

ASSESSMENT TOOL

Before we begin...

I'm glad to be on this liberation journey with you!

I hope you feel a sense of stability, mutuality, acceptance, accomplishment, love, and inspiration; that you have caught a vision for a world where all living beings can flourish.

This assessment tool is built from our Better Neighbor framework and is one way to record the moment; how far you've come and where you're getting stuck. It has been revised over the distance of my journey alongside many thought partners. I offer it humbly, with love.

Rebecca

THE FRAMEWORK

Being a better neighbor was meaningful before our ancestors became white; it is meaningful today, and it will be meaningful after we have ended racism. Consisting of three core commitments and nine practices, this framework offers a journey for white-bodied people who want to be a better neighbor to all people and the earth.



Metrics

Each core commitment has three practices to measure. For each practice, you'll notice two different metrics that will help you locate yourself as a 1, 3, or 5 - or between two locations.

1

You've begun! Now it's time to grab a friend, and give these areas some attention.

3

You're growing! Co-create communities of practice to challenge, and strengthen you.

5

Your practice is active, and maintained! Keep going, and bring more people along.

Tip: these metrics are a spectrum to be averaged over 6-12 months. They are rarely an exact fit for anyone.

Are you ready?

STEP ONE

Select the button that most closely aligns for you on the spectrum line for each practice.

STEP TWO

Total up the practice buttons, and select the corresponding core commitment button (right margin).

Write down the assessment date and keep notes, questions, and reflections here:

let's begin!

BE A CONTRIBUTION

Once we declare ourselves to be a contribution toward ending racism, the opportunities to make a difference become endless. No longer stuck trying to prove, promote, or pretend something about ourselves or each other - contribution is a willing, relational decision to offer our attention, resources, and service for the good of all living beings.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My journey has been a series of starts and stops when I am able to engage. • I often feel panicked, defensive, fearful, and/or out of control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My journey is an overwhelming to-do list, but I force myself to keep going even when it's hard. • I often feel tired, worried, inadequate, and/or confused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My journey is a daily decision to contribute that is restoring my humanity and relationships. • I often feel nimble, courageous, expansive, and/or hopeful.

TEND MY HUMANITY

Racism is based upon the idea that not all people are fully human. It thrives in any form of dehumanization: suppression of emotion, unmet life-affirming needs, the commodification of bodies, and more. When we tend our humanity, we reject dehumanization and reclaim our ability to co-create communities where everyone can reach their full, human potential.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe white people are not hurt by the system of racism. • Common impulses: finger-pointing, shame, armoring up, and/or checking out or numbing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe the hurts white people experience from the system of racism are less/not important. • Common impulses: giving up, over-simplifying, and/or escaping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe all people are hurt by the system of racism. • Common impulses: making echo-chambers, over-working, and/or setting a high bar for entry.

PRACTICE DAILY

When humanizing values like accountability, courage, curiosity, feeling, healing, play, and rest are baked into our daily routines (body/mind/emotion/spirit), we are more prepared to withstand any attempt to dehumanize. Practice drives confident humility and diminishes fear. Although a practice ethic begins in private, it is evidenced in public.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not have (or know how to have) a daily liberation practice. • I don't keep a record of my liberation journey or make any public statements about my journey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There's no way I can practice liberation every day. • I keep notes from the workshops I've attended, and share my journey publicly every now and then. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I practice my liberation daily. • I keep a personal record of my journey and share publicly often, which helps me notice where I'm stuck, and celebrate growth.

FIND MY PEOPLE

Divide and conquer is a destructive tactic of the most rich and powerful to fracture and disperse communities. White-bodied people carry a legacy of disconnection that must be healed to unhook from dominating patterns. When we do this communally, we access the possibility to become people who end racism.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I mostly feel isolated and lonely on my liberation journey. • I've lost a lot of relationships with white-bodied family and/or friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I connect at least 1-2x each week with white-bodied people on a liberation journey. • I'm not gaining or losing relationships with white-bodied people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I connect daily with white-bodied people on a liberation journey. • I'm gaining more relationships with white-bodied people than I'm losing.

EXERCISE MY INFLUENCE

How do you get more nourishing water; a well dug a mile wide and one foot deep or a mile deep and one foot wide? The same is true when it comes to exercising influence. In the age of social media, the impulse to dig wide and shallow is alluring. When we understand how natural influence works, we journey close to home among the people we love.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know who is in my spheres of influence. • I don't know how to cultivate change with those in my spheres of influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know who is in my spheres of influence, but I'm not making much of a difference. • It's hard to believe that the people around me can or want to change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm aware of my sphere of influence, and I'm committed to finding increasingly effective pathways to reach them. • I am liberating myself and co-creating spaces where our people can change.

