

Understanding & Dismantling Privilege

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Dismantling Racism and White Supremacy in Organizations: The Role of White Leaders and Change Agents

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Abstract

Kathy Obear presented “Disrupting from the Inside: The Role of White Leaders and Change Agents in Dismantling Racism & White Supremist Culture in Organizations” as a keynote address at the White Privilege Symposium in Denver, Colorado in 2018. This keynote deepens the capacity of White change agents and leaders to effectively partner with People of Color to create greater racial justice in our organizations.

Keywords: organizational leadership, racial justice, anti-racism, white caucuses, white affinity spaces, dismantling racism

Currently, president of the Center for Transformation and Change and a Co-Founder of the Social Justice Training Institute, Kathy challenges whites to dismantle racism in their organizations and communities and to develop the competencies to partner with and follow the leadership of people of color to incorporate racial justice and liberation in everything they do. For over two decades, she has created spaces for whites to do the critical self-work to dissolve internalized dominance, interrupt racist attitudes and behaviors, and shift racist practices and policies to shape genuinely inclusive, racially just organizations.

I am grateful to all who have come before: for all their commitment, sacrifice, courage, and strength to create greater racial justice in this country and world. I have benefitted from so many teachers and mentors and colleagues; People of Color, as well as Whites, who nudged and supported me, took the risk to give me feedback, and confronted me on my racist attitudes and behaviors. Take a moment, and remember all those who are your teachers, coaches, mentors. I invite you to *say their names* as we honor them all.

What horrendous, critical times we live in. When I was growing up, I had a very clear, narrow understanding of what racism and racists were. I thought racists were people like Bull Conner, George Wallace, and members of the KKK and White Citizens Councils. Racists bombed Black churches and set fire to Freedom Summer buses. Racists used fire hoses and attack dogs to terrorize peaceful, unarmed protesters, and spewed racist hate speech as children tried to simply go to school.

I looked at all these types of Whites and called them the racists and used that belief to distance myself from these Whites to prop myself up as a good White believing, “I am not racist! I am not like them! I am not violent!”

My fear is that *today* too many of us Whites are using this same tactic to avoid and rationalize away any need to look at our own racist behaviors, our own complicity and collusion in the organizations we work in. Who has seen a rise in racist comments and behaviors, as well as hate speech in your communities? Your organizations?

So many horrific acts of racism and white supremacy have occurred recently. In this last week or so, there were three

unconscionable acts of domestic terrorism that we know of. I invite you to take a moment to remember those who were murdered and their families and friends. Remember all those deeply traumatized by these and so many other recent racist acts of violence.

Some news outlets and leaders keep saying that these white nationalists, these murderers and assassins, are on the fringes of society. That’s not been my experience these last few years. How many agree? I believe Pandora’s Box has been opened as we have witnessed a significant increase in virulent, racist, white supremacist hate speech and unconscionable actions: the assassination of two Black shoppers in a Kroger store; the despicable, racist, xenophobic video tweeted yesterday that is just another Willie Horton type of race baiting rooted in white supremacist propaganda that has been used for centuries to promote murder and genocide, to uphold and enforce white supremacy both inside and outside this country; the seemingly unstoppable killing of unarmed People of Color by some police, supported by the institutional racism permeating the legal and justice systems; the onslaught of anti-immigrant, xenophobic hate speech and actions; misogynist and sexist messaging, sexual violence, and resistance to justice; anti-Semitic hate speech and the recent Pittsburgh massacre; anti-transgender threats and attacks—all of this and much more. These acts are perpetrated by top leaders and so many who support them. We can no longer pretend this is a fringe element *nor* can we stay silent and hope things go back to the way they were.

It is too easy to romanticize society, our communities before 2016. Racism and all these other forms of oppression were alive and well then, as well as for decades and

centuries before. Maybe it is all just more visible and apparent to more people in these last two-plus years. We all need to pay attention, be vigilant, and use everything in our power and sphere of influence to speak up, speak out, and work for racial justice as well as social justice in every aspect of oppression. Protesting and organizing, as well as confronting and engaging leaders, is critical work. Getting involved in community, regional, national, and international efforts to interrupt systemic racism and white supremacy *and* to create racial justice is critical work.

But I find that too often Whites overlook another key aspect of the work: our day-to-day interactions and dynamics in our organizations. We say we are for racial justice, *yet* how we engage People of Color often betrays our implicit racist beliefs and completely undermines our espoused commitment to create greater racial justice. We are most often completely unaware of the negative impact we are having on the People of Color in our lives.

