**Allyship**

*Starting points for people who want to be allies:*

This list was adapted from Ijeoma Oluo’s book ***So You Want to talk about Race*** by Anita Gail Jones.

“It is easy to think that the problem of racial oppression in this county is just too big. How on earth can we be expected to dismantle a complex system that has been functioning for over four hundred years? My answer: piece by piece. If you are looking for some small steps you can take right now to help create real change in the fight against racial oppression, if you are looking for your little piece of the system to dismantle, here are some ideas:” — Ijeoma Oluo, ***So You Want to talk about Race***

**1• Vote Local.** Too often, the opportunity to flex local power is flushed away by those who only vote in big, national elections. Vote local and demand that candidates (from school board to city council to state senator) make racial justice a top priority.

**2 • Get into schools.** Find out what the racial achievement gap is in your school district. Then ask school board, principals and teachers what they are doing to address it. Are your schools erasing the history and accomplishments of People of Color (POC) from text books? Are your children only learning about POC in February? Let them know that an inclusive education meeting needs of ALL students is a top priority, even if your child is not a child of color.

**3 • Bear Witness**. If you see something, say something. If you see a POC being harassed by police, store clerks, etc, bear witness and offer to help, when it is safe to do so.

**4 • Speak up inside your unions.** Does your union have an antiracism policy? Unions have a lot of power to combat racism at work, but only if the union decides to make it a priority.

**5 • Support POC-owned business.** Economic exploitation is one of the cornerstones of racial oppression. Help by working with and spending your money w/ POC businesses.

**6 • Boycott banks that prey on people of color.** Banks have been exploiting/abusing POC for hundreds of years: such as selling bad loans and hiking up interest rates. Don’t give those banks your business; make these despicable actions too costly and they will stop doing them. But not before then.

**7 • Donate to local orgs working to fight racial oppression & support communities of color.** Marin County has no shortage of non-profits out there fighting every day for people of color. Find one that meets your interest & criteria and DONATE.

**8 • Boycott businesses that exploit workers of color.** Many businesses reply on cheap labor from POC working in unhealthy conditions. Boycott businesses that cut costs by cutting out respect and living wages for workers of color. Here are two websites that can help:

— <https://www.greenamerica.org/choose-fair-labor/us-companies-exploiting-workers>, — [www.grabyourwallet.org](http://www.grabyourwallet.org)

**9 • Support music, film, television art and books created by POC.** So much of our cultural representation is White by default. Normalize the work of POC with financial support. And ask producers, museum curators, studios, arts orgs, radio stations and publishers for MORE.

**10 • Support increases in minimum wage.** Because a larger proportion of POC work in lower-wage jobs, and a raise in those wages will disproportionately help POC and can help address the vast racial wealth gap in this country.

**11 • Push your mayor and city council for police reform.** Ask your mayor what he or she is doing to address racial bias in policing. What training are officers undergoing? Do your officers have body cams? What sort of civilian oversight is there when there has been a complaint of bias, discrimination or abuse? Put pressure on your city government to make this a priority, and keep that pressure up, otherwise police unions will bully city government into supporting the status quo, even if it risks the lives of POC in your neighborhood.

**12 • Demand college diversity**. If you’re in college, going soon, or have a kid or grandkid in college, let your college know—if they expect your tuition dollars—that the diversity and inclusiveness of students, curriculum and staff is a top priority for your family.

**13 • Vote for diverse government representatives.** Help put POC into positions of power where they can self-advocate for the change their communities need. And support platforms that make antiracism a priority.