

# DAY 1: Personal Racial Identity

*“Not seeing race does little to deconstruct racist structures or materially improve the conditions which people of colour are subject to daily. In order to dismantle unjust, racist structures, we must see race. We must see who benefits from their race, who is disproportionately impacted by negative stereotypes about their race, and to who power and privilege is bestowed upon – earned or not – because of their race, their class, and their gender. Seeing race is essential to changing the system.” - Reni Eddo-Lodge*

We cannot cease in confronting our country's history and relationship to identity. It is time for us to take a closer look at the inequities that are deeply rooted in our systems and institutions and work together to create an America where every individual has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, and identity. Over the next 21 days, we will explore difficult topics, like structural racism, segregation, and privilege, to open up dialogue on how we can be champions of equity in our personal and professional lives.

**Before you get started, if you haven't done so already, please fill out this [pre-event survey](#) to set your intentions and share your goals for the challenge with us.** We also encourage you to download your [Challenge Activity Log](#) – a tool to ensure you are taking full advantage of what the challenge has to offer.

We want to thank the [YWCA of Greater Cleveland](#) and [Food Solutions New England](#) for inspiring this challenge. Food Solutions New England was the first to adapt an exercise from Dr. Eddie Moore and Debby Irving's book into the interactive 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge, which they launched in 2014.

## Today's Challenge:

How do you think about your racial identity and its relevance to your work/volunteerism/studies? Identity matters. Who we think we are and who others think we are can have an influence on all aspects of our lives. Think about the first time you became aware of your racial identity. What comes up for you?

**Option 1:** [Listen to this Stateside episode with Eddie Moore, Jr., executive director of The Privilege Institute](#), about the White Privilege Conference in Grand Rapids created a space for people to have “tough conversations.”

**Option 2:** Reference this document to view how people of color [develop their racial identity](#).

**Option 3:** Watch one or more of the [short videos and reflections from the New York Times](#) on racial identity in America.

**Option 4:** Journal about your own racial identity. You might consider:

- When did you first become aware of your racial identity?
- What messages did you learn about race from your school and family? Did they align with what you've seen in your life?
- When has how others perceived your racial identity affected how they treat you?

**Share your reflections** on today's topic on social media using the hashtag **#unitedforequity** and tag **@uwwashtenaw**.