

10 Ways White People Can Help Make Black Lives Matter

#BlackLivesMatter is a tribe to end oppression and embrace equality. All people welcome here.

July 9, 2016 by [Michelle Grewe](#)

Racism, one of the most baneful and persistent evils, is a major barrier to peace. Its practice perpetrates too outrageous a violation of the dignity of human beings to be countenanced under any pretext. Racism retards the unfolding of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress. Recognition of the oneness of mankind, implemented by appropriate legal measures, must be universally upheld if this problem is to be overcome. — From the Baha'i Universal House of Justice, 1985

The #BlackLivesMatter movement is open to all races. You don't have to be black to be part of the progress. It's a tribe to end oppression and embrace equality. If you really believe in equality, then #BlackLivesMatters to you. Remember, we were all black once (genetically speaking.)

With the overwhelming overabundance of racist stories plaguing our media, two stories within a week of black men being murdered by police, and a story of a man fed up with the injustice enough to murder police, many of us want to help. Many of us are done crying. Many of us are done being angry. Many of us are done being silent. Many of us are done dying.

For white people wanting to know how to sign up for #BlackLivesMatter, here are 10 different ways to register.

Sincerely Listen to the Other Side

The nation was divided as black and white before technology, and white people (generally speaking on a cultural sociological level) were just not aware. Now technology is giving black people a voice and white people just simply refuse to listen. So black people are getting louder and clearer. If you want to end the division, the first step is to listen to that other side.

No matter what side you are on, no matter what topic is being discussed, listen to the people on the other side. You don't know what's on the other side until you listen to a variety of people standing there.

Don't invalidate people's feelings and experiences because it doesn't fit within your feelings and experiences. If someone tells you they experienced racism in Wonderland, don't call them a liar because you happen to like Wonderland. Listen to their story and trust what they are saying to be true to them.

Stop Being Silent

Peace, be still. Peace doesn't still itself. You have to command peace. To quote the great Kai Lan from her show Ni Hao Kai Lan, "Use your words."

Racism is perpetuated by a silent majority. [Shh. We don't talk about that.](#) Being silent in situations of racial injustice sends two signals: One, you are telling black people you don't support them. Two, you are telling racist people you do support them. It shouldn't say that, but it does. It might not be what was meant, but it's what is understood.

For real, if you are silent in fear you will offend people with your love and equality, you are sucking up to the wrong people, and even worse, you are downplaying your own existence for them.

The silence enables the racism. Why should a racist guy stop being racist? Because he cares about what his friends think, and if you are silent about his racism, he thinks you are OK with it, and he will continue to do it. It's like parenting—if you don't tell your kid no, he will think his behavior is OK with you and won't ever learn to do better.

Meanwhile, your silence has everyone wondering where you stand. Are you not speaking because you secretly agree with the racism? We want to know. Is that true? Maybe we should give you the benefit of the doubt, but it's too easy for you to remove all doubt and tell us what you think.

Monica Howard cautions the silent people, “There’s nothing more pathetic than downplaying your own existence to keep all of your white “friends” happy.” For real, if you are silent in fear you will offend people with your love and equality, you are sucking up to the wrong people, and even worse, you are downplaying your own existence for them.

Admit that Racism Exists, and it’s a White Problem

Denying that racism exists is part of the role of the silent majority that enables the problem. Do you really want a world where racism doesn’t exist? The world you hope this world is? Then do something to help make this world a world where racism doesn’t exist by admitting there’s a problem when there’s a problem. By solving a problem when there’s a problem. Denying a problem won’t make it go away.

When is racism a problem? When people say it is. If any one person on this earth is “throwing out the race card,” there’s a reason for it. They felt victimized in some way, and it’s our social responsibility to help ensure that person was treated fairly with the same rights and liberties everyone else has.

Racism today is a white problem. The victim of the discrimination is not the problem. Not at all. Discrimination is a problem, and if the predominant race discriminating is white, then it’s a white problem. Changing black people’s opinions to accept the racism against them like we had them do with slavery won’t stop that racism (just like it didn’t stop slavery.) Only changing the opinions of white people will stop that racism. Why? Because it’s a white problem.

Use Your White Privilege

When a person is treated as less than the rest of the world for any reason, they are in no position to be credible enough to speak for themselves to the people who view them as less. In other words, a racist white guy isn’t going to listen to what a black man says, no matter how amazing his words are. Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the best writers in human history, experienced his words being ignored by some of the most intellectual people on the basis of his race alone. Once white people started speaking King’s words, those white people started listening. The majority started listening.

Requote black people when their content shows character. Let their message ring through your voice. Be their instrument to peace. Take their blues and turn it into a country song.

When you see racism taking place, stand up for them. It's really no different than walking through a playground, seeing two kids bullying another kid, and you step in and say, "No, we don't bully. Go play elsewhere and leave this kid alone." Racism is when people use their power against others on the basis of race alone, which just happens to be similar to the definition of bullying, "Using one's power to force people to do what they want." Shift that balance of power on the side of justice by stepping in and educating.

