauma>.

<sup>11</sup> Tori DeAngelis, “The Legacy of Trauma,” <https://www.Apa.Org>, February 2019, Vol 50, No. 2 edition.

<sup>12</sup> Anneliese Singh, “Racial Healing | The Time Is Now,” *Anneliese Singh* (blog), June 11, 2020, <https://www.anneliesesingh.com/blog/racialhealing>.

<sup>13</sup> “OpenSource Leadership Strategies | OpenSource Leadership Strategies: Power to Change,” accessed December 6, 2021, <https://opensourceleadership.com/>.

**10. Internalized Racial Superiority:** When white people believe and or act on assumptions that white people are superior to, more capable of, more intelligent, or more entitled than people of color. It occurs when members of the dominant white group take their group’s socially advantaged status as normal and deserved, rather than recognizing how it has been conferred through racialized systems of inequality. Internalized dominance may be unconscious or conscious. A white person who insists that anyone who works hard can get ahead, without acknowledging the barriers of racism, is consciously or unconsciously expressing internalized dominance. Whites who assume that European music and art are superior to other forms are enacting internalized dominance.<sup>14</sup>

*[Note: This term is often used interchangeably with internalized dominance.]*

### 11. Internalized Racism:

Internalized racism is the situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, and ideologies that undergird the dominating group’s power. It involves four essential and interconnected elements:<sup>15</sup>

- a. *Decision-making* - Due to racism, people of color do not have the ultimate decision-making power over the decisions that control our lives and resources. As a result, on a personal level, we may think white people know more about what needs to be done for us than we do. On an interpersonal level, we may not support each other’s authority and power – especially if it is in opposition to the dominating racial group. Structurally, there is a system in place that rewards people of color who support white supremacy and power and coerces or punishes those who do not.<sup>16</sup>
- b. *Resources* - Resources, broadly defined (e.g. money, time, etc), are unequally in the hands and under the control of white people. Internalized racism is the system in place that makes it difficult for people of color to get access to resources for our own communities and to control the resources of our community. We learn to believe that serving and using resources for ourselves and our particular community is not serving “everybody.”<sup>17</sup>
- c. *Standards* - With internalized racism, the standards for what is appropriate or “normal” that people of color accept are white people’s or Eurocentric standards. We have difficulty naming, communicating and living up to our deepest standards and values, and holding ourselves and each other accountable to them.<sup>18</sup>
- d. *Naming the problem* - There is a system in place that misnames the problem of racism as a problem of or caused by people of color and blames the disease – emotional, economic, political, etc. – on people of color. With internalized racism, people of color might, for example,

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<sup>14</sup>Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, eds., *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, Third edition, p 137 (New York: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> Donna Bivens, [\*Internalized Racism: A Definition\*](#) (Women’s Theological Center, 1995). Donna Bivens, “Internalized Racism: A Definition” (Women’s Theological Center, 1995),

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qJA73qwdrxQ6THTkYY5q8raqwlooVS\\_5/view?usp=sharing&usp=embed\\_facebook](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qJA73qwdrxQ6THTkYY5q8raqwlooVS_5/view?usp=sharing&usp=embed_facebook).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

believe we are more violent than white people and not consider state-sanctioned political violence or the hidden or privatized violence of white people and the systems they put in place and support.<sup>19</sup>

**12. Interpersonal Racism:** Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.<sup>20</sup>

- a. Examples: public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias, and bigotry between individuals<sup>21</sup>

**13. Institutional Racism:** This is the racial inequity within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies, and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment, and inequitable opportunities and outcomes.<sup>22</sup>

Whether implicitly or explicitly expressed, institutional racism occurs when a certain group is targeted and discriminated against based upon race inside institutions. Institutional racism is mostly implicit in our ideas and attitudes, so it is often unnoticed by the individual expressing it.<sup>23</sup>

**14. Inner Well-being:** Intentionally committing time and energy to deepen one's personal awareness through self reflection and self compassion. Inner well-being comes from the connection and harmony between our inner life and the outer world.<sup>24</sup> In other words:

- a. it is having inner peace
- b. it is the feeling of belonging and connectedness with the world
- c. it is about realising and experiencing deeper meaning in the universe
- d. it is the feeling that we are part of something larger than the issues, stresses, and challenges of our everyday lives<sup>25</sup>

**15. Implicit Bias:** Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, religion, and other topics.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher, "Chronic Disparity: Strong and Pervasive Evidence of Racial Inequalities - Poverty Outcomes" (Race and Policy Conference, 2004), <http://www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Definitions%20of%20Racism.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Claire Lechtenberg and Rachel Justice, "Defining Racial Justice Terms: Institutional Racism," YWCA Central Carolinas, August 11, 2020, <https://ywcacentralcarolinas.org/defining-racial-justice-terms-institutional-racism/>.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Savitha Hosamane, "Inner Well-Being," *Hasovan* (blog), February 4, 2017, <http://www.hasovan.com/inner-well-being/>.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Cheryl Staats, "Implicit Bias Review" (Ohio State University: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2013), <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/2013-implicit-bias-review.pdf>.

