

me and white
supremacy
workbook



layla f. saad

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Contents

Foreword by Leesa Renee Hall 1

Prelude: The Night This Work Was Born 4

Introduction

Chapter 1: Welcome To The Work. 10

Chapter 2: Who Is Layla? 14

Chapter 3: What Is White Supremacy? 18

Chapter 4: What Is This Work? 22

Chapter 5: Social Justice Work As Spiritual Work 26

Chapter 6: Who Is This Workbook For? 29

Before You Begin

Chapter 7: What You Will Need 34

Chapter 8: How To Use This Workbook. 37

Chapter 9: Self-Care, Support & Sustainability 41

Chapter 10: Group Work: #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circles 44

Chapter 11: Do's & Don't's 55

Part I: Days 1-7

Day 1: You & White Privilege 59

Day 2: You & White Fragility 62

Day 3: You & Tone Policing 64

Day 4: You & White Silence 66

Day 5: You & White Superiority 68

Day 6: You & White Exceptionalism. 70

Day 7: Part I Review 72

Part II: Days 8-14

Day 8: You & Seeing Colour 75

Day 9: You & Black Womxn. 77

Day 10: You & Black Men 78

Day 11: You & Black Children 79

Day 12: You & Racist Stereotypes. 81

Day 13: You & Cultural Appropriation	82
Day 14: Part II Review	84

Part III: Days 15-21

Day 15: You & White Apathy	87
Day 16: You & White Centering	89
Day 17: You & Tokenism	91
Day 18: You & White Saviourism	93
Day 19: You & Optical Allyship	95
Day 20: You & Being Called Out	97
Day 21: Part III Review	99

Part IV: Days 22-28

Day 22: You & White Feminism	102
Day 23: You & White Leaders	104
Day 24: You & Your Friends	105
Day 25: You & Your Family	106
Day 26: You & Your Values	107
Day 27: You & Losing Privilege	109
Day 28: You & Your Commitments	110

Continuing The Work

Chapter 12: Now What? Continuing The Work After Day 28	114
Chapter 13: A Note On This Workbook Being Free	117

Glossary	119
---------------------------	------------

Acknowledgments	124
----------------------------------	------------

About The Author	128
-----------------------------------	------------

Connect With Layla	130
-------------------------------------	------------

Endnotes	132
---------------------------	------------

Foreword by Leesa Renee Hall
Writer, Storyteller & Racial Justice Advocate

I'm a fan of science fiction.

I especially love television shows and movies which center on how humans react to an extinction level event caused by a tidal wave, meteor, virus, alien, deep freeze, robots, zombies, or trees.

The cataclysmic event brings on a sense of panic, but amongst the chaos, a ragtag group of humans clumsily work together to try and save the planet. They compute calculations, make guesstimates, even sacrifice their own lives, just to give the human race another chance.

Others, however, will ignore the warnings, even going as far as to sabotage the efforts of those trying to save the human race. Their efforts are fruitless. Why? Because the individual need to save one's self can never compete with the group's desire to save the species.

Fiction imitates life. While we may not be fighting a species-ending virus or an earth destroying meteor, there is something we battle that destroys a bit of our humanity each day. White supremacy, a concept created in a 1681 courtroom in the state of Virginia, has robbed so many of so much in so many ways for close to 400 years.

It is not surprising that the state where white supremacy was born is the same state where a white supremacist rally took place in 2017. The rally in Charlottesville, Virginia captured the world's attention. The photos of angry white men holding tiki torches stunned and horrified many.

Layla Saad was one of those people. What she witnessed troubled her so much, she wrote an impassioned letter to spiritual white woman, the very women who were the majority of her clients in her coaching business.

Aptly entitled "*I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy*", Layla directed the letter to white women for they are the mothers, sisters, aunts, grandmothers, godmothers, and cousins of the men who gathered in that city for that

rally. Although the expectation was that only her clients would read it, the letter Layla penned was shared a quarter of a million times in just a few short weeks.

Yet, despite it going viral, many still didn't believe the letter was directed at them. They thought they were the exceptional ones because they attended marches, wore pink pussy hats, put a Black Lives Matter icon on their social media profiles, and donated a few dollars to activists who are people of color (POC).

They posted the books they were reading penned by POC authors, shared which anti-racism courses they were taking, and made it very clear that they are an ally. Surely, they were one of the good ones.

They weren't.

Deep down, their inner white supremacist was in control, guiding their decisions and actions. It'd take a deep process to disarm generations of conditioning. Woken out of a deep slumber, Layla put together a series of prompts to share on Instagram. Calling it the 28-Day #MeAndWhiteSupremacy challenge, Layla invited people who hold white privilege to participate by journaling on a theme each day. Thousands participated in the challenge using a process of self-reflection and expressive writing. All for free. All to set people free.

What you hold in your hand is the legacy of what Layla shared during the challenge. Due to the emotional labour she had to expend for those who showed up to do the challenge, the posts are no longer available to comment on through her Instagram account. Instead, she has lovingly and fiercely put together this workbook to help you continue the work of becoming a better ancestor. Not only will Layla's instructions guide you as you write, but so, too, will the words from those who took part in the challenge.

I often ask myself, "What would the world look like without white supremacy?" We may not live long enough to know. However, if the rise and fall of empires is any clue, white supremacy doesn't have much time left.

The work you do as you go through this workbook will make you feel uncomfortable. You'll feel queasy in your stomach. Like the ragtag group of humans who are trying to save planet earth for future generations, you may face opposition, not only from your inner self, but also from friends, family members, and others who are close to you.

The good news is that white supremacy's desire to save itself will never overcome humanity's need to save the species. Because you're doing this work, not for the survival of self, but for the benefit of those who will come after you, they will look back and say that you were, indeed, a good ancestor.

Prelude

The Night This Work Was Born

It is almost 2am in the middle of the night and I can't fall sleep. It's the night of the June 2018 full moon, and full moons always leave me feeling jittery and on edge. I'm wired and tired, but I can't fall asleep. I am tossing back and forth trying to will myself to sleep, but it's just not happening.

Since sleep is obviously not happening tonight, I let my mind wander. I begin to think about the past few weeks and months. I begin to reflect on the journey I've been on ever since publishing my viral letter "*I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy*" after the August 2017 'Unite the Right' rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. The same rally where US President Donald Trump attempted to draw a moral equivalency between Neo-Nazis and anti-Nazi protesters. I think about how it was when I first started publicly speaking and writing about the intersections of race, feminism, spirituality and leadership. I think about the amount of pushback, spiritual bypassing and white fragility I encountered in those early months when I wrote social media posts and blog posts, and when I shared podcast interviews about white supremacy. And I begin to reflect on how different things are now, ten months later. How there is a greater willingness now by white people in the spiritual, wellness and personal growth industry to talk about white supremacy and anti-racism work.

As I do whenever I begin to feel words about to pour through me, I grab my phone and begin to type something out in my Notes app. At first I think it's just another Instagram post, or possibly a blog post. Either way it's a post inviting people in my community to reflect on their white privilege and white supremacy now that they seem to be more comfortable with these concepts, terminologies and dynamics. I open up the WordSwag app, which is where I like to create Instagram graphics and memes. I type out "What have you learnt about You & White Supremacy" in black font on a square-shaped white tile. And then something interesting begins to happen. As I type out the words, I realise there are so many different aspects of white supremacy that can be reflected on. Not just white privilege. But also tone-policing, white fragility, white silence, white superiority, anti-blackness, cultural appropriation, tokenism, white feminism, and so much more. Each one a huge topic within itself, and simultaneously interlocking with all the other aspects to form this thing we call 'white supremacy.'

I begin to jot down all of the different aspects of white supremacy that I have written about, witnessed and been subjected to ever since I started publicly talking about racism. I save the first graphic with “You & White Supremacy” and go back and replace those words with “You & White Privilege”. I save that image and then go back again and replace those words with “You & White Fragility”. I repeat this again and again. Saving the image and then going back, deleting those words and replacing it with another aspect of white supremacy that needs examining. I’m working quickly and efficiently now. I can barely keep up with the prompts that are pouring through me from what I believe is God (or Spirit, or however you define Source) working through me. All that frenetic, scattered full moon energy is now focused like a pinpoint on creating these journaling prompt graphics. Soon I have a few dozen of these graphics saved on my iPhone photo gallery. It’s now close to 3am. I look at the sea of white graphics on my phone and ask myself ‘*what IS this?*’ It’s clear it’s not a single Instagram post or even a blog post. It’s something more. It’s an experience. A journey. A body of work.

I ask God for further direction. I listen for an answer. Suddenly I recall that it’s the full moon. As someone who likes to work with lunar cycles, I wonder how many prompts I’ve created. As I count them I see it’s almost 28. Almost a lunar cycle. I write out a few more prompts and then I have more than thirty to work with. A strong intuitive knowing then dawns upon me. This is a month-long Instagram challenge. A free month-long Instagram challenge. For anyone in my community with white privilege who wants to join in. The fact that it’s a FREE challenge feels very important. I don’t question it, but I also don’t think about what that could mean for me in terms of the emotional labour of holding that space for 28 days. I am simply following Divine directions. I create one final graphic.

The graphic reads:

“You & White Supremacy

A 28-day truth-telling journey of what you have learnt about your personal complicity in white supremacy.

#MeAndWhiteSupremacy”

The caption reads:

“White folks: Time for some radical truth-telling about you and your complicity in white supremacy. Not those white people ‘out there’. Not white people as a collective. But you. Just you. We start tomorrow. 28 days of simple yet direct questions for you to share where you are at in your journey so far of understanding and owning your racism. This is not me educating you. This is you being honest about the work you

have been doing so far, and how you have been internalising that work. Don't comment unless you are willing to be all the way honest. I don't care about perfectionism. I care about truth, because truth sets us free and makes us better. Use the hashtag #MeAndWhiteSupremacy if you want to share. See you tomorrow ;)"

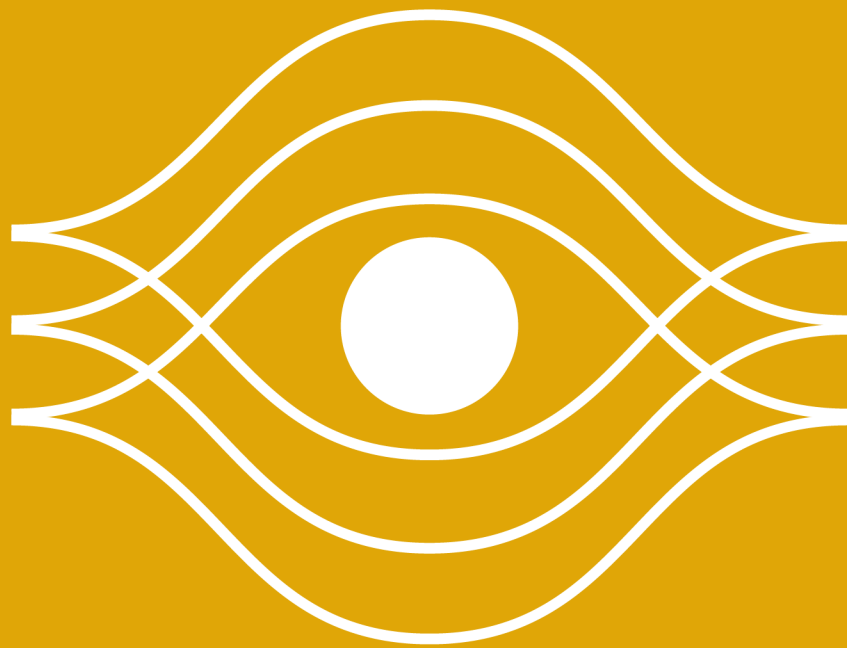
I'm finally feeling tired now. It's past 3am and I'm ready to sleep. I do a quick spell-check on the caption and then publish it to Instagram. And then I put my phone down on my nightstand and promptly fall asleep.

The next morning I begin a month-long journey that radically changes my life and the lives of thousands of people around the world. This workbook is here as a result of that journey, and a manifestation of a mystical experience that happened in the middle of the night of a full moon.

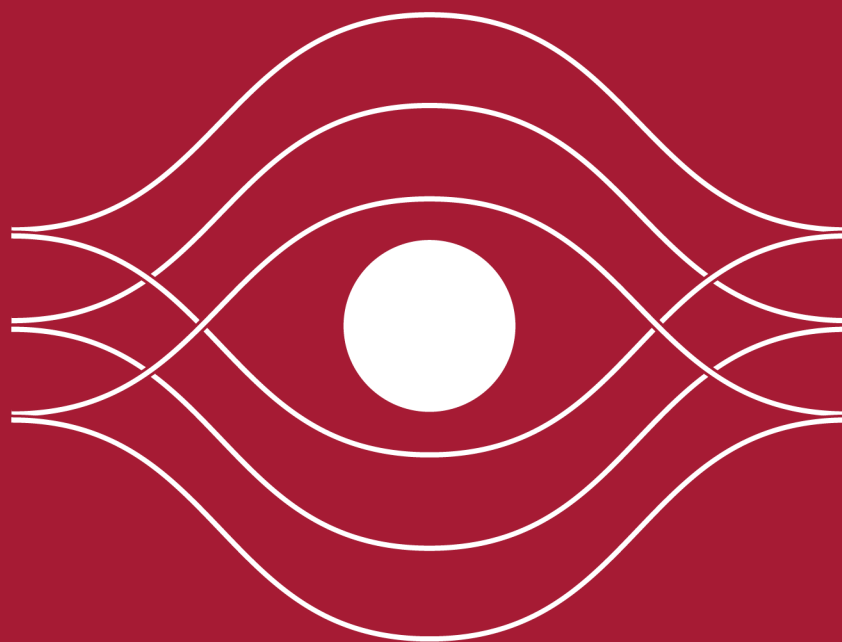
*To shape God
With wisdom and foresight
To benefit your world,
Your people,
Your life,
Consider consequences,
Minimize harm
Ask questions,
Seek answers,
Learn,
Teach.*

- Octavia Butler

Introduction



Chapter 1



Welcome To The Work

Dear Reader,

Welcome to The Work.

Perhaps you have been following my work for a while, so you know exactly what this workbook is about. Or maybe you were referred to this workbook by a friend, family member, teacher, employer, colleague, or peer because you have shown interest in wanting to examine your white privilege and begin the work of anti-racism. Wherever you are on your journey so far, I welcome you.

The Me And White Supremacy Workbook is a one of a kind self-guided workbook and personal anti-racism tool that has been designed to help you to take ownership of your participation in the oppressive system of white supremacy, and to help you take responsibility for dismantling the way that this system manifests both within you and within your communities. This workbook is part education, part activation. It helps you to take a clear look at the different multifaceted aspects of white supremacy and how they operate in both subtle and direct ways within you, and within others. It acts as a mirror being held up to you so that you can deeply examine how you have been complicit in a system that has been purposely designed to benefit you through unearned privileges, at the expense of BIPOC (Black people, Indigenous people and People of Colour)¹. This workbook is for people who are ready to do the work; people who want to create change in the world by activating change within themselves first.

We are at a very important time in history. Many white liberal progressives like to believe that we are in a post-racial time in history. But the truth is, racism and anti-blackness are still alive and well today. The legal abolition of slavery did not abolish the slavemaster's mindset. People of colour are suffering daily from the effects of historic and modern colonialism. Right-wing, anti-Muslim nationalism is gaining popularity not just in the United States, but across the western world. And anti-blackness continues to be a form of racism that can be found all around the world. It may seem like we are at a time history when racism and white supremacy is resurfacing, but the truth is, it never went away. And so, while it is true that recent events such as the 2016 US presidential election have really brought these issues to the forefront, the reality is these issues have always been there. And BIPOC in white-dominated societies and spaces have always been at the receiving end of constant discrimination, inequities, injustices and aggressions.

More white-privileged people like yourself are learning about racial dynamics and social justice terminologies than ever before. You are awakening to the fact that your white privilege has protected you from having to understand what it means to navigate the world as a black or brown person, and to the ways in which you have unintentionally caused harm to BIPOC through racial aggressions. This workbook is here to change that. It is here to wake you up by getting you to tell the truth. This workbook is not about those white people 'out there.' It is about you. Just you.

This workbook will challenge you in ways that you have not been challenged before. But we are living in challenging times. There is much work to be done. And it begins with getting honest with yourself, getting educated, becoming more conscious about what is really going on (and how you are complicit in it), getting uncomfortable, and questioning your core paradigms about race, spirituality, feminism and leadership. If you are willing to do that, and if we are all committed to doing the work that is ours to do, we may just have a chance in creating a world and way of living that is closer to what we all desire for ourselves and one another.

This work may sound overwhelming, intimidating, and unrewarding. I won't lie to you: It is. You will become overwhelmed when you begin to discover the depths of your internalised white supremacy. You will become intimidated when you begin to realise how this work will necessitate seismic change in your life. You will feel unrewarded because there will be no black or brown people rushing to thank you for doing this work. But if you are a person that believes in love, justice, integrity and equity for all people, then you know that this work is non-negotiable. If you are a person who wants to become a good ancestor, then you know that this is some of the most important work that you will be called to do in your lifetime.

Here's to doing what is right, and not what is easy.

Layla

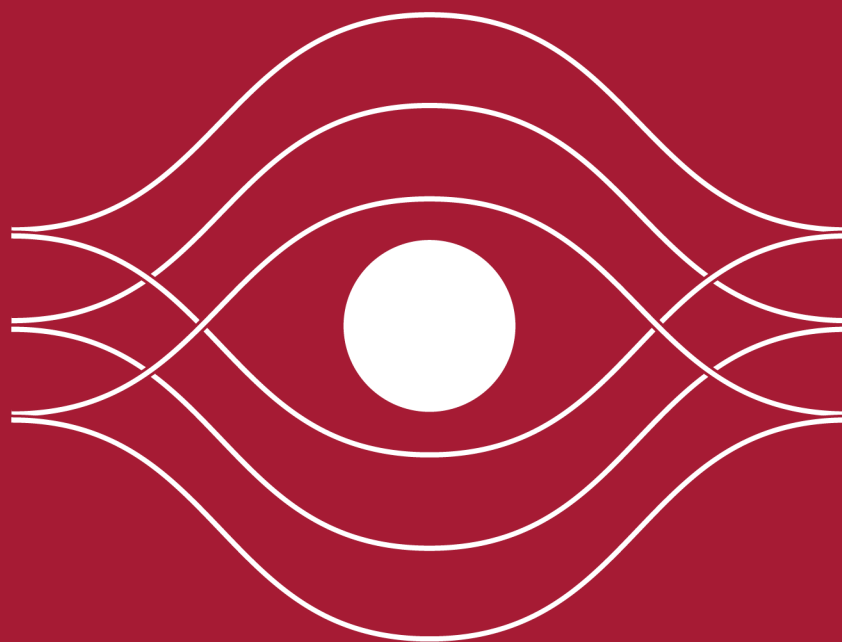
“This work was life-changing. I had (what I thought was) good awareness of white privilege, systemic racism and related concepts before participating, but when I dove into the work, I realized to my horror that I’m complicit in white supremacy in all sorts of unconscious ways. I have a renewed commitment to this work and a deeper sense of its unending nature. I’m no longer striving to be ‘a good white person,’ as I now see how destructive that mindset is. Instead I am taking concrete actions toward supporting, elevating, amplifying and prioritizing BIPOC, and remaining open to hearing about/ examining the mistakes I make along the way. Layla has taught me so much.”

- Stephanie Dobbin, New York, United States

“This work changed my life. It helped me understand how I have been systematically programmed to be racist. It enabled me to begin dismantling the racism that I truly believed wasn’t there. My world has opened up in ways I didn’t know were possible. I am now actively engaged with life and I am aware of my impact of my actions. I will never be able to thank Layla enough for leading me to my humanity.”

- Brenda Amaral, Dighton, United States

Chapter 2



Who Is Layla?

Who Am I?

My name is Layla Saad, and I am a writer, speaker, podcast host and racial justice advocate. My work explores the intersections of Race, Spirituality, Feminism and Leadership, and I am passionate about creating personal and collective change in the world. My work confronts the oppressive systems of white supremacy and patriarchy, while offering important teachings and tools for transforming consciousness, cultivating personal anti-racism practice and taking responsibility for our individual and collective healing. The impact of my work on race and feminism through a spiritual and leadership lens has extended beyond the personal growth industry where my work began. My writings have been brought into homes, educational institutions and workplaces around the world that are seeking to create personal and collective change. As an East African, Arab, British, Black, Muslim woman who was born and grew up in the West (United Kingdom), and lives in the East (Qatar), I have always sat at a unique intersection of identities from which I am able to draw rich and intriguing perspectives. My work centers my experience as a person who is Black, Muslim & Woman.

How I Began Talking About Race

I began my career as a life and business coach in the personal growth industry in 2014. In 2017, I published the viral blog post "*I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy*", following the 'Unite The Right' rally in Charlottesville, USA. My writings and podcast episodes stirred up a tidal wave of awakening and activation in an industry which is largely white-centered, white-washed and white-dominated. In 2018, I hosted a 28-day free Instagram challenge called #MeAndWhiteSupremacy. Thousands of people took part in the challenge, which was described as a month-long truth-telling journey for people who hold white privilege to explore their personal complicity in white supremacy. Following the challenge, I have written this workbook, which is a first-of-its-kind personal reflection tool for people with white privilege to explore, interrogate, gain clarity on and dismantle their internalised white supremacy.

Becoming A Good Ancestor

The primary force which drives my work is my desire to become a good ancestor. I know that my soul work is to help create change, facilitate healing, and seed new possibilities for those who will come after I am gone. This workbook is a contribution

to that purpose. It is a resource which I hope will help you do the internal and external work needed to become a good ancestor, too. To leave this world in a better place than you have found it. The system of white supremacy was not created by anyone who is alive today. But it is maintained and upheld by everyone holding white privilege today - whether or not you agree with it. It is my desire that this workbook will help you to question, challenge and dismantle this system that has harmed and killed so many BIPOC.

