

# Indigenous Anti-Racism, Cultural Safety & Humility

## Important Terms to Know

Certain terms relate to one another and fit together to form a larger picture of Indigenous Anti-Racism comprehension. Instead of alphabetical order, the terms are presented in an order recommended for the best possible learning and development.

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### Racism

"is the belief that a group of people are inferior based on the colour of their skin or due to the inferiority of their culture or spirituality. It leads to discriminatory behaviours and policies that oppress, ignore or treat racialized groups as 'less than' non-racialized groups" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 215).

### Colonialism

"Colonizers are groups of people or countries that come to a new place or country and steal the land and resources from Indigenous peoples, and develop a set of laws and public processes that are designed to violate the human rights of the Indigenous peoples, violently suppress the governance, legal, social, and cultural structures of Indigenous peoples, and force Indigenous peoples to conform with the structures of the colonial state" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 212).

### Systemic Racism

"is enacted through routine and societal systems, structures and institutions such as requirements, policies, legislation and practices that perpetuate and maintain avoidable and unfair inequalities across racial groups, including the use of profiling and stereotyping" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 215).

### Indigenous-Specific Racism

"The unique nature of stereotyping, bias and prejudice about Indigenous peoples in Canada that is rooted in the history of settler colonialism. It is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada that perpetuates power imbalances, systemic discrimination and inequitable outcomes stemming from colonial policies and practices" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 214).

### Anti-Racism

"is the practice of actively identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism. It is more than just being "not racist" but involves taking action to create conditions of greater inclusion, equality and justice" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 212).

### Cultural Humility

"is a life-long process of self-reflection and self-critique. It is foundational to achieving a culturally safe environment. While western models of medicine typically begin with an examination of the patient, cultural humility begins with an in-depth examination of the provider's assumptions, beliefs and privilege embedded in their own understanding and practice, as well as the goals of the patient-provider relationship. Undertaking cultural humility allows for Indigenous voices to be front and centre and promotes patient/provider relationships based on respect, open and effective dialogue and mutual decision-making. This practice ensures Indigenous peoples are partners in the choices that impact them, and ensures they are party and present in their course of care" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 212)

### Cultural Safety

"A culturally safe environment is physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually safe. There is recognition of, and respect for, the cultural identities of others, without challenge or denial of an individual's identity, who they are, or what they need. Culturally unsafe environments diminish, demean or disempower the cultural identity and well-being of an individual" (In Plain Sight, 2020, p. 212).

### Decolonization

"In Canada, decolonization is usually discussed in terms of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and particularly associated with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report and *Calls to Action*. It is related to Indigenous resurgence (Indigenous people reclaiming and restoring their culture, land, language, relationships, health, etc., both independent of and with the support of non-Indigenous people). Decolonization is also associated with other relationships between groups of people within Canada and in other countries and contexts around the world, and for some, is linked to broader principles of inclusion and equity" (Queen's University, n.d).

### Indigenization

"If decolonization is the removal or undoing of colonial elements, then Indigenization could be seen as the addition or redoing of Indigenous elements. Indigenization moves beyond tokenistic gestures of recognition or inclusion to meaningfully change practices and structures.[9] Power, dominance and control are rebalanced and returned to Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous ways of knowing and doing are perceived, presented, and practiced as equal to Western ways of knowing and doing" (Queen's University, n.d).

### Reconciliation

"To some people, reconciliation is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state. However, this is a state that many Aboriginal people assert never has existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. To others, reconciliation, in the context of Indian residential schools, is similar to dealing with a situation of family violence. It's about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward. It is in the latter context that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has approached the question of reconciliation.

To the Commission, reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour" (TRC, 2015, p. 6).

### Two-Spirit (2-Spirit or 2S)

"A term used within some Indigenous communities, encompassing sexual, gender, cultural, and/or spiritual identity. This umbrella term was created in the English language to reflect complex Indigenous understandings of gender and sexuality and the long history of sexual and gender diversity in Indigenous cultures. This term may refer to cross, multiple, and/or non-binary gender roles; non-heterosexual identities; and a range of cultural identities, roles, and practices embodied by Two-Spirit peoples" (definition used with permission from Battered Women's Support Service) (Trans Care BC, n.d).

## References

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