

The Urgency of Now: To Achieve Health Equity, We Must Address Injustice

AAPA Annual Conference, 2021

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No Relevant Commercial Relationships to Disclose



Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

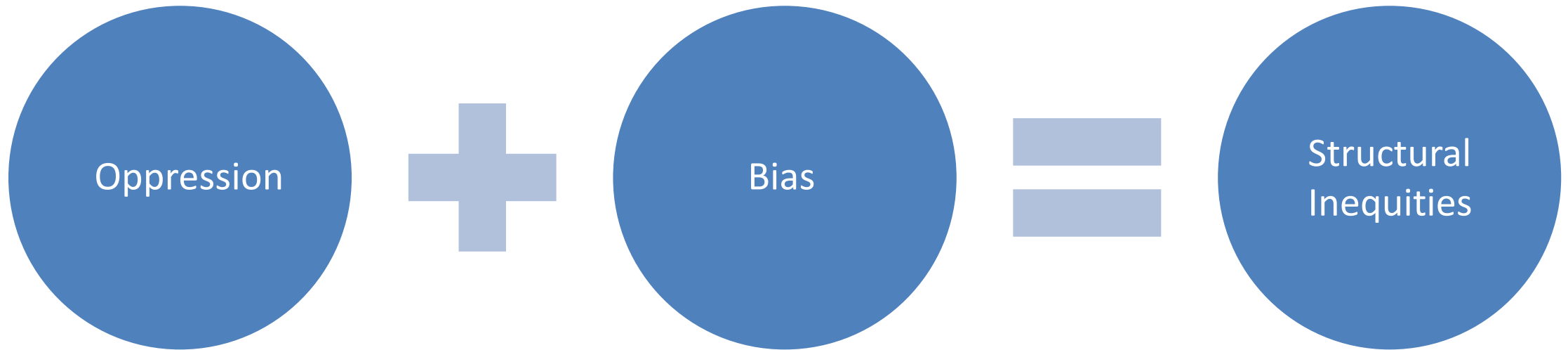
- Recognize racism as a threat to the health and wellbeing of Black, Indigenous and other people of color
- Determine how social justice impacts the health outcomes of all patients
- Discuss macro, meso, and micro approaches that PAs can employ to address institutional and structural inequities in our health care system
- Advocate for health policy changes to address ongoing health disparities in the Black community





HISTORICAL INEQUITIES IN MEDICINE





- Shifting Racial Demographic
- Diverse Patient Community





HISTORICAL INEQUITIES IN ACADEMIC MEDICINE

- Racism in medicine, a problem with roots over 2,500 years old
- Creating and perpetuating racial inferiority mythology and stereotypes
- Biological-->Sociological



History of Medicine



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Medical Mistrust



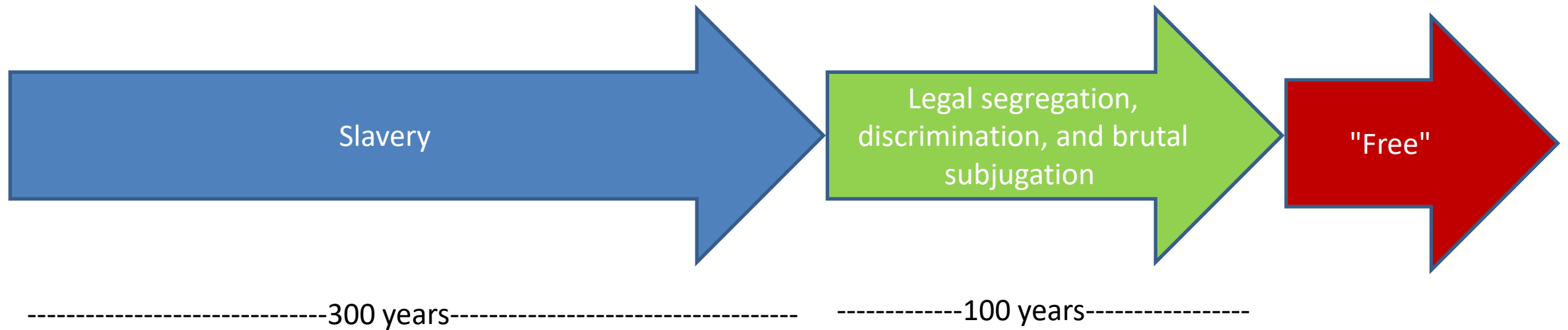
HISTORICAL INEQUITIES IN MEDICINE

Racism in medicine and health care

Racism in society



HISTORY OF RACE AND RACISM IN THE US



A top-down view of a black stethoscope and a white computer keyboard on a white surface. The stethoscope is positioned diagonally, with its chest piece in the upper right and its earpieces extending towards the bottom right. The keyboard is partially visible in the top right corner, showing keys like 'option', 'alt', and arrow keys. The background is a plain white surface with a subtle gradient.

