



RACISM
IS A
VIRUS



Racial Trauma

MCLE: 21st Annual Juvenile Delinquency & Child Welfare Law Conference 2020

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Agenda

- What is trauma?
- What is racial trauma?
- Factors making one more vulnerable to racial trauma
- Brief overview of history of racism
- Psychological Impact of Trauma
- What can we do to mitigate impact of racial trauma and diminish instances of racial trauma?



What is trauma?



Definition of Trauma


“Experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening situation for which adequate coping resources are unavailable”

*These experiences usually call forth overwhelming **feelings of terror, horror, or helplessness***

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

- Psychological/Verbal Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Neglect
- Physical Neglect
- Loss of a parent/peer/family member
- Mother/father treated violently
- Substance Use in the home
- Mental Illness
- Criminal Behavior in the household





What is racial
trauma?



“To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time.”

— James Baldwin

Racial Trauma



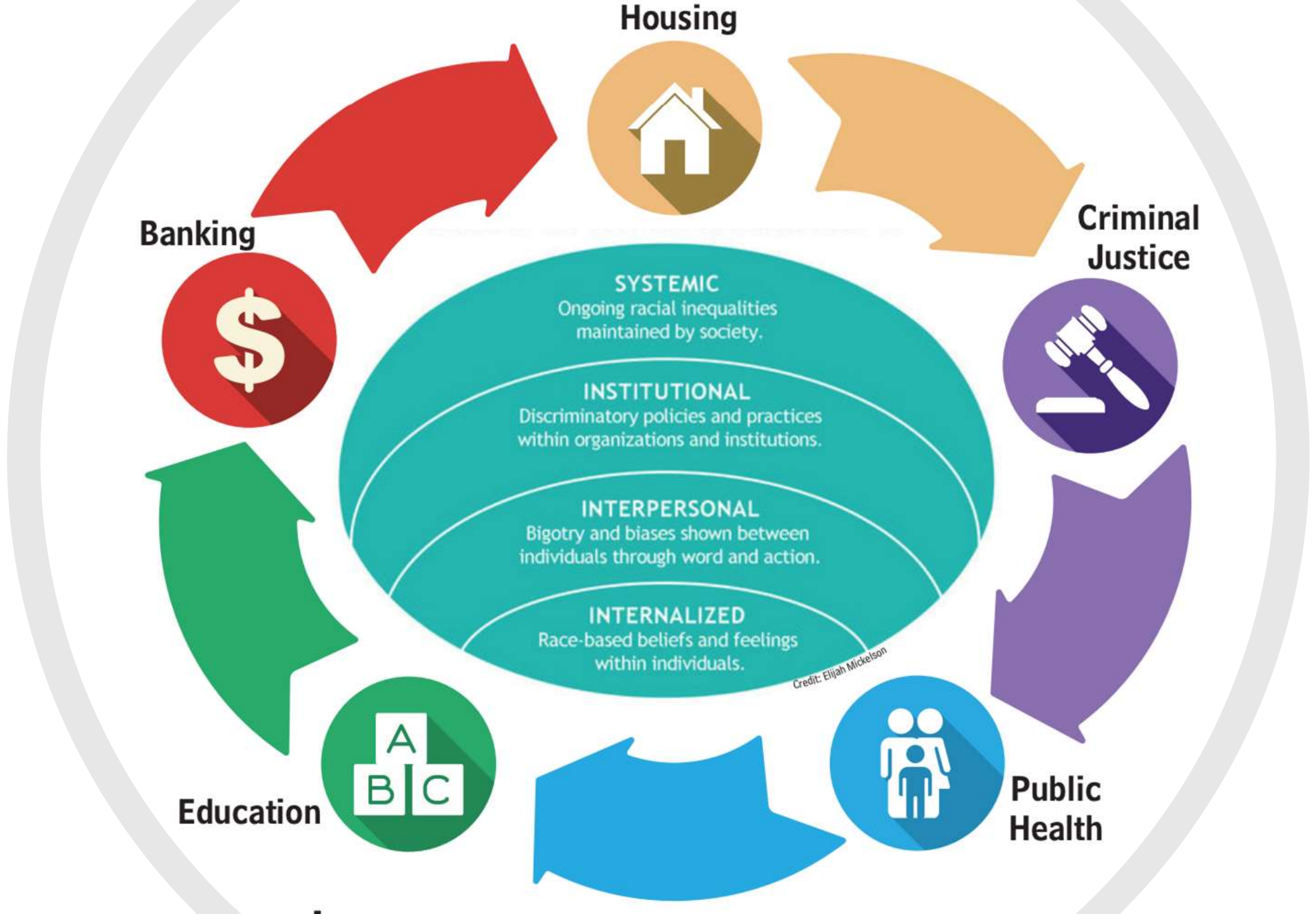
- Racial trauma or race-based traumatic stress, is the cumulative effects of racism on an individual's mental and physical health. It has been linked to feelings of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, as well as other physical health issues

