

Anti-Racism 4REALS



Saint Louis, Missouri

Introduction

That First Meeting—Racialized Terror, Racial Positionality, Real Anti-Racism

In May 2019, the Reverends Sheila M. Beckford and E. Michelle Ledder met for the first time in the aftermath of racialized terror. The circumstances were unusual but not unique. A prominent, mostly white social justice board of directors had gathered at a retreat center in Maryland—but not for the reasons one might first imagine. Earlier that year, one of its white directors had perpetrated a series of racist acts upon Black people who gathered at a United Methodist national conference to oppose social oppression of another group. The board convened in May to address what had happened and to figure out what they needed to do to repair their reputation and “become anti-racist.” The fallout of the incidents had been wide and swift. Local branches of the denomination’s Black and Latino/x caucuses had publicly denounced the social justice group and declared unapologetically that they would no longer work with them. The publicity of this explicit break in working relationship as well as the details and whispers of the racism enacted sent waves of public judgment upon the Christian social justice group, which was otherwise known for its LGBTQIA full-inclusion activism.

Rev. Beckford, a Black woman and chair of the New York Black Caucus, was one of the Black people who was targeted by the racist acts. She was there to provide her testimony, to name exactly what happened as one way to challenge the board of directors to deal directly with what they had done. Rev. Ledder, a white woman and Director of Equity and Anti-Racism for the denomination’s agency on race, was there to highlight the racism and the effects of the racism brought forward from Rev. Beckford’s and other Black leaders’ experiences. Rev. Beckford and Rev. Ledder named racism in

While it is easy to say that the Church is made up of people who struggle and sin, more often than not Christians have created a utopian sense of what Church could be or should be and so are doubly disappointed when we so disastrously fall short. We understandably want the Church to be the place and the places where racism no longer exists, where people can fully and authentically be free without the evils of white supremacy. We want the Church to be the model of what it looks like when God’s dreams for humanity and the world come true and the lion and the lamb chill out with one another in true Shalom. When the people and organizations of the Church perpetrate and are targeted by racism, a little bit of our spirit dies, collapsing under the weight of yet another disillusionment and of occluded potential.

So, we search for language and rituals taught to us by sacred texts and traditions enacted over centuries to attempt to live into who we’ve been created and called to be. We highlight our belief that all people have been created in the image of God. We center dialogues with one another and across lines of racial difference (which is often just called “diversity”) for the purpose of understanding and building relationships. We latch onto Jesus’ sayings about forgiveness and attempt to figure out what it means to be a “good” Christian in the midst of harm perpetrated even by one’s Christian siblings. However, many times the Church and her people are bogged down by “church-nice” or “church-polite” or even “church-mean” language that gets us nowhere. Worse still, there remain Church teachings that in many contexts create the kin-dom of God here on earth, but when said and enacted in the midst of racial terror and injustice actually perpetrate racism. Fortunately, we need not rid ourselves of the Church or our faith to do the work of anti-racism. What we need are anti-racism tools and interpretive lenses to help us see *how* the sacred texts and traditions of our faith lead us directly and faithfully into anti-racism work and lives.

One foundational lens that is necessary for anti-racism work but countered often by Church teachings is racial positionality.¹ The church teaches

¹ The Reverend E. Michelle Ledder first used the term *racial positionality* to describe racial identity within the system of racism while working at the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) of the United Methodist Church (2016 to present). While she hadn’t heard the term *racial positionality* before, it entered her thinking emerging from concepts and pedagogies taught to her by her advisor, the Reverend Dr. Teresa Fry Brown. Many examples exist, but two are listed here. Some years ago, Dr. Fry Brown imagined a book written by the two of them—from different racial identities, different vocational standpoints, and different Christian journeys—about their experiences in the AME church. It is quite possible this conversation is what planted the seeds for Rev. Ledder’s connection with this

a model of equality that flattens out differences in order to highlight our similarities. However, the realities of race and racism create different consequences for people based on our racial markers. Within the system of racism, white people are prioritized, privileged, and protected while BIPAL (Black, Indigenous, Pacific-Islander, Asian, and Latino/x)² people are dehumanized, disenfranchised, and discriminated against. Just like the four gospels have different perspectives, focus areas, and wisdom based on the contextual realities of their authors, so also do we based on our racialized contextual realities. Racial positionality signifies the very real but symbolic spheres within which BIPAL people and white folks exist within the system of racism. In other words, the term helps us keep in the forefront how people of different races experience the world differently because of the system of racism. The Church often gets anti-racism work wrong because we attempt to use a language of equality (similarity) to discuss, describe, and dismantle a system based in difference. What we need are words and actions that retain the divine dream of equality while addressing the realities of difference inherent in the system of racism.