**RACISM IS A PUBLIC
HEALTH EMERGENCY**



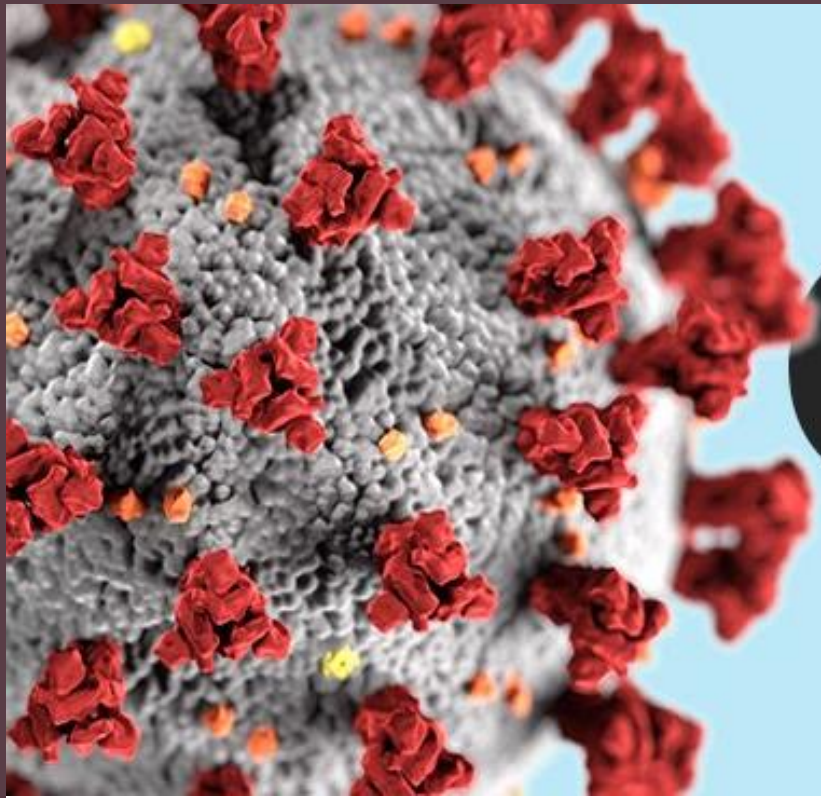
"Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call "race"), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources."

- APHA Past-President Camara Phyllis Jones, MD, MPH, PhD

Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis

- **Wisconsin** "inaction, indifference and institutional **racism** has harmed generations of black and brown Wisconsinites."
- **Maryland** "a root cause of disparities and inequities"
- **California** "a public health crisis" that results in "disparities in family stability, health and mental wellness, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice and housing."





COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many people from racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.

--CDC



COVID-19 and Racial Disparities

-- APHA Past-President Dr.
Camara Phyllis Jones, MD,
MPH, PhD



The Gwinnett NAACP had a great conversation with Dr. Camara Jones: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=st1QgNKTN0g>

Medical Associations Address Racism

- The American Medical Association denounces **police brutality** and all forms of racially-motivated violence. The AMA will actively work to **dismantle racist and discriminatory policies and practices** across all of health care.
- The American College of Physicians condemns the injustices and harm that **Black and indigenous communities and other people of color experience** as a result of pervasive overt and covert systemic institutional racist policies, practices, and discrimination in the United States. Urgent actions to **remedy historical institutional injustices and inequities** include eliminating discrimination, bias, and racism in the U.S. health care delivery system and in medical education.
- The American Nurses Association states that racism is a public health crisis that impacts the **mental, spiritual, and physical health** of all people.
- The American Public Health Association states racism is an ongoing public health crisis that **needs our attention now!** We see discrimination every day in **all aspects of life**, including housing, education, the criminal justice system and employment.



The American Academy of Physician Assistants

*“AAPA recognizes that racism, in its systemic, structural, institutional, and interpersonal forms, is an ongoing urgent threat to public health, the advancement of **health equity**, and excellence in the delivery of medical care. AAPA affirms its commitment to **anti-racism values**, defined as the intent to change institutional culture, policies, practices, and procedures to remove systemic, structural, institutional and interpersonal racism. AAPA supports the **elimination of all forms of racism.**”*



Resources

Wealth

Power

Bias

Policies

Education

Dismantling Racism

Dr. Camara Jones, UCSF 2018,
The Gardner's Tale



Structural Racism and Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health



- Racial Health Disparities
- **Structural Racism:** Policies, Laws, and Regulations