We need people who will protest, who will call their senators, as well as those who will put themselves on the line in DC, at state capitols, in the streets of our cities and towns. We need people who will run for office to *become* senators! And vote! Who's voting? Who's bugging everyone you know to *vote*?!?!

And while we are all focused externally, working to change huge, entrenched societal dynamics, we also need to pay far more attention to the racist dynamics *within* organizations and community groups and deepen our capacity and resolve to interrupt racist dynamics, policies, and practices. *Yes*, we need to keep our focus on creating societal change, while we also work inside

organizations to create far greater racial equity every single day.

This morning, I want to talk about how to disrupt from the inside and expand on the *critical* role and responsibility of White leaders and change agents in dismantling racism and white supremacist culture in organizations.

In college when I was student teaching, if you had asked me, I would have loudly proclaimed that I thought racial prejudice and racism were wrong and that Students of Color should have the same access and support as White students. I'm sure I wrote that in a paper for some class! But the reality of my behavior did not align with my stated beliefs.

I was student teaching in a tenth-grade history class on the eastern shore of Maryland. I didn't know it at the time, but I perpetuated whiteness and treated Students of Color out of racist and white supremacist beliefs. Even as I was purporting to be working for greater equality, I was fueled by racist attitudes: I wanted to *help* those poor Students of Color because they were underprivileged and underprepared. I believed it was not their fault, but that they were deficient. I was coming out of a racist *deficit* perspective, believing that they needed my help so that they could pull themselves up by their bootstraps and fit into mainstream—that is, White—society. Do you hear the patronizing, condescending energy? I wanted to help them to be successful and assimilate to White culture and White ways, which I held as better, more professional.

I'll never forget these three or four Black young men sitting one behind the other along the far wall. They weren't engaged and never spoke up or participated. Instead

of trying to make a connection and support them, I just left them alone and avoided them.

It took me years to recognize how I had been socialized to value White cultural practices, to believe that Whites were smarter and superior, to see People of Color as defective. But back then, I never questioned all I had been taught.

It never entered my mind then or for decades thereafter that I was supporting and perpetuating ways of learning and engaging that privileged whiteness and White students. I'd centered Whites and European culture as the norm, and my actions were fueled by racist attitudes I was taught throughout my life.

So much of my life I only focused on not being like the blatant racists, the KKK. I was stuck at the Individual Level, walking on eggshells and being so careful not to say anything I thought was racist. I was so desperate to *not* be called out as racist. Can you relate????

I believed that if I didn't use derogatory terms or make racist jokes, I was not perpetuating racism. I thought I was doing fine by being nice and polite to People of Color and saying hello. This is what a good White should do. And so long as I didn't make any racial slurs or say something offensive to People of Color, then I'd be okay. And I knew that when others made racist comments—like my mom did when I came home to visit in graduate school—then I had to do something. So I shook my head and didn't laugh along, thinking that was enough.

It never occurred to me until much later how many racist comments I probably heard in my home and at school that I didn't notice

at the time and that I probably repeated myself, as I was thinking the same thoughts out of implicit racist bias. My mom didn't spontaneously start telling racist jokes when I was in my early twenties, I was just beginning to be able to recognize them, or at least some of them.

Go greet five-plus people and with the fifth person, talk about what is *a source* of your *passion and commitment* to dismantle racism and white supremacy and create greater racial justice.

To be effective White allies and change agents, we need to have trifocals. We need a deep capacity to analyze and respond in situations at three levels—all at the same time:

- Individual
- Group
- Organizational

Rooted in our passion—our *big why*—we need to pay attention to our own attitudes and behaviors at the Individual Level and interrupt these racist dynamics in ourselves *before* we act on them and negatively impact others and before we create policies, programs, and services that privilege Whites and create barriers and do not meet the needs of People of Color.

Working at the Individual Level is necessary, not sufficient. We also have to develop our capacity and courage to recognize and interrupt racist dynamics all around us at the *Group Level*: what others are doing and experiencing—not just staying focused on ourselves.

Form groups of four and each share one or two recent racist comments, behaviors, practices, or policies that you have observed, done, or heard from a credible source. You

can share more obvious ones, as well as more “subtle” examples. Listen deeply to each other and relate. Not only do we need to keep expanding our awareness of these types of microaggressions that occur every single day, we also need to develop the skills to consistently speak up *and* model new ways of engaging effectively.

