

Speaker 1 ([00:02](#)):

Thank you for joining us for today's webinar Coping With The Impact of Racial Injustice, brought to you by CIGNA. Please note that copies of the presentation slides and handouts are available for download in the dropdown box on the lower left side of the player window.

Speaker 1 ([00:18](#)):

Our presenter today is Dr. Gladys Smith. Dr. Gladys Smith is a psychotherapist specializing in individual, couples, and family therapy, with over 20 years of experience. She is a graduate of California Southern University, Washington University, and University of Missouri, and currently works as a private practitioner serving a broad spectrum of clients.

Speaker 1 ([00:39](#)):

Among her areas of expertise are trauma, addiction, sexual assault, depression, anxiety, stress, military issues, couples and marriage difficulties, and eating disorders. Dr. Smith has presented at national conferences and to general audiences, speaking on a wide range of topics. And now, Dr. Gladys Smith.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([01:02](#)):

Hello everyone. Welcome. These are trying times, and this workshop, brief workshop, is titled Coping With The Impact of Racial injustice, to give you tips and tools in how to react to the things that have gone on in our society and then have been ongoing.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([01:21](#)):

Our lives are intertwined with those of our neighbors, our country, and even the world. The death of George Floyd was heartbreaking to witness. Over and over again we've seen that, and we seen it throughout history. It not only creates new trauma in our life, but triggers past trauma for many.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([01:42](#)):

When a human being whose skin is black once again dies at the hands of those charged with protecting the public, we think of our personal well being, but it also raises deep concerns about injustice and discrimination against people of color that have persisted unchanged over decades and decades.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([02:03](#)):

We recognize these are challenging times for all us and for many reasons. All of those issues are important, and we encourage you to continue having meaningful discussions and conversations about the issue. When we become silent we become still, and when we become still nothing happens. Our focus today will be on the psychologic impact of those events and how to maintain our well being as we try to come, come to terms with all of it. It's really hard, and what we're seeing, and what we're feeling, what we're feeling and what we're supposed to do.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([02:37](#)):

We talked ... Well, I'll talk about strategies that can help us process and respond to those feelings, and we'll discuss ways to manage stress and move forward, uh, as we continue to navigate these challenges, because this is just the beginning. Just the beginning. Not the start, but it is just the beginning for us.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([02:55](#)):

Let's move to the next slide. We react on many levels. The intensity and the, and in rage are the range of reactions we might ... that we might experience can be surprising and sometimes really overwhelming. We surprise ourselves sometimes how we respond. The reality is that everything about this situation points to the potential that we have strong emotions. We have emotions. You can't suppress them, because what happens is they come out in a different way. We start to eat a little bit more, we start, start to not exercise. We start to sleep a little bit more. It comes out regardless of what we think that we're doing to control it.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([03:43](#)):

The first thing that you see on here is feelings. They can be intense, they can be fluid, they can be all over the map, wondering how you got to this point emotionally. You have thoughts. We have this thing called ... that we call rumination. We ruminate about things, going over and over and over, and never coming to a conclusion, but just thinking about them a million times. But the interesting thing is if you put that together with the image that you stay focused on social media and what everyone is saying, you've got your feelings and your thoughts all bundled in a knot. And what happens is those knots come out in our body.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([04:21](#)):

A physical reaction may be less expected. You may start to have pain in areas where you didn't think that you'd have pain. And it's interesting now because of Covid 19. We're thinking that we're having these muscle aches or our throat is dry or we're having a sore throat or our sinuses are hurting, you know, or our feet are hurting. And then we start to think about, "Do I have Covid 19?" So we are experiencing a number of things at one time that we really have to understand that we relax-, react on many levels.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([04:54](#)):

