



**National Ambulance  
BME Forum**

Working to improve the experience  
of Black and Minority Ethnic Staff  
and communities

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# Black Lives Matter



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Since the death of George Floyd last week, millions across the globe are taking part in protests and supporting the #BLM movement.

The sad thing is that this is not a new issue, this is part of what has been a systematic racial problem for centuries and it is a global problem, not just a problem in the USA. We recognise the personal impact and emotional turmoil that this is having on our Black colleagues, volunteers and our communities, and we acknowledge that there are people in all our trusts who are hurting. The pain that is felt by Black people around the globe is palpable.

We as the National Ambulance BME Forum stand with our black colleagues and will continue to drive towards eradicating racism. Our focus as a BME forum is to champion and raise awareness on issues around race. Racism has no place in our society.

It is not enough just to be not racist; we also have to be actively anti-racist. We do not want to move backwards in all the good work we have done so far in terms of race equality by staying silent.

Let us use this as an opportunity to be better and do better going forward. Ask your Black colleagues “are you ok?”

Right now, our Black colleagues feel tired and having allies is more crucial than ever. It’s okay if you feel uncomfortable - let’s get talking, let’s have the conversation.

This is not a Black vs white matter. This is an everyone vs racism matter.



# Background



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The National Ambulance BME Forum recognises that BME people right now are tired of being the ones who are given the responsibility to educate people about how to be an ally, and anti-racist.

In response to the calls from our networks across the country, we have put together this resource to help colleagues find how they can support their BME colleagues and the Black Lives Matter movement.



The Black Fist of Power was first used in the late 40's by Black Africans as a form of acknowledgement. Though it's meaning changed over the decades the symbolic use of the fist diminished, until in 2012 three women formed the Black

Lives Matter movement and brought back its use. The protest group was founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi in protest at the killing of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin. Now used worldwide, its use by the BLM is peaceful and the group in its current form aims to change ideology through peaceful channels.



*The 6year old daughter of George Floyd, who joined protests earlier this week and said "daddy changed the world."*

*"The beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And that's the only way forward."*

*-Ijeoma Oluo, American writer*

# Some tips on how to be an ally



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## 1. Recognise your Privilege.

This does not mean that your life hasn't had its difficulties, but recognise that your skin colour is not one of the reasons that life is harder for you. There are many kinds of privilege, be it cisgender, able bodied, male, hetero-sexual, socio-economic as well as White privilege. White privilege has endured throughout history.

## 2. Listen

The most important of all. Create a safe space for people to express their fears, frustrations, and needs. Simply listening to stories and trusting that they're being truthful creates a protective layer of support. Listen to what people have to say and acknowledge

## 3. Be prepared to be uncomfortable and brave

Acknowledging privilege and systemic inequality is uncomfortable, it isn't meant to be easy. As an ally, when you recognise these inequalities and speak about them it makes a difference to both your audience and to people of colour. Accept criticism with grace, we all get it wrong from time to time, but be willing to learn.

## 4. Be strategic – use the power you have for change.

As an ally, your privilege and often your position will mean that people will listen more when you talk. Allyship is more than joining in the protest or being part of an event. Use your power to make positive cultural change. Call out and respond to the inappropriate banter, microaggression or racist comment.

## 5. Look at who is in your in-group.

We all have in groups and out group and our in-groups tend to look like us. How often do you hear the voices of people who don't look like you and what their experience is. Always be aware of your implicit biases – we all have them.

## 6. Amplify the voices of others

Whether it is online or in person amplify the voices of those without your privilege. We need you to speak out and challenge if you hear Racist language or behaviour



# What should I read?



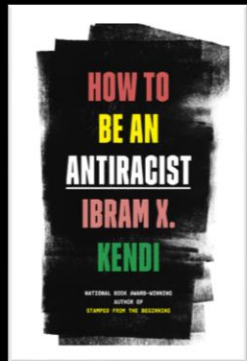
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With so much available to read on the topic of Race, we felt a short reading list from our forum members may help to get you started.



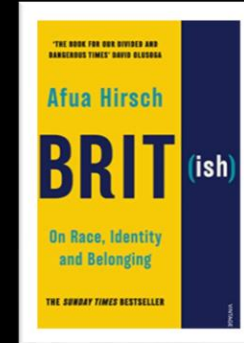
## Why I'm No longer talking to White people about Race, Rene Eddo-Lodge

In 2014, award-winning journalist Reni Eddo-Lodge wrote about her frustration with the way that discussions of race and racism in Britain were being led by those who weren't affected by it. She posted a piece on her blog, entitled: 'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race', this led to the publication of the book by the same name in 2018.



