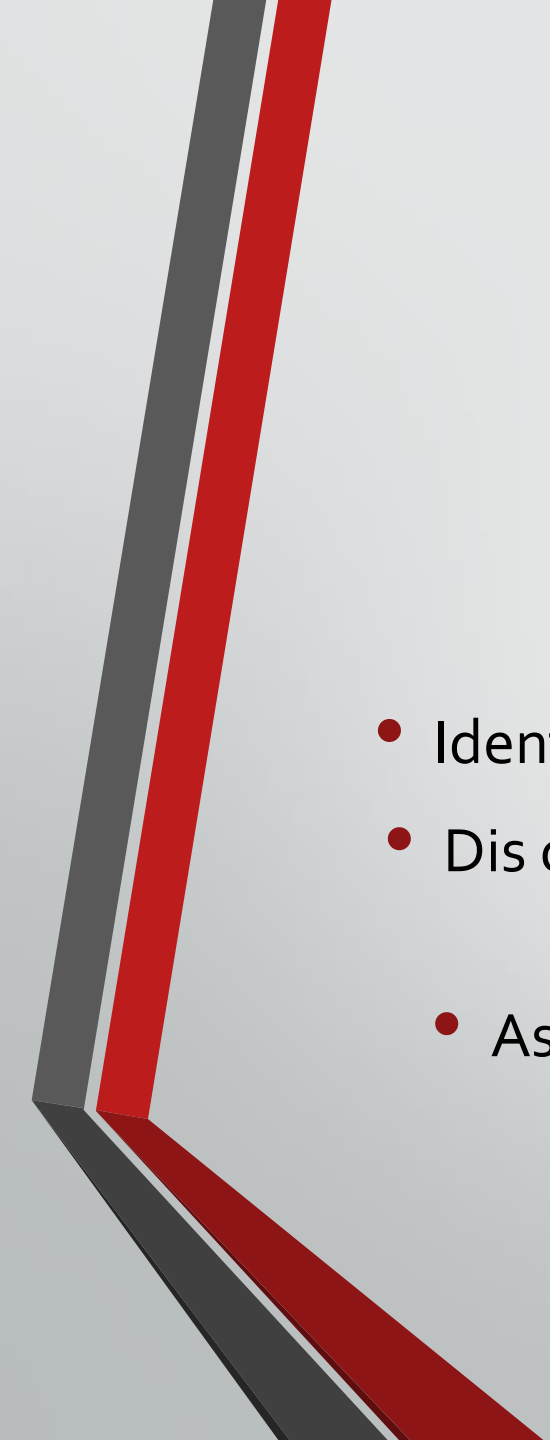




Addressing Historical & Intergenerational Trauma

From Tribulation to Triumph





Agenda

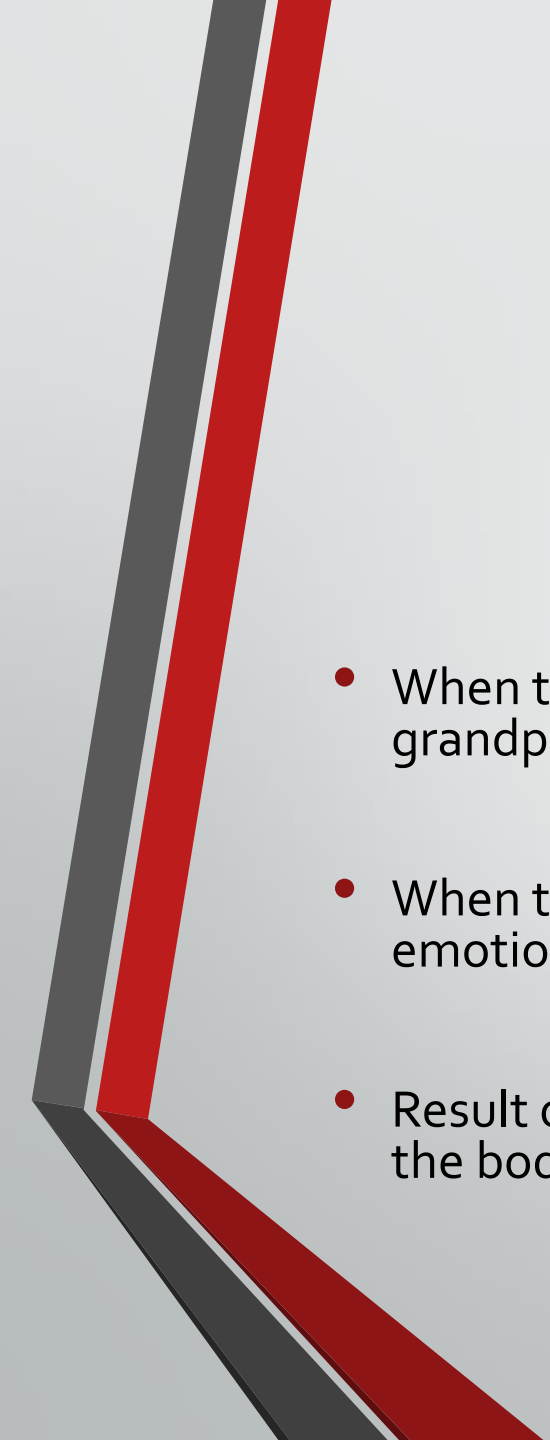
- Explain what constitutes Intergenerational Trauma
- Identify and distinguish between Historical and Intergenerational Trauma
- Discuss the messages, behaviors, and mindsets that are passed down to reinforce Intergenerational Trauma
- Assess how Intergenerational Trauma affects individuals and families
 - Healing Perspectives