Let's move to the next slide. And understanding our reactions. Now I want to tell you about, um, someone that is from Minnesota, and his name is Resmaa Menachem, and he has a book out. It's called My Mother ... My Grandmother's Hands. And it is a book that talks about the psychological and physiological impact of racial injustice, just what we're talking about today. And like I said, he's from Minnesota, the book has been out since 2017, but believe it or not if you try to get that book now it's way over, you know, you can't get a hold of it. You can get it on Kindle. I will say that, because I had to, uh, to purchase a second book on Kindle, because I couldn't find the other one, and I wanted to read from it today, but I just want to tel you about this resource.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([05:43](#)):

He talks about sticking with the discomfort, understanding your reactions first. So stick with it, because we have a tendency sometimes to self-medicate with some of those things, with sleep, with sex, with, uh, food, uh, with exercise. We, we, we try to self-medicate. One thing that Resmaa says in that book is stick with the discomfort. The body's design is to protect itself and slow it down. So your reaction may be very intense even if you didn't have a personal connection. We don't know George Floyd, but we know people like George Floyd. We know people like Sandra Bland. We know like Brionna Taylor. We know people in our community that have had incidents of injustice. Either we've been at the hand of [inaudible 00:06:33] ourselves, or we've seen it happen, or we've seen it happen on television. The idea is that trauma can be triggered by racial violence injustice and the lack of fairness in the world. We have to be real. Life is unfair sometimes, and our world is unfair. There are people who are angry, and they

take that anger out on other individuals of other color, what, who they may have power over or who they believe they have power over. Or they think that nothing is going to happen to them.

Dr. Gladys Smith (07:04):

A history of other incidents and personal experiences can compound these feelings. The aftermath adds layer upon layer upon layer, and that's what racial trauma is. That's racial trauma is, that's what collective trauma is, and that's what collective grief is. That's really what we're talking about today, a loss of what's really going on. There's a psychological term, and it's called cognitive dissonance, where you're doing something, you know that it's wrong, but you continue to do it and you're looking over on the other side as you continue to do it. We have cognitive dissonance going on in our society right now about the issues that I've just talked about earlier and that you've been thinking about as you've been triggered by just even the words of injustice. We need to recognize cognitive dissonance. We need to understand our reactions and understand that the tragedy is compounded by the fact that history, recent and long past, shows a pattern of similar events. We know this.

Dr. Gladys Smith (08:06):

So now it's time for us to understand how we're reacting and understand that the elements of this situation come together in a challenging mix of loss, grief, and anger. And the first thing is understanding your reactions. Your reactions are your reactions. We can expect strong feelings from ourselves, from other members, acting out of character, but understand that what you're experiencing is what you are experiencing. Let's move to the next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith (08:38):

So the idea of this workshop, uh, i-it's very brief and it's just a start to let you know that you can emotionally regulate with what's going on. We don't have control of what happens on the outside. We do have control of what comes on our television and what's on our podcast and what's on our radio and what's on our, our iPads. We can be opted into our thoughts. We can shift our perspective. Hearsay and some social media and mainstream media sources, uh, can easily increase your anxiety. You know, we're already at a heightened level, um, of where we are because of what's, what's going on with Covid, you know?

Dr. Gladys Smith (09:20):

In our, our system we have the sympathetic nervous system and we have, uh, the parasympathetic nervous system. What we try to do as therapists is to help people become parasympathetic dominant. Rest and digest. Because when you can, can, can stop for a minute, take a breath, and kind of realize what's going on, you're able to act in a different way.

Dr. Gladys Smith (09:45):

We crave information, but there can be value into taking breaks. The first tip or the first rule or the first thing that you should always do is just take a simple breath, and you'll notice the difference. And then you take another breath, you know? George Floyd didn't have a, have, have a way to take a breath, but there are many George Floyds, but you are not George Floyd. You are breathing. You are here. You can take a breath and determine what your next thought will be, how you will respond to a situation and allow yourself to move forward, allow yourself to make a difference, because that's the thing. Recognizing injustice, knowing how you feel and how you're reacting allows you to make better choices so that you can bring about change, and that's what this workshop is all about.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([10:37](#)):

