

Resources for Teachers and Practitioners to Investigate and Raise Awareness of Racism in our Lives and Communities

Much suffering comes about as a result of our ignorance and unawareness of how we contribute to racism through our lack of understanding of the many elements that create racism in our culture, even in the most open-hearted communities.

We, a group of White Plum members, have been meeting to look at ways to investigate our own experience and beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, with respect to diversity, inclusion, privilege/power differentials, racism, and creating/being an “other.” We believe it is vitally important that these topics be brought to light and shared as a part of our practice. In providing this resource page, it is our intention to inspire and support teachers and practitioners into investigation, education and dialogue on this essential topic.

We acknowledge that these topics are complex and multi-faceted and can be difficult to explore and talk about for many reasons:

- They can be highly charged due to personal experience.
- They are often rooted in long-standing viewpoints, customs and social situations that go back for generations.
- Diligent effort is required to delve into our unconscious belief systems and assumptions – both gross and subtle – that drive our words and actions.
- Terminology can be confusing and misleading. For example, the use of the expression “people of color” can mean to a lot of people that “white” is not a color, but a norm against which other colors are defined. And yet, someone using the expression “people of color” may not intend that implication at all.
- People often hold back from relating and joining in dialogue because they are afraid of offending each other.
- Within a group, people have different issues and concerns. For example, “people of color” in the Sangha may express a lack of interest in discussion of white privilege because they are not white. This could lead to the decision to have different learning or action modules for “people of color” and “white people” (as in the Buddhists for Racial Justice Website). Some may prefer not to create this division – and then how does one group meet all needs?
- The issue of racism does not exist in a vacuum. It is interconnected with many other issues – wealth and power disparities, discrimination due to LGBTQ status, being differently abled, and ethnic and cultural differences

- to name a few. This has also been described as intersectionality.
- There are many voices to be heard – some strident, some some gentle, some expressing rage, some difficult to hear. All are part of the conversation.

Despite the challenges in making race a focus, to not enter into the collective investigation, dialogue and efforts to dismantle our personal and collective racial delusions is a de facto acceptance and support of the status quo. Given these complexities, it is helpful to know where to turn for information or suggestions when beginning reflection on personal belief, facilitating a group discussion, or even when attempting to create a welcoming, inclusive, and diverse Sangha. For these reasons, we have compiled a list of resources (by no means complete) to help interested individuals and Sanghas in their journey. This offering is intended to be a starter kit upon which groups can build as they explore these topics.

Note that the resource list is organized by media category (websites, books, films, videos, articles, etc.) Those categories are further broken down by racial categories or another division (history, critique of structural racism, etc.) in order to make it easier to navigate the resources.

With deep appreciation,

Members of the WPA Investigating Racism Circle

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Many thanks to those who have contributed and will contribute more resources to this list. The list of resources can be found [here](#).