



## Dismantling Racial Discrimination Fact Sheet:

# UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING RACIAL BIAS

Racial bias refers to prejudiced attitudes or assumptions about people based on their race. It includes both **explicit bias** (conscious prejudice) and **implicit bias** (unconscious associations that influence behavior without awareness). Even people who reject overt racism can harbor implicit biases absorbed from cultural messages and limited cross-racial experiences.

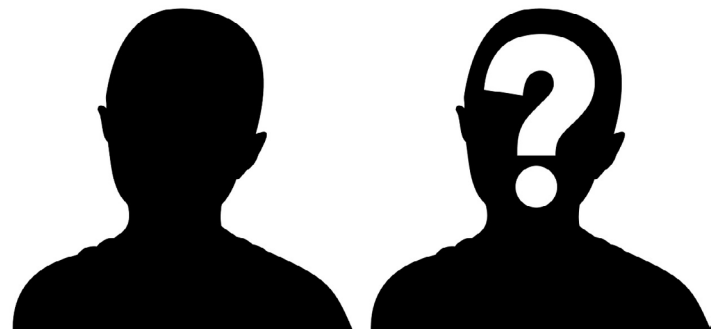
### Recognizing Bias in Yourself

Start by paying attention to your immediate reactions when encountering people of different races. Do you make assumptions about their background or abilities? Do you feel more comfortable with people who share your racial identity? Notice if you speak or behave differently around people of different races.

Examine your social circles and media consumption. Are they racially diverse? Consider your language and whether you make generalizations about racial groups, even seemingly positive ones.

### Addressing Your Bias

- **Educate yourself** about racism's history and contemporary reality through books, articles, and research by diverse authors. Make this ongoing, not a one-time effort.
- **Diversify your relationships** intentionally, but approach this thoughtfully—don't treat people as educational resources.
- **Practice mindfulness** in daily interactions. Before making judgments, pause to consider whether race might be influencing your thinking. When biased thoughts arise, acknowledge them and consciously counter them with accurate information.
- **Challenge assumptions** actively. When you catch yourself stereotyping, ask what evidence you actually have beyond racial assumptions.



- **Daily Practices:** In professional settings, examine whether you communicate differently with colleagues of different races or make different assumptions about their expertise. In social situations, notice your comfort level and body language. In decision-making, focus on specific, measurable criteria rather than subjective impressions that can be influenced by bias.

### Moving Forward

Recognize that addressing bias is ongoing work involving mistakes and learning. When you become aware of biased behavior, acknowledge it honestly rather than becoming defensive. Use mistakes as learning opportunities.

Combine individual bias reduction with supporting systemic change—advocate for inclusive practices and speak up when you witness discrimination. The goal isn't to become "colorblind" but to ensure racial differences don't lead to discriminatory treatment while still appreciating diversity.

Learn more [here](http://www.osfphila.org/justice-and-peace/racism/).