

LAUNCH EVENT  
COMMUNITY TRAUMA CONFERENCE UK 2021  
**RACIAL TRAUMA: THE PATH TO HEALING**

**CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**

10:00 – 10:10	<b>Welcome</b> Helen George, Host & Founder of Community Trauma Conference UK Introduction to co-host Leoni Cachia
10:10 – 10:45	Keynote Presentation <b>A New Terrain</b> David Weaver, President, British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
10:45 – 11:45	<b>Our Stories Matter – Healing Racial Trauma Sharing our Untold Stories</b> Rima Sidhpara, Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor & Director of Rutland House Counselling & Psychotherapy
11:45 – 12:00	<b>Break</b>
12:00 – 13:00	<b>Being vs Doing: Becoming Race Construct Aware</b> Eugene Ellis, Integrative Arts Therapist & Founder of the Black, African & Asian Therapist Network
13:00 – 13:45	<b>Lunch</b>
13:45 – 14:45	Research Presentation 1 <b>Community Healing from Racial Trauma: What the Research Says</b> Claire Beerjeraz, Creative Children’s Psychological Therapist
	Research Presentation 2 <b>Navigating Racial Trauma as New Territory in the NHS: A Qualitative Study</b> Sade King, Trainee Clinical Psychologist
14:45– 15:00	<b>Break</b>
15:00– 16:00	<b>Internalised Racism: An Ongoing Trauma</b> In Conversation with Dr Isha Mckenzie-Mavinga, Psychotherapist, Lecturer & Writer
16:00 – 16:15	<b>Break</b>
16:15 – 17:00	<b>Live Panel Discussion</b>
17:00 – 17:15	<b>Closing thoughts</b> Helen George & Leoni Cachia

## SESSION INFORMATION AND SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

### Keynote Presentation – David Weaver

#### A NEW TERRAIN

David will start from the premise that any examination of racism within the United Kingdom has to recognise the increasing and intergenerational trauma being experienced by Black people and their communities. He will reassert the need for a focus on the issue of racialised trauma through the lenses of our diasporic histories e.g., 400 years of African enslavement, centuries of African, Caribbean and Asian colonialism and the universal struggle for universal human rights. He argues this needs to be a seamless process starting by addressing the current disparities and discrimination experienced by Black people on issues such as criminal justice, school exclusions and health inequalities. These all have huge implications for the mental health of Black individuals and the communities in which they reside.

The psychological and racialised trauma that followed the racist murder of George Floyd and the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on Black communities are already manifest. And this will worsen. David will however argue that the focus being given to race issues in this country, not least due to the Black Lives Matter movement, presents opportunities for change. In supporting the conference's clarion call for the need to develop new theoretical frameworks, he will contend that this can only be effective through the establishment of meaningful and purposeful collaborations between Black counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and mental health practitioners. Most importantly this must be in creative partnerships with Black-led organisations, Black communities and Black individuals.

David views this as part of a necessary conversation about 'doing for self', doing things differently. Fast-forwarding change requires the counselling professions to critically assess the best ways of addressing the current and emerging racialised trauma that continues to damage the mental health of Black communities. This examination is vital to shaping a new terrain.

**David Weaver** is the current and first Black President of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy having previously served as a Governor / Trustee (2012 to 2016) and Vice President (from 2004 to 2009). He has played a key role in BACP's drive to embed social justice as a core principle / aspect of its work and strongly advocates the relevance of the counselling professions for 'ordinary diverse people and communities'.

A former social worker, university lecturer, local authority senior manager and political advisor, David currently leads a leadership consulting firm that works with organisations, senior leaders and communities on issues relating to strategic leadership and change. A key aspect of his current work involves him operating as a leadership advisor, facilitator and coach for senior elected local politicians, local authority chief officers in England and Wales including as a senior associate of the Local Government Association (LGA). His consulting work also extends to NHS Trusts, and he currently participates on the Mental Health Leaders Group and the NHS Race and Health Observatory.

David is an experienced and qualified coach and mediator and leads a small reputable team that focuses on conflict management, consensus building and therapeutic interventions within communities. His work extends to private and not-for-profit bodies in the UK and he has also worked in Europe, West Africa and USA. This includes being one of the UK advisors working with the Rev. Jesse Jackson and his

organisation, Rainbow Push Coalition. David is a former political advisor to Home Office ministers including the Deputy Home Secretary and Home Secretary in the late 1990s. A central part of his remit was development of the government's policies and strategy for working with the third sector, community cohesion and the eventual establishment of the Macpherson Inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence. He is a co-founder of the high-profile body, Operation Black Vote (OBV) and has represented the UK Government on the Council of Europe Body - 'European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia'.

He is a fellow of the British American Project – a body comprising business, media, community and political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic and sits on the Board of a number of community-based organisations working in the areas of human rights, mental health, community development and counselling in communities. He holds an MSc in Human Resources Management and qualifications relating to coaching, mediation and occupational psychology.

## **Speaker – Rima Sidhpara**

### **OUR STORIES MATTER – HEALING RACIAL TRAUMA THROUGH SHARING OUR UNTOLD STORIES**

We either own our stories or they own us. Only when we have the courage to own our history are we able to write a brave new ending to our story” Brene Brown .

We all have a story to share, if as Therapists, we have not explored our own race story, how can we assist our clients to do so? In this experiential workshop, we will explore:

- Healing racial trauma through empowerment of story sharing
- The importance of creative expression when words alone are not enough
- Creative tools and activities that can be used within the therapeutic relationship
- Please bring some pen, paper and colours to take part in a creative activity

**Rima Sidhpara** is a BACP Accredited Psychotherapist and clinical supervisor with over 15 years' experience in the profession. She works with the philosophy that the therapeutic relationship creates therapeutic change. She specialises in the field of trauma and attachment and enjoys using a variety of creative tools to inform her practice.

