

From *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo (2018)

Graphic distillation of pp. 119-122 and pp. 141-143 by Russell Nadel, under supervision of Dr. DiAngelo

A white person's racial perspective, assumptions, and/or behaviors are challenged

Socialized FRAMEWORK OF RACIAL ASSUMPTIONS is immediately and unconsciously activated, often including some of these flawed lines of subconscious reasoning:

- Racism is simply personal prejudice.
- If I am a good person, I can't be racist.
- Judging is wrong, and it is possible not to judge.
- My learning is finished; I know all I need to know.
- Racism is conscious bias. I have none, so I am not racist.
- My own suffering relieves me of racism or racial privilege.
- How I am perceived by others is the most important issue.
- As a white person, I know the best way to challenge racism.
- If you knew me or understood me, you would know I can't be racist.
- Racists are bad individuals, so you are saying that I am a bad person.
- I am entitled to remain comfortable / have this conversation the way I want to.
- White people who experience another form of oppression cannot experience racial privilege.
- If you have more knowledge on the subject than I do, you [must] think you're better than me.
- Racism can only be intentional; my not having intended racism cancels out the impact of my behavior.
- I am free of racism.
- It's unkind to point out racism.
- If I can't see it, it isn't legitimate.
- I have friends of color, so I can't be racist.
- There is no problem; society is fine the way it is.
- Racism is a simple problem. People just need to...
- If I am feeling challenged, you are doing this wrong.
- My worldview is objective and the only one operating.

FEELINGS generated from Assumptions:

- "Singled out"
- "Attacked"
- "Silenced"
- "Accused"
- "Judged"
- Insulted / Indignant
- Shame
- Guilt
- Anger
- Fear
- Outrage

BEHAVIORS caused by Feelings:

- Physically leaving
- Emotionally withdrawing
- Seeking absolution
- Focusing on intentions
- Crying
- Denying
- Arguing
- Avoiding

Defensive CLAIMS spoken to justify the Feelings/Behaviors, recenter the attention on the "victimization" of the white person, and exempt the white person from further engagement or accountability:

- I know people of color.
- That is just your opinion.
- I marched in the sixties.
- I already know all this.
- You are judging me.
- You don't know me.
- You are generalizing.
- You're making me feel guilty.
- You're being racist against me.
- Some people find offense where there is none.
- The real oppression is class [or gender, or anything other than race].
- You hurt my feelings.
- You misunderstood me.
- The problem is your tone.
- I can't say anything right.
- That was not my intention.
- This is not welcoming to me.
- You're "playing the race card."
- You're not doing this the right way.
- I just said one little innocent thing.
- I have suffered too.
- I don't feel safe.
- You are elitist.
- I disagree.

Claims and Behaviors serve to PROTECT & PERPETUATE white privilege & racism:

- Take race off the table
- Close off self-reflection
- Maintain white solidarity
- Silence the discussion
- Hijack the conversation
- Protect a limited worldview
- Make white people the victims
- Rally more resources to white people
- Focus on the messenger, not the message
- Trivialize the reality of racism, or gaslight victims

INSTEAD, try receiving feedback and responding from an antiracist perspective:

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Listen and Breathe

Practiced **FRAMEWORK OF ANTIRACIST PRINCIPLES** is activated, including these more constructive fundamental understandings:

- **BEING "GOOD" OR "BAD" IS NOT RELEVANT.**
- I bring my group's history with me; history matters.
- I have unconscious investments in racism/the status quo.
- My journey will never be finished — it's a journey, not a destination.
- Racism is a multi-layered system into which all of us are socialized.
- Racism is complex, and I don't have to understand it for it to be real.
- It takes courage to break with white solidarity; how can I support those who do?
- As a white person I am safe during discussions of racism, even if it feels uncomfortable.
- Given my socialization, it is much more likely that I am the one who doesn't understand the issue.
- Feedback on white racism is difficult to give; how I receive feedback is not as relevant as the feedback itself.
- White comfort maintains the racial status quo, so discomfort is important and is necessary to my growth.
- I have unconscious blind spots about racism that are hard to see or recognize without a lot of ongoing effort.
- Racism hurts and kills people of color every day. **Interrupting it is more important than my feelings, ego, or self-image.**
- Racism circulates 24/7/365.
- The antidote to guilt is action.
- My analysis must be intersectional.
- Feedback from people of color indicates trust.
- Nothing exempts me from the forces of racism.

FEELINGS generated from Principles:

- Embarrassment
- Discomfort
- Guilt
- Humility
- Gratitude
- Curiosity
- Compassion
- Motivation
- Excitement

BEHAVIORS caused by Feelings:

- Reflecting
- Apologizing
- Listening
- Processing
- Engaging
- Grappling
- Believing
- Seeking more understanding

Proactive **RESPONSES** spoken internally or aloud to express the Feelings/Behaviors, engage further in meaningful reflection, and keep the attention on the actual victim(s):

- **Thank you.** This is very helpful.
- I want to change this pattern.
- There is no "right way to do this."
- This is hard, but also stimulating and important.
- I will focus on the message and not the messenger.
- I am not entitled to dictate the terms of this conversation.
- It is my responsibility to resist defensiveness and complacency.
- It's personal, but it's not strictly personal; these are common white patterns.
- I need to build my capacity to endure discomfort & bear witness to the pain of racism.
- I'd better get on this.
- I have some work to do.
- YES! I am opening and shifting.

Responses and Behaviors serve to INTERRUPT white privilege & racism by:

- Ensuring action
- Repairing harm
- Allowing for growth
- Minimizing defensiveness
- Stretching our worldview
- Demonstrating vulnerability
- Demonstrating that we practice what we profess to value
- Demonstrating curiosity & humility
- Interrupting internalized superiority
- Building authentic relationships & trust
- Interrupting privilege-protecting comfort