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Key Tenants

Racism exists today and all members of this society participate in it / No one is exempt

All white people benefit from racism, regardless of intentions; intentions are irrelevant.

No one here chose to be socialized into racism (so no one is "bad")

Racism must be continually identified, analyzed and challenged; *no one is ever done*

The question is not "did racism take place?" but rather "how did racism manifest in that situation?"

The racial status quo is comfortable for most whites. Therefore, anything that maintains white comfort is suspect. If you are white, practice sitting with and building your stamina for racial discomfort.

**See reverse
side for
Action Steps**

Racism is a *system* that encompasses economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that *institutionalize* and *perpetuate* an unequal distribution of resources between White people and people of Color.

Discussion Questions for you and / or your team (From *The White Fragility Reader's Guide*)

- * How do so many white people feel so confident in their opinions on racism, even as many live their lives in segregation?
- * How can we make generalizations about what it means to be white when we don't know each person's individual story?
- * Consider some aspects of your identity other than race (i.e., gender, sexuality, religion, class, ability, nationality, age). How does race shape how you experience these identities? For example, how might being white shape how you experience disability? Poverty? Gender identity and expression?
- * How does whiteness manifest in your workplace? What role have you played?
- * What strategies will help you resist complacency about racism and your role in it?
- * How might you integrate a racial equity framework across your organization?

So What Can I Do?

Action Steps for Going Forward

There is no quick fix or solution to racism; it is complex, messy, and requires a life-long commitment to continually identify and challenge. Still, there are many actions white people can take. Below are just a sample of what is possible, adapted from *White Fragility*.

It is important to **avoid relying on people of color** to provide racial education. Instead, we can educate ourselves through books, websites, films, etc. For example: *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides* by Edgar Villanueva; *So You Want To Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo; *White Rage* by Carol Anderson; *Stamped From the Beginning* and *How To Be AntiRacist*, both by Ibram Kendi; *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates; *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America* by Michael Eric Dyson; *The Racial Contract* by Charles W. Mills; *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown; *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* by Paul Kivel; *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* by Reni Eddo Lodge; and *How to be Less Stupid About Race* by Crystal Marie Fleming.

Register in Conferences such as *The White Privilege Conference* and on-line courses such as those by Resmaa Menakem and Layla F. Saad, and newsletters such as Racial Equity Tools. We can evaluate media sources we usually engage with and expose ourselves to different sources, such as TheRoot, Colorlines, and Angry Asian Man. We can sign up for listserves such as The Mouse & The Elephant.

We can **get involved with multiracial organizations** and white organizations working for justice. An organization with local chapters throughout the US is Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/>

We can **break silence** with other white people and reflect on messages we've received about race, privileges we've taken for granted, how we came to be socialized, and how all of this is showing up in our lives. One way is to start a Book Study group, or a Racial Affinity Group.

We can **be open to feedback** and develop our resilience in talking about race. There are several constructive responses we can have in the moment:

- Breathe.
- Listen.
- Reflect.
- Own your impact and commit to do better.
- Seek out someone with a stronger analysis if you feel confused or defensive.
- Work through the transformative list of underlying assumptions (pgs 142-143 of *White Fragility*)
- Take the time you need to process your reactions, but do return to repair the situation.

If you are not going to do any of the above **acknowledge** that you are making a conscious decision and own that decision.