"What can I do?": Empowering allies to address a public health crisis.

Shani Fleming, MSHS, MPH, PA-C

Diane Bruessow, MPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA

Deanna Bridge Najera, MPAS, MS, PA-C, DFAAPA

HEALTH EQUITY IS ALWAYS THE GOAL!

"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

"There are so many ways of being despicable it quite makes one's head spin. But the way to be really despicable is to be contemptuous of other people's pain."

-James Baldwin

Disclosure

The presenters have no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to this presentation.

Views presented reflect the presenters own opinions and do not represent any employers or organization with which they are affiliated

Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Explore critical self-examination *and actions* needed to confront racism and other structural barriers in PA practice

2. Discuss barriers, solutions, and strategies for white PA professionals to engage in anti-racism activities *with their colleagues and patients*

3. Cultivate and maintain an equitable and just environment for all PAs and patients

ARS Question: When I observe stereotype and bias in conversation, I feel confident speaking up without shame or blame

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Racism is a Public Health Crisis

"Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call "race"), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources."

-- Camara Phyllis Jones, MD, MPH, PhD
Past President, American Public Health Association

"AAPA recognizes that racism, in its systemic, structural, institutional, and interpersonal forms, is an ongoing urgent threat to public health, the advancement of health equity, and excellence in the delivery of medical care. AAPA affirms its commitment to anti-racism values, defined as the intent to change institutional culture, policies, practices, and procedures to remove systemic, structural, institutional, and interpersonal racism. AAPA supports the elimination of all forms of racism." (HP-8740, 2020)

"AAPA opposes all forms of racism." (HP-8720, 2021)

-- American Academy of PAs

Definitions

- Anti-Racism

- Allyship

- Bystander vs. Upstander

Racial Identity Development

Contact
- Unaware and uninformed about racism, prejudice, discrimination, and privilege

Disintegration
- Naivete around racism is shattered

Reintegration
- Awareness of racism causes cognitive conflict; retreats into comfort and acceptance of own racial group

Pseudo-independence
- Acknowledgement of the realities of racism; but believe is POC who should change

Immersion/Emersion
- Focus on letting go of one's own racist attitudes and actively fighting the racist attitudes of others

Autonomy
- Understands that racism is connected with other forms of oppression and works to address all forms of oppression

Helms, J. E. (1997). Toward a model of White racial identity development. *College student development and academic life: Psychological, intellectual, social and moral issues*, 49-66.
Johnston-Guerrero, M (2016) Embracing the Messiness: Critical and Diverse Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Development https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20174

Reflection

Thoughts?

What is your earliest memory regarding race?

- It may be when you first recognized the existence of race, or it may be when you first recognized your racial identity

Your individual identity develops over time. Your stage of development and how you view yourself will inform how you interpret, inform, and interact in various situations

