

It's Not about Checking a Box

Critical Competencies for Confronting the Claims of Post-racialism

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POST-RACIAL?

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment

All Men



1 in 9

White Men



1 in 17

Black Men



1 in 3

Latino Men



1 in 6

All Women



1 in 56

White Women



1 in 111

Black Women



1 in 18

Latina Women



1 in 45

Racial Gap

Percentage in their communities saying blacks are treated less fairly than whites

In dealing with the police

Among Whites
37

Among Blacks
70

At work

Among Whites
16

Among Blacks
54

In stores or restaurants

Among Whites
16

Among Blacks
44

In local public schools

Among Whites
15

Among Blacks
51

In getting health care

POST-RACIAL -

- Racism is relegated to the past
- Consists of aberrant / anomalous actions perpetrated by people who intend to do harm.

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6. What is this person's race? Mark one or more boxes.

White

Black, African Am., or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* ↴

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Asian Indian

Japanese

Native Hawaiian

Chinese

Korean

Guamanian or Chamorro

Filipino

Vietnamese

Samoan

Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* ↴

Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.* ↴

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Some other race — *Print race.* ↴

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- Race was legally codified to maintain the systematic violation of one group of people (Black) and the systematic validation of another (White).
- Race/ racism was institutionalized by means of power hierarchy that operates to perpetuate itself.

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The racialization of power observable as:

- Categories of “better than” and “less than”
 - “better than” group as carriers of positive traits
 - “better than” group more deserving of resources
 - “better than” group defines the terms of engagement and the terms by which the less than group are known

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The racialization of power supported by supremacist ideologies that:

- Justify exclusion, violence, and annihilation of the “less than” group
- Affirm the systematic privileging of the “better than group”
 - Based on illusion, collusion, and mystification

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The Separate (Single Voice) Self

- Over-emphasizes independence, differentiation, and autonomy
- Focuses on material reality
- Strives for unilateral control
- Validates power-over as a survival strategy

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Results in essentialist notions of race ~

- Categorical reality
- Oppositional identity building
- Sense of “self” as a unitary and stable

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Relational Cultural Theory

- We grow through relationship for the purpose of relationship.
- Growth requires engagement with difference – involves the capacity to wage good conflict.

Jean Baker Miller, 1976

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The Relational – Cultural “Self”	
<i>relational</i>	<i>cultural</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable and fluid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized around socio-cultural dimensions (e.g. religion, race/ethnicity, gender, class)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical and prospective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social – cultural dimensions characterized by intersectionality and simultaneity (Holvino)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic and cohesive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fluid, multiplicitous, and unstable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Self” constituted of multiple voices 	

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Empathy is...

- Signal of presence and **Awareness**
 - *Compassionate witness*
- **Respect** for other-ness
 - *Invitation to curiosity, openness, deeper inquiry*
- **Compassion:** Safety from contempt and humiliation
 - *May be portal to increased conflict*

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Empathy is not...

- Rescue from challenge, conflict, or complexity
- Over-identification
 - *swapping “just like me” stories (affirming our sameness)*
- Mutual attraction or approval
- Promise of comfort or agreement

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Practices of Empathy...

- Breathe...
 - *Extend compassion toward yourself... it is perfectly natural to feel “triggered”*
- Listen to your voices
 - *What am I feeling...*
 - *What am I afraid of...*
- What is my “Single Voice” self telling me to do...
 - *How is my “model me” story activated?*
 - *How is “not me” story inhibiting movement?*

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Authenticity is....

- Capacity to represent oneself with complexity in relationship
 - *Encourages complexity and fuller elaboration*
 - *Includes vulnerability and “not knowing”*
- Courage to be “real” *and* empathically attuned to other person and context
- Consideration of purposefulness and timeliness

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Three R's of Authenticity...

- **Respect** – *fully noticing: staying connected to own experience; taking in the experience of “otherness”*
- **Responsiveness** – *disclosing whatever is pertinent to the growth of the relationship; inviting the experience of the other*
- **Responsibility** – *anticipating and caring about the impact on relationship*

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Practices of Authenticity...

- Breathe...
- Listen to internal dialogue to surface unmet needs and fears
- Ask dialogue-shifting questions
 - *What am I afraid of? Ashamed of?*
 - *Can you tell me more about...*
 - *I'm been wondering about...*

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Practices of Authenticity...

- Learn to tolerate imperfect knowing
 - *Give up claim on perfection and “righteousness”*
 - *Commit to saying “one true thing”*
- Embrace shame as a beckoning toward growth...
- Seek intentional community where you may safely share your vulnerability

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Mutuality Is...

- Opening oneself to influence
- Showing the other person that her/his experience matters
- Allowing images of self and other to shift; recognizing the tentative / unstable nature of “categories”

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*The essence of mutuality is racial justice:
transforming power-over (racialized hierarchies)
into shared power or power-with.*

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1. Let go...of the illusion (and the burden!) of perfection and unfailing expertise
2. Let go... of the need to simplify and objectify
3. Embrace the possibility of new growth within vulnerability
4. Validate and nurture longing for connection
5. Develop an intentional community of mentors, allies, and compassionate witnesses.