



Racism

A Vocabulary Discussion

January 2021



Words Matter

To be part of meaningful change – it is important to expand one's understanding of the fundamental meaning of key concepts and language used to define a complex situation.

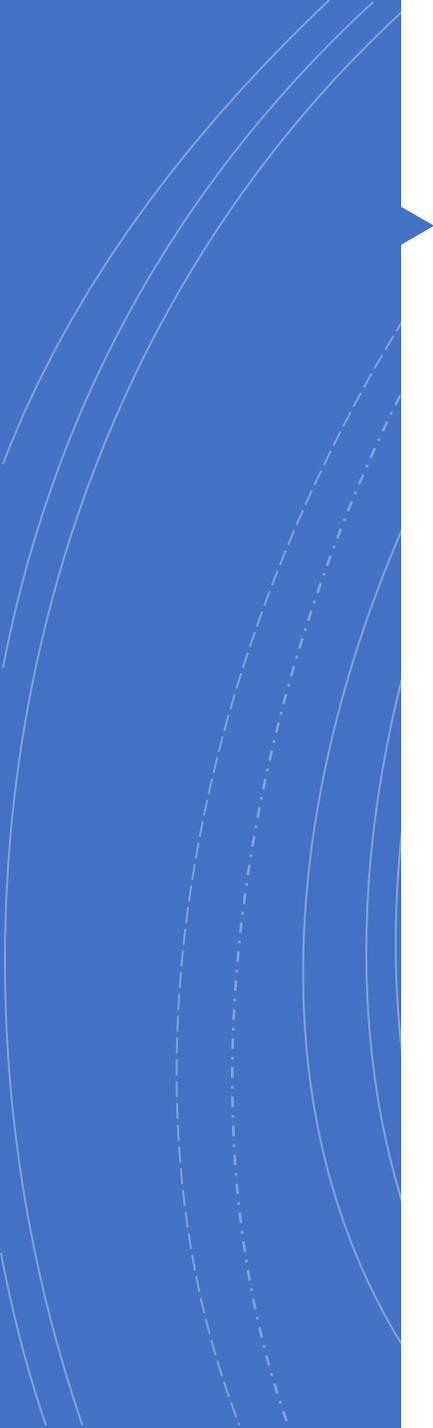


Meaning & Context

In the case of racism and in light of recent events associated with the multiple deaths of people of color in the US and Canada, as Rotarians, familiarizing yourself with key terminology is a positive step forward to being part of the meaningful change.

Starting Place

- **BIPOC:** A acronym for Black, Indigenous and People of Color.
- **WOC:** An acronym for Women of Color.
- **Indigenous:** People and/or things that live or come from a particular region or environment.
 - For e.g. Indigenous people Indigenous Languages, Indigenous culture, Indigenous plants.
- **Social Justice:** Equal/equitable access to wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.
- **Microaggression(s):** A comment or action that subtly and perhaps unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.
- **Prejudice:** An unfair (and potentially) harmful feeling, dislike, or judgement against someone or something.
- **Marginalized:** To put someone in a powerless position.
- **Discrimination:** The action or practice of treating other people unfairly.
- **Bias/Biased:** A belief that some people, ideas, etc., are better and treating others unfairly as a result.
- **White Privilege** – A set of advantages and/or immunities from which white people benefit on a daily basis beyond those common to all others.
- **White Fragility** - A phrase coined by author Dr. Robin DiAngelo as “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.”
- **BLM** - Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a decentralized political and social movement advocating for non-violent civil disobedience in protest against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against black people



Why is this important?

Racism is a complex issue with many dimensions, contexts, implications and impacts.

Meaningful change is built solidly upon the shoulders of acknowledgement and awareness.

We are all responsible for that change.

Conceptual Context

Racism

- Racism differs from individual racial prejudice (thoughts and feelings) and from racial discrimination (actions, however slight, including microaggressions) in the historical accumulation and use of **institutional power** and authority to support the prejudice and to enforce **systematically** discriminatory behaviours with far-reaching effects.

Conceptual Context

Systemic Racism

- The term “systemic racism” represents the structures of power and oppression built over centuries in Canada (and elsewhere) that enforce the racial hierarchies that confer benefits on certain people at the expense of others.

Conceptual Context

Anti-Indigenous Racism and Anti-Black Racism

- In Canada, anti-Indigenous racism and anti-Black racism refer to racism which has arisen in the context of the colonization and settlement of Turtle Island; their manifestations are inextricably intertwined with Canada's history and continue to the present day.

Conceptual Context

Non-Racist

- The term “non-racist” is used by some people who perceive themselves as operating outside of the existing system of racism. They assert that they have no prejudices and thus are incapable of discrimination. This is a false presumption of neutrality.

Conceptual Context

Anti-Racism

- Anti-racism is the active process of choosing to challenge not only one's own biases and prejudices, but to engage in the work of actively dismantling racism as a system of oppression.
- The term “non-racist” masks racism. Anti-racism represents active engagement in the work of “unmaking” our own prejudices and working to end racism as a structure of oppression.

Conceptual Context

Everyday Racism

- Everyday racism involves elements such as tone, demeanour, language, a gaze, forms of surveillance, hostility and differential treatment and include taken-for-granted ways of seeing, thinking and acting and have become so standardized that they are usually not recognized as manifestations of racism.

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity - Diversity, inclusion and equity are related terms, but are not interchangeable.

- **Diversity** is a legal requirement under the *Employment Equity Act*, which is intended to protect against the exclusion of four designated groups in the workplace – women, “Aboriginal” persons (this term is the language of the *Act* and not that of the *Writer*), persons with a disability, and visible minorities.

Sourced from - *Rebuilding the Foundation* – pgs. 21-22 - CMHR

Conceptual
Context

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity - Diversity, inclusion and equity are related terms, but are not interchangeable.

- **Inclusion** refers to equal participation and treatment within institutions and, more broadly, within society. In this way inclusion involves more than mere physical presence or representation of members of marginalized groups. An institution which is representationally diverse but not diverse in its practices is not a truly inclusive workplace.

Sourced from - Rebuilding the Foundation – pgs. 21-22 - CMHR

Conceptual
Context

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity - Diversity, inclusion and equity are related terms, but are not interchangeable.

- **Equity** occurs where the “other” is not merely incorporated into existing workplace structures, cultures and practices, but where the “other” also is imbued with *the power to affect* the structure, culture and practices of the organization. The term “equality” refers to formal equality but does not necessarily translate from fairness in principle into fairness in actuality. In contrast, “equity” refers to equality in fact and substance, where the effects of oppression have been ameliorated.

Sourced from - Rebuilding the Foundation – pgs. 21-22 - CMHR

Conceptual Context

What do we think?

... and where do we go
from here?

