

## Belonging

Acceptance of me, my difference  
and my competence

- **Embracing** my difference, my story, my culture
- **Belonging** internalizing my story

## Fitting In

Dependence on others'  
acceptance of my difference,  
competence

- **Shapeshifting** my difference, culture, **VOICE** to fit others narrative of me
- “internalizing hunter’s story

“

**Everybody has a powerful and important racial story . . .**

**“The Lion’s Story will Never Be Known As Long as the Hunter is the One to Tell It”**

African proverb

“

Some people  
when they hear  
your story  
contract.

others  
upon hearing  
expand.

And  
this is how you  
know

Nayyirah Waheed



# Racial Encounters

Past, present, or anticipated interactions that tax self-regulation of *emotions, physiology, cognitions* and *voice* (Harrell, 2000)

*Encounters* occur between and within individuals:

- Face-to-Face (FTF)
- Before, during, and after ITM (in the moment)
- Racial encounters are stressful & threatening





# Racial Threat Distorts Our Perceptions

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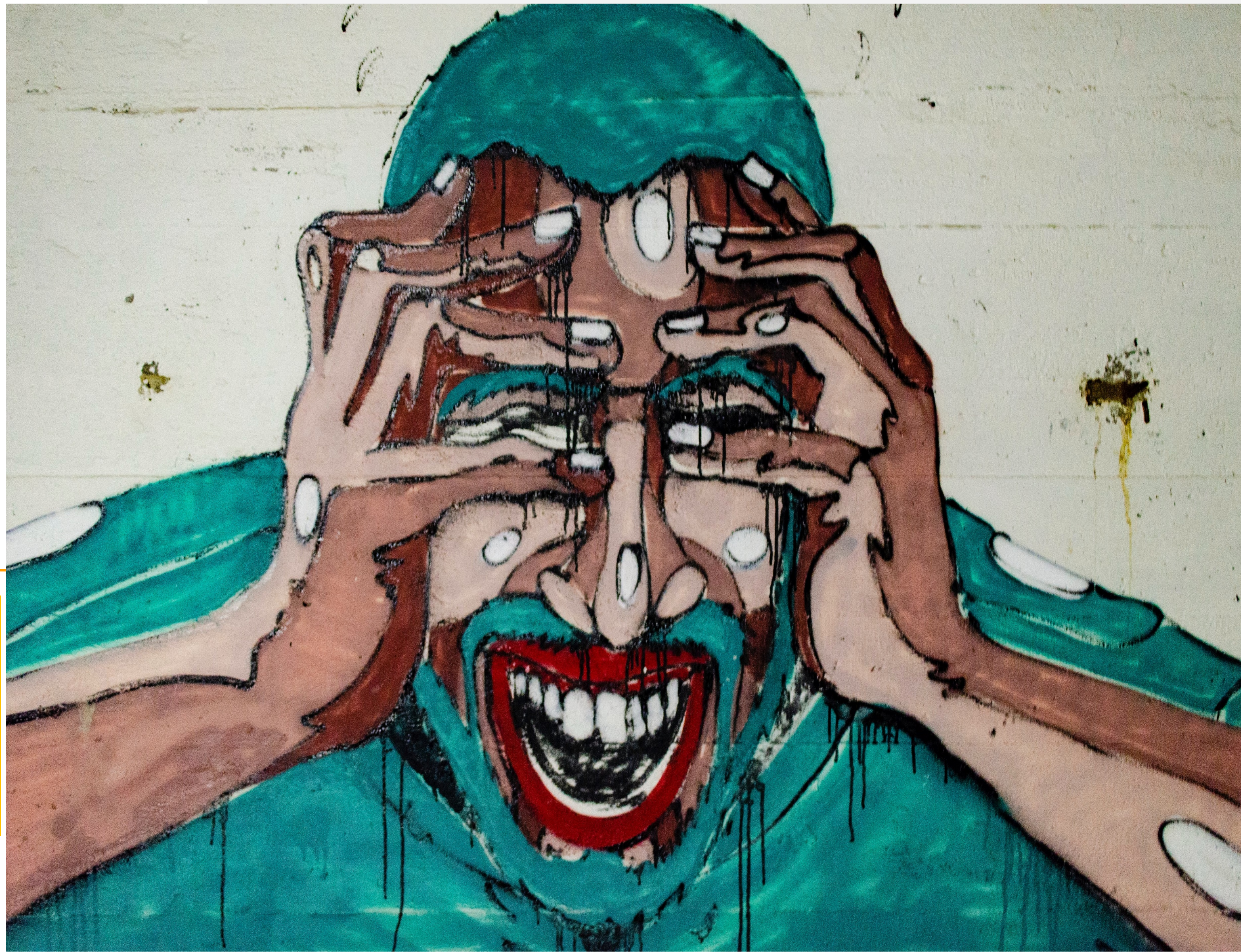
- “A Racing Mind” (Steele, 2011 )
- White Rage (Anderson, 2016)
- “Racial Battle Fatigue” (Smith et al, 2020)
- Perseveration of Past Racism (Utsey et al., 2013)
- Vigilance of Future Trauma (Hicken et al., 2019)
- Presumed Dangerous
- Larger & Blacker (Wilson et al, 2017)





