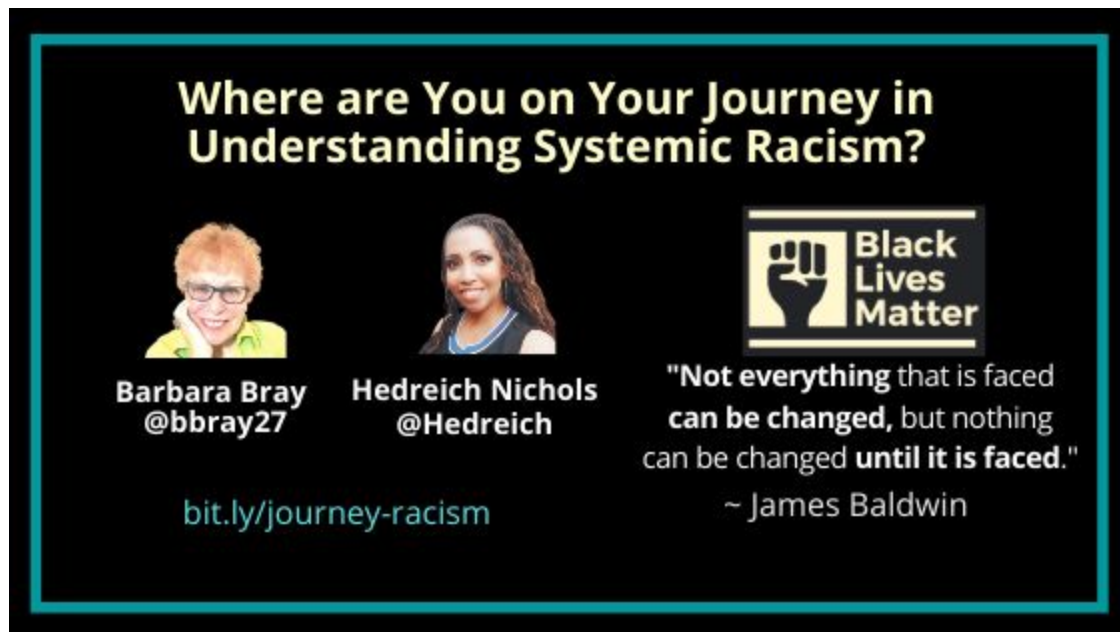


Where are you on your Journey in understanding systemic racism?

Barbara Bray @bbray27 and Hedreich Nichols @Hedreich



Sometimes, a conversation is way more than a conversation. Several of those more-than-conversations with Barbara Bray allowed us to explore the different needs that black and white educators have when talking about how to meet the goal we all have of creating more equitable classrooms and communities. We talked about what systemic racism means for different people and how the problem can be approached from varying perspectives.

The pandemic, and now the tragic death of George Floyd have exposed the inequities that are not new to people who look like me. Now, people all over the world are realizing that we can no longer be silent. Protests are worldwide and people of all segments of society are coming together to demand that we act systemically to end hate, racism, violent police actions, and systemic inequities.

We understand that everyone is at a different place in their reactions and responses to recent events. We want to share resources and scenarios for those who are not people of color to help people learn, unlearn, and relearn what to say and do about issues surrounding racism, discrimination, and the need for policy change.

From this document on [Racial Equity Tools is a Compilation of Racial Identity Models](#), the White Racial Identity Model (Helms) lists 6 stages:

1. *Contact*: taking a non-racist position and do not understand the position of their own privilege.
2. *Disintegration*: feeling guilt and shame and wanting to channel those feelings in a positive way.
3. *Reintegration*: believing that they may deserve their white privilege and are superior.
4. *Pseudo-Independence*: expecting people of color to confront and uncover racism for them.
5. *Immersion/Emersion*: attempting to connect to his/her own White identity and to be anti-racist.
6. *Autonomy*: has a positive connection to their white racial identity while pursuing social justice.

Depending on which self-identified stage people find themselves in, they may respond differently in different situations. People in every stage may benefit from support to build confidence when responding to students, colleagues, family, and friends in talking about racism and discrimination.

We thought we'd start with four situations that people might be in.

- Unaware or no interaction
- Living or teaching in a diverse setting
- Understanding inequities
- Champion for equity

Unaware or no interaction

What if I grew up or live in a place with very few people of color and have had little interaction with those who don't look like me?

