



Opioid Response Network

Transcript for recorded training: *Systemic Racism and Substance Use Disorder: Anti-Racist Strategies*

- Greetings, everyone, and welcome to this course on systemic racism and substance use disorder: anti-racist strategies. Remember there are materials available for this course, including the slides, our recording, and the workbook. You want to make sure you access those. If this is your first course with us, I actively encourage you to stop the video and check out course number one which is Developing a Shared Language for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion. At this time, I'd like to introduce our team. We're excited to walk with you in this workshop together. My name is Nicole Augustine. I am a prevention specialist. I come from the prevention side of our work, and I'm an advanced implementation specialist with *ORN*. Next, I'll throw out to Larry.

- Hello everybody. My name is Lawrence Bryant. Most people call me Larry. I also am an advanced implementation specialist with the *Opioid Response Network*. And more importantly, I am a person in long-term recovery, Brooke?

- Thanks Larry. Hi, my name is Brooke Fischer. And I'm the project manager of operations for the *Opioid Response Network*. And I work out of the National Coordinating Office at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, Laurie?

- Thank you, Brooke. I'm Laurie Johnson-Wade, advance implementation specialist with the *Opioid Response Network*. I'm a woman in long-term recovery since 1991. Thank you, Deena?

- Hi, everybody. My name is Deena Murphy. I am also an advanced implementation specialist for the *Opioid Response Network* and a community psychologist by training, so I'm going to send it back to you, Nicole.

- Okay, wonderful. We're going to get started today. And we wanted to, before we get started, to really kind of give credit to the founder of this project. And so we want to just share a few things. One, that the *Opioid Response Network* is a SAMHSA funded initiative designed to provide resources and technical assistance that's much needed to address the opioid crisis and stimulant use. If you've never reached out to us before, we have local and experienced consultants across the continuum. Every state has a team that are designated regionally to help you with your local problems.



The best way to contact us is through our website opioidresponsenetwork.org. However, there are other ways you can reach us too. We have phone numbers and we have an email address. We're truly here to help as you're addressing opioid and stimulant use in your community. The one thing that's important to understand about our approach is that we are facilitators. Our role is to create an environment that really helps you learn, engage, and be reflective in the content. This won't be a passive experience. We'll be sharing data and information and diverse research and lived experiences. The other thing that is important is that we are not experts. We're here learning with you. We're here to facilitate an ongoing conversation, and we hope that this would just be the start to so many more things that you'll be doing in your organization related to this topic. We want to make sure everyone's knowledgeable of what the expectations are in the learning goals by the end of the session. And they're listed here. I'll just review some of them. But essentially we'll want to first start with providing a review. We mentioned that there's another course. Just in case you didn't get to take it, we will take space to have a little bit of review of that content. We'll also assess some of the systems of oppression and privilege and how they impact substance use disorder treatment and delivery. In this time, you will learn about Hays' ADDRESSING model as a way of thinking about your own personal biases related to your professional life. We'll discuss some of the real-world implications related to racism for people in recovery. And then we'll spend the last bit of our time together outlining what are some of the strategies for leaders, for organizations as we develop anti-racist approaches to our work. And then we will also share resources for support around racial equity. So we have a lot that we're accomplishing in our time together, and we hope that you really enjoy this workshop experience. At this time, I'll turn it over to Deena to get us started with our recap.

- Thank you, Nicole. So we're just going to very briefly recap some of the things we talked about in that first training. And as Nicole said, the idea is you would take that first training, then come into this training. So remember we talked about the health disparities data. We talked about the impact of the pandemic, and we talked about how COVID-19 is clearly disproportionately impacting Black, indigenous, and people of color, BIPOC, communities, and increasing mental health and substance use disorder challenges. We shared a lot of data to that to talk about the worst outcomes for African Americans with COVID-19 and substance use disorder. We talked about how it was exacerbating underlying health conditions and stressors. And one of the things we really want to emphasize is the disappointing and disturbing data that's coming out in terms of overdoses in 2020 to 2021, showing significant increases in Black communities, especially for Black men. So we really wanted to reinforce what we're seeing as an impact of the pandemic, but also all the things that we've previously talked about as far as disparities. And one of those key disparities that's on the next slide is those racial disparities in treatment for opioid use disorder. We



talked about how these racial disparities are a significant feature of the current addiction treatment landscape, whether it's who's getting follow-up appointments after they experience a non-fatal overdose and they're discharged from the emergency room. Or in terms of who's getting methadone versus buprenorphine. And the fact that buprenorphine uptake is primarily accessible to White people and to people who are beneficiaries of employer-based insurance. And remember, it's not about equality, it's about equity. So, there's many differences. And we talked about those in that first training. One of the things we spent a lot of time on was those racial disparities related to criminal justice. And we said again that the criminal justice system showed a dramatic over-representation of racial and ethnic minorities. We also talked about Michelle Alexander's book, "The New Jim Crow." And we encourage you to read that. So hopefully you've had chance. And we really reinforced that data, which came from Alexander and the Center for Law and Justice, where 85% of the people who use, buy, and sell drugs are White, but 75% of those in jail or prison for drug-related crimes are people of color. So, as you remember, one thing Michelle Alexander talked about was that the criminal system is more favorable to drug crimes committed by White people and more likely to randomly stop and search people of color and also *in* communities of color. So, we really see that institutional racism kind of coming in when we look at the differential treatment of drug crimes and how it results in significant consequences for people of color. So, what we'd like to do now is really play you a video by Michelle Alexander...and it's just a clip from her video. And we encourage you to seek out other videos where she's talking, where she really shares a little bit about how mass incarceration relates or is the new Jim Crow. So, we'll take a pause and we'll come back in a bit to unpack that video in a second.

