

00:00:26 Ama-Robin

Hujambo, Courageous Community and Akwaaba! Welcome to Espresso Talk today, the podcast where we sip on insightful conversations and empower our community. I'm your host, Ama-Robin and I am not having my turmeric coffee today.

00:00:45 Ama-Robin

I am having tea today because I have a sore throat. But I am thrilled to be joined once again with my amazing friend and colleague, Mel. Welcome, Mel.

00:00:58 Mel

Hello everyone. Hi, Robin. How are you, Ama-Robin?

00:01:01 Mel

I am so excited to be back. We're diving into a critical part of our ongoing discussion today of the everyday discrimination scale.

00:01:12 Mel

So grab your favorite brew and I think you have tea there and let's settle in.

00:01:17 Ama-Robin

Asante Sana for being here, Mel, But before we jump into today's discussion, let's revisit our discussion about how racism is making us sick - I'm talking about black people. In our previous episode, we introduced you to a discussion about how racism is making us sick, and that was just incredible.

00:01:39 Ama-Robin

It was one of our most uncommon conversations, and that led us to the Everyday Discrimination Scale or the Edds.

00:01:50 Mel

That's right, Ama-Robin. The EDDS is a tool designed by the brilliant Doctor David R. Williams to measure the frequency and impact of everyday experiences of discrimination and microaggressions in our lives.

00:02:06 Mel

Doctor Williams developed the EDDS to shed light on those often subtle everyday moments that many black people experience. These experiences can take a toll on our mental and physical health, and it's crucial-crucial to recognize and address them.

00:02:24 Mel

The EDDS helps us understand the cumulative of impact of these daily encounters with discrimination. Last time, we actually took the test ourselves right here with our audience.

00:02:35 Mel

We hope that you took it along with us and we had some very interesting results. Today we're taking it a step further.

00:02:42 Ama-Robin

That's right. I did take it, Mel.

00:02:44 Ama-Robin

And yet we have reviewed the first two parts of the Everyday discrimination scale. In part one, we discussed those subtle acts of discrimination that we experience on the daily.

00:02:58 Ama-Robin

And Part 2 was about the major experiences of discrimination. And I think that y'all know exactly what those are.

00:03:06 Ama-Robin

Those discussions were eye opening and actually empowering. Today we are diving into part three, and that focuses on everybody's favorite place, the workplace, the workplace, discrimination and harassment.

00:03:24 Mel

Yes, that's so important. The workplace is a space where we spend most so much of our time, and unfortunately it's also a place where discrimination can often go unchecked.

00:03:36 Mel

The EDDS part three helps us identify and discuss these experiences, which are sometimes so subtle but significantly impactful.

00:03:47 Ama-Robin

So true. Workplace discrimination and harassment can take many, many forms, from the overt to the insidious. It's not always about those big moments that make the headlines.

00:04:01 Ama-Robin

More often it's about those small, daily interactions that accumulate over time, meaning that build up over time, creating an environment that feels hostile and unwelcoming to those on the receiving end. Again, black folks.

00:04:19 Mel

Exactly. Exactly, Ama-Robin. For example, it might be the offhand comment that seems like jokes but carries a sting, or the undue scrutiny some employees face over their work or even their appearance.

00:04:34 Mel

It could also be about being consistently overlooked for promotions or professional opportunities, despite having the same qualifications or even more qualifications and experience than others.

00:04:47 Ama-Robin

Let's not overlook the more structured, systemic issues like pay disparities and unequal access to professional development resources, and that can further entrench these discriminatory practices. Part three of the EDDS, the Everyday Discrimination Scale, prompts us to reflect on these issues by asking.

00:05:10 Ama-Robin

It asks asking specific questions about our experiences in the workplace, and these questions help to bring these often overlooked details into the light.

00:05:22 Mel

It's also crucial to mention that recognizing these patterns is the first step toward change. By using the EDDS to identify and articulate these experiences with not just voicing our own struggles, we're paving the way for organizational changes.

00:05:39 Mel

It's about highlighting the need for policies and practices that promote equity and inclusivity.

00:05:45 Ama-Robin

I'd love that. I really do.

00:05:47 Ama-Robin

And that's why discussions like ours today are so, so important. They empower us to recognize and challenge discriminatory practices.

00:05:59 Ama-Robin

They encourage our listeners to not only reflect on their own experiences, but also to become advocates for change in their environments. I love this kind of empowerment.

00:06:11 Ama-Robin

By discussing real life examples, as we will do today, we make the issues relatable and actionable.

00:06:21 Mel

That's our goal here at Espresso Talk today, to create a space where tough topics are not shield away from, but are tackled head on, providing our

listeners with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions and inspire change.

00:06:37 Ama-Robin

You know, but before we go any further, we do want to acknowledge that this topic might be sensitive for some of us, perhaps most of us, maybe all of us. And we need to acknowledge this unapologetically.

00:06:53 Ama-Robin

The Everyday Discrimination Scale is a powerful tool designed to measure the frequency and intensity of everyday discriminatory experiences, particularly those rooted in racial bias. So we're going to get to some stuff that could be really, really painful to hear.