White people are crying out more and more, “What can I do?” But they are in deep need of anti-racist strategies that do not perpetrate racism. BIPAL people need strategies to combat the inherent consequences of racism—interpersonal and institutional racism, internalized racism—and strategies for how to hold white allies accountable without capitulating to racist ideologies. In such a time as this, it is increasingly necessary to provide models and options for anti-racism that refuse to rely on temporary fixes. We believe that *Anti-Racism AREALS: Real Talk with Real Strategies in Real Time for Real Change* is one model capable of moving faith-based and good-intended people from thoughts and prayers to the real strategies that bring about real change in real time.

book’s template of responses based in racial positionality. Also, Dr. Fry Brown’s pedagogy of preaching emphasizes God calling preachers to preach from their own voices and not another’s. This deep respect for authenticity protects space for sermons to be enriched by the different questions we ask or different ways God gifts each of us uniquely. For Rev. Ledger, both of these main ideas create a perfect backdrop for her thinking about how each of us is positioned differently within the system of racism, with different experiences, perspectives, and wisdom (or lack of it) because of it.

² Many articles reference People of Color (PoC) or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to avoid centering whiteness when describing racial identity. The Reverend Sheila M. Beckford uses the term BIPAL (Black, Indigenous, Pacific-Islanders, Asian, and Latino/x) to represent multiple racial identities by naming them separately to further decenter whiteness in discussions of anti-racism and beyond.

What We Need is Real Talk, Not More Talk, about Racism and Anti-Racism

Much of our focus as Christians who want to do anti-racism work is on dialogues. We want to talk with one another instead of at one another. We want to understand each other better. We want to unlock that which we don't know in order to provide us with the answers we so desperately need. Dialogue in and of itself is not the problem. Dialogues that result only in more talk are the problem. But what does it mean to have *real talk* about racism and anti-racism versus just *more talk*? We thought we'd put our own work to work by sharing our thoughts with you using the anti-racism foundational lens of racial positionality. What follows are separate responses by Rev. Sheila M. Beckford (a Black woman United Methodist pastor) and Rev. E. Michelle Ledder (a white woman African Methodist Episcopal minister). Each of us will respond not only based in our racial positionality but make the connections between what we say and our racial positionality as clear as possible. The reasoning for this is multifold: It helps us, as writers, keep our own racial positionality at the forefront, which helps us to do anti-racism work well; it helps to create clear connections for you, the reader, between anti-racism work and racial identity; and it foreshadows the structure of the book ahead.

So, let's try it. The prompt is this: What does it mean to have REAL TALK, not more talk, about racism and anti-racism?

REV. BECKFORD'S RESPONSE: In the Black community, the phrase *REAL TALK* means giving it to you straight with no filter, no hiding behind respectability politics or politeness. Respectability politics occurs when BIPAL people are directed by those in their same group to assimilate to the dominant group in order to be accepted. We are told that if we just follow the rules, get our education, dress well, and speak well, we will be protected from harm by white wrath. For example, recently someone shared a meme. The top photo included the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Abernathy, and others marching arm in arm, dressed in suits and trench coats. The image on the bottom of the meme featured young men wearing pants that sagged. In between the two images a caption read, "They respected this [the top image] and not this." My REAL TALK response beneath the post stated, "The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated anyhow."

In the spring of 2020, the world viewed the murders of Ahmaud Arbery (Georgia) and George Floyd (Minnesota). We were infuriated by the killings of Breonna Taylor (Kentucky) and Elijah McClain (Colorado). In response, white people sought ways to understand their own racism. Many sought answers by reading books, while others sought to find the answers by asking (in fact, demanding) for BIPAL people, especially Black people, to educate them. Although some of the materials were great reads and allowed people to form book studies, they lacked something essential; their talk remained just that: talk. BIPAL, especially Black and Indigenous people, are tired of talk without change. We are tired of hearing talk that leads to more talk but not to action. REAL TALK requires action.

