



Allyship & Awareness Guide



A Lesson from an Ally

PROLOGUE, *Walking With the Wind* by [Rep. John Lewis](#),

I want to begin this book with a little story. It has nothing to do with a national stage, or historic figures, or monumental events. It's a simple story a true story about a group of young children, a wood-frame house and a windstorm. The children were my cousins: Roy Lee and Jinnie Boy, Naomi and Leslie and Willie Muriel-about a dozen of them, all told-along with my older sister Ora and my brothers Edward and Adolph. And me, John Robert.

On this particular afternoon-it was a Saturday, I'm almost certain-about fifteen of us children were outside my aunt Seneva's house, playing in her dirt yard. The sky began clouding over, the wind started picking up, lightning flashed far off in the distance, and suddenly I wasn't thinking about playing anymore; I was terrified. I had already seen what lightning could do. I'd seen fields catch on fire after a hit to a haystack. I'd watched trees actually explode when a bolt of lightning struck them, the sap inside rising to an instant boil, the trunk swelling until it burst its bark. The sight of those strips of pine bark snaking through the air like ribbons was both fascinating and horrifying. Lightning terrified me, and so did thunder. My mother used to gather us around her whenever we heard thunder and she'd tell us to hush, be still now.

But my mother wasn't with us on this particular afternoon. Aunt Seneva was the only adult around, and as the sky blackened and the wind grew stronger, she herded us all inside. Her house was not the biggest place around, and it seemed even smaller with so many children squeezed inside. Small and surprisingly quiet. All of the shouting and laughter that had been going on earlier, outside, had stopped. The wind was howling now, and the house was starting to shake. We were scared. Even Aunt Seneva was scared. And then it got worse.

Now the house was beginning to sway. The wood plank flooring beneath us began to bend. And then a corner of the room started lifting up. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. None of us could. This storm was actually pulling the house toward the sky. With us inside it. That was when Aunt Seneva told us to clasp hands. Line up and hold hands, she said, and we did as we were told. Then she had us walk as a group toward the corner of the room that was rising. From the kitchen to the front of the house we walked, the wind screaming outside, sheets of rain beating on the tin roof. Then we walked back in the other direction, as another end of the house began to lift. And so it went, back and forth, fifteen children walking with the wind, holding that trembling house down with the weight of our small bodies.

More than half a century has passed since that day, and it has struck me more than once over those many years that our society is not unlike the children in that house, rocked again and again by the winds of one storm or another, the walls around us seeming at times as if they might fly apart. It seemed that way in the 1960s, at the height of the civil rights movement, when America itself felt as if it might burst at the seams-so much tension, so many storms. But the people of conscience never left the house. They never ran away. They stayed, they came together and they did the best they could, clasping hands and moving toward the corner of the house that was the weakest. And then another corner would lift, and we would go there. And eventually, inevitably, the storm would settle, and the house would still stand.

But we knew another storm would come, and we would have to do it all over again. And we did. And we still do, all of us. You and I. Children holding hands, walking with the wind. That's America to me-not just the movement for civil rights but the endless struggle to respond with decency, dignity and a sense of brotherhood to all the challenges that face us as a nation, as a whole.

That is the story, in essence, of my life, of the path to which I've been committed since I turned from a boy to a man, and to which I remain committed today. It is a path that extends beyond the issue of race alone, and beyond class as well. And gender. And age. And every other distinction that tends to separate us as human beings rather than bring us together. That path involves nothing less than the pursuit of the most precious and pure concept I have ever known, an ideal I discovered as a young man and that has guided me like a beacon ever since, a concept called the Beloved Community.

Allyship & Awareness

Use these tools & resources to build self-awareness, understand others, and practice allyship.



An **active** and **consistent** practice of using your **power and privilege** to **operate in solidarity** with marginalized groups to **achieve equity & inclusion**.



