

21
DAY

RACIAL EQUITY CHALLENGE

DAY 6: RACE AND DISCRIMINATION

*For many people, discrimination is an everyday reality.
-American Psychological Association*

Discrimination is treating a person or group unfairly or with prejudice based on race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics. While the definition is generally understood, the *reasons why* discrimination happens is more complex.

We learn as young children to categorize people and things to make sense of the world. It is the positive and negative values that parents, peers, and our society place on those categories that create perceptions and eventually actions—like discrimination—based on those values.

Some forms of racial and ethnic discrimination are big—denying housing and employment, for example. Other forms can be smaller acts that carry just as much harm, like giving poor service to a Black family at a restaurant, clutching your purse in an elevator with a Latino teen, or denying a playdate with a child of a different race. These smaller acts are [microaggressions](#), and despite the “small” name, they hold big consequences. Discrimination can create chronic stress that in turn causes anxiety, depression, obesity, high blood pressure, and more.

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

If you are on the receiving end of discrimination, you are certainly not alone. The article below shares ways to cope with the detrimental effects of discrimination including focusing on strengths, developing a support system, getting involved in change efforts, and seeking professional help. However, it is essential that those who have power create change by focusing on actions that will prevent discrimination at the start.

The act of discriminating against others starts young. Children can differentiate race as early as six months, and the days of teaching kids to be “colorblind” are behind us. Talking about

race and teaching the benefits of seeing color will help our children see and embrace the beauty that comes with diversity.

LEARN

Option 1: Read [Discrimination and How to Cope](#)

Option 2: Read [The Benefits of Teaching Children to See Race](#)

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REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION

Questions to Consider for Self-Reflection:

- In what ways does discrimination interfere with the functioning of teams, communities, or groups that you work with?
- When you consider the four levels on which internalized racism operates (inner, interpersonal, institutional and cultural), where do you imagine most possibilities for change?

Share What You Learned:

Use the images below to share that you learned about race and equity today, and use be sure to include #ROCequity.

