

The **We Wear The Mask** movement is ultimately designed to give voice to people of color, foster healing and solidarity (social cohesion), and shift perspectives regarding structural racism among all people regardless of race and ethnicity. Oftentimes, we wear a metaphorical mask to survive and thrive or uphold racism (whether consciously or unconsciously) in society. Sometimes it's worn for protection. Other times to mitigate fears (real or perceived) by trying to blend in/fit in with white culture. Sometimes the mask is a refuge, a hiding place, safe place. And there are times that the mask is removed -- because it can be suffocating. Worst case -- it can be worn so long that one forgets their true identity.



Another way to describe this is **internalized racism**, which lies *within individuals*. This type of racism comprises our private beliefs and biases about race and racism, influenced by our culture. This can take many different forms including: prejudice towards others of a different race; internalized oppression—**the negative beliefs about oneself by people of color**; or internalized privilege—beliefs about superiority or entitlement by white people.

This is a time for people of color to really double down on their mental health and tend to their authentic selves; especially since emotional stress can weaken the immune system and take a toll on our bodies. Finding mental health support that meets your individual needs can be a struggle. There can be a perception that if you go to talk to a mental health provider or seek support that you're crazy. Maybe you feel you're supposed to be a strong person to hold up everyone else. What if "strength" means allowing your authentic self to seek, find and be held and helped in a space where you feel safe and brave? **This packet contains resources to learn more about combatting all forms of racism and tending to your mental health.**

“If you trade your authenticity for safety, you may experience the following: anxiety, depression, eating disorders, addiction, rage, blame, resentment, and inexplicable grief.”
– **Brené Brown**

Let's Stay in Touch

Share Your Story: Would you like to share your story or talk more about your journey toward removing the mask? Reflect on what it feels like to have to conform to societal norms to survive and thrive. If you've removed the mask, talk about the process. Why is this an important step in personal development and community transformation? You may record a short video or write a reflection and email it to info@cle4equity.org. Hand-picked submissions will be showcased on our website and social media to inspire others to become aware of the mask and begin removing it.

Visit us at cle4equity.org | Follow us on social media [@cle4equity](https://twitter.com/cle4equity) | Email us at info@cle4equity.org

Mental Health Resources

*****If you are in crisis or you feel that you are no longer able to keep yourself safe:**

Mobile Crisis: 216-623-6888 – you can call them any time, they are available 24 hours per day.

If you don't feel like talking, you can text the crisis text line by texting the phrase 4HOPE to 741741.

You may also go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call 911, if you feel like you can't keep yourself safe. ***

***Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Services for LGBTQ+ persons age 25 and under:

The Trevor Project thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now or call: 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678.***

Organizations below accept most commercial insurance and Medicaid/Medicare insurance plans such as Caresource, Buckeye, United and Molina unless otherwise noted:

Therapists & Counselors

Behavioral Health Associates
<https://www.behavioralhealthassoc.com/>
216-831-2500
24400 Highpoint Road, Suite 9
Beachwood, Ohio 44122
Psychotherapy and Psychological testing

Black Mental Health Corporation
216-512-0321
13110 Shaker Square
Cleveland, OH 44120

Boehm Psych Services
<https://boehmpsychservices.com/>
216-464-5700 | 440-777-9200
21403 Chagrin Boulevard, Suite 105
Beachwood, OH 44122
Offers Psychotherapy, SUD services: IOP,
outpatient detox.

Cleveland Counseling Center
<https://clevelandcounselingcenter.com/>
216-533-6330
23360 Chagrin Boulevard, Suite 102
Beachwood, OH 44122
Evening/Weekend appointments available

Center for Emotional Wellness
<https://www.emotionalwellnesscle.com/>
216-294-2434
3659 Green Road, Suite 102
Beachwood, OH 44122
Offers Eating Disorder Treatment, Psychotherapy,
Group Therapy, Nutritional Counseling

Cleveland Health and Wellness Center –
(Caresource, Molina & commercial insurances only)
<https://www.chawc.org/>
216-777-8834

Offers individual and couples therapy, Reiki and
aromatherapy, health coaching.
Offices in Rocky River and Beachwood.

