



# ANTI-RACISM

## FACILITATION GUIDE



**REAL STORIES. REAL PAIN. REAL CHANGE.**

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CANADIAN  
ANTI-RACISM  
EDUCATION



**BU CARES**  
RESEARCH CENTRE

Canada



**BRANDON**  
UNIVERSITY

# HOW THE FILMS WERE CREATED

The Real Change film project was part of a research project in Manitoba, by Michelle Lam, Ph.D., Denise Humphreys, Akech Mayuom, and Stephanie Spence. The current state of white supremacy, hate crime, and speech has received a significant amount of social media coverage. With the goal of counteracting these hate messages and broadening the public's understanding of the impacts of racism, this project involved three stages. In this first phase of the project, Manitoba's general public completed surveys and interviews. The surveys and interviews explored topics such as perceptions towards diverse groups and ways in which people experience racism, bias, and discrimination. From December 23, 2020, to January 31, 2021, precisely 500 responses were received. The data demonstrated that 84% of respondents believed that racism is a problem in their area. The [full survey report is freely available on the research centre website](#).

In the survey and interviews, individuals were invited to share their personal experiences of a time they experienced or witnessed racism in the past 12 months. From these stories, scripts were written that highlighted anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Newcomer racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Black racism. The scripts were then read with diverse focus groups for feedback, which was then integrated into the scripts.

**Representation was critical as it was important to ensure that difficult stories of racism were told by those who experienced and understood it first hand.**

The two writers of the scripts identified as Black and Indigenous. The four filmmakers hired to create the films represented the same group narrative for each film. For example, the filmmaker of the anti-Newcomer film is a newcomer. The process of creating the films was also collaborative

as the filmmakers were given creative license in developing the films, and this further refined the scripts by building on the filmmaking expertise and experience of the filmmakers. The script-testing and subsequent filming formed the second stage of the research.

In the final stage of the research, the films were launched online, and an analysis will be completed of the comments they inspire in online spaces. This report will be available on the [BU CARES website](#). To support further engagement with the films, we have created resource toolkits to go along with the videos. Our hope is that the videos prompt discussion and the toolkits provide supportive resources for educators and organizations alike. We also hope that Manitobans reflect on their relationships and the ways in which they interact with diverse populations.

**The goal of our project is to amplify BIPOC voices, challenge white people to confront their biases and privilege, and learn how to be actively anti-racist.**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the individuals who graciously shared their experiences, the feedback from the focus groups, as well as the filmmakers who beautifully captured these stories. For that, we would extend our heartfelt gratitude.

This project was funded with support from Brandon University Cares Research Centre, Brandon University, and the Government of Canada.

Credits - "Can't Dim my Light"  
Nilufer and Saira Rahman (Snow Angel Films)

Cast (in order of appearance)  
Nisreen – Zohra Razzaq  
Dr. Stevens – Susan Finnigan  
Tina – Thea Hughes  
Matt – Ariel Hoult  
Marie – Denise Humphreys  
Ajah – Akech Mayuom  
Dakota – Stephanie Spence  
Jacob – Kevin Wu  
Shopper – Susan Smiel  
Naniji – Najma Kidwai  
Siddiqui Phone receptionist – Saira Rahman  
Café friends – Anam Khan and Fadiya Sheikheldin  
Radio voice – Eric Bossé

Special Thanks to:  
Hadass Eviatar  
Ivan Hughes  
Martin Itzkow  
Brenda McLean

Music: "Everlasting Hope" By Elliot Middleton  
Licensed by PremiumBeat

"The Way of the Champion"  
By Pavel Yudin Licensed by PremiumBeat

Credits - "Friendly Manitoba"  
Kejic Productions  
Co-Directed: Tara Carpenter and Desiree Brightnose  
Written by: Desiree Brightnose, Stephanie Spence,  
Akech Mayuom  
Filmed and Edited by: Tara Carpenter

Credits - "In Search of a Better Life"

Director: Quan Luong  
Cinematographer: Tyler Funk  
Art Director: Madison Summer Dueck  
Editor: Nathalie Massaroni  
Production Assistant: Nathan Flores

Cast:  
Sheila Ellamil-Lotuaco  
Matt Jones  
Jeffrey Reyes

Credits - "Choices You Don't Make"

Mike - Antonius Hackett  
Male Coworker - Keegan Chase Dykstra  
Female Coworker 1 - Anita Molinari  
Female Coworker 2 - Laura Jacyna  
Female Coworker 3 - Boma Cookey-gam  
Friend 1 - Naba  
Friend 2 - Bisong Taiwo

Director - Bisong Taiwo  
Producer - Adesuwa Ero  
Director of Photography - Reginald Isume  
Makeup and Costume - Felicheeta Artistry  
Location provided by - TableSpace Coworking Co.

This facilitation guide is a work in progress. As the guide is tested in various contexts, it may be refined. If you are using this guide in your own context, and have feedback to share, we would love to hear from you. Please contact us at [CARES@BrandonU.ca](mailto:CARES@BrandonU.ca).

# USING THE

# FACILITATION GUIDE



# NOTES FOR THE FACILITATOR ROLE

## Helpful Tips

(Adapted from [SKIN DEEP Facilitators Guide](#) by Hugh Vasquez)

Your role as the facilitator is to create a space in which participants can authentically express themselves and learn from each other. As a facilitator, you are also responsible for supporting discussion goals and ensuring a respectful and safe group dynamic. The following are helpful facilitation tips to support you in your role:

- Ask the group to read through and agree on safety parameters in order to create a safe space. Add additional rules of engagement as the group deems fit. These can be found on page 4.
- To ensure that people do not cut each other off during discussions, ask participants to raise their hands when they want to say something. You may also wish to use a "talking stick" (or any items such as a pencil, marker, etc) to be passed around. Let people know that they may choose to pass if they do not wish to share.
- Allow for silence - some people may need extra time to think through their responses.
- Do not simply move from one person or discussion question to the next. If something is said that requires more attention, ask the person to expand or if others would like to contribute.
- If possible, make the effort to have two facilitators. One facilitator can focus on the emotional needs of the group while the other focuses on facilitation content such as the discussion questions and activities.
- Make the effort to have racialized facilitators. This will help in providing safety for racialized participants especially when they're sharing their own personal experiences with race and racism.

## Be Prepared

- Take the time to familiarize yourself with the guide, and with the resources in this guide and in the accompanying toolkits.
- Be sure you have a working understanding of the definitions included in the appendix.
- Pay attention to your own feelings of discomfort. View these feelings as invitations to explore why you might be feeling this way. Although your own journey as an anti-racist facilitator will be ongoing, attempt to resolve your discomfort before engaging with a group.