https://uh.edu/lgbtq/resources/_files/action-continuum.pdf
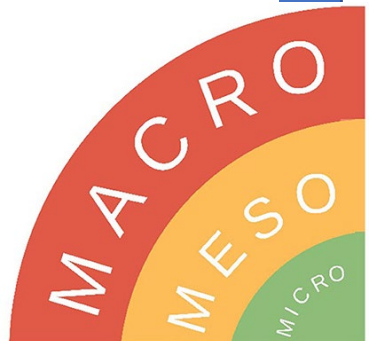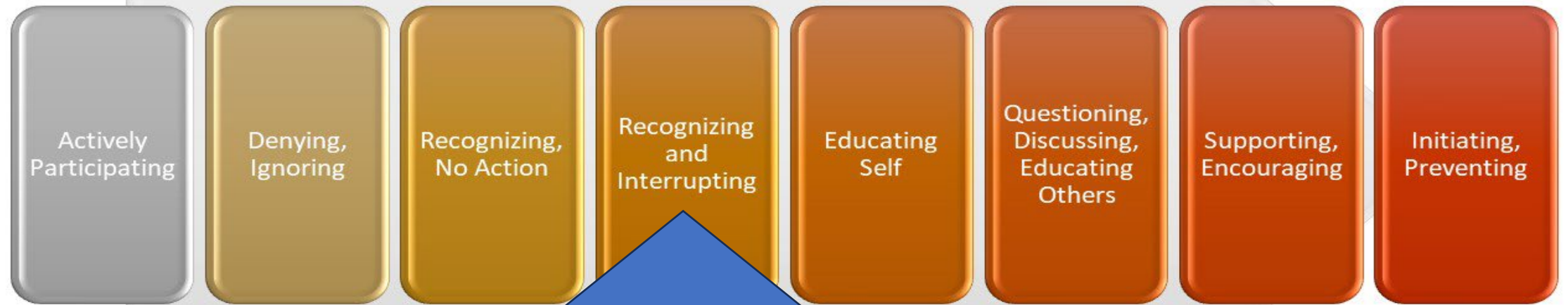
Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact:
"I know you mean well, but the impact is..."
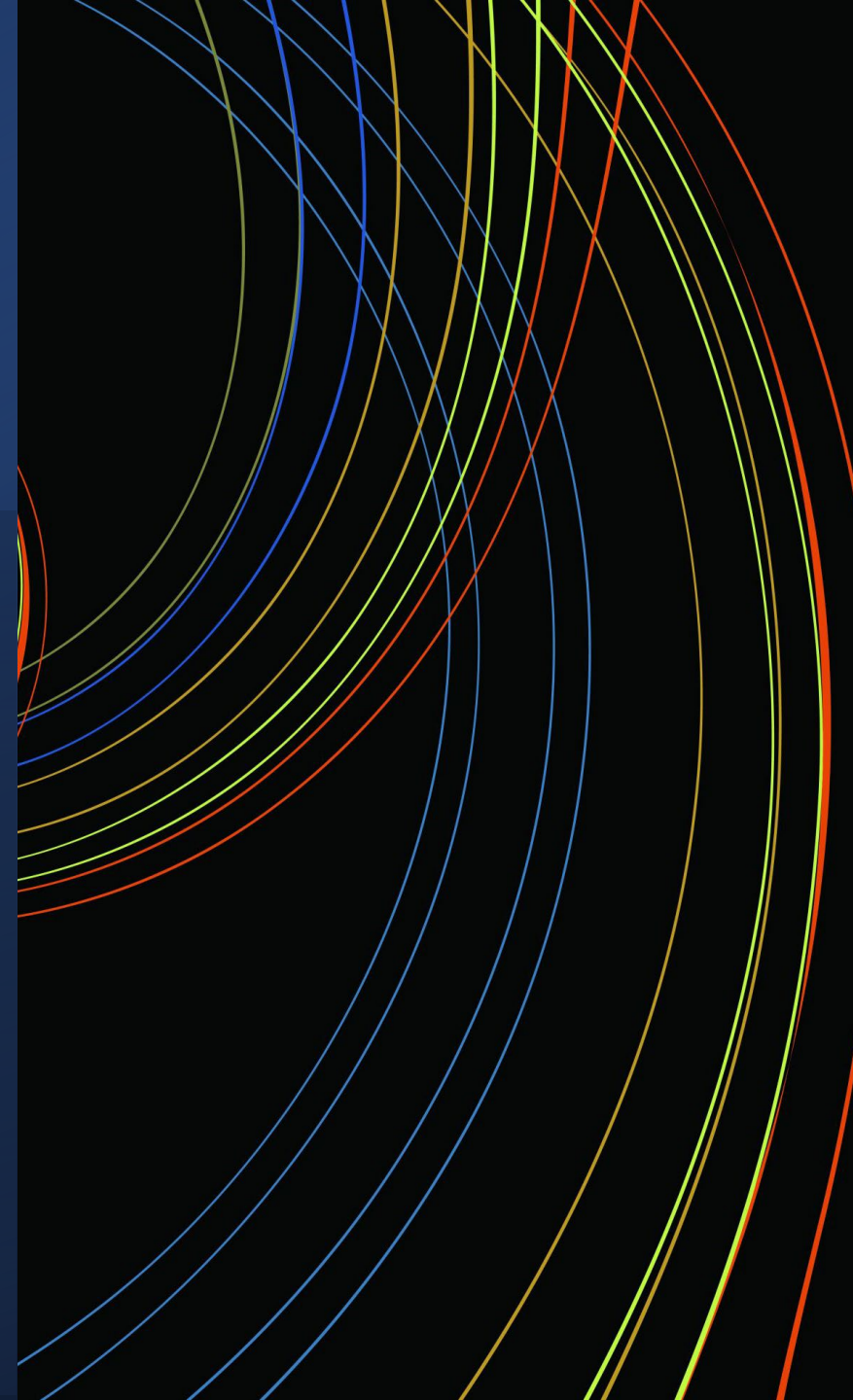
Ask a Question:
"What do you mean?"

