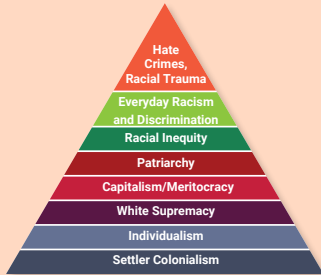
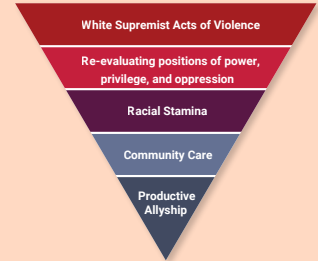


Responding to Systemic Oppression: Supporting BIPOC Communities

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- The **systemic oppression pyramid** outlines the cumulative stages of how racism impacts members of a BIPOC community.
- This process starts at the bottom of the image with **colonialism** from white settlers who exploit and occupy land from Indigenous groups, spread their white supremacy and dominance, and propagate ideologies of **individualism** consisting of personal autonomy and independent decision-making.
- White supremacy** assents to the belief of being better than all other races and that white people thus have the right to dominate civilization. These Western viewpoints support **capitalism**, which both divides individuals into different **socioeconomic** categories while **patriarchal** messages dictate **gender and social privilege**.
- Meritocracy** suggests that we thrive in a society that honours a strong sense of professionalism and work ethic.
- BIPOC communities will then experience **racial inequity** in both society and occupational industries and **everyday racism** (e.g., microaggressions and discrimination) leading to an increase in reported **hate crimes and racial trauma**.



Mental health implications from systemic oppression:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Chronic stress
- Somatization of emotional pain
- Substance use disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Symptoms of these mental health conditions can manifest in assorted ways:

- Relationship challenges
- Fear for personal safety
- Distrust and withdrawing from the world
- Disrupted sleep, insomnia, and nightmares
- Intrusive/recurring thoughts or images
- Heightened sensitivity to threat and shaming
- Arousal in the form of hypervigilance and increased suspicion
- Negative cognitions about self, society, and the world
- Increased aggression and potential domestic violence

- Racial stamina** is not synonymous with being "woke." Instead, racial stamina encourages white people to consider their positions of power and privilege, internalized racial biases and consciousness, and the urgency to have intentional conversations about racism with BIPOC. **Racial stamina** involves consistently showing up for BIPOC and becoming more engaged in productive allyship ventures.

- There are varied pathways towards becoming a **productive ally**; it is important to cultivate a community that appreciates the progression towards capacity building upon this intention. Analogous to music, as we move from a decrescendo to a crescendo, or from a silenced voice to an amplified voice, we could attract more interest in joining a movement to foster and support accountability and follow-through in one's actions.
- A **progression** of sorts might start with attending trainings on cultural responsiveness or reading a book about antiracism, then raising awareness about **Black Lives Matter**, and finally demonstrating endurance by participating in community-led solidarity vigil in honour of hate crime victims. The possibilities are endless; however, every action should be championed in an authentic and purposeful manner.
- During the process of developing an **antiracist identity**, we migrate from a scarcity mindset of denying and enabling white supremacist acts of violence to achieving a growth or abundance mindset by observing positions of power, privilege, and oppression, engaging in racial stamina, understanding the significance of community care, and becoming a **productive ally**.