



DECOLONIZATION AND ANTIRACIST ACTIVISM WITHIN COACHING PROCESSES THE 8TH EYE - LOOKING THROUGH A POWERFUL BLACK LENS

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Abstract: This paper aims to contribute to the development of existing and future coaching frameworks. I bring my diverse personal experiences and professional interests in thinking about what decolonizing coaching could entail in terms of anti-racist activism, learning and development. The 8th eye, a decolonizing eye, a powerful Black lens uses critical race theory as an approach. The approach focuses on empowering Black people and People of Colour (BPOC) and Indigenous people experiencing discrimination within their organizations and supports everyone to challenge and change systemic oppressions. Supporting individuals and institutions committed to decolonization and antiracist activism to reflect on existing coaching frameworks. We cannot address the realities of the racism faced by BPOC and Indigenous people with purely Eurocentric lenses and being racism deniers. Therefore, listening to people's experiential exchanges, shows "over standing"² and values different responses.

Keywords: decolonization, coaching, anti-racism, the 8th Eye.

DESCOLONIZAÇÃO E ATIVISMO ANTI-RACISTA NOS PROCESSOS DE COACHING O 8^a OLHO - OLHANDO ATRAVÉS DE UMA LENTE PRETA PODEROSA

Resumo: Este artigo tem como objetivo contribuir para o desenvolvimento de estruturas de coaching existentes e futuras. Trago minhas diversas experiências pessoais e interesses profissionais em pensar sobre o que a descolonização do coaching pode acarretar em termos de ativismo, aprendizado e desenvolvimento anti-racista. O oitavo olho, um olho descolonizante, uma poderosa lente preta usa a teoria crítica da raça

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² Overstanding is originally Jamaican patois with Rastafarian roots, now part of Black British communities, and means deep understanding.



como abordagem. A abordagem se concentra no empoderamento de pessoas negras e de cor (BPOC) e indígenas que sofrem discriminação em suas organizações e apóia a todos para desafiar e mudar as opressões sistêmicas. Apoiar indivíduos e instituições comprometidas com a descolonização e o ativismo anti-racista para refletir sobre as estruturas de coaching existentes. Não podemos abordar as realidades do racismo enfrentado pelo BPOC e pelos povos indígenas com lentes puramente eurocêntricas e negadores do racismo. Portanto, ouvir as trocas experienciais das pessoas mostra “superação” e valoriza diferentes respostas.

Palavras-chave: descolonização, coaching, anti-racismo, o 8o olho

DESCOLONIZACIÓN Y ACTIVISMO ANTIRRACISTA EN LOS PROCESOS DE COACHING

EL OCTAVO OJO: MIRAR A TRAVÉS DE UNA POTENTE LENTE NEGRA

Resumen: Existentes y futuros. Aporto mis diversas experiencias personales e intereses profesionales para pensar en lo que podría implicar la descolonización del coaching en términos de activismo, aprendizaje y desarrollo antirracista. El octavo ojo, un ojo descolonizador, una poderosa lente negra utiliza la teoría crítica de la raza como enfoque. El enfoque se enfoca en empoderar a las personas negras y de color (BPOC) y las personas indígenas que sufren discriminación dentro de sus organizaciones y apoya a todos para desafiar y cambiar las opresiones sistémicas. Apoyar a las personas e instituciones comprometidas con la descolonización y el activismo antirracista para que reflexionen sobre los marcos de coaching existentes. No podemos abordar las realidades del racismo que enfrentan el BPOC y los pueblos indígenas con lentes puramente eurocéntricos y negando el racismo. Por lo tanto, escuchar los intercambios de experiencias de las personas, muestra "superioridad" y valora diferentes respuestas.

Palabras clave: descolonización, coaching, antirracismo, el octavo ojo

DÉCOLONISATION ET ACTIVISME ANTIRACISTE DANS LES PROCESSUS DE COACHING

LE 8E ŒIL - REGARDER À TRAVERS UNE PUISSANTE LENTILLE NOIRE

Résumé: Cet article vise à contribuer au développement de cadres de coaching existants et futurs. J'apporte mes diverses expériences personnelles et intérêts professionnels pour réfléchir à ce que le coaching décolonisant pourrait impliquer en termes d'activisme antiraciste, d'apprentissage et de développement. Le 8ème œil, un œil décolonisant, une puissante lentille noire utilise la théorie critique de la race comme approche. L'approche se concentre sur l'autonomisation des personnes noires et des personnes de couleur (BPOC) et des personnes autochtones victimes de discrimination au sein de leurs organisations et aide tout le monde à contester et à changer les oppressions systémiques. Soutenir les individus et les institutions engagés dans la décolonisation et l'activisme antiraciste pour réfléchir aux cadres de coaching existants. Nous ne pouvons pas aborder les réalités du racisme auquel sont confrontés BPOC et les peuples autochtones avec des lentilles purement eurocentriques et en étant des négateurs du racisme. Par conséquent, écouter les échanges expérientiels des gens montre un «sur-standing» et valorise des réponses différentes.

