

**Points to make for "AIDS and Racism" transparency:**

***ISOLATION***

- **THE 31 BLACK NOVA SCOTIAN COMMUNITIES ARE VERY DISPERSED GEOGRAPHICALLY**
- **THIS IS NOT BY ACCIDENT, OUR PEOPLE WERE NOT MEANT TO LIVE TOGETHER FOR FEAR OF POWER IN NUMBERS**
- **BECAUSE OF THIS, AS WELL AS OTHER FACTORS, OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE DEVELOPED CERTAIN SYSTEMS OF COMMUNICATION**
- **TYPICALLY, INFORMATION GOES THROUGH THE CHURCHES, COMMUNITY CENTRES, AND ORGANIZATIONS WHERE PEOPLE TAKE THE INFORMATION AND PASS IT ON TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO MAY NOT GO TO THESE PLACES.**
- **AIDS INFORMATION AND EDUCATION WAS NEVER PASSED THROUGH OUR CHURCHES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITY CENTRES, AND NOBODY CAME IN TO DO PRESENTATIONS.**
- **OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN ISOLATED FROM AIDS INFORMATION FOR 9 YEARS, AND THIS HAS UNDOUBTEDLY LED TO PEOPLE GETTING INFECTED**

***AFRICAN ORIGIN MYTH***

- **UNFORTUNATELY, EVERY FATAL VIRUS, BACTERIA, DISEASE, AND SYNDROME IS SAID TO HAVE ORIGINATED IN AFRICA**

• THIS MISCONCEPTION OFTEN COMES WITH STEREOTYPES OF BEING DIRTY, UNEDUCATED, UNETHICAL, AND EVIL ("THE DARK RACE")

• THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT THEORIES ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF HIV AND THEREFORE AIDS

• NOBODY KNOWS WHERE IT CAME FROM

• IT IS EASY TO BLAME IT ON AFRICA AND BLACK PEOPLE IN GENERAL BECAUSE WE ARE THE OPPRESSED IN A WORLDWIDE RACIST SOCIETY

• SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THIS MYTH BECAUSE SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE A HIGH RATE OF HIV INFECTION

• THIS IS TRUE ONLY BECAUSE OF VERY LOW RESOURCES TO DO PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

#### *STATISTICS/TREATMENTS*

• IN BLACK NOVA SCOTIA IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO KNOW HOW HIV IS AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

• THERE ARE NO STATISTICS.

• SOME PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY FEEL THAT THIS FURTHER INHIBITS US TO UNDERSTAND THE REALITY OF AIDS

• SOME PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY FEEL THAT NOT HAVING THESE STATISTICS HELPS TO STOP SOCIETY FROM BLAMING US FOR THE VIRUS

• WE DO NOT KNOW HOW AIDS HAS AFFECTED THE SICKLE CELL ANEMIA COMMUNITY, AND THERE HAVE NOT BEEN SATISFACTORY ATTEMPTS TO FIND OUT

- MANY BLACK PEOPLE DO NOT REALIZE THEY MAY HAVE AN OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTION SUCH AS KAPOSI'S SARCOMA, (SKIN CANCER), WHEN THEY HAVE AIDS BECAUSE IT SHOWS ON BLACK SKIN DIFFERENTLY

- BLACK MEN DO NOT TEND TO GET THE SAME OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS AS WHITE MEN DO BUT THESE DIFFERENCES ARE DIFFICULT TO FIND OUT ABOUT

### ***STEREOTYPES***

- AN ISSUE FOR HIV POSITIVE PEOPLE IS WHAT IS KNOWN AS "THE REAL VICTIMS"

- THIS MEANS THAT MUCH OF SOCIETY CONSIDERS SOMEONE WHO TESTED POSITIVE FROM A BLOOD TRANSFUSION TO BE A REAL VICTIM, AND SOMEONE WHO TESTED POSITIVE FROM SEXUAL ACTIVITY TO NOT BE A VICTIM

- FOR BLACK PEOPLE THIS IS MAGNIFIED, FOR BLACK PEOPLE ARE CONSIDERED TO BE INFESTED WITH DRUG ABUSE, AND PROSTITUTION

- THOUGH THESE ARE MISCONCEPTIONS AND WE RESENT THEM, IT IS EXTRA HARD FOR AN HIV POSITIVE BLACK PERSON, FOR THEY ARE CONSIDERED TO BE INADEQUATE PEOPLE IN TWO DIFFERENT WAYS

- SOCIETY EXPECTS US TO BE INFECTED, BECAUSE WE ARE CONSIDERED TO BE PROMISCUOUS, PRACTICING "ABNORMAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS" SUCH AS VOODOO, AND WE ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW ANY BETTER

## **REPRESENTATION**

- **REPRESENTATION IN THE AIDS MOVEMENT IS COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF PEOPLE, BUT IN TERMS OF ISSUES THAT AFFECT US**
- **THIS IS NOT ONLY TRUE TO NOVA SCOTIA, BUT TO CANADA, AND THE WORLD**
- **WHENEVER WE CAN GET A VOICE IN THIS MOVEMENT, IT IS OFTEN SILENCED BY THINGS SUCH AS IMMIGRATION NOT LETTING A BLACK PERSON WHO WILL BE DOING AIDS WORK INTO THE COUNTRY BECAUSE OF THEIR HIV STATUS,**
- **OR ETHNIC ISSUES BEING CONSIDERED AT CONFERENCES BECAUSE MOST OF THESE PARTICIPANTS ARE WHITE**