

## BLM. This is a Critical Time in Our History.

6/10/2020

Last night I attended a webinar facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Hutton, DPT called Anti-Racism & Allyship for Rehab and Movement Professionals. She provided a brief history of BIPOC in healthcare and some directives for becoming an ally.

Something that really settled in for me was the deep rooted, often unconscious racism (or implicit bias) that seems to permeate every element of our lives from healthcare, to education, to television programming and fashion. It's not just the outward, the overt, in fact those real obvious forms of racism might even be relatively easy to manage/shift. It is the unconscious, the learned subtleties, the subconscious bias that is even more dangerous because they are pervasive, like a cancer.

As I explore my own biases, I feel the need to become more educated about the history of BIPOC folks, the history we didn't learn in high school, the history that was hidden. How did I allow myself to not see this? How did I not explore this sooner? How does it impact my ability to be a good practitioner, friend, human?

Dr. Hutton offered up some resources to help improve education about these important issues. Here are a few of her suggestions:

Killing the Black Body (by Dorothy Roberts)

Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present (by Harriet Washington)

The cost of racism for people of color: Contextualizing experiences of discrimination, American Psychological Association.

As the events of the last several weeks have had and continue to have a global impact on discussions around racism, the justice system and the desperate need for change I can't help but think that this may all just fizzle out, like many other causes. I don't want this to happen, but have experienced some hesitation to step out and do something more substantial. I'm fearful of saying the wrong thing, of misrepresenting the cause, of offending. This can no longer be my excuse for inaction.

I want to learn more. I want to learn how to do better, how to explore my own thoughts around race, inequality and how I sit in white privilege. I want to learn how to be an ally, both personally and as a healthcare professional. I want to do better, and I want my colleagues to do better.

I want to have discussions, to help dig up the roots and expose them so that I can be a better human, so that I don't allow the events of the last several weeks to be in vain. I want their lives to matter.

I would love my healthcare and fitness colleagues to join me in a discussion, a series of discussions, an effort to help educate each other. I would love us to discuss how to truly embody inclusion in our practices and in our hearts. Let's have those discussions.

If you don't already, give Dr. Jennifer (@dr.jpop) a follow. She's a pediatric PT with some great content.