Mots clés: décolonisation, coaching, anti-racisme, le 8^{ème} œil

INTRODUCTION: A DECOLONIZING LENS, APPLIED WITHIN COACHING PROCESSES, IS A POWERFUL LENS

There is a need for what I term ‘the 8th Eye’. In order for the experiences of BPOC and Indigenous people to be valued within the institutions and to gain the most out of coaching or mentoring, organizations must recognize how the effects of racism and other intersecting oppressions can be mediated through a range of coaching interventions. These interventions centre on enabling participants to discuss and formulate antiracist strategies to address the systemic oppressions we encounter daily and to decolonise organisations. The ability to counter frame systemic racism and microaggressions is essential. It is an essential antiracist strategy, as globally many institutions systematically exclude BPOC and Indigenous people from senior positions and racism prevents appropriate reward and recognition (MILLER, 2019, p.19). The mental and physical impact of racism experienced by BPOC and Indigenous people is with us daily and there is still a majority white resistance to open discussions about how racism creates toxic, systemic institutional policies, processes, and practices, Kinouani, (2019) discusses this from a psychoanalytical approach. Therefore as coaches, as necessary, we would support individuals or groups to contextualise and integrate the impact of **racism** both in the *here and now* and the *there and then*” (KINOANI, 2019, p.38). The 8th Eye offers this understanding and acknowledgement of systemic racism within the coaching conversations.

The stark under-representation that still exists at executive level in all institutions is linked to the early construction of stereotypes as we can see in Jasmin Dotiwala’s article in the Metro newspaper, (2017), headlined “Black women are the least valued people in society”. Dotiwala states “MP Diane Abbott makes one or two embarrassing blunders and the national media and other commentators try to create a dehumanising image of her as a national laughing stock, she is treated with total disrespect”. This reflects the misogynoir to which Black women are subjected (PALMER, 2020). The interview data later in the paper testify how common the

racialized attacks on Black women in senior positions are, and why decolonization of the coaching processes can contribute to reducing their devastating impact.

I am completing this paper when the barbaric police killing of George Floyd was carried out so casually and this irrefutable filmed evidence reached global audiences. His death and others and the fight for justice gave rise to global collective Black Lives Matter protests in June 2020. BIPOC communities are also reeling from overrepresentation in COVID deaths globally.

Academia also has a responsibility to disrupt embedded racist ideologies. My contribution here is to disrupt the systemic racism within academia through “the 8th Eye”, a powerful Black lens. The discussion first turns to the theoretical framing of the 8th eye within institutional racism and existing models of coaching including the 7th eye model. It then moves to decolonization and the 8th eye as a Black decolonizing lens on coaching through drawing on interview data so as to “counter frame” institutional racism in education and other organizations

THEORETICAL FRAMING: THE 8TH EYE, A POWERFUL BLACK LENS

The analytical tools I am using for my reflections on coaching processes, are Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Black Feminist Theory and I continue to draw on intersectionality (CRENSHAW, 1989). “The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power. The movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, setting, group and self-interest, and emotions and the unconscious” (DELGADO and STEFANCIC, 2017: 3). Black feminist theory and Critical Race Theory (CRT) as epistemology, methodology and heuristic techniques offer insights into the forces at play. Ange-Marie Hancock (2007), S. Laurel Weldon (2008), and Jennifer Nash (2009), (quoted by LEWIS, 2013, p. 871) state that Black feminist theory can become part of a more generalizable theoretical, methodological, and conceptual tool kit. This is stated because Black feminist theory acknowledges that Black women and other women of colour produce

knowledge which can also be applied to research beyond issues deemed specific to women of colour who are racialized historically as a minority.

Collins and Bilge (2016) suggest that CRT and Black Feminist theory allow us to explore and explain the complexities in the ways our multiple identities influence our experiences and validate our many roles, which are constantly being challenged by racism and other forms of oppression. This has been my experience throughout my various employment roles in the UK. I have actively used coaching conversations to challenge racist and other oppressive behaviours and processes in organisations. This comes from an understanding that systemic oppressions are embedded and continue to exist in institutions (GABRIEL and TATE, *et. al.*, 2017; BHOPAL, 2018; EDDO-LODGE, 2017). Racism can only be tackled systematically at the institutional and individual level by utilising specific antiracist, decolonizing knowledge. Therefore, I call this coaching lens “The 8th Eye”.