Yet, being vigilant and disrupting racist dynamics at the Group Level will have only minimal impact on the day-to-day experiences of People of Color so long as the policies, practices, programs, and services of the organizations that privilege Whites and create barriers to People of Color. We will make no real, meaningful progress until we empower, skill up, and hold accountable *everyone* in the organization to constantly recognize and interrupt White cultural practices and institutional racism embedded in organizational policies, programs, practices, and services.

We may have more influence at the Group Level to start. So we can begin here, and then build to organizational change work. One way to help others and ourselves increase our capacity to recognize the daily microaggressions and choose courage to speak up is to spend time discussing common racist microaggressions at a couple of levels: those unproductive behaviors that happen all around us that we often miss, as well as the more racially obvious dynamics that many of us *still* miss or stay silent and do nothing about when they occur.

For Whites who are newer to race work, starting with common unproductive behaviors may be a place to enter the conversation, since most will probably agree that egregious, blatant racist comments and behaviors have no place in the organization. I mean, even NBC *eventually* let Meghan

Kelly go shortly after she said it was okay for Whites to wear Black face!

It can be harder to recognize the more subtle comments and behaviors that leave People of Color feeling dismissed, disrespected, not valued, and as if they do not belong. These common unproductive meeting behaviors can negatively impact anyone, *and* they have a far more significant *impact* if they come from a White person to People of Color, especially when we realize the cumulative impact given *how often* these occur in organizations.

As you reflect on common unproductive behaviors, I want you to use an expanded *race lens*, including related intersecting identities, to examine the following:

- Racialized identity, Indigenous identity
- Culture, ethnicity
- Skin color
- Appearance
- English proficiency
- “Accents”
- Nationality, national origin
- Immigration and/or documentation status

How often have you seen Whites do *and* how often have *you done* these to People of Color:

- Dominate airtime
- Interrupt, talk over, take over
- Speak “for” People of Color
- Have side conversations
- Only look at other Whites when they talk
- Dismiss, ignore, disregard comments
- Like an idea only after a White person says it or agrees

- Take credit for ideas
- Center ourselves
- Crying, demanding attention
- It wasn't my intent!! (instead of exploring the impact of our behaviors)
- Play the White savior
- Rushing in to fix it!
- Saying, "Look at all I have done for People of Color!"
- Minimize the frustrations
- White-splaining them away
- Give unsolicited advice
- Challenge the validity, credibility of what People of Color are saying
- Require more "proof"
- Emphasize our good intent
- Shut down if confronted about our racist comments or behaviors
- Demand comfort and safety
- Blame People of Color if we feel the least bit unnerved or uncomfortable
- Tone policing
- Roll our eyes

When you notice and name these common race dynamics on your team and in your organization, anticipate that you'll also experience White fragility and White resistance. It can sound so many ways, such as:

"These happen to me, too!"

"It happens to all equally."

"This has nothing to do with race."

"People of Color do it, too!!"

I have thought and said each of these and many other defensive comments trying to discount and dismiss calls to address issues of racism in the organization as well as my own practice. Yet, when we start to pay

attention and track group dynamics with a *race lens*, we begin to see the frequency of these unproductive behaviors, as well as their negative impact on our Colleagues of Color. We also begin to see the patterns of how Whites react differently when these same behaviors happen to Whites compared to when they impact People of Color.

I ask you to commit to tracking these dynamics in five meetings over the next two weeks. Notice any patterns and talk to a few White colleagues about what you are noticing with a race lens.

Have you ever *not* noticed these types of unproductive dynamics across race? I have. I have been far more focused on myself or my needs in the moment and just oblivious to what was occurring around me and the impact my behaviors had on People of Color. Then, when I started to see these race dynamics more, I didn't know what to do.

Have you ever stayed silent for fear of making someone mad or hurting your relationship with Whites in the group? Have you held back for fear of being labeled the "diversity police" or losing some of your access and status?

It is critical that we choose courage and talk with other Whites about what we track and also ask them to reflect on their own behavior in meetings. And then, together, we can practice how to interrupt these racist dynamics when they inevitably occur.

When we collude and stay silent, we are contributing to very predictable consequences for our Colleagues of Color. They may *again* feel dismissed, not valued, as though they do not belong. And the whole team loses from the loss of innovation and creativity, as well as lower productivity, due to increased tension and conflict in the

workplace. All of these impact retention and recruitment and ultimately our capacity to serve. However, it is far more than these daily racist microaggressions. We also have to be vigilant and pay attention to coded racist phrases and comments that, if unaddressed, can sink the careers of People of Color. Have you ever thought, said, or heard comments like these about Colleagues or Candidates of Color?