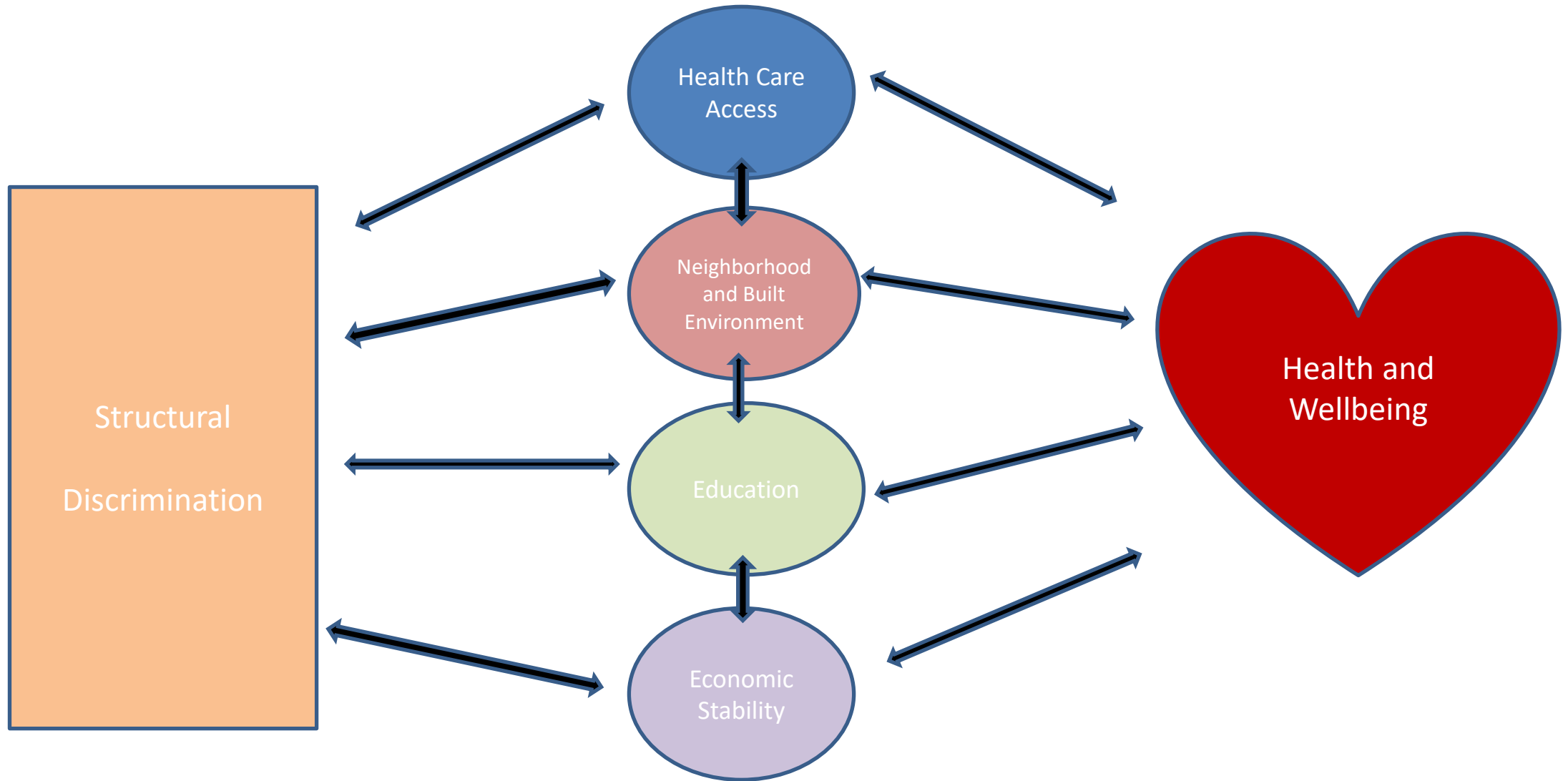
Structural Racism and Social Determinants of Health

