

**Anya Zimberoff**

Hi BH Supervisors, BHCCs, Post-docs and BH students:

This will be my last "Diversity Thoughts" Edition in a formal capacity. The Cascades Region of NPTC is in the process of selecting a new Diversity Director. I am stepping down because my duties at HealthPoint have increased and I see this Diversity facilitation mission to be too important to risk shortchanging our region or our consortium. Also, with fresh leadership comes the opportunity to review the most and least impactful efforts that have been part of this (newer) position so as to reassess and improve its functions and impact: How can we best leverage our diversity efforts and be most successful with moving forward the mission of Diversity awareness and respect in our organizations, including provider and student groups, as well as continuing to see diversity as a Leitmotif for our programs. I want to leave you with two timely areas of diversity reflection to explore: 1. Race privilege/Racism in America and 2. Disability—30 years into the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Racism** has been in our heightened awareness especially since the killing of George Floyd. The New York Times Magazine of 7/19/20 reflects about antiracism education. Change must begin with awareness of the impacts and systematic presence of racism. Several thinkers are featured in the article "Whiteness Lessons:" Glenn Singleton, Robin DiAngelo, Peggy McIntosh, and Darnisa Amante-Jackson.

- About White Fragility, DiAngelo points out that "it is 'weaponized.' Its evasions are actually a liberal white arsenal, a means of protecting a frail moral ego, defending a righteous self-image... White fragility is a way for well-meaning white people to guard what race has granted them, all they haven't earned." (p. 28).

- With frequent co-author Ozlem Sensoy, DiAngelo calls our dominant culture on the "presumed neutrality of White European Enlightenment epistemology" (p. 29).

- Diversity Educator Moore, referenced in the article (p. 48) finds that "white culture is obsessed with 'mechanical time'—clock time—and punishes students for lateness. This...is but one example of how whiteness undercuts Black kids...In school and on into the working world...tremendous harm is done by the pervasive rule that Black children and adults must 'bend to whiteness, in substance, style and format'"(p. 48).

- Peggy McIntosh reminds us that "White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear and blank checks" (p. 29).

- Glenn Singleton tries to tackle the "myth of meritocracy," He points out that favoring "written communication over other forms...is a hallmark of whiteness' which leads to the denigration of Black children in school" (p. 29)

Amante-Jackson reminds us that "Eighty-eight percent of the entire world are people of color...but 96 percent of the world's historical content is white...[and] if it is not written down, it does not exist."

**Disability** is a Diversity area which celebrates 30 years since the signing into law of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990 by President George W Bush. This law has created better access and benefits for many residents of the United States. Being an immigrant myself, I can vouch for the persistent and glaring lack of access for persons who use wheelchairs to many buildings and metro stations for example. Conversations about disability and differently abled persons include cultural groups made up of persons (and their allies) who identify with a certain disability, tackle the issues of "what if disabilities can be prevented or remedied genetically or medically," invisible disabilities, and many other topics. To read some articles in this area, I steer you to the following New York Times website: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/disability-ADA-30-anniversary.html>

It has been a pleasure and an honor to reflect with you about Diversity for the last few years. Honoring Diversity means embracing discomfort and our areas of privilege, as well as identifying intersectionality, internalized oppression and microaggression in ourselves, family members, coworkers and patients. I promise to continue collaborating with the next Diversity Director and that cultivating humility in many areas of diversity will continue to be very dear to my heart.