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
<https://clevelandrapecrisis.org/>
24 hour Call/Text: 216-619-6192 or 440-423-2020
Offers counseling, child and adolescent counseling,
advocacy, support group
Offices in Cuyahoga, Ashtabula, Geauga, and Lake
Counties

Commitment to Hope
Gwenette James, LISW-S
www.mycommitmenttohope.com
1460 Rockefeller Rd, Wickliffe
440-799-7559
Family conflict, behavioral and relationship issues

First Step with Maria, LLC – (does not accept
Buckeye, Medical Mutual or BCBS)
Maria Davidson, LISW
216-509-9125
11811 Shaker Blvd, Suite 113A
Cleveland, OH 44120

Grow Well Cleveland – mental health services for
marginalized persons (LGBTQ+, persons of color,
etc.)
<https://www.growwellcle.com/>
216-282-3838
Offices in Ohio City, Lakewood, Sheffield/Elyria.
Offers Individual, Family and Group therapy; animal
assistance therapy, EMDR, other interventions.
Groups (Mindfulness, DBT, and Existential).

Hanna Perkins Center for Child Development –
Postpartum Depression Treatment
<https://www.hannaperkins.org/postpartum-depression-and-related-disorders/>

216-991-4472
19910 Malvern Road
Shaker Heights, OH 44122

Hope Behavioral Health – both faith based and non-faith based, diverse
<https://www.hopebehavioral.com/>
800-642-4560
Multiple offices.

Humanistic Counseling Center
<http://www.humanisticcounselingcenter.com/>
216 839-CARE (2273)
Have multiple offices throughout the area.

Pipeline Counseling Services – faith based
216-360-9343
23611 Chagrin Blvd. Suite 120
Beachwood, OH 44122

Progression Counseling Group
<https://www.progressioncg.com/>
216-342-5484
3681 Green Rd., Suite 404
Beachwood, OH 44122
Offers Substance Use Counseling and Counseling for Older Adults. Has virtual groups for adults and teens.

Weinstein & Associates
<https://www.weinsteinandassociates.com/>
800-342-6111 | 216-831-1040
Landmark Centre
25700 Science Park Drive, Suite 200
Beachwood, Ohio 44122
Offers general mental health services, chronic pain assessments and disability evaluations.

Grief Counseling

Grief comes in many forms, including loss of self. *With guidance, you can work through racial wounds and other hurts.*

Grief Recovery Method
<https://www.griefrecoverymethod.com/our-programs>
1 (800) 334-7606
Heal Your Heart 90-Day Challenge, 1 on 1 grief support, support groups, & online grief support.

Cornerstone of Hope
<https://cornerstoneofhope.org/>
216-524-HOPE (4673)
5905 Brecksville Road
Independence, Ohio 44131

Hope Behavioral Health – Faith based, diverse
<https://www.hopebehavioral.com/>
800-642-4560
Offices in Beachwood, Solon, North Olmsted, North Canton, Medina, Wooster, Akron, Online

Extensive grief services, Grief workshops, online grief support group (free), Grief Recovery, Individual Grief Therapy.

Hospice of the Western Reserve
<https://www.hospicewr.org/Patients-and-Caregivers/Grief-Services>
Support groups are free and open to the community – currently virtual only. Full list of groups and times listed on website.
Healing Arts Workshops/Art Therapy is available virtually
Services are free, however, registration is required.

Rebirth Counseling & Therapy Services
<https://liferebirthed.com/>
216-200-5433
Online anywhere in Ohio

Substance Use and Mental Health Treatment

New Visions Unlimited (Medicaid/Medicaid Plans, Medical Mutual)
<https://www.newvisionsunlimited.org/>
216-561-8300
4002 Warrensville Center Rd.
Warrensville Heights, OH 44122
Dual Diagnosis, SUD IOP, Groups (men and women, morning and evening), parenting classes, anger management

Online Resources for Wellness, Coping, & Stress Management

Websites

- Pregnancy and Postpartum TV-YouTube: Pregnant/newly postpartum exercises, some for families
- Yoga with POC - Yogis of Color-YouTube: Lots of options for yoga by instructors of color
- Jessamyn Stanely - YouTube: Body acceptance and female empowerment, lgbtq, feminist
- Black Mental Wellness - Website: Finding a therapist, strategies to relax
www.blackmentalwellness.com
- Sista Afya - Website: Free resources on mental health symptoms, free online classes
www.sistaafya.com/services
- Latinx Therapy - Website: Therapist directory, free resources www.latinxtherapy.com
- National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network: Therapist directory
<https://nqttcn.com/en/>
- Therapy for Black Men: www.therapyforblackmen.org

Apps for Emotional Wellness

- Liberate Meditation for BIPOC-app: Free, created by BIPOC for BIPOC. Targets anxiety, depression, microaggressions, internalized racism, grief and loss, sleep, worry, gratitude, joy and much more.
- Breath2Relax-app: Free, breathing techniques for stress management
- Mood Tools-app: Free, self-help for depression
- Pacifica-app: Free, coping with anxiety and stress
- PTSD Coach-app: Free, assessment and education about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- What's my M3-app: Free, tracks symptoms to help with conversations with your doctor
- PPD ACT-app: Free, survey for tracking and learning how to get help for postpartum depression symptoms
- Virtual Hope Box-app: Free, learn skills for coping with depression
- Smiling Mind: Low cost, programs for all ages; mindfulness for the whole family
- Three Good Things: Gratitude app
- Shine: Free meditations voiced by black women
- Exhale: All things wellness for BIPOC women
- Headspace – cost, 1st 10 sessions free. Meditation to reduce stress and anxiety.