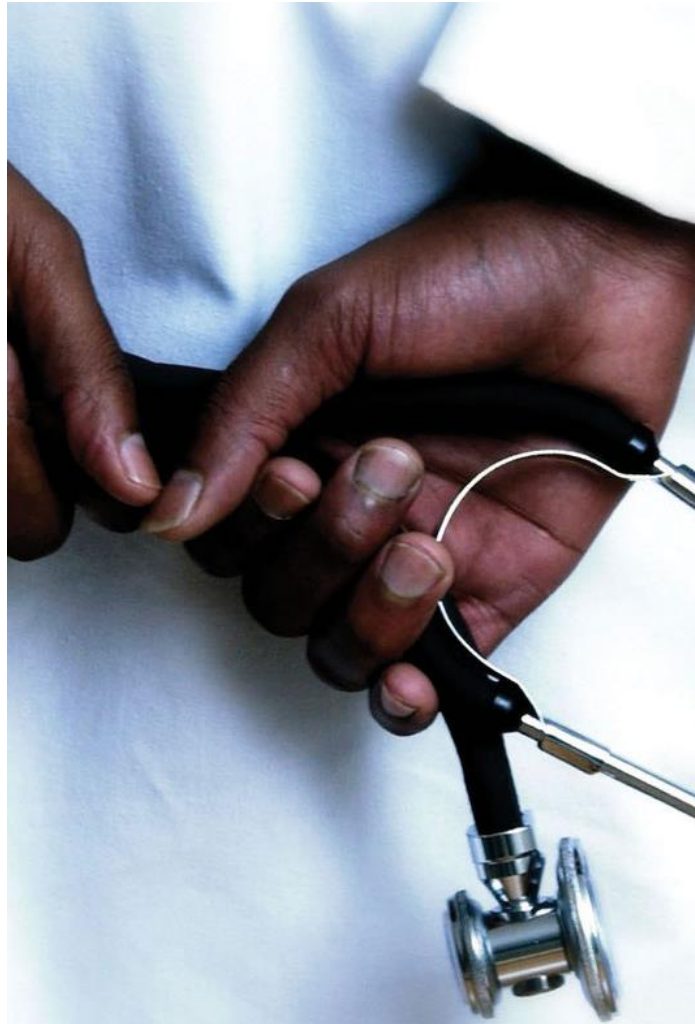


Root Cause

SDOH

Outcome





Racial Health Disparities

- Life expectancy
- Chronic Diseases
- Pregnancy
- Policing
- Suicide
- COVID-19





Resources

Wealth

Power

Bias

Policies

Education

Dismantling Health Inequities

Social Justice and Health Outcomes



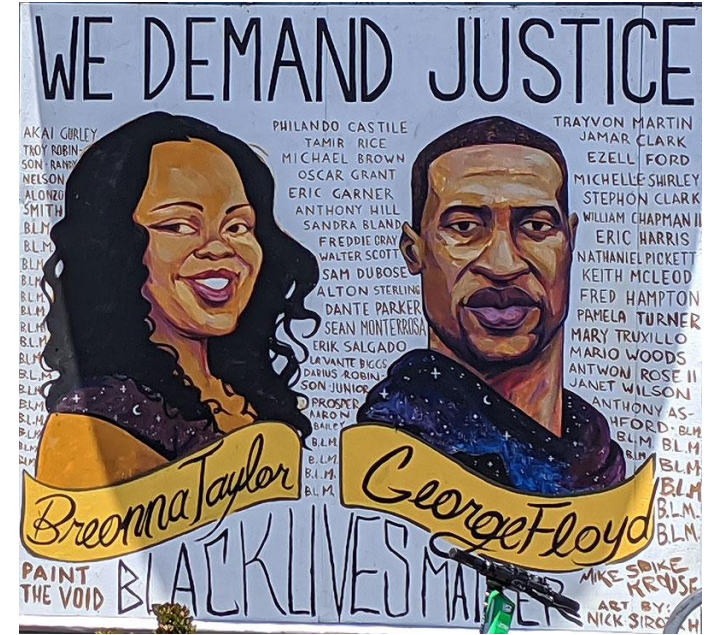
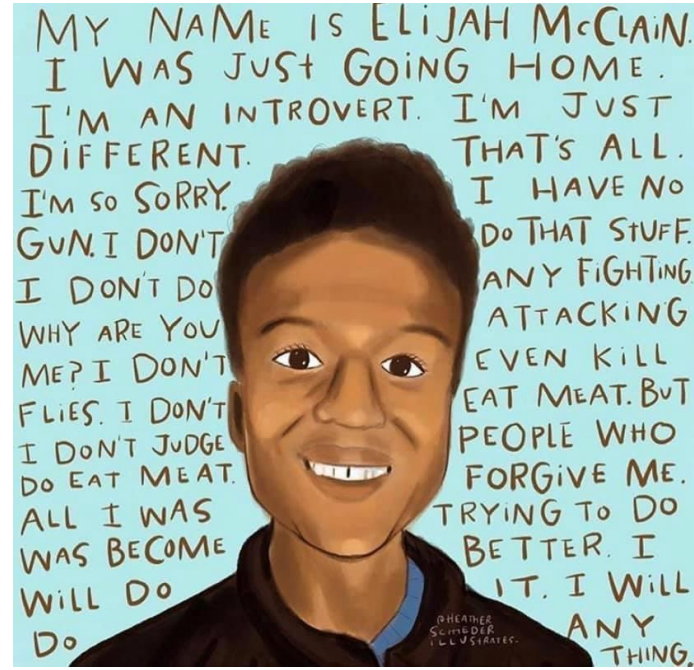
#BlackLivesMatter





White Coats for Black Lives





#BlackLivesMatter



Dehumanization of Black Lives



“To dehumanize another human being is not merely to declare that someone is not human, and it does not happen by accident. It is a process, a programming. It takes energy and reinforcement to deny what is self-evident in another member of one’s own species”

- Wilkerson (2020) CASTE





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SLAVE AUCTIONS

Charleston was one of the largest slave trading cities in the U.S. In the 1800s, the area around the Old Exchange Building was one of the most common sites of downtown slave auctions. Along with real estate and other personal property, thousands of enslaved people were sold here as early as the 1770s. Most auctions occurred just north of the Exchange, though some also took place inside. Merchants also sold slaves at nearby stores on Broad, Chalmers, State, and East Bay streets.

(Continued on other side)

