

# Glasswing Transformation

*exploring how you see yourself and your world*



Editors

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# The Glasswing Experience

## Welcome to Glasswing

This is a publication about a journey shared by thousands of people who have experienced a Glasswing racial healing seminar. Some participants came with hope, others with curiosity, anxiety, and anger, but most all left with a new way of seeing themselves and the world around them.

This manual is dedicated to all the people in our nation's history who have suffered from the oppression of racism and to all who have taken action to promote the reality of the Oneness of Our Human Family.

## From Participants

"I realize now that every one of us is a part of the same race—the Human Race."

"Not only do the Five Shifts help me understand racism, but they will help me as a husband and father. I will be a more effective person because of this process."

"This will be something I will remember for the rest of my life; I know more about racism and that it still is going on today."

"The experience left me drained yet exhilarated. I left feeling that all hope is not lost. There is purpose for our lives and it goes much deeper than our jobs, our possessions, even our immediate families."

"The seminar affected everything that I had once thought. Racism cannot be healed through hatred, but only through individuals taking the time to educate one another."

"I couldn't help thinking while attending this seminar of all the people who should be here."

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## **Racial Healing and Equity: The Development of Glasswing**

Starr Commonwealth's experience in the Healing of Racism began in 1996 when a small group of administrators attended a presentation by Nathan Rutstein, author of several books on racism, including *Racism in America: A Prescription for the Disease*. Mr. Rutstein had been asked by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to come to the Calhoun County area as an expert-in-residence and introduce the concept of healing racism.

Impacted by the clarity and power of Nathan's presentation on the "disease of racism" in our society and what people can do about it, the Starr leadership decided to commit the organization's resources—human, time, and financial—to the task of weaving the concepts and practices of the Healing of Racism into the fabric of its culture.

But the seeds for the organization's transformation had been planted more than a decade earlier. Several pioneers—Starr administrators and staff members—recognized that the treatment methodologies for kids and their families could be much more effective if treatment teams enhanced their awareness and understanding of the unique cultural needs and strengths of the children and families of color served. In the early 1980's, Starr developed a working relationship with Dr. Jack Kirkland, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Kirkland spoke and wrote about the experiences of African Americans in this country and provided our staff with insights. He also provided annual opportunities for Starr staff to be "immersed" in the neighborhoods of East St. Louis, where they could truly get closer to seeing the world through the eyes of those African Americans.

Inspired by this, a group of Starr personnel initiated an annual conference titled "Working with Children of Color" held on the Albion campus. Speakers from across the country and from Starr Commonwealth spoke and helped Starr employees, citizens from the community, and professionals from across the state learn about and experience issues impacting people and children of color. Starr also committed to organizational and individual membership in the National Black Child Development Institute, and thereby provided employees with continued learning experiences through the national conferences held by that organization.

With this history in mind, one can see that Starr's embracing of the Healing of Racism didn't just "happen," but was a continuation and, indeed, acceleration of our desire to be effective with all children, youth, and families.

Beginning in 1997, Nathan and others (Sherlock Graham Haynes and Reggie Newkirk) facilitated the two day sessions at the various sites of Starr Commonwealth. All Starr employees were, and continue to be, required to complete this session and to continue on with smaller weekly group sessions that usually last about 2 hours. As people completed these, it became apparent that many were interested in becoming facilitators of the two-day process. Nathan asked Starr to develop a *Facilitator Training Manual for the Healing of Racism*; this was completed in 1998 and an initial twelve people were trained as facilitators. They led experiences internally but also served participants from the community and other organizations.

In consultation with Nathan, Starr played a major role in establishing the National Resource Center for the Healing of Racism. A director and support staff were hired and this organization continued to be a viable resource for community and organizational groups until 2013.

Starr continued to place the Healing of Racism as a top organizational priority and in 1998 adopted the concept of the Oneness of the Human Family as a core belief. Annual “Oneness” award ceremonies were held where employees were recognized as “pioneers” and “leaders” in the Oneness initiative. Throughout that period, Starr created a Oneness Council to guide the organization in this endeavor and to coordinate activities occurring at each of the sites.

In 2006, the *Facilitator Training Manual for the Healing of Racism* was completely revised and included a foreword from Nathan Rutstein. The facilitator training was standardized at that time. The following year the name of the program was changed to *Glasswing Racial Healing*. Presently, the two-day seminar and the accompanying Glasswing Facilitator Manual continue to be updated and revised to reflect current issues in race and diversity issues. An important element added to the current manual is the scientific evidence of the powerful impact this transformational experience can have on individuals, and therefore on communities and organizations.

Thousands of participants from several hundred organizations have completed the two-day seminar. An indication of the impact is that over 80% of them state that the experience was “transformative” for them. Significant too is that approximately 97% of the participants felt the experience was a safe environment in which to explore their own feelings about racism and to hear others’ experiences.

*Through my experiences in Glasswing Racial Healing, I have come to realize that abuses of power, dehumanization, and acts of superiority are among the greatest threats we face as a society. The devastating disease of racism separates and isolates us as human beings, and the only cure is to heal as one family. Despite the many dehumanizing events etched into my consciousness every day, I have great hope for the future because of the power of the healing process and the reality of the oneness of the human family.*

~ Martin L. Mitchell, EdD, Former President/CEO Starr Commonwealth



## **The Glasswing Butterfly**

In our society, we have been taught—intentionally or not—to view people who don’t look like us in a variety of unfortunate ways. This may result in committing, or ignoring, acts of superiority. Whether intentional or unintentional, the pain experienced is the result. Glasswing racial healing helps us understand this reality and makes it possible for us to discover a healthier way of looking at others, ourselves, and our world.

With safety and transformation being the hallmarks, Glasswing racial healing sessions give us a lens through which we can see each other clearly, without color barriers or the distortion of prejudice. More than a name, Glasswing is a movement that connects and uplifts us all, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or spiritual tradition.

Glasswing is the name of a rare and delicate butterfly of Central and South America with translucent wings – one is able to see through them. Symbolically, this describes the Glasswing racial healing session’s ability to help us see others and our world in a clearer way.

Rainforest ecologists use the presence of this rare tropical gem as an indication of high habitat quality. As the environment is thriving, the Glasswing can be seen to flourish; as the environment’s health is threatened, the Glasswing’s numbers are immediately impacted negatively.

The Spanish name for the Glasswing butterfly is espejitos (ess peh hee tose), translating to “little mirrors.” Symbolically, Glasswing not only allows us to view others and our world more clearly, but makes it possible to see ourselves without distortion as well.

# Agenda for the Two-Day Transformation

## First Day

- Welcome and Housekeeping
- Glasswing Guidelines
- Introductions
- The Five Shifts
- Definition of Racism
- Lunch
- Pathology of Racism
- The Race of Life
- Caricatures and Stereotypes
- Closing Reading of Day One

## Second Day

- Checking In
- White Privilege
- Impacts of Racism
- Hop, Skip, Jump through History
- Lunch
- Oneness of Humankind
- Closing Ceremony – Appreciations
- Survey Completion



## Sharing Guidelines

- Sharing is voluntary.
- We want to create a safe, respectful atmosphere.
- Sharing is about one's own feeling, experiences, and perceptions, etc.
- We will not always see everything the same way, and that is okay.
- Each person has a right to and responsibility for his or her own feelings, thoughts, and beliefs.
- We will avoid criticism or judgment about another person's sharing and point of view or feelings.
- We won't get tied up in debate or argument. It rarely changes anything or anyone, and tends to inhibit the sharing.
- We can only change ourselves. Our change and growth may, however, inspire someone else.
- Refrain from singling out any individuals as "representing" their group issue.
- It is important give full attention to whoever is talking.
- Feelings are important.
- We will surely make mistakes in our efforts, but mistakes are occasions for learning and forgiving.
- We come together to try to learn about the disease of racism and promote a healing process.
- We may laugh and cry together, share pain, joy, fear, and anger.
- Hopefully, we will leave these meetings with a deeper understanding and a renewed hope for the future humanity.

Adapted from Rustein, 1993





## The Five Shifts

*Problems cannot be solved at the same level of awareness  
at which they were created. Hence, we need a new place to come from.*

~ Albert Einstein

Originally introduced to Starr Commonwealth in 1997 as the “Four Shifts” by Sherlock Graham Haynes and further adapted for work with parents and children by James Longhurst and other leaders of Starr Commonwealth, the Five Shifts serve as a model for humans to try solving complex problems in more effective ways. As we address the challenges of oppression and dehumanization, it is helpful to approach these problems from a new perspective.

## 1. Material to Spiritual. *The Pathway to Human Connection*

A shift from viewing the world from a *material* frame to a *spiritual* frame: from seeing people on the surface (skin color, gender) to seeing them at a deeper level, seeing the basic values, beliefs, experiences, and feelings that shape their identity. *Human Connection* is the impact of this shift. It enables people to see the ways in which we are all connected as members of a common human family.

*We are not human beings having a spiritual experience.  
We are spiritual beings having a human experience.*

~ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

## 2. Cognition to Affect. *The Pathway to Compassion*

A shift from perceiving the world and others in a *cognitive* mode to an *affective* mode: from analyzing and making rational arguments to developing empathy for each other's feelings. The impact of this shift is *compassion for oneself and others*. It allows people to experience the world with their emotions, in an affective way, to understand their own feelings and have empathy for others.

## 3. Certainty to Curiosity. *The Pathway to Genuine Understanding*

A shift from valuing *certainty* to valuing *curiosity*. In most endeavors there is a high value on achieving certainty, getting your facts straight, uncovering the truth, before deciding on a course of action. In a dialogue around issues of race and diversity, we ask people to shift out of this mode and into one that puts an unconditional value on curiosity, suspending judgment about others, and listening and inquiring about what is really going on. This produces *genuine understanding*. It allows individuals to gain a new and deeper understanding of people who are very different than themselves.

## 4. Solution to Transformation. *The Pathway to Courage*

A shift from searching for *solutions* to striving for *transformation* in oneself and in relationships between people. In most aspects of our lives, our interactions are built around finding solutions or making decisions. In dealing with racism and prejudice, the goal is not to solve problems, but rather to learn about ourselves and others, and over time to transform our own attitudes and behaviors. The purpose of this shift is to activate a person's courage and motivation to make change in themselves and in others. This motivation serves as a catalyst for people to work together to address issues of concern to the community involving race and diversity.