Use your white privilege to help influence those around the situation. You can do this whether the black person is aware they are being discriminated against or not. Have you ever walked into a job interview with three people interviewing? If you are one of the three people interviewing, make sure the black man's good points aren't being pushed aside because he's black. Bring them up when they are being denied consideration.

There is strength in numbers, and even when you see five black people standing up for one black man's injustice, whether online or offline, whether in conversation or action, you can step in and make it six people standing up for that one man's injustice. White people may be the majority, but that doesn't mean we can't make equality a majority.

[Dr. Joy DeGruy talks about an amazing story](#) at the grocery store where white privilege influenced the situation for a peaceful resolution. If you truly want to end the violence, your white influence can do that.

You, reading this, regardless of your color, you are the person who can help end racism without resorting to violence.

Stop Saying All Lives Matter to Argue Black Lives Matter

Saying, "Black Lives Matter" isn't saying that black lives matter more than white lives. It's saying that black lives matter as much as white lives.

The fact is that there is a huge racism problem in America today. It's always been here. We are just hearing about it more thanks to technology giving everyone a voice that can resonate

through the whole village again. Black lives need our attention like a victim of burglary needs us to find their justice.

To say, “All Lives Matter” as an argument to “Black Lives Matter” is arguing against black lives mattering. *Any* argument to Black Lives Matter is an argument against black lives mattering. If you are arguing, you are denying the original point. The hypocrisy behind “All Lives Matter” is enough to give a bull diarrhea for all of us to tread through.

All lives can't matter until black lives matter. (from Huffington Post's Black Voices)

Stop Being Color Blind

To say you don't see color makes black people invisible. Let them be black.

We want to say we are color blind meaning we don't see color when it comes to the subject of equality. Great intentions. But the problem with that is that white just happens to be the absence of color. So to say you don't see color, what you are implying to others and yourself on a psychological level is that all you see are white people.

Seeing a black man as a white person isn't noble if you don't see white people as black people and all people as blue people. It's not truly being color blind. To see a black man as a white man denies him his cultural heritage and pride, something white people are not denied.

Claiming cultural superiority is the same mentality before slavery in the days of servitude. You will not be free from servitude until you deny the religion from your culture and past to embrace our superior religion and superior culture. That mentality led to slavery. Cultural superiority is more dangerous than racism, and we have to be careful not to slip into that mind frame.

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Let black people be black. Let them wear their hair in braids or rows to work for you. Let all the stereotypes about their culture be. Quit making them change from bright colors to a boring suit and tie to fit in your community. Black people should never have to act white to fit in.

Do Not Deflect — Their Cause is Your Cause

Deflecting racism against black people is saying that it happens to white people too. Yes sure, some white people have experienced putting their hands up for a busted tail light, or because their car is similar to one that just robbed a place, same thing, but the point is, no white person has been asked by the police to put their hands up during a traffic violation just because their whiteness made the police more nervous and suspicious.

Just because it happens to white people too doesn't mean it's *not* racist when it happens to a black person. Talk about a gaping logical fallacy. When a woman doesn't get hired for being pregnant, that's discrimination and illegal. But when a black man doesn't get hired because he's being black, that's discrimination and illegal, *and* it's racially charged meaning it's also racism, something the pregnant woman can't claim. It's not the same thing. Both are equally wrong, but they are not equally the same.

But that doesn't mean that this isn't happening to you too. White people, we are not safe from racism against black people. When discrimination occurs, the issue isn't the black skin. The problem has nothing to do with blackness. The issue is someone was shallow enough to deny someone an opportunity or right for something petty like black skin. They will do the same to you when given an opportunity. Abuse of power and privilege is abuse of power and privilege. Period. If they can do it to black people for being black, they can do it to you for being blonde or autistic.

So yes, it does happen to white people too, but that's not a reason to deflect racism; in fact, for the wise, it's all the reason to fight against racism.

Quit Getting Angry that Black People are Angry

In the video mentioned earlier, Dr. Joy DeGruy admitted that she hesitates to stand up for herself in a case of racism just because she didn't want to be perceived as, "The angry black woman."

Many others commented in her story that they feel the same way, a lot. That's really sad. She should be allowed to be angry. She has every reason in the world to be angry.

There's a lot of white people who are all about equality, yet many of them get so offended when black people are angry about inequality. Why? Wouldn't you be angry if you were treated differently just because you are left handed? Or because you have blue eyes? Now imagine if you were treated negatively for being a Christian, how angry would that make you to see your fellow Christians being persecuted for their faith?

When you see an angry black person, listen to them. Let them speak. Let them get everything off of their chest. Let them vent. Let them do it without judgment. Believe their feelings are legitimately real. Empathize to the best of your ability. You may not know anything about what it's like to be black, but you can put yourself as their character in their story because you listened to it wholeheartedly and felt something like what they are feeling.

If you want to get angry, don't get angry that they are angry. Get angry with them. Get angry that black people have something to be angry about. Then be peaceful about your resolve.