CRT and Black feminist theory are essential analytical tools for embedding antiracist coaching in coaching frameworks and methods. Listening to and facilitating conversations on racism mean that as coaches we are working with individuals experiencing trauma from daily experiences of institutional racism. Coaches need to develop skills and knowledge to support individuals in developing strategies to maintain their well-being and engage the organisation to address oppressive practices.

The 8th Eye in coaching can support the empowerment and resilience of BPOC and Indigenous people. Applebaum (2019, quoted in YANCY, 2019, p.35) provides a useful viewpoint on the “epistemic agency of the marginalised” being ignored and disrespected, despite the epistemic resources BPOC and Indigenous people have in articulating their experiences. As CRT and Black feminist theorists, we acknowledge that colonialism is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and racialized values. White superiority, power and privilege are determinants of how racism and sexism manifest themselves throughout our daily lives, reflected in practices and processes in institutions and organisational behaviours. CRT and Black feminist theory provide insight and knowledge regarding institutional racism giving us the 8th Eye to find resolutions to the challenges.

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

In the UK there have been multiple reports evidencing institutional racism in every government institution including education and many private sector organisations. Over the last 40 years there have been -

- The Scarman Report, 1981, which denied that institutional racism existed and failed to condemn police racism.
- Stephen Lawrence was horrifically murdered by white racists in 1993. On the first “Stephen Lawrence Day” in June 2019, his mother, Baroness Doreen Lawrence, OBE stated “For the past 26 years, I've worked hard to highlight some of these injustices, which have resulted in important changes to the law in Stephen's name and memory”. Dodd, V (2019). Institutional racism was recognized because of the Macpherson Report, 1999, which was prompted by the racially motivated death of Stephen Lawrence. This resulted in changes to the Race Relations Act 1992 to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which gave individuals the right to sue the police for racial discrimination in investigations.
- NHS – The Snowy White Peaks (KLINE, 2014) stated that the National Health service needed to eradicate institutional and systemic racism and promote BPOC to senior roles in the organisation.

Anti-racist progress is slow despite numerous national reviews and reports that have been commissioned, for example, UK Universities (Equality and Human Rights Commission) 2019; the Race Disparity Audit (UK Government, Cabinet Office) 2017; the Grenfell Enquiry, June 2017; and Gender Pay Gap by Ethnicity in Britain (FAWCETT SOCIETY, 2017). The current Windrush Scandal emerged from the Tory government’s Hostile Environment Policy (2012) and the gross mistreatment of BPOC individuals, who migrated the Caribbean between 50 and 60 years ago. They entered as British citizens and made their life in Britain under UK immigration law. Many then faced deportation 50 and 60 years later losing their rights to housing financial support, health care, employment, and their dignity, which leaves BPOC communities reeling from the impact of the deportations of UK citizens as a result of institutional and systemic racism. Lessons learned will be published in a review document at the end of

June 2020. The police force is institutionally racist. The impact is the failure to tackle historical legacies of the British Empire which remain in all aspects of UK life.

Coaches denying institutional racism and those who are resistant to developing an understanding and acknowledgement of racism and daily microaggressions, will leave themselves open to challenge when coaching or supporting BPOC professionals. Without understanding antiracist strategies, they will exclude BPOC in the praxis of coaching. They must acknowledge that whiteness and white privilege work to serve the interests of white people to the detriment of BPOC (BHOPAL, 2018, p.5).

Ignorance is claimed and issues of systemic and institutional racism tend not to be discussed openly and integrated within all aspects of the coaching framework. There is a lack of understanding of how racism and its intersectionalities can be embedded into coaching frameworks, methods and practices. An explanation for this can perhaps be found in Charles Mills (1997) discussion of “epistemologies of ignorance” where “the racial contract” privileges white people at the expense of BPOC and Indigenous people. Mills, (1997) claims that systemic forms of racism shape major institutions, economies, and culture. Further, Mills and Pateman’s (2007), *Contract and Domination*, explored a shared logic which underlined the sexual contract and the racial contract. In both cases the social contract, which is visible rests on an invisible domination contract, to the benefit of the oppressors. Charles Mills explains this concept of “epistemology of ignorance” again in his later discussion with George Yancy (2017, p.187), reiterating that the racial contract is about the marginalization of racial justice. In the UK, we witness this through the systemic racism that still perpetuates racialized gender institutional inequalities in 2020. For example, Black women make up less than 1% of the professoriate in Higher Education. Most Russell Group universities have just employed one or, even worse, none. (GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER, Feb 2020). Palmer (2020, p.509) argues that we should “name the explicit terms of this sexist racism and misogynoir to understand the boundaries of gendered anti-Blackness”. Tate (2015, quoted in PALMER, 2020, p.509) is given recognition by Palmer her “powerful analysis of the iconicity of the Sable-Saffron Venus in the English colonial imagery” because these are historical legacies being replayed in the contemporary experiences of Black women. Bailey and Trudy (2018, p.763), state that “although the term is fairly new, the experiences and the histories of Black women are not, and it became important