Trauma

- Exposure to actual or threatened death, injury, neglect, and abuse or violence
- Can be directly experienced or witnessed (seeing or hearing violent acts against yourself or someone else) or indirectly experience (vicarious trauma)
- Exposure can be a one-off incident or on-going. Events such as war, natural disasters, terrorism, sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and child maltreatment and neglect can result in trauma

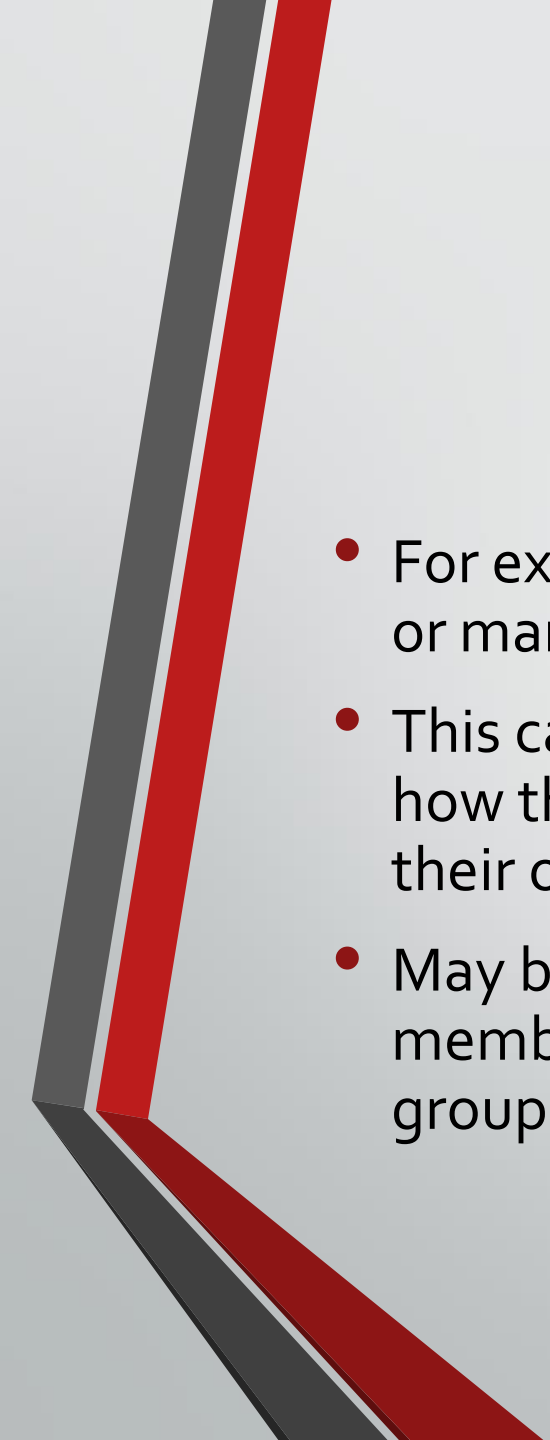
Past present & future





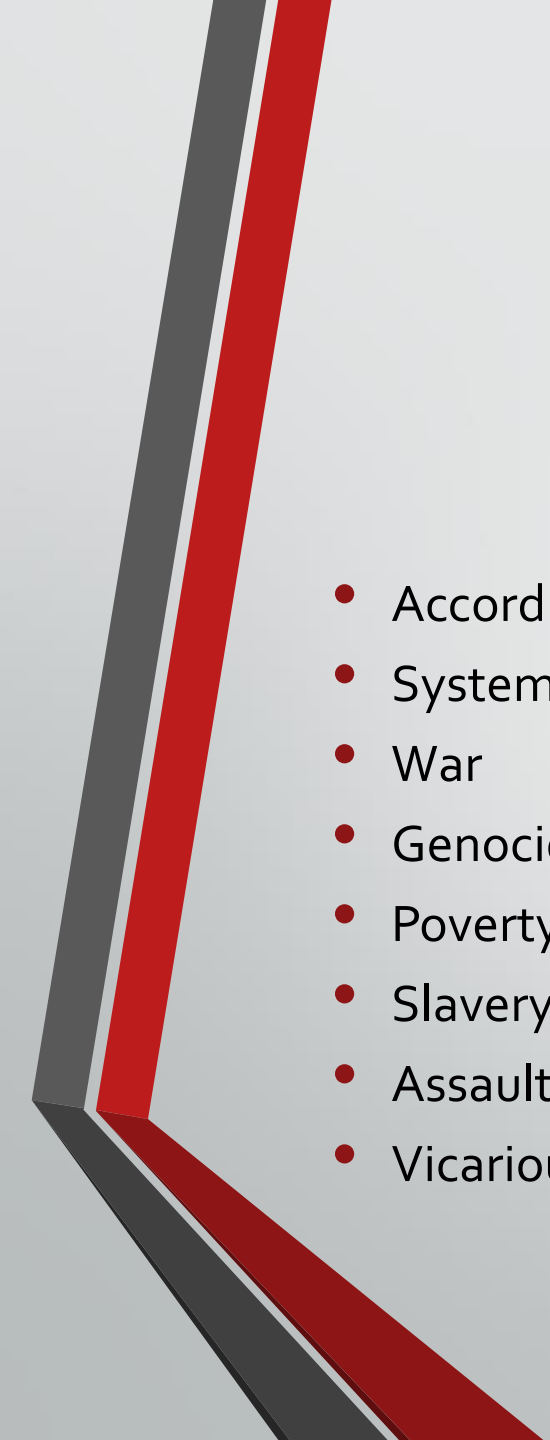
Intergenerational trauma

- When the original traumatic experience is transferred from parents to children, and then grandparents and so on
- When the descendant of someone who experienced a traumatic event presents challenging emotional and behavioral reactions that are similar to their ancestor or relative
- Result of learned behavior and alterations to internal workings with biological changes in the body due to stress



Intergenerational Trauma

- For example, a child who witnesses the physical abuse of their mother once or many times, has experienced trauma.
- This can then develop into intergenerational trauma, which can influence how the child behaves in a relationship in the future, and how they parent their own children
- May begin with a traumatic event affecting an individual, multiple family members, collective trauma, cultural, racial, ethnic or other groups/populations