00:07:11 Ama-Robin

And so that's why I think it's important to recognize that this could be painful for many of us. And it is this. The EDDS assesses how we encounter subtle forms of discrimination in our daily lives, offering insights into ongoing the ongoing impact of these experiences and their over our overall well-being.

00:07:35 Mel

That's why today, just like in our previous shows, we'll present and discuss each question. From part three.

00:07:42 Mel

We'll use real life examples to illustrate how workplace discrimination and harassment can manifest. This is about making the visible invisible visible.

00:07:53 Ama-Robin

And as always, we're here to support each other. If at any moment of the discussion, this brings up painful emotions, please, please take a moment for yourself.

00:08:05 Ama-Robin

Practice self-care techniques like deep breathing, one of my favorites or take a short break. and return When you feel ready, it's OK to pause and take care of your emotional health.

00:08:19 Mel

Absolutely. self-care is crucial. Remember, Espresso Talk today is not just a podcast, it's a community.

00:08:28 Mel

You're not alone in this journey. We're here together exploring these tough topics to foster understanding and empowerment. We'll also take a break, a a breather break doing the show so that each of us can examine our own feelings and take time to process this information.

00:08:49 Ama-Robin

Yes, breather breaks are really important though Asante Sana, Mel. and it's important to remember that we're all in this together now. Without further adeau, let's get into it.

00:09:00 Ama-Robin

We're going to start by discussing the first question in part three, and then we'll take one of those breather breaks midway through the discussion.

00:09:08 Mel

I'm ready if you are. Let's dive deep and not just talk the talk, but walk the walk together.

00:09:14 Ama-Robin

So grab your espresso or tea. Tea drinkers are welcome here too.

00:09:18 Ama-Robin

And close the door behind you. It's about to get very real and very deep.

00:09:25 Mel

It's time for real talk y'all. It's time for a real talk. And you know, I've been listening and reading about EDDS and one thing I found that studies have shown that there is a connection between racial discrimination and health.

00:09:44 Mel

So this is very, very important. Let's talk about that.

00:09:49 Ama-Robin

I am so glad you brought that up because often they think that, well, this is what people are saying or thinking, but there's real science behind all of this. Is that what you're saying?

00:09:58 Mel

That's exactly what I'm saying. I mean, they found it so specific that racial discrimination can cause hypertension.

00:10:06 Mel

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

00:10:09 Ama-Robin

So that's why, I mean, I've been hearing, like I heard Doctor Georges Benjamin, head of the American Public Health Association, say that racism has become a public health crisis. Do you think that's an overstatement or what do you think?

00:10:23 Mel

No, it's probably an understatement, because I listened to a a podcast the other day where they were saying that race, race discrimination actually is a pandemic, kind of like the COVID-19 pandemic.

00:10:37 Ama-Robin

Wow. I mean, OK, well, and that's why the everyday discrimination scale is so important, you know?

00:10:46 Ama-Robin

And so why don't we get right to it? What do you say?

00:10:49 Mel

Let's do it. Let's go y'all.

00:10:52 Ama-Robin

OK, why real talk? It's been a while, but we are back.

00:10:57 Ama-Robin

OK, so I will read the first question. And then how about if you take over the the, the, the story, these are real stories.

00:11:07 Ama-Robin

Names are changed for real people. That's right.

00:11:10 Ama-Robin

Now. That's right.

00:11:12 Ama-Robin

OK, question #1. How often are you unfairly given the jobs that no one else wants to do?

00:11:22 Mel

Well, let's talk about the case of Jordan. Jordan, an enthusiastic and diligent employee at a tech startup quickly noticed a troubling pattern after joining the team.

00:11:34 Mel

Despite his qualifications and eagerness to contribute to high profile projects, he found himself repeatedly assigned to tedious, time consuming tasks that was suddenly deemed to be less desirable by his colleagues and supervisors. These tasks often included manual data entry, extensive report documentation and other repetitive duties that didn't utilize his skills or

contribute to his professional growth.

00:12:02 Mel

At first, Jordan assumed this was part of being the newest member of the team. But as weeks turned into months, he saw new hires not sharing his racial background, immediately given opportunities to work on innovative projects.

00:12:16 Mel

This realization hit him hard, and when doing a team meeting, his manager nonchalantly passed another promising project to a newer, less experienced colleague right in front of him. While handing him another list of million tasks.

00:12:31 Mel

He was he was sure that this something was wrong. Feeling marginalized and undervalued, Jordan began to question the fairness in task distribution, a clear sign of workplace discrimination that he had initially tried to dismiss.

00:12:45 Mel

This experience not only affected his morale, but also made him rethink his value at the company and his future in the tech industry.

00:12:55 Ama-Robin

And I would imagine that caused him a lot of stress every day. But yeah, I think this was something that, you know, he was beginning then to watch more closely.

00:13:07 Ama-Robin

And him, he wants to be a team player. I mean, we all want to want to help out and support the team.

00:13:11 Ama-Robin

But when he's seeing new people coming in and getting more interesting assignments and more substantive assignments and he's still, you know, you know, putting doing data entry, I mean, that's just has to cause a lot of stress

and a lot of anger.

00:13:25 Mel

Yeah, absolutely. He's you know he's he's seeing he's seeing a a situation where he has no power to change it.