Check out these resources:

- [Books to read](#)
- 'Must read' book to read [White Fragility](#)
- [Video](#) to watch
- [Country](#) or [folk music](#) from the Smithsonian to listen to
- [Talks to watch](#)
- [Racial Equality Toolkit](#) to pull from

Scenarios	Try this...	Not this...
I saw this thing on social media about finding a black mentor.	Consider Googling "How to become more culturally responsive". Check out the resources above. Expand your circle if all your friends look like you.	Saying that you're "colorblind" and expect someone else to do the work you can do yourself.
I am mandated to learn about racism in my job.	You can be the change that gives children a better future. Start with one book and one video to begin your journey. Check the list above.	Doing the same things or teaching the same curriculum the same way and not implementing changes that highlight histories, philosophies and accomplishments of various cultures.
I don't have any black people in my life. I believe racism is caused by talking about it.	Hate can spread and impact your community. It can start with your children who go online or talk to their peers and can learn hateful speech. Do your own research so you can talk about racism from an informed point of view.	Thinking that your voice does not matter or thinking that keeping silent isn't complicity.

Teaching or living in a diverse setting

What if I have had little interaction with people of color and now live or even teach in a diverse setting?

Actions to consider:

- [Talking about Racism with Kids](#)
- Reading [Children's Books on Diversity](#)
- Exploring intersectionality [Ain't I A Woman](#) by bell hooks
- Reading about voluntary segregation [Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria](#)
- [Talking to children about race](#)

Scenarios	Try this...	Not this...
There are no people in my neighborhood or teachers of color in my school.	Checking out the resources above and having conversations with your neighbors or with teachers in your school.	Thinking that you cannot do the work without a person of color guiding you.
I have not addressed the topic of racism with my neighbors, my students or teachers in or outside of my school.	Asking questions. Making it a family project. Encouraging your students and colleagues to ask questions and do research with you.	Keeping silent.

Understanding inequities

What if I get it that people of color have been discriminated against and adversely impacted by systemic inequities?

Explore these resources and actions:

- Make sure people are ready to [vote](#)
- Join the [NAACP](#) and [get active](#)
- Use your voice and [contact your elected officials](#)
- Learn how to use your voice to [safely intervene](#).
- Read the article: [Walking While Black](#)
- Read the book: [So You Want to Talk About Race](#)
- Watch the documentary: [13th](#)
- Watch [I am not your Negro](#) about James Baldwin

Scenarios	Try this...	Not this...
I'm not sure what I can do about system racism during this pandemic.	Modeling being safe if you protest by wearing a mask and physical distancing the best you can.	Protesting without a mask or without maintaining safe physical distancing. Assuming people you know are registered to vote.
I'm feeling guilt and shame about being white for all the injustices that happened.	Working locally or remotely to get people out to vote. Fighting voter suppression. Finding and joining organizations that are making an impact. Getting others involved.	Feeling guilty and not doing anything.

I was just made aware or have know about the policies and police actions against people of color and not sure what I can do about them.	<p>Watching and discussing <i>13th</i> with colleagues about the systemic incarceration of people of color.</p> <p>Voicing your concerns about for-profit prisons at city council meetings and contacting elected officials changing policies.</p> <p>Using safe intervention strategies to stop injustices when you see them happening.</p>	Sitting on the sidelines talking about it but not doing anything to make change happen.
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Champion for equity

What if I have long been a champion for equity and sometimes have a difficult time interacting with people who are “only just now” realizing that there is a problem?

Consider the following resources:

- [Documentaries](#)
- [A Guide to Equity and Antiracism for Educators](#)
- Book: [How to be An Antiracist](#)
- PDF: [Framing Brave Conversations](#)
- [Wha Cha’ Gonna Do](#) (Guide by Hedreich)
- Article: [75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice](#)
- PDF: [Responses to Racist Remarks](#)
- [Race Works Toolkit](#) from Stanford
- Learn powerful [words to use as an ally](#)

Scenarios	Try this...	Not this...
I work with someone who is in the reintegration stage; that they feel they deserve their white privilege and are superior to people of color.	Being okay about standing up for people of color and the injustices that keep happening.	Not taking any action when someone says or does something racist.
In our staff meetings, one colleague mentioned being afraid to talk about racism.	Reaching out to that colleague to mentor or support them on their journey. Offer to lead a book study with your staff. Encourage conversations about racism on a regular basis.	Not reaching out and continuing to do the work alone.
I am a white woman who is not sure what to say or not to say about racism.	Saying “I can’t imagine” or “that’s awful” as an expression of connection so it is not about you.	Saying “I’m so ashamed” or “it’s not all white women”, which puts the burden of consoling or the blame of defending you on the hearer.

For more information about systemic racism, go to this document [scaffolding anti-racism resources](#).

Hashtags to use to learn more about racism, discrimination, and police violence

#BLM #BlackLivesMatter #ClearTheAir #educolor #BME #8cantwait #ihollaback and of course, follow @tolerance_org

For more from Hedreich Nichols @hedreich <https://hedreich.com/>

For more from Barbara Bray, @bbray27 <https://barbarabray.net/>