

A photograph of two men in conversation outdoors. The man on the left is older, with a mustache, wearing a light green polo shirt. The man on the right is younger, bald, wearing a light blue polo shirt. They are both looking towards each other. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

Printable

Increasing Access to Healing Services and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors:
A Workbook for Enhancing Critical Knowledge and Informing Action within the Crime Victim Assistance Field

**Increasing Access to Healing Services
and Just Outcomes for Older African
American Crime Survivors:
A Toolkit for Enhancing Critical
Knowledge and Informing Action
within the Crime Victim Assistance Field**


Printable Workbook

July 2020

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This toolkit was produced by the Vera Institute of Justice and the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life under award #2016-XV-GX-K015, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this toolkit are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Photos depict models, and are for illustrative purposes only.



Note to the Reader: The terms which are ***bolded and italicized*** in this workbook are included in the [Glossary of Terms](#) at the end of this workbook. The reader can return to where they left off in the guide or in the workbook by clicking the specific “Return to” link at the end of the term’s definition for the place the reader was in the workbook.

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Workbook Instructions

As you watch the videos, consider the questions for the corresponding modules. You can record your answers to these questions using the printed copy and refer to your responses as you move through the guide and toolkit.

Reflection Questions: Module One

1. What are your thoughts or reflections on the module and expert panel discussion?
2. Older African Americans have experienced decades of *race-based oppression* and trauma across their lifespan. How can an understanding of this reality impact your work with older African American victims?
3. In this video, the panel discussed how many African Americans can use *double-consciousness* to navigate social situations. How might understanding that process effect your communications, interactions, or advocacy with older African American victims?

4. What can **cultural humility** look like in your work with older African American crime victims?

5. How can you be **responsive** in your work with older African American victims?

6. What other thoughts or reflections do you have about this module?

Reflection Questions: Module Two

1. What are your thoughts or reflections on the module and Ms. Evelyn's story?
2. For some older African American victims, the experience of *systemic disadvantage* and *concentrated disadvantage* may mean that they may have (or have had) limited access to critical resources and supports to deal with crime victimization. What does that mean for your work with older African American crime victims who have that experience?
3. Within the criminal justice system and the victim assistance field, older African American crime victims and their perpetrators can be subjected to various intersecting forms of *racial bias*. What does this mean for your ability to reach and effectively serve this population of victims?

4. Ms. Evelyn's faith and church community provided her with supports to help her heal and recover in a way that the criminal justice system and crime victim services did not. How could you work to support older African American crime victims whose faith or spirituality play an integral part in their healing and recovery process?

5. What opportunities do you have to apply an **intersectional lens** to your work with older African American crime victims? What does that lens look like in your work?

6. What other thoughts or reflections do you have about this module?

Reflection Questions: Module Three

1. What are your thoughts or reflections on the module and expert panel discussion?
2. Many older African American crime victims have directly experienced the trauma of *systematic marginalization*. How can an understanding of this reality impact your work with older African American victims?
3. An older African American crime victim who experiences crime perpetrated by their child or grandchild may not engage the criminal justice system. What does this mean for your ability to identify and reach older victims? How might this change your approach to services or outreach?

4. For many crime victims, the criminal justice system is seen as a resource to access safety and services. This may not be the case for older African American crime victims and their family. What does that mean for your work?

5. Older African American crime victims who make the difficult decision to engage the criminal justice system and report their children or grandchildren may fear for their safety and well-being. They may also fear their family will be over-involved in social systems. How can you be **trauma-informed** in your work with older African American victims who have these concerns?

6. In what ways does your **institutional positionality** impact your ability to support older African American victims? What can you do in your work to use your understanding of your position to enhance services to older victims?

7. What other thoughts or reflections do you have about this module?

Reflection Questions: Module Four

1. What are your thoughts or reflections on the module and Ms. Annette's story?
2. Negative *stereotypes* and *race-based biases* about African Americans and the African American family are pervasive throughout society. These issues are also present within the criminal justice system and the victim assistance field. What does this mean for your work with older African American victims? What can you do to address these issues and provide effective services to this population of crime victims?
3. How can your work support the **centering** of the voices, experiences, and concerns of older African American victims related to the criminal justice system, victim services, and healing?

