

## Anti-Racism Work — Where to Begin

Perhaps you've been feeling uncomfortable. You have the sense that all is not well between the members of various groups which make up the Canadian mosaic. Recent headlines have made you aware of some painful history. You'd like to learn more so that you can make a difference, now and in the future, but you went to this website and found about a hundred resources, and you are not sure where to begin. Read on!

First, it matters less *where* you begin than *that* you begin. Your desire to learn reveals your desire to grow in love, to become a better disciple, a better citizen, and a better human being. Hold on to that, particularly if some of what you are reading challenges what you believe about your community and even about who you are. *This is about learning to love more effectively.*

**If you are brand new to this conversation**, here are some places to start:

First, take time to view this very short video which explains basic concepts:

English: **need to find this**

French: <https://liguedesdroits.ca/racisme/>

Then, pick up a book. I'd suggest:

*Waking Up White* (Debby Irving)

*How to Be an Antiracist* (Ibram Kendi)

To understand aspects of the experience of radicalized people in Canada, try watching:

*The Doctrine of Discovery* (This is about an hour long. We'd advise watching one chapter at a time. There is also a useful study guide you can find in the same place: <https://www.anglican.ca/primate/tfc/drj/doctrineofdiscovery/>)

*The Skin We're In* (Desmond Cole), available on CBC Gem: <https://gem.cbc.ca/media/firsthand/season-2/episode-14/38e815a-00be178daef>. (This is based on an excellent book by the same name.)

If you can, watch these materials with other people, even if only one or two others. That way, you can talk about them together.

**If you are not new to this conversation but would like to understand today's headlines and discussions**, start with Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist* and then keep going on this list. Once you have this groundwork, keep exploring! There are lots of resources on this page and elsewhere.

### Three things to remember:

- 1) Learning is the foundation. The goal is action: taking what steps you can (at home, at work, in your neighborhood or town) to ensure that each person is treated with the dignity due a child of God.

- 2) We each need to do our own work before we try to engage others who look different than we do. It is not fair to ask people of color to bear the burden of telling about their struggles over and over again. We each need to learn enough to notice what is happening around us, put it into context, and be open to what people from other backgrounds are telling us. Then, and only then, will be on the path to becoming trustworthy conversation-partners.
- 3) Christ died to bring us forgiveness. There is nothing — *not one thing* — in our faith that tells us we have to be perfect. Or that our ancestors had to be perfect. We are each worthy of love because we are each loved by God. And that gives us power to seek and to acknowledge the truth, even when the truth is that we or those we love have messed up and hurt people (knowingly or unknowingly). We can acknowledge past problems without being disloyal to those who were involved in them. Indeed, we have to acknowledge them in order to gain a better future. And what better work of love is there than to build a home where all are welcome?