

# DAY 19: Tools for the Racial Equity Change Process

The idea of race is a social construct that is now embedded in our cultural ways. Whether you are aware of race or try to live while “color blind” of race, it’s positive or negative connotations are inescapable. It is the duty of every person of every color to take anti-racist actions.

As Founding Director of the [Boston University Center for Anti-Racist Research](#) and author of books such as [How to be an Anti-Racist](#) and [Be Antiracist: A Journal for Awareness, Reflection and Action](#) Ibram X. Kendi notes that one can be racist one moment and anti-racist the next. Racism is something we all carry within ourselves --regardless of our race identity--and as a result we must unlearn biased and racist ideas to replace them with tools and actions that are centered around equity, empathy, and solidarity.

Ijeoma Oluo shares “ The beauty of anti-racism is that you don’t have to pretend to be free of racism to be anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And that is the only way forward.

Many organizations and groups are engaged in anti-racist work here in Washtenaw County. [Local community activist Trische' Duckworth has been a vocal leader of the movement towards equity. Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice inspires, educates, and mobilizes people to unite across differences in pursuit of peace and justice. The Huron Valley Democratic Socialists of America, the Mutual Aid Network of Ypsilanti and Peace House Ypsilanti are hosting \[Pullover Prevention Clinics for minor maintenance issues to help fight against racial injustices by law enforcement.\]\(#\)](#)



Graphic: Artwork by Katherine Valde as published on <https://www.dismantlingracism.org/action-tools.html>

We have seen the COVID-19 pandemic ravage communities of color and exasperated already existing health, financial, and opportunity crises, as [this graphic from the CDC illustrates](#).

Although Asian Americans are not more likely to contract COVID-19, hate crimes towards Asian Americans have grown by [145%](#) in 10 major US cities alongside widespread misinformation about Asian Americans and their relation to the pandemic.

Racism is not only statistics. It can be seen and felt in gentrification & displacement, the exploitation of Native land, clutched purses, unreasonable fears, towns and cities avoided by White persons, underfunded public schools, the social need for movements such as [#SayTheirNames](#), and redlining to name a few. However, it is often thanks to these historically oppressed communities that we are all able to exercise rights such as voting, fair employment, and fair housing among many more.

**Art and culture can help you to see things differently . . .**

- Visit [Ypsilanti's new Black Lives Matter murals](#)
- Support the work of [Staying Power, a youth-driven movement for housing justice and belonging](#) through arts advocacy and [read their 2019 publication, "Staying Power: Concrete, Not Wood A Multigenre Production by Ypsilanti & Richmond Youth Artists."](#)

- Watch the work of [The Guild](#), a collage of Michigan-based artists best known for their honest and original spoken word poetry, which centers around the principles of social consciousness, scholarship, diversity, love, community action, and education.
- [Watch past performances from and then plan to attend Student Advocacy's Center's Telling Tales out of School](#), where professional and new storytellers come together to inspire, challenge, and create community.
- [Check out local artist Yen Azzarro's blog](#) to learn more about art she has created to shed light on Ypsilanti's history and future opportunity.
- [Visit the University of Michigan Museum of Modern Art virtual exhibit Unsettling Histories: Legacies of Slavery and Colonialism](#), curated by Ozi Uduma, assistant global curator for UMMA. Then, watch Ozi in NEW's Centering Justice session: [Unbuilding Racism](#).

Today's challenge is focused on providing you with tools and resources to become anti-racist in your thoughts, words and actions.

## Today's Challenge:

**Option 1:** To know where we need to go, we need to understand where we've been. [Listen to In Their Own Words: The Living Oral History Project, interviews of Black residents in Washtenaw County](#) of what they have witnessed, experienced, and how they contributed to building the community we share today. Presented by the [African American Cultural and Historical Museum of Washtenaw County](#)

**Option 2:** [Explore the principles of racial equity](#). These 10 principles for taking action were developed as a result of dRworks' experience working with organizations and communities for over a decade.

**Option 3:** [Begin your journey to becoming an anti-racist by working through this toolkit](#) from Stanford University.

**Option 4:** Peggy McIntosh has catalogued some of the [daily benefits of white privilege \(the "invisible knapsack"\) conferred White people](#). [Click here to review the list](#) and then reflect on which you benefit from.

**Option 5:** [Read Tema Okun's definition and history of white supremacy culture](#). Then, [familiarize yourself with the characteristics of white supremacy](#) so that you can begin dismantling them.

**Option 6:** Watch [Just Belonging: Finding the Courage to Interrupt Bias](#) to better understand the emotional fatigue experienced by people of color when discussing race with their white counterparts, so that you can minimize harm to others as you work to become anti-racist.

**Option 8:** [Watch Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable](#), in which Luvvie Ajayi shares three questions to ask yourself if you're teetering on the edge of speaking up or quieting down – and encourages all of us to get a little more comfortable with being uncomfortable.