00:13:34 Mel

Yet other people are getting great assignments and he is still doing the same thing. And he knows that the other newer people coming in are looking at him and saying he must not be very good at what he does because he's still doing the menial tasks he has has two things to think about.

00:13:51 Mel

You know the but it's it's really racism. But it's also, you know, he's being looked at as a a lesser part of the team.

00:14:00 Ama-Robin

Yep, that's true. Because of racism too.

00:14:04 Mel

Because of racism. And as we just discussed, you know, studies have shown that this can lead to health problems.

00:14:09 Mel

And it's y'all. Jordan may be young, but it's a matter of time.

00:14:14 Ama-Robin

Well, I mean that's a really, really important one. It's good to know how these things show up too.

00:14:19 Ama-Robin

And so. So I appreciate that Jordan, you know, gave his experience to us.

00:14:24 Ama-Robin

But let's move on to the second question. Maybe you can ask that Mel and I'll read through the story.

00:14:30 Mel

OK, at work when different opinions would be helpful, how often is your opinion not asked for?

00:14:39 Ama-Robin

Well, to answer this one, we have the case of Simone Simone, an experienced marketing strategist at a large publishing company. Boy, if you hear about what happens there.

00:14:50 Ama-Robin

Often found herself sidelined in strategic meetings where diverse opinions were crucial. Despite her industry knowledge in proven track record and successful campaign strategies, she noted noticed a recurring pattern where her input was seldom solicited.

00:15:08 Ama-Robin

During team meetings, her manager would frequently turn to her colleagues for their opinions on key projects, glossing over hers her even when the discussions fell squarely within her expertise. One specific instance I remember that stood out to Simone occurred during a crucial meeting to decide a marketing approach for a highly anticipated book release.

00:15:32 Ama-Robin

While her colleagues were actively asked for their input, Simone was noticeably overlooked when she attempted to interject her ideas. Go Simone, she was quickly bypassed, or her suggestions were acknowledged only in passing without any serious consideration.

00:15:52 Ama-Robin

This repeated exclusion made Simone feel undervalued and invisible, undermining her confidence and making her question her place within the

team. It wasn't just about being heard, it was about the lack of recognition for her contributions and the subtle yet profound impact it had on her professional identity and emotional well-being.

00:16:17 Ama-Robin

Hmm. What do you say, Mel?

00:16:20 Mel

That's a very, very, you know, interesting story. I I can almost become part of Simone here because it's it's not only that she was not recognized in the meetings, it's a lot of things her her colleagues now see her as a lesser part of the team.

00:16:40 Mel

So anytime she's outside of a meeting or she's, you know, just at her desk or whatever and she brings something up, it's going to be just dismissed or disregarded. So, and that's the way she feels, I think disregarded and this is just racism, because she obviously was hired because she did have the expertise and the education and the knowledge and the expertise to do whatever needed to be done in this job, yet she is just being completely ignored as if she's not there.

00:17:15 Ama-Robin

And they said they needed to have I'm I'm doing quote signs here diverse voices. But when they have people who are from different backgrounds or say who are not white, they just have them sitting there and not listening to their opinion or taking their input.

00:17:31 Ama-Robin

And that must be a horrible feeling, you know, To to sit in something like that and knowing you have the expertise not just because of of your race, but because of because of your education and experience too, and what you're bringing to the table, no one cares.

00:17:46 Mel

That's true. And and you know, I've been in meetings like that where generally what they do is they they'll ask specific people certain things, and they'll get their opinions.

00:17:56 Mel

And then when you try to interject your opinion, they say, well, wait a minute, we'll get to that later. And so it, you know, it really becomes quite obvious to you and to the people in the room that your opinion is not important.

00:18:09 Ama-Robin

I think that once that's solidified, that just never changes, you know, so well. Let's go on to the third question, which I will ask here.

00:18:18 Ama-Robin

Let's see, how often are you watched more closely than others?

00:18:24 Mel

Here's the case of Marcus Marcus, an assistant store manager at a popular retail chain, began noticing an unsettling pattern at work. Although he was responsible for a large section of the store and consistently met his sales targets, he felt a disproportionate level of scrutiny from his supervisors compared to his Co workers.

00:18:47 Mel

This suspicion was confirmed one afternoon when he realized that security cameras were repositioned to primarily monitor his area. Despite no incidents of inventory issues being reported during inventory days or when high value items were received, Marcus's actions were closely watched by the store manager, who rarely exhibited the same vigilance with other team members.

00:19:12 Mel

Even during routine breaks, Marcus frequently caught his manager, observing him from a distance or asking pointed questions about his movements and

decisions, questions that his colleagues were seldom asked. This excessive monitoring not only made Marcus feel distrusted and singled out, but also added an unnecessary layer of stress to his job.

00:19:35 Mel

He struggled with the feeling that regardless of his proven reliability and hard work, he was still not afforded the same trust as his peers, purely based on an unspoken bias that seemed to shadow every step, every step that he took in his workplace.

00:19:53 Ama-Robin

Well, black people are over surveilled everywhere we go and you think that, you know if you're invited into the workplace and you're a trusted member there, well trusted in quotes that that it should be OK. But instead the surveillance continues everywhere we are and that, you know, constantly being washed like that.

00:20:12 Ama-Robin

I think there are studies about how that can really raise stress levels too.