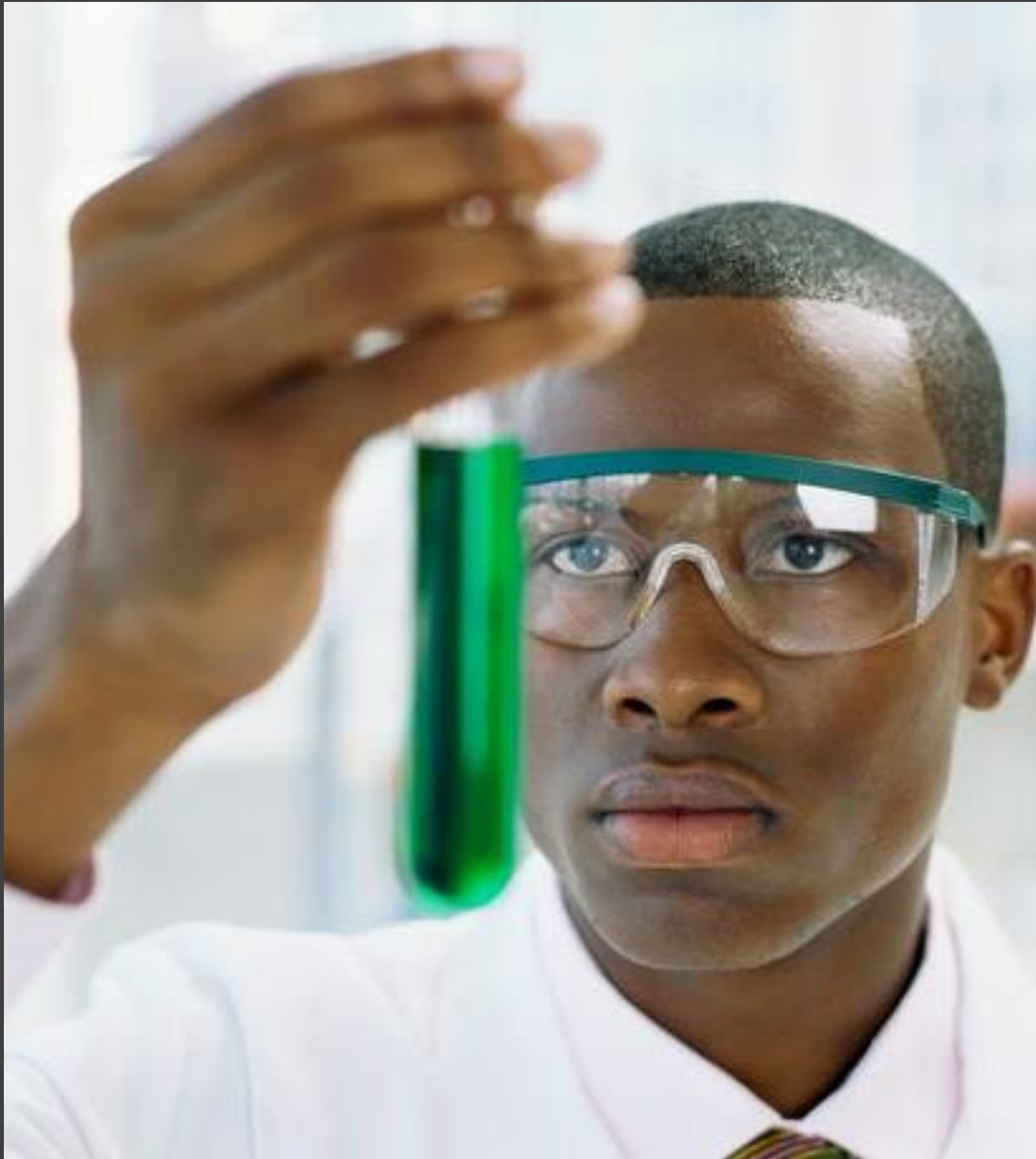
Objectified
and
Dehumanized



A group of diverse hands of various skin tones (light, medium, and dark brown) are reaching up from the bottom and sides to form a heart shape. The hands are positioned in a way that their fingers and palms meet to create the outline of a heart. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

