

NOVEMBER: Moving from ally to accomplice

“White people raised in Western society are conditioned into a white supremacist worldview because it is the bedrock of our society and its institutions. Regardless of whether a parent told you that everyone was equal, or the poster in the hall of your white suburban school proclaimed the value of diversity, or you have traveled abroad, or you have people of color in your workplace or family, the ubiquitous socializing power of white supremacy cannot be avoided. The messages circulate 24-7 and have little or nothing to do with intentions, awareness, or agreement. Entering the conversation with this understanding is freeing because it allows us to focus on how--rather than if--our racism is manifest. When we move beyond the good/bad binary, we can become eager to identify our racist patterns because interrupting those patterns becomes more important than managing how we think we look to others.

I repeat: stopping our racist patterns must be more important than working to convince others that we don't have them. We do have them, and people of color already know we have them; our efforts to prove otherwise are not convincing. An honest accounting of these patterns is no small task given the power of white fragility and white solidarity, but it is necessary.”

— Robin DiAngelo, [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#)

DiAngelo's book makes it clear that white supremacy is much more pervasive and subtle than the actions of explicit white nationalists that we might read about or see on the news. She demonstrates that White supremacy is more than the idea that whites are superior to people of color; it is the deeper premise that supports this idea—the definition of white people as the normative or standard mode of being human, and different skin colors as a deviance from that.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

Because racism is embedded in our daily lives in this country, DiAngelo says that feedback is essential to be able to recognize the places where we have been complicit in that system and to learn, grow and change our patterns of behavior. How can we become grateful for feedback and see it as part of what we need to be able to persevere in resisting evil?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

DiAngelo says, “The idea of racial inferiority was created to justify unequal treatment; belief in racial inferiority is not what triggered unequal treatment. Nor was fear of difference. As Ta-Nehisi Coates states, “But race is the child of racism, not the father.” He means that first we exploited people for their resources, not according to how they looked. Exploitation came first, and then the ideology of unequal races to justify this exploitation followed.”

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

In *White Fragility*, DiAngelo says,

“Race scholars use the term white supremacy to describe a sociopolitical economic system of domination based on racial categories that benefits those defined and perceived as white. This system of structural power privileges, centralizes, and elevates white people as a group. If, for example, we look at the racial breakdown of the people who control our institutions, we see telling numbers in 2016–2017:

- Ten richest Americans: 100 percent white (seven of whom are among the ten richest in the world)
- US Congress: 90 percent white
- US governors: 96 percent white
- Top military advisers: 100 percent white
- President and vice president: 100 percent white
- US House Freedom Caucus: 99 percent white
- Current US presidential cabinet: 91 percent white
- People who decide which TV shows we see: 93 percent white
- People who decide which books we read: 90 percent white
- People who decide which news is covered: 85 percent white
- People who decide which music is produced: 95 percent white
- People who directed the one hundred top-grossing films of all time, worldwide: 95 percent white
- Teachers: 82 percent white
- Full-time college professors: 84 percent white
- Owners of men’s professional football teams: 97 percent white”

These percentages do not match racial makeup of our country, which is only 72.4% white. What does striving for justice and peace mean to you in terms of racial justice and healing?