- Jim Crow was a system of laws, policies, and customs that operated to discriminate against African Americans in virtually every aspect of social, political and economic life. Well, ask yourself if some of the rules and laws governing felons today kind of remind you of a bygone era? Denial of the right to vote, right? 47 states and the district of Columbia denied prisoners the right to vote. But that's just the tip of the iceberg, because in the United States, pretty much the only country in the world that denies people the right to vote once they've been released from prison in many states. In fact, about one out of four African American men have been permanently disenfranchised in a few states as a result of felon disenfranchisement laws. And nationwide, the figure is about one in seven. Employment discrimination, employment discrimination perfectly legal once you're branded a felon, right? Job applications ranging from Burger King clerk to accountant, got the box. You got to check that box if you've ever been convicted of a felony. Thousands of professional licenses are off limits to people who are labeled felons. In some states, you can't even get a license to be a barber if you've been convicted of a felony, right? Housing discrimination, perfectly legal. Back in the Jim Crow era was the era of racially



restrictive covenants, right? Well, today you can be discriminated against on the basis of your criminal history. In fact, public housing is off limits to you for a minimum of five years. Minimum of five years if you've been convicted of a felony. So here you are, newly released from prison, right? No money, no job. Public housing is off limits to you. Private landlords are free to discriminate against you. And your mother, aunt, sister, girlfriend who lives in public housing, well, she risks eviction by housing you, allowing you to stay in the apartment, right? So, what are these folks to do? No job. Can't find a place to stay, right? What are they expected to do? Well, they're actually expected to pay thousands of dollars in fees and fines. Following the collapse of slavery, Black men were routinely arrested for extremely minor crimes like loitering or vagrancy, right? They were arrested and sent to work on plantations through a program known of kind of convict leasing, right? The idea was that they had to earn their freedom, but the catch was they could never earn enough to pay back the costs of their shelter and their food and their clothing. And so, they remained in perpetual servitude, a system that some have called worse than slavery, right? Well, today we have a similar system. Even if a former prisoner manages to get a job, you're one of the lucky few who manages to get a job, up to 100% of your wages can be garnished to pay back the cost of your imprisonment, to payback fees, fines, and court costs, to pay back accumulated child support while you were in prison. So here you are one of the lucky few. You get a job, up to 100% of your wages can be garnished. What is the system designed to do, right? Put you right back in prison. And in fact, that is what happens about 70% of the time. Within three years, 70% of released prisoners are returned. And in fact, the majority of those who are returned are returned within a few months, because the hurdles, the barriers of just making it on the outside are so extreme. Public benefits? Don't expect even to be fed if you have a drug felony. Discrimination is perfectly legal against those who've been labeled felons and no public benefits. In fact, if you're drug felon, you're ineligible for food stamps for the rest of your life thanks to President Clinton. Even if you're a pregnant woman, someone with HIV or AIDS, basic food stamps are off limits to you for the rest of your life. Exclusion from jury service. Of course, one of the hallmarks of the Jim Crow era was the all-white juries, particularly in the South. Well, today, those labeled felons are automatically considered ineligible for jury service. In some areas of the country, the all-white jury has come roaring back, because such a large percentage of the African American community is deemed ineligible for jury service. Now get this, even if you haven't been branded a felon yet, if you have negative experiences with law enforcement, that disqualifies you from serving on the jury if it might lead you to be impartial in a criminal case. So good luck, in many committees of color, finding someone who has not yet had a negative experience with law enforcement that just might justify your exclusion from a jury. But as bad as all the formal barriers to political, economic, and social exclusion are, as bad as all these formal barriers are, in my experience, many people labeled criminals find the stigma the hardest to bear. It's not just the denial



of the job, but the look that flashes across to an employer's face when he sees the box has been checked. It's not just the denial of housing, but being a grown man having to beg your grandma for a place to sleep at night, because nowhere else will take you in.

- So, reflecting on the video, and this is where we're encouraging you to go back to that workbook that hopefully you've downloaded, that PDF, and reflecting on this video by Michelle Alexander. How does Michelle Alexander connect Jim Crow and mass incarceration? And just write down some of your thoughts. We encourage you to pause the video here to reflect on some of these questions to take a moment to critically analyze and think about what are the implications of mass incarceration for public health? So just jot down some thoughts, please pause the video, take a second to do this, and then we'll all continue on a little bit together. So, talking about critical race theory, I am going to pass it over to my wonderful colleague Brooke who's going to continue this conversation.