Lifelong Learning to Advance Equity

- **Racial Equity Institute**: Online or in-person training opportunities for people and organizations who want to proactively understand and address racism: <https://racialequityinstitute.org/>
- **Third Space Action Lab**: Cleveland-based cooperative co-creating liberated “third spaces” for people of color.
- **Upcoming Cle4Equity events**: Invite a friend to any upcoming Masks Off Watch Parties on 7/21, 8/10, or 9/14/2022 to continue the conversation. More info and RSVP at bit.ly/Masks_Off
- **TED Talk, Bad White People**: www.ted.com/talks/travis_jones_bad_white_people
- **Resmaa Menakem**: Healing historical and racialized trauma carried in the body and the soul for all of us. Read more at www.resmaa.com. Read about **Somatic Abolitionism** on last page.

What are the Different Levels of Racism?

Race Forward's "Different Levels of Racism" Framework is an analytical tool for unpacking different types of racism that are often interacting and operating simultaneously. It is helpful to distinguish between individual and systemic racism in order to focus needed and distinct attention, analysis, and strategies on institutional and structural racism. It points toward needed systemic change-focused strategies which address root causes and can result in more transformative and lasting change. We need to invest more in institutional and structural change strategies to get to racial justice. Strategies to address individual racism are not sufficient for dismantling structural racism.

Individual racism includes internalized and interpersonal racism:



Internalized racism lies *within individuals*. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies. For White people, this can be internalized privilege, entitlement, and superiority; for people of color, this can be internalized oppression. Examples: prejudice, xenophobia, conscious and unconscious bias about race, influenced by the white supremacy.



Interpersonal Racism occurs *between individuals*. Bias, bigotry, and discrimination based on race. Once we bring our private beliefs about race into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of prejudice and hate, microaggressions, bias and bigotry between individuals.

Systemic Racism includes institutional and structural racism:



Institutional racism occurs *within institutions*. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not. Example: A school district that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers.



Structural racism is racial inequities *across* institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. Structural racism highlights how racism operates as a system of power with multiple interconnected, reinforcing, and self-perpetuating components which result in racial inequities across all indicators for success. Structural racism is the racial inequity that is deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture and our economic, political, and legal systems. Examples: The "racial wealth gap," where Whites have many times the wealth of people of color, resulting from the history and current reality of institutional racism in multiple systems.

Read more at raceforward.org.



Understanding Somatic Abolitionism

Somatic Abolitionism is a living, embodied philosophy that requires endurance, stamina, and discernment. These can be built, day by day, through reps. These reps will temper and condition your body, your mind, and your soul.



What Somatic Abolitionism Is

- Somatic Abolitionism is a living, embodied philosophy—a way of being in the world.
- It is a return to the age-old wisdom of human bodies respecting, honoring, and resonating with other human bodies.
- It is not an attitude, a belief, a strategy, a movement, or a political position.
- Somatic Abolitionism is the resourcing of energies that are always present in your body, in the collective body, and in the world.
- Somatic Abolitionism is an emergent process.
- Somatic Abolitionism is a form of growing up.



Why We Need Somatic Abolitionism

- Nearly all of our bodies—bodies of all colors—are infected by the virus of white-body supremacy.
- This virus was created by human beings in a laboratory—the Virginia Assembly, in 1691—then let loose upon our continent. It quickly infected people of all colors, backgrounds, and economic circumstances.
- Today, the WBS virus remains with us—in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the foods we eat, the institutions that govern us, and the social contracts under which we live. Most of all, though, it lives in our bodies.



What Somatic Abolitionism Does

- Somatic Abolitionism begins in your body, then ripples out to other bodies, and then to our collective body.
- Somatic Abolitionism requires activity—and repeated practice. Through repetition, you build resilience, discernment, and the ability to tolerate discomfort.
- Somatic Abolitionism heals our bodies of the WBS virus—and then inoculates our bodies against new WBS infections.