## 5. Debate to Dialogue. *The Pathway to Listening and Learning Together*

A shift from engaging in *discussion/debate* to understanding one another's experiences through *dialogue*. Rather than communicate with one another to achieve specific results or to win an argument, we listen openly and without judgment. The impact of this shift is that we explore our own and other's thoughts and feelings, and *listen and learn* together about racism in a non-judgmental way.

### Respectful Communication: From Debate to Dialogue in History

Native Americans used this tradition in tribal councils. They would form a circle without a leader. They would talk and talk without trying to force a decision. Everyone had an opportunity to be heard and their feeling known without judgment. Listening was an important component as well. Soon the meeting would end. They arrived at a shared meaning through talking from the head and heart. Small groups would form and decide what to do. It is the art of think, feeling, and learning together.

The word debate comes from the Latin word meaning "to beat." The word dialogue comes from the Greek dialogos (logos meaning "the word" and dia means "through"). The spirit of dialogue is a powerful communication tool used to heal through sharing of experiences. All Uniting Humankind sessions use dialogue. The diagram below shows some of the differences between discussion/debate and dialogue.

<b>DEBATE</b>	<b>DIALOGUE</b>
Persuade, sell, convince	Listen to learn
Achieve present goals	Understand to be understood
Search for flaws	Explore thoughts, views, feelings
Defend a position	Build relationships
Win argument	Expand views and perspectives
Adversaries	Member of Human family
Give solutions	Get at the meaning behind words
Judgmental	Non-judgmental
Fact finding within limits	Unlimited hard and soft facts
Drive for a specific outcome	Suspend need for specific outcome
Opposing teams	Same team
May not value or respect person	Values all humankind
Observe the behavior of others	Observe the behavior of self



## Racial Healing: Changing Hearts and Minds

James Longhurst and Juanita Capri Brown

*If the misery of our poor be not caused by nature,  
but by our social institutions, then great is our sin.<sup>1</sup>*

~ Charles Darwin

Many want to believe that racism is a problem of the past. Some contend that bringing up the subject of race merely serves to further polarize people. Supposedly, we should not see race since being color-blind would promote equity and justice.<sup>2</sup> In reality, racism and racial inequity persist on individual, organizational, and systemic levels.

Racism is an irrational commitment to ignorance.<sup>3</sup> It is fueled by negative emotions like hate, despair, and doubt—and at the most basic level, fear.<sup>4</sup> We contract and spread this prejudice in two ways: *explicitly* through culturally learned beliefs and stereotypes; and *implicitly* at a deep and conscious level of emotional conditioning.

Governments cannot legislate away racism. Recognizing this, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation committed to the largest investment in its history to address both racial healing and racial equity.<sup>5</sup> While it is important to change unjust policies and practices embedded in our institutions, it is also essential to transform minds and hearts of individuals. Such healing at the personal level can lead to actions at organizational, community, and, hopefully, the national level.<sup>6</sup>

## **Racial Healing in Action**

Racial healing involves more than tolerance training, but a change in deep-seated patterns of thinking, feelings, and actions. This is the purpose of Glasswing Racial Healing sessions. The name comes from a butterfly with transparent wings, found in South American rainforests. Ecologists use the presence of this tropical gem as an indicator of high habitat quality. Glasswing provides a lens through which we can see each other clearly without the distortion of prejudice.

Two-day Glasswing sessions bring together about 25 persons led by co-trainers of diverse backgrounds. The facilitators guide participants in exploring the oftentimes painful subject of racism. Sitting in a circle as the session begins, they review the “ground rules” which insure a safe and respectful environment. The format addresses both education of the mind and the heart. Facilitators present short modules on topics of racism: the definition, pathology, forms, history, white privilege, and the oneness of the human family. Participants have the opportunity to share their personal experiences in dyads and in the full group setting. A safe environment allows those who have a story to tell to relate their experiences, and others can learn by supportive listening.

As participants share their personal narratives, the diversity of members fosters a rich experience. In segregated society, it is seldom possible to comprehend the life experiences of those unlike ourselves. Hearing these personal accounts disrupts the status quo of one’s world view, creating motivation to spark change. Still, the dissonance felt by participants must be at manageable levels to be productive.

Glasswing facilitators create an environment to balance the natural tension of the topic of racism with the overriding sense of safety and security for participants. When this balance between challenge and safety is reached, two things are likely to occur: People become open to listening to and empathizing with others; there is less of a need to defend oneself or one’s position. There is increased willingness to tell one’s story without fear of being judged or criticized. With this new found awareness, individuals are motivated to create change in their family and community. Many organizations create follow-up sessions to develop plans to put racial healing in action.

## The Five Shifts

Racial Healing sessions can create profound changes in both head and heart. A typical observation is, “I feel this has been a life altering experience.” This process of transformation has been described as the Five Shifts:<sup>7</sup>

*From Material to Spiritual: Experiencing Connection.* Consciously, or more often unconsciously, we categorize others based on past experience. One of the first characteristics we perceive is race, and we need the opportunity to see people at a deeper level. We discover what lies underneath—their hopes, fears, dreams, regrets, and memories of joy and loss. Such shared experiences link us together at the spiritual level. Gradually, we realize that we are all connected as members of one family, the human family.

*From Cognitive to Affective: Fostering Compassion.* On a daily basis, we use our executive functions to make logical decisions and get things done. The professional world in particular tells us that our best thinking flows from using reason and not emotion. But as neurobiologist Antonio Damasio explains, emotion and reason are intertwined.<sup>8</sup> In fact, emotions are essential to rational problem solving. Awareness of the feelings of self and others helps us approach problems more effectively and develop compassion for our fellow humans.

*From Certainty to Curiosity: Genuine Understanding.* Humans prefer a predictable world in order to be able to feel secure. In racial healing dialogues, certainty about our views hinders our ability to gain insight. Organizational behavior expert Margaret Wheatley suggests that genuine insight comes as we are able to be open about another’s perspectives, even if this initially disturbs us.<sup>9</sup> We do not have to let go of what we believe in order to be curious about what someone else believes. Instead of shielding ourselves from divergent views, a shift to curiosity puts us on the pathway to understanding.

*From Solution to Transformation: Pathways to Courage.* Our society places a high value on being able to fix problems. We rely on the myth that answers exist for every problem, and we are quick to seek out an expert who will tell us what to do. At other times, we try to impose our solutions on others, although biased by our own experiences and thinking. Glasswing is not training to fix problems but an opportunity to learn as we set aside our defensiveness, take risks, open up, speak out, and develop spiritual courage.

*From Debate to Dialogue: Listening and Learning.* People have been arguing about racism for decades with little positive effect. Debate is an attempt to persuade or overpower—the object is to win by finding flaws in our opponent’s logic. Debates on race create anger and solidify entrenched positions. Dialogue involves genuine listening to avoid a rush to judgment—increasing our pause response before we jump into the conversation. This develops capacity to learn from and be influenced by others.



## From Healing to Equity

While the purpose of Glasswing is to foster *racial healing*, this new awareness prepares individuals to promote *racial equity*. Injustice involves both deliberate and unintentional arrangements within institutions, and even in the language we use to describe our differences. Centuries of invisible systems of *white privilege* serve to favor or obstruct persons based on the biological fiction of race.<sup>10</sup>

Equity is fairness and justice, unleashing unlimited human potential, applied with a race-conscious lens. Further, racism is entangled with classism, elitism, sexism, power, and patriarchy. The failure to recognize this blinds us to oppression, and retards our ability to become more informed, effective, and connected.

Among the most rewarding professional experience has been the opportunity to train thousands of people in racial healing and equity. Those participating in this transformation abandon the distortions of prejudice and come to see themselves and others with a new lens. Together, we honor and celebrate our diversity while internalizing the reality of the oneness of humankind.

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*It is the principle of oneness that needs to be the driving force behind the struggle of uniting the races.*

~ Sara Harrington

## Endnotes

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## Our Greatest Fear

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.  
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.  
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.  
We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you *not* to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were all meant to shine, as children do.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

~ Marianne Williamson, "A Return to Love"

# Listen

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you start giving me advice,  
You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you begin to tell me “why I should feel that way,  
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you feel you have to do something to  
Solve my problems,  
You have failed me, strange as it may seem.

Listen! All I ask is that you listen;  
Not talk, nor do - just hear me.

And I can do for myself – I’m not helpless  
Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me, that I can  
and need to do for myself,  
You contribute to my fear and weakness

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel,  
No matter how irrational  
Then I quit trying to convince you  
And can get about the business of understanding  
What’s behind this irrational feeling.

When that is clear,  
The answers are obvious  
and I don’t need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we  
Understand what is behind them.

Perhaps that is why prayer works sometimes for  
some people;  
because God is mute, and doesn’t give  
advice to try to ‘fix’ things,  
He / She just listens,  
and lets you work it out  
for yourself.

So please listen, and just hear me, and if you  
Want to talk,  
Wait a minute for your turn,  
And I’ll listen to you.

*This poem was written by a mental health consumer who was institutionalized over a number of years in Queensland. He wishes to remain anonymous.*



## **White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack**

*I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness,  
not in invisible system conferring dominance on my group.*

~ Peggy McIntosh

Through work to bring materials from women's studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to women's statutes, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's denials that amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages that men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened, or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege that was similarly denied and protected. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an untutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege. I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in every day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks.

Describing white privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in women’s studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having white privilege must ask, “having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?”

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that white women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are just seen as oppressive, even when we don’t see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern as my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: Whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow “them” to be more like “us.”

*The bias, the unfairness, this has been going on all along.  
Our people have suffered intergenerational trauma.  
They’re so numb to it, they can’t feel their own feelings anymore.*

~ Larry Emerson, Navajo Nation

## Daily Effect of White Privilege

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions that I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographic location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can tell, my African American coworkers, friends, and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place and time of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind or me.
3. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
4. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
5. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
6. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
7. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color make it what it is.
8. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
9. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
10. I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race.
11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice in a group in which he/she is the only member of his/her race.
12. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
13. Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
14. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.

