

'No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.' – Nelson Mandela

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Issue 1

## Not Being Part of the Problem

By Analyce Waite

**Racism (Noun)**- The belief that one group of people are inferior/superior to another group of people based on physical their appearance or characteristics.

Racism is an issue which has become deeply rooted in society throughout history. There are many factors to systemic racism which exist in the majority of social interactions, racial barriers- both visible and invisible. Invisible barriers could be defined as harmful behaviours that are considered normal and accepted by society. For example, picture an iceberg, on the surface level it may seem like a small obstacle in a large stretch of water, easy to avoid, however, much of an iceberg is below the surface which led to the expression "tip of the iceberg", used to illustrate a small part of a larger unseen issue. Like an iceberg, only a small part of the problem of racism is brought to light while the other part is buried under ignorance which allows the issue to go unnoticed. On many occasions, people who do not have to experience unfair treatment due to the problem of racism feel as if it is not their issue to tackle. However, racism was not created by the ones who experience it on a day to day basis, and it is not a problem we must overcome on our own. Racism must be consciously combated not discreetly tolerated. One deadly trigger of subconscious racism is the stereotyping of people of black decent. Throughout their lives, many people feel they have to hide their true character due to the fear of having been pre-judged based on the stereotypes we know exist; the person they see in the mirror is rarely seen by the institutions that govern society. We must realise that race is a social construction with no biological meaning and there are steps we must take to gradually break these barriers that have been built and transferred through generations.

### Ways to begin to overcome the issue of racism:

1. Self educating. For example, start by reading books that explore this issue. A good book to start with is "Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race", or "Black Skin, White Mask" by Frantz Fanon.
2. Acknowledging and combatting microaggressions (subtle and unintentional discrimination) which can often be phrased as backhanded compliments and communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights & insults towards people of colour or BAME communities. For example, "Oh, you're so pretty for a black girl, can I touch your hair?" or "Oh! You're quite well spoken aren't you? You're mixed right?" It can be unsettling to confront racial tendencies within yourself but it is a step you must take, and empower others to take too.
3. Anti-racism education along with the teachings of history to consider the root of racism. You can make a start by educating yourself on colonisation and the economic factors that contributed to such discrimination. Please email Miss Harrak for a reading list.
4. Create dialogue around the issue.
5. Be bold and act with intention.
6. Intervene and inform. Act on your beliefs when you come across injustice, prejudice and discriminatory words.
7. Create more diverse environments to broaden the level of visual representation (especially for young children).

Ending racism should not be a debate.

**Want to get involved in creating next week's BAME News-letter?**

**Please email:**

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Remember you don't have to be an amazing writer to get involved. You're always more than welcome to share ideas/thoughts/feeling and even design skills- all of which can be contributed to the weekly writings.

**Watch or listen to this...**

**The Last Dance**— a 10 part series documenting the untold story of Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls dynasty. Click [here](#) to watch.

**'Can We Just Ask?'** - A Podcast that aims to inspire positive change by starting conversations that matter. Their current 10 minute bulletin shares amazing stories and inspiring initiatives to bring about positive environmental and societal change. Click [here](#) to listen.