

NABPT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 5 | JULY- OCTOBER 2020



OUR MISSION

National Association of Black Physical Therapists is a nonprofit organization with the primary focus of increasing opportunities for the African Diaspora in the physical therapy network. NABPT's mission is to provide opportunities for increased visibility, networking, community service, career development, and mentorship.

This Newsletter will unify the chapters of NABPT with information that affects us personally and professionally. We want to spark different conversations each quarter and provide ideas to make changes in our communities.

TOPIC 01

Navigating 2020's
Social Unrest with
Resources

TOPIC 02

Strategies and Topics
on the Black
Experience in the
Workplace and
School

Topic 03/04

Scholarships, Mentor
Monday, Mentorship
Program

Whew! You have made it through half of 2020. This was no easy feat and many people were not so lucky/blessed. This year has brought on heartache with the passing of Kobe Bryant, anxiety centered on many ramifications issued by the COVID-19 pandemic, and now the overwhelming response from this nation (good and bad) to the recent killings of George Floyd, Breanna Taylor, Ahmad Aubry, Rayshard Brooks, and Elijah McClain. IT HAS BEEN HARD. We want to send our condolences to anyone that has lost a loved one due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also want to provide some insight and resources to help you (our family) make it through 2020. Please refer to our last newsletter on resources surrounding COVID-19.

We also want to provide mental health resources and strategies to use at school and in the workplace. Whether you have returned to your full work schedule, become an expert in the virtual world, or trying to figure out your next move, this nation has systemic racism oozing out of its pores and I'm sure it's an overwhelming additional weight. It's an issue that has been persistent and daunting for some, and new and shameful for others. There has been an outpour of concern/support on the large scale from organizations and business to the smaller scale like your co-worker or classmates. All of it has been stressful. I'm stressed because I feel that many acts are performative. I'm stressed because I feel both pessimistic and optimistic at the same time. I wonder if we will see a change in our lifetime with the massive display of increase DEI groups and statements. I wonder if my hope is similar to the hope that my grandparents had during the civil rights movement. I wonder if...

What can we do with these feelings? We recently had a Zoom meeting regarding mental health check in and we received a lot of good tips.

In summary, Be safe. Know where your power lies and act accordingly. Find your purpose. Know what you want. Have a plan. You are not a victim and you are not "less than". Find your joy.

For safety as a black American, you must "keep your head on a swivel" and know your surroundings for your health and safety. To take it a step forward, be in the know, but don't absorb all of that energy. Be the observer and not the absorber. Also know your strength. What are the things that you can do and what do you want to accomplish? Our guest panelist Dr. Talina Corvus and Dr. Trimble both stated that you should commit to one thing each day that pushes you towards your purpose and do not allow someone to steer you into something that does not align with your goals and purpose.

While at work, I have had several patients want to talk about "All lives matter" and the state of this nation. I self-evaluate to see if I have the capacity to step outside of myself and not absorb the exchange. Only then will I allow myself to have the conversation briefly and then to get back to the task at hand which is the recovery of your patients. If I'm not at a place to have a healthy conversation and not absorb the energy exchange, I change the conversation. When the patient is insistent, I will tell them just that, "I do not wish to talk about this in the workplace. It's uncomfortable. Now, have you had any falls since I saw you last?"

It is not your job to add "antiracist educator" on top of the many roles that you chose and that are place on you. If you don't want that role, then you have every right to change the subject. I do feel that if people really want to learn right now that we should at the very least give them some resources to educate themselves. We hope that in this newsletter you can find resources for yourself as well as resources that you can share with others on our experience as black healthcare professionals, and the experience of our black community.

Lastly, I want to emphasize finding your joy. There is research that shows the effects of toxic stress on the body. As healthcare and future healthcare professionals, we understand the effects of stress on the body, but we must know that we are not immune to these effects. Take care of yourself. Log off and be present with family and friends. Meditate. Do yoga. Find your spiritual outlet if that works for you. Be active. Nap. Creatively release. Explore other aspects of yourself so that you can continue to grow. Please enjoy this newsletter and refer back as needed. As always, reach out to NABPT for support!

