

## Equity Competencies for White People Challenging Racism

1. **Listening** to racialized and Aboriginal people to learn about:
  - the daily impact of racism.
  - the risks they take to challenge white privilege.
  - the roles they think white people can play in supporting their actions.
  - anger, a lack of trust and discomfort as a sane and legitimate response to racism.
2. **Awareness of your own power and position** and how that shapes your relations and situations
3. **Treating allegations of racism as useful information** that could lead to an improvement of service delivery and employment conditions for everyone.
4. **Matter-of-fact vocabulary and ways of talking about racism.** It allows us to:
  - identify it
  - engage others in conversation
  - analyse what's happening
  - agree on actions to address it
5. **Recognizing when code words** are being used to avoid frank ways of dealing with racism (e.g. diversity; equal opportunity, inclusion)
6. **Knowledge of the impact of racism** on service users, co-workers, and the way the work is defined and structured
7. **Knowledge of the history, experiences and consequences of racism**
8. **Ability to see the links between racism and other forms of oppression** in everyday interactions with service users and co-workers
9. **Taking leadership and direction from racialized and Aboriginal people to fight racism**
10. **Examining and recognizing ways in which other white people exercise or defend white privilege**  
e.g. when racialized people's challenge to white people's racism is seen as a "personal attack" and there is a reluctance to look honestly at the impact (unintended or not) of white privilege.
11. **Critical thinking and analytical skills**
  - Assume racism exists in society and will be reproduced in the workplace; we need to be proactive about challenging it.
  - Look for patterns, rather than treating events as isolated occurrences.

Tina Lopes and Barb Thomas, developed from Paul Kivel's work, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*. New Society Publishers. 1996.

- Give critical credence to racialized people's experience,
- maintain your responsibility to examine all aspects of the question, keeping in mind that your own whiteness is also a factor

**12. Developing strategic approaches to challenge racism**

- Decide on what is important to challenge
- Analyse the supports and obstacles; assess the risks
- Agree on the most effective approach to do it
- Carry it out
- Evaluate what happened and what would work better the next time.

**13. Managing our own defensiveness**

- be aware of your own defensive reactions when racialized and Aboriginal people talk about racism.
- acknowledge any fear or confusion underlying your defensiveness.
- look for ways you might be acting from assumptions of white privilege or may have missed the impact of racism in the situation.
- focus on what happened and what can be done about it, and on exploring what you can learn from this process.

**14. Challenging racism as a routine part of advocacy**