

Table 10.3 The Helms Model of White Identity Development

Contact: White people pay little attention to the significance of their racial identity; they claim, “I’m just normal”; they perceive themselves as colorblind and completely free of prejudice.

Disintegration: There is a growing awareness of racism and White privilege as a result of personal encounters. This new awareness is characterized by discomfort.

Reintegration: Feelings of guilt or denial may be transformed into fear and anger directed toward people of color. White people may be frustrated if they are seen as a group rather than as individuals.

Pseudoindependent: The individual gains an intellectual understanding of racism as a system of advantage but doesn’t quite know what to do about it.

Immersion/Emersion: This stage is marked by a recognized need to find more positive self-definition. White people need to seek new ways of thinking about Whiteness, ways that take them beyond the role of victimizer.

Autonomy: This stage represents the culmination of the White racial development process. A person incorporates the newly defined view of Whiteness as part of a personal identity. The process is marked by an increased effectiveness in multiracial settings.