- Not a team player
- Not a good fit
- Doesn't have enough experience
- Or the right experience
- I couldn't understand what they were saying!

Or have you ever heard how supervisors comfort the White candidates who didn't get the job or promotion, saying, "HR told me we have too many Whites in leadership and so made me hire a Person of Color"? These types of coded racist comments infer that White candidates were more "qualified" and competent, and the only reason they didn't get the job or promotion was because they were White.

Have you ever defended a White colleague after a Person of Color is concerned about something they said or did that had a racist impact, by saying: "He's a good person!" or "She adopted a Latina child," or "She's married to a Native American!" There are so many other common coded racist phrases that are used to maintain the status quo and diminish the input and perspectives of People of Color, such as:

- They are so loud.
- They self-segregate.
- Their research is on the margins.
- She has an attitude.
- He attacked me.

- I'm the victim here.
- They always seem angry.
- They are too sensitive and over-react.
- They are too focused on race.

How many of these have you heard? Thought? Said yourself?

We demand that People of Color jump through so many hoops, turn themselves into pretzels in order for us to even *begin* to listen to them, much less allow them to just do their jobs. We require that People of Color show up in ways that keep us comfortable and always:

- Smile
- Enthusiastically support our ideas
- Acquiesce to our "requests," which are really demands
- Not push back or question us
- Do what we ask them to do
- Show no emotions
- Not sit with or talk to more than one other Person of Color
- Always be on time, even though we walk into meetings late without consequence
- Never use the wrong word or mispronounce a word
- Never send an email or report with a typo, even though *Whites do this all the time*, without it being attributed to our racial identity

It is critical that we engage these racist dynamics each and every time *and* work to get underneath these and ask ourselves and others, "What may have fueled these racist behaviors?"

It is too easy, a cop out, to *only* focus on other Whites. We need to *also* recognize our own racist attitudes and dig deep to find

where they came from. Reflect on this question:

When do you remember realizing that *Whites, as a group*, believed they were superior to People of Color, People who are Indigenous, People who are Biracial/Multiracial (smarter, more organized, better leaders, more competent, etc.)?

As I was going into ninth grade, they desegregated Prince Georges County schools, and I was to be “bussed” to Bethune Junior High, an “all-Black school” as people in my White neighborhood described it. I do not remember my parents or siblings ever talking directly about race as they made arrangements for me to go to an all-White private school. They said things like, “You are smart. We want you to get a good education.”

Take a moment and share a story with a colleague.

Now I invite you to reflect on this more challenging question:

When do you remember realizing that *you* believed Whites were superior to People of Color, People who were Indigenous, or People who were Biracial/Multiracial (smarter, more organized, better leaders, more competent, etc.)?

I was at a national diversity conference and ran into a friend of friend, a Black woman, who invited me to join her and her friends for dinner. As we walked up to the table, I noticed that all the other 10 to 12 people there appeared to be People of Color. I sat down and listened to their conversation about the books they’d been reading for pleasure recently. I was going to join in about the fiction book I was reading, as a

few folks talked about Stephen Hawking and physics and so many more topics I had no idea about. At that moment I realized how incredibly smart and well-read all these People of Color were compared to me. The kicker was how shocked I was at that realization. I came face-to-face with the truth that I still held onto the White supremacist belief that Whites are smarter than People of Color.

I encourage you to get honest and share a story about when you realized you still believed these types of racist thoughts as I did.

These common racist beliefs and attitudes fuel racist behaviors in our organizations. The term *internalized dominance* is a concept that may be new to many Whites. My understanding is it describes how we Whites have internalized and believe racist, White supremacist attitudes and biases, even if we are not conscious of how they fuel our actions.

Which of the following dynamics have you observed or heard many Whites do or say? I still trip over some of these even after 30 years of consulting, with 20 of those focused on dismantling race and racism. These racist attitudes are deeply rooted, often just below the surface:

- I “earned” what I have.
- “Professional” (White cultural) norms are better.
- People of Color need to assimilate.
- If they just worked harder, they would succeed.
- People of Color are hired to fill a quota.
- I resent taking direction from a Person of Color.
- Look how far we have come!
- Racism is in the past—get over it.

- I assume Whites are the leaders.
- I exaggerate the level of intimacy I have with Colleagues of Color.
- I'm scared to be called racist.
- You attacked me. I can't say anything now.
- I'm a "good" White.
- I have friends who are People of Color.
- That happens to me, too!
(rationalize away race dynamics)
- They play the "race card."
- They do not appreciate all I do.

