



# COPING WITH RACIAL TRAUMA

## What is Racial Trauma?

Race-based trauma has been defined as “emotional or physical injury, or the threat of pain, stemming from racism in the form of [not limited to] harassment and discrimination” (Carter, 2007, 2015). Experiences can be associated with hate crimes or incidents, or other forms of unfair treatment due to race, as well as threats of harm, injury, humiliation, or shame to oneself or others. The cumulative effect of racism associated with personal, vicarious, collective, and historical racial injuries is real, unique to individuals, and often spans generations. Responses reflect psychological and emotional impact and may be reflective of RBTS (Race-Based Traumatic Stress; Carter, 2017). This type of trauma may cause wounds to individuals, [families], and communities (Comas-Diaz, Hall, & Neville, 2019).

## You May be Experiencing:

- Sadness, depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Rage
- Nightmares
- Hypervigilance
- Flashbacks
- Somatic Experiences
- Guilt, shame
- Helplessness

## Some Ways to Cope:

- Connect/talk/debrief/process events with other BIPOC, your community, friends, family or allies/accomplices (someone with whom you feel safe)
- Utilize campus resources and community supports
- Filter social media
- Engage in activism (letter writing, protesting, voting)
- Allow for a variety of feelings (such as those listed above) in a safe way (i.e. talking to others, journaling, artistic expression, exercising)
- Know your feelings are valid
- Practice self-compassion
- Get information, support, or submit a hate/bias incident report here: <https://www.uwlax.edu/campus-climate/>
- **Get Connected.** Contact the Counseling and Testing Center by calling or visiting our website to learn more about the many services available.