

HISTORICAL TRAUMA AND CULTURAL HEALING

Discussion Questions – *What Is Historical Trauma?*

These questions are meant as discussion starters following viewing of the video “What Is Historical Trauma” that can be found at <http://z.umn.edu/htplaylist>. This is not meant as a comprehensive list; rather, it provides a variety of starter questions that facilitators may choose from and, as appropriate, add in additional questions specific to the field in which they work.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What does historical trauma mean to you?
2. What examples of historical trauma do you know about?
3. In what ways do you see the effects of historical trauma impacting and playing out in today’s society?
4. How does learning about historical trauma affect the way you think about race, identity, and culture?
5. How does the concept of historical trauma of American Indians and African Americans reflect your understanding of American history?
6. How does one’s understanding of historical connections and historical trauma influence subtext of communication and understanding across individuals and groups of people? What challenges and benefits are there in trying to honestly and openly understand others’ perspectives through strong emotions that may be in play?
7. Do you feel like you have an opportunity to contribute and engage others in a conversation about historical trauma? If so, in what ways?

QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

1. What messages might promote or reinforce children’s negative cultural stereotypes?
2. Do you see or are you aware of positive messages about culture? How might these influence children’s and families’ resiliency responses to historical trauma?
3. How might emotional repression of elders impact social-emotional development of children? What does this look like in a family?
4. How have the historical traumas that peoples have experienced in cultural clashes influenced the valuing of individuals vs. families?
5. When there’s a historically unequal relationship between individuals and groups of people, how does that impact client-professional relationships? How can we address the underlying hurt and pain to break down barriers of communication?
6. What messages does the experience of the *colored water fountain* tell children about the importance of similarities and differences of skin color? How might this story be used to provide an opportunity for others to learn about microaggressions?

This material was compiled by: Mina Blyly-Strauss, MEd, Graduate Assistant; Jennifer Garbow, MEd, Extension Educator; Susan Govern, MA Ed Psych, Tutor; Sara Langworthy, Ph.D., Extension Educator; Cari Michaels, MPH, Extension Educator; Judy Myers, MS, RN, Extension Educator

extension.umn.edu/family/cyfc • @CYFCumn • [facebook.com/UofMNCYFC](https://www.facebook.com/UofMNCYFC)