Churches need REAL TALK, not more talk. While serving in a predominantly white church, a white parishioner made the following statement: “I don’t see your color.” Immediately, I corrected her, saying, “I am a big, tall, Black woman with an afro; you better see my color.” I continued to explain to her that to deny seeing my color is called erasure. White people do this to erase the part of a person that makes them uncomfortable in an effort to feel comfortable with an individual or group. Of course, this interruption of her racist statement made her and other white people in the room uncomfortable because they had never experienced REAL TALK. Many white people who were there spoke with me after the meeting, and for months afterward shared with me their displeasure at my public response. They told me I should have educated her without publicly embarrassing her. More talk pulls white people to the side to discuss their racism in private. REAL TALK interrupts harm in the moment. More talk allows people to remain where they are. REAL TALK requires action steps, such as white people holding each other accountable for their racism. More talk may show intellectual “wokeness” but no reparative actions. More talk promotes harm; REAL TALK interrupts harm.

More talk promotes harm
REAL TALK interrupts harm

REV. LEDDER’S RESPONSE: For those of us who are white, we are consistent in finding ways to distract ourselves from having to do our hard

work of anti-racism. Having more talk about racism and anti-racism instead of REAL TALK is one such diversion. The reasons for this abound and, at this point, don't matter. The outcome is that, in terms of anti-racism work, those of us who are white must develop the capability and the motivation to reduce our racism, which prides our attention and energy away from anti-racist strategies. Ironically, avoiding REAL TALK by using dialogue is one distraction.

One way white people misinterpret, misuse, and misappropriate anti-racism strategies created by BIPAL people is by co-opting dialogues. Whether dialogues are in the form of book studies, workshops/trainings, small group conversations, or relationship-building over food, those of us who are white consistently use these opportunities for more talk rather than REAL TALK about racism and anti-racism. We do this in numerous ways, including but not limited to the following:

- We take up all the space in conversations: White folks will fill the space of anti-racism talk with our experiences, our feelings, and our strategies. We either feel too uncomfortable to deal with our own culpability or too inadequate to do something meaningful, and to compensate we fill the space with our words. The white supremacist notion that white people's ideas and feelings should fill any and all spaces (even those dedicated to anti-racism) perpetuates racism: more talk.
- We create talk "about" racism/anti-racism without action: Have you ever attended a meeting that gathers solely to discuss the previous meeting without providing next steps or new ideas? In anti-racism work, this translates to book studies that lead to discussions but not to action; workshop hoarding that makes those of us who are white feel better but that does nothing to change our methods or behavior; or quoting facts about racism (or anti-racism strategies) without enacting them in tangible, meaningful, or powerful ways according to BIPAL people. More talk.
- We develop our own anti-racism task forces or strategies: When those of us who are white create our own anti-racism strategies without taking our guidance from BIPAL people, we only create more talk. We are duplicating (badly) the efforts of BIPAL people who already have strategies in place that we can learn to support responsibly. When white people believe we are the ones to create

anti-racism strategies, we perpetrate the racism that teaches us that white people always have the answer. More subtle excuses for this racism sound like “I want to use my position of power to create change” or “I wanted to do the proper research for a sound course of action.”

REAL TALK is always anti-racist—it *actually* interrupts and dismantles racism. More talk about racism and anti-racism reifies the status quo and generates new expressions of racism all the while. For example, REAL TALK implores those of us who are white to utilize the book study to enact the anti-racism strategies that emerge from its pages. REAL TALK is also anti-racist in **both** content and method. More talk can be anti-racist in one while perpetrating racism in another. For example, attending a protest against police brutality against Black people is anti-racist in content. White people attending the protest and talking to reporters instead of guiding them toward Black activists is racist in method.

Matthew 18:15–17a (CEB)

“If your [sibling] sins against you, go and correct them when you are alone together. If they listen to you, then you’ve won over your [sibling]. But if they won’t listen, take with you one or two others so that every word may be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses. But if they still won’t pay attention, report it to the church.”

Rev. Beckford’s response noted that often in anti-racism work, talk gets REAL when racism is called out in the moment. It matters not whether the racism is considered blatant or subtle; the white person who is made aware of their racism becomes embarrassed or ashamed and reacts. Placing the burden of responsibility on the person who named the racism rather than the one who perpetrated it, the text about taking your sibling aside in private is interpreted to mean that the “calling out of racism” should also be done in private. However, this interpretation does not apply in anti-racism work. This is because the above text refers to a sin that has occurred between only two people. “If your sibling sins against you ...” Racism enacted in front of others has happened in public. The harm has already been done against people of color, and REAL TALK, the only people who probably aren’t aware of it are the white folks. Thus, the call for a private consult over someone’s racism is invoked to protect white people’s feelings. (Sometimes, BIPAL people invoke this, too—part of the reason is that internalized racism teaches BIPAL people to want to protect white people’s feelings!)