CO-CREATE NEW CULTURE

Restoring the full range of humanity for white people includes communal pride not attached to dominating patterns. We need accountable narratives of our past, present, and future filled with new credos, rituals, and practices of belonging, care, admonishment, rejuvenation, and celebration. We must become a white community we could be proud of.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel disgusted and/or defensive about the idea of any white person feeling proud. • I feel cultureless and/or find myself using parts of cultures I am not from (with or without permission). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel curious about the idea of white people being proud. • I am ashamed of "white culture," and/or grieving the loss of ethnic culture without filling the void with someone else's culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel resolute to heal the wounds that prevent communal pride. • I am cultivating the co-creation of who we need to become to end racism and become a people we could be proud of.

EMBRACE MY ROLE

As the non-targets of the system of racism, white people have a unique and necessary role in bringing about its end. When white people police, flee, cancel, or in any way act as if "I'm not like you" with one another, we reinforce the very dominating patterns we need to loosen from in order to end racism. If not you, then who?

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My role in ending racism: listen, learn, and step behind people targeted by racism. • Less than 50% of my liberation efforts fall within current relationships, strengths, & skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My role in ending racism: interrupt racism, and force change in everyone around me. • 50-80% of my liberation efforts fall within current relationships, strengths, & skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My role in ending racism: stop being part of the problem, and help white people do the same. • 80% or more of my liberation efforts fall within current relationships, strengths, & skills.

CHAMPION EFFECTIVENESS

Once we are motivated by effectiveness more than ego, we can remain flexible, nimble, and iterate often as we seek to solve even the toughest problems. We must rethink our liberation terms, tools, and methods often, prioritizing those that bear fruit and keep us from getting hooked to the dominating patterns that keep racism alive.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There seems to be a "right way" to end racism, but I'm still learning it. • I don't know much, but other people do, so I follow them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know a lot, and if white people would do "the work," then we'd be a lot further along. • I'm not sure we can end racism; isn't it permanent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a lot of ideas, and I'm committed to keep trying. • We can end racism, even if we don't know how yet, and I'm part of the solution.

BUILD ALLIANCES

When we understand the system of racism negatively impacts all people, we reject the notion of "ally," which reinforces the lie that this is someone else's battle that we are here to support. Instead, responsibility for our unique positional relationship to racism enables us to co-create a world where all living being flourish in partnership with the targets of racism.

1	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't have any deep relationships with Black, Indigenous, or brown people. • I am not usually called upon to support the liberation of someone else. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have close relationships with Black, Indigenous, or brown people, but they rarely talk about their liberation or ask about mine. • In mixed racial settings, I listen, and don't take up space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black, Indigenous, and brown people call upon me for both personal and liberation support. • In all spaces, I am responsible to not add to the problem and if that's going well, help other white people do the same.

STEP THREE

Once you've finished the assessment on pages 3-5, identify one practice where you would like to focus some attention and follow these steps:

Make a record. This can be a journal, spreadsheet, poem, or piece of art. Log the date, your age, your feelings during the assessment, the practice being focused on, and its current rating. If you want, use the box on page 2.

Reflect. When it comes to this practice:

- Where are you getting stuck?
- What feels familiar? Different? New?
- How do you want to feel?
- How will you know if you're growing?

Make a s.m.a.r.t. plan. Keep your plan specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timebound.

Engineer your success. Set a reminder on your phone or calendar to take action on your plan in the next 24 hours. Here's why...

Behavior = Motivation x Ability x Prompt. If your motivation is 100 and your ability is 50, but your prompt is 0 - what is the likelihood of change? Zero. Because as we learned in algebra, $100 \times 50 \times 0 = \text{zero}$. Set a prompt.

Tell someone. As one of our white ancestors says, "It's in the context of community that white people find the courage to be who they want to be."¹ We do this best when we do it together.

1. Thank you, Mr. George Hrbek

STEP FOUR

Make sure to save this PDF. Then set a calendar prompt to return in 6-12 months to assess again.

Consider creating a ritual around this process:

- How will you honor growth, loosening, and possibility?
- How will you recognize your teachers, thought partners, and those who fed your humanity?
- Who needs what you are learning? How can you strengthen your connection with them?
- What songs, words, or pictures will fuel your next season? Who will you journey with?

if not you, then who?