to bridge this truth through discussing misogynoir and its impact on things such as street harassment, domestic violence, labour, media/pop culture, State violence, and more”. Palmer (2019, pp. 511-12), traces the conception of misogynoir and its expansion through the writings of “Black feminist commentators and academics” assert that misogynoir “is important in terms of helping us to unravel the (un)gendering of a form of anti-Blackness that is specific to Black womanhood” (PALMER, 2019, p.512).

The 8th Eye is an essential powerful Black lens, in response to those white academics and other professionals who may not recognise or believe that racism or misogynoir (Bailey and Trudy, 2018) matter. We are therefore reframing the value of the experiences that BPOC and Indigenous people bring to educational institutions and other organisations. Some people still choose to ignore the impact of racism and intersectionality. When the racialized status of whiteness, their role in perpetrating racism and their white privilege is discussed, some continue to refute these issues.

We cannot ignore the fact that white ignorance, arrogance and superiority continue to feature in the embedding of institutional oppressive practices, Applebaum (2019, quoted in YANCY, 2019, p.32) highlights states, the “problem with systemic white ignorance is its obstinate arrogance and its capacity to protect white individuals from even considering how they might be implicated in sustaining unjust systems”. In order for the experiences of BPOC and Indigenous people to be valued within institutions and to gain the most out of coaching or mentoring, organisations must recognise how the effects of racism and intersectionality can be mediated through a range of coaching interventions. It is imperative that as Black women in the UK, we record our realities and experiences by counterframing Eurocentric white perspectives through the 8th Eye in coaching models

MODELS OF COACHING

A common definition is that “coaching is the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another” (DOWNEY, 2003, p.15). Shaw and Linnear (2007, p.87) discuss “different formats for coaching” as being complimentary and relevant in different ways at different times whatever its format, for example, one-to-one coaching with an external/ internal coach, team coaching, learning sets, coaching on

specific skill, or co-coaching. These formats are important, but so too are the planned or ad hoc occasions and group conversations within small or large workshop events.

Many coaches and coach supervisors in their practice will utilise a model called the 7th Eye (HAWKINS and SHONET, 2006) with seven components which address the levels in the coaching process. I refer to these seven components in a later section of this paper to contextualise my contribution of the 8th Eye, as an additional lens to be embedded within all areas of the coaching process to facilitate antiracist activism and decolonization. The 8th Eye is a powerful Black lens, a counter response to racism, to widen our discussions of the systemic impact of racism.

As a result of racism and its embedded coloniality, BPOC and Indigenous people are still underrepresented in leadership roles in all our institutions. In the UK, BPOC have the highest rates of unemployment and the biggest pay gaps, (EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, 2019). BPOC also experience the highest incidents of racial harassment in workplaces and are overrepresented in the prison population and the mental health system because of dehumanisation. The first 11 UK doctors confirmed to have died from COVID-19 were BPOC. This correlates with the findings in a recent study by Public Health England (PHE, 2020) confirming that coronavirus kills BPOC at disproportionately high rates. This review did not have any recommendations to make at the time. At the time of writing the Guardian newspaper (21st June 2020) also reported that “Brazil’s confirmed overall death toll from Covid-19 passes 50,000, the virus is scything through the country’s indigenous communities”. In the UK, many stakeholders pointed to racism and discrimination experienced by BPOC communities and more specifically by key workers as a root cause affecting health, exposure risk and disease progression. Racial discrimination affects people’s life chances and the stress associated with being discriminated against based on race/ethnicity affects mental and physical health. These are additional reasons why we need to embed antiracist activism within coaching processes to challenge and decolonize systemic issues.

Activism is recognised and researched by many Black feminist theorists and critical race theorists such as Crenshaw (1989), Collins (2000), Gabriel and Tate (2017), who connect research to activism, committed to eradicating all forms of subordination. Coaching with the 8th eye is activism. At its best, coaching has the potential to be a



powerful strategy for professional development for all career stages within all educational settings and other public and private sector institutions. My understanding and experience of coaching as a mind-set was part of my mother's legacy to me and many others. My mother, Gertrude Paul, generationally provided the confidence, the foundational tools and experience that enabled us to have the difficult conversations in addressing institutional racism. This beginning is foundational for me as an educational activist involved in social justice transformation and facilitating activism to address injustices. Social justice transformation through activist coaching, can be utilised in a range of coaching formats dependant on individual/ group needs.