## How to be an Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi

Kendi candidly identifies and confronts racism in America by telling the story of his life from his upbringing in Queens, New York, where he was, at best, an indifferent student, to his time as a PhD student at Temple University in Philadelphia and, later, to some of his experiences as a professor.



## Brit(ish), Afua Hirsch

Hirsch is the daughter of a black Ghanaian woman and a white English man; her book is an interrogation of her own identity and an examination of the roots of prejudice, taking to task those progressives who claim they “don't see colour”. It asks the question that so many people of colour hear “Why do I get asked where I'm from, when my entire family is British.”



## The Good Immigrant, Nikesh Shukla

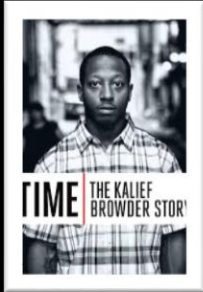
The Good Immigrant is a collection of 21 essays from Black, Asian and minority ethnic voices which have been edited by Shukla. The essays tell what is it to be a person of colour in the UK today. They address a multitude of experiences and ask why BME immigrants are seen as “bad immigrants” until they have proven themselves to be worthy.





# What should I watch?

There are many films and series you can watch to help you increase your understanding of what is happening across the globe at the present time, these may give you an insight into some of the issues.



## Time: The Kalief Browder Story

True Crime docuseries, the story of a teenager wrongly charged with theft and jailed at Riker's Island prison for over 1,000 days



## Dear White People

A series following the lives of several black students at an ivy leagues college and the myriad of challenges and micro-aggressions they face on a daily basis.



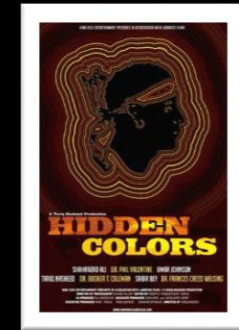
## When they see us

True crime Docuseries, based on the Central Park jogger case. Five boys wrongly convicted of a crime they did not commit.



## Black and Scottish

This film brings together black Scottish individuals who share their experiences of being black in Scotland .



## Hidden Colors

This documentary series explains and describe the marginalizing of African Americans in America and the world.



## Is Britain racist?

This BBC3 series documents the experience of Black people in the UK

<https://youtu.be/BuZbbMOH0Qo>



# How to support anti-racism in the UK



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Taking the time to learn and research is part of being a good ally. These are some of the organisations that you may want to take a look at to increase your own awareness.



## BLACK LIVES MATTER UK

Black Lives Matter is a global organisation operating in the US, UK and Canada and aims to eradicate white supremacy and "build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes."



## SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

Show Racism the Red Card tackles racism in the UK with educational workshops, training sessions, multimedia packages and many other resources. Founded in 1996, it is the UK's leading anti-racism educational charity and delivers training to more than 50,000 people every year.



## STOP HATE UK

Stop Hate UK was founded in 1995 as a direct response to the murder of Stephen Lawrence. The organisation works alongside local strategic partnerships to tackle hate crime and discrimination while supporting victims of racial harassment.



## UK BLACK PRIDE

UK Black Pride is the largest celebration for LGBTQ+ people of African, Asian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Latin American descent in Europe. From its humble beginnings, UKBP has grown exponentially – attracting LGBTQ+ people of colour from around the country to unite and celebrate at the intersection of their identities.



# Your mental health matters

This is not an easy topic to speak about and we know that for many there is an impact on people's wellbeing. Here are some tips to support you;

- **Limit social media intake**

Social media is a wonderful tool but you can also spend hours reading and absorbing traumatic information. Know your capacity and listen to your body when a break is needed

- **Talk to family, friends and colleagues**

Talking to others helps. Share how you are feeling with those you trust. Social support is key during times like these. Keep in contact with people who bring you happiness

- **Channel your frustrations**

Fitness is a great way to help channel your emotions and focus your mind and body in the present.

- **Read, listen and watch things that celebrate Black culture**

Read articles, books, listen to music and watch films that celebrate the amazing contributions made by Black people. Did you know the stethoscope was invented by a black man, Thomas A Carrington?

- **Eat well**

A balanced and nutritious diet will give you more energy and help you to think clearly.

## It's okay to not be okay

We know that individual Trusts have a multitude of wellbeing resources available.

You can also contact the NHS Wellbeing service using the details below or speak to your local BME Network or **NABMEF lead** about what's available locally.



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for our NHS people** **NHS**

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daily

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to 85258

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