4. Ensuring victim safety and access to justice are significant components of serving crime victims. What do you think safety and access to justice look like to Ms. Annette?

5. How would you support Ms. Annette in her recovery and healing process understanding that she may never choose to leave her living situation or her grandchildren?

6. What other thoughts or reflections do you have about this module?

Reflection Questions: Module Five

1. What are your thoughts or reflections on the module, the expert panel discussion, and Ms. Juanita's story?
2. Acknowledgement of the *complex racial, historical, and intergenerational trauma* older African American victims face is a step towards creating more accessible spaces for healing and justice. What can you do to increase your capacity for this type of acknowledgement, and in what ways can you incorporate this in the way you approach your work?
3. Understanding your own identity, power, and privilege is a critical element in enhancing your capacity to provide services from an **intersectional lens**. Can you name each piece of your *intersectional* identity? How does power and privilege show up in each part of your identity?

4. What messages have you received throughout your lifetime about your racial identity? About racial identities other than your own? How do these messages show up in your work?

5. **Affirming** older African Americans responses to oppressive systems, and their lived experiences is a significant component to providing **trauma-informed** supports. What do you think affirming would have looked like for Ms. Juanita when she accessed services? How could this have changed her experiences living in transitional housing after her victimization?

6. The process of **learning** and **unlearning** behaviors born from **systemic racism** and **oppression** is an ongoing and lifelong process. What are some steps you can take to move that process forward for yourself?

7. What other thoughts or reflections do you have about this module?



Glossary of Terms

Affirming – showing support, agreement, or commitment to upholding the validity and reality of experiences of others.

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Bias(es) – a tendency, trend, inclination, feeling, attitude, perception, or opinion, especially one that is preconceived or unreasoned. (See also: **Race-Based Bias(es)/Racial Bias(es), Institutional Positionality**)

Source: [Merriam Webster Dictionary](#)

Centering – intentionally focusing on people of color and their lived experiences and pivoting from the default position of dialogue and practice prioritizing whiteness and/or mainstream or traditional narratives, approaches, and ideals

Return to [Module Four Reflection Questions](#).

Complex Trauma(s) (e.g., racial, historical, intergenerational) – the experience of multiple traumatic events—often of an invasive, interpersonal nature—and the wide-ranging, long-term effects of this exposure. Complex trauma can be experienced individually, communally, or across generations.

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Concentrated Disadvantage – geographical areas where people are subjected to adverse economic and physical conditions which have negative effects on their residents. Living in areas of concentrated disadvantage is often a strong indicator of life course, socioeconomic position and/or outcome, educational outcome, and employment outcomes. Individuals who live in areas where there is concentrated disadvantaged are more likely to experience violence and decreased overall health and are also more likely to lack affordable access to medical care and healthy foods.

Return to [Module Two Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Racial Equity Tools](#)

Cultural Humility – a practice of lifelong learning, self-reflection, and self-critique that recognizes and challenges power imbalances in relationships and interactions and nourishes respectful partnerships with people and groups and institutional accountability for changing problematic dynamics.

Return to [Module One Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Cultural Humility, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia](#)

Discrimination – the unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, age, and other categories. This unequal treatment can be on the individual, community, or systems level. (See also: *Intersectional, Intersectional Framework/Approach/Lens, Racism*)

Source: [Race Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Double-Consciousness/Dual-Consciousness – a concept coined by W.E.B. DuBois as a unique perspective and a sense of two-ness experienced by African Americans because of their experiences of oppression and devaluation in a white-dominated society. This awareness forces African Americans to see themselves through their own eyes, but also use their experiences as a lens to understand how white people view them and will treat them.

Return to [Module One Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [The Souls of Black Folk](#)

Institutional Positionality – the stance or positioning of an individual—in this context, a victim services provider or criminal justice system stakeholder – in relation to the institutional, social, and political context of the crime victim experience. Institutional positionality is about having awareness of one’s position and how one’s identity as an individual within the justice system influences, and potentially *biases*, your understanding of the role, function, efficacy, and impact of the system and the field.

