

## Racial Equity Glossary

*The glossary is not all-inclusive nor static. The terms in this glossary are our best effort to reflect current usage. Preferred language is always evolving and we recognize that each person's identities, life experiences, and understandings will influence the preference for a given term. We will continue to add, delete, and adjust terms as we become aware of cultural changes that occur. We welcome your feedback and input.*

**Achievement Gap** evokes a deficit model, suggesting that students from certain communities are incapable of achieving the same level as their white counterparts. **Opportunity Gap** refers to social and institutional structures that do not provide equal opportunity to every student to succeed in the public school system

**Agent Groups:** Social identity groups that are advantaged, afforded agency, and hold an unearned privilege in society.

**Ally:** A member of the agent social group (in a power role) who takes a stand against social injustice directed at target groups (non-power role) and intervenes on their behalf. (*Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, M. Adams, et. al., 1997)

### Bias

- **Explicit Bias:** Consciously *accepts* prejudice in favor of, or against one group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.
- **Implicit Bias:** Consciously *rejects* prejudice and stereotypes and supports anti-discrimination efforts but also hold negative associations unconsciously.

**Co-Responsibility:** Moving beyond one's own self-interests to share in problem-solving responsibility; embraces community-building and stewardship for others. Co-responsibility means speaking out for social justice and systemic change.

**Culture:** The integrated patterns of human behavior that includes the thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious or social groups. The norms shared by a group, the totality of ways being passed down from generation to generation, and how people experience the world around them. A shorthand definition of culture is; "the way we do things". Culture supports ethnicity. (Doman Lum, 2003).

**Discrimination:** To discriminate is to make distinctions on the basis of preference or prejudice. It involves any situation in which a group or individual is treated differently and sometimes unfairly, based on something other than individual reason, usually their membership in a socially distinct group or category. Such categories would include, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation or disability.

**Diversity:** The range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.

## **Equality / Equity**

- **Equality** is the measure of sameness; being treated in the same way.
- **Equity** is a measure of fair treatment, opportunities and outcomes across race, gender, class and other dynamics.
  - This distinction is important. We are told that to be fair we must treat everyone the same (equal), however, when we recognize the legacy of institutionalized and structural racism we understand that differing people and communities need different resources (equity). In order to be equitable we provide specific, unique resources that will support people and communities getting their basic needs met and reaching their full potential. Sameness is not always fairness if the oppressed group remains disadvantaged.

**Ethnicity:** Social and cultural forms of identification and self-identification. Membership in a group is identified by connection to a place or lineage (ancestry).

**Gatekeeper:** Anyone in an institutional / organizational role or position who can grant or deny access to institutional resources or equity. Gatekeepers are, by structural design, accountable to the institutions they work for, and not the people they serve. They function as buffers between their institutions and the community.

**Inclusion:** Refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community.

**Individual Racism:** Prejudgment, bias or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Institutional Racism:** Policies, practices, and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

**Institutions:** Institutions are fairly stable arrangements and practices through which collective actions are taken. Examples of institutions are government, business (e.g. insurance providers), unions, schools, churches, hospitals / clinics, media, courts and law enforcement.

**Internalized Racism** manifests in two forms and evolves from thought into action:

- **Internalized Racial Inferiority:** A process people of color go through of believing, accepting, and internalizing inferior and subordinate images of themselves and their people, resulting in fear, anxiety, and uncertainty about challenging the institutions that have disempowered them.
- **Internalized Racial Superiority:** A process whites go through to develop a sense of superiority over people of color, accepting and internalizing negative images and beliefs about people of color, and positive images and beliefs about themselves.

**Intersectionality:** The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

**Oppression:** A form of economic, social, and/or political exploitation, often portrayed as “good for everybody.” Affirms a two-category system hierarchically arranged as agents (superior) or targets (inferior). There exists a gross imbalance of power in this system.

**Power (Institutional):** The social, political and economic power which provides access to resources, the ability to influence others and access to decision-makers to get what you want done. (Adapted from H.P. Newton, *To Die for the People*; The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond; and Asante, Adair, Aal, *Tools for Change*)

**Prejudice:** Learned prejudgment about members of social groups to which we don’t belong. Based on limited knowledge or experience with the group.

**Privileges:** Advantages, rewards or benefits given to those in the dominant group (whites, males, Christians, heterosexuals, etc.) without their asking for them. Privileges are bestowed unintentionally, unconsciously, and automatically. Often these privileges are invisible to those in the dominant. (The Exchange Project Peace Development Fund)

**Race:** A theory of specious classification of human beings that assigns human worth and social status using skin color and other visible characteristics for the purpose of establishing and maintaining privilege and power. Race is a social, political construct. (The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, *Race: The Power of an Illusion*).

**Racial Disparities:** Differences in measurable societal outcomes based on race. These disparities are rooted in unfairness and injustice and are perpetuated by policies and practices with racial bias (either implicit or explicit).

**Racial Equity:** When social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes are not predicted based upon a person’s race.

**Racial Inequity:** When a person’s race can predict their social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes.

**Racial Justice:** Working to eliminate racial disparities resulting from individual, institutional and structural racism. Equitable outcomes for all are central to racial justice efforts.

**Racial Microaggressions:** Brief, commonplace, subtle or blatant daily verbal, behavior, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.

**Racism:** Race Prejudice + Institutional Power = Racism

**Social Justice:** Justice in terms of distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society for all social identity groups.

**Stereotypes:** A fixed, over-generalized belief about a particular group or class of people often assumed to be true.

**Structural Racism:** The history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions. This combines to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.

**Target Groups:** Social identity groups that are disenfranchised, targeted, or exploited.

**Targeted Universalism:** An approach that supports the needs of the particular while reminding us that we are all part of the same social fabric.

- Universal, yet captures how people are differently situated
- Inclusive, yet targets those who are most marginalized

**Trigger:** Words or phrases that stimulate an emotional response because they tap into anger or pain about oppression issues.