



The Society of Indian Psychologists

Executive Board

President - Iva GreyWolf
President Elect – Joseph P. Gone
Past President – Gayle Skawen:nio Morse
Secretary – Royleen J. Ross
Treasurer – BJ Boyd

June 2020
For Immediate Release

Statement from the Society of Indian Psychologists in Unity with the Black Community

*People have the right to exist unmolested as people.
People have the right to occupy the land, on which they live,
peacefully and no one can deny them of that right.
If injustice occurs it is our moral duty to defend the oppressed against their oppressors.
When absolute justice is established, peace will follow.
Universal Justice is based on a spiritually strong society.*

The Peacemaker, Haudenosaunee Confederacy

The Society of Indian Psychologists stands with the Black community and acknowledges that Black Lives Matter. Our traditional values are community oriented and we denounce social injustices and racial inequality. We are all related and the pain of one hurts every one of us.

People have the right to exist unmolested as people. The recent events, including the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, highlight the fact that our country continues to be fueled by systemic racism and brutal violence against people of color. We have many multiracial relatives, including African-American and mixed Black and Native family members. We experience racism from a multitude of directions. We have many members who are wounded daily by the racial divide in this country. Our families and communities too have experienced historical as well as recent access to care genocide. These recent events demonstrate that institutional genocide continues for African American people as well.

People have the right to occupy the land, on which they live, peacefully and no one can deny them of that right. We wholly understand the impact of years of being classified as subhuman and the discounted unnecessary deaths of those individuals whose identities remain nameless. We wear the discrimination, the violence born on the necks of people of color. Even if some of us are white-appearing minorities, we all have relatives who wear their color and we also bear their pain. We find strength in the numbers of allies from all communities who have vocally expressed outrage in various platforms and refused to remain silent through civil and peaceful protesting.

If injustice occurs it is our moral duty to defend the oppressed against their oppressors. The ongoing and historical injustices are often not acknowledged by those in power. And if they are acknowledged, it

is often perfunctory and unaccompanied by a course of action for change. Grandmother said, “They have no ears to listen.” How many times and how many peaceful ways have communities of color worked to get those in power to acknowledge the injustices? In the aftermath of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, Custer’s body was found with awls piercing his eardrums. The women said he had “no ears” in this life and they opened them for him as he went to the next life. Throughout history, it is repeatedly documented that chronically oppressed people eventually rebel. Colin Kaepernick’s ‘taking a knee’ was highly criticized as being unpatriotic, yet he was quietly and elegantly giving voice to the injustices he saw. We must continue to find peaceful ways where those in power will hear us. Martin Luther King stated, “A riot is the language of the unheard.” We support and advocate for change within all systems to eradicate all injustices and to implement actions towards true equity and inclusion. This can only happen through transformation of those systems.

When absolute justice is established, peace will follow. We support all movements that push for human rights. We advocate for those who feel invisible, powerless, and voiceless. We believe that all must be guaranteed full humanness. We will not ignore the injustices, inequities, and discriminatory applications of law in our country. We stand in solidarity with our Black brothers and sisters -- many of whom are a part of our SIP community. We will work with you; we will fight with you; we will grieve with you; we will listen to you. We can learn from our shared stories to strengthen our resilience.

Universal Justice is based on a spiritually strong society. A spiritually strong society adheres to uncompromising values and makes certain that all people universally benefit, thus making a stronger society. When a society violates its own values of equality, fairness and justice, it is not a spiritually strong society. The Society of Indian Psychologists challenges all of our relatives to examine the ways in which we have failed to adhere to spiritual values by ignoring, minimizing or causing the struggles of our Native and non-Native relatives due to racism. There is no justification for the continued genocide of our Peoples. The oppression of one is the oppression of all of us!

Spiritual strength comes from honoring our ceremony and traditions!
Blessings to all of our relatives as we move forward together.
We are all related. *Mitakuye Oyas'in*

Iva GreyWolf
Joanna Shadlow
Teresa LaFromboise
Gayle Skawen:nio Morse
Melinda Garcia
Joseph P. Gone
Royleen J. Ross
Denise L. Newman
Alberta Arviso
Melissa Tehee