Um, on the right of that it says, "Mental images and your imagination have the power to trigger the same stress response you would feel if you were in the actual situation." You feel it in your body. You feel it in your soul. There's, you know, a lot of people are talking about self-care nowadays, you know? Self-care, doing some things, and y-you, you go over here and do that and you do this. Well, I want to talk on just a couple of seconds really about soul care. Now, soul care is that thing that is emotional, but it's also physical. It's taking care of your collective self. There's a resource that I'll tell you about. It's the self-care reel.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([11:20](#)):

The self-care reel has six components on it, you know? And those components range from the physical aspects, your social aspects, um, the actual six parts to that is your physical, your psychological, your emotional, your spiritual, your personal, and your professional. And all it is is a wheel, and it list 10-15 things that you can do to change the thoughts that you have. Your thoughts can change ... control your feelings, your feelings control your beliefs, and your beliefs control what you do. We need a cultural change, we need a societal change, but we need to change our mind and stop focusing on the negative. Yes. This is a horrific thing to happen, but we have the ability right now to focus on the injustice. But first we have to learn how to focus on how we're responding to this injustice.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([12:17](#)):

Um, there's a theory out by Dr. Stephen Porges, and it's called the Polyvagal Theory. You may have heard a lot about it, because a lot of the somatic therapists are, are really focusing on that. Uh, oh, what Dr. Porges said, and nothing new, but he arranges it in a way so that we start to understand ourselves a little bit. Remember our thoughts contain, control our beliefs, our beliefs control our feelings, our feelings control what, how we move, what we do.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([12:43](#)):

He says that there are three ways, uh, and three stages of the human and our mammalian autonomic development. When we are safe, we want to connect and engage with other people. He talks about the mirror neurons and that when we, when we smile, we see another person and we want them to smile also. We start to connect and we look in their eyes and we start to feel different, and it changes how we think about them and about ourself. The second thing that he says is that when we are a, we feel a threat, we're being racially profiled, we're being treated different because we have a brown body or a body that's not the same color of the other individual who has power, we immobilize sometimes and we meet the danger with flight or fight. You ever heard of that term, the angry black woman or the angry man? Oftentimes people aren't angry. They're trying to figure out how the heck am I supposed to respond to this situation.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([13:38](#)):

Uh, if you're, if you've ever been stereotyped by gender, by your race, by your religion, just unjustly treated, one of the first responses is that you almost automatically hold your breath, which is the first mistake that we do, because when you hold your breath, you start to breathe just from the top of your lungs, and you can't just breathe from the top. You have to breathe from your whole body, all the way down from the diaphragm, all the way down from your toes, and allow your breathing to enact around your body. The third thing that he says is that when you're overwhelmed by threats, we strive, uh, by imo-, we survive by immobilizing. We freeze. We stop. Watch a possum. A possum knows how to play

dead until it's time that he can notice that he can mo-, he can get out of there. And all of a sudden he takes a breath, he moves his legs, he resets. So taking a breath allows you to reset, and sometimes it's just as simple as that. Whew. Resetting. Let's move to the next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([14:48](#)):

Coping is one of those things that is personal for all of us. Now I mentioned the self-care wheel and I mentioned breathing, two things that you really, um, can change a situation by understanding how you're responding to the situation. So, our slide here says to monitor the situation, take precautions to be safe. How working with clients to d-, the two things that we try to encapsulate and help them understanding, whether it's trauma or whether it's anxiety, dep-, uh, depression, anxiet-, or or eating disorder, whatever it is, it-, there's a difference in feeling safe and being safe. Recognizing your environment and understanding that you're in a safe environment is being safe. Feeling safe takes a little bit more work.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([15:37](#)):

How, uh, we first feel safe is to acknowledge whatever our feelings are. Yeah, it's silly. So simple, so easy. The unknown sometimes is really known, but we choose not to see it. We're always managing on a ... We're always man- ... We're also managing on a level of anxiety. It makes them focus on the incident, something that happened years ago, and that fear that, uh, we, our loved ones, can find ourselves in a situation or a position one day that may be similar to that hap-, that happened to George Floyd, and all the lists of others that we have heard about just in the last couple of days that sometimes, uh, escape our mind. It all come with a h-, uh, we all come with a hardwired threat response that's fight or flight.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([16:28](#)):