Humanity is the Key to Justice

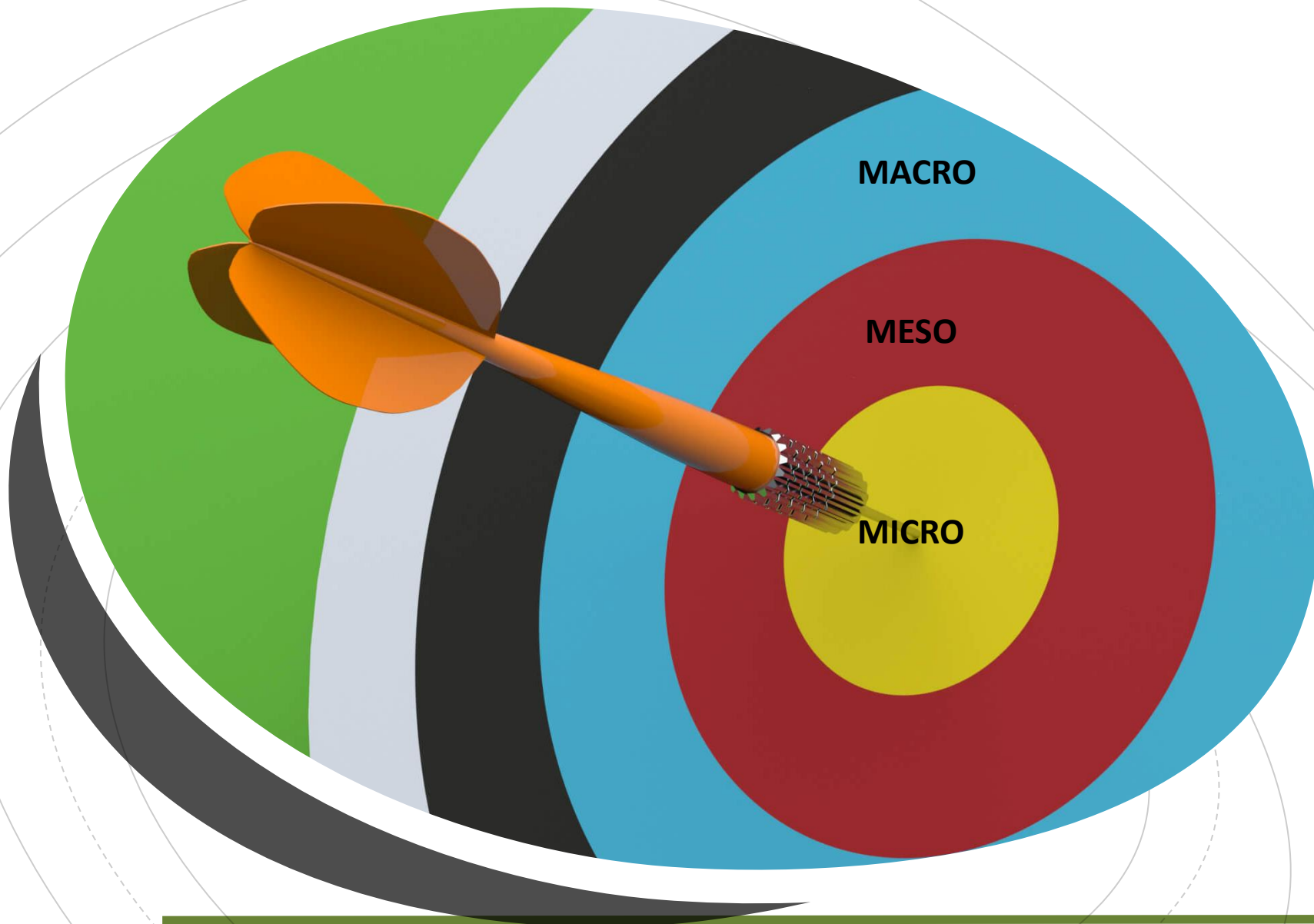




Black Male Lives

- Brutalized, killed, and negatively stereotyped
- More likely to be shot to death by police officers
- Is police violence a public health issue?