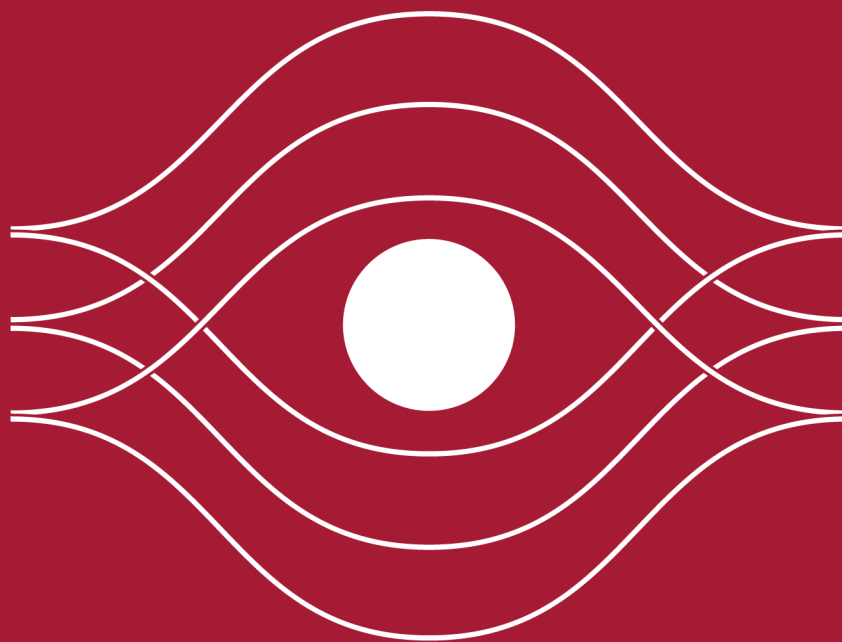
“I’m a white woman and a public school teacher. I was passionate and social-justice oriented before, but the challenge helped me see and be real about how I am part of the problem, the ways in which I reinforce the system of oppression, and how I need to be more aware of what I do and say that reinforces it. My job is powerful in ending white supremacy or perpetuating it. The challenge helped me be real and honest with myself in my thoughts and assumptions and how they contributed to the problem at large. It helped me to learn and listen especially to people of color and especially black women. It changed how I have conversations with white people, with my students, and with my family and how I am now aware of what’s really being said, the implications of certain opinions and reactions, and that I am not done learning. I still have a lot of work to do, but Layla’s work changed me in ways I never imagined.”

- Rachel, Philadelphia, United States

“Every white person needs to do this workbook. The challenge made me painfully aware that I did not escape racist socialization and white supremacy, even as a progressive, educated white person. It has also started me on a journey to be more accountable, humble, and committed to real racial justice. I can apologize more sincerely. I can see my failures and address them. The challenge was a gift, and I believe the workbook is too, because it unveils how we all participate in white supremacy, and shows that we can and must do better.”

- Bri Farber, Columbia, United States

Chapter 3



What Is White Supremacy?

You may be wondering why I chose to use the words “White Supremacy” for this book and not something softer or less confrontational like “Internalised Racism” or “Unconscious Bias”. You may be thinking that white supremacy is a term that is only used to describe far right extremists and Neo Nazis. However, this idea that white supremacy only applies to the so-called “bad ones” is both incorrect and dangerous, because it reinforces the idea that white supremacy is an ideology that is only upheld by a fringe group of white people. White supremacy is far from fringe. In white-dominated societies and communities, it is the dominant paradigm that forms of the foundation from which norms, rules and laws are created.

So what is white supremacy?

According to Wikipedia, white supremacy or white supremacism is a racist ideology based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to people of other races, and that therefore white people should be dominant over other races. You may read that definition and think that it doesn't apply to you. That you don't hold that belief, but rather you believe that all of us are equal and that you don't modify your treatment of people based on the colour of their skin. What this workbook, which is a deep-diving self-reflection tool, will help you to realise however is that that isn't true. White supremacy is an ideology, a paradigm, an institutional system, and a world view that you have been born into by virtue of your whiteness. I am not talking about the physical colour of your skin being bad. I am talking about the historic and modern legislating, societal conditioning and systemic institutionalising of the construction of whiteness as inherently superior than people of other races. Yes, outwardly racist systems of oppression like slavery, Jim Crow, apartheid have been abolished. But the discrimination, marginalisation, abuse and killing of BIPOC in white-dominated communities continues even today, because white supremacy continues to be the dominant paradigm under which white societies operate.

So we must call a thing a thing.

We must look directly at the ways in which this racist ideology of white supremacy, this idea that white equals better, superior, more worthy, more credible, more deserving, and more valuable actively harms anyone who does not own white privilege. And we must look at the ways that this plays out at an individual, personal, intimate level - within you as a person. It is so easy to blame the system “out there” for creating

this oppression. But the system was created by individual people, and it is upheld by individual people (whether knowingly or unknowingly).

If you are willing to dare to look white supremacy right in the eye and see yourself reflected back, you are going to become better equipped to dismantle it within yourself and within your communities.

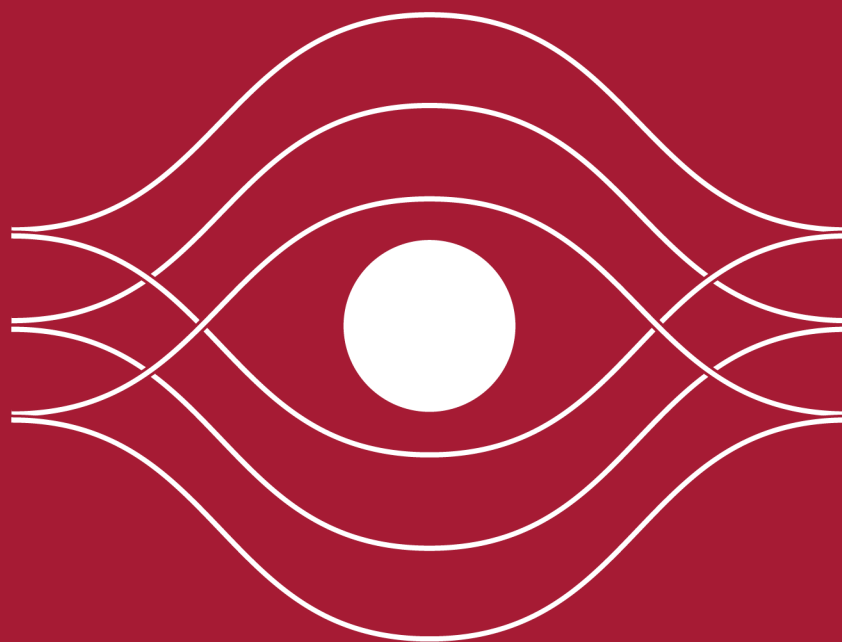
White supremacy is a system that you have been born into. Whether or not you have known it, it is system that has granted you unearned privileges, protection, and power. It is also a system that has been designed to keep you asleep and “unaware” of what you having that privilege, protection and power has meant for people who do not hold white privilege. What you receive for your whiteness comes at a steep cost for those who are not white. This may sicken you and cause you to feel guilt, anger and frustration. But you cannot change your white skin colour to stop receiving these privileges, just like I cannot change my black skin colour to stop receiving racism. But what you can do is wake up to what is really going on, challenge your complicity in this system and work to dismantle it within yourself and the world.

That *you* can do. This workbook will help you.

"We are the ones we have been waiting for."

- Alice Walker

Chapter 4



What Is This Work?

This work is a 28-day truth-telling journey to guide people with white privilege to discover, examine, unpack and dismantle their inner white supremacy and their internalised racism. It is a workbook that is based on a 28-day journey that I ran for free with thousands of participants on my Instagram page between June and July 2018. It is a one-of-a-kind resource for people with white privilege to do the internal, personal work of anti-racism. Its purpose is to educate people with white privilege as to their internalised racism, and facilitate personal and collective change to dismantle the oppressive system of white supremacy.

It is important to understand that this is deep, raw, challenging, painful, gut-wrenching, heart-breaking and heart-expanding work. It is spiritual shadow work. It is work that is designed to get you to look at something you don't want to look at - the way white supremacy manifests within you. Not as an intellectual concept, a thought experiment or a thing to do because you are a "good white person". But something deeply personal and intimate. As the creator of this work, I have two clear purposes for what I want this work to achieve:

1) To Hold A Mirror Up:

The first aim of this work, and the way that it is specifically sequentially designed, is to hold up a mirror to people who hold white privilege to look at white supremacy head on (instead of sideways, broadly or intellectually), and begin to tell the truth about how this system of oppression manifests within yourself on a personal level. Each prompt asks you to take a clear and specific look at a certain aspect of white supremacy, and journal without restraint or self-editing on how you are complicit in that aspect of white supremacy, whether through thought or action. In this way, this work is about facing your shadow self that has internalised racism, despite your conscious self-identity as a "good" and self-described "non-racist" person. It is about shining a light on what has been hidden within yourself, so that you can bring it to the surface, examine it, own it, understand the impact it has had on you and BIPOC, and begin to heal it.

2) To Help Us Become Better Ancestors

The second aim of this work, the loftier goal, is to help us to become better ancestors for those who will come after us. I believe we are at a critical time in history right now where we have the unique opportunity to disrupt the systems that have kept

so many people marginalised and oppressed. More than ever, people are beginning to speak up, use their voices, challenge the status quo, demand accountability and create spaces that are more inclusive. This is all very important work. However, I believe that the work doesn't start "out there". It begins "in here". It begins by doing the necessary personal work of uncovering and owning your own racism, so that this outer activism work doesn't become performative and self-serving (see Day 19: Optical Allyship). It begins by owning your complicity in the system, so that the work doesn't slip into white saviourism (see Day 18: White Saviourism). It begins by taking responsibility for your own impact, so that the work doesn't become a way for you to prove your goodness to the world. It begins with you, so that as you live this work, it changes the trajectory for those who will come after you, too. Not just your blood descendants if you have children, but for humanity as a collective. What we choose to do now in our lifetime will impact what happens after we are gone. And the actions of each one of us counts.

It is likely that the ancestors who came before you made choices that led to the oppression and marginalisation of BIPOC, whether through active discrimination or passive silence. And now you are a living ancestor in this lifetime doing the exact same thing. However, you have the opportunity to disrupt that lineage. You have the chance to change the story. You have the privilege to do the work that those who came before you did not do. You have the potential to change yourself, and to change the world.

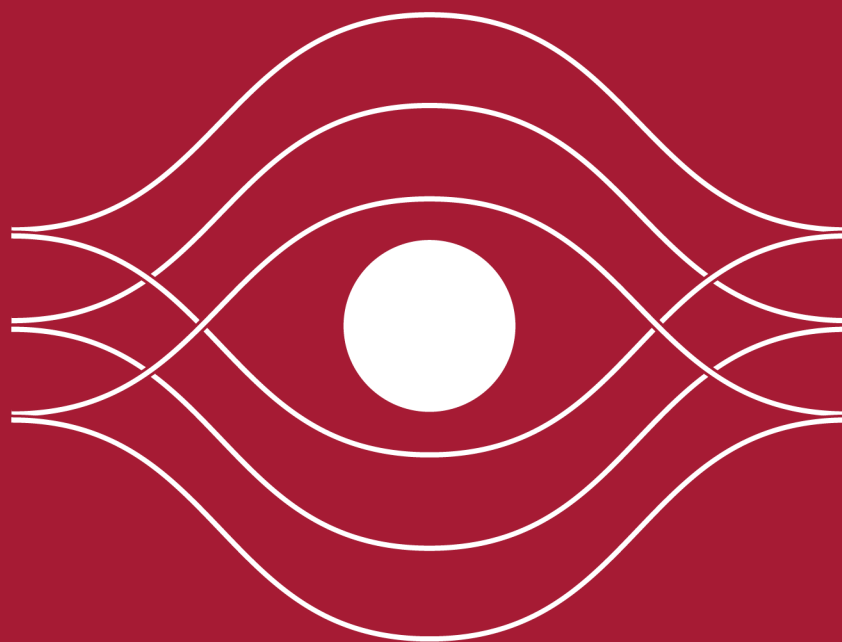
“Layla Saad’s no-nonsense, dig deep, stick-with-it approach was exactly what I needed at exactly the right time. Through this process, I’m learning what it looks, sounds, and feels like to continue to center myself in my whiteness. I’m becoming aware of how I move through the world. I’m learning to look for opportunities to make even momentary connections with BIPOC so that I might begin to build trust. The larger impact of this work has been an increase in the attention I’m giving to the systems that I’ve long benefited from. I’m paying closer attention to how I show up in conversations with other white women, prompting discussions about white supremacy and how it permeates every bias, every decision we make. I’m taking responsibility to speak up, letting my white friends know that I will center women of color, every.single.time. Thank you, Layla, for laying it out there, for doing the work so that I can do mine.”

- Martha Christensen, Virginia Beach, United States

“The #MeAndWhiteSupremacy challenge constantly pushed me to de-center myself in conversations about BIPOC and their lives and challenges. However, in addition to the benefit I reap from this, as I reflect and listen more, in turn gaining more knowledge, I also have been able to be a better friend/coworker/relative to BIPOC people in my life. By not centering myself, I not only listen and receive more, but also stop to consider whether my words and actions are truly benefiting them, or if they are a selfish act to make me feel better.”

- Sam N, Vladimir, Russia

Chapter 5



Social Justice Work As Spiritual Work

I strongly believe that anti-racism practice and social justice work are also spiritual work. British author and religious scholar Andrew Harvey has described this type of work as Sacred Activism. In his 2009 book *The Hope*, he describes the way social justice and spirituality intersect:

“A spirituality that is only private and self-absorbed, one devoid of an authentic political and social consciousness, does little to halt the suicidal juggernaut of history. On the other hand, an activism that is not purified by profound spiritual and psychological self-awareness and rooted in divine truth, wisdom, and compassion will only perpetuate the problem it is trying to solve, however righteous its intentions. When, however, the deepest and most grounded spiritual vision is married to a practical and pragmatic drive to transform all existing political, economic, and social institutions, a holy force – the power of wisdom and love in action – is born. This force I define as Sacred Activism.”

More importantly, I have found that civil rights activists throughout time and across cultures have drawn upon either their religion, their spiritual practices, or simply their belief of living in the world in a way that does more good than harm, as a source of strength and wisdom to draw from as they fought for what is right. African-American philosopher, activist and critic Cornel West wrote “justice is what love looks like in public”. And African-American author, feminist and activist bell hooks has said, “The greatest movement for social justice our country has ever known is the civil rights movement and it was totally rooted in a love ethic.”²

To me, Love is the spiritual force that guides the work of social justice.

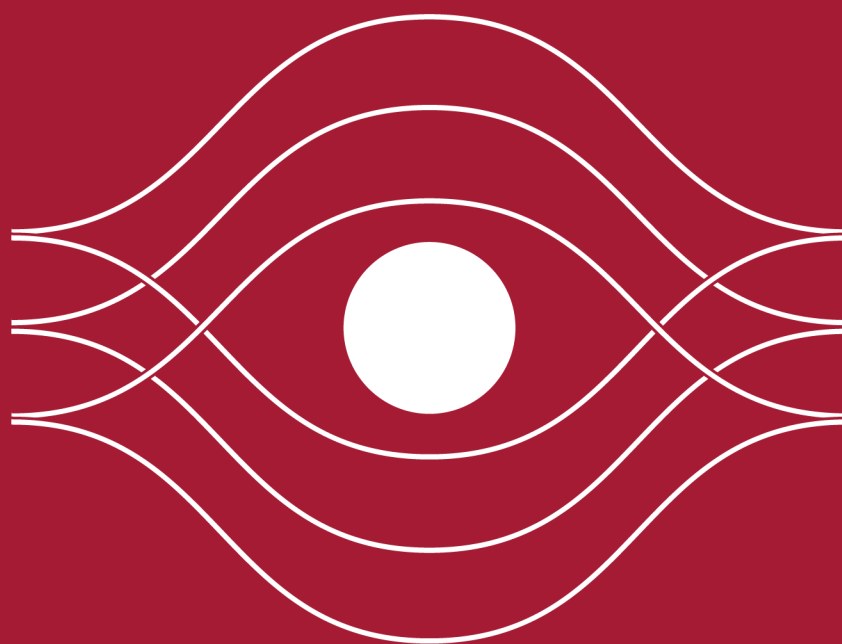
You do not have to believe in religion, spirituality or God to do this work. I choose to speak and write through the lens of spirituality because it is one of the foundational pillars that guides my work and my life. However, it is my belief that this is soul work because it requires you to go deeply inside yourself and face your darkest shadows. It is work that will help you root out those parts of yourself that are harmful to you and to others. It is work that invites you to be a better person than you have been in the past. It is work that will bring up all kinds of challenging and painful feelings, and ask

you to sit in those feelings and not run away from them. It is work that will ask you to move through the discomfort, rather than allowing your ego to protect you from going deeper. It is work that will pull out the worst of you, so that you can get to the best of you. It is not work that tolerates spiritual bypassing, New Age “Love & Light” platitudes, or skimming the surface.

It is work that requires depth of spirit, critical thinking, a heart of integrity and an empowering vision for a new world.

It is Love work.

Chapter 6



Who Is This Workbook For?

This workbook is for any person* who holds white privilege.**

***Any person:** Meaning persons of any gender-identity, including gender non-conforming persons.

****Who holds white privilege:** Meaning persons who are visually identifiable as white, white-passing, or holding white privilege. This includes persons who may be biracial, mixed race, or white-passing people of colour who benefit under systems of white supremacy from having lighter skin colour than visibly Brown, Black or Indigenous people.

Important Note for biracial, mixed race and people of colour who hold white privilege:

This workbook is for you too, however your experience of doing this work will be very different to the experiences of white people who are not biracial, mixed race or people of colour. While you may receive the so-called “benefits” of white privilege, that does not mean you have had the same experiences as a white person. You might have white parent(s) or other ancestors. Or you may not be white at all, but instead be a person of colour who is very light-skinned, white passing or white adjacent. Your white privilege does not erase your other identities. And so while it is important for you to do the work to address your internalised white supremacy, you may need to adjust the questions to more appropriately fit your experiences as a person who holds white privilege, but is not white.

It is also important to know that this work will also bring up some challenging feelings around your internalised oppression against yourself, your family members, your marginalised identities, and about how you have also been oppressed by a system that only benefits you to the extent that you are able to ‘present’ or ‘pass’ as white, and be anti-black.

This work will likely bring up many conflicting emotions including shame, confusion, fear, anger, remorse, grief, and anxiety. This work may bring up dynamics that have caused you or others harm in your family relationships, your friendships, your romantic relationships or work relationships. Please prioritise your self-care as you move through

this work. Do not use it as an excuse to not do the work in a substantial way, but at the same time honour yourself and the different feelings that show up around your identities. Do not use this work as a stick to beat yourself with. But rather, use it to interrogate your complicity within a system of privilege that is only designed to benefit you to the extent that you can conform to the rules of whiteness.

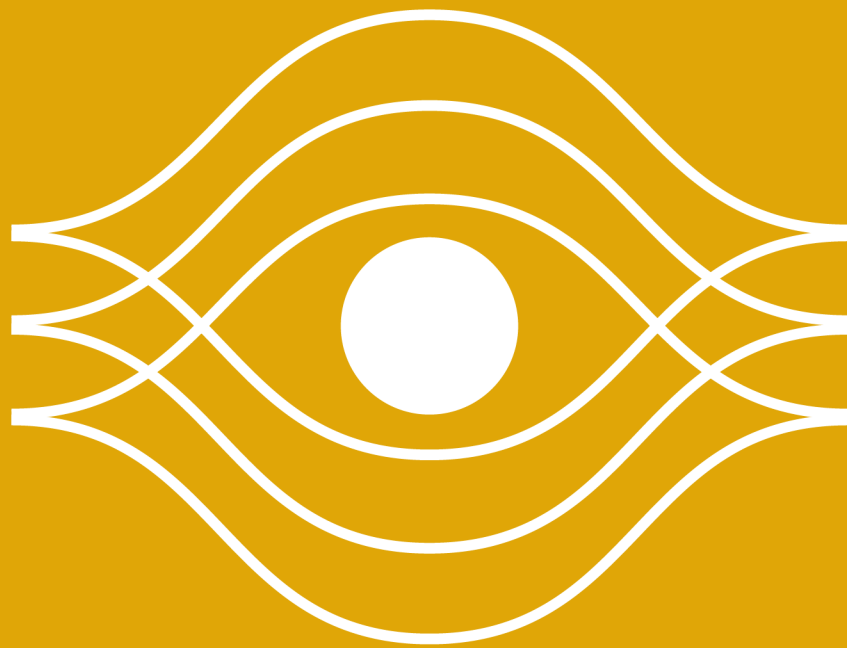
“The challenge was both difficult and cathartic. As a light skinned mixed-race woman (European/Black African) it’s easy to overlook the part you play in upholding white supremacy. Addressing these issues made me realise we all have work to do. Even those of us who are somewhat conscious and are adamant we don’t.”

