

Advice for being an ally

Dr Muna Abdi shares some of the ways you can show up and stand up as an ally. Follow her on Twitter [@Muna_Abdi_PhD](#)

1 Own your privilege

Recognise the power, privilege and resources you have and think about how you can use it to support the work of those who are 'othered'.

2 Talk about the uncomfortable

And that sometimes means talking about how you are complicit in an oppressive system. Don't talk about other people's trauma, you cannot know it... but you can talk about the effects of a system.

3 Be strategic in your activism

Being an ally is more than just joining protests and marches... it is using your institutional power to change structures and systems. If you are in a position to do so, do so. Actions Speak Louder

4 Figure out WHERE and HOW you can do the most good

Everyone can do something. Whether it is pushing out messages on Twitter and on Facebook or meeting with institutional leads to push for change. The cacophony of all of us doing work together will lead to systemic change.

5 Start where you are

Take concrete steps- small ones, like steps on a ladder. Ask people what they need... Stand/sit with those who've been doing the work longer than you... Listen... Ask more questions... then talk.

6 Ask yourself: what do I want the future to look like?

We need to spend more time thinking/ talking about potential solutions.

7 Do your research

You can't be an effective ally if you don't know what the issues are. And you can't help deconstruct systems without first understanding how they were built. Read. Listen. Read. Listen. Read.

8 Resist the white saviour complex

Your role is not to "fix" communities of colour. It is not your job to swoop down and take action on their behalf without knowing what the community needs to begin with. It might be easy to succumb to the desire to do things that seem good for others because they make you feel good, but it's important to resist that urge and re-examine how to help.

9 Start with your own circle

Call out friends and family on their racism and microaggressions, even (especially) when it's uncomfortable. They'll likely be more open to listening to you, and it will give you the opportunity to effect real change.

10 Be brave

These things are not always comfortable. But commit to pushing past the point of comfort to take effective and impactful action to change things... even if that action is messy or risks the loss of your own privileged/powerful status.