00:20:17 Mel

I agree, I agree. And that happens in more than just the workplace here.

00:20:21 Mel

When you go into a store, you're followed. Somebody's assigned basically to follow you to make sure that you don't take something.

00:20:29 Mel

And that's that's what was happening here with Marcus. They were, you know, assuming that you know, he would take something or do something with the inventory that was not permitted, and this caused him stress because he could see what they were doing.

00:20:44 Mel

It was obvious to him, although they probably felt it was very subtle. As a matter of fact, it said in here it was a subtle kind of observation.

00:20:55 Ama-Robin

Well, God forbid something ever should have turned up missing, which can't happen in these, you know, high inventory stores. Things can happen because then lots of employees working there, you know he would have been probably the first and only person they considered, you know as you know, suspicious.

00:21:12 Mel

You're right. And that racism is causing him stress.

00:21:15 Mel

Stress is causing him health problems that he probably does not feel now, but at some point in his life as, as the study says, health issues are going to appear.

00:21:28 Ama-Robin

Yeah, yeah. And I wonder if he is feeling that already.

00:21:32 Ama-Robin

You know, 'cause it go to that. And knowing that you're being watched constantly, that's that's a terrible feeling.

00:21:37 Ama-Robin

That's a terrible feeling. Well, so we're going to question #4.

00:21:42 Mel

Absolutely.

00:21:43 Ama-Robin

So how often does your supervisor or boss use racial or ethnic slurs or jokes?  
The case for Keisha?

00:21:55 Ama-Robin

Well, so I'll read this one too, because I actually know her. Keisha is a project manager at a construction firm often felt uncomfortable during team meetings due to her boss's inappropriate humor.

00:22:10 Ama-Robin

Although her supervisor would occasionally use racial or ethnic slurs and jokes when discussing clients or other stakeholders, these comments were typically masked as just jokes or harmless banter. Despite feeling uneasy, Keisha noticed that her colleagues would laugh along either out of discomfort or indifference would seem to encourage their boss even further.

00:22:38 Ama-Robin

This behavior created a hostile environment for Keisha, who felt that such language was not only unprofessional, but deeply disrespectful and alienating. Oh, that's a terrible feeling.

00:22:51 Ama-Robin

And then the colleagues going along with it.

00:22:54 Mel

That's that's really a terrible feeling and it's happening in front of you and in front of your colleagues and the people that you work with on a daily basis. So you're being kind of harassed in in a very alleged indirect way.

00:23:10 Mel

But it's really more direct because what's happening here are the ethnic slurs and the jokes that the person, the boss is using when discussing clients, you know apply to you. Although you know, they say it's harmless banter and and that type of thing.

00:23:27 Mel

So she is feeling a a great deal of stress and being muzzled in a sense that she

if she says something she probably, you know, would lose her job and this is a very difficult situation to be in.

00:23:42 Ama-Robin

Absolutely. And very isolating too.

00:23:45 Ama-Robin

You know, we've done shows on racial isolation and this, I mean, just fits right into that scenario. You know, when the the boss is saying something that's clearly inappropriate and then everybody else, but for whatever reason is, you know, snickering or laughing or chuckling or, you know, they're and you know that you either have to go along with it or, yeah, risk your job.

00:24:08 Ama-Robin

As you said, that's a terrible feeling. And I mean stress, her stress level must be through through the roof.

00:24:13 Ama-Robin

Just even the threat of that happening which seems like it happens pretty frequently is enough to keep her stress levels high. And I'm, I'm really concerned about Keisha in this situation and I think actually this is a good time to take our first probably our only breather break on this show because this is a this this is a difficult situation and it's I think all of us have been been in this in this in the the workplace.

00:24:43 Ama-Robin

So why don't we take some time to to breathe, to process, to, you know, get in touch with ourselves and we're going to come right back in about 60 seconds. And you all know that I love this music.

00:24:55 Ama-Robin

So sit back and relax. We'll see you in a minute, down.

00:25:00 Mel

A good lot of dough. Anything is possible.

00:25:06 Ama-Robin

Throw me up an headphone.

00:25:36 Mel

Welcome back our listeners. I'm really, really happy that you took a breather with us because these issues can be a very stressful to to talk about and and to listen to.

00:25:49 Mel

So we'll go ahead now with #5 question #5. How often does your supervisor or boss direct racial or ethnic slurs or jokes at you?

00:26:04 Mel

Now we'll do the case of Ben. Ben, a graphic designer in a small advertising agency, face direct racial jokes from his boss that often targeted his ethnicity.

00:26:17 Mel

These jokes were sometimes said in the guise of light hearted teasing during staff meetings, but would occasionally be more pointed and personal when they were alone. For example, his boss once remarked you must be good at this because you're black, implying that his skills were somehow tied to his racial stereotype rather than his professional expertise and hard work.

00:26:40 Mel

These comments made Ben feel singled out and diminished, impacting his job satisfaction and his sense of safety and belonging at work. What do you think about that, Ama-Robin?

00:26:52 Ama-Robin

That to me is just a straight up racist, you know, It's just a racist kind of a thing thing to say. You, you're playing on stereotypes and knowing that as a subordinate that Ben can't say anything back.