# NOTES FOR THE FACILITATOR ROLE

## Responding to Challenging Situations

(Adapted from [SKIN DEEP Facilitators Guide](#) by Hugh Vasquez and [Days After 2020- PK-12 Teachers](#) by Alyssa Hadley Dunn)

Facilitating a conversation about race and racism is hard. It can be emotionally difficult as well as surface strong feelings and perspectives. It is not uncommon that as a facilitator you will likely face some of the challenges addressed below. However, it is critical that we engage even when it is uncomfortable. The following are recommendations of ways to constructively respond to common challenging situations that may arise.

### Attending to Trauma

Talking about race in predominantly white spaces can be harmful to BIPOC individuals. In the beginning, provide a trigger warning. Acknowledge that everyone has different life experiences that will impact how they respond or process the films and the discussion. Let participants know that they can step away from the conversation at any time. Provide additional breaks as needed, and provide local resources. Let participants know that you are available for support during breaks and after the group facilitation.

### Singling Out People of Colour

Remind white participants that it is not the job of BIPOC individuals to educate them. If participants have questions, they can ask the group as a whole or take the time after the discussion to educate themselves. Helpful toolkits of such resources, tailored for each video, are available on the BU CARES website.

### Emotional Responses

If a participant becomes emotional at any point, allow them to express themselves, validate their feelings, and ask them what they need. Perhaps they may need to step away from the conversation. Remind participants that these conversations are hard, but working through emotions and feelings will support learning and growth.

### Addressing Dominant Narratives

Interrupt and remind participants of the rules agreed upon when necessary. Point out that discussions about diversity are only valuable when diverse perspectives are provided with the space to be heard. Watch for the individuals who overpower the conversations, especially individuals whose voices are often heard and hold privilege (eg., white, male, etc) and hold spaces for those often marginalized.

### Arguments

Intervene and mention to participants that differences in opinions often come from differing life experiences. Encourage curiosity and openness about other perspectives rather than defensiveness. Support students to listen and accept the perspective of others' lived experiences, rather than simply debating.

### Attending to Language

Intervene by addressing racist, biased, stereotypical, or offensive comments with education when it occurs and every time it occurs. You may respond by saying, "please stop there and consider the impact of your statement " or "your comment is harmful". Follow up with a further explanation and reminder of the safety parameters agreed upon.

# SAMPLE AGENDA

## Flexibility

Every group is different, so this agenda is offered as an example. However, depending on your context, you may wish to adjust the agenda to suit your needs. For example, if you have more time, you may choose to watch more than one film, followed by the discussion questions, and the closing activity. This sample agenda format takes approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.

Chronology of Session	Approx. time to complete section
Welcome participants; provide context for the session and do introductions	5-10 min
Share background about how the films were created	2-3 min
Develop or review the safety parameters provided	5-10 min
Pre-viewing activity - several options are provided	15-20 min
Screen one of the films	5 min
Discussion questions	15-30 min
Post-viewing activity - several options are provided	10-15 min
Closing Activity: Pledge to Action	15-20 min
Conclude by inviting participants to share their pledges or what stood out for them in the session	10-15 min



# BEFORE WATCHING THE FILMS



SETTING THE STAGE.

# SETTING THE STAGE

This facilitation guide is for anyone who requires tools or guidelines to lead conversations around anti-racism, both on a micro and macro level. Teachers, community leaders, or team managers are examples of individuals who may find this guide helpful.

The activities and discussion questions are intended for groups of six to eight people. For large groups, individuals can be broken into small working groups with one identified person leading the conversations. Every group is unique and as such, this guideline can be modified for diverse needs.

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## WELCOME

Welcome everyone to the conversation and thank them for taking the time to watch the films and participate in the conversation around anti-racism. Always attempt to build connections before diving into the content.

# SETTING THE STAGE

## SAFETY PARAMETERS

(Adapted from [Creating a Safe Space for Dialogue on Anti-Racism](#) by CCDI)

Conversations around racism can be emotionally difficult and triggering. Therefore, it is critical that as a facilitator you set up ground rules at the beginning. It is not enough to simply state that the space is safe - rules of engagement need to be established. Rules of engagement can include humility, taking turns when speaking, and being respectful of each other. Rules of engagement can be discussed and identified as a group, but here are some that have been adapted from an excellent resource from the [Canadian Center for Diversity and Inclusion](#):

- Be sensitive about the extra psychological load that this may create for BIPOC individuals, their friends and loved ones.
- Be prepared for BIPOC individuals to tell you that they do not want to discuss a particular topic or are not prepared to discuss at that moment
- Do not expect a BIPOC individual to educate you or the group members on racism and anti-racism.
- Do not assume a BIPOC individual can, and is willing, to be the representative or to speak for an entire community that is extremely diverse.
- Practice active listening - listen to understand, not to respond.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Avoid interrupting.
- Pause and think through your comments before you make them.
- Never make derogatory comments toward another member or make sexist, racist, homophobic, ableist or victim-blaming comments
- Challenge ideas, not people. Never demean or embarrass a person.
- Be open to being challenged or confronted with your ideas or prejudices.



# SETTING THE STAGE

## PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY OPTIONS

We recommend that participants not share their reflections with the classroom — everyone should feel comfortable fully expressing themselves and this may cause harm to BIPOC students if their peers are sharing racist perspectives.

### Warm-up Reflective Exercise - Option 1

(adapted from [What's Race Got to Do With It?](#))

Before starting the video, invite participants to jot down responses to some of the following questions, but do not ask to share them aloud. This exercise helps viewers articulate their own attitudes and preconceptions about diversity so they can watch the video more critically, actively and purposefully.

1. What is your comfort level when talking about race or racism? What causes you discomfort?
2. How much impact does race have on your life? Do you think about it, and/or notice it often?
3. What do you notice about common encounters with people of different races (at work, school, groups you belong to, in positions of authority/service, etc.)? Who is present, and who is absent? Why might this be the case?
4. Does race still matter? Why/why not?
5. What is wrong with the way we talk about race?
6. What does racial disparity mean to you? What does equity mean to you?
7. What do you hope to learn today? What do you hope others may learn from you?

### Warm-up Reflective Exercise - Option 2

(adapted from [Islamophobia is: Educators Guide](#))

Using large sheets of poster paper, post the following questions and invite students to walk around the room and write responses directly on the paper, or to walk around the room and reflect first, then use post-its to write responses individually, then adhere them to the paper. If facilitating virtually, this may be done using jamboard, padlet, Google docs, or another sharing software.