WHICH GROUPS ARE AFFECTED BY RACE AND STRUCTURAL RACISM?



Although groups have significantly different experiences in the United States, **all groups** viewed as being non-white have been subordinated, excluded, and marginalized, at one time or another, by institutional practices, popular beliefs, and habits that implicitly or explicitly support white privilege.

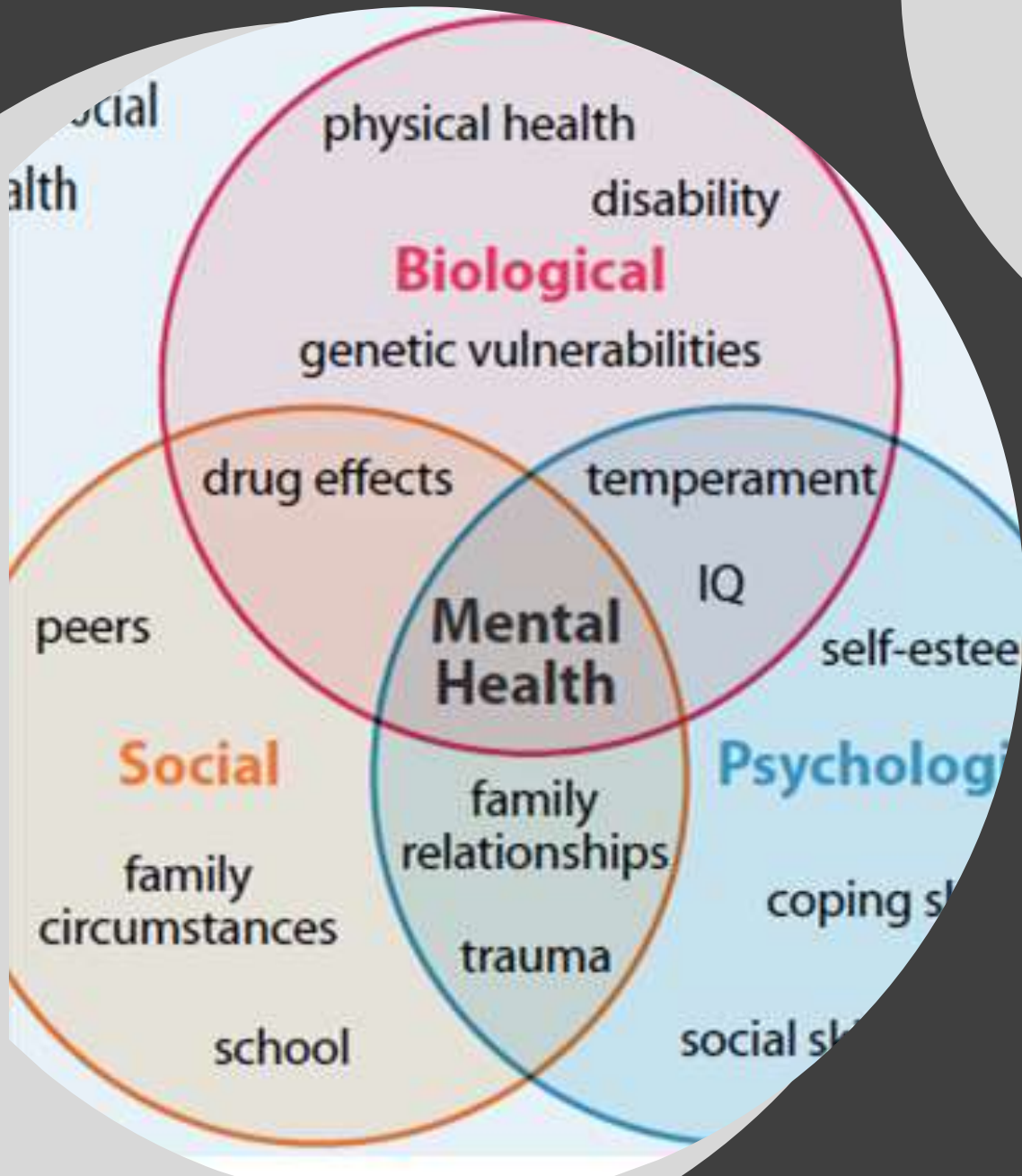




COVID-19 and RACIAL UNREST

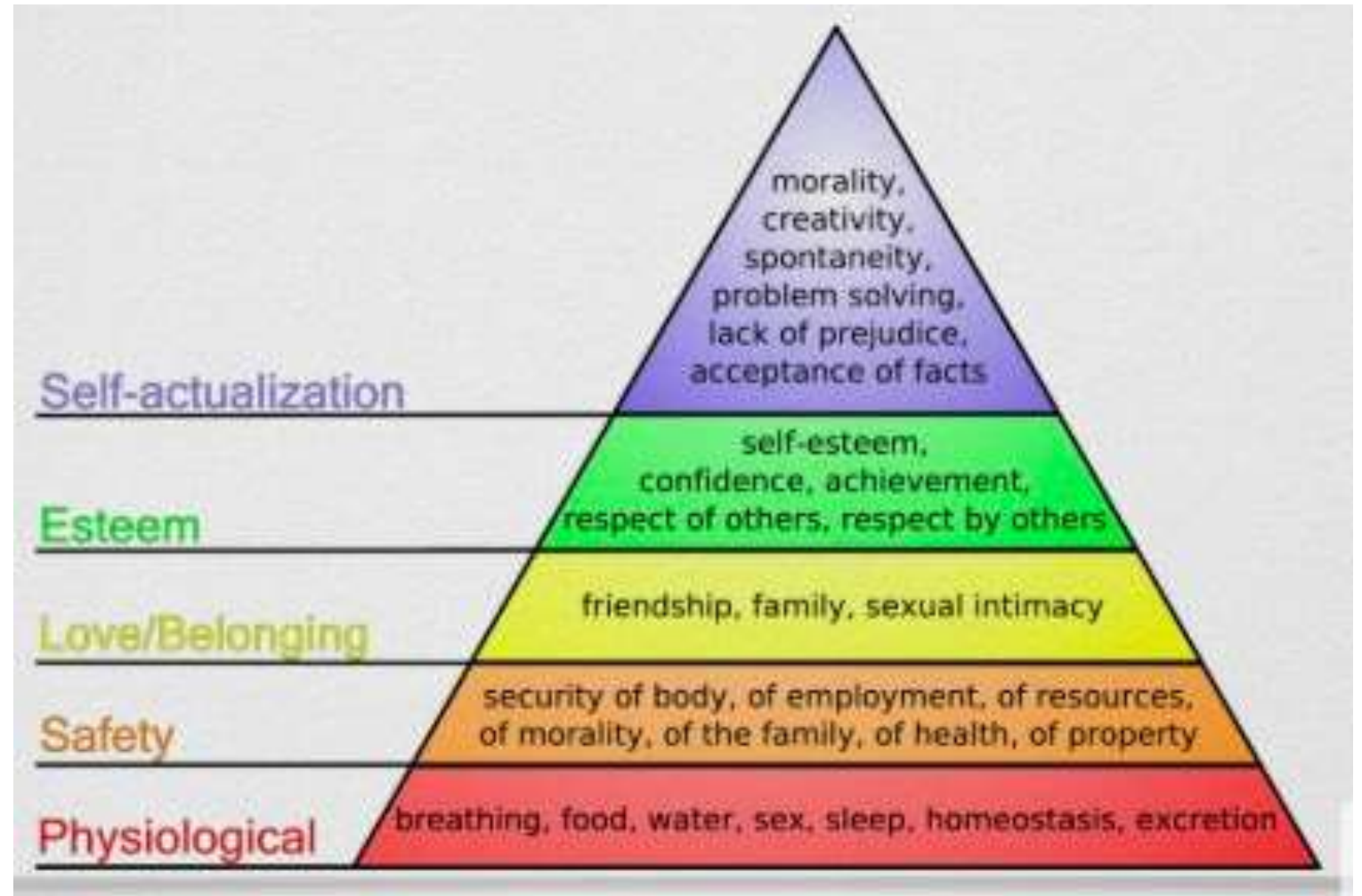