Rima is Practice Director of Rutland House Counselling and Psychotherapy Ltd, A practice that is well established and hosts a team of independent practitioners delivering private therapy services to the community and businesses. She is proud to say that RHCP Ltd will be celebrating its 10th birthday this year. Rima is passionate about equality within our profession and feel therapists should be more valued for the work they do. She volunteers as Deputy Chair of the executive of the BACP Private Practice division, and hopes to be part of influencing positive change within the profession.

## Speaker – Eugene Ellis

### BEING VS DOING: BECOMING RACE CONSTRUCT AWARE

Being 'race construct aware' primarily involves a willingness to develop a more flexible relationship with our discomfort. We can increase our flexibility around race issues by a gradual process of becoming aware of our patterns of arousal and defence. We will then be more able to stay with what is most important in the race conversation, which is to remain curious and reflective to the hurt and distress experienced by those affected by racism. This paradigm shift would then lead to the natural response we would bring to any hurt we witnessed in another human being without being encumbered by the reality distortion field of the race construct.

**Eugene Ellis** is a writer, psychotherapist and public speaker on issues of race, difference and intersectionality. He is also the founder and director of The Black, African and Asian Therapy Network (BAATN), a network of therapists committed, passionate and actively engaged in addressing the psychological needs of Black, African and South Asian people in the UK. His book, 'The Race Conversation: An essential guide to creating life-changing dialogue', explores the intersection of race and trauma, the non-verbal communication of race and how we might navigate oppressive patterns.

## Research Presenter – Claire Beerjeraz

### Community Healing from Racial Trauma: What the Research Says

This presentation will be exploring the findings and background research into how communities can come together and heal from racial trauma through creative art therapies and encounters. I will also be showcasing suggestions on how we can re-work the therapeutic space to make it more of an *intersectional implication* for individuals. Now more than ever, it is pivotal that we can explore the impacts of racism that in a way facilitates acknowledgement, empowerment and healing on a communal, international and individual level, especially for the upcoming generation and youth.

**Claire Beerjeraz** is a Liverpool based creative psychotherapist and freelance creative. She has just completed her MSc at Edge Hill University, in Counselling and Psychotherapy: Creative Contemporary Creative Approaches, with hopes of pursuing a PhD in the upcoming year to further explore her current research.

She is passionate about combining therapy and expressive arts and currently works with local charity YPAS as a creative children's psychotherapist. She strives to use her creative mediums and academia for activism and positive change.

## Research Presenter – Sade King

### Navigating Racial Trauma as New Territory in the NHS: A Qualitative Study

Research consistently indicates that the appraisal of racist experiences is related to psychological distress and trauma. These conclusions have largely been drawn from research conducted in the US and there is a limited understanding of how this is experienced in the UK. The current presentation details findings from a qualitative research study conducted with 13 qualified Psychologists in the NHS. The research aimed to explore Psychologists' understanding of racial trauma, and their experiences of working with service users from Black and Asian racialised communities. The findings reflect the complexity of Psychologists' experiences as both catalysts for change and complicit members of a systemically racist mental health system. The presentation will consider implications for clinical practice, further research, and policy development.

**Sade King** is a Trainee Clinical Psychologist in her final year of training at the University of Essex. She is due to qualify in October 2021 and will be taking up a qualified post in forensic psychology services in North East London. Sade considers herself to be a Psychologist-Activist and is committed to challenging ethnic and cultural inequalities in mental health care. Sade's clinical and research interests include racial trauma, intersectionality, and the role of power and oppression in the experience of mental distress. Sade hopes to use her passion for social justice to influence meaningful change in the field.

## In Conversation with Dr Isha Mckenzie-Mavinga

### INTERNALISED RACISM AN ONGOING TRAUMA

Internalized racism is seen as an unconscious process by which individuals assimilate and take in negative behaviours and attitudes aimed towards skin colour, hair texture and physical features. This divisive undercurrent usually gets instilled at an early age and can erode self-esteem. Hurtful traits of everyday racism can be traced back to the influence of slavery and colonialism. One example is the pecking order based on shadism. Another example is the fear that some people of colour have about challenging white racism.

White people, due to their membership in the perpetrator group, have also inherited a number of coincidental traits that amount to internalised racism and white privilege, for example white guilt and fear of being singled out as racist. An inability to fully accept the traumatic impact of racism and related feelings, can erode individual self-esteem. This becomes apparent when challenged about their responses to racism.

**Dr Isha Mckenzie-Mavinga** is a Published Writer/Poet, Integrative Transcultural Psychotherapist, Lecturer, trainer and supervisor. Fellow HEA. Her Doctoral study is 'A Study of Black issues in Counsellor Training'. She taught for thirty-three years and is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Isha worked in mental health, with women impacted by violence in relationships and as a student counsellor. She has contributed to several anthologies including, The International Handbook of Black

Community Mental Health, (2019) Ed Majors, Carberry & Ransaw, Intercultural Therapy (2019) Ed Baffour Ababio & Roland Littlewood, What is Normal (2020) Ed: Roz Carroll & Jane Ryan. She has a presentation on the Confer online Module 'Women on the Couch' 2020 and has shared her work on various podcasts and conference videos including BME Voices Trauma conference 2020. Isha facilitates workshops supporting her books Black Issues in the Therapeutic Process. [2009].and The Challenge of Racism in Therapeutic Practice. [2016] Palgrave Macmillan