DO**MORE** ...to interrupt racism.

One way we can DoMore as individuals is to interrupt racism in the moment; when we hear it, see it and feel it. Our silence gives people the green light to continue with harmful behaviours. By interrupting racism we can change the casual racism mindset that is so often normalised in Australian culture.

A few things to know about challenging racist behaviours and beliefs.

1. **It can be scary and uncomfortable** but it's important to sit with this emotion. One way we can interupt racism is to speak up when we hear it ourselves.

2. **Because interrupting racism can be challenging** it's important to look after yourself and take time to reflect and acknowledge and process the uncomfortable feelings that exist.

3. **Practice makes perfect!** At first interrupting racist remarks or behaviours can feel taxing but the more we do it together the easier it becomes. Think of it as 'feedback' and keep your 'why'(eradicating racism/making the world better) at the core of what you say and do.

You just heard someone say something offensive..

We've all heard the likes of "I'm not racist but…" or "I was only joking…" yet many of us stay silent because we're unsure how to respond. Here are some ways you can interrupt racist comments in everyday interactions (it's important to be mindful of your own safety in each situation. Speak up if you feel safe to).

Take a deep breath and interrupt with phrases like…

"I actually find that offensive because ____. I'm not sure you should say things like that."
"Hey when you said ____ It made me uncomfortable/made me feel ____, so could you stay away from saying that"
"I'm sure you weren't trying to come across this way but when you said _____ it was offensive"

You can also challenge assumptions, or unconscious beliefs using some of these phrases…

"Could you clarify what you mean by that?"
"Help me understand your thinking"
"As your friend, I feel I need to let you know that what you just said was not ok"
"That doesn't sound very funny to me. It sounds racist."

"Is the person's race relevant to this story?"

"As your friend, I feel I need to let you know that what you just said was not ok"

"That doesn't sound very funny to me. It sounds racist."

"Is the person's race relevant to this story?"

'Do you actually believe that? If so, how come?"

"I know you were just trying to make a joke, but here is why it was offensive…"

"I didn't want to single you out before, but that comment made me uncomfortable. Here's why…"

"Hey! I wanted to follow up on why I didn't 'like' your post/respond to your comment. Check out this article that explains things better than I could….."

"I really don't feel comfortable when you make comments like that…."

"I disagree. You are stereotyping…"

"Hmm…do you have evidence to support that belief"

What if I say or do something racist?

We all have unconscious biases largely because of the narratives we are taught from a young age and because we exist within systems that are prejudiced. Given this it makes sense that we will all enable racism or act racist in some way or some point. It's crucial that we accept this and learn to be interrupted or corrected.

Accepting feedback with respect is as important as challenging racism. The next time you find yourself being corrected try saying…

"Thank you for telling me! I will make sure to think before I speak"

"I totally didn't even see it that way. I'm sorry. Thank you for telling me"

"You're so right. Thank you for telling me. I'm sorry"

"I'm not sure I understand yet why that was wrong but I am sorry. I will do some research to understand better. Feel free to point me in the right direction"

Be sure to look after your feelings and take the time to reflect and process the situation.
If you don't understand yet why what you said/did was offensive try not to argue.
Instead **LISTEN, REFLECT, LEARN**.

Be sure to do the work of educating yourself on the issue.

Is it uncomfortable? Perhaps. Is it worth it? YES.

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References:

@SineadBovell (Instagram)   From Privilege to Progress https://fromprivilegetoprogress.org

@chnge (Instagram)   @Ranahuss (Twitter)