- L. Hesketh, Liverpool, UK

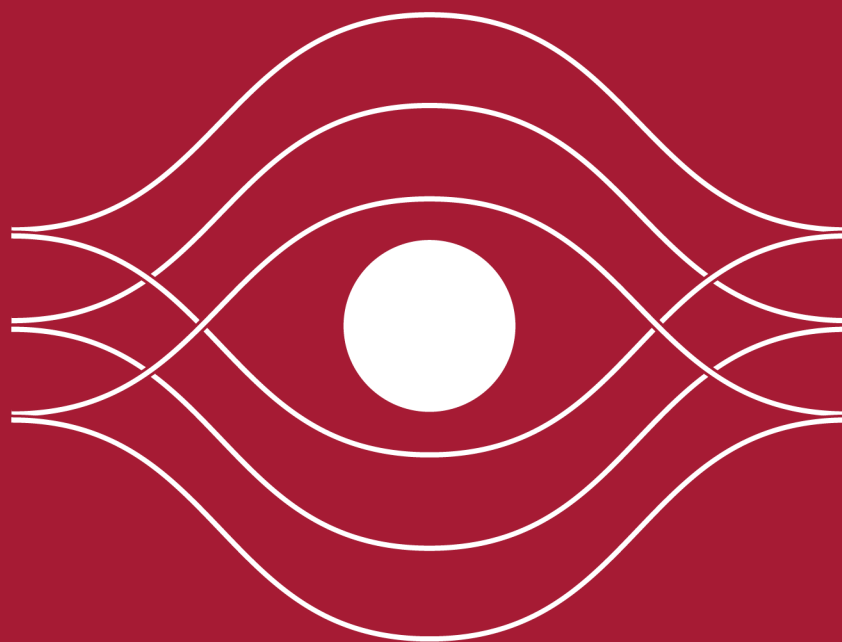
“#MeAndWhiteSupremacy was a momentous exercise in unlearning and decentering whiteness. The reflections shed light on my complicity in systemic racism, and gave me the language to identify when and how my personal complicity causes harm. For any white person here to do the work, this workbook is foundational to getting out of the way. Now, with this basis, my focus is on action, whether that be in the form of support, donations, speaking with other white people, working with organizations that are already leading the work, etc. I will always be in the learning process, but I wouldn’t be nearly as up-to-speed without the mirror Layla provided.”

- Connor Carey, United States

Before you Begin



Chapter 7



What You Will Need

You will need 3 things for this work:

Your Truth

Your Love

Your Commitment

Your Truth

This is Truth Work. Tell the truth, as deeply as you can. No side-stepping or surface-skimming. The more you tell the truth, the deeper this work takes you. What you will get out of this work is what you put into it. If you stay at the surface, what you receive from this work (and consequently what you will put out into the world as anti-racist practice) will be surface level. If you go deep, if you tell the real, raw, ugly truths so you can get to the rotten core of your internalised oppression, what you get out of this work and put out into the world will be beyond transformational. I repeat this a lot in my work and it bears repeating again: This work is not an intellectual exercise or a mental thought experiment. When we talk about racism we are talking about people's lives. This is not a personal growth book that is designed to make you feel good about yourself. It is likely that in doing this work consistently, you will find some level of personal healing. However, I want to make it very clear that this is not why I created this workbook. I created this workbook for the healing of BIPOC. This is a book that is designed to help you to be and do better by BIPOC in your communities. And that requires you to tell the truth with integrity and depth. When you don't tell the truth as deeply as you can, you are cheating BIPOC of your allyship, cheating yourself of your own growth, and illustrating that you are not truly committed to dismantling white supremacy within yourself, and therefore within the world.

Your Love

This is Love Work. Cornel West said, "justice is what love looks like in public". Love is one of those words that is very hard to define. But in the context of this work, here is what it means to me: It means that you do this work because you believe in something greater than your own self-gain. It means you do this work because you believe that every human being deserves dignity, freedom and equality. It means you do this work because you desire wholeness for yourself and for the world. It means you do this work

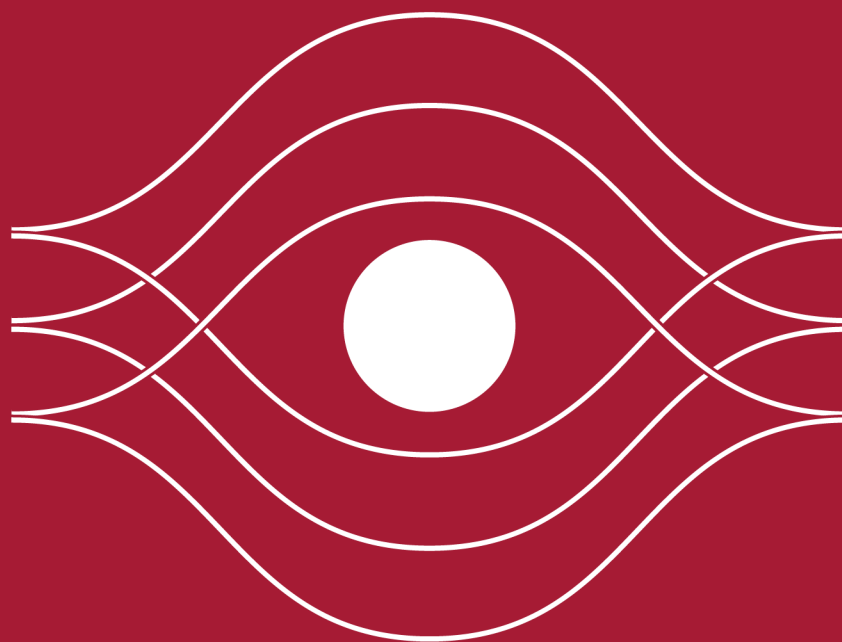
because you want to become a good ancestor. It means you do this work because Love is not a verb to you, it is an action. It means you do this work because you no longer want to intentionally or unintentionally oppress people. You will also need Love for this journey because when the truth-telling gets really hard, you will need something more powerful than pain and shame to encourage you to keep going. It is my hope that love is what initially brought you to this work. It is my conviction that love is what will keep you going.

Your Commitment

This is Commitment Work. As I've mentioned a number of times, this work is hard. There is no way to sugar coat it. White supremacy is an evil. It is a system of oppression, which has been designed to give you benefits at the expense of the lives of BIPOC, and it is living inside of you. The process of examining it and dismantling it will necessarily be painful. It will feel like waking up to a virus that has been living inside of you all these years, that you never knew was there. And when you begin to interrogate it, it will fight back to protect itself and maintain its position. There is nothing I can do to protect you from that. There are no safety nets, no shortcuts and no easier routes. You will want to close the workbook, run away and pretend you never heard of me. You will want to blame me, rage at me, discredit me and list all the reasons why you are a good person and why you don't need to do this work. That is a normal, expected response. That is the response of the white fragility and anti-blackness lying within you. You have to understand this before you begin. You have to understand that this is what you can expect to occur. And you have to decide now before you begin, and then throughout the work, that you are going to stay committed regardless. You must decide what is going to be the anchor that keeps you committed to this work - whether it is a commitment to anti-oppression and the dignity of BIPOC, your commitment to your own healing, your commitment to being a better friend or family member to BIPOC, or your commitment to your own personal or spiritual values. Decide now, before you begin, what is going to help you stay committed to this work when the going gets tough.

What keeps me going is my commitment to Truth, Love, and being a Good Ancestor.

Chapter 8



How To Use This Workbook

This workbook is based on a 28-day challenge that I ran on Instagram between June and July 2018. Here are some tips for using this workbook as a self-guided journey.

Keep A Journal

This is a book that is designed for you not to just to read, but to work through. However, I have intentionally not included any writing space in this workbook because this workbook is designed to be used again and again. I did not want restrict the amount of writing space you have available for each journaling prompt, because that would restrict how deeply you can go with this work. There is no word or page limit to how much you can write per each prompt. Keep writing until you hit the ugly truth, then write some more. I highly recommend purchasing a separate journal or notebook to use specifically for doing this work. Alternatively, you may prefer to keep all your notes for this work in a digital document on your laptop or computer. Do what works best for you, but keep your notes somewhere safe and easily accessible. You will want to refer back to your journal reflections and notes again and again.

Go At Your Pace

While it has been designed to be covered in 28 days, you absolutely do not have to complete it within 28 days. You can go through this workbook at your own pace - as fast or as slow as you choose. This work is not a race. There is no reward at the end of it. And there is no 'end' to the work of anti-racism. Use your own self-awareness and knowledge about how much time you need to process to decide the pace you are going to move at. Be aware that going too fast may result in you skimming the surface rather than going deep. And going too slow may result in you losing momentum. Choose a pace that works for you, and stay consistent and committed.

Don't Generalise

When answering the prompts, do not generalise about white people broadly. Do not talk about white people as if you are not a white person, or as if you do not benefit from white privilege. This work is not an intellectual activity. It is a personal deep dive. It is about you, and only you. Answer the prompts as specifically as possible with your own examples about yourself, and not about white people broadly. For example: In response to the question *"How have you stayed silent when it comes to...?"* do not

answer “White people stay silent by...”, but rather answer with “I have stayed silent by...”. Remember always that this work is first and foremost about you and *only you*.

For Your First Time - Work Sequentially

If this is your first time working through this workbook, and you did not do the live challenge on Instagram, then it's very important for you to work through the journaling prompts sequentially from days 1 to 28. The work is divided into four parts with six journaling prompts for each part, and a reflection journaling prompt at the end of the part. I have designed the journey to follow a very specific and intentional path. Each journaling prompt builds upon the preceding one. When you skip around rather than following the laid out sequence, the work loses its effectiveness. When you choose to skip certain days because you don't think they apply to you, you undermine and bypass the work. Give each prompt day its full attention.

After Your First Time - Work Intuitively

After you have completed the workbook for the first time, you can go back and use it intuitively or in a way that works best for you. You can either begin again from Day 1 to 28. Or you can dip in and out depending on what particular aspect of white supremacy is coming up for you to explore at this time. For example, if you realise that you have recently tone-policed a Black person, go back to Day 3 on Tone Policing and dive deeper into your self-reflection. Or if you have been called out for White Centering, go back to Day 16 and explore how you centered whiteness in that particular interaction. This book is a practical way to keep doing this work as a life-long practice, and not as something you just do once and move on from. It may also be helpful to do the entire 28 days once every few months, or annually. And then the rest of the time, use it as an anti-racism practice workbook that you can refer back to, to examine, work through and dismantle your internalised white supremacy, depending on what's coming up in your life right now.

Work Alone Or With A Group

You can use this workbook alone, or work through it with a group of people who are also doing this work. Please see Chapter 10 for more specific guidance on how to do this work in a group setting in a #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle. However, do remember that even if you are doing this work in a group setting, the journaling prompts are still about you and only you.

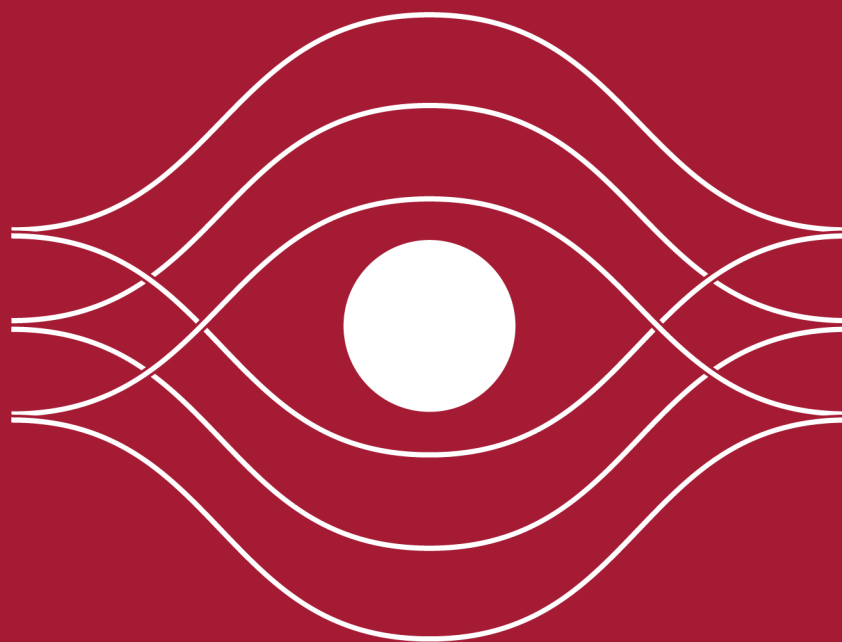
Watch The Available Videos

During the live 28 day #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Instagram challenge, I recorded seven videos to accompany the challenge. Two of the those videos were short videos for orientation and guidelines, and five were longer videos to accompany days 3, 8, 15, 17 and 19 of the challenge. These videos were an important part of the initial 28-day challenge and highly recommend you watch them on the appropriate days (I have indicated on the relevant prompt where there is a recommended video to watch). They will take your work a lot deeper and help you as you move through the work. You can find these videos at www.meandwhitesupremacybook.com/videos.

Keep Asking Questions

As you move through the workbook answering each prompt to the best of your ability, dig deeper by asking yourself When, How and Why questions. For example: *When do I react this way? When do these thoughts or feelings come up for me? How does this specific aspect of white supremacy show up for me? How does thinking or feeling this way benefit me? Why do I feel this way? Why do I believe this? Why do I think this is true? Why do I hold onto these beliefs?* Asking When, How and Why will help you to get down into the deeper unconscious layers of your internalised white supremacy, thus taking your work a lot deeper.

Chapter 9



Self-Care, Support & Sustainability

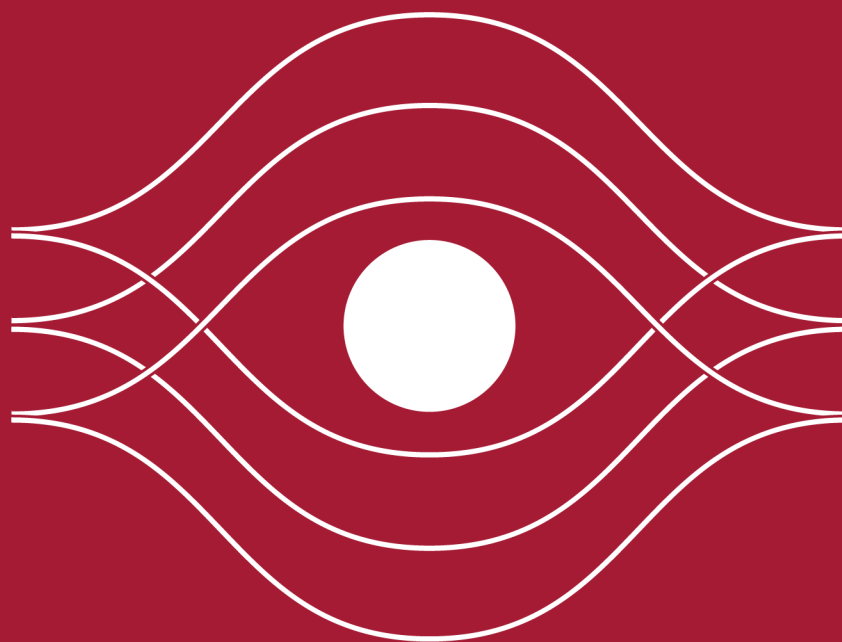
As this work is challenging, I feel it is important to say a little bit about self-care, support and sustainability.

- Many people who did the live 28-day Instagram challenge found this work physically, emotionally and spiritually challenging. As you root out your internalised oppression, your body-mind-spirit will be affected. To make sure that you are able to sustain the work and don't give up when it becomes hard, make sure to prioritise your self-care. I'm not talking about manicures and trips to the spa. I'm talking about doing what you need to stay grounded in yourself, connected to your body and emotionally well. I'm not talking about coddling yourself - I'm talking about doing what you need to do to make sure that you can sustain this work.
- If you are the only person in your family, friendship group or community doing this work, it can feel lonely. Reach out to other white privileged people who are doing this work so that you can support one another. Do NOT however reach out to other BIPOC (whether family, friends, peers, etc.) to support you and help you process what is coming for you. They do not owe you that emotional labour.
- There will never be a right time to do this work. Do not be tempted to say, "I will do this work when I can clear enough time for myself". The ability to choose if, when and how you want to do anti-racism work is a function of white privilege in and of itself. It is a privilege to say, "I will deal with racism when it's convenient for me". There will always be something pressing going on in your life. And it's important to remember that BIPOC do not have the option to say they will deal with racism when they have more time in their lives. If you are here now, if you are reading these words, and you feel ready to do the work, then jump in and start doing the work. Go at your own pace and stay committed.
- Shame, anger, grief, rage, apathy, anxiety, confusion, and other strong emotions will come up for you if you are doing this work deeply. Don't run away from those feelings. Feeling the feelings - which are an appropriate human response to racism and oppression - is an important part of the process. You may start to question what the point of this work is if all it is doing is making you feel bad about yourself. But that is not the point of this work. It is a feature of this work,

but it isn't where this work ends. It's important to feel those feelings because in doing so, you wake up. You re-humanise yourself. You start to realise that you weren't feeling these feelings before because you had shut down a part of your humanity in order to participate in white supremacy. White supremacy is like an anesthetic that has numbed you to the pain that your racism has caused. Doing this work is like the anesthetic wearing off and you beginning to feel the pain of what committing racism actually feels like physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Racism doesn't just hurt the people on the receiving end of racism. It also hurts the people who are being racist. Doing this work will wake you up to that hurt. And it will hurt. But don't stay stuck there. Take some time for yourself if you need longer to process. Pause if you have to. But don't stop the work. The purpose of this work is not for you to end up living in shame. The purpose is to get you to see the truth, so that you can do something about it. Don't bypass the feelings, but don't stay stuck there forever either. And certainly don't use your feelings as a way to check out of this work (see Day 15: White Apathy), or paint yourself as the victim (see Day 16: White Centering). No matter how bad it feels to wake up to the pain, shame and guilt of your racism, those feelings will never come anywhere close to the pain BIPOC experience as a result of your racism. So instead of getting stuck or overwhelmed, channel those feelings into action and change. You may find talking to a friend, support group, therapist, coach, etc. helpful in supporting you to process what is coming up for you so you can keep moving forward.

- Audre Lorde said, "revolution is not a one-time event". Anti-racism work is not a 28-day journey. It is a life-long practice. This workbook presents a place to begin and to continue the work. But it requires your life-long commitment to anti-oppression. This is not like reading a personal growth book, attending a spiritual retreat or going to a wellness conference. There is no feel-good reward at the end other than the knowledge that you are doing this because it's the right thing to do. You will not be congratulated for it. You won't get any Ally Cookies for it. You won't be celebrated for it. You will have to learn to wean yourself off of the addiction to insta-gratification and instead develop a consciousness for doing what is right even if nobody ever thanks you for it. Besides, there is no greater reward than being in integrity with your values and living your life in such a way that it makes the world a better place now, and for the future.

Chapter 10



Group Work: #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circles

When I initially created the #MeAndWhiteSupremacy challenge, I did not know that it would go viral. I did not know that I would eventually turn it into a workbook. And I did not know that there would be great demand from people wanting to know how to work through these prompts in family, community and workplace settings. While writing this workbook, two of the questions that have arisen again and again from people who wanted the workbook are “Will there be instructions for how to go through the workbook in a group?”, and “How can we be sure we are going deep enough in this work without BIPOC holding us accountable (as was done during the Instagram challenge)?”

Let me answer the second question first.

How can you stay accountable?

As powerful as this workbook is, there is no way to ensure that you are going deep enough in this work without the accountability of BIPOC. Whether you are going through this workbook alone, or with other white-privileged people in a group, you will never be able to replicate the depth of transformation that took place during the live Instagram challenge where many black womxn and womxn of colour challenged participants to go deeper. That is unfortunately an inherent design feature - you cannot see your complicity in white supremacy as BIPOC because it is what you see and know as “normal”. I want to make it very clear that the aim of this workbook is not to replicate what took place during the live Instagram challenge. To do so would be impossible. That does not mean that this workbook is therefore of no value. However what it does mean is that it will require greater self-responsibility, self-accountability and truth-telling to go as deep as you can, without expecting BIPOC to hand hold you through it. Doing this workbook alone or in a group with other white-privileged people will certainly help you go deep, but not as deep as you would in the presence, and with the accountability, of BIPOC. With that in mind, I plan to offer opportunities to go through the workbook in private, virtual, paid group settings with myself to help you go deeper with the work. I plan to offer a limited number of these workshops per year, so do make sure that you are subscribed to my email mailing list at www.laylafaad.com/subscribe to be the first to know when these workshops are open for enrollment.

Consider this workbook to be a free, 101 entry-level resource for people entering the work and wanting to remain consistent in anti-racist self-reflection. Consider the paid group workshops to be 102 intermediate level resources for people who have already been through the 28 day prompts alone, and are ready to go deeper with greater guidance and accountability from me.

How can you use this workbook in a group setting?

As I mentioned above, when I initially created this work I had no idea that it would extend beyond the initial 28 days on Instagram, and that there would be demand for people wanting to do the work in groups. For that reason, I did not design the 28 days as a group activity. It was specifically designed as a personal, self-reflection activity. As I sat with the question of how to make this personal work translatable into a group setting, I knew that I did not want to reinvent the wheel. I did not want to have to design a completely new process. So instead I went out looking for a process that could work with the workbook. As part of my investigations, I knew I wanted to find a process that was:

- Time-tested
- Non-hierarchical
- Structured yet flexible
- Capable of being used whether groups were big or small, intimate or business-like, virtual or in-person, etc.
- Simple and easy to implement, yet powerful

It was very important to me that the process I recommended for group settings would not perpetuate oppressive power dynamics by design. It was also very important to me that the process be one that I would personally find value in taking part in, and be comfortable recommending. The process that I found satisfied all of these requirements for me.

The process I eventually chose with confidence is one I discovered a few years ago but had forgotten about until I was writing this workbook. The process I recommend for hosting and participating in #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circles is called ***The Circle Way***.

What is The Circle Way?

