



ACTING AGAINST RACISM: Strategies for Moving Forward

KEY STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The following actions and strategies have been compiled based on the speakers' presentations and ideas generated by attendees at the Public Forum, held at Kay Meek Centre in September, 2017.

Change can happen on multiple levels. We grouped the actions and strategies generally under 3 overarching areas of influence:

PERSONAL INFLUENCE

"What can I do?"

There is great value in doing the often difficult work of building up our own individual understanding of ourselves and racism as we continue to engage in other actions.

SYSTEMIC INFLUENCE

"What can we do through our workplaces, organizations, and in the systems we operate?"

It's important to recognize that racism is entrenched in our organizations, policies, institutions, legal frameworks, governments, etc...

PUBLIC INFLUENCE

"What can I do in my social or family circles, groups, and communities?"

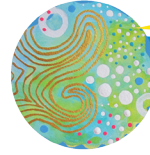
There are various approaches that individuals can take. Many of these actions are dependent on a clear self-evaluation of personal, physical, and emotional safety.



For more information about this past forum, please visit www.nsiip.ca/acting-against-racism

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PERSONAL INFLUENCE

“What can I do?”

There is great value in doing the often difficult work of building up our own individual understanding of ourselves and racism as we continue to engage in other actions.

Build up your personal toolkit

- **Take personal responsibility to continuously increase your knowledge** and understanding on historical and ongoing racism in all its scales (i.e. interpersonal, institutional, cultural).
- **Continuously seek out diverse perspectives** that challenge you.
- **Learn about the historical and current experiences** of Indigenous peoples and communities.
- **Read** the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 ‘[Calls to Action](#)’.
- **Realize that being “apolitical” is political** because of your acceptance of the status quo.
- **Explore the differences** between anti-racism, multiculturalism and diversity.
- **Seek tools** to improve your effectiveness in addressing racism. For example, how can you use a gentle non-direct approach or a direct strong approach to call someone out?
- **Instead of being reactive, think ahead** about what strategies you could use in different scenarios.
- **Understand the laws/legislation** (such as [Human Rights](#)), policies, and procedures that are in place to support you and survivors of racism.

Embrace vulnerability, authenticity and honesty

- **With an intention of learning, admit your lack of awareness** in dealing with diverse people, various forms of discrimination, or the histories surrounding these discriminations.
- **Acknowledge we all make mistakes**, we are flawed, and that we all have biases that guide us. Take responsibility to own all this and work with their impacts as you move forward.

- **Be genuinely curious and open minded** by asking questions or asking people to clarify their positions as racism is often subtle and hidden.
- **Be courageous** in sharing your personal experiences encountering racism.
- **Be open** to hearing stories and the histories that are shared with you.
- **Ask yourself how you are implicated in various forms of discrimination** instead of seeing yourself as purely a victim or innocent.
- **Find your moral imperative to address racism**, prejudice and discrimination
- **Reflect** on your actions in the face of discrimination and on why you chose to do what you did.
- **Think about your personal, physical, and emotional safety** and how these might inform what actions you take.
- **Live your identity** in your everyday.
- **Embrace the discomfort** of this work.
- **Take care of yourself** when you need it - rest, retreat, recuperate.





PUBLIC INFLUENCE

“What can I do in my social or family circles, groups, and communities?”

There are various approaches that individuals can take. Many of these actions are dependent on a clear self-evaluation of personal, physical, and emotional safety.

Acknowledging our histories is critical

- **Acknowledge whose lands we are on**, the history of how it was taken, and the experience Indigenous peoples have had.
- **Model reconciliation** to your children, families, friends, colleagues, and communities.

Interventions with the discriminatory individual/group

- **Call out** the various forms of discrimination.
- **Name the impacts using “I” statements.** Ex. “I find that disrespectful/offensive/hurtful.”
- **Make it clear** that their comment or action was not okay.
- **Offer a reminder** not to generalize about people based on isolated experiences.
- **Use humour to interrupt** with comments like “Don’t go there,” “Really?” “Are you sure?” “Do you really think that?”
- **Politely disagree** and change the topic.
- **Share stories** to challenge stereotypes and build understanding.
- **Have a private conversation** by taking them aside.
- **Invite the individual to continue the conversation** respectfully with the intent of mutual listening and learning.
- **Use the opportunity to educate** and provide different perspectives.
- **Step in and de-escalate** the situation if there is aggressive behaviour if you feel safe to do so.
- **Place yourself between** the aggressor and the recipient if you feel safe to do so.
- **Stop** or ask the individual to leave.

Supportive Action

- **Seek support** from bystanders or authorities.
- **Get to safety.**
- **Ask the survivor** of a discriminatory act what they need or what you can do to help them.
- **Listen** to the survivor.
- **Stay with** the survivor.
- **Document** the incident with photos, video, or recording details.
- **Report** the incident to the proper authorities.

Public Action

- **Attend/organize large anti-racism events** like rallies, protests, public forums, symposiums, dialogues, conferences, or community activities.
- **Support and welcome** newcomers.
- **Attend diverse social activities/events** such as the Norooz or Lunar New Year Festivals.
- **Build collaborative alliances** with people or groups that are doing anti-discriminatory work.
- **Focus on what you can do** that is within your control on a small scale, for example within your local community, work, school or peer group.
- **Vote.**

Social Media and General Information Sharing

- **Share counter arguments** on negative/false posts on social media.
- **Report** discriminatory posts/behaviours targeting refugees, new immigrants, etc.
- **Share resources** about diversity related information.
- **Share factual and well-sourced information/articles** and opinions.
- **Broadcast your learnings and questions** as you continue to develop a better understanding of the issues.
- **Encourage** people to think before they speak.



SYSTEMIC INFLUENCE

“What can we do through our workplaces, organizations, and in the systems we operate?”

It’s important to recognize that racism is entrenched in our organizations, policies, institutions, legal frameworks, governments, etc...

Making Systemic Change

- **Acknowledge how the various histories of racism intersect with our work**, the uncomfortable history of how the nation was built, and the experience marginalized peoples have had.
 - **Use your privilege to create spaces** to discuss and act against racism.
 - **Approach your work through an intersectional lens** that encourages collaborations across communities.
 - **Create a Diversity and Inclusion/Equity Committee** in your work place.
 - **Build opportunities for cross-cultural learning** that creates interaction with diverse people and diverse perspectives.
 - **Create systems, policies, and procedure to support those who experience racism** where these folks can be heard and supported.
 - **Model positive action** on reported incidences within your organization.
 - **Share** your actions, successes, challenges, and learnings.
 - **Introduce and implement diversity initiatives** such as special projects, diversity training, talking circles, dialogues, or educational workshops.
 - **Strive to work in coalitions and alliances** to combat discrimination.
 - **Vote.**
 - **Understand and challenge the role of media** in how it normalizes racial stereotypes.
 - **Call out and receive feedback** on various forms of discrimination.
- **Seek to get to the roots** of racial violence, racial designations, and processes of racialization in Canada.
 - **Recognize how race permeates** a society.
 - **Recognize and acknowledge ‘whiteness’** and that it provides a set of basic advantages and privileges that creates an amount of safety built into a ‘white’ person’s everyday life.
 - **Move beyond multiculturalism.** Take the conversations and actions further to interculturalism.



There are many more ideas and strategies that are being implemented or yet to be discovered. Let’s continue engaging in building inclusive communities!