1. What is racism?
2. Who benefits from racism?
3. Who is disadvantaged by racism?
4. Why should we care about racism?
5. Do you think you participate in racism? Why/why not?
6. Do you have any questions about racism?

# AFTER WATCHING THE FILMS



**GROWTH THROUGH CONVERSATIONS.**

# ANTI-NEWCOMER RACISM: IN SEARCH OF A BETTER LIFE

## Discussion Questions

*Guiding answers are provided on page 13-16*

- What are your initial thoughts or feelings after watching this film?
- What did you learn from watching this film? How might these learnings inform how you interact with someone who identifies as a Newcomer?
- What are Mary's intersecting identities and how may they be impacting her experiences?
- What are Mary's strengths? How is Mary's search for a better life made more difficult despite her strengths?
- What examples of microaggression and racism can you identify in the film? How did they make you feel? (Think about the non-verbal examples of racism)
- How do you think life might have been different for Mary if she identified as a white newcomer? Do you think if Mary was white and a newcomer, she would have benefited from white privilege?
- Mary changes her name from Mary Peros to Mary Peter. Why do you think she does this?
- There is a scene where a customer shouts, "You immigrants are useless - go back to your own country" at Mary while she is at work. What do you suppose Mary is thinking at that moment? How would you have responded if you had witnessed this? ([Here are a few good resources for interrupting racism as a bystander](#))
- If you were a manager or a colleague at Mary's workplace, how might you address the challenges she is experiencing?
- Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?
- Experiences of racism can have compound mental health challenges. How do you practice self-care in your daily life?
- What do you think needs to be done in order to address racism in Manitoba?
- In your own life, what does it mean to be an ally? In what ways can you practice allyship?

# ISLAMOPHOBIA: CAN'T DIM MY LIGHT

*Guiding answers are provided on page 17-19*

## Discussion Questions

- What examples of microaggression and Islamophobia can you identify in the film?
- How do you feel about the microaggressions and Islamophobia that you have seen and heard from Nisreen's daily life? What is the danger of these actions and comments?
- Did you see anything in this film that you didn't know about the religion of Islam?
- What are Nisreen intersecting identities and how may they be impacting her experiences?
- The title of the film is *Can't Dim My Light*. What do you think is the significance of the title for Nisreen?
- In class, there is a debate about Bill 21, what are your thoughts regarding how the professor facilitated the conversation? What would you have done differently?
- Why do you think the film includes the comment, "OMG I see hair! That's NOT proper hijab, sis." when Nisreen posts to social media?
- At the coffee shop, Nisreen name is written as Lisa on her coffee cup. When her friends question her, she says, "Don't ask, I needed a break". What is the significance of her response? What does Nisreen need a break from?
- As Nisreen is driving, the radio commentator makes the following statement, "This is Canada, we follow Canadian values and secularism is not racism." What are your thoughts regarding the statement? How do you think it made Nisreen feel?
- In what places does Nisreen find a sense of belonging? How do you think a sense of belonging impacts a person's sense of wellbeing?
- How might Nisreen's experiences as a Canadian Muslim impact her mental health? How might political discussions on Muslims impact their lives?
- 84% of Manitobans say racism is a problem, does this statistic surprise you? Why or why not?
- What did you learn from watching this film? How might these learnings inform how you interact with someone who identifies as a Muslim?
- Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?
- Any other comments or thoughts about the film?

# ANTI-BLACK RACISM: THE CHOICES YOU DON'T MAKE

## Discussion Questions

*Guiding answers are provided on page 22-24*

- What comes to mind after watching the film? How did it make you feel?
- Racism may take many forms. What types of racism did you witness in this film? If you would like to share, what types of racism do you see or experience in your own life?
- What kind of microaggressions can you identify in this film? In what ways did characters veil their racism to make their prejudice more subtle? How do microaggressions produce and maintain racism?
- In the film the two characters sitting at the table said "No sorry, we're waiting for someone" when the main character asks to sit with them. What function does exclusion have in contributing to racism?
- In what ways do standards of whiteness contribute to racism in professional spaces? How were characters biased to white standards in the film and how were these standards pressed on the main character?
- \*Trigger Warning-this question addresses racial violence. In the film, the main character was stopped by the police. Why do you think this was included in the film? How do you think the main character felt when they were stopped?
- What actions were taken to address some of the racism in the film? In what other ways could a stand be taken against the racism the main character experiences?
- How do you think the racism the main character experienced in the film might affect their well-being? How do you think it might affect their life at work and home?
- What role might a sense of belonging and community play in the main character's well-being and coping with the racism they experience?
- Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?



# ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM: FRIENDLY MANITOBA

## Discussion Questions

*Guiding answers are provided on page 25-27*

- Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?
- What examples of microaggressions can you identify in this film and how might they be addressed?
- Often microaggressions may be perpetrated based on bias and stereotypes as seen in this film. In what ways do you think systemic racism contributes to biases and stereotypes such as the ones you identify in this film?
- How would or do you assess your own biases?
- After the nurse assumes the grandmother wants more painkillers, the granddaughter responds by expressing "Why do they treat us this way? We did nothing wrong and they treat us like we are criminals". Why do you think others treat the grandmother and granddaughter unjustly like criminals? How does racism inform their mistreatment? How might this racist mistreatment affect the granddaughter and grandmother's well-being?
- How do you think the Seven Sacred Teachings the grandmother shared might have affected the granddaughter? How do you think both of them might be feeling carrying both the pain from their experiences of racism and the wholesomeness of their relationship and shared culture simultaneously?
- Racism in Turtle Island cannot be discussed without understanding settler colonialism. What does settler colonialism in Turtle Island mean to you? How do you think settler colonialism affects the contemporary realities of racism in this film?
- This film portrayed primarily Indigenous actors. However, what role does whiteness play in the themes of this film?
- What were your thoughts and feelings after reading the statistics at the end of the film? Were you familiar with these realities prior to the film?
- This film spoke to real truths. These included real truths about racism, Indigenous lives, and the real truths of traditional Anishinaabe teachings. How can cultivating truth contribute to anti-racism and decolonization? If you would like to share, how do these truths influence you personally?
- How might the granddaughter and the grandmother take care of themselves having experienced racism?
- How would you help the next generation deal with racism?

# CLOSING THE CURTAINS

## POST-VIEWING ACTIVITY OPTIONS

We recommend that participants not share their reflections with the classroom — everyone should feel comfortable fully expressing themselves and this may cause harm to BIPOC students if their peers are sharing racist perspectives. We also encourage facilitators to make sure they have some time available following the learning experience for anyone who may be having a difficult time and need stay behind to further debrief.

