

Resources for Anti-racism in Coaching in Canada eLearning module

Prepared by IDEAS Research Lab, University of Toronto, December 16, 2021

Janelle Joseph, Alex I. McKenzie and Shalom Brown

Terms and definitions

Active allyship - Privileged individuals who consistently take a stand in the fight against racism, right alongside people who face racism. Examples of sustained actions include: (1) listening to, making space for, and honoring what racialized communities say they want, (2) using privilege to educate and talk to others about antiracism transformations that acknowledge current complex systems of racism, (3) avoiding asking people who experience discrimination to provide teachings, (4) educating oneself through publicly available anti-racist, Indigenous, and bias resources, (5) hiring racialized people, (6) and seeking to de-centre White (stopping the practice of making White people's needs and ideas the priority) as a norm. For more information on allyship, visit: <https://socialwork.tulane.edu/blog/allyship>

Anti-Indigenous racism - False assumptions about and oppression against Indigenous people and communities. Indigenous land, culture, language and ways of being are continuously devalued and erased.

Anti-Indigenous racism in sport - Many participants and coaches work, practise and play without having to navigate racism at the individual and institutional levels, or to think about Indigenous erasure. In sport, this includes racist stereotypes against Indigenous participants and coaches, racist mascots and perpetuation of stereotypes of Indigenous people as violent, and racist exclusions and underrepresentation in leadership positions.

Anti-racism - Taking proactive measures to fight racial inequity. Anti-racism acknowledges the existence of systemic racism, and actively confronts unequal power dynamics between groups and structures that maintain systemic racism. Anti-racism also involves consistently assessing structures, policies and programs to ensure they're fair and equitable for all people.

BIPOC - This acronym stands for Black, Indigenous and People of colour. BIPOC became a more widely used acronym following the Black Lives Matter movement.

Calls to Action - Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission generated 94 Calls to Action to advance the process of reconciliation. The following 3 are specific to sport and speak to coaching practices: public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes (number 87), long-term Aboriginal athlete development, support and funding for the North American Indigenous Games (number 88), and national sports policies, anti-racism awareness programs, and initiatives that are culturally relevant and inclusive of include Aboriginal peoples (number 90).

Cis-gender (sometimes cissexual or shortened to cis) - A person whose gender identity corresponds with their sex assigned at birth. An example is a person who is assigned female at birth and identifies as a woman. The opposite of cis-gender is **transgender**.

Colonialism - Nations gaining full or partial political control over another nation, occupying their lands with settlers, and economically exploiting the land and people. This system is the foundation of Canada and still operates today. Colonialism is directly linked to systemic racism as it labels people based on racial categories used to justify exploitation.

Counterstories - A method used by Black and Indigenous communities to expose, analyze and challenge narrow and single-perspective accounts of histories and knowledges. Counterstories make space for multiple and nuanced truths of misrepresented and racialized people and experiences. Counterstories also allow for critical reflection on privilege and highlight how we continue to operate in interlocking systems of oppression.

Critical reflexivity - Essential to the decolonization process, critical reflexivity is a way to identify, question and evaluate long-held or rooted assumptions. It emphasizes reflection on the dominant narratives, assumptions and perspectives that we understand as inherent and true, in relation to the colonial processes that created them and the power relations that continue to uphold these understandings.

Discrimination - The denial of equal treatment, benefits, and opportunities to, or imposing unequal burdens on, individuals or groups because of perceived characteristics/physical traits, membership in specific racialized groups, and assumptions about their inadequacies. Discrimination may be unintentional but results from distinguishing people without regard to their individual merit, capacities, and circumstances.

Individual racism - Negative attitudes toward a person based on misguided ideas of inferiority of their racial group. Individual racism is reflected by an individual's actions and words, whether conscious or unconscious, direct or indirect, or intentional or unintentional.

Informed allyship - Using privilege to advocate for and work toward supporting the healing, celebration and resurgence of racialized and Indigenous communities. Informed coaches extend their learning to acknowledge the harmful and ongoing nature of colonial processes, the legacy of Residential Schools and ongoing racism. Through informed allyship, these coaches actively engage with reconciliation and anti-racist practices. Some examples include: engaging in critical reflexivity, incorporating local knowledge from Indigenous communities, and calling out racist behaviors and practices.