The first step is to get honest and recognize what we have thought or done in the past and probably still do. The next step is to consistently interrupt our racist thoughts before we react out of them and perpetuate racist dynamics in the organization. So, what could you do if you observe or notice any of these types of racist thoughts in yourself?

One tool to interrupt racist, internalized dominance in the moment is to ask yourself these questions:

- Is it true? Really true?
- What is my evidence that this is more true for People of Color than Whites?
- When Whites exhibit the same behavior, how do I make meaning of that? And then treat People of Color?
- What were the racist biases fueling my actions or inactions?
- What is my payoff for having this racist thought?

We can unlearn internalized racist beliefs and then relearn more accurate ones, but it takes vigilance and daily effort. As Dr. Margaret Wheatly said, "Be brave enough to have a conversation that matters" with

yourself and with other Whites. And stay motivated and committed to this work by remembering the words of Dr. Maya Angelou, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, you can do better." We need to be vigilant and shift our racist attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts in each and every moment.

Recognizing and responding to racist comments and behaviors at the *Individual* and *Group* Levels are critical but not sufficient. We have to also work to disrupt racist dynamics at the *Organizational Level*.

One place to start to recognize the pervasiveness of White privilege all around us so we can then interrupt these seemingly invisible pillars of racism in organizations is with the work of Dr. Peggy McIntosh (1989). Ask yourself and your White colleagues these questions:

- What behaviors are valued as competent or professional?
- By group membership, who gets rewarded for demonstrating these?
- By group membership, who gets ignored, overlooked, or even criticized for the same behaviors?

For example, how is leadership defined in your organization. In most predominantly White organizations I have worked with, people are considered leaders if they are:

- Assertive
- Confident
- Outspoken
- Passionate
- Direct in their communications

When Whites do these behaviors, we are seen and rewarded as leaders or as having leadership potential. Is this true for the

People of Color in your organization? More often, when People of Color display these very same behaviors, they are critiqued and criticized and undermined in their leadership by being labeled as:

- Aggressive
- Controlling, bullying
- Not a team player
- Can't work with others
- Angry
- Militant
- Not professional

How often have you seen or experienced this dynamic? It is so common, especially if Whites do not like what People of Color are saying.

We have to recognize all the privilege we get as Whites and then choose courage to name and interrupt these dynamics when they occur.

It can still be hard for me to recognize how White cultural practices have become embedded into organizational culture and operate as “business as usual.” White culture is in the air we breathe. White cultural practices and values are embedded into most every program, policy, practice, and service in organizations.

Let me be clear. I am not saying that everything about White culture is bad. In fact, some White cultural practices can be very helpful at times. The serious problem occurs, in my opinion, when White cultural practices are maintained as the *only way*, the *right way* to engage and those who have other ways of being are critiqued, punished, and not even allowed in the organization.

For example, what does “professional” mean in your organization? Most organizations enforce unwritten rules about

professional dress (clothes, hair, make-up), professional behavior and communication styles, professional ways to engage in conflict and disagreements, etc. It took me a long time to realize that these pervasive organizational “rules” about professionalism were consistent with White cultural practices:

- Even-tempered
- Polite, smiling
- Logical
- Analytical
- Impersonal
- Emotionless
- Solution focused
- Aware that time is money
- Not challenging or questioning leaders
- Working within the hierarchy

I was especially shocked to realize that I had only held People of Color to these White standards as I made lots of allowances when other Whites or I showed up in ways that were “unprofessional.”

A great resource to learn more about White culture in organizations is an article by Jones and Okun (2001) from Change Work, “White Supremacy Culture.”

Another skill set at the Organization Level is the capacity to analyze and revise all policies, practices, programs, and services with a race lens. To practice, reflect on this situation:

During the most recent budget-cutting process, some leaders are considering changing the travel policy to require employees to stay at motels where you have to go get your key and then enter your room from the outside, often from a not-well-lighted parking lot.

By group membership, who might have concerns for their safety or be in danger? Reflect on the same identities we used earlier:

- Racialized identity, Indigenous identity
- Culture, ethnicity
- Skin color
- Appearance
- English proficiency
- “Accents”
- Nationality; national origin
- Immigration and/or documentation status

We need to train all people in our organizations to analyze policies, practices, programs, and services with a race lens so they do this as a part of their everyday activities. Can you imagine if in every meeting, no decision was ever made until the group thoroughly explored these questions:

- By group membership, whose needs will be met by this idea?
- Whose needs may not be met?
- How might Whites be unintentionally privileged or advanced by this idea?
- How might People of Color experience greater obstacles or barriers?
- Whose voices and input are we missing?
- How can we get a fuller, more complex understanding of these issues?

