



Transforming Racialized Trauma: Black Belonging in AEDP with the Vision Collective

Presented by the AEDP Vision Collective

The Vision Collective

We are the AEDP Vision Collective —Black-identified therapists who have come together to create a space of healing, empowerment, and professional growth. Our members—Kosu Boudreau, Gerald Brooks, Karla Amanda Brown, Nicky Cameron, Marsha Elliott, Jennifer Jackson, Peter Muhwati, Sonya Parker, and Heloise (Lois) Ridley—have been supported by our dedicated consultants: Diana Fosha, Lynne Hartwell, Karen Pando-Mars, and Connie Rhodes.

Together, we are shaping a future where belonging, representation, and collective healing can flourish within the AEDP community.

Why This Presentation Matters

This is more than just a presentation—it is an invitation to witness our journey. We are here to show how Black therapists, while supported by community and the transformative practices of AEDP, can thrive and lead.

We believe that representation is more than visibility—it is a catalyst for growth. When Black therapists see themselves reflected in professional spaces, it fosters a profound sense of belonging and empowerment. This presentation showcases how the AEDP Vision Collective has created a nurturing space where Black therapists can truly flourish—growing, healing, and leading with strength and authenticity.

Our understanding of belonging is in alignment with the Othering and Belonging Institute (OBI) at the University of California Berkeley.

“The concept of belonging describes more than a feeling of inclusion or welcome. Its full power is as a strategic framework for addressing ongoing structural and systemic othering, made visible, for example, in the wide disparities in outcomes found across a variety of sectors and identity groups.

Belonging, as OBI defines it, means having a meaningful voice and the opportunity to participate in the design of political, social, and cultural structures that shape one’s life — the right to both contribute and make demands upon society and political institutions. At its core, structural belonging holds a radically inclusive vision because it requires mutual power, access, and opportunity among all groups and individuals within a shared container (such as a society, organization, club, etc).”

Through our work, we affirm that belonging is not just an ideal; it is a necessity in the mental health field. When those in need see healers who look like them, share their cultural experiences, and understand their struggles, the impact is profound.

The Origins of the Vision Collective

The AEDP Vision Collective was born out of a desire to have Black therapists come together to discuss the Pay What You Wish (PWYW) Program. With the ongoing support of Diana Fosha, Lynne Hartwell, Karen Pando-Mars, and Connie Rhodes, we have evolved into a dynamic group of professional growth and collective healing.

Through the AEDP PWYW, we have gained opportunities that have not only refined our clinical skills but have also deeply nourished our personal and professional journeys. Now more than ever, Black communities need healing spaces that honor their lived experiences. The AEDP Vision Collective emerged as one of those spaces—a sanctuary for Black-identified therapists to connect and grow professionally and personally.

Healing Through AEDP: A Communal Approach

As Bell Hooks so beautifully reminds us,

“Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.”

The Vision Collective is built on this truth. Our healing is deeply intertwined with AEDP’s core principles—co-creating safety, undoing aloneness, making the implicit explicit, processing deep emotions, and fostering authentic connection and transformation. Within this framework, we have found a powerful space to unpack the weight of racialized trauma and anti-Blackness, to support one another, and to transform together.

Healing racialized trauma and its impact requires intentionality. It requires space. It requires the willingness to bear witness to one another's pain and resilience. By integrating AEDP principles into our collective work, we have experienced profound reparative and transformational shifts.

Expanding Our Impact

Our work does not stop within the Vision Collective. As we have grown, so has our commitment to bringing AEDP into the wider mental health field.

Members of our collective are now:

- Leading exploratory groups and seminars on healing racialized trauma within AEDP
- Serving as Experiential Assistants (EAs)
- Presenting at Immersion and Essential Skills training
- Speaking at conferences and forums
- Pursuing AEDP certification and leadership roles

We are carrying this work beyond ourselves, into our psychotherapy practices and communities, helping our clients heal from intergenerational and racialized trauma. This is showcased in our presentation through clinical video excerpts, demonstrating how AEDP can be a powerful tool in transforming trauma within the BIPOC community.

In this presentation, we share how this growing representation has strengthened our sense of belonging and enriched our work as therapists.

Through the PWYW program, we have seen a shift—an expansion of Black representation within the AEDP community, opening doors to deeper engagement and leadership from Black identified therapists.

An Invitation to Join the Conversation

We invite Black therapists to join us in dialogue, community and continued learning. Our voices, experiences, and wisdom are vital to the growth of AEDP.

Belonging is not a passive experience—it is something we create together. Our hope is that this presentation sparks reflection, dialogue, and action. We invite the AEDP community to listen, to witness, and to consider how to foster inclusive spaces and make healing accessible to all. We are “In It Together!”

We have discovered how healing and growth is amplified in spaces of affirmation and connection. We hope that by sharing our experiences, we inspire others to create similar spaces—where belonging is not an afterthought, but a foundational pillar.

We look forward to sharing, learning, and growing with you.

To learn more, please visit us at <https://aedpinstitute.org/aedp-vision-collective/>.

Email us at VisionCollective@aedpinstitute.org



Stay tuned for details on our offerings in September 2025!

Jennifer Jackson, LCSW

A Call to the AEDP Community

by Gerald Brooks, LCSW, MA, SAP, CAADC

As Black male therapist and member of this growing AEDP community, I offer this call with both care and conviction. We must be intentional not to bring into AEDP the same hierarchies, performance-driven mindsets, and systems of exclusion that exist in the world around us. This work is too sacred, too transformational, to be shaped by the very dynamics it seeks to heal.

AEDP is more than a model—it is a way of being. We have a unique opportunity to build something that doesn't mimic the world but models a better one. A community rooted in presence, mutuality, and deep relational trust. One that honors difference, invites full humanity, and practices what it preaches.

Let's not recreate the systems that harm.
Let's build the ones we haven't yet seen.
Let's not mimic the world.
Let's reimagine it—together.