

Turning White Fragility into White Humility

My Journey Through Change

By: Ryan Trudeau



Before we get started...

What is White Fragility?

“White fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.”

*Dr. Robin DiAngelo
Affiliate Associate Professor of Education, University of Washington*

My Background

- Straight, able-bodied white man born in Canada
- Middle-class family
- Introduced to other cultures through sport
- Married to a black woman born outside of Canada
- Father of two mixed children



Acknowledging my Privilege

- There are many versions of privilege:
 - Earned vs. Unearned
 - Examples of *earned* privilege: Knowledge, education, titles like Dr., CEO, and Reverend. To acquire earned privileges or advantages people need to go through quite a bit of effort.
 - Examples of *unearned* privilege: I was lucky enough to have parents who were smart and hard-working, and who had enough money to provide a good lifestyle; I am able-bodied, and live in a country in which I had access to high-quality health care and education. All of these unearned advantages set me on a good path.

Dr. Helen Ofosu
Adjunct Professor of Psychology, Carleton University

My Journey Through Change

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

Leo Tolstoy

What is ADKAR?

A

Awareness

Change begins with understanding why

D

Desire

Change involves personal decisions

K

Knowledge

Change requires knowing how

A

Ability

Change requires action in the right direction

R

Reinforcement

Change must be reinforced to be sustained

*Jeff Hiatt
Founder, Prosci Inc*



My Tipping Point

- Despite being married to a black woman
- Despite having mixed children
- Was complacent when faced with stress-inducing situations
- Functioning to reinstate white racial equilibrium and systemic inequalities
- *All changed by a single event*



Shedding my Fragility

A

Awareness



D

Desire

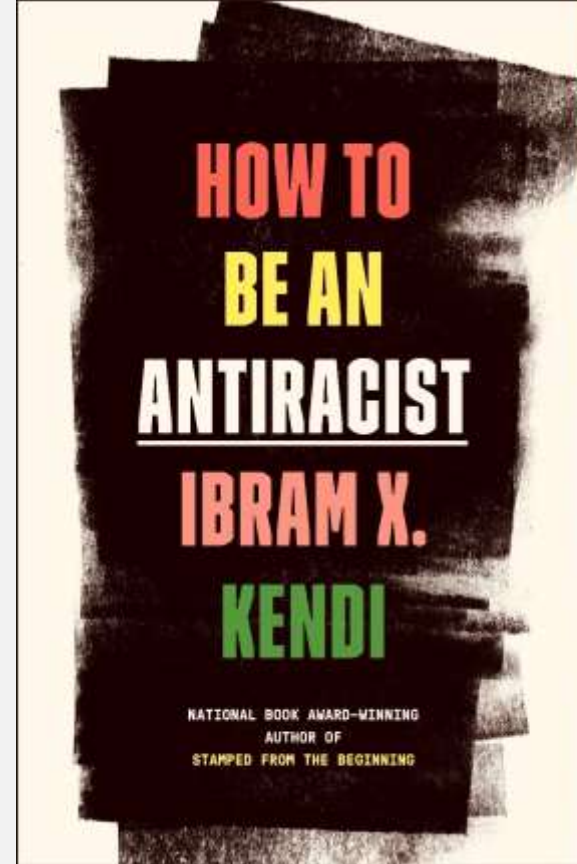


K

Knowledge

Equipping Myself with Knowledge

- How to be an Antiracist
- Gomes De Zurara
- Race is an invented idea
- Used as justification for the enslavement of people



*Dr. Ibram X. Kendi
Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities
Director of the Boston University Center for Antiracist Research*