DeAndrea Bullock, PT, DPT, CCI

01: Social Unrest Resources

Check out these articles, podcasts, books, and movies that offer different perspectives on structural racism and how it affects society. Great resources to share with co-workers and classmates. See page 4.

02: Strategies to Cope with Encounters as a Black Professional

There are topics like microaggressions, code switching, uncomfortable conversations, discrimination that need to be discussed. Check out the following pieces on pages 5-8.

03: New Scholarship Opportunity

NABPT has partnered with Intimate Rose and mFPFM on two \$500 scholarships on continuing education in the pelvic health realm. Page 11.

04: Mentor Monday

Mentor Monday with Dr. Jpop. See information below on page for Dr. Hutton's background and how to register for the event. Page 9-10.

Mentorship Program

We are ready to roll out the official mentorship program with matching. Please fill out the form to sign up to be a mentor or a mentee on page . Now more than ever is the time to have a working family to navigate these times. Page 10.



Find us at www.nabpt.org

Instagram: nabpt_

FaceBook: National Association of Black Physical Therapists

Twitter: NABPT

Email us at info.nabpt@gmail.com



01: RESOURCES

Great resource that encompasses books, articles, podcasts. Information for antiracism, mental health concerns, search engines for mental health therapists, inc.

https://nami.org/About-NAMI/NAMI-News/2020/NAMI-s-Statement-On-Recent-Racist-Incidents-and-Mental-Health-Resources-for-African-Americans?gclid=EAlaIqobChMI9uakuMTF6gIVGo_ICh2nsQN0EAAYASAAEgKFNVd_BwE

Movies

I AM NOT Your Negro

When they see us

13th

Time: The Kalief Browder Story

The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross

Freedom Riders

Podcasts

<https://www.wbur.org/artery/2020/06/05/podcasts-to-listen-to-about-race-america>

Books

<https://www.wbur.org/artery/2020/06/17/reading-list-on-race-for-allies>

<https://time.com/5846732/books-to-read-about-anti-racism/>

Articles

<https://www.webpt.com/blog/post/founder-letter-10-actions-you-can-take-now-to-support-diversity-in-your-pt-practice/>

<https://www.npr.org/2020/06/08/872371063/microaggressions-are-a-big-deal-how-to-talk-them-out-and-when-to-walk-away>

<https://medium.com/beingwell/racism-in-healthcare-and-what-we-can-do-about-it-8f213c48316c>

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/police-violence-physical-and-mental-health-impacts-on-black-americans#How-does-police-violence-compare-with-other-causes-of-death?>

<https://www.fool.com/the-ascent/banks/articles/african-americans-work-harder-to-build-wealth/#:~:text=The%20term%20%22black%20tax%22%20is,a%20lower%20standard%20of%20education.>

Mental Health Resources

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CBTUKvsjcZb/?igshid=gvhdtq887dt5>

02: STRATEGIES TO COPE

Code Switching in Healthcare

The term code switching has become a hot topic term over the last few years as black Americans have started discussing their work and experiences in the workforce. It signifies the way we may speak to accommodate others. Examples of this behavior are when one adds southern euphemisms when discussing toileting with senior southern patients or removing personal expression or emotionality from speech when speaking with senior management healthcare providers. Code switching can be helpful to connect with patients with various backgrounds as we are often times delivery difficult information while trying to ease patient's negative concerns. It can also help us to speak the lingo for career advancement if that is a goal of ours.