Interrupt and Redirect:
"Let's not go there."

Broaden to Universal Human Behavior:
"I think that applies to everyone."

Make It Individual
"Are you thinking of someone in particular?"

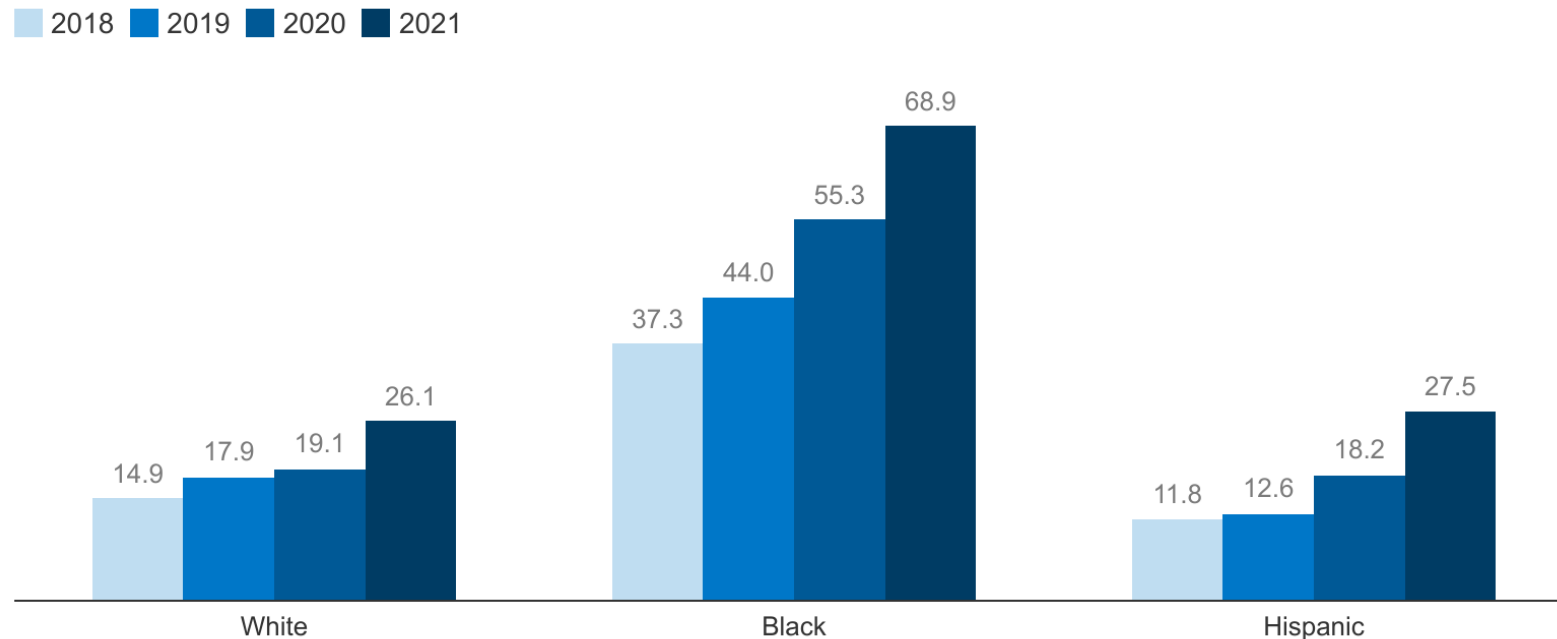# Interruption Examples

Scenarios

Scenario

Meeting Agenda Item: Addressing Racial Health Disparities and Maternal Mortality

Your colleague says, "***They keep pushing this DEI stuff at meetings! I treat all patients the same.***"