15. I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.
16. I can be pretty sure that my children's teachers and employers will tolerate them if they fit school and workplace norms; my chief worries about them do not concern other's attitudes toward their race.
17. I can talk with my mouth full and not have people put this down to my color.
18. I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
19. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
20. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
22. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
23. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
24. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the "person in charge", I will be facing a person of my race.
25. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
26. I can easily buy posters, post-cards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.
27. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tired in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared.
28. I can be pretty sure that an argument with a colleague of another race is more likely to jeopardize her/his chances for advancement than to jeopardize mine.
29. I can be pretty sure that if I argue for the promotion of a person of another race, or a program centering on race, this is not likely to cost me heavily within my present setting, even if my colleagues disagree with me.
30. If I declare there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn't a racial issue at hand, my race will lend me more credibility for either position than a person of color will have.
31. I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them; but in any case, I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.



32. My culture gives me little fear about ignoring the perspectives and powers of people of other races.
33. I am not made acutely aware that my shape, bearing, or body odor will be taken as a reflection of my race.
34. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
35. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.
36. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it had racial overtones.
37. I can be pretty sure of finding people who would be willing to talk with me and advise me about whether it had racial overtones.
38. I can think over many options, social, political, imaginative or professional, without asking whether a person of my race would be accepted or allowed to do what I want to do.
39. I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.
40. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
41. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
42. I can arrange my activities so that I will never have to experience feelings of rejection owing to my race.
43. If I have low credibility as a leader I can be sure that my race is not a problem.
44. I can easily find academic courses and institutions which give attention only to people of my race.
45. I can expect figurative language and imagery in all of the arts to testify to experiences of my race.
46. I can choose blemish cover or bandage in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.
47. I can travel alone or with my spouse without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us.
48. I have no difficulty finding neighborhoods where people approve of our household.
49. My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.
50. I will feel welcomed and "normal" in the usual walks of public life, institutional and social.

## Elusive and Fugitive

I repeatedly forgot each of the realizations on this list until I wrote it down. For me, white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free county; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

In unpacking this invisible knapsack of white privilege, I have listed conditions of daily experience that I once took for granted. Nor did I think of any of these perquisites as bad for the holder. I now think that we need a more finely differentiated taxonomy of privilege, for some of these varieties are only what one would want for everyone in a just society, and others give license to be ignorant, oblivious, arrogant, and destructive.

I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions that were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turn, and I was among those who could control the turf. My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make. I could think of myself as belonging in major ways and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disparage, fear, neglect, or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.

In proportion as my racial group was being made confident, comfortable, and oblivious, other groups were likely being made unconfident, uncomfortable, and alienated. Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit, in turn, upon people of color.

For that reason, the word "privilege" now seems to me misleading. We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yet some of the conditions I have described here work systematically to over empower certain groups. Such privilege simply confers dominance because of one's race or sex.

*You hear people say  
"Pull yourself up by your bootstraps," and you don't even have shoes.  
You're barefooted.*

*~ Mamie Mobley*

## Earned Strength, Unearned Power

I want, then, to distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred privilege can look like strength when it is in fact permission to escape or to dominate. But not all of the privileges on my list are inevitably damaging. Some, like the expectation that neighbors will be decent to you, or that your race will not count against you in court, should be the norm in a just society. Others, like the privilege to ignore less powerful people, distort the humanity of the holders as well as the ignored groups.

We might at least start by distinguishing between positive advantages, which we can work to spread, and negative types of advantage, which unless rejected will always reinforce our present hierarchies. For example, the feeling that one belongs within the human circle, as Native American say, should not be seen as privilege for a few. Ideally it is an unearned entitlement. At present, since only a few have it, it is an unearned advantage for them. This paper results from a process of coming to see that some of the power that I originally say as attendant on being a human being in the United States consisted in unearned advantage and conferred dominance.

I have met very few men who truly distress about systemic, unearned male advantage and conferred dominance. And so one question for me and others like me is whether we will be like them, or whether we will get truly distressed, even outraged, about unearned race advantage and conferred dominance, and, if so, what we will do to lessen them. In any case, we need to do more work in identifying how they actually affect our daily lives. Many, perhaps most, of our white students in the United States think that racism doesn't affect them because they are not people of color; they do not see "whiteness" as a racial identity. In addition, since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarly to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage related to nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.

Difficulties and angers surrounding the task of finding parallels are many. Since racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not the same, the advantages associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage that rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex, and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the members of the Combahee River Collective pointed out in their "Black Feminist Statement" of 1977.

One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms, which we can see, and embedded forms, which as a member of the dominant groups one is taught not to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in invisible systems conferring unsought racial dominance on my group from birth.

Disapproving of the system won't be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitude. But a "white" skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end these problems.

To redesign social system we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these subjects taboo. Most talk by whites about equal opportunity seems to me now to be about equal opportunity to try to get into a position of dominance while denying that systems of dominance exist.

It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly acculturated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all. Keeping most people unaware that freedom of confident actions is there for just a small number people props up those in power and serves to keep power in the hands of the same group that have most of it already.

Although systemic change takes many decades, there are pressing questions for me and, I imagine, for some others like me if we raise our daily consciousness on the perquisites of being light-skinned. What will we do with such knowledge? As we know from watching men, it is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base.

**Peggy McIntosh** is associate director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. This essay is excerpted from Working Paper #189. "White Privilege and Male Privilege; A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies" (1988), by Peggy McIntosh; available for \$4.00 from the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley MA 02181. The working paper contains a longer list of privileges. This excerpted essay is reprinted from Winter 1990 issue of Independent School.

## White Privilege Checklist

Peggy McIntosh describes white privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, code books, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks. (McIntosh, 1989)

The following are examples of ways white individuals have privilege because they are white. Please read the list and place a check next to the privileges that apply to you or that you have encountered. At the end, try to list at least two more ways you have privilege based on your race.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I can arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I am not made acutely aware that my shape, bearing, or body odor will be taken as a reflection on my race.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.

11. \_\_\_\_\_ I can be late for a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk with the “person in charge” I will be facing a person of my race.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven’t been singled out because of my race.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children’s magazines featuring people of my race.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ I can choose blemish cover or bandages in flesh color and have them more or less match my skin.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ I can walk into a classroom and know I will not be the only member of my race.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ I can enroll in a class at college and be sure that the majority of my professors will be of my race.

Racial privilege is only one form of privilege. What are other examples of privilege (e.g., privilege based on gender, sexual orientation, class and religions)? Can you think of ways one might have privilege based on these factors? (e.g., that you do not have to worry about being verbally or physically harassed because of your sexual orientation; or that you can be sure that your religious holiday will be acknowledged and represented in store displays, classroom discussions, etc.) Please list these forms of privilege.

*In colonial America, white and black were soon driven far apart, as slaves became property and were written out of the human race.*

~ Project Hip-Hip

## Fact Sheet on Societal Trauma

**Trauma Definition:** Any experience that leaves a person feeling helpless, fearing for their life/survival, their safety. However, it's important to remember it is a person's perception, their experience, that makes something traumatic.

**Racial/Societal Trauma:** Racism is an assault on one's sense of safety and the right to exist in the world (an assault on our ability to meet our universal needs as human beings).

**Traumatic Impact of Racism on People of Color:**

- Stressors resulting in serious physical health problems in targeted people, including both physiological health (cardiovascular, renal, lower life expectancy, cancer; and psychological health (increased risk of depression, anxiety, substance disorders,
- Increased level/frequency of anger, fear, distrust, exhaustion, paranoia



## Responses to Stress:

Fight: to actively oppose source(s) of racial stressors.

- Pros:
  - o Productive release of negative energy
  - o Healthy response to life challenge
  - o Positive impact on self esteem
- Cons:
  - o Potential for adverse and sharp reaction from environment (i.e., police aggression); work problems; labeled as “trouble maker”
  - o Danger to physical safety leading to above-mentioned stressors

Flight: to flee from source(s) of racial stressor through denial of impacts of racism and even denial of racism’s existence

- Pros:
  - o Able to suppress/repress stressors caused by racism
  - o Can avoid immediate negative response or potential worsening of situation
- Cons:
  - o Guilt and shame
  - o Sense of inadequacy, self-betrayal
  - o Failure as a human being

Freeze: A state of shutdown and disconnect while waiting for the threat to pass

- Pros:
  - o Allows person to “get through” threat situation
- Cons:
  - o Loss of sense of self
  - o Diminished control over environment
  - o Feeling of helplessness

Effect of Chronic Stress of Racism:

- Triggers body’s stress response
- Must “Gird” oneself (constantly on guard)
- Must work hard to manage anger, fear, distrust
- Generalized anger: distrust of individuals and institutions in position
- Helplessness/powerlessness (“It’s too big”)
- Not speaking up is followed by feeling of self-betrayal and resentment
- Denial, minimization, and rationalization (de-sensitization) of racism
  - o “I must take care of the dominant group.”
  - o “Why are we still talking about race?”
  - o Seeing acts of racism as isolated and accidental because of feeling overwhelmed at the “hugeness” and systemic nature of racism



Impact on white people:

- Generalized anxiety/fear when in groups of people of color; this fear and anxiety is suppressed and denied because “I’m not racist.”
- Unmet needs for compassion/altruism to include “out-groups” results in stunted, yet not readily recognized growth as human being.
- Continued support of misguided and ineffective explanation and “solution” of social issues leads to no solutions, more intense response to failure of society to address racism honestly and directly. All lead to increased anger and frustration in whites
- Guilt and shame is experienced by white people who recognize hurtful acts and do not speak out. High level of rationalization/intellectualization occurs to keep self-concept positive
- White people’s biggest fears: Being considered racist; acknowledging that status quo is actually not fair; that we may have to actually change if racism exists
- Fear of expulsion from social group if one expressed more awareness of pernicious effects of racism

What do people of color fear?

- Being the object of racism
- Afraid that the status quo is inevitable

What do white people fear?

- That things really aren’t fair and they might lose their advantage/privileges
- Being called a “racist”

Racial Microaggressions: The accepted definitions of microaggressions “are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.” (Sue et al. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-286.)

People who exhibit a microaggression are often unaware that they engage in such communications when they interact with racial/ethnic minorities.

Trauma Echoes: Even with excellent therapy for families experiencing abuse/neglect, it may take several generations for family members to break free from strong behavior patterns. Same with racism and we know that there has been no “therapy” for the past 5-10 generations. The effects of oppression and degradation can reverberate forward into our children.