I wish to widen the definition of coaching to encompass shared group experiences of racism because coaching programmes and processes have not addressed institutional racism. It is important to engage with other BPOC, whether it is Early Career Researchers (ECRs) or other Black and minoritized people's forums that create spaces for developing our antiracist strategies to address institutional racism and decolonize systemic processes. One of the analyses within CRT is "counter storytelling" which amplifies the voices of those historically marginalised (MATSUDA, LAWRENCE, DELGADO, & CRENSHAW, 1993 CITED IN VOLPE 2019, p.310). Indeed, "as critical race scholars, [our aim] is for our critical reflection to move into substantive action – to revolutionize the curriculum" Bell (1992, quoted in Berry and Stovall 2013, p.597).

DEFINING THE 8TH EYE

The 8th Eye can be defined as looking through a powerful Black lens that understands how white supremacy and white privilege are embedded in systemic processes in institutions and acknowledges that microaggressions are normalised. The 8th Eye counters the destructive and devastating impact this has on BPOC, through listening, empowering individuals to be resilient and utilise counter strategies within their roles to disrupt racism and protect their well-being. The 8th Eye locates BPOC and Indigenous people as valuable human beings and is vital for naming them/us as knowledgeable about their/our own realities within various workplaces. The 8th Eye of

anti-racism and decolonization as a “powerful Black lens” must be applied and embedded within existing coaching frameworks.

The 8th Eye, therefore, expands the attributes of both coach and those being coached through a “powerful Black lens”, a concept that I began to explore when working with individuals. I found that antiracist activism was not addressed within coaching literature. For example, when describing the wider organisational context also known as “field Phenomena”, as referred to by Hawkins and Shonet (2006) in their development of the 7th Eyed Model. The 7th Eyed Model is a framework which is used widely for the supervision of coaches as part of their continuous professional development. On some accredited coaching supervisor qualification programmes, Hawkins and Shonet’s 7th eye model is used to magnify the coaching, mentoring or supervision processes and the organisational and social systems in operation. Coaching interventions with the 8th eye centre on enabling participants to discuss and formulate antiracist strategies to address the systemic oppression encountered and to decolonize organisations’ systemic processes and practices. This contributes to individuals in leadership positions being able to “counter-frame” racism in conversations, policy, process and practice in public sector and educational roles. The whiteness in established coaching frameworks must be challenged.

CHALLENGING THE POWER OF WHITENESS IN ESTABLISHED COACHING FRAMEWORKS

Coaching is generally framed with listening, respecting the individual’s experiences and identity, empowering, providing space in the conversation for individuals to be reflective, and allowing them to find their own resourcefulness. The Psychological Dimensions of Executive Coaching (BLUCKERT, 2006) is a much-used framework. There is no mention of the lived experiences of BPOC or reference to academics such as Franz Fanon’s theoretical perspectives in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), who critiqued Eurocentrism in psychoanalysis and phenomenology. Fanon highlighted that the “political and psychic are intimately tied” in his earliest work on decolonization of History and Psychiatry and the North African Syndrome. Camile

Robcis, discusses Fanon's theory of "colonialism and racism having a direct psychic effect" on the lived experiences and minds of BPOC (2020 p.304).

Grant's (2011) RE-GROW Model presents a variation of the established GROW model (Hawkins and Smith, 2007). The RE-GROW model links coaching session structure to self-regulation theory. "A key purpose of such models is to delineate specific phases of the coaching conversations (for example, the beginning, middle or ending phases of the session), as well as acting as a memory aid to remind the coach, for example, to check levels of motivation" (MACKINTOSH, 2005; SMITH, 1998, cited in GRANT, 2011, p.1). Gregory *et. al.* (2011), discuss several ways that self-regulatory theories can be incorporated into coaching practice. Again, there is no mention of addressing lived experiences of oppression within institutions so necessary to individuals experiencing racism and other forms of oppression. The Self-Regulatory model states that the executive coaching role helps develop self-esteem and self-efficacy in those being coached in certain situations. However, without looking at individual experiences of racism and anti-racist strategies, self-esteem and self-efficacy cannot be guaranteed. The 8th Eye can be specifically utilised in all of areas of this model

Hawkins and Shonet (2006), refer to the wider systemic organisational contexts in their 7th Eye model which addresses various levels in the coaching process and the wider context. The model raises the issue of coaches needing to pay attention to their ongoing development and "monitor that they are behaving ethically and acting competently" in the various levels in the coaching process Bluckert, (2003). It does not mention the need to pay attention to race and its intersections at any of its levels:

1. The Coach/Mentor/Supervisor system.
2. The Coach/Mentor/Supervisor interventions.
3. The relationship between the Coach/Mentor/Supervisor and the coachee.
4. The Coach/Mentor/Supervisor's own experience.
5. The Parallel Process.
6. The Supervisor's own self-reflections.
7. The Wider Context.