### Post-Viewing Reflective Exercise - Option 1

Whiteness (see appendix definitions) works to both create and maintain racism. It is important to be critical of this, or we fail to analyze and truly critique and oppose power imbalances. Invite students to reflect on whiteness by journaling or authoring a personal reflection to the following questions:

1. Based on the film you just saw, what examples of whiteness can you identify?
2. What is an example of white privilege?
3. What is one step you and others might be able to take to identify and confront whiteness?
4. Beyond the films, what examples of whiteness can you see in your everyday life?

Additional resources on this topic:

- "Talking About Race: Whiteness." National Museum of African American History and Culture. (American Context)
- Cory Collins' article "What is White Privilege, Really?"

### Post-Viewing Reflective Exercise - Option 2

(adapted from [Islamophobia is: Educators Guide](#))

Using large sheets of poster paper, post the following questions and invite students to walk around the room and write responses directly on the paper, or to walk around the room and reflect first, then use post-its to write responses individually, then adhere them to the paper. If facilitating virtually, this may be done using jamboard, padlet, Google docs, or another sharing software.

1. Now that you have seen the film, what is racism?
2. Who benefits from racism?
3. Who is disadvantaged by racism?
4. Why should we care about racism?
5. Do you think you participate in racism? Why/why not?
6. How might you address racism in your own context? What do you need to move forward?

# CLOSING THE CURTAINS

## PLEDGE TO ACTION CARD

(adapted from [What's Race Got to Do With It?](#))

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Invite participants to think about what they've learned today. Then encourage them to think about actions they plan to take to be actively anti-racist. Having empathy and perspective into other lived experiences are important in anti-racism. However, on its own, it is insufficient. Intentional actions need to be taken in order to ensure sustainable change.

We have divided the pledge to action into three sections. Ask participants to think about the following questions:

- 1) What do I want to learn more about?
- 2) What do I need to re-examine and reflect on?
- 3) What actions do I pledge in order to make a change?

We have provided a [card for individuals to fill out on our website](#) or you can develop your own. Remind participants that there is no such thing as an action that is too small. After participants have filled out their card, thank them for their participation. Also, celebrate their commitment to continued social justice and anti-racism.



# MY PLEDGE TO ACTION CARD

(adapted from What's Race Got to Do With It?)

I pledge to take the following steps to be actively anti-racist:

## What do I want to learn more about?

For example, I want to learn more about Bill-21.

- 
- 
- 

## What do I need to re-examine and reflect on?

For example, I need to reflect and confront my White privilege.

- 
- 
- 

## What actions do I pledge in order to make a change?

For example, I pledge to build relationships and support anti-racism initiatives.

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- 
-

# BEHIND THE SCENES

# APPENDICES



**ANSWERS, RESOURCES, DEFINITIONS, & CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS.**

# ANTI-NEWCOMER RACISM: IN SEARCH OF A BETTER LIFE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### **What are your initial thoughts or feelings after watching this film?**

Answers will vary as each individual has a different life experience. Some may feel that the film was uncomfortable, eye-opening while others may speak to the film highlighting their own painful life experiences as immigrants or as children of immigrant parents.

### **What did you learn from watching this film?**

Lessons learned may include, but are not limited to the following: a) many newcomers come to Canada to make a better life for themselves and their families, however, they face the hardship of racism and discrimination; b) many newcomers have university degrees and are formally trained in areas such as teaching, medicine, and economics in their home country; c) despite strong academic backgrounds, newcomers face hardship in having their credentials recognized in Canada; d) working in low-income jobs such as the fast-food industry can result in the financial hardship of making ends meet; e) microaggression and discrimination in the job market can have compound mental health impacts (eg., employers refusing to hire or interview an individual with an ethnic-sounding name); c) despite all the challenges, newcomers are resilient. These issues are not created by them, but they continue to fight against the systematic barriers put upon them, but they should not have to do so alone.

### **How might these learnings inform how you interact with someone who identifies as a Newcomer?**

Many BIPOCs who identify as immigrants or newcomers are doing great work to counteract systematic barriers, but anti-racism work requires all of our efforts. Answers will vary and may include the following: people can examine their own biases and privileges, get informed on issues impacting people such as Mary, they can speak up when they notice instances of microaggressions, discrimination, and racism. Additionally, individuals can volunteer, vote for government officials that have the interest of newcomers on their agenda, and join local committees or organizations.

### **What are Mary's intersecting identities and how may they be impacting her experiences?**

Mary has several identities (and more we may not know). From what we can observe in the video, she is low income, is a woman, a person of color, and an immigrant. All of her identities mean that she is marginalized in society and therefore has complex experiences and trauma. While the film focuses on the oppression she faces because of her skin colour and her status as a newcomer, we also see a glimpse of the financial hardship when she is paying rent. Because Mary has several identities that marginalize her, this means that life is going to be harder for her than if she was a middle-class white male. Life is made more difficult as Mary is often disregarded socially, professionally, and therefore faces challenges economically.

### **What are Mary's strengths? How is Mary's search for a better life made more difficult despite her strengths?**

Mary is a hard worker, she is resilient, self-advocating, and has a loving and supportive husband. She continually sends out her resumes for jobs and advocates for herself by asking, "Is there maybe another position for me?" The restaurant industry is already a physically draining job, but Mary also has to deal with microaggression and racism from customers. Mary also faces discrimination as she is unable to secure a better-paying job in a better work environment; employers simply look at her name and disregard her as a candidate. Mary continues to fight for herself and her family even though she herself did not create these issues.

# ANTI-NEWCOMER RACISM: IN SEARCH OF A BETTER LIFE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **What examples of microaggression and racism can you identify in the film? How did they make you feel? (Think about the non-verbal examples of racism).**

There are several nonverbal and verbal examples of racism and microaggression. Your audience may note the examples listed here, but may also identify others. Microaggressions are often referred to as everyday racism. Microaggressions are the everyday acts of discrimination that compound to make up racism. Examples of microaggressions include the way in which the customer is looking at Mary and his slow speech which assumes that Mary cannot understand nor speak English. Participants from our focus group spoke to the image that the money in the envelope holds. Participants reflected on the hardship their newcomer families had in making ends meet due to difficulties in finding higher-paying jobs or jobs that treated them with respect. Examples of racism include the rejection email indicating that the employer is looking for a candidate with "strong communication" skills, Mary only being invited for an interview when she changes her last name from Peros to Peter, and having her resume put at the bottom of the pile.

