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## THE JOURNEY FROM ALLY TO CO-CONSPIRATOR

### Whats steps to I need to have to become an ally?

**Do some soul searching:** Becoming an ally is Allyship is hard work and will at times be uncomfortable and exhausting. Recognize you will be joining the fight against a system of hate that is 400 plus years old. While you don't have to experience with oppression, as an ally you will have to listen and understand. So be self-aware of your privilege and the implicit biases we all have.

**Do your homework and research** so that you can participate with knowledge and facts and understanding. Research will also lead you to ways you can participate. Not everyone is comfortable being at the forefront, you can be an ally in several ways. You can join a cause and march, you can show your support on social media but be thoughtful about this. You can't just say, "thoughts and prayers". While those are needed and necessary make them actionable, go one step further by directly reaching out and checking in on a person.

Read, read read! There are a variety of books, articles that talk about anti racism that will open your eyes. One of the revered voices on this topic is [Ibram X. Kendi](#) and his book **How to be an Antiracist**. Kendi says, " Being an antiracist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination." This excellent thought provoking book has so many nuggets of wisdom and practical ideas that go from basic concepts to larger more complex concepts that are visionary. Find online or at your favorite bookstore.

**Amplify voices:** Again, amplifying does not you have to be at the forefront but you should not be silent either. Silence is deafening and in many ways it is the most painful to experience. We've heard so many stories from Black people about how they felt after the murders of countless Black lives in 2020. That was devastating and painful but what also hurt was the sheer silence of some white friends. It is hard to wrap your mind around such horror that amplified daily in the media and then hear utter silence from some. After all, people rush to comfort and support anyone who announces a devastating, possibly life threatening illness.

Black people everywhere asked themselves, how can murder or unjustified shooting not move you? Sadly, what many what they were were witnessing was no different that the lynching of Black people in

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the Jim Crow era. Time after time, Black lives being taken with little to no consequences for the perpetrators. That is where the mantra “**Black Lives Matter**” was born. So if you don’t know what to do or say or where to begin, simply start by reaching out to your Black friends or colleagues and ask them how they are doing. A simple, “Are you okay?” goes a long way. From there, can find other ways to participate such as joining a march for Black lives or supporting and promoting Black owned businesses or by giving money to causes that help contribute to further amplification.

**Share space** “We join others even as we ask others to join us” Trish Thomas/Roberto Chene. As you are learning and evolving, bring others with you. While it is difficult to change hearts, it is possible to change minds through enlightenment and education. Easier said than done especially when it comes to family members so proceed cautiously, with sensitivity and the understanding that not everyone is ready to take the journey.

In closing the journey of allyship begins with YOU! An excellent resource to help get you started is the **30 days, 30 Ways to Become a Better Ally** by Gloria Antanmo. It is an 85 page digital resource filled with stories, practical steps and many other resources on how to begin this journey. Follow link to purchase.

### From Ally to Co-conspirator

The next step in the journey of allyship is moving from growth and participation to taking the initiative to lead, develop and teach. This step is a way for you to do some peer-to-peer teaching and training. As with the Parent to Parent model what better way to learn than learning from someone with the same experiences and in this instance, someone born with the same privileges. For some this maybe the only way they they will listen and learn. Take care to consult your Black freinds to help you develop and train but take the lead!

An ally who recognizes their privilege and chooses it for good is a very powerful and effective voices.

PATH CT’s training, **Peer Education Against Racism (P.E.A.R)** is an example of a training developed by a white ally who recognized that they only way she would change the mindset and compassion of her white family and white community members towards Black lives, was if she rolled her sleeves up and begun to do this work herself. Being thoughtful she followed the steps, teamed up and sought guidance from Black leaders and then tested out her theory. The results were powerful and lead to her becoming the go to

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person. She didn't take the glory, instead she brought others in and facilitated talks between many voices and the idea of P.E.A.R was born.

I will run this by you when it is fully completed

Other steps? Connections to CYSHCN?