

Our United Culture

Infusion Series | Issue # 5

Developing a GROWTH MINDSET To Become **Anti-Racist**

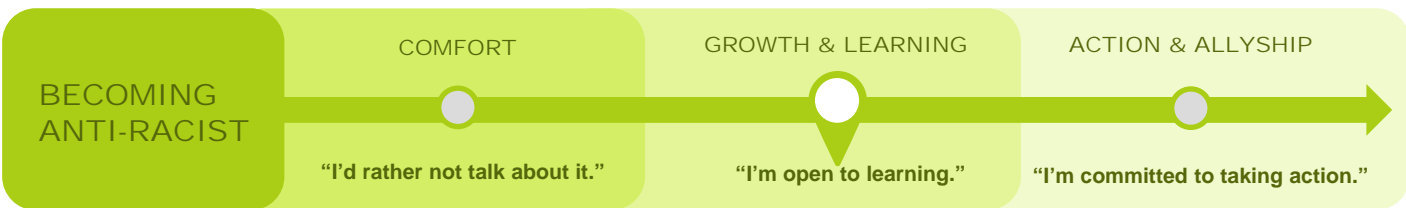
WHY IS BECOMING ANTI-RACIST IMPORTANT?

Racism is a topic that has historically been avoided at work. It is normal to feel **uncomfortable, afraid, uncertain and conflicted** about stepping into conversations about it. To become an **anti-racist**, we must embrace the discomfort and leap into the growth zone.

'Anti racism' is a relatively new term referring to the idea that we must move away from the complacency of 'I am not a racist so I am not the problem' to 'I will take intentional action to become part of the solution.' By bettering ourselves and becoming a true ally, we can create a more inclusive culture and sense of belonging for all.

HOW DO I START?

Recognize where you are in your inclusion and diversity journey. Changing how you look at racism and having a growth mindset helps you overcome your discomfort over engaging in conversations and taking action. Remember: staying silent sends a message to your team. Engaging in growth conversations about racism is an important part of becoming anti-racist. Don't let fear stop you from engaging in the discussion sooner rather than later. You don't need to complete everything below before beginning growth conversations.



Self-reflect

- Reflect on your own biases:
 - What are your [unconscious biases](#) or Blind Spots? How do they play into [systemic racism](#)?
 - What are tangible steps you can take to put an end to systemic racism and become an [ally](#)?



Choose compassion

- Practice compassion with yourself and with others. Remember no one has all the answers.
- You are capable—stop questioning your ability to engage in growth conversations.
- Forgive yourself and others.
- Take time to recharge if you feel overwhelmed.



Learn broadly and continuously

- Access diverse perspectives about race by reading books, listening to podcasts, watching documentaries, or participating in events facilitated by people of color.
- Visit the [I&D Learning System](#) for curated materials on key topics.
- Be comfortable with and learn from failure through self-reflection.
- Debrief the good, the bad and the ugly.



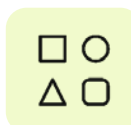
Be open to possibilities

- Ask, "how can we make this work?" instead of finding flaws.
- Visualize a future where true racial equity exists.
- Commit to action and take a stand against racism.
- Encourage others to look at possibilities rather than focusing only on what won't work.



Challenge yourself

- Identify specific areas on race, racism and racial equity where you can push yourself harder to develop and grow.
- Include a variety of challenges and settings in your learning experiences.



Surround yourself with diverse people

- Diverse perspectives challenge our thinking and help us grow.
- Ask questions and engage with people to learn from their unique experiences.

Engaging in GROWTH CONVERSATIONS

To Become **Anti-Racist**



Building upon the information you've learned through the activities on the first page, the next step of your journey will be turning your focus outward to growth conversations. Here are some general tips and best practices to help you mentally prepare for and be more confident as you engage in growth conversations about racism with your team at work, or family and friends.

Before the Conversation

- **Be clear on your objectives**
 - Why are you having these conversations?
 - What do you hope to achieve?
- **Consider your conversation partners.** Be prepared for and encourage diverse opinions and perspectives.
 - The nature of the conversation should depend on the nature of the relationships.
- **Agree on [Conversation Ground Rules](#) such as the following:**
 - Be open, transparent and willing to admit mistakes.
 - Demonstrate [cultural humility](#).
- **Check where you are on the [Mood Elevator](#) and get to curious.** Let go of discomfort and other negative thoughts and emotions by using mindfulness techniques.

During the Conversation

- **Deepen the personal connection:** Be vulnerable and share your personal story.
- **Create psychological safety:** Create a safe space for real conversations. Learn how: [High-Performing Teams Need Psychological Safety. Here's How to Create It.](#)
- **Offer grace:** Assume positive intent and remember that you don't have to have all of the answers.
- **Build empathy:** Attempt to stand in their shoes without judging based on your own personal experiences.
- **Listen to understand:** Try to understand the context behind each person's words and actions; honor perspectives that differ from yours.
- **Affirm the validity of all viewpoints.** People are experts of their own unique experiences that shape their points of view.
- **Remember that this is not a debate.** Try not to become defensive.
- **Focus on making and preserving connections through supportive statements:** Learn how: [Flip The Script: Create Connections, not Conflict in Tough Conversations.](#)

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK

Remember: Never force anyone to answer or put anyone on the spot. Be respectful of people's boundaries.

- Have you ever experienced racism? Would you like to share?
- Has a friend or family member shared a story about racism with you? Would you like to share?
- Have you ever had an experience where you felt different from others in the room? Why? What did that feel like? How do you think this connects to racism?
- How can we be better allies for our colleagues, friends and family who experience racism?
- How can I be a better ally for you?

After the Conversation

- **Reflect on and debrief your conversation.**
 - What went well? What could have been done better? How could you do better next time?
 - Express gratitude. Thank people for being vulnerable and for sharing their story.
- **Continue your personal and professional growth journey.**
- **Strive to be a powerful ally.** Aim for the top of the [accountability ladder](#) and actively find ways you can help advance racial equity.
- **Take a break and practice self-care if you need it.**
- **Establish next steps & accountability in order to continue the conversation and learning.**