Vote for People who Promote Equality

Noah Webster spent most of his life urging people to vote for people of principle and character. People who abuse power do not belong in power. It's no different than most of us believing people who abuse our kindness are unworthy of our kindness. When we vote, we are giving the gift of power to the person we are voting for. Power is a gift you would love to receive for Christmas, even more so than that light up tie that plays *Jingle Bells* that your kid forced you to wear to work. Power is precious in this world to many, and we give it away so freely to the wrong people.

The problem a lot of black people have with racism is you can't always tell who the real racists are. Sure there are a group of people who proudly hail the KKK, and there's a group of people who love to use the n-word, but unless people are asking you what's black and doesn't work, it's hard to tell. We

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may not be able to tell a person's real feelings about equality, but we *can* try to find people who promote equality regardless of how they truly feel.

The gray area closet racists usually do the most damage. They are the ones we are voting into power, and they are the ones using their power to discriminate. They are the ones hiring the cops with racist attitudes. They are the ones refusing to investigate racially charged crimes. They are the ones silencing the majority. They are the ones creating the violence we want to see end.

At times, equality might compete with other subjects of importance like gun control or abortions, but remember equality belongs up there at the top of priorities. It's a basic requirement. It's a qualification and without it, you just don't simply qualify to run our towns and our governments. Without a cause for equality in an unequal world, without a cause for justice in an unjust world, a person simply lacks the ability to handle an unequal, unjust world.

Don't Make Excuses — Always be Curious

The African American community has made this following point too many times to let it go unheard.

Many people seem to be quick to make excuses when a white cop shoots an unarmed black citizen who wasn't doing anything to call for the need for violence.

The cop was just doing his job.

It's not easy being a cop. It's a very dangerous job.

We don't know all the details.

But these excuses don't really exist when a black man is accused of something, or worse, when a black man is accused of deserving it.

I bet he has a record. Does he have a record?

He did look suspicious wearing those clothes.

He moved his leg. See? Right there. A twitch. Cop had no choice.

Article from The Good Men Project – The conversation no one else is having.
www.goodmenproject.com

Let's be curious for a second. We can also look at this from another angle.

Imagine the types of comments the following example posts would receive. Think of the comments you've seen. Compare them for yourself. Be honest. Nobody is judging you here.

A black man is shot by a police officer

vs.

A police officer is shot by a black man.

Right now, who are you angry at? Real quick. Don't think. Don't justify. Don't use logic to correct your feelings yet. Who are you more angry with? The police officer or the black man?

Now use logic to correct your feelings. Realize you shouldn't be angry at any one of them. There are bad people everywhere. There are good people everywhere. Each situation is different. Murder is wrong, no matter the circumstances. Death is sad, no matter the circumstances. Racism is wrong, despite the circumstances.

Instead of justifying anyone's behavior, we should aim to remain at all times curious. You don't have to play judge and jury. You don't have to decide a situation was or was not racist. If someone is telling you they think something is racist, then choose that's what they think and feel, and help them feel better, not worse. But you, you don't have to decide. Stay curious.

Ask questions. Seek to understand the situation instead of judging it. Yes some people need judgment to find justice, but if you aren't one of those people, you can still contribute. Remaining curious lets you be silent without being silent. As long as your intentions are aimed at ending racism, you are free to search for truth. You are free to listen to all the sides. You are free to communicate what you have discovered to be truth.

Racism is a problem. It hurts people. How do we stop it? Judgment isn't going to stop it. Understanding it will. You will never find understanding when you have already judged. You will only find it by remaining curious.

Is it too much to ask to investigate bad cops? Is it too much to ask people to use their white privilege to culturally adapt racist people to this century? Is it too much to ask to stop making

excuses for white on black crimes that are not made elsewhere? It's not too much to ask. #BlackLivesMatter is a tribe for equality, to end discrimination. All they ask is that we open our minds and empathize.

White people are the ones with the power. White people are the ones abusing the power. Add your white power to #blacklivesmatter and bring balance to the force.

Right now, the country is awake. We must continue to leverage this awakening for substantive change. We have an opportunity to change the way that issues in blackness are prioritized in political spaces and an opportunity to redefine how the political process interacts with our communities. America is finally waking up to this very necessary and critical conversation about race, equality, and preserving the life and dignity of all citizens. — Packnett, one of the founders of the Campaign Zero project, in an interview for the [Guardian](#).

Now it is time to do something. Speak out. Help. Bring focus. Don't be afraid. Change takes courage and action. We can do this. It's like the ripple effect.....even the smallest pebble can make the biggest waves.— Ricci Bester-Adams

I stand with so many that are exhausted with raising the truth about racism and the harm it engenders to every corner of this country from colleges and universities, to corporations and prisons, from the U.S. Senate to pulpits, from palaces to street corners. I digress.... Maybe it's my lack of sleep or, the frustrating realization that some still have a choice as to whether they will acknowledge, deny, pervert, or simply ignore the truth . I will not, I cannot...How about you? — Dr. Joy DeGruy

#BeTheHealing #BlackLivesMatter