You know, we can take steps to be safe in our lives. The thing is feeling safe takes you to just ... a little bit of work. You can take steps and stay safe. Taking action can help us get a sense of control. Monitor the current situation. We can learn about the true level or risk for yourself, understanding the situation. Remind yourself to check in with your friends and family. Make sure that they're okay. That allows you to feel safe. Remind yourself of the positive actions, uh, going on as well. Too many times we will focus on the negative, especially if you have depression or anxiety.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([17:05](#)):

We have the saying, um, or a type of therapy, it's cognitive behavioral therapy, and you hear of it on the commercials now. They've even talked about it when they've done the noon commercials and people trying to lose weight and they say it's from a cognitive behavioral perspective. What that means is, is that cognitively you are aware of what your thoughts are, which control your belief, which control your actions. Remind yourself to be positive. Remind yourself that you have a right to your feelings, you have a right to, to be where you are. You have a right to, to equality. You have a right to, to not be treated unjustly.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([17:43](#)):

But if you're in another color body, not a brown body, you have a right to stand up if you want to without the fear of retaliation or the fear of what's going to happen next or the fear of being misunderstood. I think one of the major things that, um, Dr. Porges was talking about is that too often we don't exercise that socialization out of fear. Fear of being judged. Fear of coming across the wrong way, and with all the action that's been going on lately, I think we're in a different phase in the history

and in our lives today is that we're learning that we've got to speak up, we've got to step up, and we've got to say something about what's going on. But that really starts with you, is focusing on what you can control. Fear of the unknown is part of the hardwired threat response. The idea is for us to stay or get to a point where we know that we're in control of our own emotions, not allow the external world to control us, but to allow us to take a positive action. Uh, next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([18:51](#)):

In making sense of all of this, there's a natural desire to apply what we know about the world to make sense of a death that we've seen over and over that feels so shocking and senseless, and then we start thinking about all of the others. Those who are not African-American or black or part of the community of colors can educate themselves. That's the first part is trying to make sense of this. You know, I've heard that so many times people have asked me this week, uh, and then in the past few weeks it's, uh, it's, uh, especially when, um, Dr. Feliti I think his name is, uh, I can't think of his name, but Dr. Feliti is a doctor that, um, developed what's called the, the ACES Study. That's his name.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([19:34](#)):

And the ACES shows, uh, it's the Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey. So what that says is that things that happened to you as a kid impact you today. But those things that happened to you as a kid can not only impact you today just in your present, but they, uh, impact you physiologically. If they were negative things, like separation or prejudice or discrimination, microaggression, sexual abuse, physical abuse, domestic violence, separation in the home, those things affect you today by changing the nature of who you are.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([20:08](#)):

We have this thing called epigenetics, you know? Things that have passed down from your grandfather, your great-great grandfather, your great-great grandfather. It's in the deans and it ... your genes, and it changes who you are today. What that means and what the ACES means and being aware of what your ACES score is, is that you want to take control and make sense of all of this, but we're wired for a certain response. So what I want you to do is to take two quizzes, if you can. Just Google them whenever you can. It's the ACES quiz, A-C-E-S quiz PDF. Just pull the PDF, you do it. If you score over a 4, it says that you have a high propensity for certain illnesses, because you're impacted by things that have put an ingrained mark on, on things that ... how you react to a situation, if you have anxiety, depression, but it also tends to certain medical conditions that are going to occur because of the stress levels.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([21:07](#)):

You know, you've heard the commercial about the high cortisol level and when you have high cortisol ... Cortisol is a toxin, and it doesn't just affect the waistline of women. We all have it, and it can be toxic in our body and it can cause things like diabetes, the propensity to eat differently, not eat foods that are so healthy for us. So our mind and our body control how we think and how we feel. The slide says get familiar with the movement, understand the movement, but first understand yourself. The ACES quiz, you can take that. The second one is a resilience quiz. You can take that as well. I'm going to give you a couple of resources then to go along with that.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([21:45](#)):