00:27:04 Ama-Robin

And I mean, I thought those are the kind of things that we had laws and policies and against, but people do say it and people do do do it. And everybody else around him, well, I don't know.

00:27:15 Ama-Robin

But, you know, maybe they're all nodding their heads. But I think this is a, this must be a, this is almost like a hostile environment for for Ben to be in.

00:27:25 Ama-Robin

And that must really be very stressful, causing a lot of anxiety. And it really actually undermines a lot of his, you know, professional expertise and and skills.

00:27:38 Ama-Robin

Because it's like, yeah, you're just good, this good. You're black, you know?

00:27:41 Ama-Robin

So what do you think?

00:27:44 Mel

I I agree with that. I you know this this they call it light hearted, light hearted teasing and that's not light hearted.

00:27:51 Mel

When you you tell somebody they're good at something because they're black, you are taking away all of the the education, the experience, the skills, everything away from them, saying you know you're black, therefore you can do this and that. That just makes you know it's it doesn't it also makes no

sense, but it also is very, very damaging to your your sense of self and your character and and your skills.

00:28:20 Mel

So I think that as you said, I agree this is probably a hostile work environment.

00:28:27 Ama-Robin

And I wonder too how the opposite works, You know, is he thinking? Well, the boss thinking, well, Ben can't, cannot do this because he's black.

00:28:36 Ama-Robin

You know that he may not say out loud, but that could be deep within his in his mind and his mindset as well.

00:28:44 Mel

The one thing we do know is he's focusing on the fact that Ben is black, and I think that that's really the key right there, that racism exists in this situation.

00:28:55 Ama-Robin

Absolutely. Well said.

00:28:57 Ama-Robin

Now always. OK.

00:29:00 Ama-Robin

So we move on to to the next one, number six. So will you read that one?

00:29:06 Ama-Robin

And.

00:29:06 Mel

I will. I would love to read it.

00:29:09 Mel

Question number six, how often do your Co workers use racial or ethnic slurs or jokes? These are your Co workers now.

00:29:19 Ama-Robin

Wow, OK, so I was going to say, wait a second, isn't that the same question? Oh, OK, but it's the Co workers now, not the supervisor.

00:29:27 Ama-Robin

OK, well, let's look at the case of Jasmine, all right? Jasmine, a new employee at a marketing firm, was eager to integrate into her team.

00:29:36 Ama-Robin

However, she quickly noticed a disturbing trend. During team lunches and meetings, her Co workers often made racial jokes, cloaking them in humor and repeatedly, you know, used ethnic slurs casually in conversation.

00:29:54 Ama-Robin

At first, Jasmine laughed along uncomfortably, not wanting to seem overly sensitive. But as these incidents persisted, she began to feel alienated and demeaned, realizing that this behavior was not this offensive, but deeply harmful to her sense of belonging and her professional confidence.

00:30:16 Mel

This is very very similar to what Ben was experiencing. You know his skills and and his expertise were diminished and here Jasmine the same thing.

00:30:27 Mel

The difference is this was his boss which had a kind of a higher sensitivity and these are his their, their Co workers. So the Co workers, you know, are are demeaning Jasmine by using these what they consider to be very humorous racial and ethnic slurs and it's it's causing her a lot of a lot of stress.

00:30:51 Mel

I think you know with your Co workers what you want to be as you know kind of

friendly and you know friend together in the sense that you want to work with them and and support them and have them support you and you're in the situation. You feel like you can't trust them because they see you, you know, from the because of the racism and they don't really see you as a worker who is as equal as they are in doing the work that is is on the table.

00:31:23 Ama-Robin

Wow, that's a really good point. Very good point.

00:31:27 Ama-Robin

I mean, it's different when it's the Co workers doing it too, but it's also very hurtful and damaging and stressful. And shall we go on to #7?

00:31:37 Ama-Robin

Let's do #7. OK, Mel.

00:31:45 Mel

OK and #7, how often do your Co workers direct racial or ethnic slurs or jokes at you? This is this is a little different than Jasmine.

00:31:58 Mel

In Jasmine's case it was. They use racial or ethnic slurs and jokes.

00:32:04 Mel

In this one, they're directing these at you. This is the case of Maya.

00:32:10 Mel

Maya and IT specialist frequently encountered uncomfortable situations where her Co workers would direct racial jokes at her under the guise of team bonding. During lunch breaks and team gatherings, remarks about her cultural background were common, despite her attempts to laugh it off or change the subject.

00:32:31 Mel

These jokes left Maya feeling ostracized and disrespected, making her dread interactions with her team.

00:32:39 Ama-Robin

Well, so this is another, another case here of racial or racial slurs. And the person trying to to laugh it off, trying to, you know, I guess feel included in all of that.

00:32:52 Ama-Robin

And I just wonder how, I mean, we think that this will make it go away, This will, you know, lessen the tension, this will be helpful in some way. I have a feeling that none of it is that that it it never is.

00:33:04 Ama-Robin

But yet we keep trying that and all it does is raise our stress level and our anxiety and even making us begin to be angry at ourselves for oh why did I laugh at that? Why?

00:33:13 Ama-Robin

Why didn't I say speak? Why didn't I speak up?