Implicit Bias: These are the pervasive attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Implicit biases are not readily accessible through introspection in contrast to explicit biases that are held on a conscious level. They can activate without intention. (from *Implicit Bias Review* by Cheryl Staats. 2013. The Ohio State University: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

## Examples of Linguistic Racist Terminology

### **BLACK**

Black: The color of evil and darkness

A Black Lie: Stemming from evil forces

Black Deeds: Evil deeds

Dark Purpose: Evil intentions

Black Future: Hopeless, difficult future

Black Friday/Monday/Etc: Having unfortunate or dire consequences

Black Humor: Harshly ironic, sinister

Black Economy: Distributed/sold illicitly

Black Record: Deserving or bringing disgrace or shame

Black Knight: Evil knight

Black Forces: Evil forces

Black Market: Underground, illicit, illegal market

Black Moon: Depressed or angry mood

Black Magic: Evil magic

Blackly: Angrily

Blacken a Person's Record: To defame their record

Black Eye: Mark of shame

Denigrate: To cast aspersions, to darken

Black Hearted: Malevolent

Blackguard: Scoundrel

Black Mark: Detrimental fact

Black Brow: To scowl at

Black Sheep: One who causes shame or embarrassment

Blackballed: Ostracized

Blacklist: List of undesirables

Blackmail: To force or coerce into a particular action

Blackjack: To compel to threat

Devil's Food Cake: Chocolate / Dark Cake

## **WHITE**

White: The color of purity, cleanliness and goodness

White Lie: Not intending to cause harm

White Knight: Valiant and courageous warrior for positive forces

White Magic: Magic used without evil intentions

Lily-White: Envidable condition of cleanliness and purity

Angel Food Cake: A white cake

White Wedding Dress: Worn to represent purity

White Collar: Processional, upper class

White List: A list of people or organizations considered worthy of approval or acceptance.

Whitewash: Concealment of flaws or failures

White Hope: Someone, especially a beginning competitor, who supporters hope will achieve great success.

White Ribbon: The distinctive badge of certain organizations for the promotion of temperance or moral purity; as the White-Ribbon Army

## Our Journey Toward Oneness

- 2000 B.C. Egyptian and the Mediterranean world held no significant color prejudice.
- 800 B.C. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey show no problem with color: "Only yesterday Zeus went off to the Ocean River to feast with the Ethiopians, loyal, lordly men, and all the gods went with him. But in twelve days the Father returns to Olympus."  
~ The Iliad 91-92  
"...all by Poseidon, raging cold and rough against the brave king till he came ashore at last on his own land. But now that god had gone far off among the sun burnt races, most remote of men, at earth's two verges, In sunset lands and lands of the rising sun, to be regaled by smoke of thighbones burning, haunches of rams and bulls, a hundred fold. He lingered delighted at the banquet side."  
~ The Odyssey 14
- 600 A.D. Christianity inclusive of Ethiopians and other 'races'.
- 1000 Blackness became bad, Oxford dictionary defined black as defiled, dirty, without merit. White pure, etc.
- 1000 Contrary to, and illustrative of European lack of knowledge regarding the existence and competence of Natives of the Western hemisphere, is Cahokia. Located at Collinsville, Illinois (near East St. Louis, Missouri), Cahokia was the trading center of North America and home to a population comparable in numbers to London, England, and Paris, France, at the time.
- 1452 Under various theological and legal doctrines, in 1452 Pope Nicholas V directed King Alfonso of Portugal to "capture, vanquish, and subdue the Saracens (e.g., Muslims), pagans, and other enemies of Christ," to "put them into perpetual slavery," and "to take all their possessions and property." Acting on this papal privilege, Portugal continued to traffic in African slaves.
- 1492 Thus, when Columbus sailed west, it was with the express understanding he was authorized to take possession of any lands he "discovered" that were "not under the dominion of any Christian rulers." Columbus took captives back to Spain with him.

- 1493 To support Columbus on his return west, in the 1493 Papal Bull Inter Cetera, Pope Alexander VI reinforced the instructions of the bull of 1452 to apply specifically to any lands or non-Christian people that Columbus might “discover.” These two bulls are clear examples of how the Christian powers viewed indigenous peoples as “the lawful spoil and prey of their civilized conquerors.”
- These papal bulls became the basis for adoption of the “Doctrine of Discovery” used to take Native lands and still implemented under Federal law, even though it is clearly a violation of U.S. Constitution provisions for separation of church and state.
- There is no reference to race or skin color in this earliest establishment of discrimination practices in the Americas; the prejudicial base is religion, a bias that has continued throughout American history. Later transfer of African slaves to the Americas emerges from the slave trade apparently created by Portugal with Papal Bull approval.
- 1505 Columbus’ son initiated the slave trade (from Africa). Christopher Columbus not only sent the first slaves across the Atlantic, he probably sent more slaves than anyone, about 5,000. It is estimated that 20 million Africans were kidnapped from their homeland, but only half survived the middle passage to America.
- 1555 Slave identity shifts from non-Christians and defeated peoples to non-white. This is called the “Terrible Transformation.” The dominant European view of Native Americans as less than human did not change and their status did not improve.
- 1596 Queen Elizabeth I orders all ‘Blackamoors’ out of England. Visibly noticeable number of Black people during a time of great poverty in England. The Whitest people meet the Blackest people from West Africa.
- Early 1600s The New England colonies, with Massachusetts leading the way, practiced slavery, using their Protestant belief systems as justification. The Pilgrims and Puritans arrived along with other immigrant families, their indentured servant procedures, and their treatment of married women and children as chattel with no personal or property rights. During this time period, Native American slaves were sent South to be traded in exchange for “blacks, tobacco, cotton, and salt.”
- 1619 First African slaves to arrive at Jamestown.
- 1640 Virginia, later Maryland, legalized and endorsed slavery.
- 1660 Non-whites thought of as chattel by English and other Europeans.

- 1700-1900 The assaults against the Native Americans escalate and expand westward under the rationalization of “Manifest Destiny.”
- 1776 Declaration of Independence.
- 1778 Compromise with Southern states allows for Africans to be considered 3/5 human.
- 1790 Passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Law, excluding non-white immigrants and Native Americans from rights of citizenship.
- 1792 African Methodist Episcopal Church (First black Church) founded in Philadelphia by Richard Allen when the Methodist Church to which he belonged refused to give him communion.
- 1808 End of legalized shipment of slaves.
- 1819 Congress passes “civilization act” to assimilate Native Americans.
- 1820 Missouri Compromise identifies free vs. slave states.
- 1827 Freedom’s Journal, first African-American newspaper appears.
- 1830 Congress passes Indian removal act.
- 1831 Cherokee Nation sued State of Georgia for trying to take their lands and force them to move west. U.S. Supreme Court said it had no jurisdiction; did not rule on the merits. One year later the Court ruled that the Cherokee Nation was sovereign. This meant that “Georgia had no right to enforce state laws in Cherokee territory. In addition it made the Indian Removal Act invalid, illegal, unconstitutional and against treaties previously made by the United States.”
- 1831-1838 Native American tribes resettled in West in Trail of Tears.
- 1834 In defiance of the Supreme Court, President Andrew Jackson forced a sham “Treaty of New Echota” on the Cherokee, and the Cherokee walked some 800 miles to “Indian territory,” now Oklahoma, in the most well-known trail of tears in U.S. history. Many such trails or events, too numerous to mention, were forced upon tribes across the country.

*Racism is still that hound of hell which dogs the tracks of our civilization.*

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

These events also signified the installment of the “reservation” system, in which Indians were ordered to certain locations, far from their original homelands, and essentially held captive as they were forbidden to leave these reservations at any time without permission of the U.S. overseers, agents, and military units. At the same time, the government assigned to these reservations specific Christian church representatives responsible for spiritual training and oversight. For example, the Catholics got Yankton, Episcopalians got Lakota, Presbyterians, Methodists, and others received other assignments.

- 1845 Manifest Destiny, a phrase to describe U.S. expansion westward and occupation of the North American continent as a divine right. This term applied to U.S. annexation of Texas from Mexico and by extension to the annexation of Oregon, New Mexico, California, and later U.S. involvement in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines. Manifest destiny was the “logical” extension of the Papal Bulls that had divided the Western Hemisphere from pole to pole and bestowed “ownership” on European monarchs.
- 1838 Underground Railroad is established.
- 1835 -1842 Seminoles resist removal in Second Seminole War.
- 1846 President James Polk declares war on Mexico under the guise of a “Mexican attack” to obtain territory in what became the Southwestern U.S.
- 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo cedes Mexican territory in Southwest to the U.S.
- 1848 European settler women hold first woman’s suffrage convention at Seneca Falls, New York. This movement was heavily influenced by Iroquois Seneca and Mohawk women. The European women were leading a movement to rid themselves of “chattel status” and to secure rights, such as those practiced by the Iroquois women with whom they were acquainted. Under U.S. laws at that time, married women were legally dead; they had no rights to property, to their earnings when they worked or to any inheritance. They did not even have rights to their children; a husband could “will away “ guardianship to whomever he chose. These suffragists wanted their safety, personal attire, political involvement, property ownership, and decision-making authority with respect to their children. They described their direct experiences with the Iroquois to influence women and others to support their petition for full citizenship and rights, including the vote.
- 1850 California imposes Foreign Miner’s Tax and enforces it mainly against Chinese miners, who often had to pay more than once.
- 1854 People V. Hall rules that Chinese can’t give testimony in court
- 1855 Uncle Tom’s Cabin tells of the evils of slavery.

- 1857 Dred Scott V. Sanford endorses Southern views on race and territories, including slaves considered to be “property.”
- 1859 John Brown raids Harper Ferry.
- 1861 Civil War begins.
- 1863 Emancipation Proclamation: African-American soldiers join Union army.
- 1865 Civil War Ends.
- 1865-1877 President Johnson begins Reconstruction; Confederate leaders regain power; white southern governments pass restrictive black codes.
- 1866-1867 Congress passes 13th Amendment, freeing all slaves. Amendment 14 makes all slaves citizens. 15th Amendment, in theory, gives the vote to ex-slaves. In reality, African Americans were not allowed to vote due to literacy tests, poll taxes, etc.
- 1867 Two thousand Chinese railroad workers strike for a week.
- 1876 Battle of Little Big Horn; Great Sioux Nation and other tribes defeat U.S. Army troops led into Native territory in the Dakotas by General George Custer.
- 1877-1960s Jim Crow Era legalized segregation. It is said that this period merely extended the chains of slavery rather than eliminating it. Over 5000 public lynchings of blacks and no protection from government, law enforcement, courts. Indian boarding schools established.
- 1879 Forced from their home in Nebraska to walk 600 miles to Oklahoma “Indian Territory,” Ponca Chief Standing Bear’s son dies in Oklahoma and elicits promise from his father that he would be returned for burial to their Nebraska home. The Chief and other tribal members begin the long walk back and are forced by U.S. Army troops to return to Oklahoma. They try again to keep the promise and are turned back. Eventually, an Osage woman activist learns of this story, convinces the Chief to talk with a newspaper man, who then finds a lawyer to represent him. Pronouncing in court that “I am a man!” the Chief convinces the judge that as such he is entitled to move about the country freely. “Habeas corpus” is established for Native people.
- 1880 Section 69 of California’s Civil Code prohibits issuing of licenses for marriages between whites and “Mongolians, Negroes, mulattoes and persons of mixed blood.”
- 1880-1881 Helen Hunt Jackson’s *A Century of Dishonor* influences public conscience about poor government treatment of Native Americans.



