

# What Can I Do?

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Below are some suggestions for actions that you can take to continue the work you have done at this training, to broaden your understanding of racism, and to promote a vision of diversity that values and includes everyone. Each one of us can make a difference if we are sincere and committed and do not let fear or apathy hold us back. Add your suggestions to this list.

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- Continue and expand on the dialogue you started with your dyad partner in the seminar.
- Notice how people avoid talking about differences. Think about what this avoidance creates. What does it mean to be different in your community?
- Think about why people find it so difficult to talk about racism in an ethnically mixed group. Discuss this with others of your own ethnicity and those who are ethnically different.
- Commit to getting to know and build relationships with co-workers, classmates and neighbors of different ethnic groups.
- Of the groups you identify with, list the stereotypes frequently associated with them, e.g., being a woman (emotional, weak, overly sensitive, etc.), elderly (fragile, forgetful, sickly, etc.). List the stereotypes that your group has about others. How are these lists similar and different? Where and how did you learn these stereotypes?
- Commit yourself to becoming aware of when your assumptions based on stereotypes affect your perceptions, thoughts and behavior towards others.
- Notice who is present and who is missing (e.g., women, men, Asians, Blacks, Latinos, etc.) at meetings, training sessions, conferences, etc. and speak up about the groups that have been left out.
- Intervene in a constructive manner when you hear someone telling an ethnic joke or making a racist remark. Don't collude by keeping silent.
- Notice (or recall/imagine) what images come up when you hear someone you've never seen described as an "American." What ethnicity are the images?
- What is an American? How does one become an American? Think about which ethnic groups you identify as American?
- Learn about the histories of people of color in the United States. How are they an integral part of the history of our country?

- Learn how to pronounce the non-anglo names of your cohorts. A sincere interest and effort is appreciated and valued.
- Listen to people of color when they talk about experiencing racism. Acknowledge them. Imagine how it feels to have those experiences.
- Form a lunch group at work that meets on a regular schedule to talk about how to make valuing diversity a productive and creative reality at your organization.
- Make a list of actions that can be taken at your worksite to make everyone feel included and valued.
- Attend classes, seminars, and workshops on unlearning racism.
- Discuss what White people have to gain by becoming active in working to end racism? What do they have to lose?
- Learn about your family's ethnic background. Are all the ethnicities in your background honored and valued?
- Research whether your family name was ever changed or anglicized by your predecessors. If so, why was this done? Have you ever changed your first name or surname to fit in more with the dominant culture?
- Read magazines that are directed at ethnic groups other than your own.
- Learn how our economy's need for labor has affected our immigration policies.
- Find others that are taking active steps to dismantle racism and bond with them. You need to have allies for support. Don't be isolated.
- Read books about race relations and diversity to broaden your understanding. Make a list of recommended books you hear about.
- The Golden Rule is a valued guiding principle but it overlooks the differences among people. Add the Platinum Rule: "Treat others as they want to be treated." Find out how others want to be treated. It might be different than how you like to be treated. Both principles work together.
- Take an active role in refuting the denial of racism.
- Write a personal action plan to promote and value diversity in your personal life and in your workplace.