There is a need to overlay a powerful Black lens on each level. The 8th Eye provides deeper knowledge and experience of organisational dynamics. In effect an opening of the other seven eyes in the model above to address racism and intersectionality. This powerful Black lens brings more critical thinking to coaching about our capabilities as BPOC and Indigenous people. The lens supports coaches and those being coached not only to anticipate but address institutional culture change with strategic antiracist practices and activism.

Universities run executive coaching programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate coaching qualifications and provide coaching and academic development workshops for students and staff. They utilise many different models and techniques of coaching, none of which explicitly address racism at the individual or institutional levels. This needs to be explicit as part of the organisational cultural change necessary to reduce the negative impact of racism for staff, curriculum development, recruitment and retention processes, performance reviews and promotion. For example, the organisational culture in UK universities over the decades has been resistant to challenging the historical and contemporary systemic process of racism, whiteness and Eurocentrism as we try to build the antiracist university (TATE and BAGGULEY, 2019). Antiracism is marginalised and lost in the sector as the “coloniality of white power keeps being re-centred because there is no interrogation of whiteness, of its political, economic, social, imaginative, epistemic and affective boundaries” (TATE and PAGE, 2018 p.146). The 8th Eye can facilitate difficult conversations in coaching on institutionally racist culture. We have to continuously look diagonally, from the bias, at the culture of the institutions, for the signs of anti-Black and people of colour racism and think about what this has done to our understandings of ourselves in the world that we inhabit. It is from this bias that anti-racism can begin to reconstruct subjectivities, institutions, epistemologies, discourses on the human and regimes of recognition (TATE and PAGE, 2018, p.153). This is about decolonizing coaching frameworks through the 8th Eye.

DECOLONIZATION OF COACHING FRAMEWORKS

The 8th Eye is a powerful Black lens which supports antiracist practice through the decolonization of coaching frameworks. Black feminist thought and CRT (cf COLLINS, 2000, 2016; TATE, 2016, 2017; ELLIS, 2011; HOOKS, 2015; LOURDE, 1984), provide theories to present BPOC and Indigenous peoples' experiences through explorations in relation to coaching frameworks.

I continue to contribute to social change in any institution in which I am employed, by advocating with others to bring community activism perspectives within not only existing coaching models, but also across the wider curriculum. Agency enables me to tap into my own box of life experiences and use the 8th Eye which allows us to disrupt systemic processes by counter framing and creating antiracist strategies which will continue to help with difficult conversations about racism and the silence it brings whenever mentioned within the institutions (TATE and BAGGULEY, 2019). In our commitment to engage all students in meaningful discussions about race, racism and other forms of oppression within society, from my experience it is mainly BPOC academics who are involved with developing these topics, plans or modules. We also consistently deal with issues that Black students raise about racism in teaching spaces and on placements. In preparation for these interactions, we create activities which facilitate conversations with all students in the classroom, ensuring their perspectives are heard and debated. Coaching for any academics who need support to facilitate these discussions should also be offered as reorientation and induction each academic year with the sharing of resources and lessons learnt from the previous years.

Coaching models and specific workshops as strategies on their own cannot address institutional racism, therefore any professional development should emphasise the depth of work required to understand the complex dynamics of racism in society and within the institutions we work with. Decoloniality gives us an approach to begin to address this. For Tate (2019, p.9) "Decoloniality [...] necessitates working at the levels of the manifestation of White racialized power and its attendant prescriptions of what counts as knowledge, who can occupy the category human and its negative affects which circulate and make HEIs the site of pain for both faculty and students alike". This is reiterated in Gabriel and Tate's (2017) edited collection on institutional racism in British academia where carrying out antiracist work in predominantly white institutions takes its toll. Gorski (2019) discusses the role day-to-day experiences with oppression

play in activist burnout. He quotes Amos (2015) and Misawa (2013 p.15), in that racial battle fatigue and burnout “uncovers the insidious racism BPOC face, including resistance, invalidation, and silencing.” The constant impact can be wearing and devastating, affecting BPOC and Indigenous people daily. This was an experience repeatedly discussed within the “Higher Education and Societal Transformation – Decolonization and Racial Equality” bi-country workshop which I discuss next in the themes section as it offered antiracist coaching in navigating systemic racism as an ongoing element of the workshop.