The second thing is get familiar with the movements and organizations that are working toward meaningful change. Understand what Black Lives Matter means. If you, if you're an African-American, do

you really know what Black Lives Matter means? Who started it and what it really is? Or, or do we take what social media tells us? One book that I'll ... There's three books that I want to refer you to. One of them is Dr. Joy DeGruy, Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome. Yes, talking about slaves, but we're talking about the physiological and the psychological response. Just what we're talking about today. Psychological response to collective trauma and collective grief. What that does to the body and what that does to the mind. In that book she talks about a little history, and it gives you an indication of, "Oh, is that how that came about." You know, this whole separation of color didn't come about in a scientific way, and she teaches you that.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([22:39](#)):

Another two books that are really, really good and that will help you become educated whether you're a brown body or you're not a brown body, is Race and Restorative Justice, the Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice. Black Lives, Healing, and US Social Transformation. And that's where we're headed. We're headed for a social transformation with all of this, especially with offering a workshop like this today.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([23:03](#)):

The second book that goes along with ... and is The Little Book of Racial Healing, Coming to the Table for Truth-Telling, Liberation, and Transformation. And guess what? Both of those books are like \$3.99, \$4.00 on Amazon. You can order it today. The first resource that I gave you earlier was, uh, the book that was written by the gentleman from Minnesota, uh, Resmaa Menachem, My Grandmother's Hands. Becoming educated allows you to talk from an informed way, and it doesn't allow you to freak. It allows you to come from an informed way. You know, prejudice, discrimination, racism, are about being uneducated, not understanding how alike we are. It's just a color of an, a skin, and it means nothing. We've made something out of it.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([23:53](#)):

Focus on questions without clear answers can drain us and leave us unable to move forward. It may be helpful to ask questions like, "How do I respond to injustice?" Actually, what's the history of injustice? You know, our schooling didn't give us a lot of what we needed about the injustice, um, injustices that have occurred in our society. So now we have a choice. Remember the slide before said be aware of what you can control. You can control how you understand a situation, and that helps you understand how to make sense out of all of this. We can't bring George, the George Floyds and the many, many George Floyds that have happened, Eric Garner, we can't bring them back, but we can push forward to make change and understand this injustice, first in understanding how we are responding to it.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([24:45](#)):

For those of us who live this history every day, it can be valuable to get familiar with the movements and organizations by reading and understanding as a collective. Church members, friends on the block, neighborhoods, understanding in like-minded groups, and then understanding in other groups. There are two groups. There's one, the Community Healing Network, uh, developed by the Association of Black Psychologists, and then there's a program that we have here in St. Louis and I know that they have it across the United States. It's called Witnessing Whiteness. It's understanding privilege and what it is to be privileged, and understanding that. Uh, those programs are free. They don't, they don't cost a darn thing. Community Healing helps individuals of color understand and be heard and be listened to.

Witnessing Whiteness helps those who are not of color understand all of this. So two resources, three resources for you. Next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([25:48](#)):

Is the desire for action. Channel your anger into constructive ways. The combination of outrage and powerlessness, which one is on the basic level, like we're hardwired and designed to set up for extreme feelings. It takes you getting a little aware of self. That's why I recommended that self-care reel so you find out where you are. What's really going on with me? Am I eating a little too much? Am I not getting enough exercise? Because, you know, trauma of any sort, whether it's collective or individual, it impacts us physiologically and psychologically, you know? And we start to do things that we typically normally wouldn't do, start to say things that we typically normal-normally wouldn't say, and we wonder why people are outraged. They're outraged because they don't have coping skills to deal with this, because it keeps happening, as I said earlier, on layers. So learn to channel anger in constructive ways. Support others in a meaningful way by asking, asking questions, turning negative thoughts and reactions into constructive ways.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([26:52](#)):