00:33:16 Ama-Robin

So, I mean, this must be causing her a lot of stress and anxiety, but it this isn't on her, this is on the on the coworkers and and those the coworkers are creating an environment that can really affect my mental, physical, emotional health.

00:33:34 Mel

Absolutely. And and it's making her, it says making her dread interactions with her team.

00:33:40 Mel

She can't work with the team if she feels that is working with them. They're going to you know make racial jokes.

00:33:48 Mel

They're going to ostracize her. They're going to, when she's at team gatherings, they're going to say things that cause her stress and and make her uncomfortable.

00:33:59 Mel

So you know she's working in this situation is almost impossible. So it's a very, very difficult situation to to have to be in because she has to work with these people on a daily basis.

00:34:14 Mel

It's not like in the supervisor situation. I'm not saying that's better, but at least you don't work with your supervisor.

00:34:20 Mel

You know day-to-day, you work with your supervisor from time to time. So Maya is in a very, very difficult situation and this is causing her racial race, racial stress, racism is there and she may have at some point, as the study says, some health problems as a result of this.

00:34:43 Ama-Robin

Absolutely, absolutely. And and I think this could be the same case with Charles who's actually where.

00:34:50 Ama-Robin

But the next question #8. Magelle Reed, how often do you feel that you have to work twice as hard as others as others work?

00:35:00 Ama-Robin

And here's the case for Charles. Charles, a financial analyst, always felt that he had to prove himself more than his colleagues.

00:35:08 Ama-Robin

Despite his accomplishments, he noticed that he had received less recognition and had to put in extra hours to receive the same acknowledgement or opportunities for advancement that seemed more readily available to his peers. This requirement to double his efforts war on Charles, impacting both his morale and his work life balance and I'll say indefinitely, his health, his mental, physical, emotional and probably spiritual health too.

00:35:38 Ama-Robin

Absolutely.

00:35:40 Mel

No question about that this, this is, this is a very typical situation that we we feel is black people that we have to work twice as hard as as others and just to just to do the regular amount of work, you know, and he felt he had to prove himself more than his his colleagues. So this is a unfortunate that he's in this situation, but I think a lot of people are in this situation because if you you know don't appear to work as hard as others and you don't work as hard as others or work more than others, that it looks like you're not doing your job.

00:36:21 Mel

And that's just an unfair kind of label based on just because you're you're black and obviously doing his job as an analyst and he's he is able to prove himself.

00:36:38 Ama-Robin

Yeah, no matter what, I think as Toni Morrison was saying that you're always going to try to do one more thing, but it just doesn't matter because whatever it is they're going to think you're you're a diversity higher that you're not there because you've earned it or because you're qualified and competent. So the heart, you can work as hard as you want and it's it's they're still going to think what they think.

00:37:00 Ama-Robin

So. So let's go on to Erica question #9.

00:37:06 Mel

OK, I'll read the question, but Erica, how often do you feel that you are ignored or not taken seriously by your boss? This is the case of Erica.

00:37:19 Mel

Despite Erica's role as a senior developer, she often felt that her suggestions in meetings were overlooked or quickly dismissed by her boss. When similar ideas were later raised by her male colleagues, they were met with enthusiasm and serious consideration.

00:37:37 Mel

This pattern of being ignored made Erica question her value in the team and stifled her willingness to contribute openly.

00:37:47 Ama-Robin

What do you think about Erica? What do you think about this?

00:37:50 Mel

I think that Erica's in a a very difficult situation because you know, it says here it stifled her willingness to contribute openly. So she had things to contribute, but she didn't want to do it because she's not taken seriously by by her boss.

00:38:10 Mel

So you know, when the boss doesn't recognize you for your statements or your contributions, you know or your work, you know. Then others pick up on that and they don't recognize you for that either and feel that you are a lesser member of the team, then then you know that you are.

00:38:29 Ama-Robin

And it created that chilling effect that, yeah, it stifled her. So she didn't even start, didn't even put her ideas forward anymore.

00:38:37 Ama-Robin

And that's that seems like it's a terrible spiral, that it started one place and then it just got worse and worse and worse. And I don't see how it could have been interrupted except for the people who are doing this to recognize what they're doing.

00:38:50 Ama-Robin

And, you know, I wonder, yeah, yeah, what she could have, what she could have done. But I think really this is for the people who are committing these kind of these, these male, her male boss and everything.

00:39:05 Ama-Robin

They're doing the bad stuff, I I think. And and she has to find a way to just not let her well, to maybe even keep pushing through and putting her ideas forward.

00:39:21 Ama-Robin

Because after a while, they're going to say, you know, you don't even put ideas forward anymore. You know, so, so anyway, so I'll go to question 10 and the case for Samuel, Brother Samuel.

00:39:37 Ama-Robin

Let's see, question 10. How often do others assume that you work in a lower status job than you do and treat you as such?

00:39:47 Ama-Robin

Well, I can probably answer this one myself, but I think Samuel had a really good, interesting story to tell. So we'll tell his Samuel, a university department head, noticed that guests and new staff often assumed he held a lower ranking administrative position, despite his prominent role and expertise.

00:40:08 Ama-Robin

He was frequently asked to perform tasks well below his pay grade or was bypassed in conversations about academic leadership, reflecting A bias based on his race.