**16. Micro/Macroaggressions:** The everyday verbal, nonverbal, 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.<sup>27</sup>

- **Microassault:** Verbal or nonverbal attack against someone’s identity with intention to hurt the victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or discriminatory actions<sup>28</sup>
- **Microinsult:** Verbal or nonverbal remarks or comments that convey rudeness and insensitivity, demeaning a person’s heritage or identity
- **Microinvalidation:** Verbal comments or nonverbal behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify the thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person’s identity

**17. Oppression:**

The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson state that oppression exists when the following 4 conditions are found:

- a. the oppressor group has the power to define reality for themselves and others,
- b. the target groups take in and internalize the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them),
- c. genocide, harassment, and discrimination are systematic and institutionalized, so that individuals are not necessary to keep it going, and,
- d. members of both the oppressor and target groups are socialized to play their roles as normal and correct.

**\*\*Oppression = Power + Prejudice<sup>29</sup>**

**18. Power:**

Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals and groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual’s internal strength). Learning to “see” and understand relations of power is vital to organizing for progressive social change.<sup>30</sup>

Power may also be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one’s beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. The importance of the concept of power to anti-racism is clear: racism cannot be understood without understanding that power is not only an individual relationship but a cultural one, and that power relationships are shifting constantly. Power can be used malignantly and unintentionally, but need not be, and individuals within a culture may benefit from power of which they are unaware.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup>“Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture” (Equity in the Center, 2020), <https://equityinthecenter.org/aww/>.

<sup>28</sup> Kevin Nadal, “A Guide to Responding to Microaggressions” (Cuny Forum, 2014), <https://ncwwi.org/index.php/resourcemenue/resource-library/inclusivity-racial-equity/cultural-responsiveness/1532-a-guide-to-responding-to-microaggressions/file>.

<sup>29</sup> “Racism Defined,” dRworksBook, accessed December 6, 2021, <https://www.dismantlingracism.org/racism-defined.html>.

<sup>30</sup> “OpenSource Leadership Strategies | OpenSource Leadership Strategies.”

<sup>31</sup> “Racism and Power — Alberta Civil Liberties Research Center,” December 18, 2018, <http://web.archive.org/web/20181218143252/http://www.aclrc.com/racism-and-power>.

### 19. Privilege:

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.<sup>32</sup>

**20. Race:** For many people, it comes as a surprise that racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact:

- a. Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.<sup>33</sup>
- b. Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "white" in the United States today were considered "non-white" in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people).<sup>34</sup>
- c. The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as designated groups, have been used by whites at different times in history to compete with African American labor.<sup>35</sup>

### 21. Racism:

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

- a. Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power
- b. Racism = a system of advantage based on race
- c. Racism = a system of oppression based on race
- d. Racism = a white supremacy system<sup>36</sup>

**14. Racial Equity:** Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Colours of Resistance, "Colours of Resistance Archive," *Colours of Resistance Archive* (blog), accessed December 6, 2021, <http://www.coloursofresistance.org/definitions/privilege/>.

<sup>33</sup> "Race: The Power of an Illusion," accessed December 7, 2021, <https://www.racepowerofanillusion.org/>.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Kivel, *Uprooting Racism - 4th Edition*, 2017.

<sup>36</sup> "Racism Defined."

<sup>37</sup> [Center for Assessment and Policy Development](http://www.capd.org) "Center for Assessment and Policy Development," Center for Assessment and Policy Development, accessed December 14, 2021, <http://www.capd.org>.