- Thanks, Deena, last time we met, we'd discussed more in-depth critical race theory. And critical race theory does exactly what the title says: it helps us all think critically about race and how it infiltrates all of our social structures, cultural and legal issues. It also helps us remember that racism is systemic and institutional, and it does not just come from individuals. Critical race theory simply helps us examine U.S. social institutions, like education, the labor market, the housing market, and helps us understand how policies and rules that are in place lead to different outcomes for different racial groups. Next slide. As we examine critical race theory, it also helps us understand structural racism. This graphic here does a great job of exemplifying how racism impacts every piece of our lives: childcare, employment, housing, transportation. Structural racism refers to the totality of ways in which societies foster racial discrimination through reinforcing systems of discrimination, next slide. We also discussed cultural humility. And as you'll remember, cultural humility is a lifelong learning process. As long as you're committed to self-reflecting consistently throughout your life and cultivating a desire to fix the power imbalances within dynamics in our society, you are practicing cultural humility. Next slide. Last time we met, we also discussed myths about race and racism. We reflected on maybe some personal experiences we've had hearing these phrases, or maybe even using these phrases that we see here on the screen ourselves. Things like race is biological. I don't see color. It's poverty, not race. And all of these phrases truly undermine the impact that racism has across our society.

- Thank you, Brooke. So, I'm going to recap those systems of oppression and privilege. And we just want to say, we know that these are not easy concepts, right? This is not...when we're talking about these myths, these are programmed into our society. They are programmed very much into our lives from young ages. So, it's not



as easy as just saying, “oh, I can get rid of this.” You really have to take that time, as Brooke was saying, practice that cultural humility, which is not necessarily about looking at other cultures, that's a part of it, but really looking at how some of the beliefs and values from your own culture came up and reflecting on those. And also recognizing we cannot change the past, but we can acknowledge it and we can move forward together.

So, when we looked at these systems of oppression and privilege, we were really looking at ourselves on this wheel of power and privilege. And it helps us identify where we hold power and where we're more marginalized based on our intersecting identities, because-remember-that was the complexity of it. It's not just about pulling out individual systems. it's about the intersection of these systems. And so we use this information to understand how systems of oppression interact and how we can personally use our privilege to advance racial equity. And remember we said, privilege is not good or bad. It just is. And we have to recognize ways we can use it to maybe amplify the voices of others or do things to support others who may not have those privileges. So, we also went through how racism is a social determinant of health. We talked about how it intersects with other social determinants of health and can create barriers to prevention. It can weaken protective factors, availability of, and access to treatment. And availability of much needed recovery support services. So really recognizing how social determinants of health show up in substance use disorder.

We also talked very carefully about drug policy, and we said, categorically, drug policy has supported systemic racism. We talked about the racialized response to drug use that was shown in drug policy. We talked about, in the late 70s, 80s, early 90s, the law enforcement approach to the crack epidemic versus the opioid epidemic and where we see the funding going. So, we saw a targeting of BIPOC communities with the crack epidemic, and we saw the funding going more to law enforcement. Whereas we've seen with the opioid epidemic funding going to research and treatment for opioids, which we're very grateful for, but we also know where some of that impetus came from. We saw previously those sentencing disparities for crack versus powder cocaine that showed up. And then again, we talked about how today we see this in who is and who is not accessing treatment and these life-saving medications like buprenorphine. And we talked a little bit about that segregation of treatment where Black and Latinx people are more likely to receive methadone and White people buprenorphine. So again, we reinforced the intersection between drug policy and systemic racism.

The things that we didn't say, we all got to see together in that video, a history of the racist war on drugs. And that was that video that was done by Jay Z with acclaimed artist Molly Crabapple, really showing the drug war's devastating impact on the



Black community from decades of bias law enforcement. And it was really interesting because it really looked at, again, the emerging above-ground marijuana market that's poised to make legal millions for wealthy investors that are doing the same thing that generations of people of color have been arrested-and some are still arrested and locked up for. So, we did already watch this. So, what we would really like to do now is have a little bit of conversation from two of our wonderful colleagues who can speak a little bit to their lived experience and really speak to "Is recovery for everyone?" And "What are some of the barriers that might be experienced if you're a person of color that perhaps you're not going to experience if you look like me, for example?"

- Thank you, Deena. Again, my name is Larry and there's an old saying, "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by those moments that take our breath away." And that certainly is a description of my recovery. On August the 16th (2021), I had the wonderful privilege of celebrating 29 years in recovery. And I tell you, my recovery journey has been nothing short of phenomenal, but it's not been without its pitfalls and dangers, it has not been without issues around racism. For example, 1985 to 86, I really come to the end of my road. I was one of those that can truly say I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was homeless. I felt hopeless. Very few friends, couldn't keep a job. Literally I was sleeping out in the park on a nightly basis. So, this is where I decided to surrender and go into recovery. And I went to this meeting that I was encouraged to go to that was what we call a special interest group. And this group was for LGBT persons who were seeking recovery. And as I went in, most of the group was White. And as more and more African American gay men came into this group, because the group was a special interest group for LGBT. And what I noticed is that the Whites in the group, although we were all there for the same reason, we all were at the end of our road, you would think that we really would have a connection to one another. However, the more African Americans that came into this group, the more of the Whites that would flee; such that after about three months, the group was entirely African American. The Whites fled to another group or started a new group. And I was really sort of taken back by that. But indirectly, it was a blessing, because those same persons in early recovery are still friends of mine today. And so, again, this recovery journey has been nothing short of phenomenal. And I just want to say that anybody can recover. Recovery is for everyone. And there's a saying that, in recovery, that anyone can stop using, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live. And certainly, we've done that. I've been able to go back to school and get a bachelor's, a master's and yes, a PhD. So, I'm a living example that recovery works, and that recovery is for everyone. Now I'd like to pass it on to my good, good friend, Laurie.