A common code switch for black professionals is to utilize their full fluency in the English language in professional settings of mixed company. This fluency of English can be used in place of African American Vernacular English, commonly and incorrectly referred to as 'Ebonics', which is spoken in more comfortable settings. While there are benefits to code switching, black healthcare providers know all too well that there is a negative and exhausting side to the practice. Depending on the scenario, it can make one feel inauthentic or even stifled, as they don't feel they can express themselves naturally for fear of negative work results such as demotion or termination.

The Physical Therapy workforce is 3% black with the majority of providers being white. Often, a black provider is solo at work in regards to diversity or racial mix. In these scenarios, I have heard colleagues discuss code switching as a necessary but exhausting way to navigate work, as they feel unable to bring their full selves to the workforce. Multiple years of code switching within these difficult circumstances can wear a person down and significantly reduce work satisfaction leading to burnout.

Another challenge that black and other professionals of color face in the workplace are micro aggressions. Micro aggressions show up as brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups.

A common micro aggression used against code switching is to have someone tell a person of color they are speaking "white" as if fluency of the English language is reserved for a single race. In discussions with colleagues, there are other micro aggressions that hinge on stereotypes of their racial group that are faced in the work place that code switching can help many professionals avoid. These are:

- Having one's knowledge or skillset questioned
- Having one's educational background questioned
- Being mistaken for positions typical of service workers
- Praised for being articulate
- Regarded as problematic due to vernacular and pronunciation used when bring issues or concerns to management

As the Black Lives Matter movement continues to roll full steam ahead I have seen these two themes play out in a new way at my job. The micro aggressions being the complete silence and lack of acknowledgement of our Nation's current events and my code switching that present me as a fully professional and unaffected employee amongst my white colleagues and patients.

Code switching and fending off micro aggressions is absolutely exhausting. There is a prominent question that now comes to mind while we are in this interesting time; How do we change this experience? If persons who display micro aggressions regularly or have an established culture that inspires code switching in regard to race dominate an environment, those are the people and organizations that need to change. How can we contribute to that process without overextending ourselves?

The major contribution that black providers and other providers of color can make is to increase our presence in these spaces. We must also normalize bringing our full selves to work. We have earned our degrees, passed our exams and secured employment. We have already earned the right to be employed as PTs. If we increase our numbers, we normalize our presence in totality. For these reasons, I am proud to be a member of the National Association of Black Physical Therapists as this organization is working to do just that. Our mission is to educate the black community on our profession and support all current and upcoming professionals in this healthcare space. I encourage you all to promote your profession to your family members and friends. Create an avenue of assistance for those to come behind you and follow your path. Where there is one there can be many. We all have a part to play in that transition.

Krystol Hines, PT, DPT, CSCS

Navigating Uncomfortable Conversations

There is a reason why many of us stay away from religion and politics in the workplace, but what about race? In light of recent events, our country is having more and more conversations about this sensitive topic. Since we have chosen a profession that directly involves people, difficult conversations are bound to happen.

So, what can we do to protect our energy and still do the best job we can for our patients and/or maintain a cordial relationship with our colleagues?

The first step in managing difficult conversations is knowing yourself.

What are your triggers? What topics are hot buttons for you? What things really get under your skin? When you know what they are, it is easier to keep yourself from going down a path that you don't want to go down.

First and foremost, know that you ALWAYS have the right to opt out of a conversation. Just as we have the Constitutional right of freedom of speech, we also have the right not to speak. If it is with a patient, you can redirect the conversation back to patient care or simply say, I would prefer not to talk about that. The same goes for dealing with colleagues.

If you do want to engage in the conversation, here are some tips you can use to come out on the other side with your job and your dignity intact:

Listen to understand. I am not saying that you have to agree, but sometimes, miscommunications happen and feelings get hurt when we listen only to give a response, when we enter the conversation only to speak our mind or with assumptions about the other person. A simple way to get clarification is to ask, *what do you mean by that?*

Try to manage your emotions. This can be tough to do, but whenever the other person starts throwing emotion at you, or you feel yourself getting amped up, try to separate what they are actually saying from how you **feel** about what they are saying.

