



The Impact of Racism on African American Couples: Implications for Couple Therapy

Marjorie Nightingale, PhD, LMFT, JD

9:00 am to 12:00 pm, Saturday, November 13, 2021

Interactive via Zoom

This workshop addresses the impact of racism and racial oppression on African American couples. The experience of racism is nuanced and unique to the individual even where systemic racial oppression affects entire communities. For couple therapists, whether they identify with oppressed racial groups or more privileged ones, experiences of racism are similarly unique and nuanced. Thus, clinicians must understand why the most important aspect of working effectively with this community requires a broad examination of their own racial, ethnic and other contextual identities and the relative positioning of those identities regarding power, privilege and subjugation in relation to others *before* entering the therapy space. The presenter will encourage participants to begin that work through a series of dynamic exercises.

Additionally, the presenter will engage participants in a discussion about the impact of racial trauma, fears of vulnerability and other common themes identified in her study and clinical practice that may derail the therapeutic process with African American couples. These conversations will encourage skill development using media and role plays.

Marjorie Nightingale, PhD, LMFT, JD, is a psychologist and a licensed marriage and family therapist specializing in couples and sex therapy in a private practice in Washington, D.C. She received her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at LaSalle University and her doctorate from the Couple and Family Therapy Program at Drexel University where her research focuses on interventions for African American couples. She holds a post master's certificate in Sex Therapy from the Council for Relationships, and a juris doctorate from the University of Maryland School of Law. She recently received the 2020 AAMFT Foundation's Outstanding Research Publication Award for her first academic article: "Emotionally Focused Therapy: A Culturally Sensitive Approach for African American Heterosexual Couples." Learn more about Marjorie at www.marjorienightingale.com.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this program the participants will be able to:

1. Describe why doing self-of-the therapist examination *before* entering the therapy space is essential for working effectively with African American couples.
2. Identify how racial trauma and other negative racial experiences may impact their clinical work with African American couples.
3. Provide examples of how they would engage in conversation about race with African American couples.

REFERENCES:

American Public Health Association (2020). *Structural Racism is a Public Health Crisis: Impact on the Black Community*, Policy No. LB20-04. Retrieved from <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2021/01/13/structural-racism-is-a-public-health-crisis>

Johnson, K.R. & Loscocco, K. (2014). Black marriage through the prism of gender, race and class. *Journal of Black Studies*, 46, 142-171. Doi: 10.1177/0021934714562644.

Lavner, J. A., Barton, A. W., Bryant, C. M., & Beach, S. R. H. (2018). Racial discrimination and relationship functioning among African American couples. *Journal of Family Psychology, 32*(5), 686-691. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000415>

Nightingale, M., Awosan, C.I. & Stavrianopoulos, K. (2019). Emotionally focused therapy: A culturally sensitive approach for African American heterosexual couples. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy, 30*(3), 221-244.

FEE:

PCFINE is a non-profit organization. This workshop is a fundraiser with all revenues earmarked to fund: (1) reduced tuition for fellows who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color entering PCFINE's 2022 first year Couple Therapy Training Program, (2) a discounted "equity rate" for this workshop (see details under registration rates), and (3) other initiatives to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion at PCFINE.

For registration information, please scroll down to the registration section of the flyer.

PARTICIPANTS:

This program is open to all PCFINE members, other interested mental health professionals and students. It is intended for those with a beginner, intermediate or advanced level of knowledge and experience.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Full refund if notice of cancellation received by November 5, 2021.

CONTINUING EDUCATION:

PCFINE is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. PCFINE maintains responsibility for the program and its content. This program fulfills the requirement for 2.5 hours of CE credit. Social Workers and Licensed Mental Health Counselors may call (781) 433-0906 or e-mail pcfine1934@gmail.com for CE information. Application for professional continuing education (CE) credits from the New England Association for Family and Systemic Therapy (NEAFST) has been submitted.

PCFINE is committed to accessibility and non-discrimination and will conduct all activities in strict conformity with the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles for Psychologists. If you believe that a violation of ethics has occurred during this program, or if you have concerns about accessibility for people with disabilities, or any other complaints or questions, please contact Justin Newmark, Ph.D.

There is no commercial support for this program nor are there any relationships between the CE sponsor, presenter, workshop content, research, grants, or other funding that could reasonably be construed as a conflict of interest.

For information about PCFINE, visit our website at www.pcfine.org.

REGISTRATION:

The deadline for registration is Thursday, November 11, 2021.

To register, please visit our website at <https://www.pcfine.org/event-4420681>.

PCFINE Member	Non-PCFINE Member	Students in full-time graduate programs in mental health fields	Equity Rate*
\$75	\$90	\$30	\$30

*This registration rate is for participants who identify as belonging to racial or ethnic groups with historical barriers to access, and/or those who primarily work with low income or historically marginalized people.