Causes of Intergenerational trauma

- According to the Association of Psychological Association examples include
- Systemic and cultural oppression
- War
- Genocide
- Poverty
- Slavery
- Assault or abuse
- Vicarious distress



Examples of family reactions to Trauma

Emotion

- Denial
- Minimization
- Difficulty/inability to express emotions
 - Cumulative emotional wounding
 - Emotionally unavailable parents
 - Inability to connect with others



Examples of family reactions to Trauma

Epigenetics

- DNA modifications
 - Memory
 - In utero
- Increased cortisol
- Dysfunctional immune system



Examples of family reactions to Trauma

Messaging

- Cultural messaging and conditioning
 - Cultural patterns
 - Dominant family narratives
- Normalization of hatred, cruelty, and dehumanization toward others
 - Silence about traumas
- Stigma surrounding mental health treatment

Epigenetics





Intergenerational trauma effects on families

Emotional

- Shame
 - Difficulty in regulating aggression
 - Heightened vulnerability/helplessness
- Impaired self-esteem stemming from minimization of the child's own life experiences in comparison to the parents' trauma



Intergenerational trauma effects on families

Physical

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Poor sleep
- Hypervigilance
- Heart disease
- Cancer/Diabetes



Intergenerational trauma effects on families

Behavioral

- Extreme reactivity to stress
 - Distance
- Detachment
- Disconnection



Effects cont.

