

Trauma in Uniform: Exploring the racial disparities African American veterans experienced while serving.

Speaker: Kenyuatia Gash, DSW, LCSW, BCD

Description:

The word "trauma" is most likely associated with death or injury. However, the transmission of the effects is broader than the context of war, significant disasters, and sexual and physical assaults. When it comes to trauma, human physiology does not differentiate between social and physical pain. Trauma-related symptoms may result when someone feels threatened or experiences physical harm or injury, either directly or indirectly. However, experiences of social exclusion or rejection are likely to result in the same symptoms. The structural and institutional systems established in America have resulted in unfair disadvantages for People of Color, especially African Americans, which remain very present. These systems affect opportunities for good education, housing, employment, etcetera and reflect disparities such as healthcare, wealth, income, justice, and voting. Retrospectively, it is no secret that when it comes to racism, biases, and discrimination, the military continues to wrestle with persistent racial injustice within its ranks, just like the rest of our country.

Thus, the intricacies of trauma-related symptoms within interpersonal, structural or systemic contexts must continue to gain recognition. As clinical social workers, our NASW code of ethics emphasizes promoting fairness and equity across aspects of society. This presentation will offer basic knowledge of trauma, the commonality of trauma, and the different trauma sectors. In addition, participants will be introduced to diverse factors that can impact trauma treatment implementation. Also, participants will learn how to apply trauma treatments within a culturally component framework.

Learning Objectives:

- Define the difference between trauma and PTSD.
- Describe the impact of trauma from a cognitive, neurobiological/physiological, clinical, and ecological perspective.
- Gain a basic working knowledge of trauma and its impact in society (racial, systematic, historical, and transgenerational) and basic strategies for treating trauma victims in uniform.

Duration: 1:30