### **How do you think life might have been different for Mary if she identified as a white newcomer? Do you think if Mary was white and a newcomer, she would have benefited from white privilege?**

Mary's life would be different if she identified as a white newcomer. Think back to the concept of intersectionality and how you can hold privilege or be marginalized depending on your intersecting identities. While being a newcomer can be marginalizing, being white is a privilege in society. If Mary was white, her resume would not be rejected as she would have a white-sounding last name, customers would not speak to her slowly with the assumption that she does not speak English, nor would they tell her to go back to her own country. If Mary was white, she would most likely be taken more seriously at job interviews, increasing her chance at a higher socioeconomic status.

### **Mary changes her name from Mary Peros to Mary Peter. Why do you think she does this?**

Mary changed her last name to increase her chances at an interview and at a better job opportunity. Research demonstrates that employers will skip over resumes with ethnic-sounding names when compared to ones with white-sounding names despite similar experiences, skills, and education (Oreopoulos, 2011). Individuals may point out Mary's feelings of sadness, anger, or frustration in having to deny a part of her identity.

### **There is a scene where a customer shouts, "You immigrants are useless - go back to your own country" at Mary while she is at work. What do you suppose Mary is thinking at that moment? How would you have responded if you had witnessed this? (Here are a few good resources for interrupting racism as a bystander).**

Depending on the individual's life experiences, thoughts regarding Mary's feelings will vary. Some may feel that Mary is angry, frustrated, or surprised. Others may feel that Mary is unmoved by the situation because she is "used" to people treating her in this way (while this is not okay, it speaks to the level of occurrences and how many BIPOC's may feel regarding the situation). Ways in which someone may intervene is to point out to the customer that their statement is harmful. Individuals may say, "What you just said is harmful and I feel that it is racist" or "Are you aware of how hurtful that statement is?". Others may speak to checking in with Mary after the customer leaves to make sure she is okay, others may speak to seeking outside help by talking to the manager of the restaurant and reporting the incident.

### **If you were a manager or a colleague at Mary's workplace, how might you address the challenges she is experiencing?**

The responses may vary and the race of the manager should be taken into consideration. If the manager is BIPOC, they may experience difficulties or fear responding in the manner laid out here or they may also be traumatized if

# ANTI-NEWCOMER RACISM: IN SEARCH OF A BETTER LIFE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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they witnessed the interaction. As a manager, you may approach the customer who made the comments to Mary and explain to them how harmful and racist the comments and actions are. You may ask the customer to change their behaviours and to apologize. If the customer does not change their behaviours or apologize to Mary, you may ask them to leave. Next, it would be important to check in with Mary to see what supports she may need (eg., a break, the time and space to talk to a loved one, paid time off for the rest of her shift, etc).

### **Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?**

Individuals may speak to the acts of microaggression and racism as being uncomfortable, including but not limited to: the man assuming she can't understand so he over pronounces, when the racist man yells, "Immigrants are useless, just go back to your own country!", when she asks, "Is there another position for me?" and then becomes sad, when she says, "Even though this is not a problem I created, I continue to fight, for the sake of my family.", and the final statistic. Dealing with these discomforts will be dependent on who is uncomfortable and why. A person of colour or a newcomer may need to access supports or resources. People who are uncomfortable with their own biases may need to educate themselves with resources, share resources and educate others, and start interfering when they see this type of racism happening individually, systemically, or institutionally.

### **Experiences of racism can have compound mental health challenges. How do you practice self-care in your daily life?**

Answers will be personal and therefore vary. For some people, self-care involves dismantling racism. Some may speak to engaging in allyship, or anti-racism work in the community, politically or academically. BIPOC individuals may align with Audre Lorde's concepts of self-care where self-preservation is prioritized and thus an act of political welfare. Others may speak about relationships, travelling, working out, rest days, the use of therapy, etc.

### **What do you think needs to be done in order to address racism in Manitoba?**

In Manitoba, policies need to be changed and institutions and systems need to be rebuilt so that they benefit and include everyone. Positions of power should reflect more diverse populations which will, in turn, reflect the diverse needs of Manitoba. Education must be accessible and equitable for all people of all ages. Anti-racism work must be enforced across systems and institutions. Anti-racism must be taught as not just an opinion, but the only way to move forward.

### **In your own life, what does it mean to be an ally? In what ways can you practice allyship?**

Examples of allyship include, but are not limited to: acknowledging the limits of their knowledge about the lives of those who are marginalized without stopping them from thinking and/or acting, never centring themselves and always centring the impacted, listening and learning from those who are facing oppression, leveraging their privilege, passing up opportunities in order to make room on the floor, confronting racism when it comes up daily, and working to dismantle racist institutions and systems.





# ISLAMOPHOBIA: CAN'T DIM MY LIGHT

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### **What examples of microaggression and Islamophobia can you identify in the film?**

Some examples of Islamophobia would be Bill-21 disproportionately affecting Muslim women, singling out Nisreen for her thoughts when discussing Bill-21, and the suggestion that being Muslim is not a Canadian value. Some examples of microaggressions include singling out Nisreen when discussing Bill-21, mispronouncing Nisreen's name, suggesting Nisreen's headscarf is a style instead of a religious symbol, suggesting Nisreen would have been too hot with a headscarf on, the reluctance to spell Nisreen's name correctly, the social media comment that suggested she does not practise proper hijab, assuming Nisreen is not from Canada, and being surprised Nisreen's English is good because she is Muslim.

### **How do you feel about the microaggressions and Islamophobia that you have seen and heard from Nisreen's daily life? What is the danger of these actions and comments?**

Thoughts and feelings will vary depending on life experiences. Some people will be feeling sad, angry, or frustrated with the Islamophobia and microaggressions that were shown in the film, while others may not recognize them as Islamophobia or microaggressions. Further discussion of Bill-21 may come up. The dangers of these actions and comments include: Islamophobia, perpetuating individual, systemic, and institutional racism, and even hate crimes.

### **Did you see anything in this film that you didn't know about the religion of Islam?**

Answers include but are not limited to: Followers of Islam are called Muslims, the use of a prayer rug, followers of Islam pray to Allah (God), Muslim women may freely choose whether to wear a headscarf (diverse practice), followers of Islam pray multiple times a day, or the response "Thank you Allah" when something good happened, and that Bill-21 disproportionately affects Muslim women. It may be important to point out in this discussion that not all Muslims practice their faith in the same ways as what is depicted in this film.

### **What are Nisreen's intersecting identities and how may they be impacting her experiences?**

Intersecting identities are including but are not limited to gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, class (past and present), religious beliefs, sexual identity and sexual expression. The ones that are clear in this film are that Nisreen is a person of colour and a Muslim woman. These would impact her experiences because of the constant discussion and lived experience around Bill-21 and the way that it affects her. Nisreen is a Muslim who chooses to wear her hijab, and people have a constant tendency to weigh in on her choices and life. These identities have made Nisreen a marginalized person, creating trauma and impacting all of her life experiences.