- Thank you, Larry. Thanks for sharing your experience. And also my lived experience since I ended my addiction career in 1991 and started on my recovery



journey has been one that is filled with opportunity and the best life I've ever lived. And like Larry, mine is not without being reminded that I am Black. And I was told that regardless of age, race, creed, religion, or lack of religion, sexual identity, it didn't matter, that you were welcome in the recovery world. And I found that heartening, but when I went to treatment in 1991, I was quickly reminded of the statistics surrounding African American women, that they were the lowest among all groups. My White peers didn't have that experience. When I went to San Francisco, my husband and I went to study a model there that helps people and went to a support meeting, part of a global society. And I was greeted by someone at the door, almost stopped at the door, and was encouraged to go to another part of town where people "who looked like me" were. And then even recently, 2018, I worked for a faith-based treatment facility where the human resource director referred to the clients with slave names and in derogatory terms. So, I found that race definitely has an impact on recovery. Even at my recovery community organization, I have to explain constantly to the board of directors and to those around me why I do diversity, equity and inclusion work. And so, I continue to do this in hopes that this would be integrated into all systems of care. Thank you.

Now I would like to take a moment to have some reflection. If you'd go to your workbook, exercise two, we want to ask you, in what ways does structural racism show up in these examples of lived experience? What did you hear Larry and I share? If you'd just take a moment to reflect on that.

Okay, we're going to talk about some anti-racist strategies. Advancing racial equity and inclusion can sometimes seem daunting and often leaves many wondering how and where to start. One way to achieve social change in organizations is to incorporate race, equity and inclusion at every stage of work. There are individual actions that can be taken. So, looking at oneself and asking, what can I do as an individual? But why anti-racist? In this quote, Ijeoma shares, "You don't need to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward."

Let's talk about the fears and the myths of the zero-sum game. There's a myth of equity resulting in loss as resources are limited when in fact we have plenty and there's plenty to go around. There's a divide and conquer mentality that hurts us all. There's a myth and a fear that White people are missing critical information from a young age. So why is it so hard to talk about race? And then there's the narrative of the zero-sum game perpetuated by the elite. This helps the elite avoid accountability. This was very obvious, even in slave times. There were folks that were clearly racist, but they saw that the elite, just the few, benefited from the institution of slavery and they railed against it. They saw that it did not benefit all. So, there is missing critical information that needs to go forward in this fear and



myth of the zero-sum game. Let's take another reflection. Let's reflect on the concept of the zero-sum game. So, thinking about that, do you find it hard to talk about race? How does this fear and the myth of the zero-sum game resonate with you? Okay. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Deena, to talk about how you can be anti-racist, Deena?

- Thank you, Laurie. And one of the things we want to be really clear about is this process of reflective self-inquiry and cultural humility, it is humbling. It is a lifelong process, as Brooke mentioned earlier. And as Laurie mentioned, there's a reason, if you mentioned before when you looked at that reflection that you found it hard to talk about race, and you're a White person, there is a reason for that. That was intentional. And that's something we all need to look at, because if we accept that racism is systemic, then we as part of the system must be willing to listen and to do the work. We really loved that quote that was shared earlier, because the only way out of this is through. We have to be willing to do the work. And White people are critical if we're going to affect change around racist policies. One of the things we often do, and we talked about this in the first training, as White people, is disassociate. It gets hard. It gets uncomfortable. We feel that shame come up. And we spiral there and we turn off the news or we decide we don't want to have these conversations or respond to our neighbors who are making comments. And we step back from that. But it's really important that we as White people associate with this concept and really look at this concept within ourselves, within our friends, within our colleagues. See the system, see the ways in which we've been programmed. Acknowledge those and think about how those systems have impacted us. And then how have they impacted people of color, our friends of color, our colleagues of color? And silence is compliance. So, it's critical now. We can't just say, well, I'm not a racist, I didn't say that. If you stayed silent when someone else made a comment, that's compliance. If you stay silent while there's systems of inequity around you, that is compliance. So, we have to act by supporting these anti-racist policies and ideas.

There's a wonderful video by a woman called Verna Myers. And she has this call to action at the individual level. And she, kind of, has three main points that she talks about here. And very similarly to what we're asking you to do, get out of denial. Enough with, oh, I'm not a racist. She's a racist. He's a racist. They're a racist. No. We all need to own this. And really step into this work. Get out of the denial, see your bias, see where you default. There's a lot of wonderful work around implicit association. I'm sure many of you have been to an implicit association training and understand that implicit bias refers to something unconscious. It's these unconscious stereotypes that live within us, that affect our behavior or our beliefs about a group of people, our understanding of those people, and maybe decisions we make about those people. So implicit biases can be negative. They can also be



positive. And they affect us, but it doesn't mean it's conscious. So, it is something that's unconscious. And so one of the ways that Verner encourages us to get out of this denial is to stare at awesome Black people. There are so many images that associate people of color with criminal activities. We see negative reinforcement in the media. So really look out for examples of awesome black people. There are a plethora of examples out there, because it disassociates any previous associations in our brain and it resets our brain. So really look for black excellence, because there are amazing examples out there, and it'll just help reset that brain. Walk towards your discomfort. So, a lot of the time, as we said, we step away when we feel uncomfortable. We're asking you to step into your discomfort. We're asking you to look around your circle and say, well, who's not in my circle? And if all your circle looked like you, you need to be bringing in a more diverse circle. You need to be seeking out ways that you can bring people into your circle. And especially when we're talking about young Black men who are so disparaged in our community, and really a lot of the outcomes we see for young Black men across different spectrums are not looking good. So really thinking through how you can build relationships, build compassion, and better understand the intersection of those social determinants of health and race.

