

RACIAL EQUITY 101

OVERVIEW

TRAINING DESCRIPTION

This one-hour training video introduces the basics of understanding racism: how it manifests through social and political institutions, in overt and hidden forms, now and throughout history. By completing this training and associated companion guide, you'll gain insight and tools to help you become an active participant in the fight for equity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- **Terminology:** The words we use, and how they reflect the values we uphold
- **Key concepts:**
 - » **Three forms of racism:** Individual, institutional, and structural
 - » **Power dynamics:** Identifying power and privilege, and their influence
 - » **Racial equity:** Understand the differences among equality, equity, and justice, and how to avoid the pitfalls of “colorblindness”
 - » **Implicit bias:** How stereotypes and standards reinforce oppressive messages and norms
- **History:** How racism has informed centuries of American law and policy, specifically in housing and policing
- **Practice:** Actions, tools, and strategies to minimize harm through repair and reduction, and to intentionally practice anti-racism
- *(THIS)* **Companion guide:** Reflection questions and exercises to help process the information and deepen learning
- **Resource guide:** More information, recommendations, and concrete actions to continue your journey to social justice. You can find the resource guide [here](#).

RACIAL EQUITY 101

COMPANION GUIDE

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING

WHAT DID I LEARN? REFLECTING ON YOUR LEARNING THROUGH JOURNALING

Throughout the racial equity training the YWCA Leadership and Social Justice team shared a brief origin history of historical oppression, policing, injustice, and the functions of structural racism. Utilize as many of the journal prompts below to reflect on the foundational learning of historical oppression:

CONTENT REVIEW

SECTION 1: AN ORIENTATION TO RACISM: *reshaping our understanding*

Q1 During the folding paper exercise, Lauren shared about the timeline of African American history.

HISTORY

In what ways did the folding paper activity challenge and expand your perspective on racist structures and institutions? Did you learn anything new?

Q2 We know that racism functions at an individual and structural level.

PRIVILEGE

In what ways can you use Caroline's teachings on unconscious bias and privilege to examine your own benefits or impacts racism has on your worldview? List one privileged identity that you hold. How has this impacted your lived experiences? How do you think it shapes your story?

Q3 Using statements such as, "I don't see color." or "I'm colorblind." are often used to erase the real ways racism functions in interpersonal relationships and decision-making power.

"COLORBLIND"

Having gone through this material, why is it important to see color? Has your perspective changed on why taking a "colorblind approach" negatively impacts people of color?

SECTION 2 ANTI-BLACKNESS IN PRACTICE: the history of racist policies in housing and policing

Q1 Jillian highlights how discrimination and segregation in housing have directly excluded and oppressed Black people through policy.

RACIST POLICIES

How can you use the example of racism in the institution of housing as a model to critically examine how racism in other institutions have impacted inequities we see today? What other racial disparities do you see today that can be connected to racism embedded in other institutions? (i.e. voter suppression, health care, etc.)

Q2 Institutional oppression is a part of our history and legacy of segregation. We see this in policies such as racial zoning being eliminated in 1917 and nearly a century later housing segregation still persists.

HOUSING POLICY

How do you see inequitable housing policies continue to affect communities of color and white households today?

LEAVES

What problems do you see facing your community?



TRUNK

What structures, practices, and policies institutionalize the problem?

Modified from the original Blueprint for Social Justice by the Movement Strategy Center

ROOTS

What are the underlying historical, social, or economic root causes of these problems? Why do these structures or policies exist?

Q3

HOUSING POLICIES

Where do you live? **Think about your own neighborhood and areas around you.** Who do you see represented? Who isn't? What in your life and/or your parents' lives opened up or restricted housing opportunities for you? Using the problem tree (on page 3) reflect on how housing policy has impacted your own life.

Q4

CURRENT

In what ways do you see the historical foundations of racism present in current events locally and/or nationally? For example, the number of Black people incarcerated in our prison system is disproportionately higher to other racial groups.

Name a current event from the past year and make a connection to the disproportionate disadvantages of Black individuals and people of color present in society.