### **The title of the film is Can't Dim My Light. What do you think is the significance of the title for Nisreen?**

The significance of this title speaks to the resilience of those who face constant racism and discrimination. For example, Nisreen gets an A+ despite the Islamophobia and microaggressions she faces daily, and she practices her own faith, and pursues her own interests. A follow-up question might be to discuss what things can dim or strengthen her light.

### **In class, there is a debate about Bill 21. What are your thoughts regarding how the professor facilitated the conversation? What would you have done differently?**

Opinions on Bill 21 may vary. Some may agree with it, others will not. Some may be neutral about the professor's handling of the discussion, others may think she should have been agreeable on the side of Bill 21 and others will completely disagree with the way she facilitated the conversation. It is important to remember that Bill 21 is an attack on Nisreen's identity, so a trauma-informed approach to the discussion should have been taken. The professor should have

# ISLAMOPHOBIA: CAN'T DIM MY LIGHT

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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also used this discussion as an opportunity to teach her students about the way Bill 21 disproportionately affects religious women of colour and the way in which it will perpetuate individual, systemic, and institutional racism. Finally, if the professor has small classes where regular discussion happens, she should take the time to learn and pronounce her students' names, and be sure her students know appropriate supports if necessary to access during or after hard conversations.

**Why do you think the film includes the comment, "OMG. I see hair! That's not proper hijab, sis" when Nisreen posts to social media?**

Reaction and judgement around Muslim women and how they choose to dress comes from all directions and in all forms - even from within their own community or people in their circle, and from all genders. Women are judged for covering too much or not covering enough. This goes both ways - women who don't wear hijab or who do wear it feel judged for different reasons and on different levels. It's an added layer of the complicated faces of Islamophobia and microaggressions (or macroaggressions) that many Muslim women feel. Muslim communities are so diverse and complex and we are also struggling to embrace our diversity and expressions of Islamic practice.

**At the coffee shop, Nisreen name is written as Lisa on her coffee cup. When her friends question her, she says, "Don't ask, I needed a break". What is the significance of her response? What does Nisreen need a break from?**

Nisreen needed a break from being a marginalized woman of colour. Racial microaggressions are constant assaults on one's identity, cause trauma, as well as economic, systemic and institutional barriers, and have a detrimental effect on mental health.

**As Nisreen is driving, the radio commentator makes the following statement, "This is Canada, we follow Canadian values and secularism is not racism." What are your thoughts regarding the statement? How do you think it made Nisreen feel?**

Thoughts regarding this statement may vary. Again, it is important to remember the way in which Bill 21 disproportionately affects religious women of colour and will perpetuate individual, systemic, and institutional racism. How people think it made Nisreen feel will vary based on personal experiences and capacity for empathy. Her feelings may have included but are not limited to: anger, sadness, disbelief, frustration, hopelessness.

**In what places does Nisreen find a sense of belonging? How do you think a sense of belonging impacts a person's sense of wellbeing?**

Nisreen finds a sense of belonging when she is at home in prayer, when she talks with her Naniji (grandmother), and when she is with her friends. Answers will vary when considering how belonging impacts a person's sense of wellbeing. Belonging is very much intertwined with social identity. To belong, one must feel a common sense of character with and among members of a community. When a person is constantly marginalized, it impacts their identity which can have detrimental effects. A sense of belonging can be impacted by things like Bill-21, or even the way in which Western European culture is seen as the only Canadian way when Canada is in fact a very diverse country.

**How might Nisreen's experiences as a Canadian Muslim impact her mental health? How might political discussions on Muslims impact their lives?**

Nisreen may encounter increased mental health challenges due to the Islamophobia she has experienced, and she may

# ISLAMOPHOBIA: CAN'T DIM MY LIGHT

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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be more at risk for mental health challenges due to her gender, race and her visible expression of faith through wearing a hijab ([CMHA, 2020](#)). Overall, Muslims in North America may be more likely to experience psychological distress, anxiety, depression and feelings of isolation due to faith-based discrimination ([Badaloo, 2022](#)).

### **84% of Manitobans say racism is a problem, does this statistic surprise you? Why or why not?**

Opinions may vary based on lived experiences and capacity for empathy. Many rural communities in Manitoba are not diverse and some may have not been exposed/are ignorant to the racism that is in Manitoba, while others have been exposed to racism/are the perpetrators of racism and just don't recognize it as such. It is important to listen to the lived experiences of people of colour. Some reasons it should not surprise you: People of colour being over-represented in prisons, white people over-represented in positions of power, Canada's history of slavery, residential schools and internment camps, and the colonization that Canada's systems and institutions are built off of.

### **What did you learn from watching this film? How might these learnings inform how you interact with someone who identifies as a Muslim?**

Things learned are including but are not limited to: the religion of Islam, Bill 21, belonging, intersecting identities, Islamophobia, microaggressions and marginalization. These learnings may inform someone to be more culturally aware when discussing religion or religious symbols with someone who identifies as Muslim. It also helps identify some of the constant microaggressions faced by Muslim people so that you can now check your own blind spots and the blind spots of others and begin your own, internal anti-racism work.

### **Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?**

Uncomfortable moments in the film include but are not limited to: discussing Bill 21 which disproportionately affects only one person in the class, mispronouncing Nisreen's name, singling out Nisreen for her opinion on a bill that disproportionately affects her, her conversation with the lady in the store, when Nisreen has to spell her name out on the phone, the unsolicited comment on her hijab use, the radio conversation, and the ending statistic. Dealing with these discomforts will include but are not limited to: seeking out support, seeking out resources for better understanding and to help teach others, interfering when seeing or hearing racial microaggressions/racism. It is important to remember that anti-racism work is usually uncomfortable, whether you are a person of colour or not. Checking and fixing your unconscious biases will always be uncomfortable, yet it is a small price to pay compared to the detrimental effects of racism.



# ANTI-BLACK RACISM: THE CHOICES YOU DON'T MAKE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### **What comes to mind after watching the film? How did it make you feel?**

Each person will have their own answers to this question, and may or may not share them with the group. Some may feel the film reflects their own life experiences with racism, some may feel angry or sad, some may feel defensive, some may feel newly exposed, and some may feel empathy. Thoughts and feelings will vary for each individual and their unique life story and social position.