*Increase in symptoms
of PTSD/Trauma*

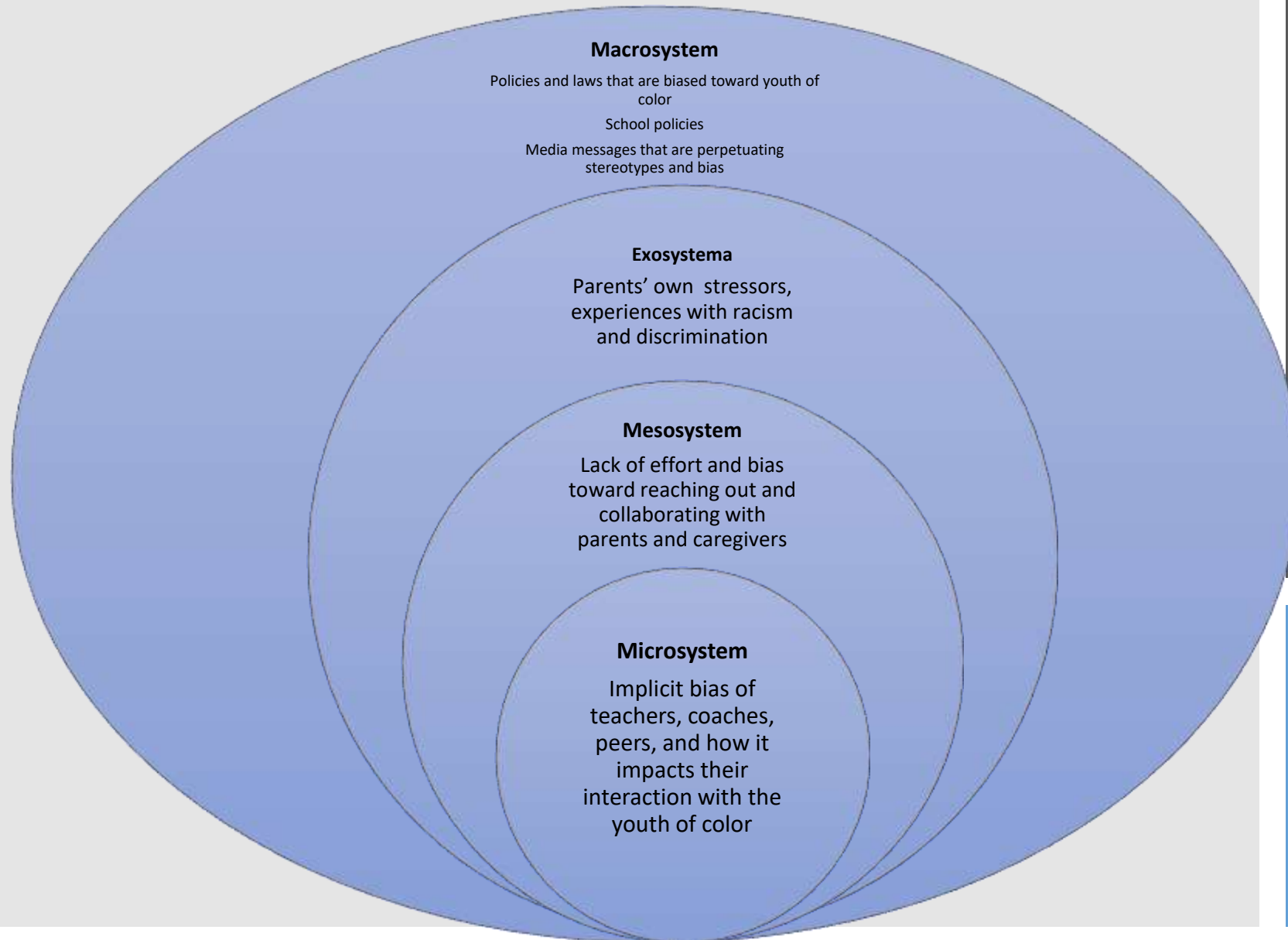




What factors make one vulnerable to racial traumatic experiences and response?

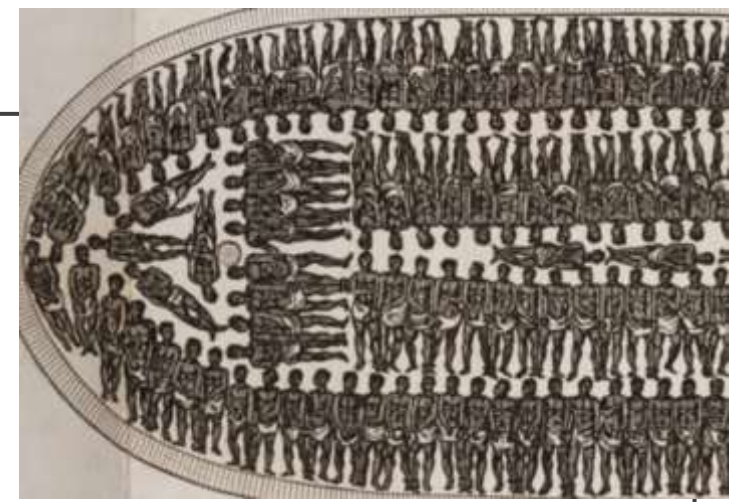
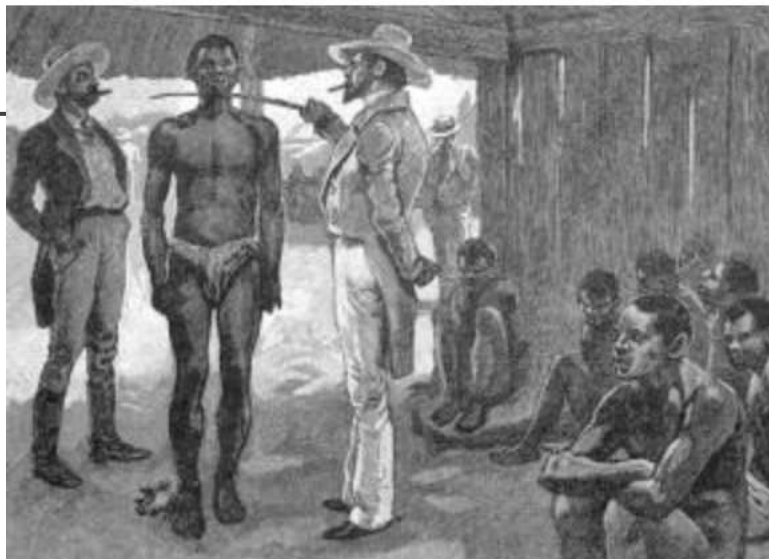
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs







Brief overview of history of racism in the USA



In the United States...

People of Color (POC) are much more likely to live in poverty than White people.