- 1882 Congress prohibits Chinese immigration for ten years, bowing to pressure from nativists in the West.
- 1883 Supreme Court in civil rights cases strikes down 1875 Civil Rights Act and reinforces claim that the federal government cannot regulate behavior of private individuals in matters of race relations.
- 1887 Dawes Act dissolves tribal lands and grants land allotments to individual families. It should be noted that the real effect of this law was to take land away from tribes by changing their land titles from tribal holdings, confining ownership to lots sufficient for individual farmers, which Natives were not. After giving one allotment to each family, the remainder was available for selling to non-Native bidders. This method not only contradicted the successful way of Native resourcing and conserving the lands but also substantially reduced the land under Native management.
- 1890 Wounded Knee massacre; final suppression of Plains tribes by U.S. Army.
- 1895 Booker T. Washington gives Atlanta Compromise speech.
- 1896 Plessy V. Ferguson upholds doctrine of “separate but equal” among Blacks and whites in public facilities.
- 1898 Race riot erupts in Wilmington, North Carolina.
- 1899 Cummins v County Board of Education applies “separate but equal” doctrine to public schools.
- 1900 Census of Native Americans is approximately 650,000.
- 1902 Chinese immigration excluded indefinitely by Congress.
- 1904 Japanese plantation workers engage in first organized strike in Hawaii.
- 1905 Niagara Falls Convention promotes more militant pursuit of African-American rights
- 1906 Race riots erupt in Atlanta, Georgia.
- 1909 NAACP founded.
- 1914 During Mexican Revolution, U.S. Troops invade Mexico.
- 1915 D.W. Griffith directs Birth of a Nation. This portrays African Americans as “brutes” to be feared and reinforces separation of “races.”
- 1917 Whites attack African Americans in race riots in East St. Louis, Illinois.

- 1919 Chicago race riot one of many in the “Red Summer.”
- 1920 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. European women citizens of the U.S. win part of the fight. Some states had previously relented.
- 1923 Ku Klux Klan activity peaks.
- 1924 Immigration Act denies entry to virtually all Asians.
- 1924 Indian Citizenship Act (1924). “BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all non citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States be, and they are hereby, declared to be citizens of the United States: Provided That the granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any Indian to tribal or other property.” (Approved June 2, 1924)
- 1931 Nine African-American men arrested in Scottsboro affair.
- 1934 Wheeler Howard Act restores lands to tribal ownership.
- 1935 Jesse Owens wins four gold medals at Olympics in Berlin.
- 1936 Dennis Chávez begins a 27-year term in Congress as a senator, battling for the rights of Hispanic residents and Native Americans in his home state, New Mexico. He played a major role in the establishment of the Fair Employment Practices Commission.
- 1939 Marian Anderson becomes the first African American to perform at the Lincoln Memorial.
- 1930s-1945 Holocaust of Jewish people and others (handicapped, Roma [“gypsies”], homosexuals). In Germany, as many as 7-8 million people were killed.
- 1941 African Americans threaten to march on Washington to protest unequal access to defense jobs; Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) prohibits discrimination in war industries and government.
- 1942 120,000 Japanese Americans sent to relocation camps.
- 1942-43 “Zoot Suit Riots” occur in Los Angeles. Arab American lawyer George Shibley assists in the defense of Mexican Americans during the People v. Zammora, the famous Zoot Suit Riot Trial.
- 1943 Ban on Chinese immigration lifted.
- 1948 Apartheid begins in South Africa.

- 1948 Truman appoints Presidential Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services.
- 1954 Brown V. the Board of Education begins to roll back Jim Crow Laws.
- 1954 Brown V. the Board of Education rules “separate but equal” illegal.
- 1955 Rosa Parks arrested; Montgomery bus boycott begins. Emmet Till killed, has open casket at request of his mother.
- 1957 Little Rock desegregation crisis; Congress passes Civil Rights Act; Martin Luther King, Jr. founds SCLC.
- 1960 Sit-in Greensboro, North Carolina; SNCC formed; Kennedy elected president.
- 1961 Freedom Rides protest segregation in transportation; National Indian Youth Council formed.
- 1962 Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta start the United Farm Workers of America to change deplorable working conditions for migrant farm workers; James Meredith enters University of Mississippi.
- 1963 Civil Rights march on Washington and King “I Have a Dream Speech”; bombing of Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama; JFK assassinated.
- 1964 Economic Opportunity Act allocates fund to fight poverty; Civil Rights Act outlaws discrimination in jobs and public accommodations; murder of Schwerner, Chaney and Goodman; riots break out in first of the “long hot summers”; Democratic National Convention fails to seat the delegation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.
- 1965 Malcolm X assassinated; Voting Rights Act allows federal supervision of voter registration; Watts explosion; young African-American men in Mississippi refuse to enlist in demonstration against war in Vietnam; Cesar Chavez organizes United Farm Workers strike. Immigration Law abolishes “national origins” as basis for allocating immigration quotas to various countries – Asian countries now on equal footing.
- 1966 King begins Chicago campaign to organize vs. landlords; founding of Black Panther Party in Oakland, California; Mohammad Ali refuses to fight in “white man’s war” and his boxing title is taken away; SNCC calls for withdrawal from Vietnam.
- 1967 Race riots erupt in Newark, Detroit, and other cities; King begins Poor People’s Campaign; George Wiley starts Welfare Rights Organization.
- 1968 King assassinated; African-Americans riot in 168 cities and towns; Civil Rights Act bans discrimination in housing. Robert Kennedy assassinated.

- 1969 School Desegregation Ordered.
- 1970 Soledad Prison inmates organize and prisoner support groups are formed on the outside; National Guard called to Jackson State and Kent State (students are shot at both schools).
- 1971 Inmates revolt at Attica Prison in protest of inhumane treatment.
- 1972 Shirley Chisholm: First black American to run for President of U.S.
- 1977 Television miniseries of Alex Haley's Roots.
- 1978 Bakke v. University of California outlaws quotas but upholds affirmative action.
- 1980 Race riots break out in Chattanooga and Miami.
- 1982 Ileana Ros-Lehtinen became the first Hispanic woman and first Cuban American to be elected to the U.S. Congress and advocated for human rights around the world; Voting Rights Act of 1965 removed.
- 1987 Workforce 2000 by the Hudson Institute brings Diversity to the national Agenda along with 'Skill Gap' issue.
- 1988 Congress apologizes and awards \$20,000 to each of the surviving 60,000 Japanese-American internees.
- 1992 First Rodney King verdict leads to rioting in Los Angeles.
- 1996-97 Starr Commonwealth begins "The Oneness of Humankind" initiative.
- 2001 Hijacked airliners flown into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City
- 2001 In the wake of 9/11, the number of hate crimes against Arab Americans and Muslims surge.
- 2005 Rosa Parks dies at age 92.
- 2003 Latinos are pronounced the Nation's largest minority group
- 2004 National Museum of the American Indian established on the mall in Washington D.C.
- 2004 Minuteman Project begins to organize anti-immigration activists at U.S. – Mexico border
- 2006 President George W. Bush reauthorizes the Voting Right Act renamed the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King and Caesar Chavez Voting Rights Act

- 2006 U.S. Congress debates legislation that would criminalize undocumented immigrants—it fails. Debate now centers on legislation offering pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
- 2007 Nooses hung from tree by white high school students leads to civil unrest between white and black youth and the eventual arrest and charging of eight black students for assault in Jena, Louisiana
- 2008 Election of Barrack Hussein Obama as the 44th President of the United States
- 2009 President Obama signs Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 regarding equal pay which amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- 2010 Congress passes the Fair Sentencing Act which reduces the disparity between sentences for crack and powder cocaine offenses from 100:1 to 18:1
- 2010 President Obama signs legislation to pay Native American and African American farmers over \$4.6 Billion for past government mistreatment
- 2010 President Obama signs legislation repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”
- 2010 Home health care workers in Wisconsin and Missouri, most of whom are immigrants and women of color, join workers in 10 other states to organize a union.
- Arizona Senate Bill 1070 is passed into law, making it the broadest and strictest immigration measure in the country. Officially titled The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, the bill is seen as legally sanctioned racial profiling.
- Volunteers with No More Deaths, an organization that seeks to prevent deaths of people crossing the border, are fined for littering. The organization left one-gallon jugs of water in the various Sonoran Desert locations.
- 2011 The W.K. Kellogg Foundation implements a \$75 million, five-year “America Healing” initiative to combat structural racism and heal the wounds of racism.
- 2011 Federal jury convicts five New Orleans police officers of charges related to the cover-up and deprivation of civil rights related to the shooting of unarmed African Americans on the Danziger Bridge in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.
- 2012 After years of organizing and information gathering by immigrant and human rights groups, the U.S. Department of Justice accuses the Maricopa County (Arizona) Sheriff’s Office of engaging in a pattern or practice of unconstitutional policing, including racial profiling in traffic stops, immigration operations, and discrimination against Spanish speakers in the county jails.