The Circle Way is a structure for deep conversation and wise outcomes based on a methodology founded by Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea in 1992, and fully expounded upon in their 2010 book, *The Circle Way: A Leader In Every Chair*.³

Baldwin and Linnea describe The Circle Way as a process that gathers people into a circular shape with participants at the rim and the purpose in the centre. Each person has a voice and everyone can see and hear one another. Social agreements and practices help facilitate respectful conversation. The process is simple to use, yet powerful in its impact. The process of Circle is non-hierarchical and supports a leader in every chair - every one who is part of the Circle is responsible for holding the structure, energy and purpose of the Circle. In addition, The Circle Way lends itself well to anti-racism practice and racial justice change. The Circle Way website states that, *“In light of these times, The Circle Way reaffirms the essential practice of taking a seat on the rim and turning to one another to uphold racial, ethnic, gender, economic, and environmental justice.”*

The Circle Way book explains:

“We have the opportunity in circle process to heal our old stories and to make new stories that lead to different actions and create a different world. This is the essential task of our times! Understanding the power of story and the container of the circle give us life skills that have profoundly transformational potential. We can talk the world we need into being and then align our actions with our vision. This is what our ancestors did at the fire, and if we are to become ancestors to future generations, this is what we will do today.”

Why do you need to use a particular process for working through this workbook in groups?

It is important to me that people working through this workbook can do so in group settings, if they wish to do so. However, there are a lot of risks when leaving the format of how these groups should be run to you, the readers. If left to chance, it is highly likely that the very white supremacist behaviours discussed in this book start to run the show. Without clear guidance, instruction and structure, the following could occur:

- No clear intention or purpose for coming together as a group

- No clear structure for holding the conversation, where everyone gets to speak with equal time and focus
- No clear agreements and guidelines for what will and will not be tolerated during group meetings, leading to potential chaos through White Fragility, White Centering, White Exceptionalism, etc.
- A hierarchical structure can form, where some people in the group are able to dominate over others if they are louder, more forceful, seen as “further ahead” in the work, etc.
- Lack of focus and structure leads to distraction, derailing and the meeting simply becoming a social get together
- Not being clear on the intention of the group, therefore having certain members in the group who are not ready or willing to do the work, thus undermining the purpose of coming together in the group in the first place
- Lack of accountability to stay committed to the work, and to do it with the integrity and rigour it requires
- All of the above and more leading to the Me And White Supremacy work being minimised, tokenised, undermined and ultimately, wasted.

If you are truly interested in doing this workbook in a group setting⁴, then the **only** way this should be done is through a #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle, using The Circle Way as the model and structure for doing so. Choosing to use another process, or no process at all, against my express wishes, is an indication that you are not truly ready to do this work. This work is powerful, transformational, healing work. I ask that you treat it as such.

If a book circle is something you truly want to host, the best place to go for a comprehensive guide is the book that this work is based on - *The Circle Way: A Leader In Every Chair* by Christina Baldwin & Ann Linnea. This book will answer most of the questions you have about how to design and run a #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle.

However, you don't need to read the book to host a circle. The authors of the book and founders of the process have generously created many free and paid resources on *The Circle Way* website⁵. On the Resources page of the website you will find books, videos, The Circle Way guidelines (which at the time of writing this workbook is available in 14 languages), questions about Circle, booklets (including the very useful The Circle Way Pocket Guide), case study stories and tips, learning maps and articles.

With these resources, you will be well equipped to understand how Circle works, and how to design a #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle based on The Circle Way process.

The Circle Way guidelines

For the purpose of clarity, I am including a brief outline of the basic guidelines of The Circle Way process below. These guidelines are excerpted from the books *Calling the Circle, the First and Future Culture* [1998] by Christina Baldwin, and *The Circle Way*. The below excerpt and Circle diagram were taken from The Circle Way Guidelines⁶. The Basic Circle Guidelines pdf condenses the art of hosting a circle into a two-page, easy-to-understand document. I recommend downloading the document itself and studying all the resources on The Circle Way website to gain even more clarity and understanding on how Circle works. Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea have generously created a plethora of resources to help you understand how to use the Circle process. If your wishes as a group host and/or participant are to truly honour the work that I am offering through this free workbook, then please go through all of the available materials carefully and thoroughly, to ensure that you create the best space possible for doing this work.

Excerpted from “The Circle Way - Basic Guidelines for Calling A Circle”⁷

“COMPONENTS OF CIRCLE

What transforms a meeting into a circle is the willingness of people to shift from informal socializing or opinionated discussion into a receptive attitude of thoughtful speaking and deep listening that embodies the practices and structures outlined here.



INTENTION

Intention shapes the circle and determines who will come, how long the circle will meet, and what kinds of outcomes are to be expected. The caller of the circle spends time articulating intention and invitation.

START-POINT OR WELCOME

Once people have gathered, it is helpful for the host, or a volunteer participant, to begin the circle with a gesture that shifts people's attention from social space to council space. This gesture of welcome may be a moment of silence, reading a poem, or listening to a song – whatever invites centering.

SETTING THE CENTER

The center of a circle is like the hub of a wheel: all energies pass through it, and it holds the rim together. To help people remember how the hub helps the group, the center of a circle usually holds objects that represent the intention of the circle. Any symbol that fits this purpose or adds beauty will serve: flowers, a bowl or basket, a candle.

CHECK-IN / GREETING

Check-in helps people into a frame of mind for council and reminds everyone of their commitment to the expressed intention. It insures that people are truly present. Verbal sharing, especially a brief story, weaves the interpersonal net. Check-in usually starts with a volunteer and proceeds around the circle. If an individual is not ready to speak, the turn is passed and another opportunity is offered after others have spoken. Sometimes people place individual objects in the center as a way of signifying their presence and relationship to the intention.

GUARDIAN

The single most important tool for aiding self-governance and bringing circle back to intention is the role of guardian. One circle member volunteers to watch and safeguard group energy and observe the circle's process. The guardian usually employs a gentle noisemaker, such as a chime, bell, or rattle, that signals to everyone to stop action, take a breath, rest in a space of silence. The guardian makes this signal again and speaks to why s/he called the pause. Any member may call for a pause.

SETTING CIRCLE AGREEMENTS

The use of agreements allows all members to have a free and profound exchange, to respect a diversity of views, and to share responsibility for the well-being and direction of the group.

Agreements often used include:

- We hold all stories or personal material in confidentiality*
- We listen to each other with compassion and curiosity*
- We ask for what we need and offer what we can*
- We agree to employ a group guardian to watch our need, timing and energy*
- We agree to pause at a signal when we feel the need to pause*

THREE PRINCIPLES

- 1. Leadership rotates among all circle members*
- 2. Responsibility is shared for the quality of experience*
- 3. Reliance is on wholeness, rather than on any personal agenda*

THREE PRACTICES

- 1. Speak with intention: noting what has relevance to the conversation in the moment*
- 2. Listen with attention: respectful of the learning process for all members of the group*
- 3. Tend to the well-being of the circle: remaining aware of the impact of our contributions*

FORMS OF COUNCIL

- 1. Talking piece council is often used as a part of check-in, check-out and whenever there is a desire to slow down the conversation, collect all voices and contributions, and be able to speak without interruption.*
- 2. Conversation council is often used when reaction, interaction and an interjection of new ideas, thoughts and opinions are needed.*
- 3. Reflection, or silent council gives each member time and space to reflect on what is occurring, or needs to occur, in the course of a meeting. Silence may be called so that each person can consider the role or impact they are having on the group, or to help the group realign with their intention, or to sit with a question until there is clarity.*

CHECK-OUT AND FAREWELL

At the close of a circle meeting, it is important to allow a few minutes for each person to comment on what they learned, or what stays in their heart and mind as they leave. Closing the circle by checking out provides a formal end to the meeting, a chance for members to reflect on what has transpired, and to pick up objects if they have placed something in the center.

As people shift from council space to social space or private time, they release each other from the intensity of attention being in circle requires. Often after check-out, the host, guardian, or a volunteer will offer a few inspirational words of farewell or signal a few seconds of silence before the circle is released.”

Again, I would like to reiterate that the above information is a start pointing. If you are serious about hosting a group #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle, make sure to visit The Circle Way website to go through all the resources, and if possible, buy *The Circle Way* book.

Important considerations for when you are ready to create and run a Me And White Supremacy Circle

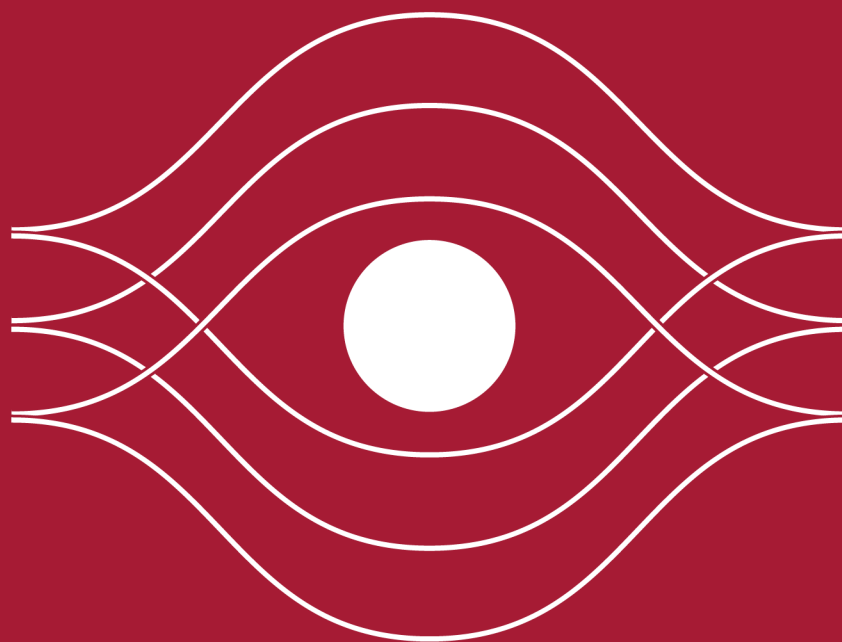
- Before making any announcements to create a group, go through all the above-mentioned resources and study them thoroughly. Understand the basic guidelines and structure of the process before taking any outward action.
- Get clear on your intention and stated purpose for the circle. Don't leave it to chance. Write out your stated purpose and keep it front and centre at every meeting.
- Use discernment and intention to invite the right members to be in circle with. Not everybody is willing to do this work. Not everyone is willing to follow the structure of circle or set aside their White Fragility to be a part of something bigger. Make sure that the people you are inviting to be in circle are ready to really do the work.
- Decide where your circle meetings will be held. Will it be in person or virtual? While The Circle Way is described in terms of a physical, in-person circle, I have taken part in circles run online with the Zoom app that follow The Circle Way process. With the right intentionality and focus, it can be done well.
- Other considerations for the circle's format: How frequently will the circle meet? When and where will you meet? Will you cover one prompt per meeting, or group prompts together and cover a few per meeting? How long will the meeting be?

How many minutes will each person get during the Talking Piece Council portion of the meeting? Will you be journaling during the meetings, or only talking about what you have journaled on prior to the meeting? Think carefully about the entire format of the circle. It's important to do as much preparation work up front, so that when you are in circle time, things run smoothly, expectations are clear and the impact is powerful.

- Make very clear agreements for the circle. In *The Circle Way Pocket Guide*⁸, agreements are described as providing an, "...*interpersonal safety net for participation in the conversations that are about to occur. In a circle, where you're practicing rotating leadership and shared responsibility, agreements tell people what they can expect from each other and what is likely to happen in the exchanges between them.*" Make clear agreements on how the circle will be run, what behaviour will and will not be tolerated, how you will challenge each other to go deeper in the work, how you will respect each other's boundaries, etc. Also create agreements for what you will do when White Fragility, White Exceptionalism, White Apathy and other aspects of white supremacy mentioned in this workbook arise. Be committed to keeping one another accountable. Be as specific as possible with your agreements. Up front agreements before beginning the work can help to minimise the risks of derailment and chaos I mentioned earlier.
- Be intentional and consistent about following the three principles of The Circle Way (rotating leadership, shared responsibility and reliance on wholeness), and the three practices of Circle (intentional speaking, attentive listening and tending the well-being of the circle).
- Have clear roles assigned for each meeting, with clarity on who is the Host, Guardian and Scribe each time. Remember that roles can and should be rotated so that all members of the circle take leadership roles.
- Do not let the circle unravel to become simply a social circle and time to spend time with your friends. Come together with intention, hold the intention each time you meet, don't get distracted or side-tracked. Do the work.
- Don't become apathetic or self-congratulatory in the circle. Don't coddle whiteness by allowing White Fragility to take over. Stay focused on your purpose - to tell the unvarnished truth about your internalised white supremacy and dismantle it.
- If you have any questions about circle, refer to The Circle Way website and *The Circle Way* book *first*, to find your answers. If after consulting these resources you still need support, send an email to info@laylafsaad.com with your query.

- Understand that even with all of these checks and balances in place, it is still possible for white supremacist behaviours to sneak in (centering, dominance, fragility, etc.). Understand that whether you have an assigned role or not in the circle, each circle member is a leader. Take responsibility. Do not leave the success of the circle to one or two people. Work together as a group to ensure the best possible outcome, with the best possible outcome being that in doing this work, you show up better for BIPOC.

Chapter 11



Do's & Don'ts

In addition to what has already been covered for how to use this workbook, here are some important do's and don'ts to be aware of as you move forward with this work.

Do:

- Read all of the instructions carefully and thoughtfully before diving into The Work in Part III
- If choosing to go through the workbook in a group setting, do use the #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle as the process for doing so (see Chapter 10)
- Credit me when sharing my work linking back to my websites (www.laylafsaad.com and/or www.meandwhitesupremacybook.com), and/or tag me on Instagram @laylafsaad
- Use this as a resource that you can return to again and again as part of your lifetime anti-racism practice
- Use this workbook in addition to seeking other forms of anti-racism education and action-taking. This workbook will serve as an important personal reflection tool, but anti-racism practice requires more than personal self-reflection. This workbook should be a supplement to other forms of your anti-racism practice, and not the only tool in your anti-racism toolbox.

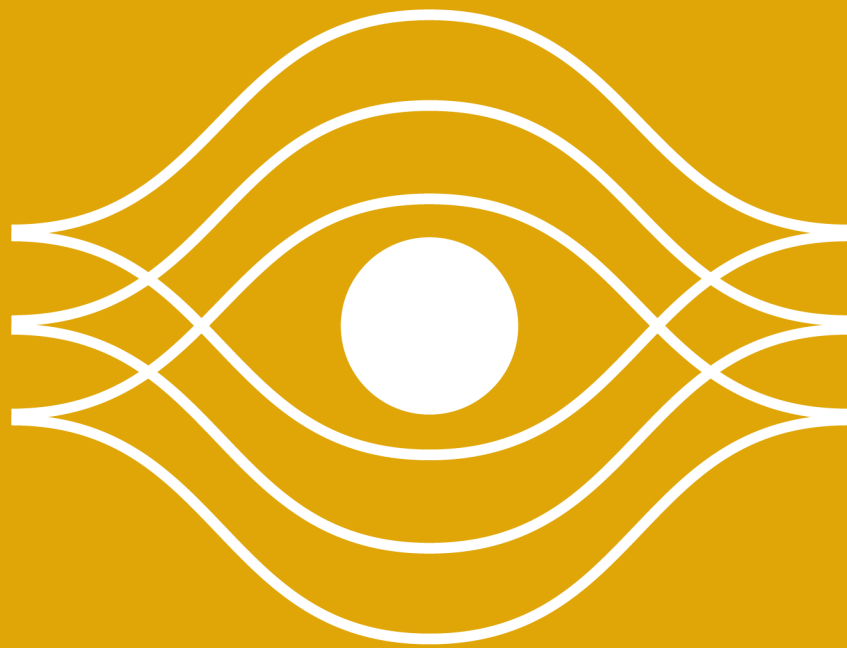
Don't:

- Surface-skim or side-step telling the truth
- Use my work to lead anti-racism classes, courses, events, etc. whether paid or unpaid. The only exception to this is the #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circles, as laid out in Chapter 10
- Steal, copy or sell my work, or attempt to pass it off as your own
- Ask any BIPOC to help you process what is coming up for you in this work, whether paid or free. That includes family members, friends and partners
- Share your journal reflections on social media, as was done during the live Instagram challenge. Please keep all your journal writings to yourself and/or your #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle, and do not share them online
- Use this workbook to be performative or self-congratulatory. (See Day 6: White Exceptionalism and Day 19: Optical Allyship for more on this)
- Tokenise me or my workbook to prove you are a “good white person” (see Day 17: Tokenism)

“Are you sure, sweetheart, that you want to be well?... Just so’s you’re sure, sweetheart, and ready to be healed, cause wholeness is no trifling matter. A lot of weight when you’re well.”

- Toni Cade Bambara

Part 1: Days 1 - 7



Part 1: Days 1 - 7

In Part I we begin by looking at some foundational aspects of internalised white supremacy.

Day 1: You & White Privilege

Day 2: You & White Fragility

Day 3: You & Tone Policing

Day 4: You & White Silence

Day 5: You & White Superiority

Day 6: You & White Exceptionalism

Day 7: Review

During Part I there are two orientation videos to watch: before beginning Day 1, and a video for Day 3.

Day 1: You & White Privilege

What Is White Privilege?

Though white privilege as a legislative, systemic and cultural norm has existed for a very long time, it was women's studies scholar Peggy McIntosh who first coined the term 'White Privilege' in her 1988 paper "White Privilege And Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies"⁹. A year later, a substantial portion of that paper was excerpted and was published as a paper titled "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"¹⁰. The paper contains 50 examples of white privilege. McIntosh writes:

"I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks."

White privilege is unearned advantages that are granted because of one's whiteness or ability to 'pass' as white. White privilege is separate from, but can intersect with, class privilege, gender privilege, sexuality privilege, age privilege, able-bodied privilege, or any other types of privileges. For example, a person can be a transgender male, and still have white privilege. Not holding cisgender privilege does not cancel out one's white privilege. A person can lack class privilege, and still have white privilege. Not having wealth does not cancel out white privilege. A person can be gay, and still have white privilege. Not having straight privilege does not cancel out white privilege. In this workbook, we are specifically talking about white privilege.

How Does White Privilege Show Up?

Peggy McIntosh's list of 50 examples of white privilege is a great place to start to see how white privilege shows up. Some examples from "Unpacking The Invisible Knapsack" include:

"1. I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time."

7. *When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.*

12. *I can go into a book shop and count on finding the writing of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can deal with my hair.*

15. *I did not have to educate our children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.*

25. *If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.*

36. *If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.*

41. *I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me."*

Why Do You Need To Look At White Privilege?

White privilege is the reward that white and white-passing people receive in exchange for participating in the system of white supremacy. In order to dismantle the system, you need to understand how much white privilege is a key aspect of your life, how you benefit (whether knowingly or unknowingly) from your whiteness, what that means for people who do not receive that same benefit, and how you can dismantle it. You cannot dismantle what you cannot see. You cannot challenge what you do not understand.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & White Privilege?

- What have you learned about you and your specific white privilege: How it shows up, how you hold on to it, how you use it (consciously or unconsciously) against BIPOC?
- How do you benefit from white privilege, and how you have held onto that benefit (despite knowing the harm it does)?

- What have you learned about the ways you specifically wield this privilege that do harm (whether intended or not)? Dig deep. No sugar coating and no focusing on the good you have done with your privilege. Remember: this isn't about being self-congratulatory, it's about pulling out white supremacy.
- What have you learned about your white privilege that makes you uncomfortable?

Day 2: You + White Fragility

What Is White Fragility?

'White Fragility' is a phrase coined by author Dr. Robin DiAngelo¹¹ and is defined as "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves." It wasn't until I began directly writing and talking about race that I realised how deeply white fragility runs in the vast majority of white people. So many of the white people who were interacting with my work had so little experience talking about race that any racial discussion lead to them having a total meltdown.

How Does White Fragility Show Up?

Here are a few examples of White Fragility in action:

- White fragility shows up as white people getting angry, defensive, afraid, arguing, claiming they're being shamed, crying or simply falling silent and choosing to check out of the conversation.
- It looks like calling the authorities (the manager, the police, the social media censors) on BIPOC when you are uncomfortable with what they are sharing about race. (I have had my social media posts reported and censored more than a dozen times because of white fragility).
- On social media platforms it also includes deleting what you wrote (another form of running away and pretending it never happened) when you can't handle where the conversation is going.
- White fragility includes crying during racial interactions.
- In essence, white fragility looks like a white person taking the position of victim, when it is in fact that white person who has committed or participated in acts of racial harm.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Fragility?

White fragility prevents you from having a conversation about racism without falling apart. If you cannot talk about racism, especially about the ways in which you have knowingly or unknowingly been complicit in racism, then you will never be able to go beyond a mere superficial understanding of racism. White fragility makes you dangerous to BIPOC. When conversations of racism come up, you jump into defense

mode, which makes you unable to really hear and understand the pain and challenges of BIPOC. Without developing the resiliency needed to talk about racism, your white fragility will always prevent you from being an ally to BIPOC. More than that, your white fragility, which is really fear, can quickly turn into active harm. Like going into fight or flight mode, your white fragility can either cause you to shut down and run away, or to become even more aggressive, violent and harmful to BIPOC. Without understanding your white fragility, you cannot move forward in this work.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & White Fragility?

- How has and/or does your white fragility show up?
- How have you fallen apart or taken the position of victim during racial interactions?
- How have you weaponised your fragility against BIPOC through for example, calling the authorities, crying, claiming you're being harmed (*'reverse-racism!', 'I'm being shamed!', 'I'm being attacked!'*)?
- What emotional outbursts have you had during racial interactions? Or how have you shut down, walked away, deleted everything and pretended nothing happened and hoped no one would notice?
- How has your white fragility resulted in fight or flight?
- What has your white fragility looked like and why have you acted in that way?
- How fragile are you when it comes to talking about race?

Day 3: You & Tone Policing

What Is Tone Policing?

Tone policing is a tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who don't by focusing on the tone of what is being said, rather than the actual content. Tone policing doesn't only have to be spoken out loud publicly. People holding white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors.

How Does Tone Policing Show Up?