THEMES FROM BLACK WOMEN’S TESTIMONIES OF THE 8TH EYE

Alongside my other institutional roles, for many years I have been coaching both BPOC and White senior leaders in a range of institutions. In this section I share themes from coaching conversations with 2 Black women who are senior leaders. Secondly, I provide a personal experience of undergoing wider group coaching at the ECR workshop in Brazil. I decided to write this article as a result of the similarity of themes which continue to evolve in the coaching that takes place with BPOC leaders across many years. My energy to do this was recharged at the global workshop in Brasilia. The themes illustrate the need to “counter frame” institutional racism, the impact on BPOC and Indigenous people working in educational institutions and how coaching can be useful as a decolonizing tool in disrupting systemic and institutional racism.

The themes presented here, provide illustrate the necessity to address institutional racism with antiracist activism within coaching conversations. The trauma that is experienced because of racism continues to be highlighted by BPOC and Indigenous people. We/They are tired of having to explain why we/they prefer to have a coach or a coach supervisor who is experienced at looking through a powerful Black lens. This lack of trust and “shaming” by those senior managers who feel they had the right to refute these requests from Black women, for example, is appalling and shows the ignorance discussed earlier. This is because of “Whiteness and anti-Black woman racism dictating our very outsidersness, our position on the margins of organizational social life”, (PUWAR, 2004; ROLLOCK, 2012; MIRZA, 1997; cited in TATE 2017, p.54).

The 8th Eye is a tool to actively resist the denial of our/their lives within racialized context. It can empower those being coached. Indeed, if we look at themes which emerged from the women being coached on the impact of having a coach who identified as a Black feminist, educational activist, community, and organisational development coach we can see its significance:

1. The need for BPOC seeking mentoring and coaching relationships with each other as part of their personal and professional conceptualizations and development.
2. Navigating difficult conversations regarding request for a Black woman coach amidst “Institutional silencing” by “shaming”, Tate (2017) by questioning whether racism truly happens.
3. Using your identity to empower others, encouraging wider debates on educational antiracist practices.
4. The network provides space to redress impacts of oppression, confidence in challenging institutional norms.
5. A psychologically safe space without threat of being judged or having to deal with ignorance and prejudice.
6. Effective developmental conversations.
7. My ability to remain fully present and inspire individuals to look forward by addressing the racist issues that are resurrected in the organisation in meaningful discussions.
8. The intersections of race and gender, race, gender, and visible disability.
9. Adopting values and beliefs from their work, being an educational campaigner and activist irrespective of role.
10. Leaving the session feeling uplifted, energised and more resilient.
11. Maintaining a strong sense of pride in their identity- affirmation of the great value of our unique selves and contributions to the organisations in which we work.
12. Being aware as a coach of our own implicit biases so that we do not filter what we hear.

The 8th Eye in the coaching was essential for the two women here, because when they called out racism in the organisations in which they worked it had serious repercussions for them which we found resolutions to over time in coaching.

My experience at the Higher Education and Societal Transformation – Decolonization and Racial Equality workshop in Brasilia in June 2019, also illustrates the importance of the 8th Eye. The positive impact this has had on me as an ECR is astounding and I remain eternally grateful that I participated. This was the first workshop of its kind, developed by two Black professors - Professor Shirley Anne Tate (at the time from Leeds Beckett University and now at the University of Alberta in Canada) and Professor Breitner Tavares (from the University of Brasilia). They alongside other world-renowned speakers presented, led workshops, coached and mentored us as ECR participants as we co-created antiracist coaching spaces in group settings and working groups.

The atmosphere was exhilarating as we engaged with the fully participative Keynote lectures from:

- Professor Shirley Anne Tate, “Interrogating whiteness in UK universities: Institutional pain and Black decolonial feminist anger”
- Breitner Tavares, “Student suicide, mental health and institutional racism in Universities in Brazil”
- Andre Keet, from Nelson Mandela University in South Africa, took us on a journey of “Human rights education and higher education transformation in South Africa”
- Marcia Wilson from the University of East London, UK spoke on “The search for that elusive sense of belonging, respect and visibility in academia”. I certainly felt all of those things in this space.
- Jason Arday from the University of Warwick (has since moved to the University of Durham), spoke about “Understanding Mental Health: What are the issues for Black and Ethnic Minority students and staff at University”?
- Nilma Lino Gomes from the University of Federal Minas Gerais (UFGM) took us on her amazing journey of personal resilience and being attacked for fighting to create antiracist policies and strategies in partnership with government and the

communities. This keynote was “The knowledge built by the Brazilian Black Movement: The struggles for emancipation”.

