


RACISM & PREJUDICE - HOW CAN I RESPOND?

People often tell us they want to respond to prejudice when they see it - but they don't feel quite confident enough or 'know what to say'. So we've created these resources to help offer some ideas and guidance. We've worked with people with lived experience of responding to prejudice. Together we have identified the comments they hear most often, and the potential responses they would suggest using to reply. Experience tells us that arguing doesn't work, but by talking and listening, we can help to change perspectives and attitudes.



Remember, you don't have to engage in conversation if you don't feel physically and emotionally safe to do so, and all hate crime should be reported to Nottinghamshire Police by calling 101 (999 in an emergency) or online through True Vision at www.report-it.org.uk

! Warning: Please be aware the content of these comments and responses may be offensive or distressing and is intended for educational purposes !

| Prejudiced comment | Potential responses |
|--|--|
| Black men are more violent and more likely to commit crime or deal drugs. Police should target black people more because they commit more crimes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes you think that? • My experience of meeting black men has been very different to this. I know lots of very caring, gentle black men who work hard to do good things in their community. • Black men are much more likely to be subject to racism from police and many elements of the system who think like this, and more likely to be sent to jail, which means they are risking a lot more if they commit a crime. |
| <p>I am not responsible for slavery, I didn't do anything wrong.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not about taking personal blame, but recognising that the experience and lives that white people live are very different as a result of slavery that was committed by ancestors. Much of the wealth that some white people have originally came from slavery. • We might not be responsible for slavery as white people in this age, but we benefit from it while black people still suffer the consequences. • It's important to be aware that many black people still feel the pain of slavery and are still living with the impacts of it, and of racism, which is different to saying anyone is to blame. It's just about being considerate to people's feelings and aware of the history as context so as not to trigger hurt. |
| <p>A victim mentality isn't helpful and bringing up the past creates a problem - when will we let history go?</p> <p>Forgiveness will help them move forward. No one is denying what happened.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people do deny it and don't fully acknowledge that it happened. • It might not be helpful saying that to someone who experiences racism - telling someone to move on isn't productive if they are experiencing hurt and discrimination. • Places like Bristol & Liverpool are built on wealth brought in by slavery and still have references to slavery, and slave drivers are still being celebrated. • Slavery is part of our shared history, like the Ice Age and the World Wars, which we still talk about. History helps us explain who we are and why we act in different ways. • How would you feel if you were told to just get over harm done to you or your community? |
| I'm not racist because I have black friends / I believe everyone is equal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have black friends why are you putting down black people? What would they think about what you're saying? • I am glad to know you have a diverse group of friends - would you want them to suffer from discrimination and injustice? • It is important to recognise that sadly not everyone is equal and black communities are often disadvantaged and discriminated against. It is important to recognise injustice and discrimination that black people are enduring, and to support underprivileged communities. |
| Racism doesn't exist anymore. It's only an issue for suburban communities, no one in the city is racist. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see as racism? • Have you ever discussed this with anyone who might have experienced any form of discrimination? Sometimes we are not affected by it directly but it is important to recognise that it might be affecting those around us - it can be surprising to see how different people's experiences are to yours. • If you don't personally experience racism, it's difficult to know the full effects of it. |

| Prejudiced comment | Potential responses |
|--|---|
| Racism against white people is as much of an issue. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you feel discriminated against? Do you feel targeted because of being white? |
| You can't be white and Christian in this country anymore. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think that? Have you had any negative experiences or have you been targeted because of those factors? |
| We need to keep our culture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What part of your culture are you concerned about and would like to protect? Our culture has always been heavily influenced by others such as with food, inventions and language - it is constantly evolving and always has been. One of Britain's main cultural values is tolerance and acceptance. |
| I wouldn't want my child dating someone from a different race. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes you think that? Why do you think race matters while dating someone? |
| You can't be racist against white people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you define racism? Do you think a white person can be racist to another white person based on their nationality? |
| Black people are good at sports / strong. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there any particular sport that you are thinking about and where this statement is coming from? I believe that everyone, irrespective of ethnicity can be strong and sporty with exercise. It can be unhelpful for people to be type-cast like this, as not everyone fits to stereotypes. It's like saying all women like cooking or all men like football, which isn't true. All people are different. |
| Black men don't stick around for their kids and won't be faithful. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the causes of families coming apart in our society/ community? Is this something that you or anyone from your circle has experienced? Have you ever been with or known any black men that lived up to this stereotype? Broken families and unfaithfulness in relationships are hurtful things that take place in all communities. |
| Where was my privilege when I couldn't get ... - food. - money to pay the bills. - a job. - benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concept of 'white privilege' doesn't mean that you won't go through difficulties in your life. It just means that you won't go through difficulties because of your ethnicity. Poverty, unemployment, expensive housing - these are issues that touch people in all communities. However, as a white person, there are less negative stereotypes or structural inequalities that hold you back. I am sorry this happened to you, it must have been very difficult and it's difficult no matter what your race. |
| If you just behave properly, the law will treat you fairly. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, in a perfect world, everyone would follow the law. However, it's not the reality and inequality exists even in how the law is implemented It is important to consider how we respond to crime and the people who break the law. It's really interesting to see statistics and research on this. For example, black men are more likely to be stopped and searched by the Police. They are also more likely to get longer custodial sentences. There are a lot of documented cases where Black people get treated differently to white people. |
| Racism is intentionally acting badly to someone because of their race. I don't do that so I can't be racist. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racism is much more than that. It includes open hatred, but also more subtle types of discrimination and micro-aggressions that may be subconscious. All of it causes hurt and emotional damage. We all have unconscious bias based on our experiences in life - we can try and reflect so we don't unintentionally harm people. |
| If you work hard, you will do well. POC / black people clearly don't make an effort and are lazy which is why they don't have much money or good jobs. They need to look at their own behaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not everyone has the same life opportunities or starts from the same place. Research shows that class is one thing that holds people back in the UK and race is another. Some people are held back or denied opportunities because of their race, or have to work much harder to reach the same position as others. |
| I have always tolerated black people, so I'm not racist. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word 'tolerate' implies that there is something to tolerate - that you don't quite see Black people the same way you do white people; as equal human beings and part of British society. What is it exactly that you need to tolerate about Black people? |

