



RACIAL TRAUMA TOOLKIT

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Counseling and Psychological Services



This toolkit was created by Mason's Counseling and **Psychological Services in** collaboration with Mason's Center for the Advancement of Well-Being. The goal of this toolkit is to raise awareness about, and encourage healing from, experiences of racial trauma. This toolkit is not an alternative to mental health treatment, but <u>rather is an</u> adjunctive means of support. We wish you light on your healing journey.





"Racial trauma, or race-based stress, refers to the events of danger related to real or perceived experience of racial discrimination."

<u>(Comas-Díaz, Hall, & Neville, 2019)</u>

This means that racial trauma can happen through...

• Personal lived experiences

- <u>Microaggressions</u> ("You don't sound Black," "I don't see color," touching a Person of Color's hair)
- Discrimination (being bullied for the color of your skin, being racially profiled)

• <u>Vicarious trauma</u>

- Consuming media and news about acts of racism
- Hearing about a friend's experience of racism

Intergenerational trauma

 Systemic oppression throughout history (descending from enslaved African folx, or from refugees/asylum seekers)

What can racial trauma look like?

Racial trauma can look different for everyone. **Some common symptoms are:**

- Feeling anxious and/or depressed
- Physical manifestation of pain
- Feeling disconnected from your thoughts, feelings, and body (dissociation)
- Not trusting your reality and experiences
- Concerns about safety (hypervigilance)
- Worries about physical appearance
- Difficulty with self-esteem
- Concerns about vulnerability/intimacy





SO, HOW CAN YOU COPE WITH RACIAL TRAUMA?

Coping with Racial Trauma

The parts of you that are impacted by racial trauma are known as the "Four Bodies."

The Four Bodies are the:

- Mental Body
- Emotional Body
- Physical Body
- Spiritual Body

(Nappy Head Club, 2020)

Although coping does not look one particular way, taking a holistic approach to self-care can promote balance and healing.

<u>Heal Your Mental &</u> <u>Emotional Bodies</u>

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• Mental Body: Ease Your Mind

- **Unplug** schedule media breaks
- **Pause** take time off school/work if you can
- Talk talk to a professional about your experiences

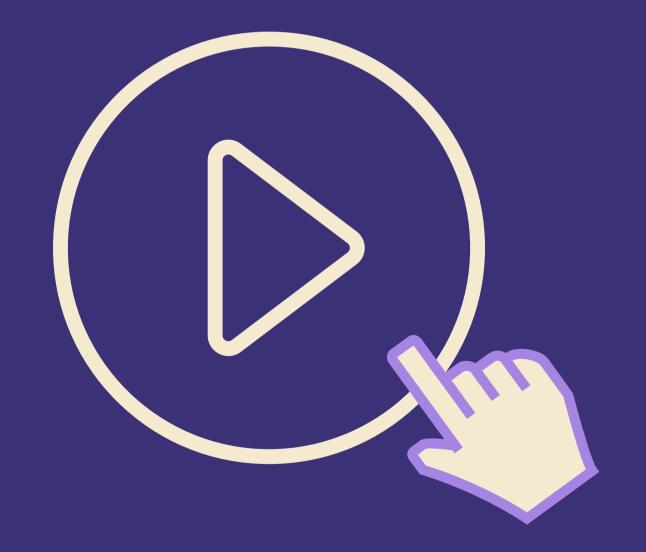
• Emotional Body: Release Your Emotions

- Feel allow yourself to express your emotions
- **Gather** surround yourself with safe people
- Write journal to release pent-up emotions

Heal Your Physical & Spiritual Bodies

- Physical Body: Transform Tension
 - **Rest** take naps and breaks
 - Move stretch, walk, dance to relieve pent-up energy
 - **Self-Massage** release tension in your body
- Spiritual Body: Return to Yourself
 - Meditate intentionally take time to reflect
 - Reclaim read, listen, attend to things that empower you
 - Organize support causes that are meaningful to you

Guided Meditation for Relaxing all Four Bodies



RESOURCES

Therapist Directories

- Asian Mental Health Collective
- <u>Clinicians of Color</u>
- Inclusive Therapists
- Institute for Muslim Mental Health
- Latinx Therapy
- <u>National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color</u>
 <u>Network</u>
- South Asian Mental Health Initiative & <u>Network</u>
- Therapy for Black Girls
- Therapy for Queer People of Color

Websites with additional information and support

RESOURCES

- Center for Healing Racial Trauma
- Mental Health America
- <u>Racial Trauma & Anti-Racism Resources</u>
- <u>Racial Trauma, Resiliency & Ally Resources</u>
- <u>Rx Racial Healing Circles</u>
- <u>Thriving Together: Diversity</u>

RESOURCES Books

- Me and White Supremacy by Layla F. Saad
- <u>My Grandmother's Hands</u> by Resmaa Menakem
- <u>The Racial Healing Handbook</u> by Anneliese A. Singh

Mental Health Apps

- <u>Finch</u>
- Insight Timer
- <u>Liberate</u>
- <u>Shine</u>

* These resources are not alternatives to mental health treatment

RESOURCES

Lists of social media accounts to follow

- Asian American & Pacific Islander Therapists
- <u>Black Therapists</u>
- Latinx Therapists
- BIPOC Mental Health Accounts



- <u>Center for Culture, Equity, and</u> <u>Empowerment (CCEE)</u>
- <u>Center for the Advancement of Well-Being</u>
 <u>(CWB)</u>
- <u>Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)</u>
- <u>First-Gen+ Center</u>
- International Programs and Services (OIPS)
- LGBTQ+ Resources Center
- <u>Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC)</u>
- <u>Student Health Services (SHS)</u>