

Practicing Self-Care and Survival

CYNTHIA E. CHEN, PH.D.

LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST

CU DENVER STUDENT AND COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER

#RacialTraumalsReal



Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Racial Wellness Toolbox	Describe what you are like when you are managing and responding to racism in a healthy manner.
Daily Maintenance of Centeredness in the Face of Racism	List connections or tools that help you maintain your centeredness in the face of racism. Such items can include, but are not limited to: a) Review Racial Identity Theory (see Helms); b) Connect with friends who are equally or better able to engage in conversations about racial awareness; c) Engage in prayer, spiritual practices or use of mantras; d) Engage in activism; and e) Practice self management, such as healthy eating, exercise, and favorite activities that help you feel centered.
Racial Trauma Triggers and Response Plan	List items or experiences that tend to result in racial trauma symptoms (e.g., anger, isolation, sadness). After each item or experience identify a specific centeredness response (e.g., calling a friend, writing in your journal, activism).
Racial Trauma Early Warning Signs & Response Plan	List early warning signs that you are experiencing racial trauma (e.g., body aches, fatigue, anxiety, depression, difficulty sleeping) and related ways of coping from your Daily Maintenance of Centeredness (item #2) coping skills list.
Acute Racial Trauma & Response Plan	List signs that you are experiencing acute racial trauma (e.g., hypervigilance; heightened emotional experiences, such as depression, anxiety, and anger, which compromise your ability to engage in chosen activities of work, sleep, or school). Identify an action plan for each item on your list.
Crisis Planning	Ask yourself how you would know if you were experiencing a crisis due to racism (e.g., thoughts of harm to others and/or self; inability to care for self and/or others; acute racial trauma symptoms that last longer than a specified duration). List a person(s) or additional resources to contact in the event you experience such a crisis.
Post Crisis Planning	List ways of reconnecting with yourself and your communities to regain centeredness in the face of racism.

http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/schools/lsoe_sites/isprc/pdf/racialtraumalsrealManuscript.pdf

© 2015 Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture All Rights Reserved



Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 1
Identify Your
Signs of
Centeredness

Describe what you feel like when you are responding to racism in a healthy manner (How do you feel emotionally? How do you feel physically?).

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 2:
Daily
Maintenance of
Centeredness in
the Face of
Racism

Describe some ways you can stay grounded, healthy, and caring of yourself, when encountering racism (i.e., “Centeredness Strategies”). Examples: a) Review Racial Identity Theory (see Helms); b) Connect with friends who are equally or better able to engage in conversations about racial awareness; c) Engage in prayer, spiritual practices, meditation, or use of mantras; d) Engage in activism; and e) Practice self-management, such as healthy eating, exercise, journaling, and favorite activities that help you feel centered and grounded.

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 3: Racial Trauma Triggers and Response Plan

When do you experience racial trauma? List types of experiences that tend to result in racial trauma symptoms (e.g., anger, isolation, sadness). After each experience, identify a specific Centeredness Strategy (i.e., RRP Item # 2) that you can use to help you cope.

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 4: Racial Trauma Early Warning Signs & Response Plan

What does it feel like when you encounter racial trauma? List early warning signs that you are experiencing racial trauma (e.g., body aches, fatigue, anxiety, irritability, depression, difficulty sleeping) and identify Centeredness Strategies (i.e., RRP Item # 2) you can use to combat your symptoms.

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 5: Acute Racial Trauma & Response Plan

List signs that you are experiencing acute racial trauma (e.g., hypervigilance; heightened emotional experiences, such as depression, anxiety, and anger, which compromise your ability to engage at work or school, or to sleep). Identify an action plan to cope with your symptoms using Centeredness Strategies (e.g., meet with a mental health provider or spiritual leader, meet with an activist group).

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 6: Crisis Planning

Ask yourself, how would you know if you were experiencing a crisis due to racism (e.g., thoughts of harming others and/or yourself; inability to care for self and/or others; acute racial trauma symptoms that last longer than a specified duration). List a person(s) or additional resources to contact in the event you experience such a crisis.

Racism Recovery Plan Steps

Step 7:
Post Crisis
Planning

List ways of reconnecting with yourself and your communities to regain your sense of centeredness in the face of racism.

To read the manuscript:

<https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/lynch-school/sites/isprc/isprc-advisory-board.html>

