“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

-Martin Luther King, Jr
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What really motivates you to speak up?
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead
Aspiring Ally Identity Development

• Why is that some who identify as allies are effective in working against forms of oppression while others ultimately serve to perpetuate the system of oppression despite their best of intentions?

• Am I one of those people with good intentions who perpetuates the system of oppression?

• How can I be a more effective, consistent, and sustainable ally for social justice?
“The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don’t do anything about it.”

- Albert Einstein
Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest

Self

Other
You must be the change you wish to see in the world

~ Mahatma Gandhi ~
Aspiring Ally for Altruism
“Guilt is just as powerful, but its influence is positive, while shame's is destructive. Shame erodes our courage and fuels disengagement.”

-Brene Brown
Guilt

I made a mistake.

inversely correlated

Shame

I am a mistake.

addiction, depression, violence, aggression, bullying, suicide, & eating disorders
Ally for Social Justice

Self

Other
If you have come to help me, please go home. But if you have come because your liberation is somehow bound with mine, then we may work together.

-Aboriginal activists group, Queensland, 1970s
THE TRUE FOCUS OF REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IS NEVER MERELY THE OPPRESSIVE SITUATIONS THAT WE SEEK TO ESCAPE, BUT THAT PIECE OF THE OPPRESSOR WHICH IS PLANTED DEEP WITHIN EACH OF US.

AUDRE LORDE
Considerations

• Fluid, non-linear process, depending on internal and external influences
• Intentions matter in terms of outcomes
• Fostering sustainable motivation for consistent interventions
• Problematic nature of self-identifying allies
• Influence of target/agent identities
• Paralyzing nature of “ideal ally”
• Connections across oppressive systems
Justice is what love looks like in public.
-Cornell West
Tool for Self-Reflection

- Managing emotional reactions such as defensiveness and frustration
- Establishing systems of accountability
- Being effective, consistent, and sustainable allies
- Recognizing counterproductive efforts

- Describe three different ways of being an ally for the same social identity group in a similar situation.
We all do better when we all do better.

-Paul Wellstone

Beyond Good Intentions
Aspiring Ally Identity Development
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