- Homelessness – and food and housing insecurity** – all disproportionately affect POC. ⁽¹⁾
- White people in the U.S. have **13x** the net worth of Black people. ⁽²⁾
- The average Black family would need **228 years** to build the wealth of a White family today. ⁽²⁾
- Race-based barriers such as **redlining** have historically limited opportunities for POC to own real estate and accumulate wealth. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Pew Research Center (2) The Nation Daily, 8/9/16

SLAVERY
1619 - 1865

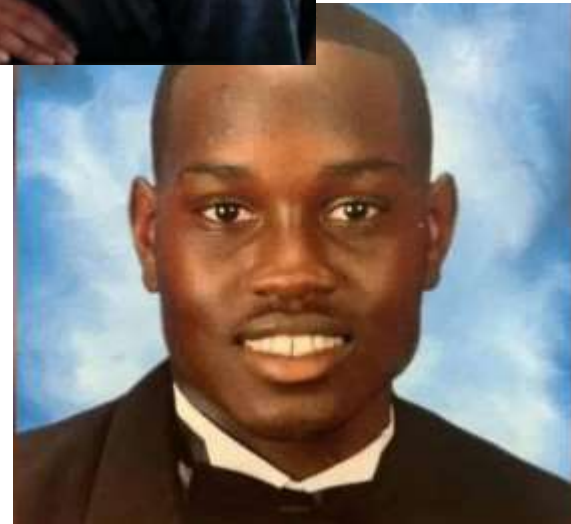
JIM CROW
1877 - 1960s

REDLINING
1934 - 1968

MASS INCARCERATION
1970s - present

COLORED WAITING





- Is the system broken or was it based on a foundation of White Supremacy Culture and thus developed to dismiss the needs of people of color and alienate/marginalize/oppress them?
 - Video of Kimberly Jones



Inequities in the Criminal Justice System

- **Dylan Roof**

- Shot and killed 9 people in a church in Charleston, North Carolina



- **George Floyd**

- Paid with an alleged forfeited 20\$ bill



Inequities in the Criminal Justice System

- **Kyle Rittenhouse**

- Fundraiser to bail him out
- Shot and killed 2 protesters in Kenosha



- **Kalif Browder**

- 3 years in prison without trial in solitary confinement for having stolen a backpack

