SMRF Family and Partners,

Since its founding in 2007, Shadow Mountain Recovery (SMRF) has been a small close-knit company that we hope has the feel of a family business. Over the past thirteen years we have partnered with many community stakeholders within our industry to achieve our mission of helping those navigating the disease of addiction and to help them find success in their struggle for a better life. Through our individual actions, we all define to our patients, partners, families and each other the image we seek to project as an organization prepared to serve people struggling to achieve more and better for themselves.

Recently, we have navigated our organization through this year’s challenges including an international pandemic and now a very visible and vocal plea for basic social justice. As our community and society are engaged in a heated debate over race and justice, we feel the need to revisit Shadow Mountain’s commitment to understanding people struggling for a better life for themselves and those around them. While we join all parties new engaged in this process of rediscovering our basic understanding of each other in working toward a better future for us all, we want to be clear that there is no room for certain behavior.

When the current public demonstrations began several weeks ago, we at Shadow Mountain became concerned that our team members were attuned to the emotionally charged environment and therefore no public statement would be needed to remind our team or tell the outside world that we believe in justice for all and helping our fellow citizens achieve success in their struggles whether with addiction or not. We were wrong. Earlier it was brought to our attention that an individual in our SMRF family utilized their private social media to spread a racially insensitive meme. Shadow Mountain Recovery has a zero-tolerance stance for any forms of racism, intolerance or prejudices towards anyone. Given the vast amount of learning, unlearning, and relearning taking place across our country the past several weeks, we would like to make it clear what zero-tolerance means to our SMRF family. Instances of the below behaviors are never acceptable and will result in punitive measures such as unpaid suspension or termination.

Microinvalidations:

- What it is: subtly or obviously denying or attacking the experiences, feelings or thoughts that people of color have.
- Examples: “I don’t see color”,”we are all human beings”, “all lives matter”, “stop being so sensitive”
- What it does: can make people of color feel invisible and frustrated

Microinsults:

- What it is: Verbal and nonverbal insults that demean or discredit people of color.
- Example: “You sound like a white black/brown person”
- What it does: Can affect the self-esteem of people of color.

Microassaults:

- What it is: Very explicit verbal or nonverbal attacks against people of color.
- Example: Using racist slurs, avoiding eye contact, overt racist commentary, displaying symbols that traditionally represent oppressive ideals.
- What it does: Can make people of color feel unsafe or unwanted

Racial Gaslighting:

- What it is: Manipulating information in a way that makes BIPOC question their own reality, memory or experience.
- Example: “If you protested peacefully more people would listen to you” “it’s just a joke”, “Racism doesn’t exist anymore”
- What it does: Minimizes the very real experiences of people of color and can negatively impact their mental health.

Over the past few weeks, many people have said these uncomfortable conversations must start at your own dinner table and I agree. More specifically, these conversations are underway. As we move forward, we will continue, with the goal of lasting behaviors and thought processes that will nurture understanding and support for individuals suffering from injustice and systemic oppression.

We’d like to share with you some of the resources we have found insightful and educational over the past several weeks. This list is far from exhaustive and we would love for you to share any resources you’ve encountered that would be valuable additions.

Articles:

- "Why Joaquin Phoenix Is the Future of Hollywood’s Activism" by Joe Reid
- "Why You Need to Stop Saying ‘All Lives Matter’" by Rachel Elizabeth Cargle

Films/TV:

- Selma
- "When They See Us"

Podcasts:

- "A Testament of Hope: Essential Writings and Speeches" by Martin Luther King Jr.
- "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" by Maya Angelou
- "Black Panther:" Why It's So Hard For White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo, PhD

Books:

- A Testament of Hope: Essential Writings and Speeches by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou
- White Fragility: Why It's So Hard For White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo, PhD

At a moment in time where action, or inaction, can shift us farther apart from those who see the world differently than us, we believe in the importance of bridging the divide. At Shadow Mountain Recovery, we firmly believe that we are responsible for modeling the world we wish to see. We are starting within, with our own SMRF family, and we hope you join us in doing the same.

Sincerely,

Manny Nien, MHA

Jackie Elliott

Robb Holub

Kat Seisman, MHA