- 2012 Law professor and social justice advocate Michelle Alexander publishes *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, energizing a growing movement to confront the war on drugs and the crime policies that have had devastating racial impacts.
- 2012 17-year-old teenager Trayvon Martin is shot and killed by neighborhood-watch volunteer George Zimmerman in Sanford, Florida. Zimmerman is not charged in the shooting until national outrage forces city leaders to arrest him.
- 2012 Several thousand people march from Harlem to the Upper East Side townhouse of Mayor Michael Bloomberg to protest New York City's notorious "stop-and-frisk" police procedure, which almost exclusively targets young Black and Latino males.
- 2012 Barack Obama is elected to his second term as President.
- 2013 The U.S. Supreme Court invalidates a key section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act allowing several (mostly Southern) states to modify their election laws without federal approval.
- 2013 The U.S. Supreme Court reverses a key part of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, allowing the adoption of a young girl to white parents in South Carolina, away from her Cherokee father in Oklahoma.
- 2013 George Zimmerman is found not guilty of the murder of teenager Trayvon Martin.
- Protests spread through more than 100 cities across the country in support of the family of Trayvon Martin after Zimmerman's not guilty verdict. Student activists, The Dream Defenders, drew national attention for the longest sit-in demonstration at the Florida capital. Gov. Rick Scott rejected their demand for a special session on the "Stand Your Ground" law.
- In New York, a broad coalition of diverse grassroots groups wins major police accountability reforms. A federal court rules that the NYPD's practice of "stop and frisk" is unconstitutional, and the City Council overrides a mayoral veto to establish an Inspector General for the NYPD.
- 2014 A mistrial is declared on the count of murder in the shooting death of 17-year old African-American Jordan Davis by Michael Dunn, a 45-year old white male, at a gas station in Jacksonville, Florida. The jury fails to reach a unanimous verdict even after Dunn admits to shooting Davis during an argument about loud music coming from the car Davis and his friends were in.
- 2014 Three U.S. Presidents commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act at the LBJ Presidential Library. That same day, Pro Publica previews the findings of a yearlong investigation concluding that public schools have desegregated—and disparities between black and white students have widened.

- 2014 The U.S. Justice Department launches the National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice to collect and analyze data on racial profiling in order to reduce racial bias in the criminal justice system.
- 2014 The Supreme Court turns back the clock on hard-won civil rights by upholding the University of Michigan's ban on considering race as a factor in university admissions. In her powerful dissenting opinion, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote, "This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable... We ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society."
- 2014 President Obama launches My Brother's Keeper, an initiative aimed at improving life outcomes and expanding opportunities for boys and young men of color. Ten foundations announce investments totaling \$200 million over the next five years.
- 2014 Unarmed, 10-year old Michael Brown shot and killed by police officer, Darren Wilson, setting off almost 4 months of protest and civil unrest in Ferguson, MO.
- St. Louis county prosecuting attorney Robert McCullough announces that a grand jury decided not to indict police officer Wilson for any crimes related to the fatal shooting of Brown.
- 2015 Several intoxicated white men pour beer on a group of Native American youth, telling them to "go back to the Rez" ("Rez" refers to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation) during a minor league hockey game in Rapid City, South Dakota.
- Members of a fraternity at the University of Oklahoma are videotaped chanting that black will never be admitted to the chapter, making references to lynching. The video goes viral and the chapter is dissolved by the national association.

*"(Ours)... is a past that is filled with some of the ugliest possible examples of racial brutalization and degradation in human history. We need to recognize it for what it was and is and not explain it away, excuse it or justify it."*

~ John Hope Franklin

## What We Can Do as People of Color, to Heal Internalized Racism

1. Make a consistent conscious effort to become informed of our internalized racist patterns. Particular attention must be given to our reluctance to support other African-Americans in leadership roles.
2. Wage an active campaign to dispel the negative myths and misinformation that we have received about who we are.
3. Surround ourselves with pictures, stories, and role models who exemplify qualities that reflect the resilience of African-Americans people. Our children need a comprehensive view of our history.
4. Actively support other African-Americans and people of color in their pursuit of Black re-emergence.
5. Reach out to other people of color—Native American, Latinos, and Asians—as well as European-Americans in order to establish bonds of friendship and support, and to establish multi-cultural support groups. Act on the assumption that others' inherent nature, just as our inherent nature, wants closeness—assume we are wanted.
6. Systematically incorporate into our lives, activities that will celebrate our creativity, intelligence, determination, and spirituality. This is particularly crucial for our children, so that they are raised with a real sense of their nobility.
7. Participate in and support groups and organizations that are designed to enhance the quality of life of African-Americans and other people of color.
8. Constantly celebrate our own strength, nobility and ability to grow, through immersing ourselves in literature that is reflective of our true history.
9. Interrupt oppressive jokes and behavior whenever possible. Be vigilant in not allowing oneself to be pulled into putting down people in our own ethnic group or in any other group.

Learn to listen for and find the fear in a person we perceive as racist, avoid blame or anger. Think of every American as a “recovering” person with racist conditioning.



# **The Role of White People in Ending Racism**

Racism is contrary to the fundamental nature of every human being. All human beings begin life caring deeply about all other human beings. Until we ourselves are hurt - put down, ignored, threatened, beaten, criticized, isolated, and so on - each of us wants all people to be treated well. None of us, including white people, would ever participate in the racist mistreatment or oppression of other humans unless we had first been hurt. However, once hurt, we are vulnerable to hurting others—by participating in oppressive systems and acting oppressively as individuals.

In an oppressive society, few people escape being hurt in ways that leave us feeling scared and bad about ourselves. It is when we are scared or when we feel bad about ourselves that we are most vulnerable to believing racist messages.

In a racist society there is a constant barrage of racist messages and practices—from family, friends, acquaintances, schools, the media, and many other institutions. No one can grow up in such an environment and escape its effects. In this way the society installs racism on every white person. It does so regardless of how strongly or for how long we actively resist.

## **White people act as agents of racism**

As a result of these hurts, all white people have been conditioned to accept the lies of racism and to carry racist feelings. Some white people stop questioning these feelings and act out these “beliefs” in hateful and oppressive ways. Other white people intellectually reject the content of racist messages and try to treat people targeted by racism respectfully and as equals. But even when those of us who are white act with goodwill toward people targeted by racism or actively engage in fighting racism, attitudes connected with racism (unjustified fears, the seeking of approval, feelings of superiority, etc.) surface from time to time and must be battled in order for us to act consistently according to our best thinking.

We white people are pulled to act on the basis of the racism we have heard and seen, acting sometimes subtly and unaware; and at other times overtly and harshly.

## **Racism hurts white people**

Racism greatly damages the lives of people targeted by it. Racism also hurts those of us who are white. (This is true of any group that acts out oppression at another group.) This is far from the damage inflicted on the targets of racism, but it corrupts our humanity and compounds the ways we already feel bad about ourselves. Not standing up against racism erodes our integrity and undermines our sense of goodness and self-worth.

White people become separated from the majority of the world's people, know little about them, and miss close involvement in the lives of a rich variety of people. Racism also erodes relationships between white people - we do not want to be associated with "that white racist" or "that white liberal." Racism leaves us feeling hopeless about actually eliminating racism and creating a just and equitable society.

### **White people ending racism and healing from the hurts of white racism**

We have learned that any and all "oppressor roles" (the role played by a person who has been conditioned to be an agent of oppression) are installed by hurting people very deeply. White people's oppressive behavior arises from deep emotional damage. Sustained emotional work is therefore required for those of us who are white people to free ourselves from racism. To create a just society, white people must not only inform us fully about racism and take action to end it, but must also heal from the damage caused by being exposed to racism and by having participated in it.

White people taking turns listening to each other in pairs and in groups is an effective way to do this emotional work. Those of us who are white need to remember and to tell our stories about the racism in our lives and assist one another to release the intense feelings that underlie these stories. These stories can include early experiences with racism, the racist lies we were told, the times we acted out racism, and the racist attitudes that were held by the people around us, as well as the successes we have had in fighting racism.

To do this work, we white people need settings in which we can be open about racism without being blamed or shamed, where we know we are cared about and respected. Under these conditions, we can remember and tell what happened to us with regard to racism and release the painful emotions from these experiences. And we need to learn to do this work with one another as white people. It is the job of white people, not people targeted by racism, to do the work to both stop white people from perpetuating racism and to help white people heal the damage we carry.

With emotional release, white people are able to think afresh about these experiences. We become partners with people targeted by racism in their efforts to heal from having lived in a racist society. We begin taking effective steps to end racism along with freeing ourselves of the effects of racism, all of which improves our lives in countless ways.

### **White people as allies to people targeted by racism**

An important part of ending racism and all other oppressions is to develop alliances between those targeted by the oppression and those outside the targeted group. Eliminating racism requires the development of strong alliances among groups of people targeted by racism and also with white people who are committed to ending racism. These white allies are people who have decided to work for the liberation of all people targeted by racism. We, white people in this ally role, demonstrate by our actions and words that we support the goals and visions of groups targeted by racism and work alongside them. In United to End Racism, we have learned a great deal about building these alliances and about white people becoming effective allies.

## Steps toward becoming white allies

There are many ways for white people to work as allies in eliminating racism. Some of these include:

- Taking visible stands against all forms of racism by both backing anti-racism organizations led by people targeted by racism as well as standing independently as a white person against racism;
- Working on and eliminating our own racism and healing the places we have been silent and passive about racism;
- Standing against one of the effects of racism by reminding targeted people of their goodness, intelligence, competence, and the importance of their relationships with one another;
- Actively seeking correct information and healing from the ways we have been unaware and uninformed;
- Building long-term friendships with people targeted by racism and challenging the racist messages of separation, difference, and fear;
- Training and building groups of white allies committed to eliminating racism by assisting other whites to heal the damage done to us by racism;
- Understanding that being allies to people targeted by racism is for our own benefit since it involves reclaiming our full humanity and having a world right for everyone, a world where everyone matters.

For more information about white people healing the damage done by racism, see the pamphlet *Working Together to End Racism*, a publication of United to End Racism.

*“The very process of racial engagement puts us all on the same plane. When we are honest with each other...when we place on the table our assumptions, fears, trepidations and secret desires, by that very act we are connecting with one another as equals.”*

~ Harlon L. Dalton



## **What We Can Do as European-Americans, as Allies, to Heal Our Unawareness of Racism.**

1. Make a consistent, conscious effort to become informed of our unaware racist patterns. Particular attention must be given to a superior attitude, taking over, or speaking in a patronizing or controlling manner.
2. Seek out positive aspects of our own heritage to reclaim complete pride in who we are.
3. Identify white heroes and heroines in our heritage or in our past who fought against racism, and honor those who do so in the present
4. Set aside specific times to recall and share stories of misinformation, to heal past hurt and feelings of guilt.
5. Reach out, establish bonds of friendship and support with African-American and other people of color, and establish multi-cultural support groups. Celebrate any environment that permits one to enjoy the presence of people of different cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

6. Do it! Make mistakes, in fact, look forward to them. Mistakes are like little badges we wear that say we are out there trying.
7. Participate in and support groups and organizations that are designed to enhance the quality of life of all Americans, not just those of our own background.
8. Educate ourselves continuously on what is happening to and with others in our world. Read *Ebony*, *Jet*, Black newspapers, books, and tapes on African-American history and culture.
9. Interrupt oppressive jokes and behavior whenever possible. Be visible, act as an ally. Be vigilant in not allowing oneself to be pulled into putting down people of any ethnic group.
10. Learn to listen for and find the fear in a person we perceive as racist, avoid blame or anger. Think of every American as a “recovering” person with racist conditioning.
11. Work to develop the ability to listen objectively to the anger of others without taking it personally.
12. Do not give up when we experience a cautious response, or even outright rejection, from African-Americans or other people of color. Remember that if one or two rejections hurt us, people of color have been hurt many, many times. Act on the assumption that their inherent nature, just as our inherent nature, wants closeness—assume we are wanted.