00:40:22 Mel

Yeah, that that happens a lot in the in, in meetings, in in in seminars and and that type of thing where you know, you interact with other people. They will ask you, oh, can you bring me some coffee or why is there no water on the table, as if it was your responsibility to to make that happen.

00:40:45 Mel

So it says he was frequently asked to perform tasks well below his pay grade or bypassing conversations. It's not only the the his pay grade in terms of, you know, the work that he does, but they would assume that you know, he was one of the servers or one of the people there who was there to make them comfortable as opposed to being one of the principles for the for the seminar or the, you know, meeting that he was attending.

00:41:14 Ama-Robin

Right, right. And this is very common in, I think workplaces that are very hierarchical, particularly universities, you know, and I just don't know where, where to what, what else you can you can do about this except for, you know, Samuel was distressed as though he was in, you know, the serving staff and not say there's anything wrong with that.

00:41:40 Ama-Robin

But the serving staff, they're, they have an important job to to fill too. But he's a university department head.

00:41:46 Ama-Robin

Everyone should know exactly who he is and treat him that and treat him as such and and because he certainly would treat another person that same way that, you know, the same way that he expects to be treated. So yeah, that's another another another thing for for the stress and for blood pressure.

00:42:06 Mel

Absolutely. And and Samuel will at some point, you know, unfortunately maybe

have some health problems as a result of this.

00:42:14 Mel

And that's very, very unfortunate. You know, it's the, the part about he was bypassed in conversations about academic leadership.

00:42:25 Mel

I think it's really, really important. It's all like his opinion didn't matter, you know, he was not a person that you would, you know, you would want to know what is what do you think about this, you know.

00:42:38 Mel

So I'm sure it was very difficult for him to attend meetings and to go to seminars in these these situations. So now we're at question 11 and I will read that how often has a Co worker with less experience and fewer qualifications gotten promoted before you?

00:42:58 Mel

This is Angela. Angela, a seasoned sales manager, watched as a new, less experienced colleague was promoted over her.

00:43:07 Mel

Despite her extensive experience in consistently exceeding her sales targets, Angela was passed over for promotion, which was given to a newer employee who had neither her track record nor her qualifications, but who fit the company's more typical managerial profile. What do you think of that?

00:43:26 Ama-Robin

Well, I think it's the stereotyping profiling. This is all the different.

00:43:31 Ama-Robin

These words for for racism. OK and and Angela I'm sure clearly sees this and almost probably expected it and still she has to watch it happen and know that it had nothing to do with her with with her skills but yet it only to do with

her race and and and color and their racism and their ignorance and yet she this this effects her you know personally professionally and and certainly health wise and she has to go in every day and see this other person who fits this typical managerial profile and we could probably guess what that you know the.

00:44:12 Mel

Profile is, yeah, right. It's it's as if you are visible and invisible.

00:44:20 Mel

You're visibly, you know, black. So racism comes into play.

00:44:24 Mel

You're invisible when it comes to the benefits like promotions or or or status, you know, or recognition and that type of thing. So it's it's a it's a game that's played, you know, that is very, very disrespectful and and in some ways dangerous and certainly will have some effect on health in the future.

00:44:51 Ama-Robin

Yes, absolutely. And well, maybe we should go then to the very to the last question here.

00:44:58 Ama-Robin

And we take this question is about the case of Thomas here. How often have you been unfairly humiliated in front of others at work?

00:45:11 Ama-Robin

And we're going to tell Thomas's story here. During a team meeting, Thomas was unexpectedly criticized by a supervisor for a minor error in a report.

00:45:21 Ama-Robin

The criticism was harsh and public, with his supervisor making demeaning remarks about Thomas's attention to detail and and questioning his competence in front of the entire team. This public humiliation not only

embarrassed Thomas but also damaged his reputation and confidence within the team.

00:45:44 Mel

I think this happens a lot and you know and and and Thomas it's unfortunate that he had to experience this but you know rather than bringing Thomas in you know if there was a minor error in the report and it should be pointed out bring him into the office and say you know there was a minor error in this report during they wait until a team meeting. So, you know, in a sense it's just kind of an an embarrassment and to to to acknowledge from their standpoint that you're not competent in the job that that you're doing and that's racism One O 1, you know, because it happens a lot and it could be handled, you know, differently.

00:46:27 Mel

Certainly he made a error in his report, but did it have to be a public situation And I think they did that in order to make his role or his reputation less within the team, you know, and in the department.

00:46:47 Ama-Robin

Well, you know, reading, rereading, you know, Thomas's story and and hearing, you know him talk about it, that brought up a lot of things for me. And yeah, I think this is one of my one of my trigger points too, because this has happened to me and it there's just no forgetting that.

00:47:07 Ama-Robin

I mean, I can still kind of feel that in my breathing, you know when when that happened and and how helpless and angry and embarrassed I felt and that just doesn't go away. That for the for the next day you come back at work.

00:47:19 Ama-Robin

So yeah, well so these things don't just go away. You know that when people stop at the meeting's over.

00:47:29 Ama-Robin

Thomas is probably still carrying that just like I feel like I kind of am too. This happened years ago.

00:47:34 Ama-Robin

So. So anyway, I think that was that was the last question on the on the everyday discrimination scale.

