





Biopsychosocial Responses to Anti-Asian Racism and Racial Trauma


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Body's Response to Racial Trauma: Forgive or Forget?


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Mind-Body Connection



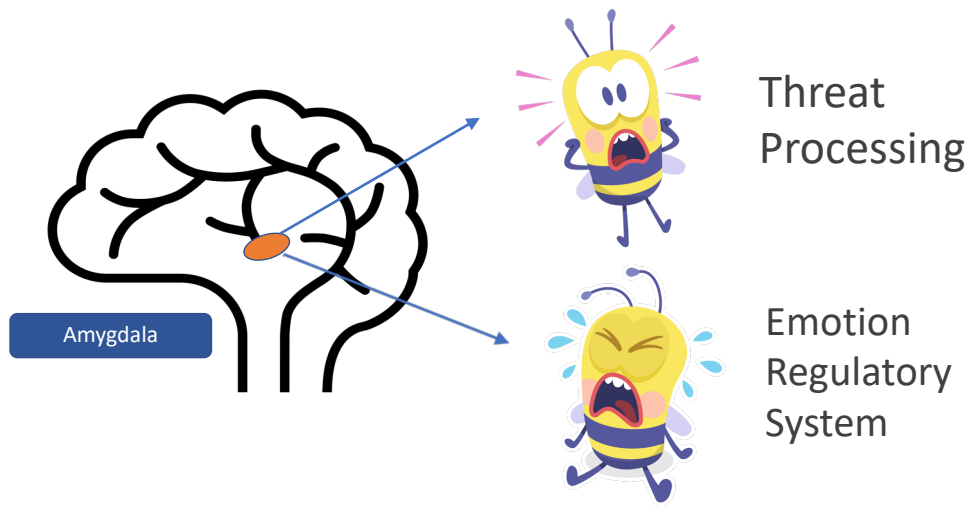
- Brain biology
- Physical health
- Stress reactivity
- Genetic vulnerability
- Neurochemistry

"Let's Talk!"

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Traumatic Stress & Brain Development



Amygdala

Threat Processing

Emotion Regulatory System

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What Does It All Mean?

"Let's Talk!"

Safety Behaviors

- Desire to seek safe spaces
- Includes emotional and physical safety
- Can be interpersonal and systemic level



Emotion Regulation

- Meaning making
- Emotional expression/suppression
- Need for coping

Power of Storytelling: Creating Own Narratives

"Let's Talk!"

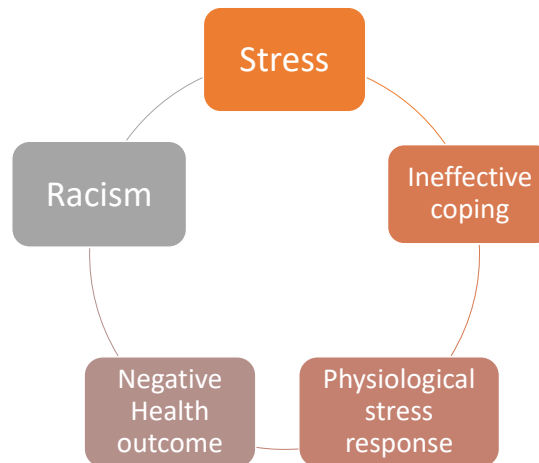


- The body as the bridge
- "Trauma stories lessen the isolation of trauma" -Bessel van der Kolk (2014)
- Stories we tell ourselves vs. stories we tell others
- What's allowed and not allowed to talk about

Racial Trauma and Body's Response



- Increased risk for
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - Obesity
 - Respiratory and pain conditions
 - Physical health complaints
 - Cancer



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Intergenerational Transmission of Stress



- **Prenatal stress**
 - Low-birth weight, preterm birth
 - Hypertension, cardiovascular disease
 - Depression, anxiety
- **Parent-child relationship**
 - Survey of 500 3rd generation Japanese Americans
 - Twice as many previously incarcerated fathers died early (before age 60) when compared with non-incarcerated fathers
 - Attachment style
 - Mental health symptoms
 - Role reverse, disrupted family functioning



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Asian Americans, Racism & Coping: Now What?

Alvin N. Alvarez, Ph.D.

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Complexities of Racism

"Let's Talk!"

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Context of Racism

"Let's Talk!"

- Relational Context
- Power Context
- Environmental Context
- Temporal Context
- Agency & Resources

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Context Matters



You are called names and insulted...

- At school
- At work
- At a restaurant



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Context Matters



You are called names and insulted...

- At school
 - By your teacher
 - By your roommate
 - By another student you don't know
- At work
 - By your boss
 - By your co-worker
 - By your student
- At a restaurant
 - By a waiter at your favorite restaurant
 - By the owner of your favorite restaurant
 - By another patron while on vacation



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Complexities of Asian America

"Let's Talk!"