*“If there is no struggle, there can be no progress.”*  
~ Frederick Douglass

## Examples of Internalized Racism

- ➔ Racism has made us think of ourselves or others as stupid, lazy, unimportant, or inferior.
- ➔ Racism has made us criticize or verbally attack each other, using the racist messages of our societies, or allow others in our group to do so.
- ➔ Racism has made us physically attack or kill each other, playing out our rage about racism at one another.
- ➔ Racism has made us put our individual well-being last. Racism has made us unable to think about our physical/emotional health, making us vulnerable to heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, ulcers, and more.
- ➔ Racism has made us criticize and beat our children in misguided efforts to “discipline” them and keep them from openly displaying pride or pleasure in themselves (attempting to make them less vulnerable to racism, but instead leaving them more beaten down and enraged.)
- ➔ Racism has made us feel helpless, despairing, and angry, which can make us vulnerable to the lure of alcohol and other drugs for “relief” from those feelings, even though we know that this does additional harm to ourselves and our families.
- ➔ Racism has made our various racial groups fight with each other over what seems like a scarcity of resources; racism has made us fight each other in gangs.
- ➔ Racism has made some of our groups join racist institutions and take part in carrying out their racist policies against our own people.
- ➔ Racism has made us feel disconnected from other members of our group, or divide or categorize each other by behaviors or lifestyles, believing that some of us are “better” or “more legitimate” than others and that what some others do is “not part of” our culture.
- ➔ Racism has made us place higher value on members of our group who appear more white, and denigrate those who have darker skin, kinkier hair, or other “less white” features. We also do the reverse—we target those with lighter skins as not being “black enough,” not legitimate persons of color.

*A minority group has “arrived” only when it has the right to produce some fools and scoundrels without the entire group paying for it.*

~ Carl T. Rowan



## **What to Say when People Say.....**

These are possible ideas as food for thought. Of course, we must avoid getting into angry debates about these issues.

### ***“I don’t see race....I teach my kids to be colorblind.”***

1. At best, this is an attempt for people of a lighter hue to aver their belief in a just society—a society that doesn’t exist. It would be nice to have (some say return to) a society where lightness or darkness, or geographical origins do not play a role in anyone’s consciousness. But that is not the world we live in and even for the well-intentioned person, this statement is a hurtful one in that it denies many people’s existence and identity. Plus the fact is that one of the first things we notice about people is indeed their “race” or what we perceive to be race. Everyone sees color!
2. At worst, these statements are intended to be a subtle, yet powerful rejection of the realities of the dehumanization and abuse of power and white supremacy in our society. It is intended to place the blame for racial tensions solely on the backs of people of color.

3. It is helpful to ask how that statement applies to the person who sees a woman (“I don’t see gender, I just see a human being.”) or when the person sees a rabbit (“I don’t see a rabbit, I see an animal.”) Another version of the colorblind defense is “We all bleed red.” Again, they feel that conversations about race are harmful.
4. Finally, when children hear someone say, “don’t look at their color”, they can’t help but deduce that there must be something wrong with the person of color, or else why would someone they trust tell them to pretend their color doesn’t exist? Nobody has EVER said to a white person, “When I look at you, I don’t see a white person. I just see a person.” That’s because being white historically has not been associated with oppression and dehumanization. Being “colorblind” is a privilege available only to white people. Non-white people do not have the luxury of pretending that color can be ignored.

### ***“What about black on black crime?”***

Crime events are most common in one’s own community and neighborhood. Thus, studies indicate that there is not a significant difference in rates of so-called black-on-black crimes and white-on-white crimes (93% to 84%). While white-on-white crime happens as frequently, why is it we don’t hear in the media that a major social problem is “white-on-white crime?” As Tiffany Drayton and Joshua McCarther post in “18 Things White People Should Know/Do Before Discussing Racism” (posted June 12, 2014), white people have engaged in “everything from elementary school shootings to world wars. Why should crimes committed by and against people of color be labelled any differently?”

### ***“It’s not really about race...it’s about (poverty, class, etc.).***

Focusing on just class ignores or denies the experience of many people of color who are wounded by the experience of race in our country. There is definitely a “class” issue that needs to be discussed, especially as the rich in our country get preposterously richer while the middle class at best stays even or more likely falls behind in the wages/compensation arena. The truth is that for white people, class can rise to be the most important, but it’s a cop-out to reject the notion that race is secondary to class.

### ***“Why blame me for something that happened centuries ago? Why blame me for what my ancestors did?” “I didn’t do anything wrong!”***

We are not talking about blame, but rather understanding our past which is the basis of much historic distrust among people of different backgrounds. Strictly speaking, these are fairly accurate statements. But institutions are referred to as “we” by all entities – government, religion, science, education and business, to name a few. A Supreme Court justice may say, “In Smith v. Jones, we ruled that...” This particular decision may have occurred centuries before but the “we” refers to the acknowledgment that the justices are part of an ongoing enterprise, and as such, are responsible for its history. Not as individuals, but as person charged with the duty of carrying on a project that precedes them and will survive them.



### ***“Talking about race only makes it worse.”***

Being silent on ANY issue only makes things worse. In psychological terms, not talking about race can even be seen as an ineffective defense mechanism aimed at reducing the anxiety associated with (for white people) being around people of color or through honest discussions about race. This statement too has been directed at President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder by those in power who have a lot to lose if the citizens of America were to honestly grapple with racial issues rather than blaming people of color for the racial tensions experienced in this country. This statement is not limited to being spoken by white people. Dr. Benjamin Carson has stated this unequivocally—that talking about race just makes matters worse.

### ***“They are just playing the race card.”***

When it comes right down to it, everyone, no matter what our hue, plays the race card. But let’s look at this statement being directed at a person of color by a white person. This statement is intended to, at a minimum, trivialize a person’s concern with racism in this country. More likely, its aim is to stigmatize and scapegoat those who disagree with the false notion that America is a color-blind, post-racial society. It is one of those quick, clichéd dismissals that are used to make sure nothing changes in our society.

### ***“Privilege!? I had to work for everything I ever got.”***

- People of color have understood this reality of white privilege and advantage for centuries, despite the fact that the concept was “discovered” by a white female as she was contemplating male privilege.
- When privilege becomes the entrenched status quo, challenges to this privilege are framed as persecution.
- When rampant inequality becomes prevalent, advantage is couched in terms as blessing, favor, hard work, while the disadvantages are indicted, using appeals to cultural pathology.

### ***“White men are the real victims here.”***

Psychologically, human beings naturally defend against feelings and thoughts that potentially contradict their positive view of themselves. When people begin to justify, blame, intellectualize, displace, etc. to the point of dramatically distorting reality to ensure their psychological well-being, they are showing signs of a psychological disorder. People who make this statement tend to be very closed, have insecure personalities, and have gotten used to “playing the victim card.”

### ***“We live in a post-racial society. The fact that we elected a Black President is proof of that.”***

1. Electing and re-electing Barack Obama as President of the United States signifies a significant visible symbol of change. This statement is typically a cop-out for people who are unwilling to look at the reality of widespread oppression of people of color. One only has to look at the unprecedented hateful attacks on his character, origins, and religious beliefs, to understand that, contrary to the statement, his Presidency has made visible the degree of racial animus in this country.

2. Another dis-proof of this statement is that people of color continue to be at the bottom of all indices of racial equity—health, education, per capita wealth, incarceration, etc. And while the economy’s upswing has been experienced by white people, the positive impact upon people of color has been negligible. At the present time, less than 1% of CEO’s in this country are African American.

***“Not everything is about race.” “Stop making everything about race.”***

It is convenient to ignore the long-term effects of centuries of intentional/methodical oppression, marginalization, and bigotry. The fact is it DOES have to do with race since by saying it doesn’t negates the experience in people’s worlds that have been shaped by race. Question: Who benefits when we don’t make it about race?

***“Get over it!”***

When people of color do not have to be concerned about their safety and well-being, security, and even how they perceive reality, then they might be able to “get over it.” They will know when that time comes because they will not feel a need to protect their children by educating them on the physical and emotional dangers implicit in a society conditioned by racism.

***“Black people had slaves, too.”***

It is true that slavery has existed since earliest recordings of time in cultures of lighter and darker hues. There is no denying that slavery is cruel and dehumanizing. It is widespread even today throughout the world. But “chattel slavery” which was created in our society was especially cruel and was constructed to continue in perpetuity through the slave mother’s descendants. When one considers that children born from rapes of slave women by slave owners remained slaves and were often sold away from their families, one begins to grasp the sickness this must entail.

***“Black people are racist, too.”***

This is also called “reverse racism” implying there is moral equivalent that minimizes the impact of racism. At the societal level, racism is defined by who has the power to oppress another group; historically in Western society, this was the whites who enslaved, colonized, and subjugated, including aboriginal peoples on all continents. Oppressed people certainly fight back but are in no position to construct elaborate systems to provide privilege and advantage to themselves; only the dominating peoples can do that. Of course, white people can be hurt by prejudice. It is also true that people of color can be prejudiced, bigoted, and hate, fear, and distrust white people. We all have the capacity for those emotions. We will not make much progress on issues of race unless we acknowledge how both people of color and white people have been hurt by this bigotry and prejudice.

### ***“Why is it ok that Black people can say the N-word, and I can’t?”***

Such is the craziness of racism! Listen closely to people talking about race and notice the hesitation when someone refers to the “race” of someone. These normally well-spoken people seem to internally stutter when they have to include something about race in their statement. The most extreme example of that is the “N” word. There is no agreement among people of color on the rightfulness or wrongfulness of saying that word. For some, it depends on who is saying it, under what circumstances, in what company, and in what context. Since this was the core dehumanizing term in our history, use of this is extremely demeaning and inflammatory.