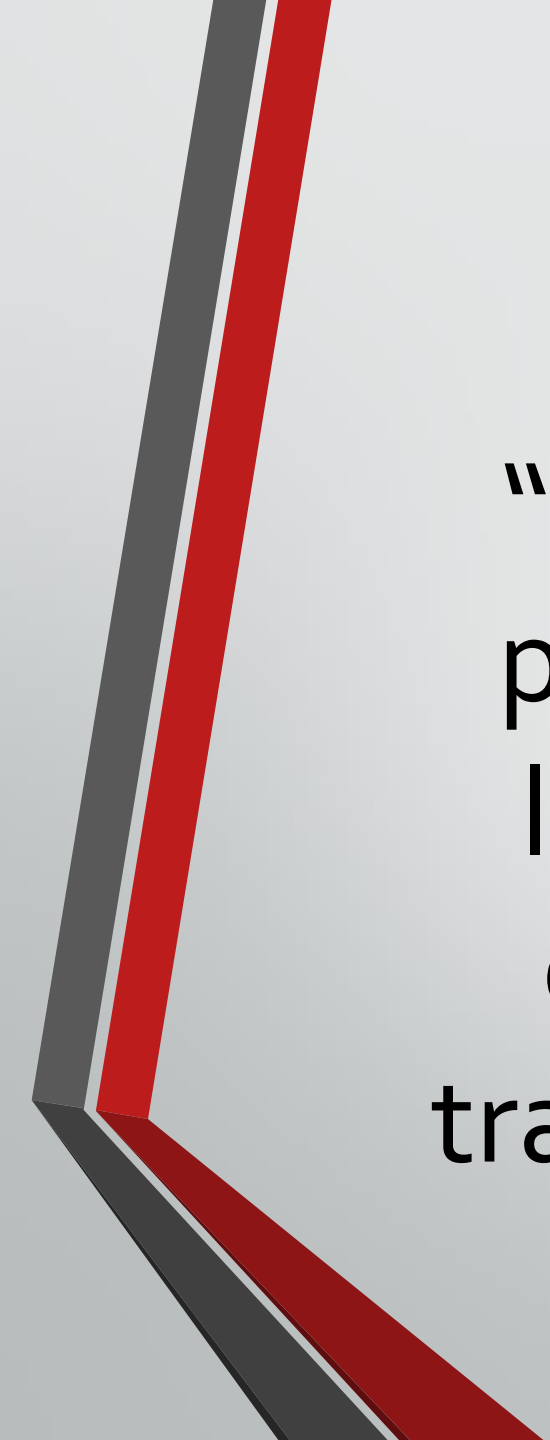
- Relationships with family members and romantic partners
 - Sense of self or personal identity
 - Communication patterns
 - Parenting styles
- Overall mental health and well-being

Historical trauma

- (a category of intergenerational trauma)

multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial or ethnic group.

- Related to major events that oppressed a particular group of people because of their status as oppressed, such as slavery, the Holocaust, forced migration, and the violent colonization of Native Americans.

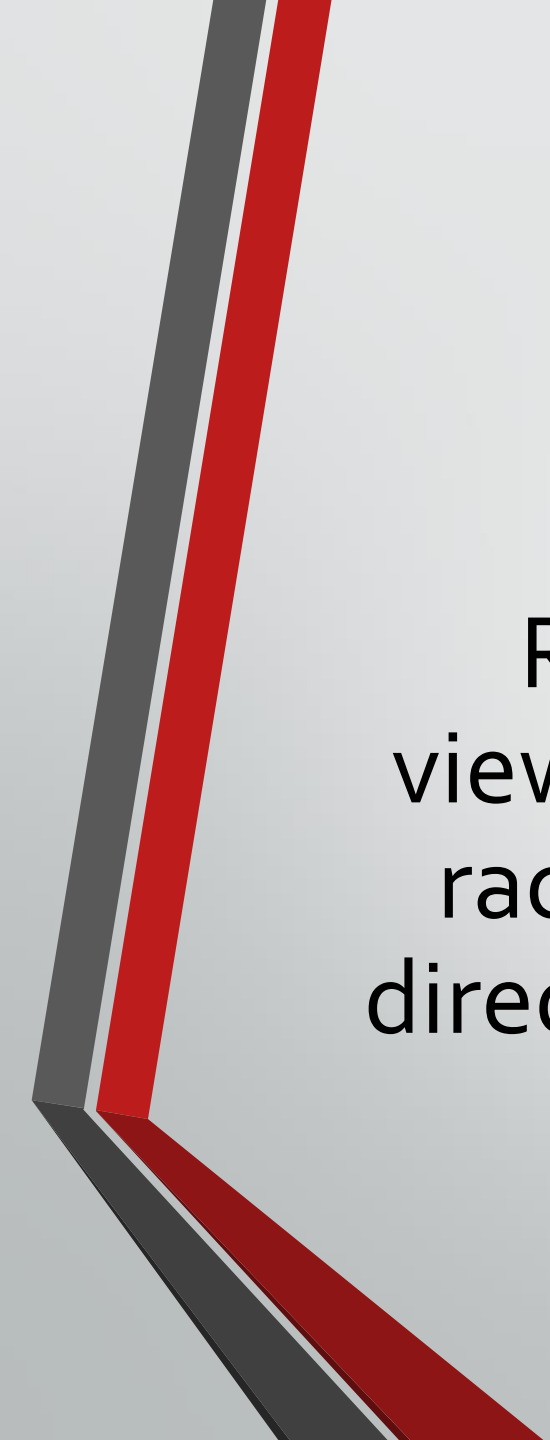


Historical trauma

“...the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma.” (Marie Yellow Horse Brave Heart)