The Racism You Can and Can't See

Apparent Racism

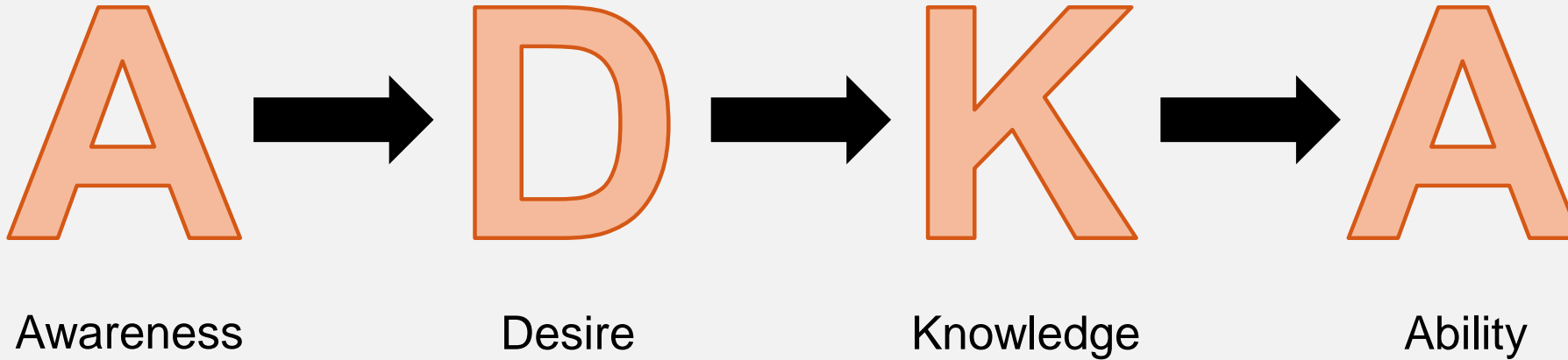
- Overt acts of violence
- Harassment
- Open affiliation with groups associated with racist ideas and/or behaviors

Subtle Racism

- Micro-aggressions
- Unconscious bias

*Dr. Ibram X. Kendi
Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities
Director of the Boston University Center for Antiracist Research*

Taking Steps Toward Action



Being an Ally

What is an Ally?

- Uses status/advantages/privilege to make personal sacrifices in advocating for the rights of a marginalized person without seeking praise or reward.
- Actively tries to advance an inclusive culture through intentional, conscious efforts that benefit others.
- Committed to growing and learning about inclusion while consistently looking to build trust and relationships with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people.

What Allyship is not

- Allyship ISN'T or should not be “performative”.
- Participation in public activism for recognition, but not being an activist when there's nobody watching.
- Posting to social media on an issue because it's trending.
- Saying things like, “Black lives matter” but taking no real action beyond your words.

Dr. Helen Ofosu
Adjunct Professor of Psychology, Carleton University

10 points on How to be an Ally

- 1) Be an active listener
- 2) Don't rely on others for your learning
- 3) You must accept criticism
- 4) Support racialized public servants
- 5) Use your privilege to dismantle systemic racism
- 6) Support advancement opportunities for racialized public servants
- 7) Don't expect rewards/recognition when facing the day to day problems
- 8) Share your decision-making power (Leadership)
- 9) Build a professional network that includes racialized public servants
- 10) Give positive and fair referrals and/or evaluations to racialized public servants

*Patricia Harewood
Director, Representation and Legal Services Branch
Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)*

Making Sure it's Sustainable

A

Awareness



D

Desire



K

Knowledge



A

Ability



R

Reinforcement



Call to Action!

Change has to start somewhere...

- Get past that fear of “losing” something
- Equity is not a zero-sum game – there are no “winners” or “losers”
- Sense of great responsibility

- **Find your “Tipping Point”**
- **Be the change you want to see**
- **Walk the walk**
- **Turn Fragility into Humility!**

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

Nelson Mandela

Thank you!

Questions?

Feedback?



Interested in having this presentation within your respective department and/or agency?

Please make your request via the [Federal Speakers' Forum on Diversity and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](#)

References

- DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Beacon Press, 2018.
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Resources

- [Anti-Racism Event Series - CSPS \(csps-efpc.gc.ca\)](https://csps-efpc.gc.ca)
- [Anti-Racism Learning Series - CSPS \(csps-efpc.gc.ca\)](https://csps-efpc.gc.ca)
- [Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat - Canada.ca](https://canada.ca)
- [Federal Speakers' Forum on Diversity and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](https://canada.ca)
- [Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service - Privy Council Office - Canada.ca - Canada.ca](https://canada.ca)
- [Change Management Training \(Prosci\) – Prosci.com](https://prosci.com)