

**Atlantic AIDS Network
September 22 - 25, 1994
Anti Racism Workshop Agenda
"Consciousness Raising"**

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Anti-Racism Workshop Outline

Watch for Time

Welcome to "Consciousness Raising" - this is a workshop on **Racism** and this afternoon you will learn ways we can work together to combat racism in your work or community. I will also attempt to raise your awareness of how racism impacts upon the African Nova Scotian community and how you can become a part of the solution to eliminating racism. I am not here to represent or speak for people in other racially visible communities. I will be talking about my experience as an African Nova Scotian and how racism affects my community. I am not suggesting that other people of various color communities do not experience the same thing but I can not speak for them.

Color on my clothes

1. **Introductions** - Who I am - Why I consider myself an african N.S., where I grew up - family, school, involvement in the community, present job, past AIDS work, experience of racism - socially, politically, economically and culturally.

- participants introduce themselves and organizations they represent
- importance of Anti-racism work in the HIV/AIDS field
- 3 yrs behind on agenda at AAN and still not a workshop on its own - ex. of racism

2. **Workshop Expectations** - Flip chart - each participant will say one thing on what they expect to get out of the workshop. We will re-examine these same expectations at the end of the workshop

- Facilitators objectives:

- A) understand the relationship between racism and power
- B) be able to describe the 3 main types of racism
- C) understand psychological impact of racism
- D) be aware of the societal institutions that transmit racist ideas
- E) create a step by step model for combating racism on a daily basis

3. **Historical overview of African Nova Scotian community**

To understand racism from the African Nova Scotian perspective, it is important to give a brief historical overview of the social, political and economic conditions of the community to begin the discussion on how racism impacts on the African Nova Scotian community.

- African N.S. community was populated by 3 waves of immigrants to N.S.
- 1783, following the American War of Independence, some 40 to 50,000 immigrants arrived in N.S. - 3500 Black people referred to as the Black loyalist.

- 1796, 550 Black Maroons were brought over from Jamaica and they were involved in the building and development of Citadel Hill.
- Between 1812 and 1815 over 1200 Black refugees came to N.S. following the American war of 1812

*** these early settlers reveals the story of hardship, neglect and deprivation mitigated by systemic discrimination and racism.

- Since the arrival of the first settlers African N.S. have been struggling for social, political and economic survival and were forced to remain on the margins.
- they were promised land, liberty and gov't services in exchange for military service in both the American revolution and the War of 1812
- their white counterparts did receive land, liberty and gov't service and the conditions back then sealed the fate of African N.S. today.

4. **Exercise #1 - Bingo game** - important to discuss individual and institutional racism

5. **Key definitions - Racism Theory**

Four definitions need to be explained before we can talk about what racism means. Let's define **prejudice** and **discrimination** first. **Prejudice** is an **attitude** and **discrimination** is a **behavior**.

Prejudice - To pre-judge; a mental state where an individual passes judgement (generally unfavorable) on a person or group of persons he or she does not know, usually attributing to that person or group, a variety of characteristics which may be unfounded. It is an attitude in contrast to a behavior.

Stereotyping: generalizing characteristics to all members of a group without regard for individual difference; assuming all members of a group possess the same characteristics or behavior.

Discrimination - The act of excluding or singling out (generally in an unfavourable way) a person or a group of persons on the basis of prejudicial attitudes and beliefs, rather than on the basis of individual characteristics. Thus **discrimination** is an **action/behavior** while **prejudice** is an **attitude or state of mind**.

Let us now define **Power** and **Racism**. We sometime cannot understand racism because we put too much emphasis on our individual oppressions. This is okay in some instances but in order to understand the difference rather than the similarities of our oppressions, we need to emphasize the issue of power and privilege.

Power - the ability to act to do, strength, influence, command, authority, one who exercises authority, a mechanical advantage or effect.