Maternal Mortality (per 100,000 births) by Race/Ethnicity, 2018-2021

■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

White
- 2018: 14.9
- 2019: 17.9
- 2020: 19.1
- 2021: 26.1

Black
- 2018: 37.3
- 2019: 44.0
- 2020: 55.3
- 2021: 68.9

Hispanic
- 2018: 11.8
- 2019: 12.6
- 2020: 18.2
- 2021: 27.5

Reflection

Thoughts?

a) In this case is the micro aggression again the PA, the patients or both?

b) Do you have to have the same opinion as the speaker in order to consider this a micro aggression?

c) Which of intervention techniques might been used?

d) Imagine you observed this interaction in your current role? What factors would influence your ability to interrupt it?

e) How might such comments impact the whole culture/climate of the environment?

Scenario

A hospitalist PA whose hospital shift is just starting is receiving the sign-out from another PA whose shift is ending. One of the patients is a 50-year-old woman who is a fall risk. Your colleague says, "She has several things going for her," he said. He rattled off several protective factors: "she is a nonsmoker, she is fairly young," after a pause he adds, "and she is African-American."

You ask, "And by that, you mean …?"

He replies, "Well, African-Americans have great bone density. I mean, some things don't work in their favor, like sickle cell and diabetes. But they have really strong bones, so that is at least one thing going for them, genetically speaking."

Reflection

Thoughts?
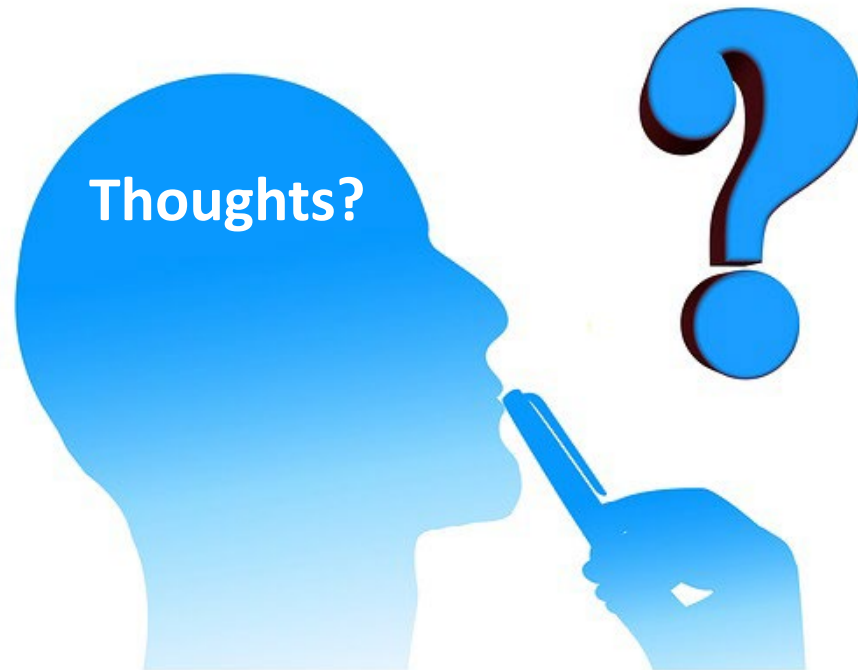
a) In this case, is the microaggression (s) against the PA receiving the sign-out, the patient, or both?

b) Do you have to have the same identities as the patient in order to consider this a microaggression?

c) Which of the micro intervention techniques could have been used?

d) Now imagine you observed this interaction in your current role as a PA or PA student. What factors would influence your ability to interrupt this?