Historical trauma

- **Meets three criteria**
 - Widespread effects
 - Collective suffering
 - Malicious intent
- **Historical Trauma Response (HTR) can manifest as**
 - low self esteem/vacant esteem
 - substance abuse
 - suicidal thought
 - depression/anxiety
 - ever present anger
 - violence
 - difficulty in emotional regulation



Racial Trauma

Results from experiencing, witnessing, viewing, or hearing about racial harassment, racial discrimination, race-based terrorism directed at a person/s of the same ethnoracial group. (Chioneso et al., 2020)

Maafa

Great Disaster

- KiSwahili term referring to the Eurasian intrusion into Afrika, the removal of tens of thousands of Afrikan people from the of African people and colonization. (Richards 1989)

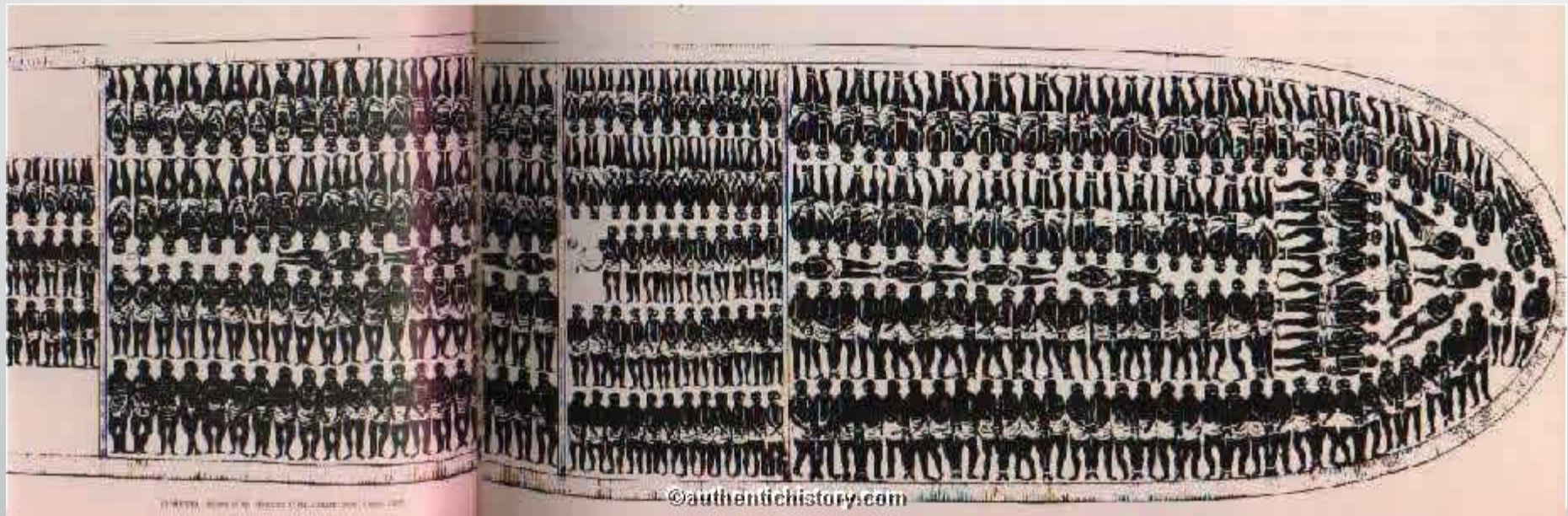
Trauma Chambers



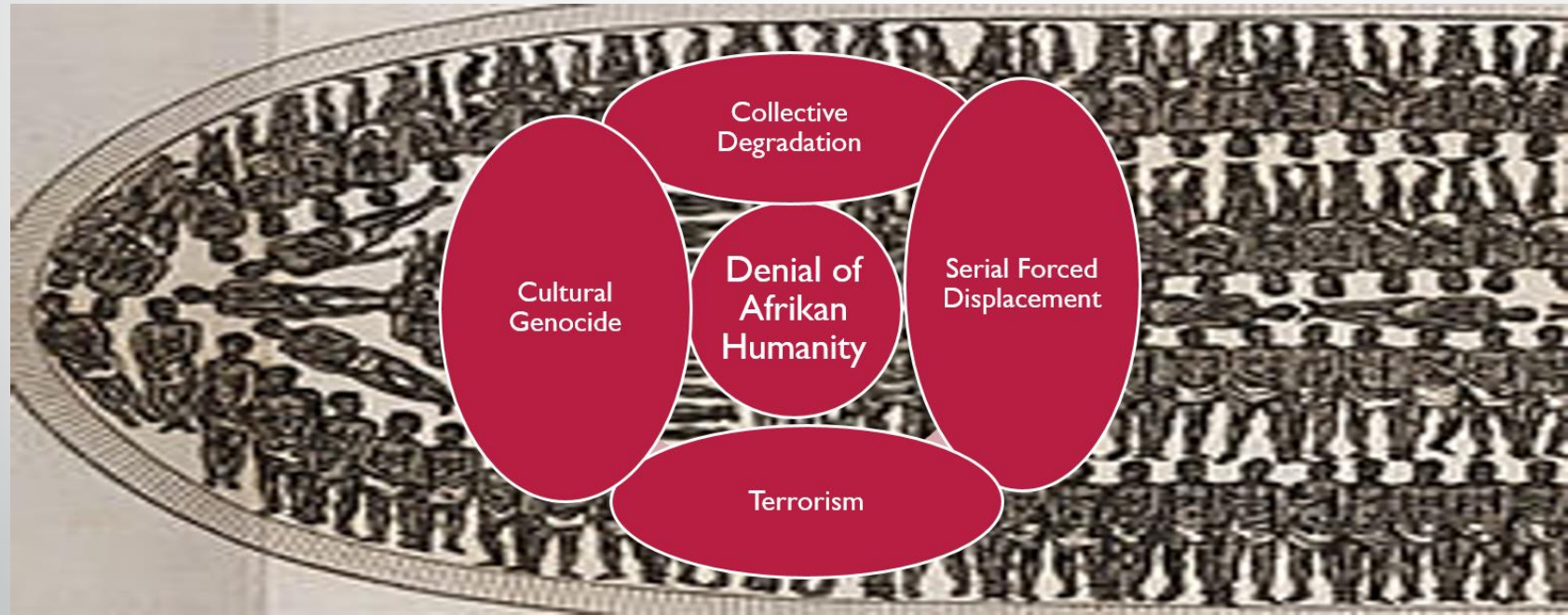
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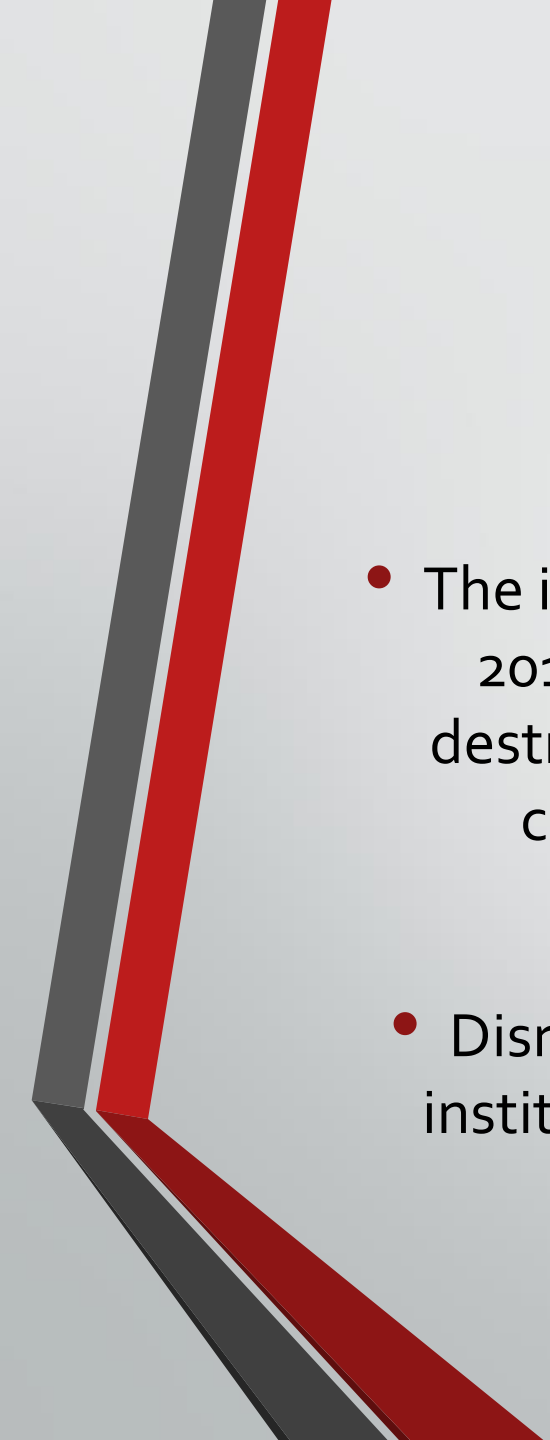


