



10 Anti-Racist Action Steps

If you're like us, you've seen the horrifying videos, you've read all the news in frustration, you've seen our leadership fail when it comes to unifying America, and you're wondering - what now? How can I help? Here are ten anti-racist action steps that we've put together to begin to answer that question:

- 1. Get Real With Yourself.** The inner work in anti racism is often as important as the outward facing work, because if you don't know yourself, you're going to have a really hard time fighting for others. And as we often talk about on the podcast, change doesn't come from complacency. Our country is still deeply divided over race, largely due to our unresolved history with slavery (more on that later). We have all had racist thoughts, and perhaps we've even acted on them - but when we see others wielding their privilege like a weapon (Amy Cooper, we're looking at you), then we need to look at ours as well. And the most important thing to do here? Own up to where you have work to do (we ALL have those areas). *Practice letting go of the defensiveness that often acts as a barrier to true change, and let certain things sit with you.* We love [this article](#) which is straightforward but rang true with us, and if it does with you as well, think about why that's the case. (And if you're looking for more tools to get real, we're starting a book club that will be geared just towards this!)
- 2. Identify Your Privilege.** In [This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work](#), Tiffany Jewell talks about a simple exercise that may start to dive into breaking this down. Draw a box. Inside the box, write down every identity that you hold that is part of the dominant/majority culture in our country. On the outside of the box, write down all of the identities that you have that are not part of that majority. *The identities inside the box are where you hold power.* That's the privilege that you're going to spend to help others who are outside of the box. And those identities outside of the box? That's where you're marginalized - but while you may not have agency there, you have knowledge and that is also important. And - if you've got more identities inside the box than out? You need to be an ally. If you're comfortable, do this exercise with family or friends and share your boxes. Sharing these boxes help us know where we can help - because we have to stand together to create this change.
- 3. Educate Yourself.** As mentioned above, the history of our country is unique in that we have had systems of oppression in place for centuries that, while dismantled at least facially now, have never been addressed. We also have the largest incarceration rate in

the world. If those two facts seem totally unrelated to you, it's time to get to work. *Learn about our country's history and how systems that were put in place to create a white-led hierarchy are still there, just lurking under the surface.* One resource that we love for this is [Teaching Hard History](#) by the Southern Poverty Law Center. If we don't understand the steps that have led us to our current state of unrest and divisiveness, we can never really address them.

- 4. Don't Look Away From Hard Things.** Once you've gotten the history down, it's important to be aware of what is happening today, in our society. And that means you're going to be seeing terrible, uncomfortable things. Honestly, not much can be worse of a video showing a police officer kneeling on the neck of a black man for eight minutes, slowly choking him to death as he begs for his life. But it is so important that we see it, and sit with those feelings of revulsion, of terror, of hopelessness, because if you feel that way, imagine any person of color watching that video and seeing that as yet another validation that their lives don't matter. *If we choose the privilege of closing our eyes and looking away, we are purposefully looking away from the pain and suffering of others.* And, if we have the privilege to be able to look away, we also have a voice that we can use so others don't end up on the ground, being murdered in broad daylight. Don't look away. We all have to see what's happening in order to have this not happen again, and again, and again.
- 5. Get - And Stay - Angry.** This is a key, key step. It's not enough to just see something and process it and then go about your day. *One of our deepest fears about what's happening now is that it will be a week or two of social media uproars and then largely life will go back to normal - until someone else dies brutally while being filmed by horrified bystanders.* This doesn't have to be a rage-filled anger where you are throwing things and screaming, but once we lapse back into complacency, we look away. We get defensive. But, as we often say on the podcast, if black lives don't matter, no lives matter. We have to stand together, and speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. Civility is [often used as a tool](#) for trying to keep people of color "in line" - most likely because anger is a primary motivator for change. You should feel outraged about the state of our country currently. Use that outrage and keep it as a motivator when things get hard (because they will - this isn't easy work).
- 6. Talk To People, Especially Your Kids.** Now that you've educated yourself, it's important to talk to others and share what you know, or talk about what's going on in your city, or state, or our country. And one key group here is kids, if you have them, considering their ages when you do so. *The reason we especially advocate talking to kids is they ask great questions. They can often challenge your viewpoint in ways you couldn't imagine - and circling back to some of our earlier points, you might learn things about yourself in those questions, or how you talk about race and race-based issues.* Not sure where to start? We love resources like [this one](#) from Embrace Race that gives you some places to start, and things to be mindful of, as you start doing this. (And one tip we especially love from

this article is to read books with your kids that reflect all of the differences in our society!).

- 7. Talk To People Of Color (And Be Ready To Listen).** If you've listened to an episode of our podcast, you know we advocate listening as a key tool to being an ally, and that personal narratives often form the best basis for understanding someone else's point of view. We also loved the [recent Trevor Noah analysis](#) of what's going on in our country by stating that there are the haves, and there are the have nots, and how you see things differs drastically depending on which group you're in. In order to understand someone else's perspective, you'll need to talk to them. *And, if you're white, and talking to a person of color (and we're not talking necessarily about your "one black friend"), you should be prepared, first and foremost, to listen.* Their experience and viewpoint over an issue may be very different than yours - but, more importantly, it's another way for you to learn how to be an ally. So listen first.
- 8. Call Out the B.S. and Gaslighting.** Kids do see color. [We are not a color-blind society.](#) Your voice does matter. Don't let people gloss over or minimize the work that you're doing, or that others are doing, because it's not easy or "proper" or what they want to hear. Don't let others [gaslight](#) you, and don't stand there while someone else is facing prejudice, hate, or gaslighting. If you see something, say something, and model how you would like society to be, especially if you're trying to be a white ally. Stand up for what you know to be right even if it's not easy. *Silence is a choice (more on that later) - and in our current state, silence isn't an option if you truly want to be an anti racist.*
- 9. Vote.** Our leadership is not only completely lacking in any tools to bring our nation back together, but is also actively fanning the flames of racial hatred and dissent through social media and policy choices, to name a few. One of the big tools we have in our country though is the vote - and this is a big year for that. Make sure your voice is heard and [VOTE](#). *Vote for the candidates who are anti racist, who have a proven track record of that, and make sure we can vote out those candidates who have demonstrated nothing but contempt for those who are different later this year.* As has been highlighted in the news recently, there have been many efforts made by a small minority to keep people of color out of the voting booth. Now we have to be allies and make our voice heard. **VOTE.** We can't say that enough.
- 10. Don't Stay Silent or Inactive.** We purposefully left the most powerful action step for last. Don't stay silent. *In this time, as we noted, silence means that you are okay with the status quo.* Silence means that George Floyd, or Ahmaud Arbery, or Breonna Taylor, or anyone else that has been brutally murdered without cause, died in vain and that many others will die like animals in the streets as well. Do what you can to make your voice heard. **Donate** to organizations like the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) that are fighting for education and justice on many fronts. Lend your voice to protests, virtual or otherwise. **Volunteer** for organizations in your community that are helping to fight racism (or make

your own, if none exist!). **Share resources** and thoughts on social media. Keep informed, and keep talking. We have an opportunity now to show what true allyship looks like. Speak up. **Let's get loud.**

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