Choose your words carefully. What I mean by this is as much as possible, say how you feel and what you think and be specific versus general. For example, *I felt hurt when you said...* versus *you made me mad when you said...*

Change your physiology. We all know what happens when we go into fight or flight mode. It affects our ability to think and communicate. Take notice of your breath. Is it starting to become shallow? Are you clenching your teeth, your fists or shrugging your shoulders? Is your heart rate starting to elevate? The simple act of taking slower, deeper breaths and consciously relaxing your muscles can make you calmer and more open to the conversation.

Think about what you're thinking about. This is so important, because when we enter the conversation thinking it's going to be difficult, how do we approach it, versus how we might approach a conversation with a friend. On the same token, if we go into it thinking so-and-so is just difficult, how do we feel and how do we interact with them as opposed to how we feel and interact with those we admire and respect? Sometimes, just changing how we think about the person and the conversation makes all the difference...

TaVona Denise Boggs, PT

How do we advocate for ourselves in the workplace?

The pursuit of happiness. When ask to write a section on how to advocate for ourselves in the workplace, my initial thought is that everyone deserves the right to the pursuit of happiness. Shouldn't a part of that happiness come in the form of how you meet your financial needs. Now there are many factors that can affect your happiness in this area. Are you in the profession that brings you joy and do you have the means to complete that job? Other factors can include safety, security, location, etc. As a black person in a profession where you make up less than 3% of the population and the odds of having a co-worker that looks like you are low, what other factors contribute to your happiness? Is it support, inclusion, and safety? Based on an article from the Muse, there are steps to take to thrive and not just survive in a clinic or organization as one of the few people of color.

Here are 4 tips for when you are the only person of color in the office.

- 1.) Create your own support system
- 2.) Find a workplace that wants you
- 3.) Embrace the similarities and not the differences
- 4.) Speak up.

(<https://www.themuse.com/amp/advice/only-person-of-color-in-office>)

You should also know your company's policy on equal employment opportunity, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. If your company does not have one, ask for one to be implemented. Also know the steps to reports such acts if you ever encounter them. First, speak with your supervisor or the human resources department. Write every detail down and why you felt that you were discriminated or harassed and keep a copy. Paper trail, Paper trail, Paper Trail. If you feel that your company did not take your complaints seriously, you can report to your local government run civil rights enforcement agencies (<https://www.instagram.com/p/CBMlbgoJaya/?igshid=t13ln5lk2ymk>).

I learned about self-reflection in school and it has been vital to my career. We must be true to ourselves before we can advocate for ourselves. Understand the mission and values of the company where you work and truly evaluate if the company follows its statements for the clients that you encounter and for you as an employee. Take inventory on your happiness. (Do not go and quit your job today. Take the necessary steps to make sure that you are happy at your workplace or your future workplace). If you need any assistance navigating the workplace or school, reach out to us at NABPT. If we do not have an answer, we will help you to find the experts that do.

DeAndrea Bullock, PT, DPT, CCI

Finding Your Tribe

In Physical Therapy, where Black men and women make up 3% of the profession, often we are "the only one" in our department or organization and it can be pretty lonely. And that can make the job, the thing that we spend most of waking time at, extremely challenging.

Humans crave connection and finding your tribe of people is so important to stay engaged and not feel isolated.

The good news is, in the Age of the Internet and especially since COVID, there are groups for just about anything.

When trying to find your tribe, you have to first get clear about what you are craving. Is it more professional connections and conversation? Is it personal connections and conversation? Is it more related to a hobby or other interest?

There are Facebook groups, LinkedIn groups and other online forums where people are gathering around similar interests.

The NABPT is here to bring together those of us together working in the profession with the people, events and resources you need to succeed as a Black person working in the field of physical therapy. If you need help connecting with other members in your area, your specialty or something else, please do not hesitate to reach out.

