

WHAT IS COLONIALISM & HOW DO WE DECOLONIZE: PART 1



@NEUROCLASTIC

HI, I'M JUDE AFOLAKE OLUBODUN (HE/HIM)

I am a Black, trans, and autistic parent of two gender nonconforming and neurodivergent children, abolitionist, and educator in transformative justice, harm reduction, and the decolonization of our fight for survival. I teach what it means to be in community and in struggle with the global South including our rights to self-determination and the destruction of white supremacy in all forms so that we are no longer robbed of our humanity to reach mutual liberation.

As the new Chief Decolonizing Officer and member of the Neuroclastic leadership team, I look forward to being in struggle with my Autistic community so we can empower one another with the tools and resources to achieve advocacy and justice that does not mirror white supremacy and does not abandon those for whom it is considered acceptable that they suffer and die under capitalism.



@NEUROCLASTIC

WHAT IS COLONIALISM?

Colonialism is a pillar of white supremacy. In colonialism, settlers take over, claim, and control indigenous land and resources and subjugate or engage in genocide against indigenous people.



@NEUROCLASTIC

Colonialism happens when settlers (non-indigenous people) use erasure through preventing people from practicing their native culture, forced assimilation, and even genocide. Colonizers make themselves the heirs of all that was indigenous, land, resources, spirituality, and even culture.



Colonialism forces the erasure of indigenous people by requiring them to 'play dead' or become invisible through assimilation to reinforce the narrative of the "vanishing people." As a necessity of harm reduction to avoid enduring more violence and losing their lives, indigenous people must disappear to survive.

@NEUROCLASTIC

STOLEN LANDS, STOLEN CULTURES

Colonialism is the erasure of indigenous people by encouraging and allowing non-indigenous people to claim indigenous identity and control their narratives, culture, religion, and outcomes.

Appropriating and capitalizing on native cultures entitles settlers to appoint themselves as the rightful inheritors of what previously belonged to the “vanished” indigenous people.

Indigenous people “vanish” depending on the physical, social, or psychological removal from colonized lands.



@NEUROCLASTIC

COLONIALISM IN DISABILITY

In disability advocacy, the core narratives tend to be centered on the experiences of white disabled people, erasing disabled BIPOC. If we view white supremacy through racism and colonialism as **separate issues** that can be solved **after the main issue of ableism is solved**, we fail to address that **white supremacy is the foundation of ableism**.

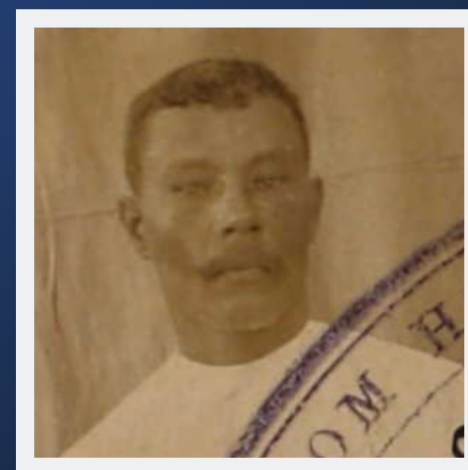
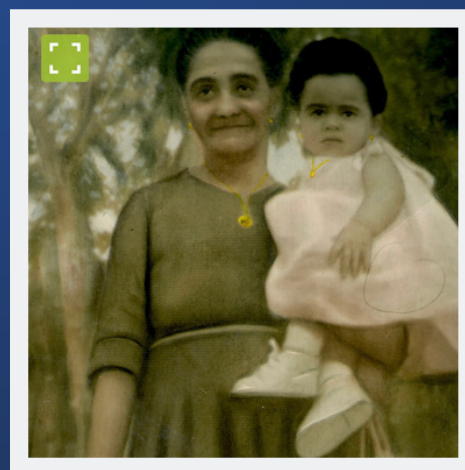
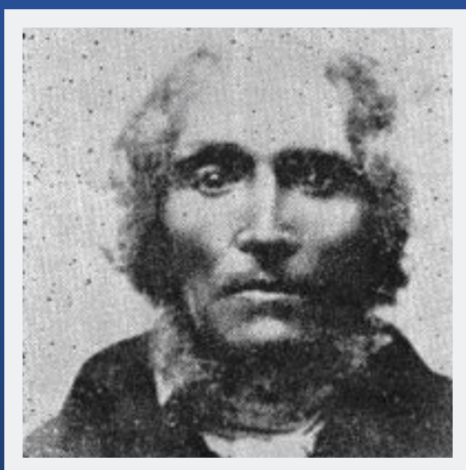
If we do not acknowledge and address the source of the problem, the problem will always exist.



It is why advocacy must be BIPOC-led and/or centered because white-centered advocacy that does not include BIPOC existence sets the timeline that BIPOC must be comfortable in their oppression and erasure through trickle-down disability justice that **will never reach us** because it specifically excludes us.

Advocacy that centers BIPOC to address colonialism is part of the tools to abolish the foundation of the **ableist system that is killing us all**.

White people can learn what it truly means to be in struggle and community with Black, Brown, and Indigenous people whose existence is used to feed colonialism and racism. This means not abandoning us or excluding us in what it means to accommodate our **common** and **individual** needs to keep us safe.



It is important that we do not mirror white supremacy through colonialism in our advocacy. We must make sure that we are not building community that reinforces genocide and erasure to benefit ourselves because **we are only continuing to trap ourselves and assuring the continued existence of the very system we are fighting against.**

We must build in a way that fights for the abolition of colonialism to make way for **mutual liberation** that recognizes **all of our humanity** because **none of us are free unless all of us are free.**

I look forward to breaking down what colonialism is, how it causes erasure and oppression for all of us, and how we can build a true community by decolonizing together.

*-Jude Afolake
Olubodun*

