

## **HOW TO SUPPORT ANTIRACISM IN YOURSELF & IN THE WORLD**

*--by Karla McLaren, syndicated from karlamclaren.com, Jun 29, 2020*

How do we build a more loving and inclusive world?

In 2016, when the serious troubles in the United States began to boil and coalesce into ever deepening and blatant racism, I went into a period of study with my friend and colleague Amanda Ball.

We read everything that we could get our hands on about race, prejudice, and discrimination, and we educated ourselves from the ground up. There was a lot that we didn't know, because things are set up so that we don't know. Luckily, there is a vibrant community of writers and speakers who are sharing valuable knowledge. I have listed some of them below if you want to learn.

On the night of the 2016 election, I found many new organizations to support, and then realized that reliable monthly donations would help more than one-time amounts, so I dedicated part of my income every month to organizations that protect the rights of people of color, immigrants, LGBTQIA+ people, disabled people, poor people, and the freedom of the press. I have listed some of them below if you want to help.

Today, the serious and deadly problems caused by our racism are even more obvious than they were in 2016, and as people in the United States and across the world gather to protest racism and police brutality, I thought it might help to give you good things to read, people to follow, organizations to support, and ideas for creating the kind of serious structural change that's required for an antiracist United States to emerge.

### **First, listen to the voices of the people themselves**

We live in a very segregated society, not just by race, but also by social class. Our media is segregated, our Google searches are segregated, our social media is segregated, and even the shows we watch tend to be segregated (look at your Netflix, Hulu, or other online streaming service and note the racial makeup of the shows and movies in your queue). This is not a dastardly thing; humans tend to focus on people and groups they recognize.

But staying in segregation reduces empathy and it reduces our creative imagination; we need both to create an antiracist world.

If you would like to learn about what's real and true for people of other races, but you live in a mostly segregated community, watch the shows that are made for them. Read the books. Watch the movies. Listen to the music. Step across the lines of segregation and experience other voices, other ways of living, and other ways of seeing the world.

If you have no close friends or no access to people who are very different from you, it can help to follow people on social media so that you can widen your perspective. For instance, you can follow each of the authors below. Watch and listen closely. Widening your empathy requires a period of respectful silence as you learn how to understand other people and their different experience of the world.

### **Read the words of people who are working for antiracism**

These short articles are helpful, and they offer personal perspectives on racism, plus my own take on how to use privilege for justice.

*White Supremacy as a Trauma Response* by Resmaa Menakem

*What I Said When My White Friend Asked for My Black Opinion on White Privilege* by Lori Lakin Hutcherson

*Confronting Racism is Not About the Needs and Feelings of White People* by Ijeoma Oluo

*What Your Body Has to Do With Social Change* by Adrienne Maree Brown

*I Am Racist, And So Are You* by Rachel Shadoan

*Racist Ideas in America* with Ibram X. Kendi

*The Case for Reparations* by Ta-Nehisi Coates

*Embracing Grief* by Sobonfu Somé

*How to Be a Privilege Traitor* by Karla McLaren

### **Read great books on racism and antiracism**

These are some of my favorite and most re-read books about racism and antiracism.

*How to Be An Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi

*So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo

*My Grandmother's Hands* by Resmaa Menakem

*The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein

*Fatal Invention* by Dorothy Roberts

*White Rage* by Carol Anderson

*Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson

*The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander

*The History of White People* by Nell Irvin Painter

*Rising Out of Hatred* by Eli Saslow

*The Making of Asian America* by Erica Lee

*An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

*Reel Bad Arabs* by Jack Shaheen

*Orientalism* by Edward Said

*Evicted* by Matthew Desmond

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

*Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah

*Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi

*The Healing Wisdom of Africa* by Malidoma Somé

### **Support organizations that are doing the work of antiracism**

If you have extra money or time, you can either volunteer for these (and other) organizations, or donate to help them stay afloat and do their important work. Even \$5 per month can help.

Before 2016, I was giving one-time donations every now and then, but a friend pointed out that monthly donations would be better, so that these organizations could count on me. Here are some of my favorites that have the most extensive infrastructure and already have their boots on the ground, but there are many, many more.

[American Civil Liberties Union](#)

[NAACP](#)

[Equal Justice Initiative](#)

[Native American Rights Fund](#)

[First Nations Development Institute](#)

[The Bail Project](#)

[Human Rights Campaign](#)

### **And most importantly, create, vote for, and support antiracist political change**

Racism is a structural fact in the United States and much of the world. It isn't created by individuals alone; it's in the air we breathe and in the water we drink (literally, in places like Flint, Michigan).

Racism lives in our ideas, practices, folkways, and laws. Racism lives in and is protected by our institutions, media, regulations, educational systems, financial systems, mortgage lending, zoning rules, medical care, policing, gerrymandering, voter suppression, and our legal system. Changing ourselves is important, but if we don't change the system, nothing will truly change.

We must vote and work for true political change at every level of government so that we can replace our current racist structures with antiracist structures.

### **This is an involved process, because racism has a long and involved history**

Racism is built into the structure of nearly every aspect of U.S. culture, and it's not something that can be dealt with in a week, or by one group of people, or in one way, or by one organization. It will take many of us working in many different areas and many different ways.

And today is the perfect day to start, or to continue with fresh eyes and a dedicated heart.

May we all learn to create a world where equality, inclusion, justice, safety, love, empathy, truth, and antiracism reign.



Syndicated from [Karla McLaren's website](#). Karla McLaren, M.Ed. is an award-winning author, social science researcher, and pioneering educator whose empathic approach to emotions opens startling new pathways into self-awareness, effective communication, and healthy empathy. She is the author of [The Art of Empathy: A Complete Guide to Life's Most Essential Skill](#) (2013), [The Language of Emotions: What Your Feelings are Trying to Tell You](#) (2010), the multi-media online course [Emotional Flow: Becoming Fluent in the Language of Emotions](#) (2012), and the upcoming book [Embracing Anxiety: How to Access the Genius Inside this Vital Emotion](#) (Sounds True, June 2020).