Sustainability:
Action Plan
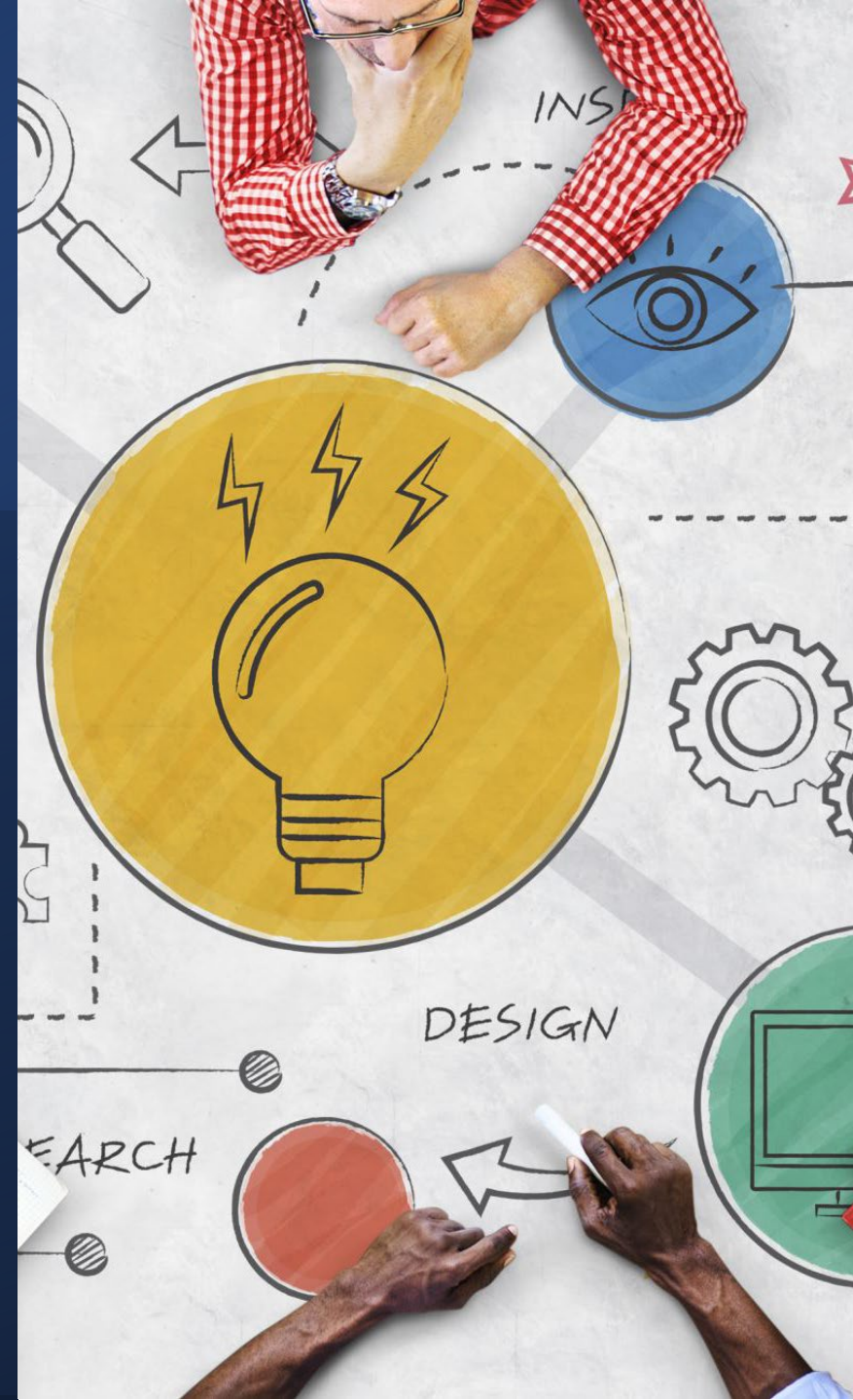
Becoming part of the solution

SILENCE

PRIVILEGE

EXPERIENCE OF THE OPPRESSED

What are some ways that you personally can contribute to being part of the solution without having to be asked?

- Take a stand against injustice. Take risks.

- Be strategic. Attach the source of power.

- Support the leadership of people of color

- Don't do it alone. Work together. Build support. Establish networks, work with established groups

- Doing nothing is a tacit approval and collusion with the abuse