- 15. Racial Equity Lens:** The process of paying disciplined attention to race and ethnicity while analyzing problems, looking for solutions, and defining success. A race equity lens critiques a “color blind” approach, arguing that color blindness perpetuates systems of disadvantage in that it prevents structural racism from being acknowledged. Application of a race equity lens helps to illuminate disparate outcomes, patterns of disadvantage, and root cause.<sup>38</sup>
- 15. Racial Trauma:** ‘Racial trauma, or race-based traumatic stress (RBTS), refers to the mental and emotional injury caused by encounters with racial bias and ethnic discrimination, racism, and hate crimes [1]. Any individual that has experienced an emotionally painful, sudden, and uncontrollable racist encounter is at risk of suffering from a race-based traumatic stress injury [2]. In the U.S., Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) are most vulnerable due to living under a system of white supremacy.’<sup>39</sup>
- 16. Self-love:** Self-love is the deep care, acceptance, admiration and appreciation that you have in your relationship with yourself. Self-love means recognizing the internal and external parts of yourself and having love for them. When we think of self-love, we also think of having.<sup>40</sup>
- a. Self-compassion for yourself
  - b. Patience for your growing edges
  - c. Appreciation for your strengths and your challenges
  - d. Awareness of yourself and what your needs are
  - e. Understanding that physical looks are only one component of who you are
- 17. Self-care:** Self-care is the acts and behaviors that help you show up as your best self and your self-care practice as the intentional practice of identifying and addressing your needs on a regular basis. While your self-care plan will grow and change as you do, your self-care practice should ultimately be balanced, fulfilling and efficient.<sup>41</sup>
- 18. Showing Up Fully:** Showing up fully means being able to be your true and authentic self at work while recognizing all the different identities that are important to who you are. Additionally, you are able to navigate the workplace in a way where you don’t feel like you have to worry about parts of your identity getting in the way of being able to participate fully, to be treated equitably. **Fostering environments in which people can show up fully means allowing individuals to thrive, collaborate, and feel like valuable members of a team while keeping equity and inclusion as anchors. Showing up fully and authentically leads to greater happiness and satisfaction, productivity, deeper connections and relationships, trust, and engagement.**

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<sup>38</sup> “Embracing Equity: 7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion within Your Organization,” Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide (Baltimore, Maryland: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014), [https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF\\_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf](https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> “Racial Trauma,” Mental Health America, accessed December 7, 2021, <https://www.mhanational.org/racial-trauma>.

<sup>40</sup> G Michelle, “The Difference Between Self Love and Vanity,” *Gmichelle.Com* (blog), April 29, 2019, <https://gmichelle.com/2019/04/29/the-difference-between-self-love-and-vanity/>.

<sup>41</sup> <https://gmichelle.com/2020/05/31/3-self-care-practices-you-need-in-your-routine/> “3 Self-Care Practices You Need in Your Routine,” gmichelle.com, June 1, 2020, <https://gmichelle.com/2020/05/31/3-self-care-practices-you-need-in-your-routine/>.

**19. Social Construct:** A social construct is an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society.<sup>42</sup> It is a form of categorizing something or someone with no true or absolute biological basis. As a society we develop cultural rules and then we apply these rules when psychologically categorizing people.<sup>43</sup>

‘A social construct is something that exists not in objective reality, but as a result of human interaction. It exists because humans agree that it exists.’ One way humans create social constructs is by structuring what they see and experience into categories. For example, they see people with different skin colors and other physical features and "create" the social construct of race.<sup>44</sup>

**20. Structural Racism:** The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics—historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal—that routinely advantages Whiteness 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 Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Arab and other racially oppressed people.

Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including history, culture, politics, economics and the entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism—all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.<sup>45</sup>

**21. Systemic Racism:** The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics, and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.<sup>46</sup>

**22. White fragility:** Per Robin DiAngelo, white fragility is “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable [for white people], triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> “Definition of SOCIAL CONSTRUCT” (Merriam-Webster), accessed December 7, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social+construct>.

<sup>43</sup> Gordon Hodson, “Race as a Social Construction,” *Psychology Today*, December 5, 2016, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/without-prejudice/201612/race-social-construction>.

<sup>44</sup> Ann-Louise Lockhart and Carol Bainbridge, “Why People Make Social Constructs and How They Can Change,” *Verywell Mind*, October 12, 2020, <https://www.verywellmind.com/definition-of-social-construct-1448922>.

<sup>45</sup> Lawrence and Keleher, “Structural Racism.”

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Robin J. DiAngelo, *White Fragility: Why It’s so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018).



**23. White supremacy culture:** White Supremacy Culture refers to the dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. These standards may be seen as mainstream, dominant cultural practices; they have evolved from the United States' history of white supremacy. Because it is so normalized it can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call U.S. culture or norms – a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But it operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what “normal” is – and likewise, what “professional,” “effective,” or even “good” is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, “at risk,” or “unsustainable.” White culture values some ways – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, western tradition – of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways. And it does this without ever having to explicitly say so...<sup>48</sup>

White supremacy culture is an artificial, historically constructed culture which expresses, justifies and binds together the United States white supremacy system. It is the glue that binds together white-controlled institutions into systems and white-controlled systems into the global white supremacy system.<sup>49</sup>

[*Note: This term is often used interchangeably with white dominant culture.*]

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<sup>48</sup> Gita Gulati-Partee and Maggie Potapchuk, “Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity,” *The Foundation Review* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1189>.

<sup>49</sup> “Challenging White Supremacy Workshop :: Workshops,” accessed December 6, 2021, <http://www.cswsworkshop.org/workshops.html>.

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