Call to Action for PAs

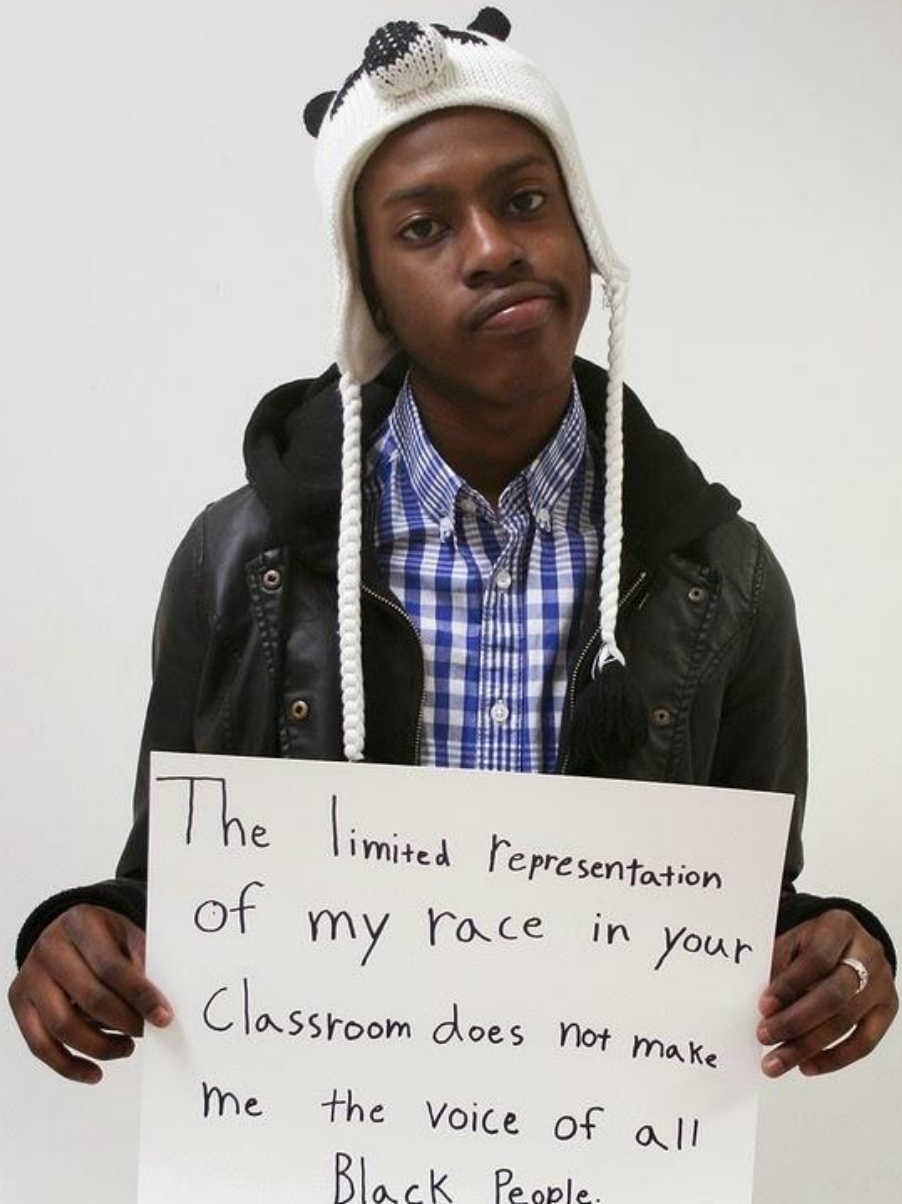




Call to Action for PAs

- Conversations about race
- Ask hard questions
- Awareness of social environment





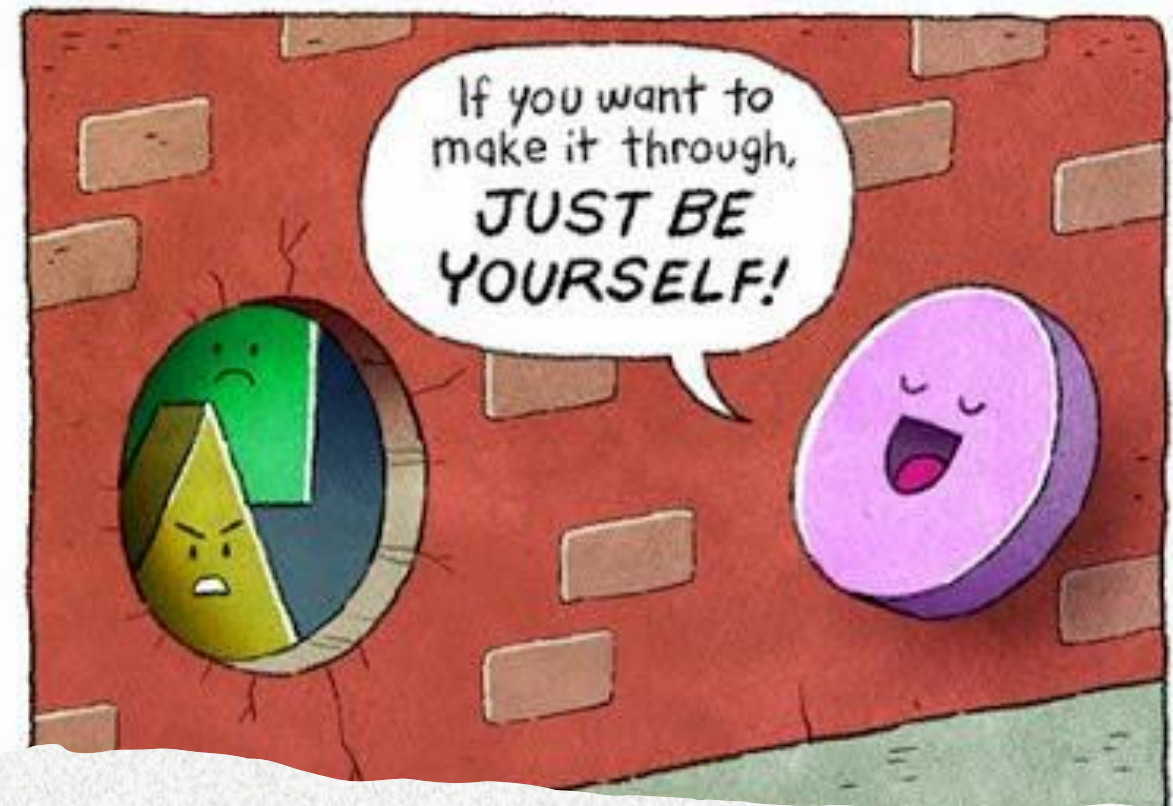
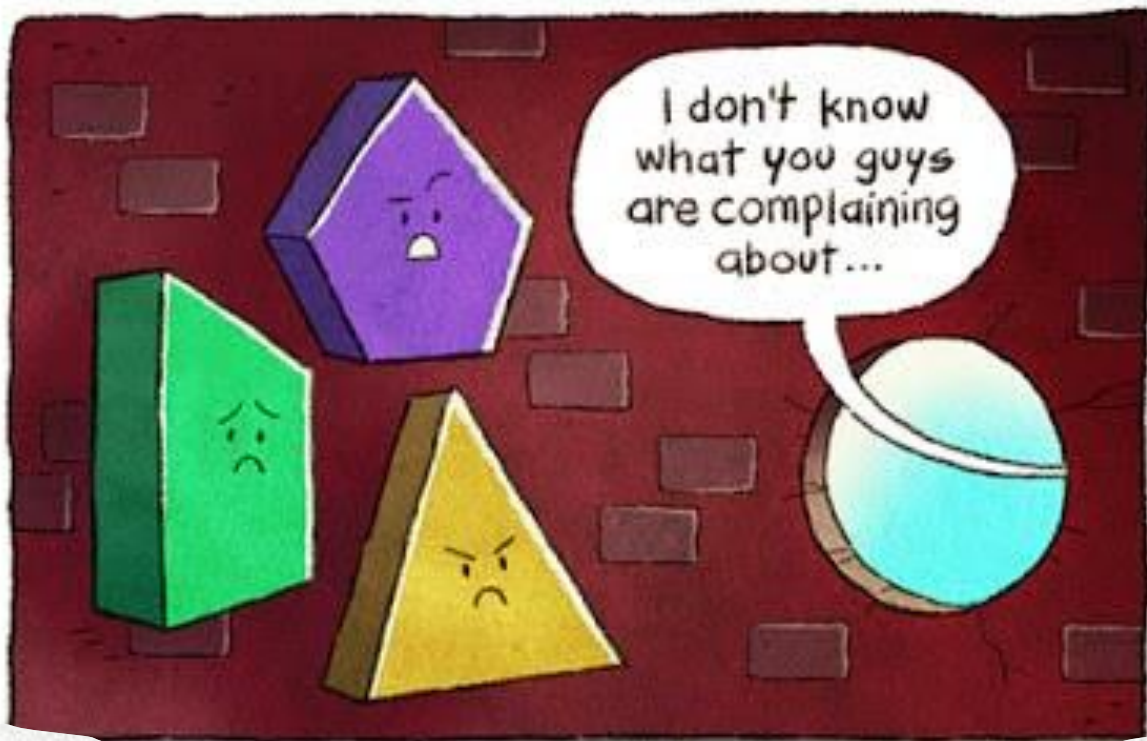
The limited representation
of my race in your
Classroom does not make
me the voice of all
Black People.