It shows up when white people ask BIPOC to say what they are saying in a "nicer" way. It's saying (or thinking) things like: I can't take in what you're telling me about your lived experiences because you sound "too angry". Or your tone is "too aggressive". Or the language you are using to talk about your lived experiences is making me feel "ashamed". Or the language you are using to talk about your lived experiences is "hateful" or "divisive". Or you should address white people in a more "civil" way if you want us to "join your cause". Or the way you are talking about this issue is not "productive". Or if you would just "calm down" then maybe I might want to listen to you. Or you're bringing too much "negativity" into this space and you should focus on the positive. Or, or, or...

There are so many direct and subtle ways that tone policing takes over, and it doesn't just occur during conversations about race. Tone policing also occurs when you judge BIPOC for not conforming to white norms of communication (e.g. being too loud, using African America Vernacular English or speaking in ways that do not conform with Standard English, etc.).

Tone policing is both a request that BIPOC share our experiences about racism without sharing any of our (real) emotions about it, and for us to exist in ways that do not make white people feel uncomfortable. It is also a demand that racism be presented to you in a form that is more palatable to you, and doesn't make your White Fragility flare up.

Why Do You Need To Look At Tone Policing?

Tone policing reinforces white supremacist norms of how BIPOC are 'supposed' to show up. It is way of keeping BIPOC in line and disempowered. When you insist that

you will not believe or give credibility to BIPOC until they speak in a tone that suits you, even if what they are speaking about is true, then you uphold the idea that your standards as a white person are more superior. When you control the tone of how BIPOC are supposed to talk about their lived experiences with racism and existing in the world, you are reinforcing the white supremacist ideology that white knows best. It is also an insidious way of gaslighting BIPOC. When you insist that BIPOC talk about their painful experiences with racism without expressing any pain, rage or grief, you are asking them to dehumanise themselves. You are expecting them to detach themselves from the true feelings of what it feels like to be discriminated against and oppressed. Asking people not to feel what they feel about their oppression and abuse is cruel and violent. You need to look at the specific ways that you tone police so that you can see the very subtle, often undetectable to you, ways that you reinforce white supremacy. When you can understand how you tone police, you can begin to change your behaviour so that you can allow BIPOC the full expression of their humanity.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & Tone Policing?

- How have you used tone policing to silence, shut down or dismiss BIPOC? What tone policing thoughts have you harboured inside when you've heard BIPOC talk about race or their lived experiences, even if you didn't say them out loud?
- How have you insisted on white norms of "respectability" and "civility" when BIPOC talk about their lived experiences?
- How have you derailed conversations about race by focusing on how someone said something to you, rather than what they said to you?
- How often have you claimed or felt you were "being shamed" in conversations about your or other people's racism?
- How often have you walked away from race conversations because you didn't approve of the tone being used?
- How often have you made your willingness to engage in anti-racism work conditional on people using the "right" tone with you?
- How have you discounted BIPOC's real pain over racism because the way they talk about it doesn't fit with your world view of how people "should" talk?
- How have you discounted BIPOC in general because of the tone that they use when they talk?
- How have you used tone to police BIPOC?

Day 4: You + White Silence

What Is White Silence?

White silence is exactly what it sounds like. It is when people with white privilege stay complicity silent when it comes to issues of race. Tone policing is about how you silence BIPOC. White silence is how YOU stay silent around race.

How Does White Silence Show Up?

Here are a few examples of White Silence in action:

- It shows up when you stay silent (or make excuses/change the subject/leave the room) when your family members or friends make racist jokes or comments.
- It's staying silent when you see your colleagues of colour being discriminated against at work.
- It's staying silent when white people treat your biracial family members in ways they would not treat your white family members.
- It's staying silent by choosing not to engage in any conversations about race.
- It's staying silent by not attending protest marches for Black Lives Matter, immigrants at risk and other marginalized people of colour.
- It's staying silent when your favourite well-known teacher/coach/mentor/author is rightfully called out for problematic behaviour.
- It's staying silent when you witness other white people use their White Privilege, White Fragility or Tone Policing against BIPOC.
- It's staying silent by not sharing social media posts about race and racism in your spaces because of the way it might affect your personal or professional life.
- It's staying silent about your anti-racism work for fear of losing friends, family members and followers.
- It's staying silent by not holding those around you accountable for their racist behaviour.
- It is the deafening silence that has upheld white supremacy throughout all these years. It is the silence that silently gives approval to the horrors of racism.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Silence?

Because silence is not neutral. Silence is looking the other way and protecting your privilege - thus continuing to uphold white supremacy. White silence is violence. White silence protects the system. White silence prevents you from speaking truth to power.

You must look at the ways in which you stay silent, so that you can begin to build the strength and courage to start using your voice. As Audre Lorde said, “your silence will not protect you”. When you stay silent, you stay complicit.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & White Silence?

- How do you and have you stayed silent when it comes to race and racism?
- How has your silence been complicit in upholding racist behaviour?
- In which situations do you fall silent when it comes to racism?
- Why do you stay silent?
- How do you benefit from white silence?
- How do you do harm with your white silence?

Day 5: You & White Superiority

What Is White Superiority?

Superior: higher in rank, status, or quality.

White supremacy stems from the erroneous, violent and racist idea that people with white/white-passing skin are more superior to, and therefore deserve to dominate, people with brown or black skin. The most extreme manifestations of this are the KKK, Neo-Nazis and right-wing nationalism. However, you don't have to buy into this extreme ideology to harbour thoughts of white superiority. In fact, you can consider yourself one of the most progressive, liberal, we-are-all-one-race, peace loving white people and still at subconscious levels believe in white superiority.

How Does White Superiority Show Up?

Here are a few examples of White Superiority in action:

- Tone Policing (as described in Day 3's prompt).
- Subscribing to and elevating European standards of beauty.
- Believing AAVE (African American Vernacular English) is 'ghetto,' and thinking the correct way to talk is the way you and other white people talk.
- Primarily buying from and working with white entrepreneurs and service providers.
- Primarily reading books by white authors.
- Primarily learning from and supporting white leaders.
- Primarily staying on the 'white' side of town.
- Only sharing the work and words of BIPOC if you think it won't offend or upset the other white people in your communities.
- Holding the expectation that BIPOC should 'serve' you by providing free emotional labour around racism.
- Believing, in subtle and overt ways, that you are smarter, more valuable, more capable, wiser, more sophisticated, more beautiful, more 'articulate', more spiritual, more civil, more you name it... than BIPOC.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Superiority?

Because the belief in your superiority is the foundation of white supremacy. You continue to perpetuate white supremacy to the extent that you believe in your own and other white people's superiority over BIPOC. On the surface of it, you may think you

don't believe that. But the reality is, you have been conditioned since you were a child to believe in white superiority, you have been educated by institutions that have taught white superiority, you have been conditioned by media which continues to reinforce white superiority, and you likely work within industries that uphold white superiority. You need to look at white superiority so that you can begin to unravel it within yourself, and dismantle it within the spaces around you.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & White Superiority?

- In what ways have you consciously or subconsciously believed that you are better than BIPOC?

Don't hide from this. This is the crux of White Supremacy. Own it.

Day 6: You + White Exceptionalism

What Is White Exceptionalism?

White exceptionalism is the belief that you as a white person are exempt from white supremacy. That you are “one of the good ones”. That this work doesn’t apply to you.

How Does White Exceptionalism Show Up?

White exceptionalism has shown up every time you saw one of the prompt questions and thought “I don’t do that” or “That doesn’t apply to me”. White exceptionalism is what convinces you that you don’t *really* need to do the work. That you don’t have to deeply reflect on and diligently write out your responses to the journal questions - that you can just think about it in your mind, and that that’s enough. That you’re somehow special, exempt, above this, past this. That white supremacy is what those “other white people” do, but not you. White exceptionalism is the belief that because you’ve read some books on this topic and follow some BIPOC activists and teachers, you know it all and don’t need to dig deeper. White exceptionalism is the hurt “not all white people!” response when BIPOC talk about white people’s behaviour.

White exceptionalism goes hand in hand with white superiority:

I’m special. I’ve already read about this. I’ve already spoken on this. I’m one of the ‘good ones.’ I’ve already shown I’m an ally. So I don’t need to keep going any deeper.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Exceptionalism?

White exceptionalism is particularly rampant in progressive, liberal, spiritual white people because there is a belief that being these things makes you exempt or above it all. You’re not. And the belief that you are makes you dangerous to BIPOC because you can’t see your own complicity. If you believe you are exceptional, you won’t do the work. If you don’t do the work, you will continue to do harm. You are not an exceptional white person. Meaning, you are not exempt from the conditioning of white supremacy, from the benefits of white privilege and from the responsibility to keep doing this work for the rest of your life. The moment you begin to think you are exceptional, is the moment you begin to relax back into the warm and familiar comfort of white supremacy.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & White Exceptionalism?

- In what ways have or do you believe you are exceptional, exempt, “one of the good ones”, or above this work?
- In what ways have you believed you are the exception to the rule?
- And how has your white exceptionalism prevented you from being an ally to BIPOC?

Day 7: Part 1 Review

If you've reached this far in the challenge you'll begin to notice a pattern. All of these themes weave in and out of each other, interlocking and interconnecting. This is the sticky web of white supremacy. It's not just binary black or white you either are a racist, or you aren't. Rather, it is these multilayered behaviours and beliefs that make up your white supremacist world view. Your internalised racism is part and parcel of your view of both the world and yourself. These journal prompts are helping you to become aware of that.

On Day 7, we don't rest. Because BIPOC don't get to rest from (your) white supremacy. But we do reflect. This is not a break. Consider it a breather. Because a lot has been brought to the surface over the last 6 days and it's important to step back, take stock of what you've learnt so far and integrate so that you can continue through the rest of the challenge.

If you've been honest with yourself and dug deep for each journal question, then a lot of things should have come to the surface that you weren't consciously aware of when you first began this work.

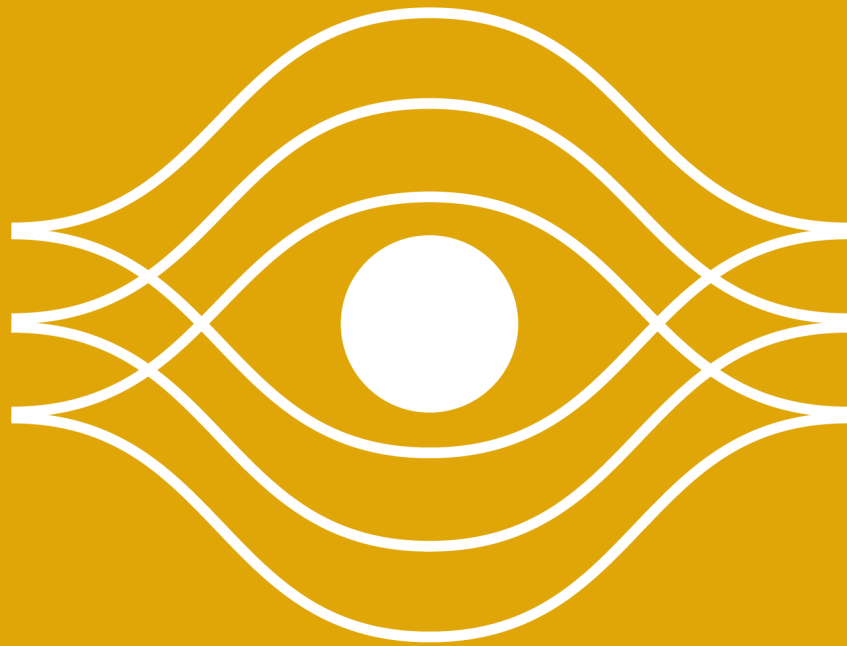
For today, share what you have learnt so far about You & White Supremacy.

- What have you begun to see and understand about your personal complicity in white supremacy that you were not able to see or understand before you begun this workbook?

Again, we're not looking for the happy ending, the teachable moment or the pretty bow at the end of all the learning. We're also not looking for dramatic admissions of guilt or becoming so frozen with shame that you can't move forward. The aim of this work is not self-loathing. The aim of this work is Truth: seeing it, owning it and figuring out what to do with it. This is lifelong work. Avoid the shortcuts and be suspicious of the easy answers. Avoid the breaking down into White Fragility. Question yourself when you think you've finally figured it out.

Take a moment to go within to recall and find the patterns behind all that you have learnt so far about how you perpetuate white supremacy. And then sit in it. Let these understandings work on you and through you.

Part 11: Days 8 - 14



Part II: Days 8 - 14

In Part II we look at colour-blindness, anti-blackness and racist stereotypes.

During the #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Instagram challenge, I included a content warning for this week asking participants not to share their writings on their social media pages, so as not to trigger BIPOC, especially Black people, in their communities. While I have already specified that you should not share your journal answers publicly online while doing this work, please be *especially* mindful of **not** sharing your writings during this week. And if you are a biracial, mixed race or white-passing person of colour, please know that this part of the workbook is particularly heavy.

Day 8: You & Seeing Colour

Day 9: You & Black Womxn

Day 10: You & Black Men

Day 11: You & Black Children

Day 12: You & Racist Stereotypes

Day 13: You & Cultural Appropriation

Day 14: Review

During Part II, there is a video to watch for Day 8.

Day 8: You + Seeing Colour

What Is Colour-Blindness?

Race-based colour-blindness is the idea that you do not 'see' colour. That you do not notice differences in race. Or if you do, that you do not treat people differently or oppress people based on those differences.

How Does Colour-Blindness Show Up?

"I'm not racist. I don't see colour."

If I had a dollar for the number of times I've heard progressive, spiritual, liberal white privileged people say they "don't see colour" when they've been accused of being racist... Except I wouldn't want those dollars because this statement, "I don't see colour", is violent. It is violent because it says, I don't see you for who you are. I'm choosing to ignore your skin colour, your hair pattern, your accent or other languages, your cultural practices and spiritual traditions. I'm choosing to erase all of the important parts of your identity that make you who you are. It is violent because it erases the identities of BIPOC, thereby also erasing our lived experiences with racism. It minimises these experiences. And it asks BIPOC to minimise these experiences too. It asks BIPOC to act as if the world is set up that way - as if institutional racism and racial prejudice don't exist. It is also a form of gaslighting because it simply isn't true. You do see colour. You're choosing to pretend you don't so that you don't have to face the elephant in the room - your white privilege and your complicity in white supremacy.

Why Do You Need To Look At Seeing Colour?

Perhaps you have been taught that not seeing colour is the way to not be racist. Perhaps you have been taught that not noticing racial difference is what nice, polite, "good" white people do. However, in erasing a person's race, you erase the person. When you say you don't see a person's race, you're saying you don't see *them*. When you say a person's race doesn't matter to you, you're saying an important part of what makes them who they are doesn't matter to you. And besides, like I've already mentioned, it's a lie. You do see colour. You do see race. You do adjust your behaviour based on racial difference. You try not to because you know it's not right. But it is what you have been conditioned to do.

Your white privilege depends on understanding that you are white/white-passing and others are not. Without BIPOC, white privilege would not exist. Everyone would be treated equally. But we are not. You need to look at this idea of colour-blindness and tear it apart. You need to learn to see racial difference as just that - difference - without attaching “good” or “bad” to that difference. Anti-racism work depends on your ability to start seeing colour, and start seeing the ways you and other white people and institutions treat BIPOC based on their colour.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & Seeing Colour?

- Are you someone who has thought or said “I don’t see colour”?
- Are you someone who has used the idea that “there is only one race - the human race” to gaslight, minimise, erase, ignore and harm BIPOC? (And by the way, race is a social construct - we actually are one human race - but race-based systems of oppression like white supremacy act in opposition to that).
- Have you wanted BIPOC to stop talking about race using this statement?
- Have you said or thought that racism only exists if we keep talking about race?
- Have you cringed or become frustrated anytime a BIPOC has used the term “white people”?
- Have you felt that it was racist or divisive to keep talking about white people?
- Have you thought they were talking about the actual colour of your skin and thought it was “reverse racism”?
- Have you wished we could just stop talking about race?
- What mental gymnastics have you done to avoid seeing your own race (and what your white race has collectively done to BIPOC)?

Day 9: You + Black Womxn

Black Womxn & White Supremacy

Malcolm X famously called black women the most disrespected, unprotected, and neglected person in America. I believe that applies outside of America too. Black womxn bring up all kinds of feelings in white (privileged) people: fear, awe, envy, disdain, anger, desire, confusion, pity, jealousy, etc. Black womxn are either super-humanised and put on pedestals as Queens, or dehumanised and seen as unworthy of the same care and attention as white womxn.

As black womxn we even have our own class of misogyny directed at us: Misogynoir. Black womxn have been painted with stereotypes such as Mammy, Jezebel, and Sapphire. Black womxn's sisterhood is envied. Black womxn's anger is vilified. Black womxn's sexuality is fetishised. Black womxn's styles are appropriated. Black womxn's bodies are abused. Black womxn's leadership is undermined. Black womxn are expected to serve and protect everybody but themselves.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & Black Womxn?

- How have you related to black womxn? Not only Black cis-gendered women, but also trans women and femme/feminine-identifying genderqueer and non-binary people?
- How have you super-humanised or de-humanised black womxn (both of which are racist)?
- How have you expected black womxn to bend and fold themselves for you?
- How have you excluded, discounted, minimised, used, or projected your white fragility and white superiority onto black womxn?
- How have you viewed and treated lighter-skinned black womxn differently to darker-skinned black womxn?
- How have you wielded your white supremacy against black womxn?

Note: Please note that we are speaking specifically about Black Womxn. Not womxn of colour broadly, but Black womxn of African descent.

Day 10: You & Black Men

Black Men & White Supremacy

Black men are also either super-humanised or dehumanised, but in ways that are very different to black womxn. Black men's bodies are physically feared by both white womxn and men alike. Their bodies and sexuality are fetishised or reviled. They are painted with stereotypes like thugs, gangsters, savages, drug dealers, and magical negros. And like with black womxn, when they are educated and financially successful, they are seen as the token few. They are expected to be athletes - only useful to white supremacy to the extent that their bodies can be used for physical activity (which of course goes back to slavery and how black people were useful only as physical workhorses and breeders).

In the US of course, there is a fraught and abusive relationship between black men (and black people) and the justice system. This is enabled in part by white people who are constantly calling the police on black men (and black people) for simply existing. Black men are also often seen as a monolithic block of 'Black Men' and not as individual people with complex inner and outer lives. When they are gentle, vulnerable, shy, or anything other than a 'thug' in the white imagination, it comes a surprise to many white-privileged people. Black men's bodies are often sexually desired as "prizes", or for their ability to produce biracial children. Black men are othered by being avoided and criminalised (even if just in the imagination). Or they are fetishised, tokenised, and collected like trophies, which is also just another way of othering.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & Black Men?

- How have you stereotyped, feared, fetishised, avoided, collected, dehumanised, and harmed black men?
- How have you viewed and treated lighter-skinned black men differently to darker-skinned black men?
- How have you wielded your white supremacy against black men?

Note: Please note that we are speaking specifically about Black Men. Not men of colour broadly, but Black men of African descent.

Day 11: You & Black Children

Black Children & White Supremacy

Black children. The black womxn and the black men we talked about in Days 9 and 10 all started off as black children. Black children in the white imagination often start out as cute. Cute brown faces, with cute curly hair. And then at some point they grow up and in the white imagination they're suddenly not so cute anymore. Black boys like Tamir Rice and Trayvon Martin are no longer seen as children, but are feared as men who can harm anyone at any moment. Black girls like Dajerria Becton are dragged and thrown around by police officers. Last year a study¹² found Black girls experience “adultification”— or are seen as older and less innocent than their white counterparts. There are so many more examples I could give of black children not being treated as children but treated as the adult black people they will grow up to be. Black children are both super-humanised (as if they don't experience the same kind of pain, fear, trauma as white children do) and dehumanised (as if they are not worthy of the same level of care and attention that white children are).

Black children are also often pitied in the white imagination, with white people wanting to “save” them — whether from their own blackness or from their black parents, who are seen through the white gaze as being inferior in their ability to parent than white parents. This however is often just another way for white people to affirm themselves as good. It does not take into account what the children actually need, but focuses on white people's twisted imaginings of black people.

Journaling Questions

What have you learnt about You & Black Children?

- How have you or do you view black children when they are young, versus when they get to their teens and young adulthood?
- How have you treated black children differently to white children?
- How have you tokenised and fetishised “cute black kids” or cute mixed kids”?
- How have you wanted to “save” black children?
- How have you viewed and treated lighter-skinned black children differently to darker-skinned black children?

- If you are a white or biracial parent of black children, what anti-racism work have you been doing on yourself and in your communities to make the world a safe space for your children?
- Do you protect your black or biracial children when someone others or racially aggresses them, or do you retreat into White Silence?
- How has your white supremacy shown up when it comes to how you treat or think about black children?

Note: Please note that we are speaking specifically about Black Children. Not children of colour broadly, but Black children of African descent.

Day 12: You & Racist Stereotypes

Indigenous People, People of Colour & White Supremacy

White supremacy has not just hurt and killed black people. It has also hurt and killed Indigenous people and People of Colour (POC) from countries around the world. Racist stereotypes are negative stereotypes about whole groups of people based on their race.

Journaling Questions

Today I want you to think about the Indigenous people from the land where you live, as well as the migrants and descendants of immigrants who live in your country.

- What are the negative and/or fetishising racist stereotypes, beliefs, and thoughts that you hold about these people?
- What racist assumptions do you make about them?
- What racist stereotypes do you hold against Indigenous and POC men, womxn and children in your country?
- In what ways do you paint them all with one brush rather than seeing them as complex individuals?
- How have you been complicit in wielding white supremacy against them in the way that you think about them (or don't think about them)?
- In what ways have you thought of them as less than yourself and other than white people?
- In what ways have you super-humanised some parts of their identities while dehumanising other parts?

Note: When completing today's prompt, please identify people by their race. They are not a monolithic block of 'others.' Write out the racist stereotypes you hold by race, rather than referring to POC broadly.

Day 13: You + Cultural Appropriation

What Is Cultural Appropriation?