That means you can change your mind by opening your mind a little bit. You may find that support groups and helping out is something that you do, getting out and helping others now. We're getting out a little bit more at safe distances and using social distancing. You can make calls. You can volunteer by passing out flyers, which is social distancing. You don't have to do anything or connect with someone to pass out flyers. You get the flyers, you pass them out. Using your voice and not being silent allows you to move and allows you to feel a little bit different, but it also allows you to be connected to this cause of injustice and changing it into justice, because in the end it is just us. We ... No one's going to come and rescue us and change it this. We're a strong, resilient people, and we have to realize that the core of everything is us. You cannot pour tea out of an empty teacup. You can't get, uh, water out of a dry well, which means at first you have to engage in yourself, then engage in some hard conversations.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([27:58](#)):

Those new to the conversation, conversation, being able to listen and try to really hear without adding a different perspective. That's where the education peace and reading a little bit comes in, because it allows you, a, to take action, and, b, make yourself realize, or you start to realize, oh, there are things that I can do. I don't have to sit here. And it's not those people. Those people are all of us.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([28:25](#)):

Another powerful action is to make a commitment to use your voice in a way that you can use your voice. Some of us can do Zoom calls, some of us can make phone calls, some of us can connect with others. We all have something special that we can give to this. But when we become like the possum, unmovable, dead, nonresponsive, that has a great impact on us, because we start to deteriorate, our body starts to deteriorate, our mind, and then we start to get angry, because we feel like we don't have control. Uh, next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([29:03](#)):

So it starts with doing something that we need to do, talking with children, our children, the children in our churches, the children in our social groups. Ask what they know or h-, what they have heard, because too ti-, too many times what happens is, oh, they don't understand. Oh, they don't know. Oh,

they don't know. You know? When I work with families I try to tell families, guess what? They know. They understand. They get it. But you just aren't talking to them, and so they've got all these things running around in their mind. Let them know their emotions and the questions that they have are okay. And talk to them about it. But that's how ... First, you have to get educated a little bit so that you can understand. But then, you can make it a task that both of you are doing together, understanding and educating and learning. Reassure with words and actions. Talk about positive ways to respond. Coloring, dancing, moving, yoga, singing, all of those things are the most important thing that you can do to talk with the children, whatever ages they are.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([30:03](#)):

Limit exposure to news coverage. For a child, repeated images can seem as if the events are happening over and over again. You know? How many times have you watched, uh, you know, Sesame Street and the Dinosaurs? And speaking of Sesame Street, there are two resources that I really want to, uh, to give you today. One of them is belly breathing. Earlier I talked about just taking a breath, taking a few minutes and just breathing. There is a YouTube that's out and it's called Belly Breathing, and Common is in it, I do believe, and there's a couple other stars, but it teaches kids how to belly breathe, and guess what? It teaches the parents how to belly breathe as well, because the one thing that you can control at this point that others have not been able to control is your breathing. If you can control your breathing, it slows you down. It puts you in what's called parasympathetic dominance, the rest and digest aspect. It's where you want to be and make choices and to think about things. So that's the first one is belly breathing. All you've got to do is belly ... Sesame Street belly breathing, Google that.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([31:06](#)):

And the second one is Diversity Inclusion, uh, Program, that Sesame Street had, um, a couple of days ago. And so it's on, on the web as well, and you can watch that with your children, uh, and it will help educate you, um, uh. I remember when we were younger we had, uh, Conjunction Junction What's Your Function, and we learned all about adjectives and verbs and, you know, I heard that they're bringing that back now, but Sesame Street has stepped up their game, and they're talking about diversity inclusion. So those are two, two resources that you can use with your children. Let them know that it's okay to ask questions and to feel their feelings. Uh, let's see what the next slide has for us.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([31:45](#)):

I mentioned earlier about the self-care reel, a really, really important resource for you to take a look at and to help you understand, take care of yourself. Understand the reality. There's no easy or right way through this. It takes time to process and find your balance. Be good to yourself physically and emotionally. I mentioned it earlier, uh, moving, moving, moving, whether it's walking, whether it's running, whether it's walking with others at a social distance, uh, you have to get yourself moving, because it's not ... you become stagnant and those, uh, you start to ruminate, and I mentioned that, going over and over and over things, and usually those things come out negative. So getting a good self-care plan going, knowing what your ACES is, knowing what your resilience strengths are, using those strengths.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([32:34](#)):