I hope you help your organization analyze every practice, program, and service, such as all those related to marketing, customer service, hiring, onboarding, professional development, promotion, supervision, mentoring, and

performance management. A simple change in hiring practices is to give lists of the interview questions to every candidate as each interview begins. This small shift can help level the playing field for members of multiple marginalized groups.

Effective White allies and accomplices continually do their self-work at the Individual Level, constantly deepening their capacity at the Group Level to effectively recognize and interrupt racist microaggressions, and accelerate their ability and those of other Whites at the Organizational Level to disrupt white privilege, shift White cultural practices, and revise policies, programs, practices, services with a race lens.

We must be vigilant as we deepen our capacity to partner with People of Color and other Whites to interrupt racist dynamics at all three levels and create true racial justice throughout the organization. Too often, we well-intentioned Whites fall into these common *pitfalls* as we enthusiastically begin to try out new ways to disrupt racism in our organizations. Which of these are all too familiar to you?

- Distancing yourself from other Whites
- Competing to be the “best White”
- Playing “find the racist” in the room
- Critiquing other White change agents (social justice elitism)
- Piling on if a White missteps or makes a microaggression
- Staying stuck in our heads, intellectualizing
- Quickly moving to solutions: Here’s how to fix it!
- Only hanging out with People of Color

- Being all talk with no collective, meaningful action

I love this quote from Dolores Huerta: “Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.”

Why should Whites work for racial justice? There are potential risks if we speak up and name racist dynamics in the workplace. If you are feeling fear, you are not alone among White allies! But imagine what it is like for People of Color who do not have the added protection of White privilege and White culture!

It helps me to continuously get grounded in my *big why*, my passion for doing racial justice work. I want to be a part of creating the world I envision is possible, one of true liberation for all. I want to live in a world where everyone can succeed without racist barriers and obstacles.

And there are some deeper motives for me as well. I was in denial for so long about the impact of my racist behaviors and attitudes. I sold my soul and my humanity for White privilege. I bought into White cultural practices and overburdened the few Colleagues of Color with doing their own work *and* a second and third unpaid job of doing all the race-related work. Today, I want to do my part and take my share of responsibility for creating real, sustainable change.

But most painful for me is that I am motivated to stay in the work, to stay vigilant so that I never again say and do things that negatively impact People of Color. I do not want to perpetuate racism any more. For me, it is no longer about *not* being called out on my racist behaviors, I

am motivated to change by sitting in the pain of knowing I have violated my core values and caused harm to others. I want to live differently, I want to be different.

I hope you commit to staying in this process of self-work. If you do, you will develop a far more authentic relationship with yourself and other Whites. You will find accountability partners, other Whites to learn with and get support from as you deepen your capacity as a White accomplice and change agent. And you might even be blessed with more meaningful, intimate relationships with People of Color.

We are always under construction. And if we want something we have never had, we have to continually do things we have never done before. It takes courage and perseverance, and a deeper willingness and resilience that many of us have never had to develop before.

I want to offer a few last thoughts on next steps to deepen our capacity as White allies and accomplices:

- Do your own self-work.
- Deepen your understanding of racism and white supremacy.
- Create White affinity spaces; learn with other Whites.
- Work with other Whites.
- Engage them where they are; model, and invite movement.
- Partner with and follow the leadership of People of Color.
- Track team and organizational dynamics with a race lens.
- Speak up and name racist dynamics.
- Support others when they speak up.

- Revise all policies, programs, practices, and services with a race lens.
- Listen deeply when engaged and confronted.
- Stay in it for the long haul.

I hope you live in your strengths. It can feel overwhelming to try to hold *all* that needs to be addressed. Find your passion that matches your talents and skills and do that for racial justice. Do what you do well and support others to use their passion and talents to disrupt racism in other ways.

We need all of us together in this work. Go where you are called and give it your best. And then ask: What else? What more can I do? *And* maybe do a little bit more.

This past year I have been deeply moved and motivated by this passage I am told is from the Talmud: “Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.”

Thank you for all you do to dismantle racism and create greater racial justice in organizations. Together, I believe we can manifest the world we envision.

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