- Communities of Immigrants
- Disconnected Waves
- Diversity of Ethnicities
- New to Race
- Internalizing Model Minority Myth
- Cross-Racial Gaps & Prejudices
- Generational & Colonial Traumas
- Comparative Traumas
- Family Socialization

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Coping & Healing

"Let's Talk!"

- Naming It
- Racial Socialization
- Preparation for Racism
- Validation
- Social Support
- Critical Consciousness
- Attributional Shifts
- Cultural, Racial & Ethnic Pride

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Coping & Healing

"Let's Talk!"

- Racial Not Just Cultural
- Advocacy & Protest
- Faces of Resistance
- Creative Arts
- Cross-Racial Relationship & Coalitions
- Permission to Pause
- Healing Not Only Coping
 - Efficacy & Agency
 - Collective & Authentic Spaces
 - Creativity & Dreaming
 - Self Determination

Artwork by Amanda Phingbodhinak

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Lessons from the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans During WWII

Nora Yasumura, MSW
Diversity Consultant & Healing Circle Coordinator,
Tsuru for Solidarity



"Let's Talk!"



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Intergenerational Trauma Research


Dr. Donna Nagata and Dr. Satsuki Ina

Issei & Nisei (1st & 2nd)







- Increased risk of heart disease, substance abuse, domestic violence, & anxiety/depression/suicide
- Silence: Did not talk about what happened

Messages to Sansei (3rd):

- Focused on safety in a number of ways:
 - Closeness to whiteness
 - Downplay culture & language
 - Emphasis on education to be secure and to make up for losses
 - Focus on being perfect & not making waves
 - Ignore other racial group challenges



"Let's Talk!"



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"Let's Talk!"

Silenced

How the government control the narratives

The Silencing

How they were socialized to abandon their voices

Reclaiming the Silence

How they reclaimed the truth

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"Let's Talk!"

Silenced

Government Controlled the Narrative
 Reinforced by Society Norms

Yellow Peril
 "Danger to the Western World"

Perpetual Foreigner
 "Looking like the enemy"

Model Minority
 "Didn't resist"

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Propaganda Messages

Government was being helpful and humane.

Japanese Americans "cheerfully" cooperated and wanted to make the sacrifice to show their loyalty.

Japanese Relocation - US Gov't Propaganda Film (1942)



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The Silencing



"Americanization" Classes



Loyalty Questionnaire



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"Let's Talk!"

Silenced
How the government control the narratives

The Silencing
How they were socialized to abandon their voices

Reclaiming the Silence
How they reclaimed the truth

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"Let's Talk!"

Reclaiming the Silence

"Until we can talk about the experience and make a connection with our grief and anger, we will each be unconsciously trying to get out of our own prison camp. Our experience was unique, but it's an example of the broader experience of racism, how it permeates lives, and how we each attempt to survive it. It's about trauma and suffering, but it also is about strength and resilience."

- Dr. Satsuki Ina
Children of the Camps Documentary

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Reclaiming the Silence

Healing: Context Matters
 Personal Narratives
 No power- could not prevent
 No words- but it was felt
 No validation that it was real.
 Invisibility → shame
 No permission or support

Reclaiming Our Voice
 Creative Expression
 Solidarity with Others Racial Groups
 Healing Circles







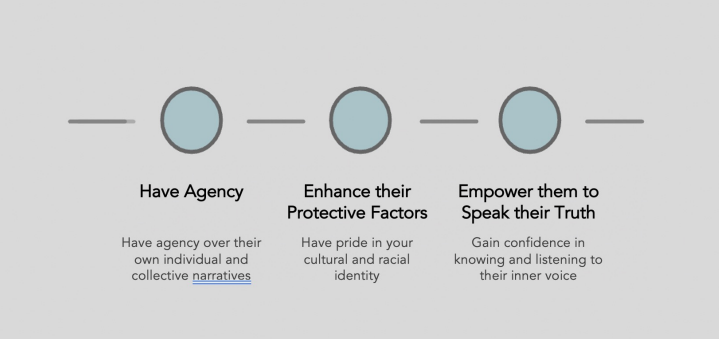






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Social/Cultural & Institutional Norms



Have Agency



Have agency over their own individual and collective [narratives](#)

Enhance their Protective Factors

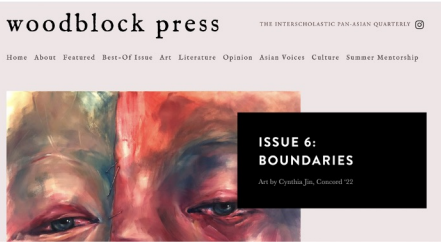
Have pride in your cultural and racial identity

Empower them to Speak their Truth

Gain confidence in knowing and listening to their inner voice

Painting created after the Atlanta shooting.
 By Raven Hong,
 H.S. student








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