**ABMT Anti-Racism Statement**

The ABMT committee has been shocked and deeply saddened by recent global events. The killing and brutalising of black people by police, especially in the United States, and the disproportionate number of BAME people who have died from Covid-19, are a painful reminder of the oppression, injustice, and inequality that people of colour continue to endure as a result of systemic racism.

These events, and the activism of the Black Lives Matter movement, have moved the ABMT committee members to reflect on our individual and collective responsibilities to take action. We recognise that racism is not something that can be addressed simply through compassion and empathy but is a structural issue that needs to be actively and continuously dismantled by those who benefit the most from it.

We acknowledge that as individuals who are racialised as white, we have not had to deal with the negative effects of racism in our own lives. Indeed, we inevitably form part of a wider societal problem in that we tend to benefit from racist policies and systems if we remain complacent. We recognise that this privilege will have an impact on how we represent and run the Association, and as we grow in our awareness and understanding we are taking steps to address this.

We wanted to share with you, our members, the areas that we are currently focusing on:

* We have agreed to the following working definition of racism when considering how we plan our activities and policies, taken from *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi: ‘Racism is the marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racist inequities…a racist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups. An antiracist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups’ (p.17).
* We plan to review the Association’s constitution to ensure that we make a long-term commitment to anti-racist work. Any proposed changes will be circulated in advance of an AGM to then be voted on by members. We will also take this as an opportunity to review our constitution’s policies around diversity and intersectionality more generally. We are compiling a list of resources for our members about racism and anti-racism, including books, podcasts, online courses, films, documentaries and CPD, an initial draft of which we have included with this message and will also be posted on the Association website
* We encourage feedback from all our members on how they would like to see us move forward with this work. Please feel free to send us ideas, or to suggest speakers/trainings that you would find beneficial to support your development as biodynamic massage therapists in this area. At the upcoming meeting on July 11th, if people feel moved to share, we would like to hear from members about how you have been impacted by recent discussions of racialised violence and Covid-19 inequities.
* Over the coming months, we will prepare an edition of the Biodynamic Massage journal focused on the effects of Covid-19, Black Lives Matter, and the great social upheaval that we are currently witnessing and experiencing. We invite all our members to consider writing for this issue, but we particularly welcome our Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) members to consider sharing their thoughts and reflections on what they would like to see from this edition, as well as contributing to writing should they feel drawn to do so.
* Our Vice-Chair post has been vacant for some time now. It is a role that does not have a set remit and can be flexible depending on what the person wants to focus on. We would encourage our BIPOC members to consider applying for this post to help steer our organisation’s future.

Finally, we wanted to leave you with a couple of quotes from people working on anti-racism that we felt resonated with the biodynamic experience. We look forward to seeing you via Zoom on July 11th, and hopefully in person before too long.

‘*The capacity to create some kind of connective tissue between the energising, exhilarating, somewhat cathartic urgent movement we are leaving, to the more protracted moment we are entering, and that we gather in whatever way that we can to talk about what we need to do next*.’ Gary Younge, from Podcast entitled: ‘Gary Younge on the global black liberation uprisings’. *Weekly Economics Podcast*, Available at: <https://soundcloud.com/weeklyeconomicspodcast/gary-younge-on-the-global-black-liberation-uprisings>

*“You’re gonna need to deal with the aches, deal with the doubts, deal with all of that difficulty. You’re gonna have to get up against your own suffering’s edge before transformation happens. But you need to condition that. Why do we think that when we talk about race, that’s any different?”* Resmaa Menakem(<https://onbeing.org/programs/resmaa-menakem-notice-the-rage-notice-the-silence/> )

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