

# Talking Points Guide

## Episode Twenty-Seven: Racism Is Taught and Learned, but So Are Acceptance and Respect

Systemic racism is woven into every political and institutional structure, and unconscious biases influence all of our interactions. Being "against racism" isn't enough; we must actively *work* to end racism. Addressing interpersonal racism in our social spheres is valuable; but more importantly, we need to dismantle the racism embedded in organizational policies.

Here are four actions you can take:

**1. I will get comfortable saying: "That's racist."**

Bravely call out racist policies, power dynamics and comments, every time. While this small action may not immediately change systems or minds, it will open the conversations that lead to change.

**2. I will accept the concept of privilege.**

For centuries, opportunities have been denied to racialized people; this has been particularly explicit and persistent for Black and indigenous people. Recognize that resources and benefits must now be re-allocated -- equally -- among people of all races because centuries of unfairness must be righted.

**3. I will "see color," including whiteness.** For many people, hearing the word "White" feels uncomfortable, even confrontational. But avoiding the idea of whiteness or claiming that "race doesn't matter" actually shuts down important conversations about racism. If we are too uncomfortable to "see color," we will misunderstand persistent patterns in how people of different colors are treated.

**4. I will recognize the ways in which I prize proximity to whiteness.** Consider how some races are positioned as "respectable," "hardworking," or "non-threatening," in contrast to other races. These beliefs are limiting, and they unfairly benefit some communities -- at the expense of others. Challenge these unfair hierarchies, especially if you're a member of any group that benefits from "proximity to whiteness" on this unspoken scale.

**5. I will be my child's first anti-racist role model.** When you encounter racism in public interactions, at social gatherings or with family, set an example by speaking up. Diversify the people your child admires: seek Black health care providers and activities with Black leaders. Buy Black dolls. Choose books and shows with joyful Black protagonists -- characters who are not enslaved, not servants, who do not hate their own appearances, who are not portrayed as victims and who do not require "saving" -- characters whom your children would be proud to emulate. Older kids do need to learn about historical racism. But even more importantly, during their formative years, kids need to directly see and experience people of all races as true equals and aspirational role models.