Allyship Do's & Don'ts

THE DO's

- ✓ Do be open to listening
- ✓ Do be aware of your implicit biases
- ✓ Do your research to learn more about the history
- ✓ Do the inner work to figure out a way to acknowledge how you participate in oppressive systems
- ✓ Do the outer work and figure out how to change the oppressive systems
- ✓ Do use your privilege to amplify (digitally & in-person) historically suppressed voices
- ✓ Do learn how to listen and accept criticism with grace, even if it's uncomfortable
- ✓ Do the work every day to learn how to be a better ally

THE DON'TS

- ⊗ Do not expect to be taught or shown. Take it upon yourself to use the tools around you to learn and answer your questions
- ⊗ Do not participate for the gold medal in the "Oppression Olympics" (you don't need to compare how your struggle is "just as bad as" a marginalized person's)
- ⊗ Do not behave as though you know best
- ⊗ Do not take credit for the labor of those who are marginalized and did the work before you stepped into the picture
- ⊗ Do not assume that every member of an underinvested community feels oppressed

Allyship & Awareness

A

Acknowledge that continuous self-learning is required for allyship.

C

Choose to relinquish the luxury of your comfort

T

Take action and intervene when you see opportunities to support

1. Assess your relationship with race; [Use this tool](#) to understand yourself.
2. Embrace a [growth/learning mindset](#).
3. Identify your [privilege, power & intersectionality](#).
4. Discover your Inclusion & Allyship Why.

What's your Inclusion & Allyship Why?

1

impact

the impact I aim to have as an ally is...

2

inspiration

my inspiration to be an ally is...

3

inclusion & allyship purpose statement

I value inclusion and/or allyship because _____

And I hope to impact _____

Even when it gets difficult, I will push forward to fulfill this purpose.

[Research shows](#) that people who can articulate their purpose are more clear, more resilient and more committed.

Reflect on and complete the statements below to write your Inclusion & Allyship Purpose Statement.

Allyship & Awareness

A

Acknowledge that continuous self-learning is required for allyship.

C

Choose to relinquish the luxury of your comfort

T

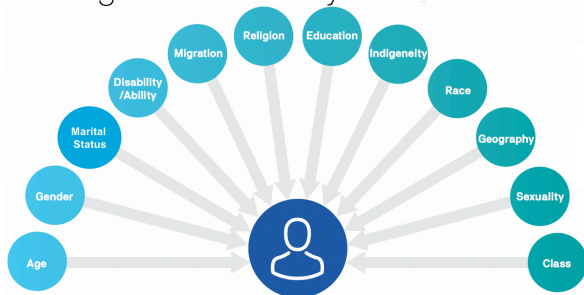
Take action and intervene when you see opportunities to support

1. Build empathy by learning about people with experiences that are different from your own.
2. Engage in conversations to learn more about the unique experiences of others. Be curious.
3. Practice self-compassion and self-care. Care for yourself, so you can care for others.

Build Empathy by Learning About Others.

Embracing Intersectionality

Adapted from Ask the Other Questions, 2019



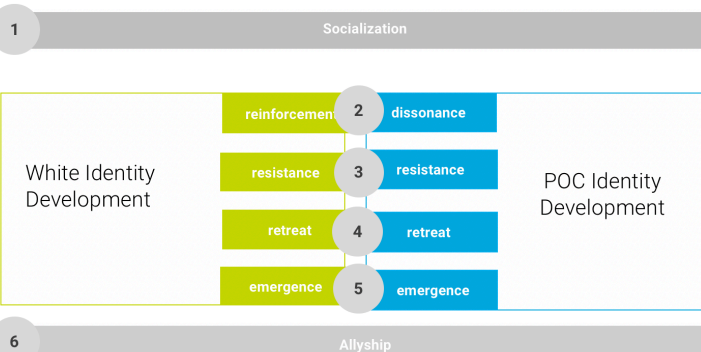
The notion that social identities overlap and intersect in dynamic ways that shape each individual. Like a literal intersection, identities within an individual come, go, or converge, depending on time or place.

Use this [intersectionality tool](#) with partners, team members to learn about who they are.

OR

Try the [I Am But I Am Not Exercise](#)

Racial Identity Development Framework



Observe the behaviors of others to assess where they fall on the race identity model. This will help you meet people where they are.

Allyship & Awareness

A

Acknowledge that continuous self-learning is required for allyship.

C

Choose to relinquish the luxury of your comfort

T

Take action and intervene when you see opportunities to support

1. Learn how to identify [microaggressions](#)
2. [Select ways to address microaggressions](#) based on your personality and the context.
3. [Memorize a few techniques](#) that work for you.
4. Ask your co-workers how they'd like to be supported and do it.

Resource Library

JED Glossary of Terms is located in the Intranet along with other resources.

[Books & Media](#)

[Intercultural Development Plan](#)