00:47:43 Ama-Robin

I think in terms of assessing what happens in the workplace, this was right on point. What do you think?

00:47:51 Mel

I think that's true. And I I think one of the things we, we, you know, haven't haven't discussed or haven't mentioned, I don't know discussion is necessary is that this also contributes to the mental health of the people who are involved, you know, who have these racist, you know, situations, you know happen as most black people do, you know all the time.

00:48:16 Mel

So it's not only the mental health and the physical health, you know, it's it's, it's a combination of of the two. And I wanted to make sure that that our listeners understood that there could be mental health issues related to these, you know, racist situations that we've described.

00:48:33 Mel

And I'm sure there are a lot more that we have not described so.

00:48:39 Ama-Robin

I think that.

00:48:40 Mel

Sorry, no.

00:48:41 Ama-Robin

Did sorry.

00:48:42 Mel

No, I I think, I think that you know, our listeners should realize that combination is is very, very lethal.

00:48:52 Ama-Robin

It definitely is. And and I think this is also, excuse me, important to recognize that this is the first step.

00:48:59 Ama-Robin

Identifying this, these, these stressors is the first step and the next step, which is very important to you was, you know, acknowledging it's not your fault. That kind of thing.

00:49:10 Ama-Robin

Recognizing that this is racism, this is not you and you know there are things that you can do. This is a Black Empowerment Podcast show.

00:49:19 Ama-Robin

We are empowered to do things to take care of ourselves too. And self-care is essential for this.

00:49:26 Ama-Robin

We can't, can't just write this off, laugh it away, you know, leave the meeting and and try to forget about it. No, we got to take affirmative steps to try to do something, to to try to, you know, release the the, the, the stop the stress response or to let go of the anger or, you know, to vent it or what do you whatever you need to do.

00:49:48 Ama-Robin

For me, I think I do the breathing. Breathing is very, very important to me, 'cause I as I was reading like Thomas I Thomas's story, I felt my breathing

becomes shallow.

00:49:58 Ama-Robin

So I know that my breathing is something that I really need to regulate, and that's also it's an indicator of how stress is affecting me and when I'm regulating it. It also empowers me to control the stress.

00:50:09 Ama-Robin

So in terms of self-care, breathing exercises are my go to Do you have what is yours, Mel?

00:50:16 Mel

Yeah, I I have different ways of coping with these types of stress from racism. And I I mostly.

00:50:24 Mel

I talk to family and friends about experiences that I've had. I you know, I I do you know some mindful approaches and and that type of thing.

00:50:36 Mel

But what I I really try to do is to make sure that I I am focused in on what has happened and that I need to have a self-care card or something so that I can I can get over this and not let it damage me physically or mentally.

00:51:01 Ama-Robin

OK. OK.

00:51:02 Ama-Robin

And and that's the that's the thing here. Everybody's gonna have their different thing that that helps.

00:51:09 Ama-Robin

An important thing is that to remember that everybody needs that kind of a some kind of yourself care tool kit or something so that you can take care of

yourself. I mean I also love to go walking in the forest.

00:51:20 Ama-Robin

There's just other things that that that I do. The other things that you do, Mel, find out what it is we ought to each have to find out what helps us the most and what we can access at the time, 'cause I can't always just leave the leave the office and then go to walk in the forest.

00:51:34 Ama-Robin

I mean, that's not just not practical, but I am so grateful for this everyday discrimination scale. And I'm really, really grateful, you know, to have had this real talk with you, Mel.

00:51:48 Ama-Robin

This made it. It's these were difficult things to talk about, but it made it easier with you and you just provided some incredible insights, as always.

00:51:56 Ama-Robin

So Asante's honor for that.

00:51:59 Mel

Well, thank you Robin. Alma, Robin, I really, and I won't say I enjoyed this, but it brings me back to where I know I need to be very, very sensitive to what's going on.

00:52:11 Mel

Sensitive to how I react to it and respond to it. And to make sure that I take care of myself.

00:52:19 Mel

And I don't get into a situation where the the the mental health or the physical health, my mental health or my physical health is affected because of racism.

00:52:32 Ama-Robin

Well, yeah. And so we're on, we're almost done with this.

00:52:35 Ama-Robin

I mean this, this test, the scale is in four parts. We've done 3 and I think the first one is really the one that's kind of the most most common, but each one has a has a a purpose.

00:52:46 Ama-Robin

So I hope that I can count on you to come back and we can finish up this 4th one together.

00:52:52 Mel

Absolutely, I will be here.

00:52:55 Ama-Robin

Great. I enjoy these real talks.

00:52:56 Ama-Robin

I learned from them. I hope you do too.

00:52:59 Ama-Robin

You know, I'm talking to my audience here and I finished my cup of tea and well, I think we're time to wrap this up. And you know, we'll we'll, we'll come back and finish up the Everyday discrimination scale.

00:53:13 Ama-Robin

Asante Sanamel.

00:53:15 Mel

Thank you for having me. I'm with Robin.

00:53:17 Mel

I really enjoy being on this show and and discussing this with you because this is a very, very important issue that we all face.

00:53:28 Ama-Robin

Yes, we all face consistently and we have to be there for each other. OK.

00:53:34 Ama-Robin

And so I will see you soon. Bye for now.

00:53:37 Mel

Bye.