### **Racism may take many forms. What types of racism did you witness in this film? If you would like to share, what types of racism do you see or experience in your own life?**

Racism may be perpetrated overtly, covertly, systemically, racially, culturally, religiously, internally or laterally to name a few. See the "useful definitions" section on pages 29-31 for help explaining these types of racism. Some examples of racism portrayed in the film include anti-Black racism, microaggressions (see next question), the bias of characters toward standards of whiteness (see question #5), systemically (see question #6), etc. As for seeing or experiencing racism in the lives of group members, some may know the effects of racism intimately in many of these forms, some may benefit from racism, some may be allies in fighting different forms of racism, and others may be new to identifying racism.

### **What kind of microaggressions can you identify in this film? In what ways did characters veil their racism to make their prejudice more subtle? How do microaggressions produce and maintain racism?**

There are multiple times in this film where the main character faced microaggressions from their coworkers. Some of these included the negative comments about the main character's food when the other colleague notes "You know there is a McDonald's down the street, you don't have to eat that" and when the two coworkers exclude the main character from their table because of the main character's lunch and hair based on their culture and race. In these examples, the colleague said "just kidding" after their remark. Making a joke of their microaggression helped to veil their racism. As for the coworkers at the table, they made an excuse as to why the main character could not sit with them to veil their racism. Microaggressions can help produce and maintain racism because of their subtle nature, they can be downplayed. This could result in BIPOC individuals being gaslighted, questioning the racism perpetrated, which could potentially make racism more likely to go unaddressed.

### **In the film the two characters sitting at the table said "No sorry, we're waiting for someone" when the main character asks to sit with them. What function does exclusion have in contributing to racism?**

When people are excluded based on their race, culture and/or religion by those who have privilege in these aspects, it may result in issues such as othering, devaluation, stress, marginalization, and health, socioeconomic and democratic inequity. Canada also has strived to benefit from the detriment of Black exclusion ([see the following for more on both the celebration of Black histories and Canada's anti-Black racism](#)).

### **In what ways do standards of whiteness contribute to racism in professional spaces? How were characters biased to white standards in the film and how were these standards pressed on the main character?**

Some of the ways standards of whiteness can contribute to racism in professional spaces include assumed incompetence of BIPOC individuals, lack of recognition for and the questioning of expertise and work of BIPOC individuals, the celebration of white mediocrity and the pressure put on BIPOC individuals to constrain authenticity of identity. The main character in the film had to deal with the white standards of taste/food, hair, way of speaking and professionalism. The

# ANTI-BLACK RACISM: THE CHOICES YOU DON'T MAKE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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character at the microwave and the two characters at the table showed white bias toward the main character in their disparaging remarks.

*\*Trigger Warning - this question addresses racial violence.*

**In the film, the main character was stopped by the police. Why do you think this was included in the film? How do you think the main character felt when they were stopped?**

Racial profiling of Black peoples is a common phenomenon in Canada (OHRC, 2019). Of Black Canadians who were not involved in any criminal activity, 34% claimed they had been stopped twice or more in the past two years compared to 4% of white Canadians (Wortley & Tanner 2003). Studies by James (1998) and Neugebauer (2000) found strikingly similar results (Smith, 2006). Black peoples in Canada also experience disproportionate levels of violence perpetrated by the police (Wortley, 2006) and overrepresentation in the justice system (Owusu-Bempah et al., 2021; OHRC, 2021). Considering the disproportionate level of violence Black peoples experience by police in Canada, it may be likely the main character potentially felt scared, stressed, unsafe, or degraded.

**What actions were taken to address some of the racism in the film? In what other ways could a stand be taken against the racism the main character experiences?**

Some of the actions taken to address racism in the film included the character who sat down with the main character for lunch and supported them, the main character who continued to live out their own identity, through actions such as keeping their hair to their own standards and eating their foods in their home and through the friends being a supportive community in the main character's life. Besides the ways already listed, just a few others of many actions that may be taken include directly confronting the person who is being racist (if it is safe to do so), verbally questioning the racist action, seeking remedy and change at the organizational or systemic level if possible and/or the perpetrator could apologize and commit to addressing racist harm. ([Click this resource to find more on challenging racism](#)).

**How do you think the racism the main character experienced in the film might affect their well-being? How do you think it might affect their life at work and home?**

The main character might be experiencing the effects of racism in multiple ways. Some could include diminished mental, emotional and physical health. For example, the main character's work life was affected by racism through increased social isolation and decreased satisfaction. The main character may have brought these effects along with the stress or trauma of being racially profiled with them beyond the initial experience to both home and work. For example, in the bathroom scene, the main character appeared to be distressed by the anti-Black racism they experienced regarding their hair.

**What role might a sense of belonging and community play in the main character's well-being and coping with the racism they experience?**

Answers here may vary. However, belonging and community can help shape a positive sense of identity and may help foster connectedness. A sense of belonging and community may also help the main character and others in their community experience acceptance, support and security in the face of racism. As an example, the coworker who sat down with the main character at lunch helped support them after they experienced racism at work. Another example includes how the characters' practice of commensality offered a community to express forms of identity with, experience acceptance and in this instance appeared to bring multiple characters a sense of joy.

## ANTI-BLACK RACISM: THE CHOICES YOU DON'T MAKE

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### **Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?**

The racism portrayed in this film might make people uncomfortable for different reasons. BIPOC individuals might feel uncomfortable as the film reflects racial trauma that may resonate with many lived experiences. Allies may be uncomfortable with the injustice they witness but may also be uncomfortable alongside other white individuals when addressing their own biases. Some white people who have not experienced racism may not feel uncomfortable with the racism in the film. However, some of the uncomfortable situations in this film might include: when the coworker insults the main character's food, when the two characters at the table exclude the main character and make disrespectful remarks about their food and hair, when the main character is deliberating over cutting their hair, when the main character is racially profiled by the police, when the main character is eating the breakfast sandwich instead of the food they would like to eat, when the main character feels the need to change the way they speak to avoid discrimination, and when the main character expresses the longing for a day without the oppression of racism. People involved in this discussion may deal with their discomforts differently. Some might seek various supports including self-care and other relational care. Some might work on addressing their own racism or the racism they witness. Others might choose to ignore or avoid dealing with their discomfort in a constructive way. As the facilitators, it is important to encourage ways of dealing with discomfort that support BIPOC individuals and anti-oppression.



# ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM: FRIENDLY MANITOBA

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **Did anything in the film make you uncomfortable? How do you deal with these discomforts?**

Uncomfortable moments in this film may include but are not limited to: when the person with the sign at the bus stop is sneered at and talked down to, when the granddaughter is followed and watched in the convenience store, when the grandmother is stereotyped and treated rudely by the nurse, when the characters feel distressed by the racism they experience and the statistics that demonstrate systemic racism in Manitoba. Some may feel uncomfortable for different reasons depending on their personal experiences encountering, witnessing and/or perpetrating racism and their own coping and/or anti-racism journey. Based on this, dealing with discomforts may take a variety of forms such as self-care, accessing support and resources, examining personal bias, education, growth in anti-racist action or attempts to avoid the discomfort.

