

Glossary of Terms

Equality: Aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to live full and healthy lives. Assumes that everyone is starting from the same place in society and needs the same things.

Equity: Strives to understand and give everyone what they need to enjoy full and healthy lives. Assumes that unique needs are largely determined by historical and present-day experiences of systemic oppression.

Race: A socially constructed system of categorizing humans largely based on observable physical features (phenotypes) such as skin color and ancestry. There is no scientific basis for or discernible distinction between races. *(Source: Race Forward)*

Racial Equity: Just and fair inclusion into society in which all people can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

“The active state in which race does not determine one’s livelihood or success. It is achieved through proactive work to address root causes of inequities to improve social outcomes for all individuals; that is, through the elimination or shifting of politics, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.” -City of Boston Executive Order on Resilience and Racial Equity

Racism: A system of power and oppression that structures opportunities and assigns value based on race, unfairly disadvantaging people of color, while unfairly advantaging whites. *(Source: Adapted from Dr. Camara Jones and The People’s Institute)*

- Racism=a system of **oppression** based on race
- Racism=a system of **advantage** based on race
- Racism=race **prejudice** + institutional **power**

Internalized Racism: The expression of racism within individuals. A set of unconscious or private beliefs, prejudices, ideas, and biases about race and racism, influenced by our culture.

Interpersonal: The expression of racism between individuals. It’s when we bring our private beliefs and biases into our communications and interactions with others of a different race. This can be intentional or not intentional.

Institutional Racism: Discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and practices, and inequitable opportunities and impacts within organizations and institutions (including schools, the education system, organizations, companies, the criminal justice system, media), based on race.

Systemic Racism: Racial bias across institutions and society over time. The cumulative and compounded effects of an array of factors such as policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and norms that work in various, often reinforcing ways, to perpetuate racial inequity.

Anti-racism: The policy or practice of opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance. “Supporting of anti-racist policy through their actions or expressing an anti-racist idea that yield racial equity.” - Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Anti-Racist*

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

The term was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw who explains further in a [recent interview](#), “It’s basically a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.”

Minoritize: To make (a person or group) subordinate in status to a more dominant group or its members.

Privilege: Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g., white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Usually invisible to those who have it because we’re taught not to see it.

White Privilege: “I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks.” -Peggy McIntosh, [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)

White Fragility: White fragility refers to feelings of discomfort a white person experiences when they witness or participate in discussions around racial inequality and injustice.

The term was coined by Robin DiAngelo in her book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. For more information, consider [this article](#) by DiAngelo.

White Supremacy Culture: White supremacy culture is the idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. For more information on the Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture, consider [this article](#) by Tema Okun.