



Tune In and Stand Up to Speak Out

Watching the news or going on social media these past few days, it is impossible not to be reminded of the incredible injustice that is going on in our nation. But people are stepping up to take a stand against the systemic racism that has plagued our nation for generations upon generations. Many people wonder what to do, and there is an important first step: ask.

In this society, no matter how it seems, no one is expected to be born knowing exactly what is going on at every moment. Right now, there is no excuse not to educate yourself once you realize you do not know what is going on with such easy access to the internet and social media. There are countless videos, articles, movies, news broadcasts, podcasts, etc. that will tell you everything you need to know. Racism has been a part of our country's fabric since its beginning. There is no one alive today who has not been affected by it. We see it in our homeless population, we see it in the urban planning of our towns, we see it in our voting districts. We probably even see it in ourselves.

Segregation might not exist as it did decades ago, but white children are still more likely to get a better education from preschool to grad school than black children. Grocery stores and farmers markets are located nearer to white neighborhoods than black ones, while the latter has easy access to fast food and liquor stores. Black men are more likely to be arrested, charged and convicted of the same crime as a white man and with each conviction, a black man's chances of going back to prison go up exponentially. These are not just coincidences.

Once you recognize the wrongfulness of these powers that be, you are obligated to do something and the least you can do is educate yourself. Become "woke". Make yourself uncomfortable. You do not have to watch first hand accounts of men, women and children being murdered but read their stories. Remember their names. If you yourself are not a person of color, it is your job to understand the plight of your brothers and sisters of different skin tones, of black skin tones. Anything else is willful ignorance.

Educating yourself will enable, and hopefully even empower, you to speak up. Maybe you will not loot a drug store, start a riot or even actively participate in a protest, but there are things you can learn about doing that will make sure what is going on in America right now does not become just a footnote in the annals of American race relations. Learning about that is going on in the nation right now allows you to form opinions and arguments about those things. Say their names: Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor. Tell their stories. You can start a dialogue with people around you so you can figure out what you think is better. You can become a more educated voter. In times like these where our country has fallen so far, it might feel like democracy is lost. But all of us have the power to take part in making a change.

Thanks!

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