Return to [Module Three Reflection Questions](#).

Intersectional – being inclusive of and responsive to the complex and cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of ***discrimination*** combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw](#)

Intersectional Framework/Intersectional Approach/Intersectional Lens – a framework, approach, viewpoint, or action that analyzes, acknowledges, and responds to the complex and cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of ***discrimination*** combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

Return to [Module Two Reflection Questions](#); [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw](#)

Learning and Unlearning – the act of information gathering and self-reflection moving towards behavior change with the goal of systems transformation.

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Oppression(s) – the systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. (See also: ***Responsive***)

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Race Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Race-Based Bias(es)/Racial Bias(es) – a ***bias*** based on a person or group's race.

Return to [Module Two Reflection Questions](#); [Module Four Reflection Questions](#).

Race-Based Oppression – the ***racialized*** and systemic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group.

Return to [Module One Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Race Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Racialized – actions, behaviors, or policies enacted based on race. (See also: ***Race-Based Oppression, Systematic Marginalization, Systemic Disadvantage(s)***)

Racism – a system of oppression and/or advantages based on race. In American society, racism is rooted in a **white supremacy** system. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out **discrimination** through institutional policies and practices and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. (See also: **Systemic Racism**)

Source: [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Responsive – this concept is about acknowledging, naming, and validating any experiences of **oppression** and trauma for older African Americans who experience crime, and crafting responses to those experiences which honor their perspectives and lives and the choices they make with regard to accessing services and supports.

Return to [Module One Reflection Questions](#).

Stereotype(s) – a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion or uncritical judgment or attitude, especially about a group of people.

Return to [Module Four Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [Merriam Webster Dictionary](#)

Systematic Marginalization –the intentional and **racialized** relegation of an individual or a group to an unimportant or powerless position within society, outside of the mainstream and to the margins. Marginalized individuals and communities exist at the edges of society and have limited power, participation, and influence in traditional locations and modes of authority in society.

Return to [Module Three Reflection Questions](#).

Systemic Disadvantage(s) – disadvantages created within systems that offer advantages to some and disadvantages to others. In American society, these disadvantages are often **racialized** and designed to exclude African Americans and the African American community as well as other people and communities of color from a fair or unfettered opportunity to succeed within those systems.

Return to [Module Two Reflection Questions](#).

Systemic Racism – the manifestation of **racism** within social systems and institutions.

Return to [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Trauma-Informed – these approaches and practices begin with an understanding of the experiences of trauma survivors, including the prevalence of physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma. A trauma-informed approach or practice responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings. Trauma-informed approaches prioritize the survivor's feelings of safety, choice, and control.

Return to [Module Three Reflection Questions](#); [Module Five Reflection Questions](#).

Source: [The Office for Victims of Crime Glossary](#)

White Supremacy – the idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to those of People of Color. White supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless, immoral, bad, inhuman, and "undeserving." The term also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level. (See also: **Racism**)

Source: [Race Equity Tools Glossary](#)

Credits

An electronic version of this toolkit is posted on the NRC website:

<http://reachingvictims.org/>

The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims is a clearinghouse for victim service providers, culturally specific organizations, criminal justice professionals, and policymakers to get information and expert guidance to enhance their capacity to identify, reach, and serve all victims, especially those from communities that are underrepresented in healing services and avenues to justice. For more information about the NRC, visit the NRC's website at: <http://reachingvictims.org>. For questions about this toolkit, please contact: reachingvictims@Vera.org.

The Vera Institute of Justice's Center on Victimization and Safety convenes the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims. The Center on Victimization and Safety works with communities around the country to create healing services and justice options that reach, appeal to, and benefit all survivors. Our work focuses on communities of people who are at elevated risk of harm but often marginalized from the organizations and systems designed to support victims.

For more information on the Center on Victimization and Safety, please contact: cvs@Vera.org.

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The National
RESOURCE CENTER
for REACHING VICTIMS

Helping those who help others