Over the past five days, we have been looking at all the ways you have perpetuated the dehumanisation of BIPOC, whether through thought or action. If you are at this point, you have probably begun to realise that your white supremacy is usually present in some form when interacting with someone who doesn't hold white privilege. There is always a power and privilege dynamic of you above them, them below you. This mindset is what made slavery and colonisation possible.

Cultural appropriation is a modern type of colonisation. It's the stealing of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, hair and fashion styles, speaking styles and in the Internet age, forms of 'digital blackface' with GIFs and emojis. I'm not going to spend time explaining all the things that are and aren't cultural appropriation. However, what *is* important to remember is that cultural appropriation happens when there is an imbalance of power and privilege — a dominant culture appropriates from a marginalised culture. Cultural appropriation does not work the other way around. Black people cannot appropriate from white people, because black people do not hold collective power and privilege over white people.

You have spent the last 5 days airing out all the ways you look down on BIPOC and wield your white supremacy against them. Yet those are the same races whose cultures you will appropriate. How then is it a form of *appreciation* of those race's cultures, if you simultaneously see those cultures as less than you?

Why Do You Need To Look At Cultural Appropriation?

The idea that you can "appreciate" rather than "appropriate" from a culture that you see as less than you is highly doubtful. Often times what you may describe as "cultural appreciation" is a form of tokenising and exoticising that culture, while continuing to discard and dehumanise the people of that culture. Often times, the cultural things which are appropriated are stripped of their original cultural context, meaning and significance, and used in such a way as to serve or pleasure whiteness. For example: when white people use African American Vernacular English, they are perceived as more woke or cool. When Black people use AAVE, they are seen as ghetto and less educated.

Cultural appropriation is a form of stealing. And it continues to uphold the white supremacist ideology that white people can take what they pick and choose from BIPOC without consequence. And that when you adopt something from a BIPOC culture, you are somehow enhanced because you have adopted something 'exotic'.

Cultural appropriation is collecting the parts of blackness and brownness that appeal to you, while discarding actual black and brown people. It is racist. Cultural appropriation rewrites history with whiteness at the center. Though yoga has its roots in India as a spiritual practice, it is now seen as a predominantly white-centered practice that is focused largely on physical health. When we think of a yoga teacher we think of a white person. While Native Americans were historically prohibited from practicing their religious practices by laws and government policies, now white New Age spirituality co-opts and financially profits off of these practices, sacred tools, ritual plants, and ceremonial items. Black hairstyles have been vilified as being less beautiful (when worn by black people), or seen as threatening to white women's beauty¹³. But now the predominantly white fashion world, which has historically neglected the care of black hair, co-opts black hair styles like braids, cornrows, and bantu knots while calling them 'edgy' and 'urban'.

What white supremacy once denied to an entire race of people it tried to erase, it now appropriates and commodifies. This is racism.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & Cultural Appropriation?

- How have you or do you appropriate from non-white cultures?
- Why have you felt entitled to appropriate from races you see as less than yours (whether consciously or subconsciously)?
- What actions have you taken when you've seen other white people culturally appropriating? Have you called it out? Or have you used your white silence?
- Have you been called out for cultural appropriation? How did you respond?
- Have you or your teachers profited from cultural appropriation?
- Have you held yourself or your teachers accountable to doing better?
- How have you excused cultural appropriation as being "not that bad"?
- How do you feel about it now, having done 13 days of this work?

Day 14: Part II Review

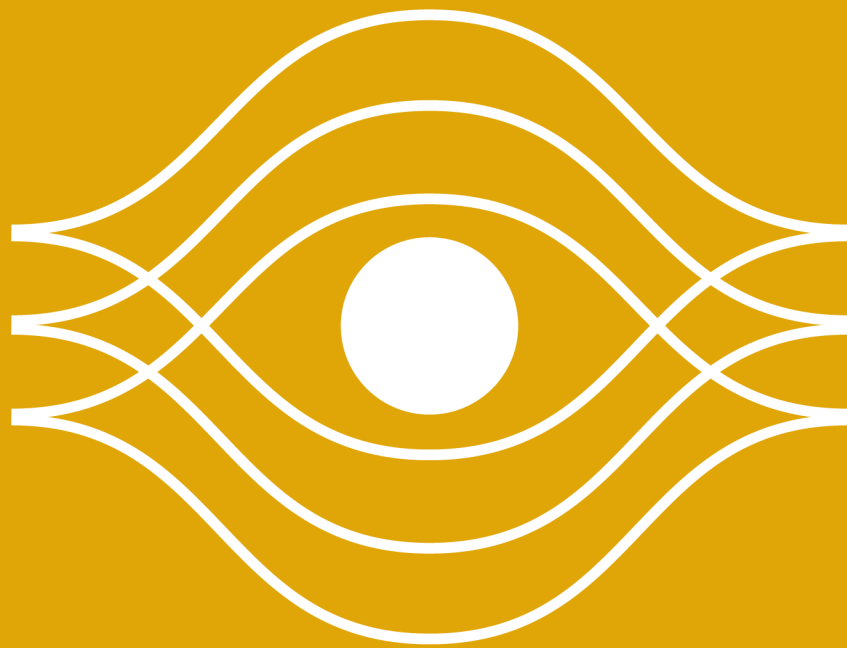
This part of the book was heavy. Ugly. You have probably had multiple thoughts of running away and forgetting you'd ever heard of me, or this workbook. But you're here anyway, because you're starting to understand what the real work is. And once you begin to see it, you can't unsee it.

So what have you begun to see that you can't unsee?

- What have you begun to unearth about yourself when it comes to white supremacy?
- What have these last 13 days (and especially the last 6 days) shown you about how white supremacy works through you?
- What have you learnt about the dehumanising ways you think about and treat BIPOC, and why?
- What have you learnt about you and anti-blackness?
- If you came to this workbook thinking you were “one of the good white people” or an ally to BIPOC, how do you feel about that now?
- If you were craving a reward for doing this work, how do you feel about that now?
- How are you thinking differently about your White Privilege, White Fragility, White Tone Policing, White Silence, White Superiority, and White Exceptionalism now?

How are you thinking differently about your white supremacy now?

Part III: Days 15 - 21



Part III: Days 15-21

In Part III we look at some deeper aspects of internalised white supremacy including apathy, centering and performative allyship.

Day 15: You & White Apathy

Day 16: You & White Centering

Day 17: You & Tokenism

Day 18: You & White Saviourism

Day 19: You & Optical Allyship

Day 20: You & Being Called Out

Day 21: Review

During Part III there are videos to watch for days 15, 17 and 19.

Day 15: You + White Apathy

What Is White Apathy?

Apathy (noun): lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern.

Synonyms: indifference, unconcern, passivity, detachment, insensitivity, dispassion, disregard.

White apathy is a feeling of apathy about racism by white-privileged people.

How Does White Apathy Show Up?

Here are a few examples of White Apathy in action:

- White Apathy shows up as laziness, tiredness, fear, boredom, numbness, perfectionism, turning away from the news, and other apathetic feelings and actions when it comes to engaging in anti-racism practice.
- White Apathy shows up when people have done very little anti-racism work, so they don't understand just how urgent this work is.
- It shows up as White Silence, White Exceptionalism and inaction because of your attachment to the idea that you are a "good white person".
- It shows up as using your high sensitivity, high introversion, or using mental health and personal issues to opt out of doing the work (ignoring the fact that there are BIPOC who are also highly sensitive, highly introverted and have mental health and personal issues who cannot opt out of being at the receiving end of (your) racism).
- It also shows up as a result of feeling overwhelmed by how urgent anti-racism work is.
- You may well be feeling White Apathy right now after completing Days 1-14 of this workbook. You may be feeling overwhelmed, fatigued, helpless, impotent and depressed because of everything you have pulled up from inside of you so far. You may be finding other ways to distract yourself from this work, becoming too busy with other aspects of your life so that you can run away from this work.
- White Apathy arises as a self-preservation response to protect yourself from having to face your complicity in the oppression that is white supremacy.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Apathy?

White Apathy towards racism is another important component that keeps white supremacy in place as the status quo. White supremacy has kept you numb and apathetic to really doing this work up until now. It's not that you didn't care about BIPOC. It's that you didn't care enough. It's that you didn't feel you had an incentive to care enough. There was no personal gain for you for doing this work. In fact, doing this work would mean losing things and you knew it. You didn't care enough to unravel all the ways in which you are complicit, in which you have actively done harm, in which you may need to release your white privilege and go against white supremacy in order for real change to happen. All the risks you would have to take outside of your comfort zone of privilege.

You may now be realising that apathy is like a fog that shrouds you from really giving a damn about BIPOC. Now that you are doing this work not just intellectually, but actually physically feeling it in your body, you're realising that you cannot be apathetic anymore. That continuing to remain apathetic is the same as knowingly and intentionally being racist and upholding white supremacy. When you allow white apathy to take over, you allow white supremacy to re-assert itself as the comfortable status quo.

Journaling Questions

Today I'd like you to examine two things:

- In what ways have you been apathetic when it comes to racism?
- In what ways have you observed white-privileged people in your communities (family, friends, work) being apathetic when it comes to racism?

Day 16: You + White Centering

What Is White Centering?

Under white supremacy, whiteness is centered. Meaning, whiteness is seen as the norm. BIPOC are seen as “other”, because whiteness is seen as “normal”. Whiteness is seen as the highest value measure of rightness, goodness, truth, excellence and worthiness. White centering is the centering of white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else.

How Does White Centering Show Up?

White-centered values and modes of being, creating, speaking, existing, protesting, etc. are what are seen as the most right and the most desired. Conversely, when whiteness is not centered (e.g. when BIPOC-only spaces are created, when white feelings are ignored in racial conversations, when hashtags like #blackgirlmagic are used, when cultural appropriation by white people is called out, when BIPOC are in leadership positions, etc.), there is often a white backlash. How dare BIPOC be centered, elevated, celebrated and affirmed over whiteness? Whiteness is so used to taking up space in all spaces, that when it is restricted or a boundary is put in place to center or protect BIPOC, its reaction is often one of white fragility, tone-policing, white superiority, white exceptionalism or just straight up violence (whether verbal or physical).

Why Do You Need To Look At White Centering?

White supremacy is what creates white centering. White supremacy says that white is what is at the centre. White is what should be valued, protected and privileged above all else. When you take part in white centering, you take part in white supremacy. When you learn what white centering is, you can learn how to decenter whiteness. Decentering whiteness does not mean you have to take a position below BIPOC. This idea simply feeds into the hierarchical paradigm that drives white supremacy - that one race must be above the others. White supremacy makes you fear your whiteness being decentered because you have been taught to believe that if you are not centered then you are being oppressed. That not being at the centre means being diminished. That living in an inclusive way means living as equals to the people that you have been conditioned to believe are below you. Decentering whiteness means learning to

stop upholding white as the norm, and instead learning to live and operate in a more inclusive way. When whiteness is decentered, white supremacy loses its power.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & White Centering?

- How is your world view a white-centered one?
- How have you reacted when whiteness or you as a white person are not centered in spaces and conversations?
- How have you judged BIPOC when they don't measure up to white centered standards?
- How have you centered yourself as a white privileged person in non-white spaces and conversations?
- What are you beginning to understand about how white centering affects and others BIPOC?

Day 17: You & Tokenism

What Is Tokenism?

Tokenism occurs when BIPOC are used as props to serve white supremacy.

How Does Tokenism Show Up?

There are 3 types of tokenism that come to mind:

1. When a dominantly white organisation or event engages a few “token” BIPOC or BIPOC culture to give the visual effect of “diversity”, without actually being committed to inclusion or anti-racism in practice or policy.
2. When a white-privileged person or organisation puts the expectation on token BIPOC to carry the emotional labour of discussing and working on all matters related to racism, thus reducing them simply to their race.
3. When a white privileged person uses their proximity to BIPOC to “prove” they can’t be racist. E.g. I can’t be racist because my partner/ex/children/family members/best friends/teachers/favourite writers, entertainers, activists, athletes, entrepreneurs, etc. are BIPOC.

Why Do You Need To Look At Tokenism?

In all cases of tokenism, BIPOC are used as token props to prove one’s non-racism. It goes without saying that this is dehumanising because it strips away BIPOC’s humanity, and treats us as “get out of racism free cards” that can be whipped out at any time. It is particularly insidious when used against another BIPOC, because it is weaponising one BIPOC against another (e.g. A black woman calls you out on your racism and you shoot back with the fact that you have a black child/best friend/partner, so you can’t be racist).

Tokenism of BIPOC is a white supremacist act because it still places BIPOC as objects that can be used to further a white person or organisation’s agenda. Tokenism may look flattering on the outside, but the truth of it is that it uses BIPOC as if we are things, not people. Tokenism says that BIPOC are only valuable to you to the degree that they can be used by you for your own agenda (whether consciously or unconsciously).

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & Tokenism?

- How have you justified your racism by using your proximity to BIPOC?
- How have you tokenised BIPOC to prove your words, thoughts or actions are not racist?
- How have you tokenised and weaponised one BIPOC against other BIPOC?
- If you are a business owner, how have you tokenised BIPOC or BIPOC culture in your brand?
- If you believe you have never tokenised BIPOC, how have you stayed silent when you saw it happening?
- When you've lauded organisations/events for being "diverse" because they appear to have a few BIPOC, how much further have you looked into their practices and policies?
- How have you mistaken the "look" of diversity for actual inclusivity and equity?

Day 18: White Saviorism

What Is White Saviorism?

White saviourism seems benign on the surface: Trying to “help” the marginalised. Trying to “give a voice to the voiceless”. Trying to advocate for people who “cannot advocate for themselves”. In reality though, white saviourism is another form of white supremacy. White saviourism, like colonialism, assumes that BIPOC need white people to save them. That without white intervention, instruction and guidance, BIPOC will be left helpless. That without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen as below and less than white in the white imagination, will not survive. It puts BIPOC in the position of helpless children who need to be saved by the supposedly more capable and wiser white people.

How Does White Saviorism Show Up?

During week 3 of the live #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Instagram challenge we looked at anti-blackness and racist stereotypes. Many of the challenge participants spoke about wanting to adopt and “save” black babies. A fair number of them spoke about wanting to “save” black men. Many of them have travelled or wanted to travel as volunteers to Africa, Latin America and Asia to go “save the poor people” there. Many people of white privilege often feel the urge to step in and speak on behalf of BIPOC’s needs, as if we cannot speak for ourselves. And many have believed that their mere presence could save BIPOC from the oppression they face.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Saviorism?

White saviorism is patronising, condescending, and an attempt to assuage one’s own white guilt. It may look like an attempt to make things right, but it only serves to empower white people by making you feel better about yourself. It is actively disempowering to BIPOC, and continues to reinforce the white supremacist ideas that 1) BIPOC are only useful to the extent that they can be used for white interest, and 2) White people are more capable of knowing what is best for BIPOC than they know for themselves. White saviorism is a form of colonialism.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & White Saviorism?

- Have you stepped in to try and “save” BIPOC or have you thought about it?
- Have you tried to intervene, offer instruction or guidance believing that your (superior white) view would offer the best solutions?
- Have you seen yourself as an activist whose job is to give a voice to the so-called voiceless?
- Have you spoken over BIPOC because you felt that you could explain their experiences better than they can?
- Have you thought of dismantling racism as something that you needed to give your “help” to as some sort of good white benefactor?
- Have you been taken aback when BIPOC have told you that they don’t need your “help”, they need you to be quiet, listen, do the work and follow BIPOC leadership?
- And if you have done any or all of the above, ask yourself “Why?”.

Day 19: You + Optical Allyship

What Is Optical Allyship?

Maybe you've heard the term Performative Allyship? That was the term I have always used until my friend and founder of MamaGlow.com, Latham Thomas introduced me to the term 'optical allyship'. Back in May 2018, she shared a post called "We are not interested in Optical Allyship". There is something about the word 'optical' that feels more resonant for me, almost like an optical illusion. Optical allyship aka performative allyship is white supremacy in action because it's all about you. Optical allyship is the visual illusion of allyship without the work of allyship. It's jumping to call oneself an activist or an ally without actually risking anything. It's performing allyship for the ally cookie of being called courageous and inspiring.

How Does Optical Allyship Show Up?

Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples of optical allyship:

- Jumping on the activism or allyship bandwagon without doing any real self reflection work on your personal racism.
- Creating the "look" of being an ally by tokenising BIPOC.
- Reposting anti-racism posts and virtue signaling so that everyone knows you're an ally, but not doing much more work beyond that.
- Positioning yourself as an ally or activist leader, while continue to step over, talk over, speak for and take over the spaces of BIPOC.
- Distancing yourself from your own white supremacy by continuously complaining about how awful other white people are.
- Creating campaigns and movements for anti racism that are really about building your social capital or assuaging your white guilt.
- Only showing up for the fun, easy, glamorous work, and disappearing when its time to do the real work.
- Clinging to symbols like pink pussy hats, safety pins and hashtags, over doing the real work.
- Bringing activist words and BIPOC images into your brand to make your business look more "woke".
- Doing this #MeAndWhiteSupremacy work because you secretly hope it will make you look more "woke".
- Acting like an ally in public but harming BIPOC behind closed doors.

- Going out of your way to be extra nice to BIPOC with the hopes you'll be seen as a good white person.
- Showing up only when it makes you feel or look good, or when you feel you get some sort of reward out of it beyond just doing the right thing.
- Only sharing the work of BIPOC who you've deemed to be palatable to the White Gaze.
- Doing the bare minimum to look like an ally, without really risking anything.

Why Do You Need To Look At Optical Allyship?

Like with tokenism and white saviorism, optical allyship is all about you. It's all about how it makes you look and feel. It is not a form of anti-racist practice, despite how it may look. It is another form of white centering. It is a way to continue to affirm yourself as a person of white privilege while either not actually being an ally to BIPOC, or actively doing harm to BIPOC. Tokenism, white saviorism and optical allyship all seem on the surface like really great ways to combat racism. However underneath the surface they continue to perpetuate the ideologies that white supremacy rests on - that in the end, any actions taken must somehow benefit those with white privilege at the expense of, to the detriment of, and on the backs of, BIPOC.

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about how you perform Optical Allyship?

- Which of the above examples of optical allyship have you taken part in, and why?
- How is your allyship a performance, an optical illusion, and a way to continue to serve you?

Day 20: You & Being Called Out

You & Being Called Out

If being seen as a “good white person” has been your biggest desire, then being called out for your racism is your biggest nightmare. Because of fragility, superiority, exceptionalism and all the topics we’ve covered so far, if you are not committed to a life-long anti-racist practice then you do not do well when you are called out for causing harm through racism.

Common Reactions When Being Called Out

- Becoming defensive, minimising, derailing, crying, falling silent, flouncing/ dramatically leaving the space or conversation, deleting everything and running away (see Day 2: White Fragility).
- Talking about your intent while ignoring your impact (see Day 6: White Exceptionalism).
- Claiming you’re being attacked, or characterising the person(s) calling you out as aggressive and irrational (see Day 3: Tone Policing).
- Pretending that you ‘don’t see colour’ (see Day 8: Seeing Colour).
- Pulling out your token BIPOC to prove you’re not racist, or talking about all the good things you’ve done for BIPOC. (see Day 17: Tokenism).
- Talking about how the person calling you out doesn’t “know the contents of your heart”.
- Having to have the last word (see Day 5: White Superiority).
- And other white fragile reactions that center you as the victim, instead of the one who did harm.

Why Do You Need To Look At Being Called Out?

If you are so used to being seen as virtuous, “nice” and right (because of White Centering), and if you harbour deep anti-blackness and racist thoughts, then of course you are not going to be able to accept being called out. Furthermore, it also means you can’t bring yourself to give a sincere apology when you have done harm, because at some level you still believe your intent matters more than your impact, and that you shouldn’t have to apologise to people that you see as less than you. The reaction you have when you are called out tells us so much about how much anti-racism work you are or are not doing.

Lastly, the fear of being called out is a dangerous deterrent to true anti-racism practice. If you are constantly afraid of doing the wrong thing and being called out for it, then your anti-racism work will easily slip into perfectionism; which will lead to White Fragility (because you haven't built the resilience needed for doing this work), Tone Policing (because you can only handle being called out if the message is delivered to you in a certain tone), White Silence (for fear of saying the wrong thing), White Exceptionalism (because you will continue to think you are the exception to the rule), White Apathy (because you will think "what's the point if I'm going to be called out?"), Tokenism (because you will want a BIPOC to protect you from the pain of being called out), and Optical Allyship (because you will be more concerned with not being called out, than with simply doing the work).

You *will* be called out as you do this work. That's how you get better at anti-racism practice and dismantling your internalised white supremacy. The question is: Are you well-equipped to handle being called out in a way that will help you move forward, or will it simply lead you to falling apart and reverting back to white supremacist thoughts and behaviours?

Journaling Questions

What have you learned about You & Being Called Out?

