



## **XR Brighton Anti-Racism People's Assembly Handout**

This year has really highlighted the need for many more people and organisations – especially white people – to stand up and be anti-racist

That means more than not being racist ourselves, but challenging racism wherever we see it – whether that be in other people, in our government, or in ourselves and the systems we benefit from.

It is about recognising that as we have been born into a racist system, no matter how much we may believe we are not part of the problem, we actually often are.

### **Why is anti-racism work important within the environmental movement?**

Many of the underlying issues that environmentalists try to overcome are the same as many other movements are grappling with

Whether it be Trade Unionists, climate youth strikers, or the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement we all want to overcome the same fundamental problem: An economic and political system that is exploitative and destructive

Our overarching solutions are the same: We all want to create a system that is caring and nurturing. Working together will increase our chances of success and we are stronger united.

### **Why is anti-racism work important within the environmental movement?**

The climate crisis is intimately tied to social justice and civil rights. Marginalised communities are far more exposed to its impacts.

Climate breakdown exacerbates existing inequalities between: rich and poor, men and women, white populations and people of colour, residents and refugees.

Waste, pollution, and the climate crisis disproportionately impact people of colour. This is a global issue, which is also prevalent right here in the U.K.

Race, more than income or educational level, is the strongest indicator of how negatively someone will be impacted by environmental hazards.

Generally, countries in the 'Global South' – who contributed least to the climate crisis – are suffering the most. Many Indigenous peoples have become or will become climate refugees, displaced due to environmental disasters.

Furthermore BIPOC aren't included in climate conversations and indigenous knowledge has been and still is dismissed.

It is not enough to focus only on the science; people are at the heart of everything we do and racist systems make it harder for us all to succeed

Furthermore, when other oppressions begin to cease people will have more capacity to get involved in activist movements like XR.

### **Why is anti-racism work important within the environmental movement?**

In an open letter that Wretched of the Earth wrote to Extinction Rebellion they said:

*“You may not realize that when you focus on the science you often look past the fire and us – you look past our histories of struggle, dignity, victory and resilience. And you look past the vast intergenerational knowledge of unity with nature that our peoples have. Indigenous communities remind us that we are not separate from nature, and that protecting the environment is also protecting ourselves. In order to survive, communities in the Global South continue to lead the visioning and building of new worlds free of the violence of capitalism. We must both centre those experiences and recognise those knowledges here.”*

BLM has been a powerful force this year, mobilising people from across communities and across countries all around the world – an inspiration and triumph

We as XR are overwhelmingly white and we have a huge amount to learn from others.

## **Where have we got to so far?**

Nationally and locally we have made efforts to be more diverse and reach out to other groups

There is a growing connection to communities in the Global South

There has been a focus on creating a movement of movements for example, locally we have made efforts to engage with, support and work alongside BLM Brighton.

But it hasn't always gone as well as might have liked:

- People of colour in XRB have felt alienated and left
- BLM activists have at times felt uncomfortable at XR events
- And we have had little success at diversifying our membership

## **What is racism?**

Quote from the Me and White Supremacy Workbook by Layla F Saad:

*'Many white people hear the words white supremacy and think that doesn't apply to me, that they don't hold that belief but rather that they believe that all of us are equal and that they don't modify their treatment of people based on the color of their skin.'*

*However 'white supremacy is an ideology, a paradigm, an institutional system, a worldview that you have been born into by virtue of your white privilege. I am not talking about the physical colour of your skin being inherently bad or something to feel shame about. I am talking about the historic and modern legislating, social conditioning, and systemic institutionalizing of the construction of whiteness as inherently superior to people of other races.*

*Yes, outwardly racist systems of oppression like chattel slavery, apartheid and racial discrimination have been made illegal. But subtle and overt discrimination, marginalization, abuse, and killing of BIPOC in white-dominated communities continues even today because white supremacy continues to be the dominant paradigm under which white societies operate'.*

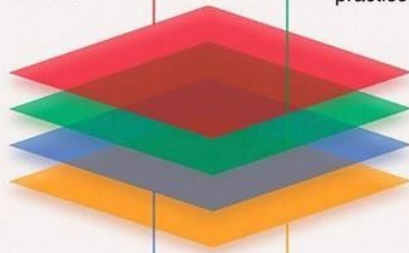
# THE FOUR <sup>OF</sup> DIMENSIONS **RACISM**

## **INSTITUTIONAL**

Policies and practices that reinforce racist standards within a workspace or organization.