Institutional racism - Differential treatment of, or discriminatory practices toward, various groups based on race. This treatment is a result of an institution's established rules, policies and regulations. In turn, those are both informed by and inform the norms, values and principles. Institutional racism is enacted by individuals within organizations, who because of their socialization, training and allegiance to the organization abide by and enforce these rules, policies and regulations.

Intersectionality - Because every person has a race, a gender, disability status, sexuality, ..., each different group of people experiences race and racism differently. Intersectionality emphasizes the simultaneous and mutually reinforcing aspects of oppression based on complex identities. For example, an Indigenous two-spirit person on Turtle Island (North America) embodies a masculine and feminine spirit and doesn't adhere to gender binary categories, and may experience discrimination from a combination of racism, sexism and homophobia.

Meritocracy - A system where access is equal between racial groups and individuals who work hard earn success based on merit. Meritocracy would allow equal opportunity for any individual to access positions on teams, head coaching jobs and leadership roles through applied and transparent processes.

Model minority stereotype - The model minority stereotype views certain racialized groups as more likely to have a high education and an advanced career as well as to be more qualified, hard-working, and natural leaders than other racialized groups. This stereotype is often applied to East and South Asians. It's harmful because it can mask discrimination these groups face, create unjustified and impossible-to-achieve standards, and sets a racial hierarchy with Black and Indigenous groups at the bottom.

Nepotism - A system of favourable access to jobs, promotions, or inclusion based on friendship or kinship. This practice often extends within White groups as white, cis-gender, non-disabled men are more likely to hold positions of power and recruit those who share their identities.

Otherness - The position that people or groups are "other" if they appear to differ from or be outside of a dominant group. This could be based on social identifications (race, gender, ability, sexuality, ...) that "other" people do or don't have compared to a dominant group. Otherness can lead to discrimination.

Presumed incompetent stereotype - A combination of race, class, ability and gender discrimination results in assumptions of some racialized people being unable to succeed, unskilled, or unknowledgeable. Unlike the model minority stereotype, which unfairly assumes leadership abilities and hard work of East and South Asians, the presumed incompetent stereotype is often applied to Blacks and Indigenous peoples and unfairly emphasizes poor work ethic and low intelligence. This is the opposite of the model minority stereotype. Examples of presumed incompetent stereotypes are assuming that someone is physically strong but is less intelligent and has a poor work ethic. Such stereotypes grew out of slavery, when

Privilege - The rights and ways of being that privileged people never have to think about because they don't face discrimination. Despite experiencing select privileges (being without disabilities, White), someone can face other discriminations (queer, woman). People with White privilege may experience struggles in life and fight to earn their position, education or income. However, they don't experience discrimination because of race. Power associated with privilege can be used to change systems of discrimination.

Race and racialized - Race isn't based on physical and genetic criteria. It's a social, political and historical idea created by socially dominant groups. People become racialized when meanings are attributed to a previously unclassified group (for example, Mohawk and Cree become Indigenous or Yoruba and Jamaican become Black). They're understood as a group with commonalities and are treated as such, while individual characteristics are erased.

Racial evasiveness - Avoiding discussions of race promotes misinformation and allows White people, cultures and ideas to remain in the centre and privileged. Since racism is experienced as a culturally loaded term that's associated with bad people, it's difficult to talk openly about racism. People can become uncomfortable and combative, unwilling and unprepared to discuss racism directly, resulting in reinforcing coded language (for example, describing something as urban, expressing ideas that racism is 'not seen'). This is sometimes referred to as colour-blindness.

Racism - The belief that a group is superior to others. Racism is displayed through any action or practice that treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination.

Residential School System - A system used to assimilate Indigenous children into White Canadian society. Indigenous children were forcibly and violently separated from their families, and subjected to physical, sexual, emotional and psychological harm. The system was based on colonial racist ideas that dehumanized Indigenous peoples and required they be "civilized" through White Christian education systems, including sports. The last Residential School closed in 1996. Over 7000 children died in these schools and many Indigenous people are survivors and descendants of survivors.