- Joaze Bernardino Costa from the University of Brasilia shared an interactive session with us on his experiences of “affirmative action, curriculum change and decolonizing the university.

Participating in group mentoring and coaching within a context of anti-racism awareness and shared Blackness had an amazing impact. There were so many aspects, but I have limited myself to sharing only a few:

I was able to access so much academic expertise, being able to have long conversations with the 7 globally renowned keynote speakers was a once in a lifetime opportunity. The atmosphere created by the structure and input over the 3 days was exhilarating and being able to work on antiracist strategies for higher education in groups and one- to-ones was very productive and free of stress.

Being with many others who shared similar experiences of institutional and systemic racism meant that we could go straight to identifying the issues and challenges then move on to antiracist strategies without our voices being ignored.

I was at ease throughout the 3 days, I was listened to and I listened intently to everyone else with total respect for their individual experiences and the strengths they shared. Our experiences of racism were never denied. There was no disruption by having to continually justify why we were saying what we said. This made me recognise how much time and space is given to those disruptions daily.

The analysis shared throughout the individual presentations by us as ECRs, was phenomenal, I experienced being coached and stretched holistically, academically, and spiritually. Our critical analyses were presented through powerful Black lenses, with the use of theoretical concepts, storytelling, metaphors, music, drama, poetry, and literature. Every keynote was inspirational as were every single one of the participants’ presentations. As an ECR, we were very much given value and commendations for our presentations. It was sometimes emotional, as carrying the weight of racism is not easy but the workshop provided the space to just be unguarded and relaxed which enhanced creativity.

The networks we created are lifelong with authentic friendships that were created from the process. This makes us as a collective very strong in sharing academic messages, research, literature and support a year on. I came away rejuvenated and ready

to create more seen through the eyes of BPOC and continue to reframe the dominant thinking of white supremacist legacies of colonialism.

CONCLUSION

The experience of the workshop is an example of the importance for coaching to also be seen in a wider context, such as groups of people with shared experiences of racism and intersectionality coming together through a vital intervention. In this case to discuss the impact of racism for those of us who are educational antiracist activists, pursuing methods and strategies to address historical issues of racism that continue to create toxic institutions. Whether it be curriculum, staff management, services or unfair processes, the impact of racism is immense. However, there is an absence of research that specifically addresses the evidence of the supportive coaching role that academic workshops addressing the impact can provide. From my experience of the 8th Eye in Brazil, coaching workshops provide individuals with strategies in moving the agenda forward within higher education (and other public sector organisations).

I began this paper to add to the discussions amongst coaches, educators, researchers and practitioners - we should be re-thinking not only the practices in organisations, but also the historical relations of power that prompt resistance to discussions of racism and intersectionality. We need to ensure that there are conversational spaces within coaching frameworks where coaches discuss the impact of racism and intersectionality operating across wider institutional systems. This is especially necessary in universities because “..academia does not exist as an impenetrable bubble but as part of a wider society where race, gender and power are interwoven, and raced and gendered ideologies, attitudes and behaviours are transferred through and within its boundaries” (GABRIEL, 2017 p.4). This statement can be applied to all organisations and therefore these institutional issues can be challenged through coaching utilizing the 8th Eye.

The increased emphasis on coaching has promoted debates about the criteria organisations use for the selection and development programmes for coaches. There is still some ambiguity around the role of coaches, levels of knowledge and experience of antiracist activism. In many organisations the positionality of the coach and those being

coached is not a consideration. As coaches we have a responsibility to disrupt racism ensuring we do not perpetuate power structures, which is why the concept of The 8th Eye - Looking through a powerful Black lens, can be a complimentary, supportive antiracist strategy in counteracting the many systems of oppression and White privilege affecting BPOC and Indigenous people in institutions. With the 8th Eye, if we pay attention, if we listen, to narratives of racial inequalities and other forms of oppression when working with any coaching model or process we can provide much needed support in the coaching conversation and coaching processes. This will allow us to examine the processes, behaviours, language, norms, organisational cultures, practices, and people which are oppressive in institutions.

Following the BLM protests, the requests are growing rapidly daily for support to now engage with antiracist practice in schools, colleges, all educational spaces. It is no longer an option for any White members of staff to not be confident or competent to include this in their respective praxis. Otherwise what remains is higher expectations of BPOC staff, a majority of whom continue to endure lower pay grades and unequal workload pressures. Let us commence by having open, honest conversations with each other in Higher Education. We make progress by implementing ideas and valuing everyone as human, understanding intersectionality, and dispelling the myths by reframing praxis. Through this we can construct anti-racist thought and behaviour.

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