SECTION 3

AGITATE! Anti-racism and transformative change

Q1

COMMITTING

Making connections between yourself as an individual and institutional racism can be beneficial to structural change.

Can you distinguish examples of racism present in your workplace, personal life, or in your community? What positions of power do you hold in your life? Where can you use your power/what strategies can you use to move racial equity forward? Give an example of something you can commit to.

Q2

Rachel spoke on harm reduction and harm repair.

APPLICATION

How do you feel about knowing you may cause harm? When thinking about implementing harm reduction and repair practices into your life, how does it make you feel? How do you think you can integrate repair practices into your learning as an individual, a professional, and/or community?

Q3

Rachel indicated that accountability and responsibility after causing racist harm is important.

ENGAGE

Is there anyone you need to repair harm with? What ways do you believe you can engage in this process?

Q4

After going through the racial equity training what are you still thinking about it? What else do you want to learn or continue doing in anti-racism? Don't forget to check out the [resource guide](#) for more ways to grow your racial literacy!

REFLECTION



Americans are loath to talk about enslavement in part because what little we know about it goes against our perceptions of our country as a just and enlightened nation, a beacon of democracy for the world. Slavery is commonly dismissed as a “sad, dark, chapter” in the country’s history. It is as if the greater distance we can create between slavery and ourselves, the better to stave off the guilt it induces. But in the same way that individuals cannot move forward, become whole and healthy, unless they examine the domestic violence they witnessed as children or the alcoholism that runs in their family, the country cannot become whole until it confronts what was not a chapter in its history, but the basis of its economic and social order. For a quarter millennium, slavery was the country.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson (pg. 43)

It is important to acknowledge that all systems and institutions are deeply influenced and impacted by who is and is not in the room. Policing, stop and frisk, and racial profiling are all deeply connected to mass incarceration. Black people specifically are targeted by these unjust standards on a regular basis. Take a mental note of your current professional team of colleagues, supervisors, and staff. Who is represented? Who is not?

Using the examining your network table, fill in the boxes to create a visual representation of your professional team and personal relationship. Identify the highlights and reflect on the racial disparities you notice.

ACTIVITY

Examine Your Network

Filling out this table will give you an idea of how diverse your network is. Some statements may not be relevant.

NOTE: You will not know every identity for every person/group. Focus on the identities of which you are aware.

Statement	Gender	Race	Body Type	Age	Sexual Orientation	Education	Ability	Class	Religion
My direct supervisor at work is...									
Most of my co-workers are...									
My best friend is...									
My closest colleague at work is...									
My mentor at work is...									
My role model is...									
My spouse/significant other is...									
Most of my neighbors are...									
My closest family member is...									
The most recent person to come to my house is...									
Most of the people at my church are...									

Taylor, Leo. (2020, October 16). How to Talk About Race in the Workplace [Webinar]. Ohio State University. <https://youtu.be/vA0DWDnaMcA>

Was this activity jarring for you? Why or why not?

Is there a diverse representation of people and voices in your workplace?

If anyone, who do you think is missing?

What do you believe needs to happen to maintain or change towards a culture of racial equity?

QUOTE THEME**Black Criminality, Discrimination, and Incarceration**

The racial dimension of mass incarceration is its most striking feature. No other country in the world imprisons so many of its racial or ethnic minorities. The United States imprisons a larger percentage of its black population than South Africa did at the height of apartheid. In Washington, D.C., our nation's capital, it is estimated that three out of four young Black men (and nearly all those in the poorest neighborhoods) can expect to serve time in prison. Similar rates of incarceration can be found in Black communities across America. These stark racial disparities cannot be explained by rates of drug crime. Studies show that people of all colors use and sell illegal drugs at remarkably similar rates.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander (pg. 7)

WHERE DOES RACISM FUNCTION IN MY SPHERES OF LIFE?

