

Slave Mentality

Provided as an elementary explanation from the author's own African American perspective, a slave mentality occurs when either an individual, group, or even an entire culture of people whose mindset(s) tend to normalize injustices, inequities, and inequalities that are reflective of how African slaves were brutally coerced to behave during the chattel and antebellum slavery eras.

Historically, such normalizations have been adopted and perpetuated across the greater Black community. Purportedly, the intentions were to "keep the peace" by not making White people who control America's reins of power angry. Such anger could manifest itself when Black people evoke the history of slavery in ways that may insult White people who are employing racist policies and practices that are fundamentally designed to oppress Black people.

An example might be when Black men and women whose job qualifications and performance have earned them a promotion, but their White supervisor promotes the less qualified performer purely based on that individual's White race. The slave mentality intervenes when the Black coworker of the Black employee who was passed over strongly encourages that individual to just be quiet and not "rock the boat." By encouraging the coworker to be quiet, supposedly it calms the situation and perhaps precludes the racist supervisor from taking a sterner approach against all Black employees under his or her supervision.

The slave mentality perpetuates the notion that being a "good Negro" will make things better for all Negroes. All things considered, "don't piss off Massa!"

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