## **STRUCTURAL**

Multiple institutions collectively upholding racist policies and practices, i.e. society.



## **INTERPERSONAL**

Racist acts and micro-aggressions carried out from one person to another.

## **INTERNALIZED**

The subtle and overt messages that reinforce negative beliefs and self-hatred in individuals.

*Inspired by  
Race Forward Trainings*

**Slow Factory  
Foundation**

Via Our Future Now

**Here are some key words & ideas taken from Me & White Supremacy by Layla F Saad and some other sources**

**White fragility:** A phrase coined by author Robin DiAngelo, defined as “ a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.” e.g. being called out for something you’ve done and becoming angry, upset or defensive.

**White privilege:** Think of white privilege as an unearned, an almost randomly assigned head start. It doesn't guarantee that you're going to win the race. It just means that you get to start a few feet further forward. White privilege doesn't mean you don't have any hurdles, it just means you have fewer of them and they're not related to the colour of your skin. - Mikki Kendall, author of Hood Feminism.

**White saviorism:** A colonialist idea that assumes that BIPOC need white people to save them, that without white intervention, instruction, and guidance, BIPOC will be left helpless, and that without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen and treated as inferior to people with white privilege will not survive.

**White silence:** Occurs when people with white privilege stay complicitly silent when it comes to issues of race.

**Tone Policing:** A tactic used by those who have white privilege to silence those who do not by focusing on the tone of what is being said rather than the actual content. This can be out loud or subconscious.

**White centering:** The centering of whiteness and white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else. The belief, whether conscious or not, that whiteness is “normal” and BIPOC are “other”.

**White exceptionalism:** The belief that people with white privilege are exempt from white supremacy. The belief of being ‘one of the good ones’.

**White apathy:** A feeling of apathy, indifference, unconcern, detachment, dispassion and disregard about racism by people with white privilege.

**Performative allyship:** The visual illusion of allyship without the actual work of allyship.

## Slide 10

### What is anti-racism?

Being anti-racist is based on the conscious efforts and actions to dismantle institutional, structural, interpersonal and internalised racism and as a result provide equitable opportunities for all people.

People can act against racism by acknowledging personal privileges, confronting acts of racial discrimination, and working to change personal racial biases.

If we are going to change things going forward, it is really important that white environmentalists and activists listen to BIPOC within our movement and take a deep look at our own environmental activism and the movements we are part of, considering how much of environmentalism’s racist history still applies and what we can do to change things going forward.

Before we start on this journey we want to emphasise that it is important to understand that it is all a process and the most important thing is to be open minded, humble and willing to learn and grow even if that means experiencing discomfort.

## **XR Anti-racist Resource list**

Here are a collection of resources including books, podcasts, videos, films, TV programmes and people to follow. As racism is ingrained into every aspect of our society, anti-racism must be too. It is vital to be proactively anti-racist and use these resources to gain more knowledge on this issue.

### **Books**

These books centre the experiences of people of colour. Exploring themes such as race, racism, whiteness and othering/marginalisation;

Why I Am No Longer Talking to White People About Race, by Renni Eddo-Lodge

(non-fiction)

The Windrush Betrayal by Amelia Gentleman (non-fiction)

Black Feminist Thought by Patricia Hill Collins (non-fiction)

Ain't I A Woman by bell hooks (non-fiction)

Redefining Realness by Janet Mock (non-fiction)

Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde (non-fiction)

Me and White Supremacy, by Layla F. Saad (non-fiction)

White Fragility, by Robin Diangelo (non-fiction)

Kill the Black One First by Michael Fuller (non-fiction)

Brit(ish) by Afua Hirsch (non-fiction)

