

Tools

To be trauma informed AND critically conscious

1. PAST injury - Historical (or intergenerational) trauma

The cumulative emotional harm of an individual or generation caused by a traumatic experience or event

TASK- Be curious about people's historical trauma; consider that it may be present even if they don't disclose. Acknowledge dominant perspective that may overlook historical trauma. Apologize.

2. PRESENT injury – Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly marginalized groups. Are experienced as belittling, disrespectful and devaluing. They cause a psychological bind for marginalized groups

TASK- Acknowledge when you commit a microaggression. Be curious about how you injured another. Offer an apology as needed. Note it so you can make a change. Don't expect the other person to explain it to you. Do your own research. Utilize micro-affirmation if possible.

3. Narrative possession

When a person of privilege controls, owns and dictates the story of the other and selects what gets perpetuated and told

TASK- Recognize when your privilege overshadows the lived experiences of others. Acknowledge the amount of space and power you may be taking up. Allow the experiences of others to have space and voice.

4. White fragility

Defined as "the disbelieving defensiveness that white people exhibit when their ideas about race and racism are challenged." Responses to "racial triggers" include: emotions such as anger, fear and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, tears, silence, and withdrawal

TASK- Acknowledge and openly discuss racial issues, uncomfortable subjects and whiteness. Be accountable for your own fragility. Seek support from other white people. Don't expect people of color to explain or support your process.

5. Confirmation bias

The tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions, beliefs or hypotheses, while giving disproportionately less consideration to alternative possibilities or views

TASK- Utilize groups outside your comfort zone that may challenge your belief system. Intentionally ensure that populations you are developing programs and legislation for are on your advisory board. Get consultation from those with different lenses.