



Glossary for Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative Selected Terms

Bias: Prejudice against or in favor of an individual or group, usually based on attributes like race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

- **Explicit bias:** Conscious attitudes or stereotypes that shape our actions. Explicit biases lead us to discriminate against someone based on that person's identity.
- **Implicit Bias:** Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that shape our actions. Implicit biases begin to develop at a very early age through exposure to media, schools, government, religious institutions and our families and friends. Our conscious beliefs and statements do not necessarily reflect our implicit biases.

Racism: The belief that members of different races possess characteristics or abilities specific to those races. The goal of racism is to treat people better or worse based on the supposed inferiority or superiority of their races.

- **Individual racism:** Pre-judgment, bias or stereotypes about an individual or group, based on race.
- **Institutional racism:** Organizational programs, policies or procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.
- **Structural Racism:** Racism that plays out across multiple, interlocking institutions in a context of racialized historical and cultural conditions. Structural racism leads to negative outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities.

Internalized Racial Oppression: The acceptance of and acting out of an inferior definition of self, given by the oppressor, is rooted in the historical designation of one's race. Over many generations, this process of disempowerment and disenfranchisement expresses itself in self-defeating behaviors.

Internalized Racial Superiority: The acceptance of and acting out of a superior definition is rooted in the historical designation of one's race. Over many generations, this process of empowerment and access expresses itself as unearned privileges, access to institutional power and invisible advantages based upon race.

Anti-Racism is strategies, theories, actions, and practices that challenge and counter racism, inequalities, prejudices, and discrimination based on race.

Anti-Oppression: The strategies, theories, actions and practices that actively challenge systems of oppression on an ongoing basis in one's daily life and in social justice/change work. Anti-oppression work seeks to recognize the oppression that exists in our society and attempts to mitigate its effects and eventually equalize the power imbalance in our communities. Oppression operates at different levels (from individual to institutional to cultural) and so anti-oppression must as well.