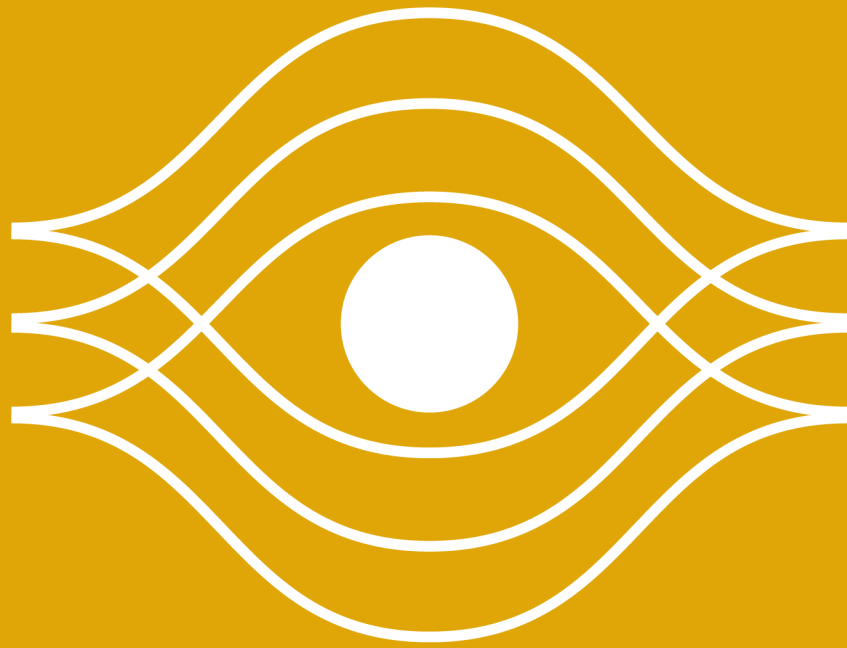
- What have you felt, thought, said or done when called out, or how do you think you would react if it hasn't happened yet?
- What about apologising after being called out - have you been able to do that sincerely, or have you swept it under the rug hoping no one would notice?
- Most white people who have done racist harm to me have never come back to apologise sincerely, or make amends. Are you one of those people who cannot apologise to BIPOC?

Day 21: Part III Review

This week we covered White Apathy, White Centering, Tokenism, White Saviourism, Optical Allyship and Being Called Out.

- What more have you learned about yourself and your unique, personal brand of white supremacy?
- In what ways have you realized that behaviours you've thought "weren't that bad" were actually very harmful?
- Where are you beginning to see your biggest work is when it comes to your personal anti-racism work?
- Where are you starting to do your work, and where are you still holding back?
- What other dots have you started connecting when reflecting on the work you have done so far?

Part IV: Days 22 - 28



Part IV: Days 22-28

In Part IV, we look at your relationships with other white privileged people as well as your personal values and commitments to this work.

Day 22: You & White Feminism

Day 23: You & White Leaders

Day 24: You & Your Friends

Day 25: You & Your Family

Day 26: You & Your Values

Day 27: You & Losing Privilege

Day 28: You & Your Commitments

During Part IV there are no videos to watch.

Day 22: You & White Feminism

What Is White Feminism?

As a feminist, I cannot complete this book without talking about feminism. In this context we are talking about white feminism, or what you may have considered 'mainstream' feminism. White feminism is feminism that focuses on the struggle of white women. It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender (usually cis-gender), but does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections which are just as important including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

How Does White Feminism Show Up?

White feminists will talk about the pay gap between men and women, without referencing the pay gap between white women and BIWOC (Black, Indigenous & Womxn of Colour). White feminists will tell BIWOC that talking about race is divisive, and that we should focus first on being united under gender. White feminist spirituality culturally appropriates and white-washes BIPOC spirituality. White feminists showed up for womxn at the Women's March, but don't show up for black womxn at Black Lives Matter marches. White feminism will ignore the black maternal health crisis because it doesn't impact them. White feminism centers white women leaders, while undermining and betraying BIWOC leaders. White feminism has never read the works of Black feminist leaders like Kimberlé Crenshaw, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Alice Walker, Angela Davis or other non-white feminists. White feminism doesn't believe Muslim feminists are "real" feminists.

Why Do You Need To Look At White Feminism?

White feminism is white supremacy in disguise. It is only concerned with white women gaining parity with white men. And it will throw anyone who is not white under the bus to gain that parity. White feminism asks BIWOC to ignore their race and focus only on their gender - as if our race isn't as important as our gender. When Sojourner Truth said '*Aint I a woman?*,' she was asking if her blackness made her less than a white woman. Did her blackness erase her womanhood? Did she have to erase her blackness in order to gain parity with white women (something that she of course could and would never do)? The antidote to the poison of white feminism, and by extension white supremacy, is intersectional feminism. But intersectionality is not something that

can be reached without a constant and unwavering commitment to anti-racist practice – and without placing BIWOC, especially black womxn, at the center.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & White Feminism?

- To what extent has your idea of feminism been under the issue of gender only?
- How has your feminism neglected or minimised the issues of BIPOC?
- How has your feminism rejected, discounted or simply ignored BIPOC leaders?
- How has your feminism been white-centered?

Day 23: You & White Leaders

You & White Leaders

Over the last 22 prompts, you have dug deep exploring the white supremacist thoughts, beliefs, behaviours and motivations within yourself. For the next few days of the workbook we are examining how these behaviours play out in relationship between you and other white people in your life, and those who have an impact on your life. Today we are looking at You & White Leaders. Specifically, white people in positions of leadership, authority and power who you come into contact with. This includes for example: teachers, coaches, mentors, authors, speakers, management at your work or other institutions, worship leaders, community leaders, project leaders, politicians, etc. It also includes yourself if you are in a leadership position, and your peers who are in leadership positions too.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & White Leaders?

- Knowing what you now know about white supremacist behaviours across Days 1-22, how do you respond when you witness white leaders behaving in these white supremacist ways? Do you call them in/out on it? Do you ask them to do better? Do you project your own white fragility on to them and fear calling them in/out, because you yourself fear being called in/out? Do you act like it didn't happen and keep buying their products and services, or following their leadership regardless?
- Do you challenge white leaders, or do you silently seethe inside while hoping someone else will do it? Do you allow them to do the bare minimum and give them a cookie when they do (whether through speech or in your mind)? Had you even noticed before this work that your white leaders have been showing up in these ways? And if you now realise they have, how do you plan to respond (if at all)?
- If it's you that's in the leadership position, how do you plan to respond to your own behaviours going forward? Do you understand that holding yourself accountable to doing better also includes holding your leaders accountable to doing better, too? Does your fear of loss of privilege and comfort hold you back from asking your leaders to do better?

Day 24: You & Your Friends

You & Your Friends

We are continuing to look at the personal connections you have and how you respond when you notice white supremacist behaviours playing out. Often times there is a reluctance to rock the boat by calling in/out racism when you see it, or doing so in such a gentle and subtle way that it is essentially ineffective.

In today's prompt, we are not just talking about your closest friends, as that can often be the easiest place to speak up. There is already built up rapport, connection, and implicit understanding that the call in/out is not necessarily received as a personal attack (although sometimes it can be received that way!). Instead, I invite you to cast your view out to ALL your friendship and acquaintance circles. Your co-workers. Your peers. Other parents in your community. Other students in your school. Other worshipers in your spiritual community. Other entrepreneurs in your business circles. Other artists in your creative circles. Family friends. Your partner's friends. Friends of friends who you've spent time with. And so on.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & Your Friends?

- How have you responded when you've witnessed racist words and actions from these people in your life?
- Have you stayed silent or made excuses for them in your mind?
- Have you thought it wasn't worth the hassle because of the discomfort of rocking the boat? Or have you seen it as your responsibility to address it with them since you have more influence over them because of your interpersonal connection?
- Are there certain people you feel more comfortable speaking up to than others?
- Are there certain people you continue to stay in friendship with even though they are problematic and refuse to change?
- Have you risked any of your friendships to call in/out, even if nobody was going to give you an ally cookie for it?
- How do you feel about your friends who are not doing their own personal anti-racism work, and what responsibility do you feel to encourage them to do their work?

Day 25: You + Your Family

You & Your Family

You knew we were going to get to this day. You & Your Family. I will preface this prompt by saying *everyone* has family stuff. Everyone has family dynamics that range from hurt feelings to trauma, and lots of family secrets. And so bringing race/racism into these dynamics is a lot more complicated than with your friends or co-workers. However, your unique and complex family dynamics do not exempt you from doing this work in your family circles. BIPOC have complicated family dynamics too. And on top of that they still have to deal with (your) racism.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & Your Family?

- How do you feel about speaking up about racism and white supremacist beliefs and actions to your family members? Do you speak up or do you remain silent? Do you excuse your family members' racial aggressions because it's "not worth it" and you want to keep the peace? Do you justify your silence with your family by referencing your mental health? And do you understand that BIPOC have mental health issues too and *still* have to deal with (your and your family's) racism? Do you excuse your elders' racism because they are "from another time"?
- If you are a parent, do you speak to your children about racism? And not the "we don't see colour" talk, but the "white privilege" and "white supremacy" talk? Do you realise how early BIPOC have to talk to their kids about racism? Did your parents or caregivers ever speak to you about racism?
- What racist beliefs have you internalised from your family?
- Do you believe talking about racism is important, but not important enough to disrupt your family dynamics?
- To what extent do you place white comfort over anti-racism in your family?

Day 26: You & Your Values

You & Your Values

There are now only 3 days left of this workbook. However as you will have come to realise by now, this work is life-long. And so in these last 3 days, we are going to look at some areas to help you prepare for staying committed to the work after these 28 days are over.

Today we are looking at You & Your Values. Depending on your personal values or belief system, you may call it your spiritual values, your religious values, or just the core values and guiding principles that you live your life by. Throughout this workbook we have been unpacking this idea of what it means to be a “good white person”. By now you may have realised that clinging to this notion has actually done more harm than good, because it has prevented you from doing the real work. Through a few of the bonus videos included with this workbook, I’ve invited you to redefine what being “good” means to you. Not how others perceive you (hello White Exceptionalism, White Saviourism, and Optical Allyship!). But whether or not you are actually living in integrity with your core values.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & Your Values?

- Today I’m inviting you to take a look at your core values and beliefs and examine, in the context of white supremacy: To what extent have your values helped or hindered your ability to do this work?
- I also invite you to look at whether your core values and beliefs have been weaponised to do harm to BIPOC in the past (e.g. spiritual bypassing, white centering, superiority, “positive vibes only”, “we are all one race, the human race”, Law of Attraction, etc).
- I invite you to take an honest look at whether or not you have been living in integrity with these values and beliefs when it comes to white supremacy (e.g. Has your spiritual practice included justice? Has the practice of your core values and beliefs extended outside of your white bubble? Have you actually treated everyone as if we are one race, the human race? In focusing on being “nice”

and “civil”, have you tone policed BIPOC when talking about their experiences of racism, etc.?).

- And lastly, what new core values and beliefs do you feel you need to integrate after doing this work in order to better practice life-long anti-racism?

Day 27: You & Losing Privilege

You & Losing Privilege

We are coming full circle now. When you first started this workbook, Day 1 was all about You & White Privilege. Over the last 26 days you have explored what that privilege means in ways that you've probably never done before. How your privilege has harmed BIPOC. You will also have begun to realise that in order for change to happen, you must lose some of that privilege. I'm not talking about using your privilege for good in some sort of White Saviourist Super-Ally way. This isn't about rescuing or helping BIPOC by becoming a voice for the voiceless. I'm talking about what privileges, advantages and comforts you must be willing to let go of so that BIPOC can have more dignity in their lives.

White privilege is a bubble that protects you, rewards you with unearned advantages, gives you the belief that you are entitled to be in all spaces all the time, shields you from showing up for BIPOC, and grants you a feeling of authority and power.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & Losing Privilege?

- In what ways will your privilege need to change in order for you to consistently practice anti-racism?
- How will you need to change the way you take up space?
- How will you need to show up differently (or at all) for BIPOC?
- What risks must you be willing to take? What sacrifices must you be willing to make?
- What comforts must you be willing to lose?
- What ways will you need to take greater responsibility?
- How will you need to de-center whiteness and the White Gaze?
- How will you need to lose privilege in your friendships, workspaces, businesses, families, spiritual communities and other white-centered spaces?
- And are you willing to lose your white privilege after everything you've learned here?

Day 28: You & Your Commitments

You & Your Commitments

We are at the finish line of this workbook! But certainly not at the finish line of this life-long work. What you have uncovered over the last 27 days can no longer be hidden again. You can't go back to sleep. You can't unsee and unknow what you now see and know. (And if you were to choose to, you'd be worse off than when you began this work on Day 1). Although this is the last prompt of this workbook, it is just the beginning of this work.

Now that we have come to the end of this workbook, the question is how are you going to stay committed from Day 29 onwards? This question is actually one I want you to consider revisiting on a daily basis. Because all the learning and a-ha moments in the world don't mean anything if they aren't followed through with committed actions for change.

Two days ago we looked at your values, yesterday we looked at what you are willing to lose. Today we are looking at what commitments you are ready to make to practice your life-long anti-racism. Please note that I am not talking about promises. You cannot make promises that you will break. But you can pledge commitments. And you can re-pledge daily. So even when you slip up, forget, regress into old white supremacist habits and screw up - you can re-pledge to your commitments.

Journaling Questions

What Have You Learned About You & Your Commitments?

Today's prompt has two parts:

- 1. Write 3 concrete, out-of-your-comfort-zone actions you are committed to taking in the next two weeks towards anti-racism.***

These could be uncomfortable conversations you need to have, significant changes in your life you need to make, someone you need to call in/out, sincere apologies you need to make, announcements you need to make, etc. Make these actions as SPECIFIC as possible (what, where, when, who, why) and also make clear how you will be held accountable for these actions (e.g. choose and notify an accountability partner).

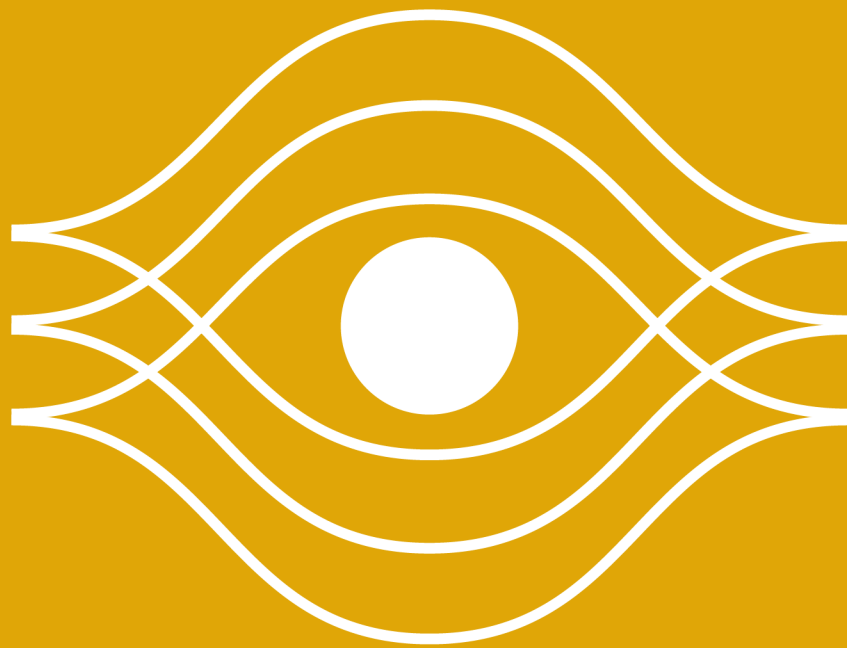
2. *Starting today and over the next week, begin to write down your commitments to this work.*

Craft a commitments statement that you **will** be able to refer to everyday, and especially on the days when you screw up. Your commitments are not what you will try to do or hope to do, but what you will do.

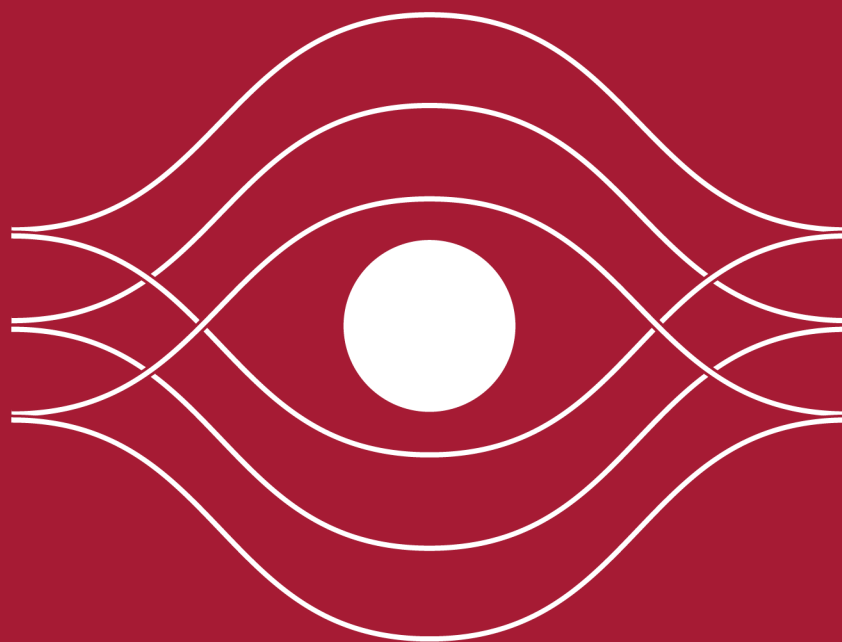
- To craft this document, go back through all the journaling notes you have made when answering the prompts in this workbook, and recall the ways you've done harm and the ways in which you are committed to change. Think about what you are ready to commit to in your personal life, your family life, your friendships, your work and business life, your community life.
- Where and how are you committed to showing up? Where and how are you committed to stepping back and de-centering yourself? Where and how are you committed to continuing your life-long education? Where and how are you committed to putting skin in the game instead of staying on the side-lines? Where and how are you committed to being a good ancestor?
- Commitments are strong statements of solidarity and action. They are not guarantees that you will actually do the work. But they will help focus you so you know what work you are supposed to be doing. COMMIT to this life-long work. Write it down and then live your life accordingly.

Remember: You don't have to write it all down today. Begin today but continue this over the coming days, weeks, months and years. Your Commitment Statement is not a solid document set in stone. Treat it as a living, breathing, evolving and ever deepening statement that reflects your own growth in this work and your commitment to anti-racism as a life-long practice.

Continuing The Work



Chapter 12



Now What? Continuing The Work After Day 28

What happens on Day 29? Does the work stop now? Are you finally no longer racist?

If you've gone through the entire 28 days of this workbook, you'll know that the work never stops, and that you'll never not be racist - but you can consciously choose to be anti-racist.

Reaching the end of this book does not mean you have made it. In fact, it means you are just beginning. This work is lifelong work. There is no end to reach, but rather a daily, moment-by-moment choice to live and work in ways that are as non-oppressive to BIPOC as possible. This will be hard because white supremacy is and will continue to be deeply rooted within you, and because racism isn't just about privilege and prejudice, but also about power. This internal work of examining, reflecting, changing and acting differently is just one prong in the work to dismantle white supremacy. For real change to happen, you must also be challenging systems and working to create structural changes, dismantling white supremacy institutionally, as well as personally.

Even though it is just one prong, this internal work is incredibly important. Systems don't change unless the people who uphold them do. And each person is responsible for upholding the system. So it is your responsibility within yourself, your communities, your educational institutions, your corporations, and your government institutions to do the work that you can do everyday, to create the change the world needs - by creating change within yourself. Use this workbook as a tool to return to again and again. Keep it close by and use it to interrogate where you are causing harm, and how you can do better. Remember what you learn here and practice being better.

As you continue the work from Day 29 onwards, here are some important tips to support you in continuing to do your work:

- Don't just go through the journaling prompts once. Return to them again and again as needed. Go deeper each time. Dig out more, so that you can do less harm.

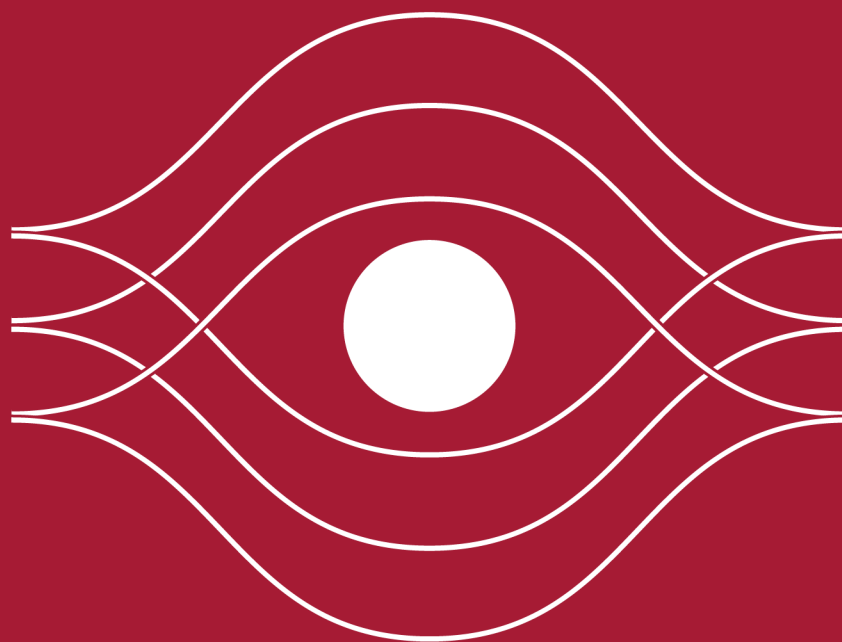
- Seek out anti-racist educators and teachers. Attend their classes, courses, workshops and events. Self-reflecting is important, but it is not enough. Put yourself in spaces where you can learn directly from anti-racist educators. For teacher recommendations, check out the black womxn I have interviewed who specifically do this work.
- Make curating your anti-racism education and following through on your action-taking your responsibility. Find articles, podcasts, books, publications, and other resources to expand your understanding of historic and present time oppression. Don't ever stop learning. Show up at meetings, rallies, marches and fundraisers. Show up, period.
- Financially support organisations, non-profits, political candidates, educators and activists who are working hard for BIPOC rights.
- Uplift, centre, pay and elevate BIPOC leaders and teachers. You don't need to pass them the mic. You need to listen to what they have to say on their own mics.
- Remember your commitments to living your life differently, with integrity and in ways that are healing and liberatory for the collective. Live these commitments daily. Know that we need all of us. All of us.