Black and British by David Olusoga (non-fiction)

Girl, Woman, Other by Bernadine Evaristo (fiction)

Sula, by Toni Morrison (fiction)

How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi (non-fiction)

Assata, by Assata Shakur (non-fiction)

Me, Not You, by Alison Phipps (non-fiction)

Queenie, by Candice Carty Williams (fiction)

The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house (non-fiction)

### **Podcasts**

Growing up with Gal-dem  
Bad Activist  
Say your mind  
About race  
The Black Curriculum  
BLAM UK (Black History Bites)  
Gurls Talk

### **Films/TV**

Small Axe- BBC  
When they see us- Netflix  
13th- Netflix  
Black and British: A forgotten history -BBC  
Sitting in Limbo- BBC

What Matters -BLM Documentary

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/whatmatters2020-its-on-us-join-the-movement-blacklivesmatter/>

Black feminism & the movement for Black lives:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV3nnFheQRo&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV3nnFheQRo&feature=emb_title)

The Single Story:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

This difference between being not racist and anti-racism:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/ibram\\_x\\_kendi\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_being\\_not\\_racist\\_and\\_antiracist](https://www.ted.com/talks/ibram_x_kendi_the_difference_between_being_not_racist_and_antiracist)

### **Platforms**

Gal-dem  
Gurls Talk  
Free Black Uni  
The Black Curriculum  
Wretched of The Earth  
Sustainable Sundayz  
Black History Walks

## **Black Thinkers: Academics, Activists and community leaders**

bell hooks- Black feminist

Kimberle Crenshaw- Intersectional feminist

Frantz Fanon- Postcolonial psychologist

Audre Lorde- Black feminist and queer theorist

Stuart Hall- Black sociologist

Robert Bullard- Environmentalist and academic

Angela Davis- Black activist

James Baldwin- Black activist

Olive Morris- Black British Activist/ Community organiser

Altheia Jones-LeCoite - Black British Activist and part of the Mangrove Nine

## **People to engage with (via Instagram)**

<https://www.instagram.com/MikaelaLoach/?hl=en>

<https://www.instagram.com/ajabarber/?hl=en>

<https://www.instagram.com/sustainablesundayz/?hl=en>

[https://www.instagram.com/solidaritree\\_/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/solidaritree_/?hl=en)

[https://www.instagram.com/toritsui\\_/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/toritsui_/?hl=en)

<https://www.instagram.com/natureboyniel/?hl=en>

<https://www.instagram.com/domipalmer/?hl=en>

<https://www.instagram.com/vanessanakate1/?hl=en>

## **Useful links and articles**

Sustainable Sundayz Anti-racist environmentalism guide:

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAEAYOVXStE/EabdLyaUiH5tYS\\_2TNXE7g/view?utm\\_content=DAEAYOVXStE&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAEAYOVXStE/EabdLyaUiH5tYS_2TNXE7g/view?utm_content=DAEAYOVXStE&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton)

XR Let's talk about the environmental movements' racist history:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10jhV4CJpavjxw195UiXMDfLBChjDV6M/view>

Is your environmentalism anti-racist?

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B2pP0IQh7EZ/?hl=en>

Pass the MIC:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CHcx7TjnCi5/>



Environmental Injustice:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/21/what-is-environmental-injustice-and-why-is-the-guardian-covering-it>

Black environmentalists talk about climate and anti-racism:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/03/climate/black-environmentalists-talk-about-climate-and-anti-racism.html?ref=oembed>

Racial justice is climate justice:

<https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2020/06/09/the-links-between-racism-and-the-environment-frederick-hewett>

Are XR whitewashing climate justice:

<https://gal-dem.com/extinction-rebellion-risk-trampling-climate-justice-movement/>

This is what XR must do to engage with people of colour on climate justice:

<https://gal-dem.com/this-is-what-extinction-rebellion-must-do-to-engage-with-people-of-colour-on-climate-justice/>

Who are the climate justice organisers reshaping a very white movement:

<https://gal-dem.com/who-are-the-climate-justice-organisers-reshaping-a-very-white-movement/>