Maafa



Lifetime impact of aces trauma informed Oregon & RYSE





Serial forced displacement

- The impact of repetitive, coercive upheaval of groups (Fullilove & Wallace, 2011, which leads to root shock:..."the traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one's emotional ecosystem" by disrupting our connection to place – neighborhood, community, village, or nation
- Disruption of social support system, destruction of Black businesses and institutions, loss of ubuntu, increase in interpersonal & structural violence, increase in health disparities, decrease in political efficacy

Terroism

- Terrorism is “the systematic use of ‘terror’ to create horror, anxiety, fear or dismay that results in immobilization and insecurity” (Nobles, 2018)
- •Psychic Terrorism –“the systematic use of any act, feeling, belief, attitude, thought or condition that results in immobilization, destabilization and/or diminishment of one’s fundamental sense of security and safety by assaulting one’s consciousness and identity.” (Nobles, 2018)
- •It results in” damaging the human will and belief in one’s limitless possibility and potential.” (Nobles, 2018, p.6)
- •.Destruction of the sense of humanity, potential, and possibility thru processes of de-Africanization

Terrorism = Trauma

- Terrorism can be considered a form of racial trauma which has these effects (E. Turner):
- Increased vigilance and suspicion
- Increased sensitivity to threat
- Increased psychological and physiological symptoms
- Increased alcohol & drug usage
- Increased aggression
- Narrowing sense of time





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Credit: Bettmann

Resistance

- The interaction between self-determination and defiance
- Self-determination/kugichaculia – to name oneself, speak for oneself, create for oneself, and define oneself (Karenga, 1989)
- Defiance is intentional planning to achieve a better condition and ensure the achievement of individual and collective goals (Chioneso et al., 2020)
- Example – The Montgomery Bus Boycott; The March on Washington; Black Lives Matter, The Great Migration

Igbo landing trauma response or resistance



Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

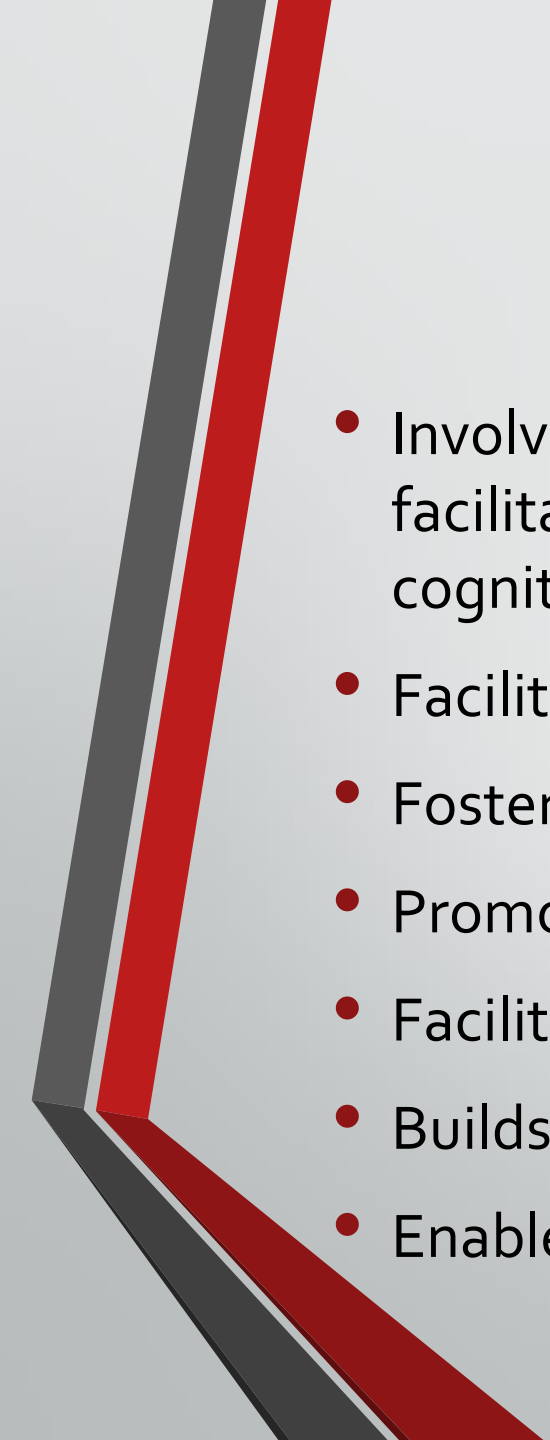
- Multigenerational trauma that exists when a population has experienced centuries of enslavement and continues to experience oppression and institutionalized racism. (DeGruy, 2005)
- - Vacant Esteem: Believing oneself to have little worth, based on societal view of your inferiority
- - Ever Present Anger: Response to the frustration of blocked goals and opportunities and continuous undermining of hopes and dreams
- - Racist Socialization: Adoption of the values of our oppressors; belief in superiority of whiteness & inferiority of blackness