### ***“We are all hard wired to be racist anyway.”***

So not true. We ARE hardwired and have been for thousands of generations to be comfortable with the familiar; and to experience discomfort with the unfamiliar, even to the point of being alarmed, anxious, or on guard. For many people, being around people who don’t look like them raises these emotions, not because of some racial-sensitive complex of neurons in our brain, but because we lack familiar, human experiences with them. “Different” takes on the meaning “dangerous” or “threatening” to folks as the default emotion. This is especially true if one’s experiences with people of color are limited to what is seen or read in the media or what is passed down from parents to children verbally and non-verbally.

### ***“Why are Black people so ANGRY all the time?”***

Of course, nobody is always angry, but the experience of racism makes anger a natural response. It would be totally unnatural, even psychotic for people who have been subjected to centuries of injustice and oppression to not be angry. Anger is a natural emotion installed in our brain circuit to prepare us to deal with threat. All of us experience this emotion, how we deal with it defines our relationships with others.

### ***“They had slavery in Africa, too!”***

Indeed true and we have major examples of genocide in many countries as well. This does not minimize the moral evil. In some cases, slavery in Africa had differences with that common in the Americas:

- Slaves remained human beings.
- They could marry lawfully and own property.
- They could even own a slave themselves.
- There was a way to freedom— called ransom.
- They could be adopted; could inherit master’s property.
- They could even have a personal relationship with the master.

# Ally Building as a Way to Heal: An Individual Commitment

Twelve ways of being an ally for the healing of racism:

1. Taking the time to review one's own personal history with regard to race (maybe alone, with a friend or in a workshop group); the bringing to consciousness how present behavior and thought patterns were established.
2. Developing the ability to listen objectively to the anger and hurt of another person without taking it personally; knowing the hurt comes from a long history of injustice and frustration and that "getting it out" to a true listener is in itself healing.
3. By being able to listen and find the fear in a person who is acting out their racial conditioning rather than just blaming and getting mad at them; thinking of such people as "recovering" from racial conditioning.
4. Seeking out positive aspects of one's own heritage; identifying true heroes and heroines from one's own background in order to take complete pride in one's own heritage.
5. Continuing to educate ourselves on what is currently happening with others in our world through reading their newspapers, magazines, listening to their leaders, etc.
6. By learning how to risk making mistakes and to change mistakes into growth experiences.
7. Becoming aware that unaware racist patterns exist and making a consistent effort to bring them to consciousness and overcome them.
8. By taking an attitude with people who have been hurt, that their inherent nature wants closeness with our inherent nature – i.e. by not taking a courteous response to us as rejection and giving up.
9. Forming multi-cultural support groups.
10. Making a commitment to correct missing and incorrect information one has been given, through personal reading, study, and investigation.
11. Intervening in situations where something racist is happening and "interrupted it" in a safe and non-judgmental manner. Avoidance of the word "you" may help in accomplishing this.
12. Making the decision and taking action to establish meaningful friendships with people of different racial, ethnic, religious backgrounds, overcoming the societal pattern toward separation.





# PERSONAL PLAN

## I. Action Continuum:

Actively Participating    Denying, Ignoring    Recognizing, No Action    Recognizing, Action    Educating Self    Educating Others    Supporting, Encouraging    Initiating, Preventing

**Supporting Oppression** ←————→ **Confronting Oppression**

Where do I see myself prior to my first 2-day Glasswing session?  
(refer to the Action Continuum)

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Where do I see myself now?

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Where will I be in 1 year from now?

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**II. Allies:**

*Definition – “Someone with whom you make an agreement to achieve the same thing.”  
Someone who helps and supports you to accomplish a goal, and vice versa.*

I will serve as an ally to these people by:

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These people will serve as an ally to me by:

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**III. Interests:**

I am interested in learning more about racism (and the other isms) – I have special interests in:

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**IV. Personal/Social Action: Plan**

I am taking responsible social action to promote the oneness of our human family in the following ways:

Personal:

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Family:

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Work or School:

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Community:

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Participant

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Date



# Suggested Reading

## **Nathan Rutstein publications**

*Healing Racism in America: A prescription for the disease*  
Nathan Rutstein ( ISBN 0-9633007-1-7)

*Racism: Unraveling the Fear*  
Nathan Rutstein (ISBN 0-9659945-0-3)

*Racial Healing: The Institutes for the Healing of Racism*  
Reginald Newkirk and Nathan Rutstein (ISBN 13: 978-0970386403)

*Coming of Age in the Millennium*  
Nathan Rutstein (ISBN 13: 978-0967257709)

*The Racial Conditioning of our Children*  
Nathan Rutstein (ISBN 0-9703864-1-9)

## **Native American History/Culture**

*American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*  
David E. Stannard (ISBN 13: 978-0195085570)

*Everything You Wanted to Know about Indians But Were Afraid to Ask*  
Anton Treuer (ISBN-13: 978-0873518611)

*Exiled in the Land of the Free: Democracy, Indian Nations, and the U.S. Constitution*  
Oren Lyons et al (ISBN 13: 978-0940666153)

*In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations*  
Jerry Mander (ISBN 13: 978-0871565099) (See pp 211-221 “Indians Are Different from Americans”)

*In the Hands of the Great Spirit: The 20,000-Year History of American Indians*  
Jake Page (ISBN 13: 978-0684855776)

*Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*  
James W. Loewen (ISBN 13: 978-0743296281)

*Living in Two Worlds: The American Indian Experience*  
Charles (Oyihesa) Eastman and Michael Oren Fitzgerald (ISBN 13: 978-1933316765)

*Native Roots: How the Indians Enriched America*  
Jack Weatherford (ISBN-13: 978-0449907139)

*Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery*  
Steven T. Newcomb (ISBN 13: 978-1555916428)

*Spirit and Reason: The Vine Deloria Jr. Reader*  
Vine Deloria Jr. (ISBN 13: 978-1555914301)

*Through Indian Eyes: The Native Experience in Books for Children*  
Doris Seale & Beverly Slapin (ISBN 13: 978-0865712126)

*Utopian Legacies: A History of Conquest & Oppression in the Western World*  
John Mohawk (ISBN 13: 978-1574160406)

*The Winona LaDuke Reader: A Collection of Essential Writings*  
Winona LaDuke (ISBN 13: 978-0896585737)

## **Dialogue**

*Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*  
William Isaacs (ISBN 0-385-47999-9)

*Dialogue Groups: A Practical Guide to Facilitate Diversity Conversation*  
Sally Huang-Nissen (ISBN 1-891850-22-9)

## **African American History**

*Human Cargo: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade*  
Anne Terry White (ISBN 8116-4802-8)

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*  
As told to Alex Haley (ISBN 13: 978-0345350688)

*The African-American Odyssey 5th Edition*  
Darlen Clark Hine William C. Hine, & Stanley Harrold (ISBN 13: 978-0-205-72881-7)

*African American History for Dummies*  
Ronda Racha Penrice (ISBN 978-0-7645-5469-8)

*Invisible Man*  
Ralph Ellison (ISBN 0-679-73276-4)

*Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America*  
Lerone Bennett, Jr. (ISBN 978-0-87485-000-0)

## **Racial Healing and Equity Work**

*Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*  
Paul Kivel (ISBN # 0-9703864-1-9)

*What Every American Should Know About American History: 200 Events that Shaped the Nation*  
Ella Mazel (ISBN 1-55850-309-9)

Racial Healing edition. 2013. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*. Vol. 22, No. 1.

*From Rage to Hope*  
Crystal Kuykendall (ISBN 1-879639-22-X)

## **Resources for Glasswing seminars**

*“And Don’t Call ME a Racist!”: A Treasury of Quotes on the Past, Present, and Future of the Color Line in America.* (Not for sale-available w/o charge to non-profit organizations for educational purposes)

## **Hispanic/Latino History/Culture**

*Latino Americans: The 500 Year Legacy that Shaped a Nation*  
Ray Suarez (ISBN 978-0-451-23814-6)

*Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*  
Juan Gonzalez ( ISBN 978-0-14-025539-3)

## **General History, including history of racism**

*A People’s History of the United States: 1492-Present*  
Howard Zinn (ISBN-13 978-006-083865-2)

*American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*  
David Stannard (ISBN 13 978-0-19-508557-0)

*What Every American Should Know About American History*  
Alan Axelrod and Charles Phillips. (ISBN 1-55859-152-5)

## **Racism: How We Learn It**

*The First R: How Children Learn Race and Racism*  
Debra Van Ausdale & Joe R. Feagin. (ISBN 0-8476-8861-5)

*Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria: and other conversations about race*  
By Beverly Tatum (ISBN 13-0465083619)

## **How racism is used strategically in politics**

*Dog Whistle Politics:  
How coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class*  
Ian Haney Lopez (ISBN13 978-0199964277).

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*  
Michelle Alexander (ISBN 978-1-59558-103-7)

## **White Privilege**

*Dear White America: Letter to a new minority*  
Tim Wise (ISBN 978-0-87286-521-1)



## Feelings Chart

### Pleasant Feelings

Open	Happy	Alive	Good
Amazed	Fortunate	Courageous	Calm
Confident	Glad	Energized	Comfortable
Receptive	Joyous	Liberated	Encouraged
	Thankful	Optimistic	Peaceful

Love	Interested	Positive	Strong
Close	Concerned	Brave	Dynamic
Drawn Toward	Curious	Confident	Free
Touched	Eager	Determined	Secure
	Intrigued	Hopeful	Unique
		Inspired	

### Difficult/Unpleasant Feelings

Angry	Depressed	Confused	Helpless
Bitter	Disappointed	Distrustful	Alone
Boiling	Discouraged	Lost	Ashamed
Feeling Attacked	Miserable	Pessimistic	Fatigued
Infuriated	Sense of Loss	Tense	Frustrated
Irritated		Unsure	Guilty
Resentful			Vulnerable
Worked Up			

Indifferent	Afraid	Hurt	Sad
Neutral	Anxious	Alienated	Anguished
Preoccupied	Fearful	Heartbroken	Dismayed
Reserved	Nervous	Injured	Grief
Wary	Threatened	Offended	Tearful
	Wary	Pained	Sickened
		Victimized	
		Wronged	