Exploring the Self in Relationship to the World

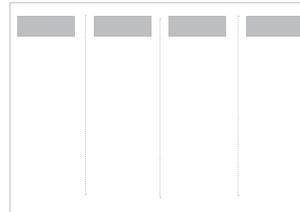
Transformation towards anti-racism is possible when individuals who make up our society are aware and intentional about the power and spheres of influence they hold in institutions and communities. Rachel shared how power and participation can play a dynamic role in structural change.

ACTIVITY

In this activity you will need a blank sheet of paper. Divide the paper into four different box sections and title them with a following themes:

- **In My Own Personal Development**
- **In My Leadership Role or Workplace**
- **With My Peers and Colleagues**
- **With Friends and Family**

EXAMPLE



In each box jot down specific ways you can either use your power to educate, disrupt, name negative impact, or challenge racism and oppression that is present. Reflect on tangible ways you can integrate these actions and practices overtime with intentionality and grace.

QUOTE THEMES

White Privilege, Impact of Racism, and Anti-Racism



While making racism bad seems like a positive change, we have to look at how this functions in practice. Within this paradigm, to suggest that I am racist is to deliver a deep moral blow—a kind of character assassination. Having received this blow, I must defend my character, and that is where all my energy will go—to deflecting the charge, rather than reflecting on my behavior. In this way, the good/bad binary makes it nearly impossible to talk to white people about racism, what it is, how it shapes all of us, and the inevitable ways that we are conditioned to participate in it. If we cannot discuss these dynamics or see ourselves within them, we cannot stop participating in racism. The good/bad binary made it effectively impossible for the average white person to understand—much less interrupt—racism.

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo (pg. 72)

DO SOME RESEARCH! **The Opportunities for Learning Are Boundless**

Utilizing the **resource guide** provided to you, find one suggested resource on institutional and structural racism to learn more about to continue your learning. Racism is present in our education system, criminal justice system, health care system, housing, and more.

After engaging in an additional resource reflect on the following questions:

How does what you learned about structural racism intersect with the work you do?

Where do you see structural racism present most in your own life?

What are you still thinking about?

QUOTE THEME **Institutional Policing and School to Prison Pipeline**



More than forty-five years after the landmark U.S. Supreme Court *Brown V. Board of Education* decision, school segregation in the United States persists. In fact, it has been on the rise since the early 1990s. There is a strong relationship between racial segregation and concentrated poverty. National data show that most segregated African American and Latino schools are dominated by poor children, but that 96 percent of white schools have middle-class majorities. Such segregation cuts children of color off from educational and employment networks of opportunity. Segregation and inequality are strongly self-perpetuating, yet the ideal of democratic education is to create an environment in which such patterns can be interrupted. The first step to in interrupting this cycle of inequity is mutual engagement. We will not be able to effectively dismantle systems of oppression – systems of inequality – without working in coalition with one another across lines of difference.

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race (pg. 211-212)

GET CREATIVE**with Your Learning Commitments: Innovating with Anti-Racism****CREATE IT**

Use the knowledge gained from the racial equity training to create an art piece, poem, etc. to highlight an aspect of your learning. For example, write about a story that encompasses themes about racism and/or inequity and share what your role can be in moving change forward.

NAME IT

After expressing what you learned, take it further and name what you are committed to doing moving forward to be anti-racist continue to unlearn. For example, think about writing a short story of a past experience and adding in the learning you gathered today as a newfound perspective. You can then utilize your learning to make commitments for the future.

QUOTE THEME**Racism, Racial Profiling, Stop and Frisk**

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To be Black in the Baltimore of my youth was to be naked before the elements of the world, before all the guns, fists, knives, crack, rape, and disease. The nakedness is not an error, nor pathology. The nakedness is the correct and intended result of policy, the predictable upshot of people forced for centuries to live under fear. The law did not protect us. And now, in your time, the law has become an excuse for stopping and frisking you, which is to say, for furthering the assault of your body. But a society that protects some people through a safety net of schools, government-backed home loans, and ancestral wealth but can only protect you with the club of criminal justice has either failed at something much darker.

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates (pg. 18)