TaVona Denise Boggs, PT

03/04 Mentorship and Scholarships

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Jennifer Hutton, aka Dr. Jpop, is a pediatric physical therapist from Nashville, TN. She became interested in PT when her youngest cousin was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Jennifer spent time observing him in different therapies, and subsequently determined that she would work with children in a similar capacity. She graduated from Loma Linda University with her Doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2008, and moved back to her hometown. She spent two years treating in an ortho setting before finally transitioning to her dream job with children. Jennifer enjoys treating the developmentally delayed population, as well as children with neurological and orthopedic diagnoses, both congenital and acquired. While the world reminds children with special needs of their limitations, she believes they are all capable of the impossible and helps them see that their special gifts will help them be their best selves. Jennifer loves to showcase her "pop stars" and share creative treatment ideas on Instagram. In 2018, Jennifer became an instructor for RockTape which sparked a passion for teaching others. She is currently working on her own educational content for pediatric movement specialists. As a Black woman, Jennifer knows what it is like to identify as different, and it has helped in her quest to be an ally for children with disabilities inside and outside of the clinic. Now she is educating others on how to be effective allies to BIPOC and furthering her desire to create a diverse and inclusive space she calls Dr. Jpop's Neighborhood.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK
PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, INC.**

Mentor Mondays

Every 3rd Monday of Each Month

Register in advance by email
memberships@nabpt.org to receive the Zoom
registration link.

REGISTRATION FOR MENTOR

MONDAY [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZYVC-CQQJIRETNKO_QACBN54FSMZSUUVUOTR](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9678123456?pwd=QACBN54FSMZSUUVUOTR)

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIPQLSDYPBGGOB1QYP-IP6OU4WVAMBSIGUGM76QTZYJRKTDJYBUZD5A/viewform>

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM TO START THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM. YOU CAN ALSO GO TO WWW.NABPT.ORG/MENTORSHIP AND FILL OUT THE SURVEY UNDER HOW TO GET STARTED. PLEASE ALSO CLICK IF YOU ARE OPEN TO BEING ON MENTOR MONDAY AS A MENTOR AS WELL.

WE WILL SEND OUT EMAILS AT THE END OF THIS MONTH TO MATCH YOU WITH YOUR MENTOR OR MENTEE.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY





\$500 CEU AWARD

- Submit a convincing video proposal to info@NABPT.org. "How will I use this scholarship for community outreach in underserved populations?"
 - Follow @NABPT 
 - JOIN NABPT (membership as low as \$25/yr for students)
 - ANYONE is welcome to join NABPT
 - Follow @intimaterose 
 - Follow @mypelvicfloormuscles 
 - Follow @mypfm 
 - Schedule a post-course live presentation
 - Scholarship covers one \$500 award for online pelvic health course(s) through myPFM.
 - Contest closes 8-31-20
 - We will announce the first winner on Instagram within 1 week
 - Must be a PT, PTA, SPT, or SPTA to apply
 - Must be licensed or plan to be licensed in the USA
 - Must use scholarship within 90 days
-

NABPT Directory

NABPT has a database of over 300 in our subscriber list and 5 chapters across this nation. NABPT also has nearly 800 followers on Instagram, Twitter, and FaceBook. NABPT has recently initiated a relationship with most PT/PTA programs in the US. NABPT also has access to many PT related groupchats. Joining our database and family will ensure a greater connection with *all* PT/PTAs across this country.

All members have access to the following packages Free of charge. Please email your information to membership.nabpt@gmail.com and fill out this form <https://forms.gle/u9JhVuGhft3Eqv5RA>

Not ready to be a member yet, but want exposure? Select the package that's right for you and contact us at info.nabpt@gmail.com for the link.

\$25 to add your name and business to the NABPT directory

\$35 for IG and FB post as well as NABPT directory

\$50 for IG post, FB post, NABPT directory, and Business highlight in quarterly newsletter