

## RACISM, RACIAL TRAUMA & SAFETY

### NAME THE HARM WITHOUT MAKING YOURSELF THE PROBLEM

Racism and discrimination can affect stress, safety, sleep, mood, trust, and health. Distress after mistreatment is not proof that you are overreacting.

### WHAT RACISM CAN LOOK LIKE

- Slurs, threats, harassment, exclusion, unequal treatment, stereotyping, profiling, or being treated as less credible or capable.
- Racism can occur between people and through policies, institutions, or systems.

### YOUR BODY MAY STAY ALERT

- Repeated discrimination can contribute to vigilance - watching for the next slight, threat, or unfair treatment.
- Notice sleep changes, muscle tension, anger, fear, exhaustion, withdrawal, or difficulty concentrating without judging yourself.

### CHECK CURRENT SAFETY

- What exactly happened? What is observable?
- Is there an immediate threat, a pattern of discrimination, or a painful reminder of earlier experiences?
- Choose protection, documentation, support, or grounding based on the evidence.

### YOU CHOOSE WHETHER TO RESPOND

- You may speak up, ask a question, leave, document, report, seek advocacy, get support, or decide not to engage.
- Not responding in the moment does not mean you agreed with what happened.

### RECONNECT WITH STRENGTHS

- Culture, ancestry, language, spirituality, community, family, art, history, humor, advocacy, and collective care can be sources of strength.
- Choose what genuinely supports you rather than what others say should help.

### WHEN SUPPORT IS NEEDED

- Consider culturally responsive mental health care, trusted community support, civil-rights or workplace resources, or legal information when appropriate.
- Immediate threats or violence require a safety response, not a cognitive reframe.

**Racism is an external harm. Coping can protect your health while you decide what action fits your safety and values.**