Chapter 1:

4REALS: Real Talk with Real Strategies in Real Time for Real Change

Anti-Racism 4REALS is both an anti-racist template and an anti-racism organization. The term *anti-racism* assumes as true the reality of racism to survive and thrive in environments without intentional and explicit actions and actors capable of disrupting, dismantling, and destroying it. Racism will not surrender to the weak calls for gradual change that are beholden to the timeline of those who are racially protected. Rather, racism is fortified by such efforts—it relishes in its ability to bathe in the tepid waters of compromise and consciences that are comfortable with accepting the suffering of others as collateral damage. Anti-racism is anything that *actually* interrupts and dismantles racism.

***Anti-Racism is anything that ACTUALLY
interrupts and dismantles racism***

The question is, how do we do that? Anti-Racism 4REALS literally suggests four (4) REALS.

In this book, we will utilize several strategies and approaches to developing REAL TALK about racism, which ultimately means action and change. The following describes the components of this book and what to expect as you work through it.

REAL TALK finds every way possible to use words to interrupt and dismantle racism. Have you ever been part of discussions about racism and

anti-racism that are so shallow and superficial that you might as well have been talking about the weather or the local sports team? There are many conversations that never get to what is needed to interrupt and dismantle racism. Even dialogues with titles that include words like *diversity*, *racial justice*, *racial reconciliation* (whatever that's supposed to mean!), or *anti-racism* can fall short when they do not get at what needs to be said and how it needs to be said.

The corporate world teaches its leaders to speak in neutral terms to maintain professionalism. Schools hide behind political correctness, which allows false objectivity to masquerade as facts. The Church also fails hard at this because many of us have been taught that in order to be a Christian, we must always be polite/nice/gentle/compassionate/loving. The problems are not the terms or inclinations themselves but how they are interpreted and lived out while addressing oppression—in this case, racism. For example, *polite* and *nice* become code words for “Don’t say anything that gets white people upset.” *Gentle* transforms into soft-pedaling around difficult issues rather than directly naming them. *Compassionate* translates to understanding racism as someone’s opinion or upbringing rather than addressing the oppression and injustice. *Loving* is described as “meeting people where they are” but ends up leaving racists where they are until they feel comfortable enough to change, if ever. (By the way, if that sentence was difficult for you to read, it may be because you’ve been hearing more talk about racism versus anti-racist REAL TALK. We’ll go into this more throughout the book!)

REAL TALK not only names racism directly but also says things in ways that enact anti-racist strategies within the content and proclamation of the words themselves. For example, in contrast to “journey language,” REAL TALK advocates for “entry point” language.³ Entry points create a way for all people to start anti-racism work right now. The work of an anti-racism trainer, book, or workshop is to find entry points for people and develop learning engagements that connect someone’s entry point (perspective, prior training, learning style, and so on) with the work of anti-racism. Entry point language also removes the literal and symbolic space for people (especially white people) to wiggle out of responsibilities to dismantle racism that journey language permits. REAL TALK

³ The Reverend E. Michelle Ledder first used “entry point” language to describe places where people do the work of anti-racism while she was working at the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) of the United Methodist Church (2016 to present).

places what is needed for discussions about racism and anti-racism in direct contact with how to say the uncomfortable things, how to do the uncomfortable things, and how to remain faithful and authentically human all the while.

REAL STRATEGIES prioritize ACTION-NOW Learning Engagements to move everyone beyond just talking about racism to immediate anti-racism actions. Rather than relying on models that demand that talk (REAL or otherwise) occur first and in isolation from action, REAL STRATEGIES places action at the center of Anti-Racism 4REALS. If anti-racism is anything that *actually* interrupts and dismantles racism, it just makes sense that actions are necessary. However, so much of current anti-racism practice, especially within the Church, is predicated on talking about and agreeing on truth of content, strategies necessary, and actions in order to engage. Book studies abound as new information is published and church groups gather in unprecedented numbers after the racialized terror murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and Elijah McClain in 2020. But how many of those book studies have created any, let alone sustainable, change for racial justice or equity? How many book studies create tangible, meaningful, and powerful anti-racism acts? Instead, how many book studies led to quoting truths *about* racism and anti-racism without *actually* interrupting and dismantling it?