Sankofa
“go back and fetch it”



Community healing through Storytelling

- Chioneso & colleagues (2020) identify the ways that storytelling facilitates community healing:
- Storytelling > connectedness > understanding, validate shared traumas, foster community bonds
- Storytelling > resistance > decreases in indifference, devaluation of self and community, & broken community ties
- Storytelling > collective memory
- Recall of historical traumas and triumphs
- Resistance reduces interpersonal distrust, historical amnesia, &...inaccurate personal stories and distorted community narratives



Storytelling

- Involves the process of “sharing one’s personal stories with others to facilitate reprocessing and reframing negative cognitions to positive cognitions” (Chioneso et al., 2020, p. 102)
- Facilitates resisting oppression
- Fosters healing
- Promotes spiritual communion
- Facilitates restoring cultural identity
- Builds a sense of community
- Enables challenging negative stories

Storytelling

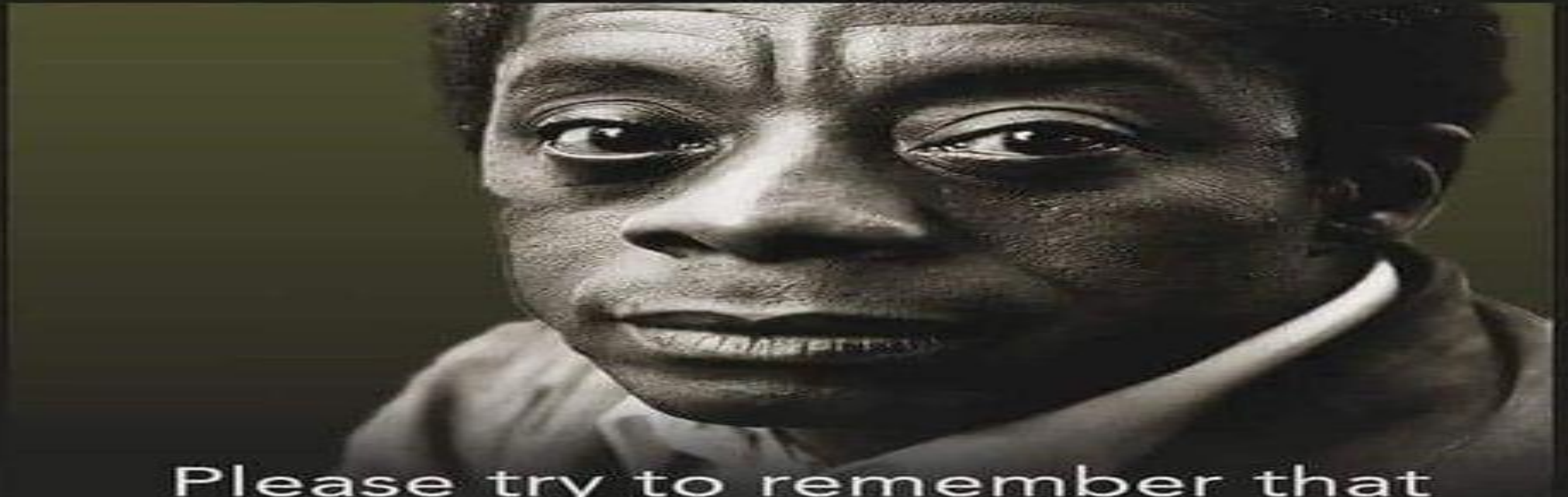
- Acknowledge the loss of our community
- Identify what was lost: sense of connection, relationships, homes, businesses, etc.
- Create rituals, monuments, etc. that honor our memory of what was lost
- In Montgomery, Alabama, the Equal Justice Initiative is placing markers in places where AA were lynched and collecting the dirt from these sites





Dr. Thema Bryant

- Professor of Psychology at Pepperdine
- 2023 President of the American Psychological Association



Please try to remember that what they believe, as well as what they do and cause you to endure does not testify to your inferiority, but to their inhumanity.

James Baldwin,
African American novelist, poet, playwright,
intellectual and social critic
(1924 — 1987)



If the children are not nurtured,
they will burn down the village
just to feel its warmth.

Afrikan Proverb

IN EVERLASTING MEMORY

OF THE ANGUISH OF OUR ANCESTORS.

MAY THOSE WHO DIED REST IN PEACE.

MAY THOSE WHO RETURN FIND THEIR ROOTS.

MAY HUMANITY NEVER AGAIN PERPETRATE

SUCH INJUSTICE AGAINST HUMANITY.

WE. THE LIVING VOW TO UPHOLD THIS.

11/03/2012



Dr. T. Bryant





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