

WHY A WHITE SPACE?

(Why do we meet as a group of white people?)

For many, it sounds contradictory: “Isn’t it racist if just white people to get together? Isn’t that segregation?” The following are our reasons for organizing as a white anti-racist community:

1. People of color shouldn’t always have to be the ones to educate white people about racism and oppression. We are taking responsibility for learning about racism, our own white privilege, and how to challenge it as white people.

2. In order to challenge racism and dismantle white supremacy, white people need to unlearn racism and discover the ways we enact white privilege. This is a long, difficult, and sometimes painful process. It’s helpful to have a space where other white people engaged in this process can support and challenge us, without having to always subject people of color to further undue trauma or pain as we stumble and make mistakes. Having a community of white anti-racist people gives us hope, helps us grow our practice, and gives us strength to stay in it for the long haul.

3. A commitment to anti-racist identity and practice as a white person can sometimes mean increased alienation and conflict in our lives, especially with other white friends and family who disagree with us. This is a space where we can get support from people who are experiencing similar struggles as anti-racist white people.

4. It’s a space for white people to figure out what it means to be an anti-racist white person and challenge racism in all areas of our lives. We cannot expect people of color to have all of the answers for us on how to transform ourselves and other white people. As white people we are well equipped to understand what it means to be a white, as well as a white anti-racist.

5. It’s a place where white people can begin to build a new culture of white anti-racism, and learn the skills needed to transform the larger white community.

6. This group is a supplement to, not a replacement for, multi-racial dialogues and activism between white people and people of color. It’s important that white people give space in their lives to learning from and bearing witness to people of color’s experiences of racism.

7. A white space serves as a resource to people of color who want to work with white people but don’t want to have to spend all their energy dealing with the racism of white people.

[www/awarela.org](http://www.awarela.org) This document was created and revised by AWARE-LA through a cyclical process that included small group dialogue, brainstorm, and discussion. It has been used by many to help explain why we do our consciousness raising work with the white community.