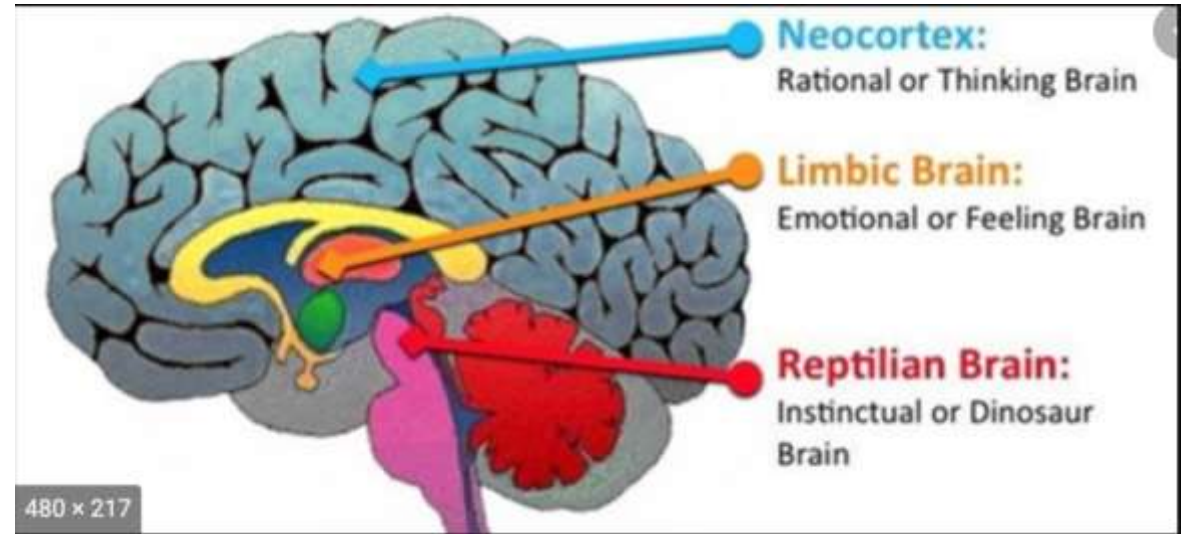


School to Prison Pipeline

- **School to prison pipeline** → **Detention and suspensions**
 - Implicit bias and misunderstanding of disruptive behavior of Black boys, Black girls, Latinx student and other students of color as violence and aggression instead of symptomatic of possible depressive disorder, PTSD, or anxiety disorder
 - Thus, more vulnerable to detention, suspensions or to be sent to juvenile system, as they are more likely to be handled by school police officer; more likely to drop out of school
- Black students are a disproportionate **39%** of those **expelled** and receive **combined suspensions and expulsions at a rate 3.5X higher than White students**
- 70% of students arrested or referred to police at school are black or Latino




Psychological Impact of Trauma



Flight or Fight or Freeze
Response

Psychological Impact of Trauma

Emotional	Cognitive	Physiological	Behavioral
Feeling overwhelmed and anxious	Loss of focus	Insomnia	Social withdrawal
Loss of motivation	Difficulty retrieving information (memory difficulties)	Increase or loss in appetite	Avoiding going anywhere
Irritability/Anger/Rage	Loss of motivation and interest to get anything done	Nightmares	Avoiding certain topics of conversation
Feeling on edge Paranoia Hypervigilance	Self-doubt	Headaches/stomachaches	Keeping busy in order to avoid feelings and thoughts evoked by traumatic experience
Frequent crying/sadness/hopelessness		Lethargy/Low energy	Being defiant
Feeling confused		Panic Attacks	Quick to react to protect self by engaging in physical fights
Mistrust of the system		Medical problems worsen	
Loss of sense of safety			
Feelings of powerlessness and disappointment			

A dark blue, irregularly shaped graphic with a splatter effect, containing white text. The graphic is centered on a white background and has a rough, ink-like edge with some smaller splatters around it.

What can we do to mitigate impact
of racial trauma and diminish
instances of racial trauma?

Cultural Humility

- Cultural humility lens to understand your clients and treat them in a culturally sensitive manner and affirming way
- Being open minded
- Consider multiple views
- Understanding that one's experiences are not the norm
- Challenge one's savior complex
- Understanding that differences does not equal deficiencies and deviances
- There is no single human norm/status quo
- Understanding the narrative and story of the youth and their parents
- What is the youth's story with systems? What is the parent's story with systems?
- How do parents and youth view police?

Before jumping
to
conclusions.....
Assess and
inquire about
their narrative
and story

- **Youth**

- Experiences with the system (school, police, providers, foster care system)
- Fluency in English
- Experiences with racism and discrimination
- What is their behavior communicating?

- **Parent**

- Fluency in English
- Immigration history
- Cultural view of child rearing, discipline
- Cultural view of role of parent, teacher, police, etc.
- Understanding of the sociocultural differences between USA and their country of origin
- Understanding of laws in the USA
- Parents' experiences with the system (medical, legal, immigration)
- Parents' experiences with racism and discrimination
- Parent's acculturation level
- Parent's stressors

Pillars of Cultural Competency

SELF-AWARENESS

ATTITUDE TOWARDS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES


KNOWLEDGE OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL PRACTICES AND WORLDVIEWS

CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS





Trauma informed approaches



Components of Trauma Informed Practice

Safety

Choice

Empowerment

Collaboration

Trustworthiness

SAFETY	CHOICE	EMPOWERMENT	COLLABORATION	TRUSTWORTHINESS
Structure	Offer youth options in their case where possible	Make youth's voices heard	Get youth's input and collaborate with them before making a decision where possible	Build connection with youth
Routine		Make youth feel validated and seen		Establish rapport and trust with youth
Inform and clearly explain the law and what to expect		Recognize and acknowledge youth potential		
		Accept youth as she/he/they are		
		Find and recognize youth's strengths		

General Trauma Healing Concepts



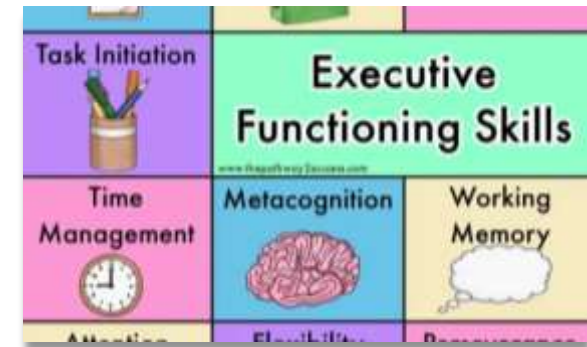
AM I SAFE?

