Racial trauma is a powerful organizing principle in the lives and souls of black folks. There is virtually no dimension of the lives of black people that is free of the residuals of slavery and racialized trauma. At its core, racialized trauma is a type of societal/interpersonal violence that lacerates the spirit, scars the soul, and punctures the psyche of black people, while also serving as a resounding source of determination and fortitude. It leaves those who are infected and affected by it with pervasive wounds, especially to the spirit that are not easily measured, codified, or acknowledged.

Despite its pervasive effects, racialized trauma is rarely considered a viable contributing factor to the everyday difficulties experienced by the racially oppressed. In the rare instances where it is acknowledged, it is often dismissed as an excuse or convenient crutch for those interested in abdicating accountability and responsibility for their suffering.

This address will provide an in-depth analysis of racialized trauma and its multifaceted effects on the souls of black folks. Special attention will be devoted to the subtle, often invisible and undetected ways in which it disrupts individual, familial and community functioning while also potentially serving as a source of strength, resilience, and resistance. Implications for our work as helpers, healers and advocates for social justice will be discussed.

Learning Objectives: Participants will be able to
- Identify three strengths of Black Families
- Identify three strategies for effectively engaging and treating racial trauma
- Implement strategies for talking about race in treatment

1 CE credit
Instructional Level: Intermediate
Healing Racial Trauma
Kenneth V. Hardy, PhD

Racial trauma is an inescapable by-product of persistent exposure to repressive circumstances that emotionally, psychologically, and physically devastate one’s sense of self while simultaneously depleting one’s strategies for coping. It is a life altering and debilitating experience that affects countless numbers of people of color over multiple generations. Unfortunately, the failure to consider the interrelationship between racial oppression and trauma limits our ability to work effectively with the People of Color who live in the midst of sociocultural conditions that are injurious to their psyches and souls. Even when clinical work is trauma informed, it rarely devotes adequate attention to racial oppression and the pervasive trauma associated with it.

This workshop will provide a comprehensive overview of the anatomy of racial trauma and the debilitating hidden wounds associated with it. Special attention will be devoted to highlighting trauma informed interventions and strategies that centralize race and racial oppression in every facet of the treatment process. Relevant Self of the Therapist issues that may facilitate and/or impede the treatment process will be explored.

Learning Objectives: Participants will be able to
1. Use metaphor as a tool to uncover hidden wounds of racial trauma
2. Use effective racial self-disclosure as a strategy for promoting emotional safety within the therapeutic process
3. Identify at least two Self of the Therapist issues that may be both an asset and impediment to working with the racially traumatized

1.5 CE credits
Instructional Level: Intermediate
COVID-19 Pandemic and Asian American Mental Health

Hyeouk ‘Chris’ Hahm, PhD, LCSW

Individuals of Asian descent in the US have long been facing stressors and barriers to a healthy identity. Asian Americans often feel and are perceived as “perpetual foreigners,” subtly yet inevitably affecting their perception of themselves. Additionally, the “model minority” stereotype portrays all Asian Americans as successful and flourishing in their careers and personal lives without mental health problems. Conversely, there is actually a vast range of SES and evidence of mental health struggles within this heterogeneous population.

In this presentation, Dr. Hahm will present the prevalence of COVID-19-related discrimination and the extent to which COVID-19-related discrimination is associated with mental health symptoms among Asians and Asian American (A/AA) young adults during the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic. We used data from the COVID-19 Adult Resilience Experience Study (CARES). Sixty-eight percent of A/AA young adults reported that they or their family have experienced COVID-19-related discrimination and approximately 15% of respondents reported verbal or physical assaults. After controlling for covariates including predisposing factors, lifetime discrimination, and pre-existing mental health diagnoses, COVID-19-related discrimination was significantly associated with an increased level of symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but not of anxiety or depression. Our study results suggest that COVID-19-related discrimination may contribute to PTSD symptoms among A/AA young adults. This presentation will also include the suicide prevention intervention, the Asian Women’s Actions for Resilience and Empowerment (AWARE) intervention funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). AWARE is an 8-week group psychotherapy that includes weekly facilitated sessions by mental health clinicians utilizing a culturally grounded psychotherapy model—incorporating relevant cultural, familial, and gender aspects—with a focus on healing, CBT, and mindfulness practices. Complementing sessions, texts of “AWARE Stories,” are sent to participants daily to encourage Asian American women participants in their process of healing.

Learning Objectives: Participants will be able to
1. Describe racism against Asians—both pre- and during COVID-19—and the struggles that Asian Americans go through.
2. Explain the goals and efficacy of the AWARE intervention.

1.5 CE credits
Instructional Level: Introductory
In 2020, the focus of the American conversation about race, culture, and racial trauma has been at the forefront, alongside the talk about the covid-19 pandemic. But the issues of social unrest due to systemic racism in America is nothing new. As supervisors in the field of community-based mental health, it is imperative that we move beyond just cultural competence. We have to move towards being more responsive and impactful in our supervision and create a space where our staff and students can talk about how their culture, the culture of those they serve, and the culture of those they work for impact the work in many ways. From how we diagnose, to what services we offer, to the policies we create in our systems, culture is the underlying thread that runs through these aspects of what we do. This workshop will build context for why this is so critical now more than ever and will offer concrete steps you can use at your next supervision meeting.

Learning Objectives: Participants will be able to
- Define prejudice, racism, bias, and anti-racism and how this is demonstrated in mental health practice, policy, and service delivery
- Define the impact of culture in the: staff-family dynamic, staff-staff dynamic, and the supervisor-staff dynamic
- Use trauma-informed principles to supervise staff using a culturally responsive approach

1.5 CE credits
Instructional Level: Intermediate
Historical Persecution, Jewish Tradition, and Modern Antisemitism: Hurt and Healing in the Jewish Community

Jeremy Lichtman, PsyD & Abraham J. “AJ” Berkovitz, PhD

Antisemitism has been on the rise in America, increasing the anxieties among the American Jewish population regarding their safety and acceptance by the dominant culture. These anxieties have been a persistent feature of the Jewish experience—one that history has, repeatedly, demonstrated to be justified (Lipstadt, 2019). This workshop examines the role of antisemitism in inculcating feelings of insecurity in contemporary Jewish populations and provides tools to use this knowledge to improve cultural competency when working with Jewish clients.

It begins by exploring two forces that encourage Jews to view antisemitic rhetoric as an almost inevitable harbinger of physical harm and exile. The first is the historical record, which demonstrates that the demonization of Jews and Judaism often leads to persecution, expulsion, and death (Gager, 1985). The second is the Jewish tradition, which embeds these catastrophes into collective memory and often ritualizes them (Yerushalmi, 2002). This historical lens is then applied to the current state of antisemitism in America, focusing specifically on the impact of modern antisemitism on the mental health of the Jewish population. Finally, professionals will learn strategies to apply this insight clinically, thereby fostering a stronger therapeutic rapport when working with Jewish clients.

Learning Objectives: Participants will be able to
1. Describe historical instances in which antisemitic rhetoric resulted in violence and how the Jewish tradition understands these events.
2. Describe how instances of historical trauma, Jewish tradition, and current antisemitism impact mental health.
3. List ways in which professionals can improve cultural competency when working with Jewish clients.

1.5 CE credits
Instructional Level: Introductory