Call to Action for PAs

- Address microaggressions
- Call out racism





Call to Action for PAs

- Acknowledge privilege
- Implicit Bias





ACTION PLAN			
WHO	WHAT	WHEN	HOW

Call to Action for PAs

- Take racism out of medical algorithms
- Create an anti-racism action plan





The Time is NOW for PAs

- Critical research of health disparities
- Academic Medicine



The Time is NOW for PAs

- Internal institutional reform
- Anti-racism advocacy



The Time is NOW for PAs

- Health insurance/payor mix
- Racially diverse medical workforce



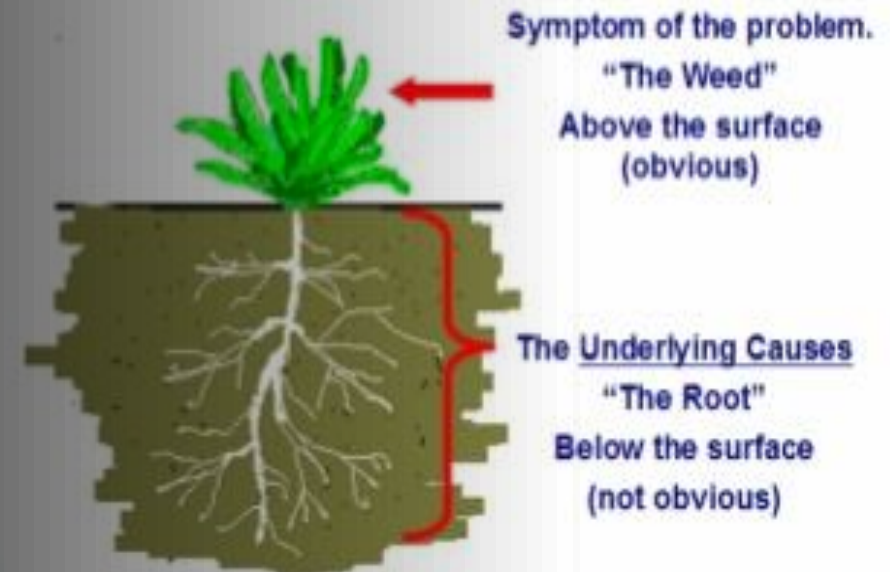


Identify Root Causes

- Look for the underlying factors which are causing the problem(s).

The Time is
NOW for PAs

Root Cause Analysis Basics



The word root, in root cause analysis, refers to the underlying causes, not the one cause.





American Medical Association

Acknowledging

Acknowledging the harm caused by racism and unconscious bias within medical research and health care

Identifying

Identifying tactics to counter racism and mitigate its health effects

Encouraging

Encouraging medical education curricula to promote a greater understanding of the topic

Supporting

Supporting external policy development and funding for researching racism's health risks and damages

Working

Working to prevent influences of racism and bias in health technology innovation





PAs Take the Lead

- Create health policy
- Design and implement culturally competent programs



PAAs Take the Lead

- Disseminate messaging about the intersection of race, medicine, and health care
- Advocacy for human rights
 - Grassroots, local, state, federal



“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane”



**INJUSTICE
ANYWHERE
IS A THREAT
TO JUSTICE
EVERYWHERE.**

REVEREND, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



Martin Luther King Jr. on Improving Social Equality



Martin Luther King Jr. discusses the current state of African American inequality in this rare audio of a speech he gave at the New School in New York, City on February 6, 1964. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R56OPiso6iY&t=39s>

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- All images from Bing Creative Commons image search



Questions?

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