



## Starting Race Talk - Definitions

Adapted from <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary> and other sources

**Accomplice:** A person who helps another commit a crime

**Ally:** Side with or support (someone or something)

**Bystander:** A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part

**Culture:** The customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people or other social group

**Emotional Labor:** The work required to manage one's feelings or maintain social relationships in everyday life.

**Gatekeeper:** A person or thing that controls access to something

**Inclusion:** The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate and bring their full, authentic selves to work.

**Intersectionality:** Acknowledgement of the multiple identities, such as patriarchy, heterosexism, classism, xenophobia, in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. Coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw.

**Microaggression:** A statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

**Oppression:** The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group.

**Privilege:** A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people

**Race:** A socially constructed grouping people based on skin color, ethnicity or physical differences that has no genetic or scientific basis. The concept was created to support the social and economic oppression of non-white people.

**Racism:** The individual, cultural, institutional, and systemic ways by which different consequences are created for different racial groups. Also defined as prejudice plus power.

**White Fragility:** "A state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable [for white people], triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium." Term coined by Robin D'Angelo.



## Four levels of racism

*Adapted from Interaction Institute for Social Change*

**Personal:** Private beliefs, prejudices, and ideas that individuals have about the superiority of whites and the inferiority of people of color. Among people of color, it manifests as internalized oppression. Among whites, it manifests as internalized racial superiority.

**Interpersonal:** The expression of racism between individuals. It occurs when individuals interact, and their private beliefs affect their interaction.

**Institutional:** Discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and practices, inequitable opportunities and impacts within organizations and institutions, based on race, that routinely produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people. Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they reinforce racial inequities.

**Structural:** A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequality. It is racial bias among institutions and across society. It involves the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of societal factors including the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of color.

## Suggested group norms to use when starting race talk

Norms are important in creating a space for dialogue, especially with intense or complicated issues. The list below is not inclusive and can be adapted for your group needs. Select which ones will work for your situation:

- This is a safe space
- Respect each other
- Share the air-time/ step up- step down
- Oops/Ouch /Whoa - intent vs impact
- We are all in different places in our understanding of race
- Be aware of power dynamics
- Take care of yourself
- Stay on race – avoid traveling the trail intersectionality
- Find comfort in discomfort  
STOP (Stop, Take a breath, Observe, and then Proceed)
- WAIT (Why Am I Talking)
- Ask participants for agreement and additional suggestions