

Key Terms and Working Definitions

White supremacy - a political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.¹

Anti-Blackness - a global phenomenon marked by specific antagonism toward Black people (regardless of ethnicity) that affects people in every cultural and ethnic group. Put simply, it is the belief that there is something wrong with Black people. Within larger systems of structural oppression, it translates to higher rates of social ills, including poverty, unemployment, poor health outcomes, and substandard housing, with proposed solutions that are rooted in the inherent belief that Blackness/Black people and their customs are inferior, unacceptable and wrong.

Whiteness - **Definition one:** a powerful fiction enforced by power and violence. Whiteness is a constantly shifting boundary separating those who are entitled to have certain privileges from those whose exploitation and vulnerability to violence is justified by their not being white² ([Kivel, 1996, p. 19](#)). **Definition two:** a dominant cultural space with enormous political significance, with the purpose to keep others on the margin. ... [W]hite people are not required to explain to others how 'white' culture works, because 'white' culture is the dominant culture that sets the norms. Everybody else is then compared to that norm. ... In times of perceived threat, the normative group may well attempt to reassert its normativity by asserting elements of its cultural practice more explicitly and exclusively.³

Implicit Bias - refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Generally, our implicit biases tend to favor our own identity group (although research shows that for many reasons, we may hold implicit biases against our identity group). Most importantly, these biases can eventually be unlearned diligent, intentional learning, training and education to unlearn our socialization.

¹ Quoted from scholar Frances Lee Ansley

² Kivel, P. (1996). *Uprooting racism: How white people can work for racial justice*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Press.

³ Estable, A., Meyer, M., & Pon, G. (1997). *Teach me to thunder: A training manual for anti-racism trainers*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Labour Congress.

Anti-racism - the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably⁴

“Micro”aggression - defined in the dictionary as a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority. Although the prefix “micro” connotes something that is relatively small, we would argue that the compounded trauma and anxiety inflicted on Black and other people of color in professional and social settings has a lasting, tangible effect.

Intersectionality - First coined by Kimberle Crenshaw, is the theory of how different types of discrimination interact--i.e. Queer Black trans women, who experience discrimination based on race, sexuality, gender identity and gender, simultaneously.

⁴ (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity).