

To our community members,

should not - look away from the harm and trauma that is wreaked upon our Black communities.

The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery are on a list that is TOO LONG; a list that should not exist.

These were people who desired basic human dignity and were denied this because of the color of their skin. They deserved to feel protected - to feel secure in their home with their loved ones, to feel the exuberant rush of running for joy and not fear, to feel safe that they would be treated with respect and decency.

These overt acts of racism are happening while the COVID-19 pandemic is magnifying the health and economic disparities that Black and other communities of color have been facing for generations. The “social change” that we say we want WILL NOT happen unless we address systemic racism and injustice directly.

Life can feel overwhelming- especially right now when you may be homeschooling your children, taking care of a loved one, stressed about a job lost, and/or afraid of going to the grocery store in a way that is deeply unsettling to you.

Please don't look away.

We all need to look and to listen and to feel this.

We all need to understand this inequity on that deeper level - a level that Black people already innately know to the core of their souls, while other parts of our community are profoundly unaware.

This is not a simple task we can do alone.

The changes we all want to see - the good we all want to do - cannot happen unless we all act to end the visible and invisible racism in our communities. We will not see that bright future we're all striving for if we do not target our efforts to improve the livelihoods of those who are being harmed the most by our unequal systems.

Please don't look away.

**Ways to Engage Right Now – Each One Counts**

If you're wondering what steps to take, here are some things that can help.

**Listen. Learn. Give. Center.**

**Listen:**

Listen to communities of color. Understanding what Black, Brown, or Indigenous people need to thrive is crucial right now.

- x Please don't assume.
- x **Ask.** Ask them right now what they need from you.
- x **Listen.** Listen to what your community members say.
- x **Trust.** Trust what they say is what they need right now.

**Learn:**

x [Race Forward](#)

**Give:**

It's become a pandemic cliché to say "Now more than ever," but it's still true. Now, more than ever, giving is essential. Whether it's giving money, time, or compassion.

x **If you are an institutional funder:** please give. Please don't wait for the

**Parse your media intake-** who is being centered? Whose experiences are “the protagonist”? At this time of heightened racial violence and inequity, if the story “protagonist” is not Black or Brown, use that as an indicator to reassess that media source and what narrative they are trying to give you.

Our own media literacy (including social media) is a key learning area right now. **Following media outlets and sources that are authored by and for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities is a crucial step** to improve one's own media literacy, especially if you want to unlearn harmful narratives that you may be unknowingly carrying with you.

### **#BlackLivesMatter**

For people of color in the Collective Impact Forum community, we see you. We see your pain and grief. We see the injustices you have and are experiencing. You do not deserve to feel this way. No one should. This burden should not be yours. It should not be anyone's.

For our Forum community - Let us all do what we can to overcome anti-blackness and racism in our systems and communities.

**Listen. Learn. Give. Center.** And **Support** each other.

Now more than ever. Your actions and convictions are needed.

With deep gratitude,

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