



## City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

### Glossary of terms

*These terms are excerpts from various sources referenced below. They are presented to help facilitate communication around race and racism and to promote greater understanding among participants in the community dialogues on race occurring May-July 2015.*

#### **Inclusion**

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Open Source Leadership Strategies Some Working Definitions

#### **Implicit Bias**

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess.

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.

*State of the Science Implicit Bias Review 2013*, Cheryl Staats, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University.

#### **Prejudice**

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*.

#### **Bigotry**

Intolerant prejudice that glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.

*National conference for Community and Justice – St. Louis Region, unpublished handout used in the Dismantling Racism Institute program.*

## **Oppression**

Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access.

WPC Glossary from 14<sup>th</sup> Annual White Privilege Conference Handbook, White Privilege Conference, 2013.

## **Discrimination**

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories.

Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*.

In the United States the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed charges of discrimination, or participated in any employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business.

## **Privilege**

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Colors of Resistance Archive Accessed June 28 2013.

## **White Privilege**

Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

*White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies*. Peggy McIntosh. 1988.

*Structural White Privilege*: A system of white domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining white privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt white privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural and institutional levels.

The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of white privilege that are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life-expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth and other outcomes, in part through different access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.

### **Racial Equity**

Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

[Center for Assessment and Policy Development](#)

### **Racism**

For purposes of this site, we want users to know we are using the term “racism” specifically to refer to individual, cultural, institutional and systemic ways by which differential consequences are created for groups historically or currently defined as white being advantaged, and groups historically or currently defined as non-white (African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, etc.) as disadvantaged. That idea aligns with those who define racism as prejudice plus power, a common phrase in the field. Combining the concepts of prejudice and power points out the mechanisms by which racism leads to different consequences for different groups. The relationship and behavior of these interdependent elements has allowed racism to recreate itself generation after generation, such that systems that perpetuate racial inequity no longer need racist actors or to explicitly promote racial differences in opportunities, outcomes and consequences to maintain those differences.

[www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org)

### **Structural Racism**

The normalization and legitimization of any array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes of people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.

*Racial Justice Action Education Manual. [Applied Research Center](#), 2003.*

For example, we can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for African American and Native American men, compared to white

men. These include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs and unhealthy housing stock, higher exposure and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress and racism, lower rates of health care coverage, access and quality of care and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these things.

*Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building.* Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens and Barbara Major. 2005.

### **Institutional Racism**

Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

*Examples:*

- Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans (also known as “red-lining”).
- City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

*Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building.* Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens and Barbara Major. 2005.

*Naming the problem* – There is a system in place that misnames the problem of racism as a problem of or caused by people of color and blames the disease – emotional, economic, political, etc. – on people of color. With internalized racism, people of color might, for example, believe we are more violent than white people and not consider state-sanctioned political violence or the hidden or privatized violence of white people and the systems they put in place and support.

*Internalized Racism: A Definition,* Donna Bivens, Women’s Theological Center. 1995.