You'll notice in the, uh, when we had the open bookstores, we could go in and we could get those adults coloring books and all of those things, that helps you move a fear, anxiety, all of that, from one part of the brain to the other pa-, part of the brain, left hemisphere, right hemisphere, and the middle of the

[inaudible 00:32:52]. What we want to do is move it to another part, which is the prefrontal cortex, so that we can make good decisions, for ourselves, for our family, and for our community.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([33:03](#)):

Other ongoing major distractions, such as Covid, can make it harder to manage our reactions and feel resistant. The same thing that we've talked about today is getting moving, being aware of what's going on, becoming educated on it, limiting your, um, connection to the television over and over and over, seeing the same things over and over and over doesn't allow you to really think through, and it disconnects you, when you're connected to those things, from your own body, from your own self and what you do have control over. Be aware that living with others and ongoing struggles, uh, or stressors can make it more difficult to manage a reaction to the challenges that are at hand. Yes, past things bring about, you know, things that make it harder for us to deal with things today.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([33:50](#)):

The Covid pandemic can be a significant factor in all that's going on with us. The CDC, uh, Center for Disease Prevention, rec-recommends using, uh, things that, uh, that are proven to be effective. The things that I've mentioned today all come from APA, um, the American Society of, of Counselors, the American Psychological Association, and just plain breathing, comes from just plain breathing.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([34:20](#)):

It doesn't have to be significant things. You can reach out in the community. There are resources. There are many things, but the first thing that you have to do is recognize where you are and recognize that it is okay to reach out. It is okay. You know, courage is this thing that many people have a definition for, but reaching out is the most significant sign of courage that an individual can have, because you're saying, "I need help." We do better when we ask for help. We do better when we know that we're not so strange. Other people are going through this. And the next slide.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([35:04](#)):

You must be courageous and compassionate, both with ourselves and each other. I've mentioned several resources for you today, things that have a way that you can either react or act. We want you to act in a way that you're in control of. Not while watching television over and over and over, and seeing the [inaudible 00:35:32] over and over again, and looking and making that connected to other things, but it's taking a step back, taking a walk, getting out in nature, recognizing where you may not feel well and feel that well. Dr. Nadine [inaudible 00:35:50], she is infamous. She is now one of the ... the Surgeon General of, um, Los Angeles, one of the first of California actually, and so what she ... She has a book out. It's called The Deepest Well. The Deepest Well talks about the things in our life that attack us, and how we have control over certain things. You can also watch that, her, um, YouTube, and it's, it's, she has it, it's the ACES. Dr. Nadine [inaudible 00:36:16], and it's the last resources that [inaudible 00:36:18].

Dr. Gladys Smith ([36:18](#)):

What I want to leave you with is that you have the power to address injustice, but you have even more power to address those things that you need by listening to your body, taking action on what you need to do to feel better, to feel safe and be safe all at the same time, and it is possible through all of this turmoil. These are challenging times. They are times that call on our strength and resilience, and an unspeakable and unshakeable belief in the value and, and rights of all human beings. We have a right to feel our feelings, too be connected to others, to be who we are. The strategies that we talked about

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today are not about, uh, not feeling your feelings or getting over them, but they're first to address them, and it starts with you, and then we can start with our family, and then we can start with the community, and then we can start with connecting with other parts of the world. But it's not ... Nothing is going to change until we take a temperature on how we're feeling, change those things, and move forward with connecting with others.

Dr. Gladys Smith ([37:31](#)):

I want to thank you for your time today, and I want to remind you to just take a breath before you make any moves. It allows you to move forward with courage, with tenacity, and for all of us to address the unjustness in our society. Thank you very much.

Speaker 1 ([37:53](#)):

Thank you, Dr. Smith, and ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for being with us today. That concludes today's webinar.