



## White Supremacy Teach-in 2017

In May 2017, Unity Church hosted a teach-in on white supremacy along with hundreds of Unitarian Universalist congregation. Here's a brief overview of some of the ideas presented. You are encouraged to continue to explore and learn about this topic.

### Unity's Beyond Ends Statement

Unity Church-Unitarian carries out the work of love in community, making a positive impact in our neighborhood and in our world. Grounded in the transforming power of our faith we

- a. open our doors and our hearts to those who seek comfort, courage, and meaning.
- b. build authentic relationships with people across differences, in the spirit of humility and reverence.
- c. live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism.
- d. serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment.
- e. participate actively in the larger Unitarian Universalist community.

### Defining the Conversation

(For more in depth information, go to [www.racialequitytools.org](http://www.racialequitytools.org))

### Racism = Prejudice + Power

- Individual – beliefs, actions, attitudes that support racism
- Cultural – representations, messages, stories conveying that whiteness is “better” or more “normal”
- Institutional – the ways policies and practices create different outcomes for different groups
- Structural – the normalization of dynamics that routinely advantage whites while producing adverse outcomes for people of color (POC)

### Growing as an Antiracist

None of us were around when racism was established in this country over 500 years ago. Many conversations about race and racism go badly because we aren't taught how to have productive dialogue about these often-painful topics. We need a common language, more complete awareness of history, and an understanding that racism isn't any one person's fault (at least not anyone living today).

**And yet we are all responsible for the dismantling of it.** Racism dehumanizes us all and antiracism helps White people as well as People of Color find their self-interest in the work.

Whether you've just discovered the work of dismantling racism or have been organizing for most of your life, there are ways to challenge yourself to grow. The following list of suggestions is based on the work of [Dr. Emily Drew](#), a trainer with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training :

- *Find others to talk with and deepen your understanding. Racial identity caucusing with your team is a great tool for this.*
- *Find other antiracist people to align yourself with and learn from each other.*
- *In order to develop capacity and resilience, sit in — and with — discomfort, but don't get stuck in it.*
- *Figure out how to apply a systemic analysis of racism within your sphere of influence.*

- Step out of your comfort zone and seek new opportunities to learn, e.g. community events, theater presentations, reading, etc.
- Research your own ancestry and situate your own story in historical context.
- Know “home” – find your way there, and welcome others home.
- Follow news that includes an analysis of racism, e.g. [Colorlines](#)

From [www.crossroadsantiracism.org](http://www.crossroadsantiracism.org)

### White Supremacy Defined

White supremacy is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.

**Black Lives UU adds:** “White supremacy is a set of institutional assumptions and practices, often operating unconsciously, that tend to benefit white people and exclude people of color. In 2017, actual ‘white supremacists’ are not required in order to uphold white supremacist culture.”

See the graphic below, one representation of the “iceberg” of white supremacy – what we can see and readily name, and what we are sometimes oblivious to or complicit with.



This article does a very thorough job of describing what white supremacy is and how it works. <http://www.alternet.org/civil-liberties/10-things-everyone-should-know-about-white-supremacy>