# Racial Stress Harms our Health

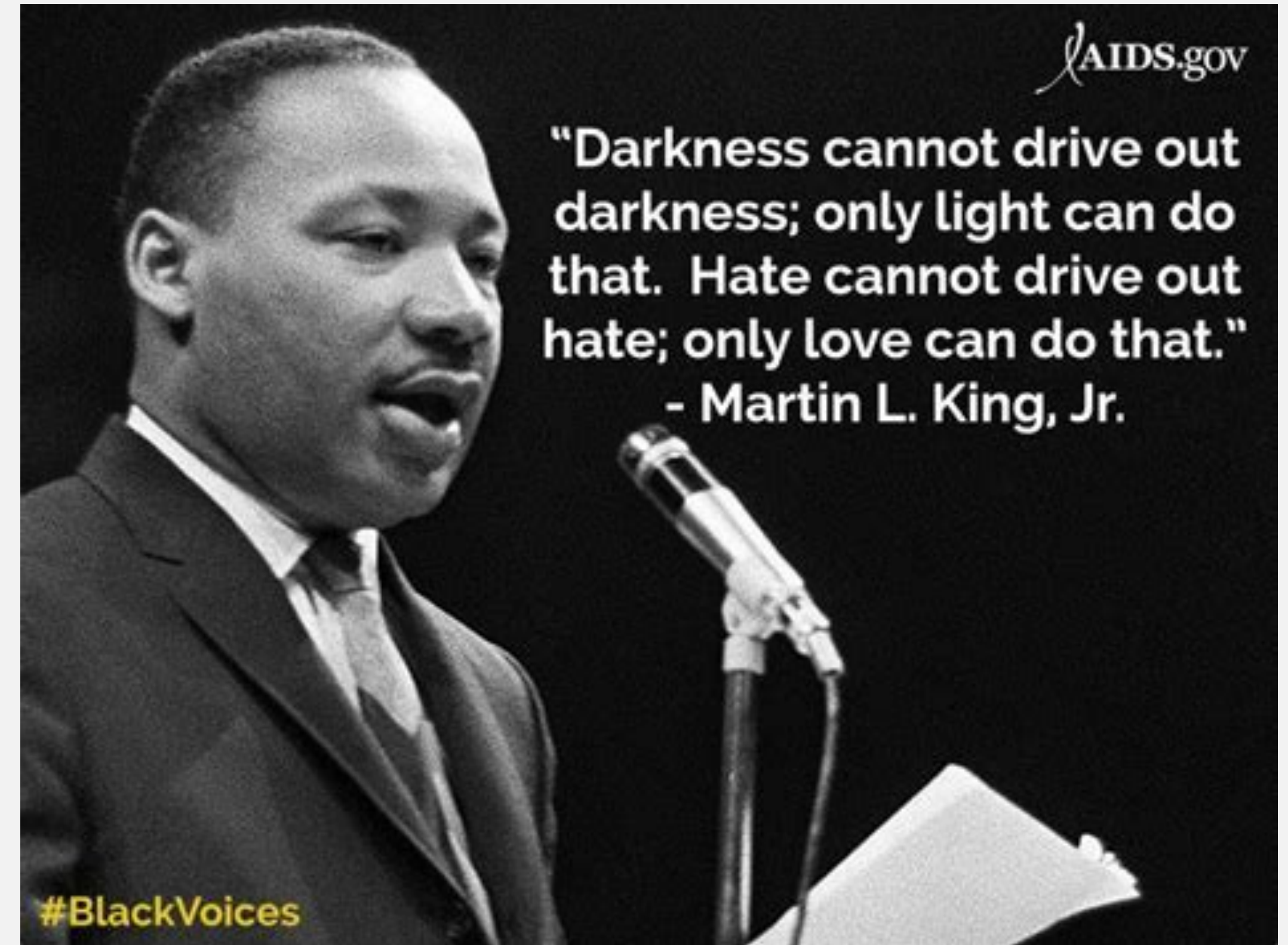
- **John Henryism** (James, 2016)
- **Cardiovascular Disease**
- **Breast Cancer in Black Women**
- **Poor Sleep Quality in Teens**