Residential School System legacies - It's critical to understand and recognize the lasting and present-day impacts of Residential Schools and colonial violence on Indigenous communities. Passed on through intergenerational trauma, these legacies include continued loss of language, culture, traditional teachings, and well-being. Non-Indigenous Canadians continue to benefit from the impacts and violence of Residential Schools and colonialism, as the erasure of Indigenous culture and language and the removal of people from their land allowed Canada to become a nation.

Self-reflection - The process of examining oneself for values, needs and biases to increase awareness and engage with others more consciously and objectively.

Stereotypes - Persistent ideas, meanings and myths attributed to particular groups to maintain the social order. Perpetuated by media and educational curricula, stereotypes are believed to be universal, essential or natural truths about racial groups. Stereotypes can be so firm that even when we see evidence to the contrary, we remain surprised by the evidence instead of dismantling our assumptions. Two examples of damaging stereotypes are the presumed incompetent stereotype and the model minority stereotype.

Systemic racism - Discrimination through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface, but which can exclude particular racialized groups through multiple organizations that make up a system. Racism happens daily, at every level of society and within every person. Sustained racial inequality is tied to social systems and institutions, and is embedded into practices such as recruitment and promotion. Systems have rules and practices that inherently exclude. Indigenous and racialized people experience systemic racism - social systems and institutions such as health, education and sport- when rules are applied differently to them, negative assumptions are made about them, or they receive less favorable treatment.

Systemic racism in coaching certification - The rules and practices for systems aren't evenly applied to all people based on individual and community differences. Coaching certification processes that require expensive training, on-site education, and lengthy processes all disadvantage people who live rurally and are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Indigenous people are disproportionately excluded by coaching certification processes.

Talent wastage - The result of a coach's incorrect selection or deselection of a participant for a team, resulting in negative outcomes. Most talent wastage stems from: cognitive biases affecting human judgment such as unconscious bias, and situational factors affecting the decisions such as cultural insensitivity.

Transgender (sometimes trans) - A person whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, someone may be assigned male at birth but identifies as a girl or woman. The term **trans** also includes people who identify beyond the gender binary of man or woman (genderqueer, non-binary, gender variant). If you're in doubt about the correct term to use for someone, always respect the words they use to describe themselves.

Trauma-informed coaching - Allows for the adoption of coaching practices that recognize the experiences of trauma for participants and supports their healing and ability to thrive. This type of coaching requires awareness of brain and body connections, behavioural reactions and symptoms of trauma, different causes of trauma, and understanding of a need for safety, clear boundaries and confidentiality.

Treatment discrimination - When members of a social group receive fewer opportunities and are treated poorer than others, despite strong work and athletic performance. Behaviours rooted in racist ideologies contribute to shortcomings within Canadian sport systems. For example, qualified racialized participants and coaches are overlooked or undervalued. Sport coaches and administrators who are unaware of how their biases can lead to discrimination are likely to reproduce assumptions about racialized participants and coaches, which reinforces inequities in sport.

Truth and Reconciliation - In Canada, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created to document the effects of the Residential School System and establish recommendations to develop and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

Unconscious biases - Social stereotypes about groups of people that individuals form outside of their own conscious awareness. They're formed from ideologies and knowledge adopted as universal and inherent, based on colonial processes of racialization and otherness.

White entitlement – White people are taught to feel entitled to comfort, simplistic understandings of racism, and to decide when and where racism is discussed in a way that sustains their entitlements.

White fragility – In North America, White people live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress. This insulated environment of racial protection builds White expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering the ability to tolerate racial stress, leading to what is called White Fragility. Any challenge to Whiteness causes discomfort. This is normal and must be acknowledged.

White standards of beauty in sport - Beauty standards based on representations of White femininity, that is, someone who is White, female or woman, with long hair, angular features and a slim figure. By featuring those standards as what's inherently beautiful, "good" and moral, it by default places racialized individuals outside of those definitions, and mistakenly labels them as ugly, "bad" and immoral.

White universalism – White people are taught to see their perspectives as objective and representative of reality. They're also taught to value themselves as individuals who are treated the same as everyone else, for example, "People have insulted me before."

Whiteness - The way that White peoples' customs, culture, beliefs, standards of beauty and professionalism operate as the criteria by which all other groups are compared. The normalization of Whiteness has created a culture where racialized persons are seen as inferior or abnormal.