ACTION-NOW Learning Engagements are exercises that bridge the gap between learning about something and doing something. Anti-Racism 4REALS believes that all people can begin doing anti-racism now, and in three (3) steps or less. REAL STRATEGIES interrupts and dismantles the workshop-hoarder mentality that believes attending workshops can be equated with anti-racism work or that one more workshop will “get me ready” to do what’s necessary. REAL STRATEGIES also breaks the chains of information-only workshops—even at the introductory entry point—by creating processes by which action can be taken right now. For example, have you ever been in the presence of someone making a racist joke? How did you respond? Did you interrupt them? Did you stay silent? Did you leave? Did you laugh? REAL STRATEGIES moves from learning and talking about anti-racism work to the actual doing of reparative racial justice.

REAL STRATEGIES are placed at the end of every chapter—including this introduction—so that the work of anti-racism begins without a waiting

period. Each will be based on a threefold template of THE BIG IDEA (what you learn about in the chapter), ACTION-NOW (for immediate use), and ENTRY POINTS (racial positionality and prior skill set). Without REAL STRATEGIES even the realest of REAL TALK becomes just more talk. Book studies which have the potential to dismantle racist thinking will actually lead to anti-racist acts instead of dialogues about the dialogues. Missed opportunities to interrupt racism will decrease as we learn how information becomes the actions that bolster our courage, resistance, and conviction. REAL STRATEGIES make REAL TALK real.

REAL TIME incorporates role-plays so that people can practice scripts and rehearse plans in preparation to interrupt and dismantle racism in the moment. REAL TALK and REAL STRATEGIES can't interrupt and dismantle racism if when the racism occurs we can't enact them. Racism happens in real time, so anti-racism must also happen in REAL TIME. Anti-Racism 4REALS recognizes that even prepared anti-racists will experience situations when racism occurs and the words or interruptions won't come. This is for many reasons. Sometimes, for those of us who are white, the momentum of our inaction has yet to be overcome, or we recognize the racism but don't have a skill set necessary to interrupt it or dismantle it. For BIPAL people, at times the act of racism itself is so hurtful that the trauma of the event necessitates self-care without overt disruption. Sometimes, BIPAL people wait for white people to step up and take responsibility for the anti-racism they purport to be about. At other times, internalized oppression creates in BIPAL people the need to protect white people or shield them from their own embarrassment even as they perpetrate racism.

But REAL TIME isn't restricted to racism that occurs "out there." 4REALS, as an organization, believes that anti-racism isn't simply information that is taught but the method by which the work is done. 4REALS believes that REAL TIME begins in the learning (even during anti-racism workshops or books) and that there are faithful ways to address racism even at the introductory entry points. Interrupting racism in anti-racism workshops has the power to model what faithful Christianity, humanity, and anti-racism work looks and sounds like in REAL TIME. These same strategies can be used to provide a model for interrupting racism in churches, schools, at work, at home, and most, if not all settings.

CAUTION: Anti-racists *only* role-play the interruption of the racism, not the racism itself, because this mitigates to the best of our ability the harms

of racism. We do not perpetrate racism in real time in order to interrupt racism in REAL TIME. (For white folks reading this and wondering how to become better at recognizing racism in real time without role-plays, use a Google search. Unfortunately, plenty of examples of every type of racism abound.)

REAL CHANGE crafts accountability templates and measures to ensure that tangible, meaningful, and powerful change for racial justice replaces good intentions and workshops. REAL CHANGE requires that we focus on outcome, not on intent. There is often a disconnectedness between intent and what actually occurs. One reason for this is racialized implicit bias, but other factors impede REAL CHANGE as well. Some organizations attempt to do anti-racism work using the “add-on” method, which retains a foundation of white supremacy and “adds” trainings or special days on top. Some leaders are so entrenched in the way things are because that’s how they got there.

Anti-racism 4REALS defines anti-racism as anything that *actually* interrupts and dismantles racism. REAL CHANGE provides ways to track, assess, and analyze successes and failures (yes, failures), and make on-the-go shifts that avoid the most common roadblocks and obstacles to anti-racism work. REAL CHANGE creates methods of accountability and transparency that build not only timelines and momentum but also trust. *Change* is a word that has been cheapened by superficial and temporary fixes that might feel good to some in the moment but that do nothing to shift the ethos of an institution or the commitment of an individual. REAL CHANGE provides the external measurements and an accountability paradigm that brings all people the opportunity to participate in anti-racism work that actually does the work of anti-racism.