And then lastly, as we've said, silence is compliance. This is the time to take a stand. It's time to embrace courage, whatever that means to you. But no longer can we stay silent. We've got to speak up. We've got to speak out. We've got to challenge racism when we hear it. That means at the holiday dinner table with your family and friends. That means in the workplace with colleagues. That means out in the grocery store. Everywhere you experience racism, you hear racism, is a space where you can take a stand, and embrace that courage. So, we're going into one more reflection here. And this is really for you to think a little bit about your own experiences around race. And so we're, again, encouraging you, every time you get here, we're not going to pause, but you pause the video and just think about how do racist ideas impact your personal life? Even if you're not directly impacted by racism, what does it look like in your personal life? What do you see? What has it done to some of the communities around you, to your family members? A lot of people are experiencing a lot of pain around this in their family because they have a very different set of beliefs and values than the family they grew up in. So, think about, how do racist ideas impact your personal life? And also how do racist ideas impact your professional life? And we're going to go into that a little bit deeper. So pause the video, reflect on that.

And we're moving on. We are encouraging you to educate yourself. Again, White people, we don't know what we don't know. We cannot change the past, but we can acknowledge it and we can commit to doing better. That's all we're asking you to do on this journey with us today. Acknowledge the past, see the past, see your bias, and



commit to doing better. Ways that you can do this include reading. We've got some individual reading recommendations here. We're not going to go through all of them, but there's been some amazing work that's come out in the last five years. There's some older works. So, we've explored a couple of things during this process, but we've got some readings here, and we'll also send out these slides and you can see all these different recommendations.

If you're not a reader, we've got some short video recommendations. One of which we talked about with Verna Myers. There's some great TED talks out there. Austin Channing Brown has a show, which is about expanding racial justice, called "The Next Question." And of course, I'm sure you're all very familiar with Ibram X. Kendi. And he has another TED talk, the difference between being not racist and anti-racist.

If you are not a video person, but you do like a podcast, we've got some podcast recommendations for you. And I'm sure many of you have some other recommendations, but we're just sharing some examples that we've come across.

And if you are not a podcast person, we've got TV shows and movie recommendations. There's a couple of things listed here, but most importantly, and this is something I don't think that a lot of White people are always aware of, is that just because a movie or a TV show has people of color in it, it doesn't mean it's a Black-led work. And so, we really want to look for Black-led works where we have BIPOC directors, writers, producers telling us about their experience. So Black-led works are where black directors would tell you about the Black experience versus a White director using Black actors to tell you about what the White person thinks the Black experience is. So, it can be a very different story and it's something we need to pay attention to. So, there's four examples there, but just look out for that, who's writing? Who's directing? Who's producing?

And again, where do we do this work? We do this work everywhere. We've got to bring this into our homes. We've got to bring this into our communities. And we've got to bring this into our work. And step into that discomfort. And my wonderful friend and colleague Larry is going to share the ADDRESSING framework and walk you through a way that you could do this to support your work in the workplace. Larry?

- Thank you so much, Deena. And you made just a poignant point that I'd like to reiterate. We, number one, have got to do this work in our homes, on our jobs, in our community. And most importantly, we have to do the work amongst ourselves. Laurie just said this just so eloquently, "This work starts with self." And one of the things that the ADDRESSING model, that was developed by Pamela Hays, is just a phenomenal way that we can look at our own biases, where we can look at where



we have privilege, and when we can look at where we may not have privilege. She looks at 10 different areas of influence that's mostly in our workplace in America, but it's not all inclusive. 10 of the actual influential areas, are age, that's the first A, each ADDRESSING model abbreviation stands for something. So A stands for age. D stands for disability. So there are two types of disabilities. There's developmental, which may been caused during birth or before birth. Then there's acquired, something that is developed after birth. Also R stands for religion. E stands for ethnicity and racial identity. S stands for socioeconomic status. The second S stands for sexual orientation. The I stands for indigenous heritage. The N stands for national origin. And lastly, the G stands for gender. And these, again, are the 10 areas of influence that we most interact with in our workplace.

And so, in the next slide, if you will, we see three columns. So, the first column really reflects the influences, as I just spoke to. The next one looks at how you identify. And that is compared to the dominant identity. So, for example, when you look at, let's say disability. So, the dominant identity would be those that do not have a disability. And lastly, in their third column, it really challenges you to look at what of these influential areas you may have difficulty working with. So, for example, let's just look at two different areas. Let's look at sexual orientation and let's look at gender. In the example here, in sexual orientation, so the dominant identity here is heterosexual. So individual, this particular example is an individual who was gay. And he says in his reflection that, "I would have difficulty working with this population," and this is a quote, "I know I have biases against people who follow a strict and literal interpretation of the scriptures." So this individual has some experience, perhaps where scripture or a Bible was thrown in his face around sexual orientation. So, he would have a very difficult time dealing with, or working with this population. Another very powerful area of influence is gender. And of course, the dominant gender is male. And this particular example in terms of working with a population that may be different, this quote says, "I would have problems working with those who follow a strict social sexual role. In other words, only men can do men things and only women can do women things. I find gender and social sex roles much more fluid." So, you get a chance to really, really reflect on your own self in those areas where you may have difficulty. It also gives you an opportunity to learn more about this group and to determine if in fact you can work with this particular group or this particular population, or if you may need to step back and reevaluate whether or not this is the trajectory for you. And the next slide, please.

