

Dismantling Discrimination

By: Alejandro San Juan

“The moment a little boy is concerned with which is a jay and which is a sparrow, he can no longer see the birds or hear them sing.”

— Eric Berne

Types of Discrimination

Racism

Racism is described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race”.

Sexism

Sexism is described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “prejudice or discrimination based on sex”.

Ageism

Ageism is described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “prejudice or discrimination against a particular age-group and especially the elderly”.

Ableism

Ableism is described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “discrimination or prejudice against individuals with disabilities”.

Classism

Classism is described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “a belief that a person's social or economic station in society determines their value in that society”.

How can you help?

Recognizing YOUR own privilege.

The most important way you can combat discrimination of all kinds is by recognizing and understanding your own privileges and using those privileges to empower others who don't share the same privileges as you.

Do you have any biases?

Ask yourself if you subconsciously or consciously have any biases against anyone.

It typically isn't your fault that you have these biases because nobody is born with any discriminatory ideologies or feelings, they are learned as you grow up. This can come from your parents, peers, classmates, or even strangers.

Acknowledging your own biases is the first step in creating equality for all.

Put your foot down on discriminatory “jokes” or statements.

All too often people make a discriminatory comment or a “joke” and this is absolutely not okay. Calling these out in my opinion is the number one way to go about abolishing discrimination. You may feel uncomfortable calling out your parents, or friends on something they say but if you truly want to help it is necessary. I should note that if you’re worried someone may not like you anymore as a result, then it was probably for the best that you part ways with them.

Donate.

Along with the other methods mentioned a huge way you can help is donating. It doesn't have to be a lot, any bit helps. Here are some direct links to non profits fighting discrimination in Canada.

[Afri-Can Food Basket](#) - Racism/Classism

[Canadian Women's Foundation](#) - Sexism

[HelpAge Canada](#) - Ageism

[Ability First Ottawa](#) - Ableism

[Action Logement](#) - Classism