

A GOOD *place*

THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE

HOW TO CULTIVATE RESILIENCE AND DISMANTLE RACISM





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The killing of George Floyd was a turning point for many of us. The video of his murder confronted us with the ugly face of centuries-old, racialized violence against Black people in this country. For too long, many of us have turned a blind eye. Too many of us have been unable to see, or haven't wanted to believe, the experience and testimony of millions of Black people. Our outrage and our grief have mobilized us to confront the vast, encompassing scale of racial injustice in the United States. While racism may dominate, indeed, constitute our life in the present, it has no place in our future. Enough. We must all do our part.

At A Good Place Therapy, it's time to step up as a community and redouble our efforts against the systemic racial oppression and anti-Blackness that plague our city and our country. We stand in solidarity with Black communities in their struggle against oppression, discrimination, and police brutality. As a predominantly White mental health practice, we believe that the burden of combating racism should fall not on the shoulders of People of Color, but upon White people who benefit from the privilege of living in a society that was built for them. The approach we are taking as a practice recognizes that the work we do, like all things in the world, is political.

Wisdom, traditions, and more recently, neuroscience research, show us that we are all connected. We are all pained in our hearts when we see the images of George Floyd's murder. We all deal with feelings related to exclusion and inclusion, power and powerlessness, and we all seek belonging at our core. We belong to each other, and we are connected in community. Louis Cozolino, psychologist and neuroscience researcher explains: "The brain is a social organ, it evolves to connect with other brains. When others feel something, we do too." We are hard-wired to connect as a people and a polis; this is the basis of our biological and political survival.



Dismantle Racism

White supremacy, the idea that White people and their ideas are superior to those of People of Color is an artificial, historically constructed culture. It is embedded in the institutional and cultural architecture of American life. For this reason, many White people find it difficult to understand how White supremacy affects them and how it is exhibited in social norms, attitudes, 'common sense' ideas, geography, laws-- and, most of all, how all of this benefits them.



The cultural moment has once again forced the country to look itself in the mirror. It is crucial that we take this crisis as an opportunity to recognize our unexamined prejudices and to take action to better ourselves and our society.

We encourage you to walk alongside us as we take tangible actions to dismantle racism and support Black communities by doing the following:

For White People

- Self-reflection. Consider how White privilege has put you at an advantage (e.g., consider how you got your first job/internship, first loan, or personal dealings with police, etc.).
- Self-educate. Learn about the history of systemic racism and its impact on society. Engage in active anti-racism learning and commit to educating yourself, colleagues, friends and family about anti-racism via [resources](#) and [toolkits](#).
- Become an ally. Do everything in your power to ensure that all people are treated equally. Don't forget that allyship is a verb - something you continuously do and work toward - not a noun or a place you arrive at without sustained effort.

For People of Color

- It is not your responsibility to educate your White friends and colleagues about racism. It is not your responsibility to hear their racist confessions, to forgive their past actions, or to comfort them. Be kind to yourself.
- Cultivate and maintain practices that center around joy and well-being. Your joy is an act of resistance and self-love.

Take Social Action

- Attend protests. White and Non-Black People of Color (NBPOC) can ease the burden Black people may feel when showing up to protest. Check out tips [here](#) on how to stay safe when protesting.
- Sign a petition. Demand justice from your representatives by signing a petition.
- Donate. Do research to find organizations that are actively working to counter racism or local nonprofits serving Black communities.
- Vote. It is easy to change attitudes and biases. The real work of changing political platforms and public policies (i.e., income inequality, police reform, ending mass incarceration, etc.) lies in our votes.



Cultivate Resilience

Being anti-racist can be difficult work to sustain, especially at first. People who want to engage in active allyship may do so for a few weeks, only to become overwhelmed with all that needs to be done. It's important to stay engaged, even when it's hard or no longer trending. In order to make anti-racism a lifelong commitment, we must build resilience to sustain anti-racism work.

Here are some tips to help you sustain anti-racism as a lifelong commitment:

- Understand that growth comes from struggle. To grow and change, you have to embrace the discomfort and realize that you may have certain biases or prejudices that need to be shattered.
- Hold yourself accountable. Accountability is a prerequisite for change.
- Be kind to yourself and others. Allow for mistakes and learn from them. Realize that this is a work in progress and redirection is better than stagnation, as [Myisha Hill](#) explains. She says to “fail forward” and that failure is not futile. Rather, it's how you continue to work toward anti-racism.
- Self-care. You can't pour from an empty cup, so be sure to take care of yourself. Journaling, exercising, and eating well are a few ways that can help you continue the work.
- Practice mindfulness. Mindfulness can help reduce negative emotions and stress.
- Be more connected. Set up time to speak with friends who are also active in anti-racist work. Have conversations and share helpful resources with each other.

In this distressing time of upheaval and uneasiness, a show of solidarity and support for one another is critical. Fighting for racial equality requires that each of us support our Black communities. Simply saying 'Black Lives Matter' is not enough. To break down systemic racism, we have to go beyond being an ally and work to be anti-racist. We hope this guide and resources provide a starting point to dismantle racism at its core.

Additional Resources

Guides and Toolkits:

- [Black Lives Matter Resources and Toolkits Guide to Allyship](#)
- ["White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh](#)

Training:

- [The Adaway Group](#)
- [Race and Resilience](#)
- [Co-Conspirators Lounge](#)

Books:

- ["So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeoma Oluo](#)
- ["How to Be an Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi](#)
- ["Me and White Supremacy" by Layla F Saad](#)
- ["White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo](#)
- ["Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America" by Ibram X. Kendi](#)
- ["Check Your Privilege: Live into the Work" by Myisha Hill](#)

Podcasts:

- ["Black Wall Street 1921" by Nia Hamm](#)
- ["Co-Conspired Conversations" by Myisha Hill](#)
- ["1619" by Nikole Hannah-Jones](#)
- ["Code Switch" by NPR](#)
- [This conversation between Toni Morrison and Angela Davis on Connecting for Progress, By NYPL Library Talks](#)
- ["Unlocking Us" by Brené Brown](#)

If you'd like to connect with a therapist at A Good Place, click [here](#) to schedule your first session.