And so when we reflect back on the workbook exercise, exercise five, we want to look at the ADDRESSING model. And complete the table. And this model also includes some very important and poignant questions for us to reflect on. The first bullet point here is what examples of privilege and bias did you identify? So, reflect on that for a moment. The second bullet point. What are the implications for your



work? And so, as we reflect on those questions, it really starts the process of self-reflection. And we talked about cultural humility already, and that process is ongoing. The process is continuously improving our own ability to be able to work with those individuals and persons that are different than we are. Again, this is an ongoing process. It is not a static event. Next. So, for here, we will go on, pass it on to Deena.

- Thank you, Larry. And I really appreciate, Larry, you mentioning that this is a lifelong process. Again, as we said, you can do this work at a surface level. You can stay in your comfort zone, but we're asking you to go deeper. This is hard work. It should be hard work, because we're overcoming 500 years of systemic racism here. So, you cannot change the past. We've said that. But we can acknowledge it and we can commit to doing better. So, acknowledge the past. Acknowledge this is a lifelong process and just get comfortable being uncomfortable. That's when you know you're in the work and you're doing the work, when you feel that emotional connection to the work. So, bring this into your whole world. We're asking you to bring this into your work, your family, your friend circles, and we're reminding you that our colleagues who are Black, indigenous or people of color don't have the choice to disassociate when the work gets hard. They are directly impacted by this all the time. So, please, we're asking people to step into this work, to seek out trainings and just engage in doing this work. And this work is not easy work. And there are a lot of components.

We talked briefly about some individual ways, and it's important that we want to reiterate, even in this longer webinar that we've got, we're only providing a very basic overview. But we do have a wonderful team at the *Opioid Response Network* if you're interested in engaging around racial equity in your organization. One of the questions we get a lot from people is how do we integrate racial equity effectively? And it's really important that we're asking this question, and not just jumping to action, because it is going to take time. It's going to take time just like any new program or practice would take time. And we at the *Opioid Response Network* are committed to working with people around that implementation process. We're committed to working with organizations that want to commit to this process. And we're seeing this as about a year-long process. It might involve, again, being in that stage of preparing for change, building implementation teams, making sure you've got buy-in from leadership. There's always an assessment piece. Making sure that you're ready to do this work rather than just jumping in and then finding out you were not ready. This requires racial equity assessment, maybe a power analysis. We've got to build our workforce capacity through training, ongoing leadership support protocols and policies. We've got to make sure we've got measurement in there. This is an ongoing measurement process. So, we know that we're doing well. And most importantly, we have to think about how we can sustain this work and are



we putting resources and funding to it? So organizational change around racial equity really does require a solid implementation plan and a commitment to making this plan actionable. Many of our substance use service providers are really committed to integrating this across their organization, but they're really not sure where to start or how to do this work. So, we want to encourage you to reach out to us, because our *Opioid Response Network* implementation institute is going to work with providers who want to make a commitment to integrating racial equity into their organization. So, we hope you will...and at that point, I'm going to turn it over again to my wonderful colleague Laurie who's going to tell us why we should be doing this, Laurie?

- Thank you, Deena. And as Deena has said, we are here to help you. One of the key roles of leaders in organizations is to carry forth best practices. And so, all organizations and leaders should be doing this. And as an extra incentive, the executive order from our administration came out in January of this year because advancing equity requires a systemic approach to embedding fairness in the decision-making processes. The executive departments and agencies must recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity. And those things were set forth as an executive order for all federal programs. And so even if you are a small 501c3 organization, you fall under the executive order. And most organizations that get federal dollars also have to comply with this executive order. You may have received some correspondence. I know I did from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, where they are trying to start looking at these processes. And of course, there's key principles at work for advancing racial equity in our approach. The key principles, as shown on your screen, should ground agency activities pursuant to this executive order. So advancing equity must be a core part of management and policy-making processes. Advancing racial equity in our approach means to include successful equity work that yields tangible changes, not just checking a box, but actually changing the culture of the organization. You should be able to see the difference. And equity benefits, not just some of us, but all Americans. If we close the gaps in income, wealth and financial securities for families across our country, our economy will grow. It's up to all of us as leaders to carry this message and to demonstrate that advancing equity is not a zero-sum game as described in Heather McGhee's "The Sum of Us." This is something that benefits all of us, that this is not something that benefit some communities at the expense of others. This is something that benefits us all. So, I'm going to turn this over to my colleague Nicole at this time.

- Great. Thank you so much. It's really, really great that we have that executive order now as a means of really putting some teeth behind this work. So, it's truly exciting to kind of have that as a part of our why. So, I want to talk a little bit about examples of leadership action. We've talked about organizational things and we're going to



talk a little bit about leadership action. And there are five key strategies we're going to talk about. Leading the way, modeling this work yourself, investing in this work of diversity, equity, inclusion, diversifying your leadership, analyzing policies, and then recruiting. And these five strategies we're going to talk about in more detail, but what I want to kind of just highlight here as we're marinating on this slide is to think about what are some tangible things we can do?