Lastly, there will be different categories of people who read this book:

- There will be those who read this book because they want others to think they are a good white person.
- There will be those who read this book because they genuinely want to do the work, but they tap out after a few days because it challenged them too much and required too much of them.
- There will be those who will use this book to become better white supremacists - learning the lingo and the arguments, and then weaponising them against BIPOC to continue to build their ego, and maintain the status quo.
- And then, there will be those who are really about this work. Who worked through the entire book, and will continue to use it as a tool to re-examine their complicity in white supremacy and how to dismantle it - both within themselves and in their communities.

You get to decide which category you belong to. You get to decide whether or not you become a good ancestor.

Chapter 13



A Note On This Workbook Being Free

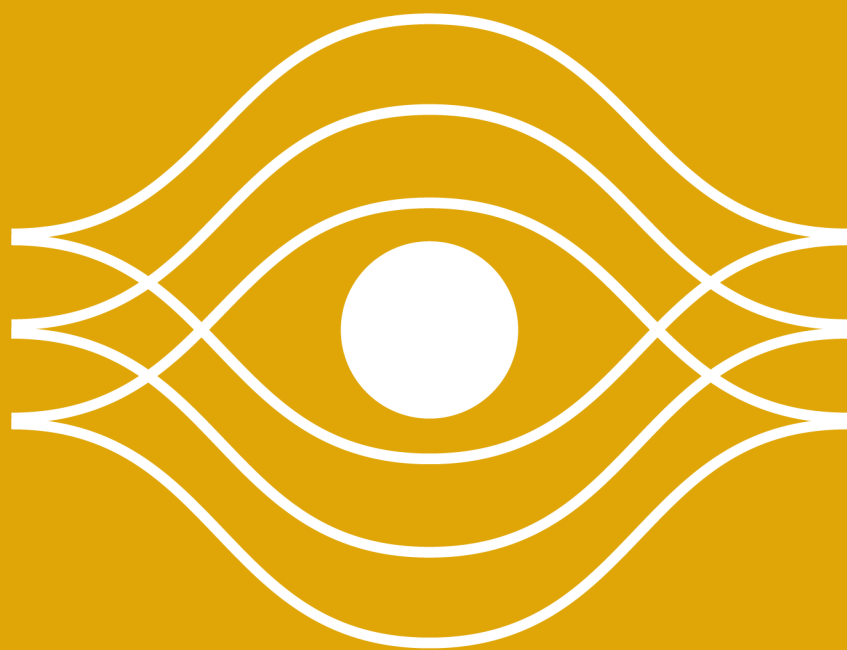
During the course of writing this workbook, I made the decision to offer it for free. My reasons for doing so are personal, and I stand by my decision. However, I do understand that as part of doing this work you may feel that you want to pay me for the emotional and intellectual labour and time investment it took me to put this workbook together.

If you do wish to pay me for this workbook, or my work in general, there are two ways that you can do so:

1. By making a PayPal donation to me of any sum to www.paypal.me/laylasaad
2. By become a monthly paying patron of mine on my Patreon page at www.patreon.com/laylafsaad

Thank you.

glossary



A glossary of terms used in this workbook.

AAVE

African American Vernacular English.

Ally Cookies

Praise or other rewards for not being racist. Usually sought out by white privileged people who are more concerned with personal gain than justice.

Anti-Blackness

Defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as being opposed to or hostile toward black people. Anti-blackness can be found all around the world.

BIPOC

Black, Indigenous, People of Colour.

BIWOC

Black, Indigenous, Womxn of Colour.

Cultural Appropriation

A modern type of colonisation that involves the stealing, appropriation and sometimes commercialisation of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, hair and dress fashion styles, speaking styles and in the Internet age, forms of “digital blackface”. Cultural appropriation happens when there is an imbalance of power and privilege - a dominant culture appropriates from a marginalised culture. Cultural appropriation does not work the other way around. BIPOC cannot appropriate from white people because BIPOC do not hold collective power and privilege over white people.

#MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle

Based on the book and the process called *The Circle Way*, this is the preferred and recommended structure and methodology for working through the Me And White Supremacy Workbook in group settings.

Misogynoir

Misogyny directed specifically towards black womxn.

Optical Allyship

The visual illusion of allyship without the actual work of allyship. Also known as performative allyship.

POC

People of Colour

Spiritual Bypassing

A term introduced in the early 1980s by John Welwood, a Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist. Described as a "tendency to use spiritual ideas and practices to sidestep or avoid facing unresolved emotional issues, psychological wounds, and unfinished developmental tasks"¹⁴.

The Circle Way

A structure for deep conversation and wise outcomes based on a methodology founded by Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea in 1992, and fully expounded upon in their 2010 book, *The Circle Way: A Leader In Every Chair*. The Circle Way is the preferred and recommended structure and methodology that #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circles should follow for working through the Me And White Supremacy Workbook in group settings.

The White Gaze

The white supremacist lens through which white privileged people see BIPOC. The white gaze also describes how BIPOC are defined, limited, stereotyped and judged in the white imagination - usually to the detriment of BIPOC.

Tokenism

When BIPOC are used as props to serve whiteness and white supremacy.

Tone Policing

A tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who don't by focusing on the tone of what is being said, rather than the actual content. Tone policing doesn't only have to be spoken out loud publicly. People of white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors.

White Apathy

A feeling of apathy, indifference, unconcern, detachment, dispassion and disregard about racism by white privileged people.

White Centering

The centering of white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else. The belief, whether conscious or not, that whiteness is “normal” and BIPOC are “other”.

White Exceptionalism

The belief that you as a white person are exempt from white supremacy. That you are “one of the good ones”. That this work doesn’t apply to you.

White Feminism

A feminism that focuses on the struggle of white women. It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender (usually cis-gender), but does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections which are just as important including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

White Fragility

A phrase coined by author Dr. Robin DiAngelo, and is defined as “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.”

White Privilege

A phrase coined by Peggy McIntosh her 1988 paper called *White Privilege And Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies* as follows:

“I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks.”

White Saviorism

A colonialist idea that assumes that BIPOC need white people to save them. That without white intervention, instruction and guidance, BIPOC will be left helpless. That

without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen as below and less than white in the white imagination, will not survive.

White Silence

Occurs when people with white privilege stay complicity silent when it comes to issues of race.

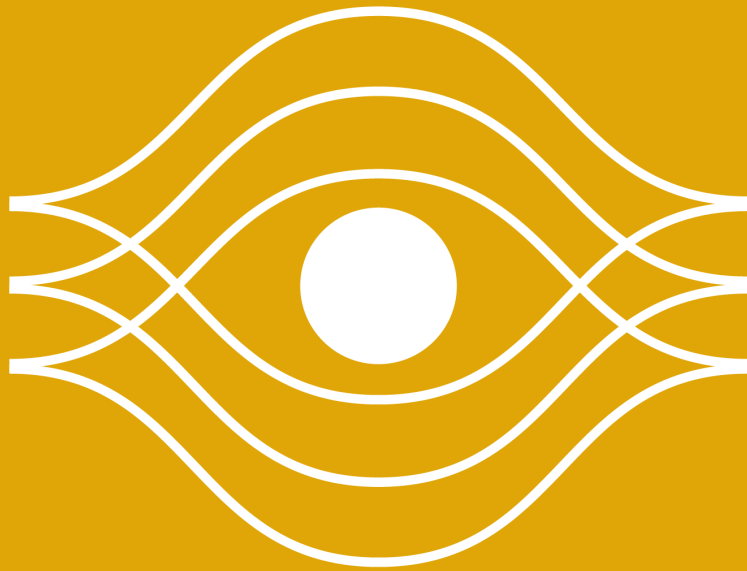
White Superiority

The erroneous, violent and racist idea that people with white/white-passing skin are more superior to, and therefore deserve to dominate, people with brown or black skin.

Womxn

A definition of women that explicitly includes not only cis-gender women, but also trans women and femme/feminine-identifying genderqueer and non-binary people.

Acknowledgments



Thank You

No creative work is accomplished in a vacuum. And no creator ever truly creates alone. It is my intention and desire that this Me And White Supremacy Workbook is one part of my legacy that I leave behind as a living ancestor now, and a good ancestor when I am gone. But I could not have done this work without the support, teaching, education, guidance and prayers of so many people - both in my personal community and in the global community.

Before sharing my acknowledgment and appreciation for any human being, I want to share my love and gratitude to God, without whom, this work would not exist. It is my belief and experience that this work was divinely channeled through me. I thank God for the wisdom, insight, patience, resilience and love granted to me, so that I could do this work with integrity.

I am forever grateful for my husband and life partner Sam, who since day one has always been my biggest cheerleader. It is a blessing to have a partner who sees and understands your purpose, and does everything they can to support you in living it. He knew I was a writer from the day one, and would affirm me constantly to focus on my writing. It took me 10 years to finally believe it. I am also grateful for my two children, Maya and Mohamed, for whom all of my work is for. They are the descendants I work tirelessly to create a better world for.

I am grateful for my parents who imprinted in me the energies of water and fire – patience and passion. As my living ancestors, they have taught me so much about the importance of doing good works in the world, working to improve the lives of the most marginalised in society, and doing what it takes to leave this world better than I found it.

My work is about healing and liberation. As someone who is working hard to facilitate healing for others, I have made it a priority to make sure I am prioritising healing for myself, too. Who heals the healer? In my case, it has been my mentor and friend, Dr. Frantonia Pollins. My mentoring work with Frantonia has been hugely influential in my own healing, and my ability to hold space for collective healing. I would not be able to do the work that I do without my behind the scenes team, and Frantonia is an important person on that team.

Every person needs a circle of friends, no matter how big or small. As my work has grown in the world, it has become even more important to me to hold my circle even closer. I want to thank Leesa Renee Hall, Sharona Lautoe, Latham Thomas, Rasha Karim and Omkari Williams for holding space for my growth and healing, and cheerleading me every step of the way.

As a highly sensitive introvert, taking care of the logistical side of my work can become overwhelming very fast, and can take much needed time away from writing time. I could not do the work I do without the support of my assistant and friend Ashley Story, who has been like a godsend from day one.

So much of what I have learnt since I started writing and talking about the intersections of race, spirituality, feminism and leadership has been from the powerful conversations I have hosted on the Wild Mystic Woman Podcast. I want to express my deep appreciation for every woman of colour that I have had the pleasure of interviewing on the podcast. I want to thank every black woman and woman of colour from the podcast who has become a good friend and collaborative peer. Each woman has taught me something new, something important, something life-changing. I urge you to listen to each episode, visit their websites, read their books, take their classes, attend their events and support their work in the world. They will change your life.

In addition to the black womxn in this lifetime who have taught me so much, I gratefully thank and acknowledge the black womxn I call my Literary Ancestors. These ancestors are black womxn writers, thinkers, feminists, poets and activists who have influenced so much of my healing and thought-leadership. Thank you Audre Lorde, Octavia Butler, bell hooks, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Maya Angelou and Lucille Clifton. Your words have been my soul medicine.

When I ran the original #MeAndWhiteSupremacy challenge on Instagram, it was womxn of colour and particularly black womxn who stepped forward voluntarily to help me hold the space for the work that was being done. They called participants out when they weren't going deep enough, they sent me daily messages of support and love, they prayed for me and lit candles for me, they sent me self-care gifts and handwritten cards, and they spoke life into me - affirming me and my purpose. I will forever be thankful to the womxn of colour who showed up for me during those 28 days, and ever since. I sincerely believe I could not have held the space that I did during that month without

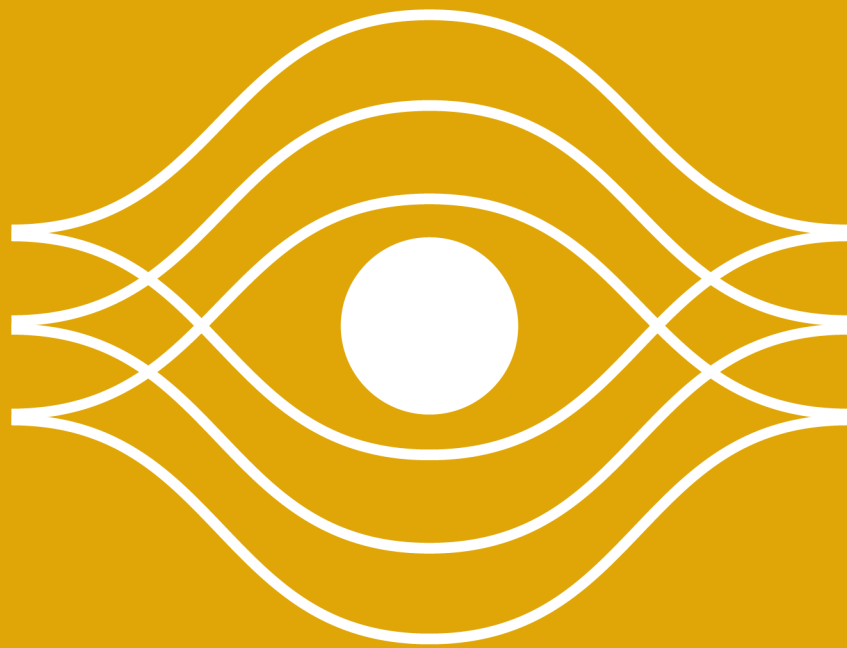
their love, support and prayers. And I know that the experience would not have been what it was without their witnessing and accountability.

I am so grateful to Laurie Jacobsen who reached out to me to voluntarily design this workbook. Working with Laurie has been such a joy and I am so grateful that she was able to translate the energy I wanted to convey with her beautiful design. I am also grateful to Sara Blackthorne, who has painstakingly proofread this workbook to make sure that I am putting my best work out into the world.

I would like to acknowledge the founders of The Circle Way process, Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea, who don't know me, but have served as good ancestors to me and the world by laying out a process and a methodology for coming together in circle to do work that matters.

Lastly, thank you to everyone who has financially supported my work. Whether through being a member of my Patreon community, sending PayPal donations or attending classes and conferences that I am speaking at, your financial support makes my work sustainable, allowing me to focus on doing the work I am here to do.

About the Author



About Layla

Layla Saad is the author of the groundbreaking self-guided *Me And White Supremacy Workbook* [2018], the host of *Good Ancestor Podcast*, and the now retired *Wild Mystic Woman Podcast*, and a globally sought speaker on the topics of race, spirituality, feminism and leadership.

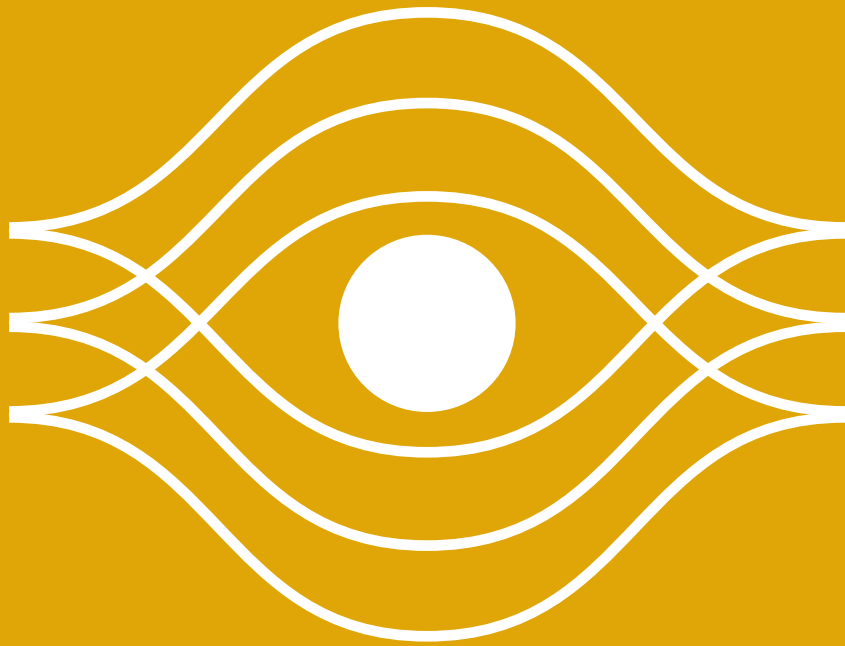
Layla began her career as a life and business coach in the personal growth industry in 2014. In 2017, Layla published the viral blog post “I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy”, following the ‘Unite The Right’ rally in Charlottesville, USA. Layla’s writings stirred up a tidal wave of awakening and activation in an industry which is largely white-centered, white-washed and white-dominated. In 2018, Layla hosted a 28-day free Instagram challenge called #MeAndWhiteSupremacy. Thousands of people took part in the challenge, which was described as a month-long truth-telling journey for people who hold white privilege to explore their personal complicity in white supremacy. Following the challenge, Layla wrote and published the self-guided *Me And White Supremacy Workbook*, which is a first-of-its-kind personal reflection tool for people with white privilege to explore, interrogate, gain clarity on and dismantle their internalised white supremacy.

As an East African, Arab, British, Black, Muslim woman who was born and grew up in the West (United Kingdom), and lives in the East (Qatar), Layla has always sat at a unique intersection of identities from which she is able to draw rich and intriguing perspectives. Layla’s work is driven by her powerful desire to become a ‘good ancestor;’ to live and work in ways that leave a legacy of healing and liberation for those who will come after she is gone.

Layla is passionate about creating Inspiration, Education and Activation for us all to become good ancestors. The impact of Layla’s writings, talks and curated conversations on race and feminism through a spiritual and leadership lens has extended beyond the personal growth industry where her work began. Her work has been brought into homes, educational institutions and workplaces around the world that are seeking to create personal and collective change.

Layla earned her Bachelor of Laws from Lancaster University in the United Kingdom. Layla lives in Doha, Qatar with her husband and two children.

Be Connected



Connect With Layla

Visit The Workbook Website

Go to www.meandwhitesupremacybook.com to find the workbook and other resources for working through the workbook.

Visit Layla's Website

Go to www.laylafaad.com to find Layla's writings and podcast episodes.

Subscribe to Layla's Mailing List

Go to www.laylafaad.com/subscribe to join Layla's email mailing list.

Listen To Layla's Podcasts

Listen to Good Ancestor Podcast, and Wild Mystic Woman Podcast (now archived) at www.laylafaad.com/podcasts.

Host A #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle

Read chapter 10 for instructions and tips on how to host a #MeAndWhiteSupremacy Book Circle in your community or workspace.

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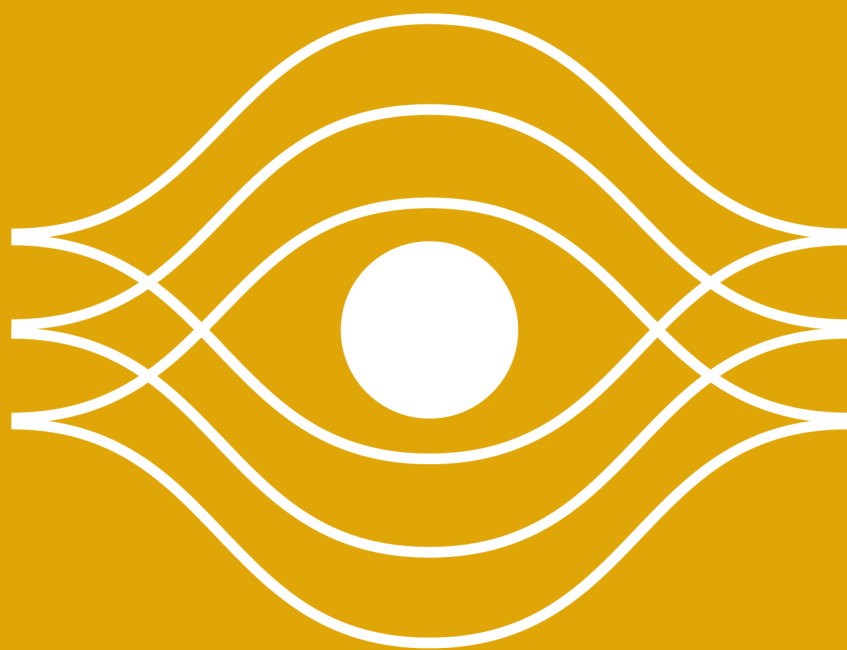
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Contact Layla For Media Requests & Speaking Invitations

Contact Layla's team for media requests, speaking invitations and other queries at www.laylafaad.com/contact.

Endnotes



Endnotes

¹ See more definitions of acronyms and terms used throughout this workbook in the Glossary

² Source: A chat with the author of 'All About Love: New Visions'. CNN Chat Room, www.cnn.com. February 17, 2000

³ Berrett-Koehler Publishers [2010]

⁴ I define a 'group setting' as being a group of three or more people

⁵ <http://www.thecircleway.net>

⁶ The free resources, materials, and information on The Circle Way website are all made available under a Creative Commons Attribution 3 License, unless they are individually copyrighted by the author (which will be clear). The Creative Commons Attribution license means people are free to copy, distribute, and transmit information if they formally acknowledge and attribute all such use with a link to their website: thecircleway.net. I share this excerpt from The Circle Way website, under the explicit understanding that I am permitted to do so under the Creative Commons Attribution 3 License, with the proviso that I cite the origin and authorship of this document, and include a link back to www.thecircleway.net.

⁷ <http://www.thecircleway.net/circle-way-guidelines>

⁸ The Guide can be found at <http://www.thecircleway.net/booklets>

⁹ 1988 Peggy McIntosh, Working Paper 189, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley, MA

¹⁰ "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" first appeared in Peace and Freedom Magazine, July/August, 1989, pp. 10-12, a publication of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Philadelphia, PA.

¹¹ Robin DiAngelo is the author of the book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, Beacon Press [2018]

¹² A groundbreaking US study titled *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood* [2017] published by the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality provided—for the first time—data showing that adults view Black girls as less innocent and more adult-like than their white peers, especially in the age range of 5–14.

¹³ See the Tignon Laws of 1786, which prohibited black women in Louisiana from displaying their hair in public.

¹⁴ Fossella, Tina; Welwood, John (Spring 2011). "Human nature, buddha nature: an interview with John Welwood"