Chapter Outline: Two Responses and an ACTION-NOW Learning Engagement

Rev. Beckford and Rev. Ledder have created a way to model what REAL TALK with REAL STRATEGIES in REAL TIME about racism and anti-racism can mean for REAL CHANGE. Each chapter will highlight one REAL one aspect of racism or anti-racism, and will include three sub-sections: a response from Rev. Beckford; a response from Rev. Ledder; and a collective response based in an anti-racist skill/action the reader can use right away. In-book journaling with prompt questions (as you’ve already seen)

will continue to create the literal space for any reader to move beyond just absorbing material to internalizing the internal and external work necessary for anti-racism.

The chapter on REAL TALK focuses on the role of silence in its multiple forms—repressive or oppressive, vigilant or violent, protective or as a means of survival. The REAL STRATEGIES chapter highlights how racial positionality influences which actions white allies and BIPAL people should engage. Included also is a chart with eight sets of scenarios and multiple entry points for immediate use. REAL TIME gets right to the point prioritizing doing the work of interrupting and dismantling racism and the obstructions that get in the way. Chapter 4 on REAL CHANGE includes a list of things anti-racists should stop right now as well as accountability measures and templates for anti-racist outcomes. Finally, the conclusion presents an overarching anti-racism strategy that honors racial positionality and creates a method for challenging white folks to do the anti-racism work needed without placing a double burden on BIPAL people.

ACTION-NOW Learning Engagement—Doing Anti-Racism Work Responsibly

Anti-Racism 4REALS believes that at every moment, every person can do anti-racism work. This is why we've included critical journal prompts even in the introduction and why now we're providing an ACTION-NOW Learning Engagement that provides an anti-racism skill you can use as soon as you read it. It's called anti-racist covenants.⁴

Anti-racist covenants can be seen as corrections to safe space or even brave space covenants: lists of pre-agreed-upon ways of speaking and being with one another when having difficult conversations or working alongside each other across lines of difference. Safe space covenants were created to try to literally create spaces where people felt safe enough to be vulnerable with others different from themselves. Soon, however, cri-

⁴ The Reverend E. Michelle Ledder first created a version of anti-racist covenants while working at the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) for the United Methodist Church. The first versions were inspired by attending a meeting hosted by the Young People's Department of the Washington DC NAACP, who introduced a dialogue agreement created by groups caucused by race. The current version included here has been adapted and modified by 4REALS: Anti-Racist Anti-Racism Training and Consulting, LLC.

tiques of these attempts emerged as participants realized it was impossible to create full safety. Brave space covenants attempt to rectify this by replacing the impossible goal of safety with the possibility of creating spaces where people could be brave enough to be vulnerable even though 100 percent safety couldn't be achieved. However, both safe space and brave space covenants fall into the same trap: They still prioritize the dominant or protected group.

Racism works just like all other spheres of oppression. Within a system of oppression, there are those who are protected, prioritized, and privileged, and those who are discriminated against and who are the direct targets of the oppression. Within the system of racism, white people are the protected group and BIPAL people are the direct targets. More than the inability of any covenant items to provide 100 percent safety, the limitations of safe space and brave space covenants lie in their replication of the dominant group's worldview and the protection of their safety and comfort. Here, we're including three (3) anti-racist covenant items so that you, the reader, can start doing REAL TALK the very next time your anti-racism group/workshop leader initiates a covenant to determine how the work will proceed.

The following table has three columns. The first represents the goal of the covenant item. The second column represents how you might see it written in a safe space or brave space covenant. The final column shows language for an anti-racist covenant item. Outcomes are listed for the safe/brave space item and the anti-racist item. Notice how the outcomes of the safe/brave space items get away from the stated goal while the anti-racist covenant items point more closely toward it. Notice your reactions to reading them. If you are white, take special care to think about how the safe/brave space item has protected you in the past. If you are a BIPAL person, think about how, if at all, the anti-racist covenant item would mitigate the harm of the safe/brave spaces you've been part of in the past. If you believe it wouldn't, what language would help it to do that? For everyone, name at least one specific thing you can do to live out one of the anti-racist covenant items the next time you are doing anti-racist work.