We want to make sure that we're recruiting and supporting culturally and linguistically diverse governance. And when we say linguistic, this means making sure that our services are people-centered, making sure that it's a language that folks can understand. Things like asking for our pronouns. There's so many different ways we can prioritize diversity in our work of making sure that we're doing the things that we need to do. So, let's dive into these five here a little bit more. The first I want to talk about is how do we actually invest in diversity? Well, one, you're doing it now. Being a part of trainings like this are one of the first ways of investing in diversity. But we want to push the envelope even further. Begin to think about your contractors, your consultants, the folks you work with who pay to provide you services. Have they also attended a training like this? Do you require them to get training on diversity, equity inclusion? That way the services they're providing to you are also in alignment with your organization. So we want to think about things like this. In a 2015 study, it showed that when 25% of faculty from medical departments received training around gender bias, faculty report significant increases in action to promote gender equity and after just three months. And so truly taking time to invest in training, staff, your consultants, your whole system, is an important action step that we can take as leaders.

It's also important that we promote and elevate BIPOC employees. And this is probably one of the challenges with this work is the actual promotion and elevation of employees. And in doing this, this requires us to actually assess our organizational context and our staffing, looking at whether or not our upper levels of management are really diverse. Because sometimes it's not. And so, we want to make sure that there's true pathways to leadership in this work that we do. It becomes so important that, again, these are not just things that are said or things that are in black and white, but that when we truly look and assess our organizations, that we actually see it reflected in our staff that we care about diversity, equity, inclusion. The other clear strategy that leaders can do is to reexamine company policies and practices. Those that promote microaggressions. In the first course, we talked about microaggressions. We want to make sure that we take time to evaluate our policies. Do we have policies that are against hair or restrictions around hair, restrictions around particular professional appearance, as it may be deemed? And really thinking about are some of those policies microaggressions? Are they culturally insensitive? Have we fostered an



environment where folks feel comfortable actually bringing issues up? And knowing that if they identify racist policies or strategies that those things will be addressed. Is there true enforcement of the anti-racist policies that have been outlined in your organization? These are all clear ways of making sure the environment actually mimics and actually reflects the words that we have in our policies and our documents. It's really important to think about that.

In this too, a very clear strategy is beginning to look at how we recruit and hire staff. And truly considering whether or not it reflects the population we serve. So often in our work, this is not the case. And a part of this is really helping us think about and reflect, do we honor lived experience in our hiring practices? Do we actually honor the community that we're serving and make sure that our staff reflects those folks? The other thing to remember with this is remembering the conversation about equity versus equality. If we remember, and those of you who saw the apple and the trees and the little boxes, equity was about adding additional opportunities and resources so that the equal outcome of reaching the apple could happen. You want to think about this exact same way with your hiring practices. What type of opportunities or resources do we need to provide to make sure that we're prioritizing equity over equality in the work that we do and in our hiring practices?

So, with this, I want to leave you with some questions that us leaders should be asking in this work. And the first question is, does the demographic makeup of our staff reflect those we serve? Are we assessing the organizational climate? Do staff feel a sense of belonging and community in the workspace? Are we actively investing in leadership pathways for underrepresented and/or BIPOC staff? And how are we addressing social determinants of health, such as food or housing insecurity in our programs, especially being that we understand how much those things are interconnected as it relates to structural racism? What are we really doing about all these things? I want to give an opportunity for reflection here. This is our reflection number six at this point. And for you all to pause the video and really take some time to think about what questions are you asking as a leader? And what questions could you be asking? So, I invite you to pause and have that reflection. At this time, I want to pass it over to Larry so he can begin to talk about some of the organizational shifts we'll need to make in doing this work.

- Thank you so much, Nicole. And just thank you for your poignant statement around how staffing should be diversified, just in terms of those that are in decision-making positions. So now we're going to look at organizational shifts. We're going to look at how organizations can become more responsive to those they serve. So, we're talking about how can they be more responsive to employees? How can they be more responsive to stakeholders? And how can they be more responsive to the communities that they serve? So, let's look at the next slide. So, there are four areas



that can be key steps in terms of doing this work. Again, Deena so eloquently said, "We have got to do the work." So, this is where we can start, with these four steps. First of all, we have got to acknowledge that there is a problem. So how can we do that? Because oftentimes organizations may say, well, we've got, our employees are satisfied and we don't need to make any changes, those kinds of things. But if we take a deeper, more critical look at areas like what are individuals saying in their exit interviews? What kind of complaints may or may not have been sort of taken to human resources, those kinds of things. If we do a survey of our employees and/or our stakeholders, and maybe even the community, we may come back with information that will say that there are areas that we need to improve in in terms of equity, as well as diversity.

So once having that information, our next step is really to look at it, to assess it, to determine, well, we've got these issues, we've got these problems, what are we going to do? How can we promote racial equity and how can this in turn impact our stakeholders, our employees, as well as the community? So once we've assessed the issue, our next step can be to do a critical assessment to examine where the organization can actually make changes to the systems. To make changes that will be more inclusive. To make changes based on input from, again, our employees, our stakeholders, and the community. And lastly, once having that information, this last point, include an ongoing measurement to assess these changes. So that's important. In health care, we have a process called continuous quality improvement. So, what does that mean? It means that we collect this data, this information that we're talking about, we literally collect that and we assess it on an ongoing basis. We look at how well we're doing and we try to duplicate those things that we're really doing well. But we also look at the gaps in the system. Is it that, as Nicole mentioned, that our hiring practices may need to be improved to more reflect our populations that we serve? We can look, again, those that are in decision-making positions, are they reflective of the population that we serve as well as do we have a diverse body of persons that are making important decisions that impact everybody in the organization, next.