# Racial Stress harms our healing & healers

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# Racial Encounter Coping Appraisal and Socialization Theory (RECAST)

Anderson & Stevenson, 2019; Stevenson, 2014

↓ *RACIAL STRESS* → *RACIAL CONFIDENCE*

Racial socialization -Being prepared for racial hate  
reduces racial stress by improving racial confidence



# Benefits of *“THE TALK”* are linked to

- **Improved Thinking and Behavioral Competence in Preschoolers**
  - Caughy et al., 2002; Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011)
- **Greater Youth Self-Esteem, Anger Management, Racial Identity, & Academic Achievement in Youth & Adults**
  - (McGill, Hughes, Alicea, & Way, 2012; Stevenson, 1995; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009; Bannerjee, Harrell, & Johnson, 2011; Bowman & Howard, 1985; Neblett, Phillips, et al., 2006, Wang & Hughley, 2012; Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Murry, Berkel, Brody, Miller, & Chen, 2009)
- **Increased Parenting Competence and Reduction in Parental Racial Worries**
  - (Anderson, Jones, & Stevenson, 2021; Coard, et al., 2004; 2007; Fagan & Stevenson, 2002; McKay, et al., 2003)
- **Better Family Racial Communication**
  - (Anderson & Stevenson, 2019; Bentley-Edwards et al., 2020; Anderson, McKenny, Stevenson, 2019)

# Racial Literacy Skills

Stevenson, H. C. (2014). *Promoting racial literacy in schools: Differences that make a difference*. New York: Teachers College Press

Racial literacy is the ability to *read, recast and resolve* racially stressful encounters (RSE).



Reading



Recasting



Resolving



# Reading RSE:

*Notice & Appraise*

is the ability to:

- See “Racial Elephant in the Room”
- **Decode** verbal and nonverbal
- **Interpret** meaning accurately
  - Interactions, text, social media





# Recasting RSE

*Breathe & Reframe*

- The ability to
  - Reduce stress via mindfulness (CLCBE)
  - Positively reframe
  - Breathe





# CLCBE

is a mindfulness approach  
to help you **positively**  
**reframe racial threats.**  
(Stevenson, 2014).

## Calculate

What I feel & how much?  
(1-10)

Breathe

Exhale

## Locate

Where do I feel it?

## Communicate

Self-Talk & Memory?



# Resolving RSE

*Engage & Negotiate*

**“Resolving” racial encounters is the ability to:**

- Engage rather than ignore or run
- Negotiate to a healthy conclusion
- Assertively speak up
- Match Social Justice Beliefs-→Actions





# Racial Literacy Training Projects

- **Can We Talk Project:**
- **Prepare Teachers/Students to Resolve School Racial Conflict**
  - (Bentley-Edwards, Stevenson, et al., 2020)
- **Shape-Up Project:**
- **Prepare Barbers/Patrons to Restrain Retaliation & Unsafe Sex**
  - (Baker, et al, 2018; Stevenson, Jemmott, et al., 2021)
- **PLAAY Project:**
- **Prepare Coaches/Youth to Manage Stress In-The-Moment of Play**
  - Thomas et al., 2009; Cassidy & Stevenson, 2005; Stevenson, 2003; 2014)
- **EMBRace Project:**
- **Prepare Parent/Children to Build Racial Communication Skills**
  - Anderson, McKinney, & Stevenson, 2019; Anderson et al., 2018a; 2018b)

## **The Lion's Story Village:**

- **Prepare Professionals to Create Racial Climate Change**





# Sesame Street Racial Justice Initiative

<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/subtopics/dealing-with-racial-hurt/>





# Racial Literacy Take Home Points

1. Racial stress affects our bodies, feelings, thoughts
2. Racial threat impairs our perceptions, decisions, behaviors and relationships
3. Feeling threatened (fight, flight, or fright) is **HUMAN**
4. Avoidance → Unethical and **INCOMPETENT**
5. Racial stress is **observable/resolvable**, IF you face it
6. Seeking help, knowledge, & practice is **COURAGEOUS**
7. Racial literacy is not about **BLAME** but **PREPARATION**



Are you  
prepared?

**Fright, Flight, or Fight?**







So, What's Your  
Racial Story?



“The **lion’s story** will never be known as long as the hunter is the one to tell it.”

*-West African Proverb*

***Tell your story, heal the village***