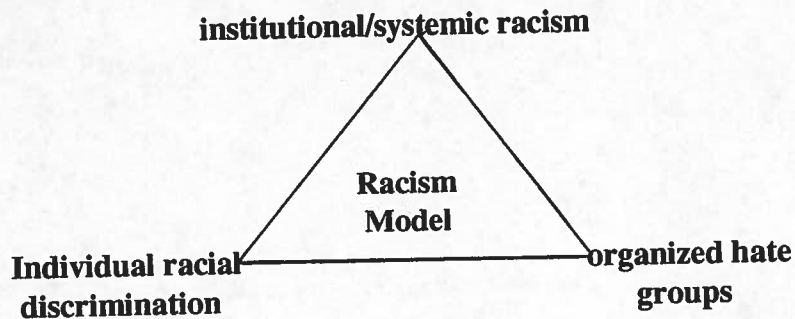
Racism - Discrimination on the basis of race or color. Racism involves having the social, cultural, economic or political power to subjugate another on the basis of race.

Racism is best described in an equation

- **PREJUDICE + POWER = RACISM**

Reverse racism - has the power been reversed? If the power is reversed than it can be reverse racism, but there's no reverse racism from racially visible groups because they have no power.

- **3 types of Racism:**



- to fight racism, we have to define it and describe it. We have to know what it sounds like, feels like and looks like. Racism comes in many forms - from exclusion to racial slurs to hate literature etc.

a) **Individual racial discrimination** - a person judging someone on the basis of their skin color eg. an employer not wanting to hire someone because of their race.

- not wanting to go out with someone of a different race

- based on individual actions, not wanting to house someone because of the color of their skin

- we can all discriminate against someone not only based on race eg. a man discriminates against a woman or vis versa, people discriminate against gay/lesbians

- denying people rights, opportunities because of a dislike for another person based on race, gender, religion affiliation, sexual orientation etc.

- denial of employment opportunities

Individual discrimination can go to the absolute extreme

b) **Organized hate groups** - when you believe a particular race is superior, fear of a race, stereotyping, becoming a part of an organized hate group such as the KKK, western guard and arian resist movement- produce hate literature

- skinheads, nasty graffiti, attack on Black people, attacks on gay men community
- misinformation and myths, ignorance
- comes in the form of racial jokes - question? who wrote those jokes to be distributed - organized racist hate literature, eg; **SHOW LITERATURE**
- making a considerable effort to put down another race, perpetrating racism

eg. RUSHTON - teaches at the univ. of windsor. He classifies people by their intelligence - whites 1st, asians 2nd and Blacks 3rd. teaches that one race is superior to another by intelligence

c) **Institutionalized/Systemic racism** - not a matter of someone joining a group or discrimination on an individual basis- not aware they are being racist

- this is when systems are set up to keep others out eg: people don't wake up in the morning and say they want to discriminate or be racist.
- systems are set up to exclude people on the basis of race. This form of racism is most deadly - most people don't realize they are a part of it.
- this is when institutions such as: education, political, religion, economic, media - the key institutions in our society exclude non-white people eg. education system exclude Blacks from their history books, how many Blacks do you see in politics, where are Blacks economically - there are very few Blacks in good positions in society, do you see them as managers etc.
- television - Blacks are portrayed negatively - pimps, mamis, slaves
- religious - what color was Jesus?
- problem is that the individual may not be discriminating but the system is. These institutions make decisions in our lives and most of them are filled with whites.

6. AIDS and racism

Racism in the health education field ranges from severe resource restraints, to programming which is racially and culturally insensitive, to little or no target funding of programs, to the exclusion of African N.S from dialogue on health care issues and policy development.

- we often think how can there be racism in the AIDS field and we say those Blacks are always screaming racism. **Talk about the AAN planning and the AIDS and Racism handout.**

7. Exercise #2 - Identifying Racism

Refer to handout for guide

8. Solutions to combating Racism

- a) Discuss this workshop with colleagues
- b) Ask to have this workshop put on the agenda at the next staff meeting or meeting of your group
- c) Rent a Black film from the national film board - this is always a good educational tool
- d) Check out the library for Black books
- e) Get involve with Black History month
- f) Speak out against Racism - challenge attitudes eg: slurs, jokes
- g) Suggest and help your organization in developing an anti-racism policy
- h) Make an effort to meet a person from a racially visible group in your work or community
- i) Include other people of color in your AIDS or community development work
- j) Be a part of the solution not the problem

9. Questions and Closing