So, let's, again, let's look at some key areas. And I'm not going to go through every one of these, but one that is very, very important, and that is developing a mission statement that reflects a commitment to diversity. So, we know that the mission statement is that statement that reflects the organization's purpose for even existing. It really reflects their goals and objectives. It reflects what the organization stands for. So therefore this is a great opportunity to inject culturally appropriate kinds of language in our mission statement. So, I just want to give you one example of some inclusive lens. So, this is an organization, this not a real organization. But it says "At St. Jones Rehab, we operate as one team and are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive working environment where we value and develop employees



of all backgrounds and experience. We firmly believe collaboration among team members with varied perspectives generates more inclusive insights that better serve our staff and community.” So, as you can see in that example, it has inclusive language. It's letting persons know that you care about their culture, that you care that the organization is diverse. And those kinds of things can be put on your website. So as people are browsing your website, they can see for themselves that, yes, this is an organization that's diverse. I can feel welcome in this organization. And that's not just for the population you serve. That's for potential employees as well.

And again, just an experience that I had some years ago that certainly I think is worth mentioning here. As assistant professor at a major university out here in the Southeast, I would, every year, attend the graduation, so I have my full regalia on, and just was so proud of our learners who were graduating. But I was also very, very sort of taken back when I looked on the stage, because on the stage was a representation of the administration of the school, starting from our chairs to our deans, to our president and a total of maybe 100 people on the stage. And when I looked at the makeup of these individuals who are in decision-making positions. I could see maybe one or two Black faces or Brown faces. And it was just so disheartening to me, because the population of the university was more than 50% African American, and persons of color. So that's an example that sort of really, really opened my eyes as well.

And lastly, I just want to say the makeup of the board is also important, because the board is very powerful, very influential. And so, we want to make sure again that when we're talking about really diversifying and becoming a more equitable organization, these are the things that we want to make sure that we incorporate. And again, we have got to do the work, we've got to do the work. And I just want to say, lastly, is a quote from one of my heroes, one of my mentors that I just think is just so appropriate now. And it goes something like this, "In a real sense, all life is interrelated. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality." And so, when we think about these important points, this quote by Martin Luther King, I think, really brings it all together to help us to understand that we are all in this together. Next slide.

And so this slide really does take us home in terms of organization and looking at how we can implement this, how we can do the work. So, when we talk about data, desegregate data, disaggregate data, what that means is we're going to look and keep records of our hiring practices. Keep records of different racial groups that are



being hired and ensure we are really being equitable in that process. Expand professional development. This gives individuals an opportunity regardless of who they are, regardless of where they are in the organization, but gives them the opportunity that if they want to grow, if they want to develop, if they want to move up the ladder, opportunities should be available for them to be able to do that as well. This is all beneficial for the organization and the organization's bottom line as well. And lastly, this point I think it's so important. Employ culturally specific outreach and engagement strategies. So, what that means is that we are being more culturally sensitive to the needs of our community, to the needs of our staff, to the needs of our stakeholders. Stakeholders are just as important that they understand and know your commitment to diversity, your commitment to equity as well. And so, we're going to go on to the next slide. And I'm going to turn this over now to my colleague Laurie for her to talk about our commitment to action. Again, our overarching necessity and need to really, really do this work. And we can start by this commitment to action. Laurie?

- Thank you, Larry. Yes, what can we do individually in the workplace as leaders and champions? And looking at our individual commitment, there's a saying, if you don't stand for anything, you'll fall... if you stand for nothing, you'll fall for anything. So, you have to kind of stand up to this and come up with this culture of being anti-racist. What does your workplace look like? Is it a climate both spoken and unspoken that fosters anti-racist beliefs? What are the leaders doing and the champions doing in order to undergird this and to make sure there's accountability, that there's an anti-racist climate? I know in my own experience, I worked in an environment where it was not anti-racist and there were no mechanisms of descent in order to correct it. There were no processes in place to correct it. Needless to say that was not a place that I would continue to work and it was a hostile environment for people of color. So, these are the things that can be avoided in our commitment to action. So, let's just take a moment to reflect once again. We're on reflection number seven in your workbook. Reflect on the strategy shared at the individual leadership and organizational level. What are you committed to doing? This is not easy. You have to think about this. What am I individually going to change? What am I willing to do? What are the implications for your work? What are you prepared to do individually in your role as a champion and leader or at the organizational level? These are reflective questions.

We don't want you to do this work alone. We would love it if you would submit a request so we can support you. Advancing racial equity and inclusion can be daunting. It often leaves us wondering how and where to start. *ORN* wants you to know you're not alone. We are indeed here to support you. There are multiple ways you can reach us. The quickest and most effective way is at our website provided here on the slide for you, www.opioidresponsenetwork.org. You can call us if you're



stumped and don't know where to start, feel free to reach out. The phone number is provided here as well. And then if you need to reach out to us via email, just email us at orn@aaap.org, and we will get right back to you.