Symptoms of Racial Battle Fatigue

"Racial battle fatigue addresses the physiological and psychological strain exacted on racially marginalized groups and the amount of energy lost dedicated to coping with racial microaggressions and racism." (Smith et al., 2007)

Behavioral/Emotional Responses	Physiological Responses	Psychological Responses
● Stereotype threat ● John Henryism - high-effort coping with difficult psychological stressors ● Increased commitment to spirituality ● Overeating or loss of appetite ● Impatience ● Quickness to argue ● Procrastination ● Increased use of alcohol or drugs ● Increased smoking ● Withdrawal or isolation from others ● Neglect of responsibilities ● Poor school or job performance ● Changes in close family relationships	● Tension, headaches, and backaches ● Elevated heartbeat ● Rapid breathing in anticipation of racial conflict ● An upset stomach or "butterflies" ● Extreme fatigue ● Ulcers ● Loss of appetite ● Elevated blood pressures ● Diarrhea or constipation ● Rashes ● Hives ● Frequent illness ● Chest pain	● Apathy ● Constant anxiety and worrying ● Increased swearing and complaining ● Inability to sleep ● Sleep broken by haunting, conflict-specific dreams ● Loss of self-confidence ● Difficulty in thinking coherently or being able to articulate (confirming stereotype) ● Hypervigilance ● Frustration ● Denial ● Emotional and social withdrawal ● Keeping quiet ● Resentment ● Worry ● Miscarriage

Adapted from: Smith, W. A., Allen, W. R., & Danley, L. L. (2007). Assume the position . . . you fit the description: Psychosocial experiences and racial battle fatigue among African American male college students

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Manifestations of Racism-Related Stress (Race-Based Othering)

Adapted from: Harrell, S. P. (2000). A multidimensional conceptualization of racism-related stress

Racism-Related Life Events - These are racialized events that have a beginning and end. For example, experiencing racism from a parent of one of the children at the school where the guardian then withdraws their child from the school, causing the educator to no longer have contact with the guardian.

Vicarious Racism Experience - This type of racism happens through observation or report about a situation. In this same example, another BIPOC educator witnesses the exchange between their colleague and the guardian, where they, too, believe that race was a factor in the way the educator was treated.

Daily racism microstressor - I don't believe in any stressor being a microstressor, but I want to honor Dr. Harrell's work. Daily racism stressors in the education space can look like continual put-downs by colleagues, silence, or lack of solidarity from management when reporting racialized experiences within the workplace.

Chronic contextual stress - These are system-wide issues, such as unequal distribution of resources and limited opportunities for people of color, which influence their living conditions and quality of life. For example, the continual promotion of White employees who appear to be less qualified or lack of effort to increase or at least maintain the number of Black educators within the space. (This may not appear to be racialized for some folks.)

Collective Experiences of Racism - This does not involve witnessing or hearing about a specific incident of racism associated with someone the educator knows. Instead, it is the broad collection of racism happening to people of that race. For example, a lack of representation within places of authority within an organization or knowing that, in a general sense, BIPOC preschool educators do not experience equal pay.

Transgenerational transmission - There must always be a consideration for the history of racism experienced by the group. The history also shapes the content of the race-related family and community stories that are passed down through the generations that have intragroup and intergroup dimensions. The history of being an educator in America, especially for Black people, has been tumultuous, with Brown vs. Board causing 40,000 Black educators to be fired from their jobs. The remaining educators were typically lighter-skinned.

Notes:

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