- Regulate the reptilian brain → Deep breathing, meditation, exercise
- Consistency, routine, predictability, safety in classroom
- Help youth satisfy basic needs of breathing, sleeping, stable housing, food security in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



AM I LOVED?

- Heal feeling brain → Therapy
- Validate/Listen/Empathize
- Building relationship/Connecting
- Teaching Coping Skills



CAN I LEARN?

- Heal thinking brain
- Teach and enhance executive functioning skills
 - Problem solving
 - Planning
 - Organizing

resilience

noun

re·sil·ience | \ ri-'zil-yən(t)s \

Definition of **RESILIENCE**

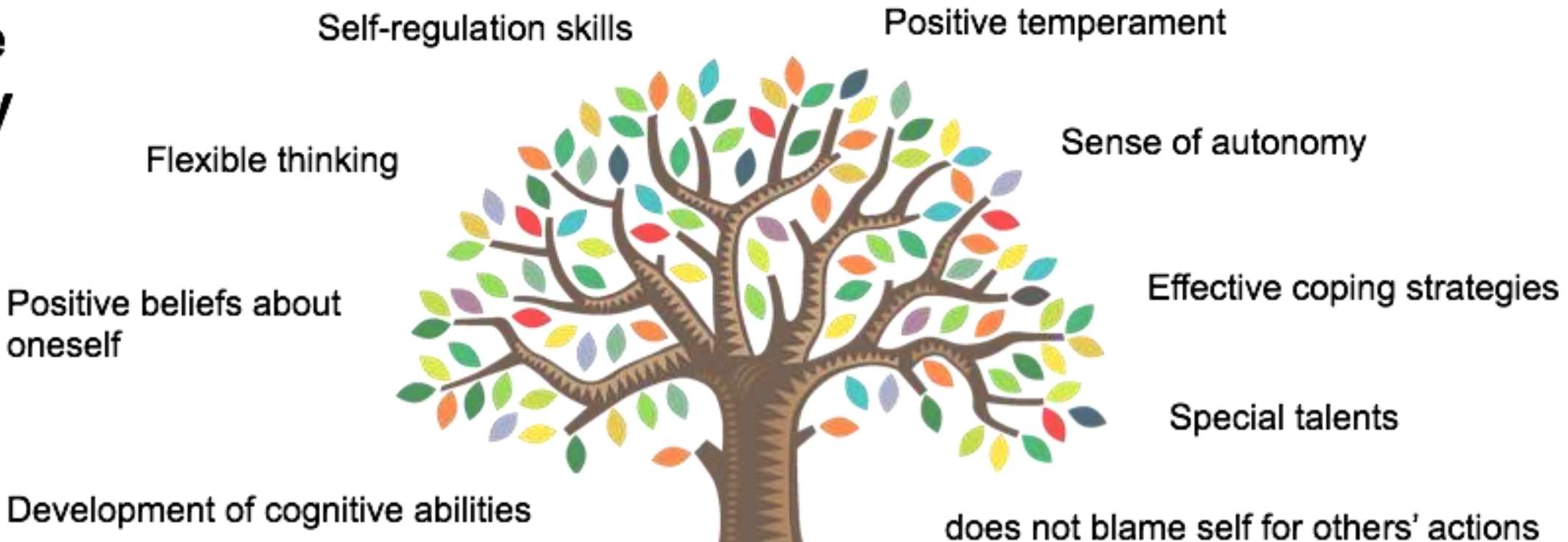
1 : an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change



Be like the bamboo, bend but do not break

RESILIENCE

Protective Resiliency Factors



Protective Community Environments



