

# HOW TO RESPOND TO COMMON RACIST STATEMENTS

By @wastefreemarie



"I DON'T SEE COLOR. WE ARE  
ALL ONE HUMAN RACE."

While we are all human and biologically the same, the systemic oppression of black people makes my experiences vastly different from yours. To say that you don't see my race means you don't see my oppression, my marginalization, or the discrimination I'm facing daily. This diminishes my suffering and excuses you from your responsibility to be anti-racist. You must see race to combat racism.

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“YOU THINK SOMETHING I SAID  
WAS RACIST? YOU MUST’VE  
MISUNDERSTOOD ME.”

When individuals perpetuate racism, it’s usually unintentional. You may have had good intentions. Still, racist acts are defined by their impact, not their intent. Give black people the benefit of the doubt when we call out racism. Rather than suggesting we lack understanding or intelligence, listen and learn from us about how to confront racist ideologies.

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"I'M NOT A RACIST PERSON."

This 'good non-racist people' vs 'bad racist people' binary concept is a gross oversimplification of what racism is. Racism is oftentimes subconscious, undetected, and born out of privilege or apathy. Racism isn't just in bad people's minds; racism affects all people who belong to a racialized society. Put more effort into learning how to be anti-racist than you put into convincing others you're non-racist.

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“I’M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT MY  
ANCESTORS DID. AM I SUPPOSED TO  
FEEL BAD ABOUT THAT?”

We are living in a society that was built on the backs of black people for the benefit of white people. Generational wealth, prosperity, and opportunity benefit white people. Recognize that injustice didn’t stop with our ancestors. White people are presently benefitting from the very systems that marginalize black people. Feel convicted to reconcile today’s injustices.

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“AS A WHITE PERSON, I’M  
DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE  
OF REVERSE RACISM.”

Racism requires both prejudice and power. You may face prejudice. That’s not racism, because your race is in power. The criminal justice system favors white people, social institutions favor white people and white culture, and internalized prejudices attribute favorable traits to white people. White people are irrefutably in the place of power, so reverse racism cannot exist.

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“WHY DO YOU MAKE  
EVERYTHING ABOUT RACE?”

Everything in our society is blanketed with white supremacy, which is the notion that whiteness is the norm, the standard, or the ideal. Blackness is regarded as abnormal, substandard, and not ideal. White supremacy covers every facet of our society, but it often goes unnoticed by those it benefits. To better recognize your privilege, take notice of oppression that you don't experience.

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## “ALL LIVES MATTER”

All lives can't matter until black lives matter. “All lives matter” overlooks systemic injustice plaguing the black community. “All lives matter” has been weaponized to silence the cries of the unheard. “All lives matter” promptly ends progress before it starts. To work toward equity for all people, we must start with advocacy for the most marginalized.

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IF **BLACK LIVES MATTER**  
BOTHERS YOU BECAUSE IT DOESN'T SAY  
**ALL LIVES MATTER**  
BUT **BLUE LIVES MATTER**  
DOESN'T BOTHER YOU,  
THEN WHAT REALLY BOTHERS  
YOU IS THE WORD  
**BLACK**



YIKES. I'VE SAID THESE  
THINGS WITHOUT REALIZING  
THAT THEY'RE RACIST....

MICROAGGRESSIONS AND COVERT  
RACISM ARE OFTEN TIMES  
UNINTENTIONAL. REGARDLESS OF  
YOUR INTENTIONS, ACCEPT AND  
UNDERSTAND YOUR ERROR.  
RECOGNIZE RACIAL INEQUALITIES.  
CONFRONT YOUR  
INTERNALIZED PREJUDICES BY  
LEARNING MORE ABOUT RACISM.

By @wastefreemarie

"BUT I STILL FEEL LIKE I  
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO  
SAY THE RIGHT THINGS."

LISTEN TO BLACK STORIES  
LEARN ABOUT RACIAL INJUSTICE  
AMPLIFY BLACK VOICES  
ACT


By @wastefreemarie



# WE NEED TO TALK



 : Blue lives matter.

 : Are we talking about smurfs here? Blue lives do not exist. Police officers can remove their blue uniform, but black people cannot shed their skin. Those uniforms protect police both literally and metaphorically, while black skin is a target in the United States.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : All lives matter.

👤 : Sure, but not all lives are treated equally and that is the problem. This saying diminishes the unique struggle of black people in our country.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : Police kill twice as many white people as black people every year.

👤 : The militarization of the police harms us all. There are six times as many white people in the US as black people, so proportionally black people are far more likely to be killed by police than white people.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : But I'm not racist.

👤 : You may not see yourself as racist, but as a white person you benefit from a racist society. It is not enough to be "not racist," you need to be anti-racist and actively work against the racism deeply imbedded in our country.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : I don't see color.

👤 : The idea of not seeing skin color is nice in theory, but in practice it harms our efforts for inclusivity and diversity. Different races experience the world differently, and we have to recognize that in order to work against the inherent biases we hold, and recognize the additional struggle they face in this world..



# WE NEED TO TALK



👧 : Why don't they just peacefully protest?

👧 : It is not our place to tell Black people how to protest. Black people have peacefully protested for decades, and things are relatively in the same place. Peaceful protests are easy to dismiss, and have been largely ignored.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : Murder is bad, but so is destruction of property.

👤 : Destruction of property is bad, but it is nowhere near equal to murder. A human being and a building are not the same, and the loss of either should never be compared. If you believe the loss of property is worse or equal to the loss of a human life, you should consider where your values lie.

# WE NEED TO TALK



👤 : What about black on black crime?

👤 : White on white crime happens at roughly the same rate as black on black crime. This is because crime is generally committed where a perpetrator lives. High crime rates are a deep, complex issue, usually caused or exacerbated by segregation, over-policing, and lack of community resources. It is dismissive to assume black on black crime is an issue black people don't also care about.