### **What examples of microaggressions can you identify in this film and how might they be addressed?**

Some examples of microaggressions in this film may include the hostile verbal and non-verbal messages communicated to Indigenous Peoples in the uncomfortable moments described in the previous question. Depending on the person, the microaggressions may be addressed differently. One way these microaggressions were addressed in the film was through the application of the Seven Sacred Teachings by the granddaughter and grandmother. This practical application of the teachings may help offer guidance to those in this discussion as to how they might personally address racist microaggressions. [This resource on bystander anti-racism](#) may also be helpful in providing more examples of how the Seven Sacred Teachings may be applied in practice.

### **Often microaggressions may be perpetrated based on bias and stereotypes as seen in this film. In what ways do you think systemic racism contributes to biases and stereotypes such as the ones you identify in this film?**

A Canadian society built on white privilege will create and sustain false biases and stereotypes of BIPOC to maintain this white privilege. Agents of socialization such as education and the media and institutional norms and policy instruments all contribute to strengthening racial bias and perpetuating stereotypes for the benefit of white people. For example, it is found that Canadian media has significantly contributed to constructing false stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples being prone to the problematic use of pain medications (Nelson et al., 2016). This pathologization of Indigenous Peoples in the media is one small component of how Indigenous Peoples, such as the grandmother in this film, may become stereotyped and receive lesser care or detrimental treatment.

### **How would or do you assess your own biases?**

Participants in this discussion will have varying answers. This discussion time used is one example of how participants may first learn or continue learning to first identify their own biases before working to unlearning them. Putting in the work to educate oneself, self-reflect, and practice unlearning will most likely be included in many participant answers, and as a facilitator, it is also important to emphasize that assessing and changing biases will always be a much-needed work in progress.

### **After the nurse assumes the grandmother wants more painkillers, the granddaughter responds by expressing " Why do they treat us this way? We did nothing wrong and they treat us like we are criminals". Why do you think others treat the grandmother and granddaughter unjustly like criminals? How does racism inform their mistreatment? How might this racist mistreatment affect the granddaughter and grandmother's well-being?**

The grandmother and the granddaughter are treated like criminals by others who wrongly see their Indigeneity as deviant. Similarly to question #3, systemic racism in its many forms reinforces these harmful social constructions and the subsequent mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples to advantage white society. Some examples from the film of how racism may affect both characters' well-being include the psychological and emotional distress they experience and the grandmother's diminished levels of physical care and outcomes. However, the effects on their well-being are likely more extensive than this.

# ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM: FRIENDLY MANITOBA

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**How do you think the Seven Sacred Teachings the grandmother shared might have affected the granddaughter? How do you think both of them might be feeling carrying both the pain from their experiences of racism and the wholesomeness of their relationship and shared culture simultaneously?**

From the film, it appears the granddaughter may feel a sense of comfort and guidance from her grandmother and the Seven Sacred Teachings that are shared with her. Through these teachings, the grandmother shares that "they will guide you down the right path to being your true self" which may apply to the granddaughter who practices them. The granddaughter and grandmother will most likely be having many feelings, as most likely will many participants in this discussion who have also experienced racism and have their own senses of belonging and identity. Some possible feelings and experiences may include anger, sadness, stress, hopelessness, low-self esteem, trauma, strength, support, healing, safety, sense of belonging, positive sense of identity, vitalization, wellness and joy.

**Racism in Turtle Island cannot be discussed without understanding settler colonialism. What does settler colonialism on Turtle Island mean to you? How do you think settler colonialism affects the contemporary realities of racism in this film?**

Settler colonialism on Turtle Island will have very different meanings between and among Indigenous Peoples, settler, and immigrant and refugee groups. At its very core, settler colonialism is traumatizing to Indigenous Peoples as it aims to eliminate and violently replace them with settlers on Indigenous land. In addition to this, many immigrants and refugees may potentially be affected by settler colonialism in other nations and the racism of settler colonialism on Turtle Island. As a facilitator, this may be a triggering discussion for yourself or others in the room. Thank you in advance for taking the time and space needed to tend to yourself if this is the case and/or allowing others to be tended to who may be triggered. Settlers continue to benefit from ongoing colonial violence. Settler participants may deny this as well as their Treaty responsibilities. However, by centring BIPOC voices targeted by settler colonialism and their enduring presence in the discussion, hopefully, the effects of re-traumatization can be mitigated. Settler colonialism sets the stage for racism in the film. When the man with the sign at the bus stop, the granddaughter and the grandmother are looked down on, discriminated against and experience inequality because of their Indigeneity, this is made possible through the othering and exploitive structure of settler colonialism. Click [here](#) for help making further connections between the film and settler colonialism, Indigenous resistance, and ways forward.

**This film portrays primarily Indigenous actors. However, what role does whiteness play in the themes of this film?**

Whiteness produces racism through normalizing and privileging white people at the expense of BIPOC. Some strategies of white supremacy may be to try to foster lateral violence among BIPOC for white benefit or to attempt to disguise racism as intragroup conflict, however, it is important to emphasize that racism is always based in and sustained by whiteness, perpetuated by white systems structured by white people, and that the onus is on white people to address this. Myths that argue otherwise must be dispelled. Click [here](#) for more on white supremacy and racism in action in Manitoba.

**What were your thoughts and feelings after reading the statistics at the end of the film? Were you familiar with these realities prior to the film?**

Answers to these questions will vary based on life experience, empathy and education. The prevalence of Indigenous Peoples experiencing racism in the areas of healthcare, public transportation/on the street, in shops/restaurants and in Manitoba generally will be relatable on a personal level to certain participants and should be disturbing to all. If this is not the case, listening to the voices of those with lived experience is important. For resources for participants to learn more about the realities of anti-Indigenous racism in Manitoba and beyond, and more on how to practice anti-racism, see page 34.



# ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM: FRIENDLY MANITOBA

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**This film spoke to real truths. These included real truths about racism, Indigenous lives, and the real truths of traditional Anishinaabe teachings. How can cultivating truth contribute to anti-racism and decolonization? If you would like to share, how do these truths influence you personally?**

There are many possible answers to both questions. One answer as to how truth can cultivate decolonization may be that "Decolonization requires an understanding of Indigenous history and acceptance and acknowledgement of the truth and consequences of that history" ([Manitoba Foundations Group, n.d., p.89](#)). Understanding that Indigenous Peoples continue to have their own truths and ways that they have always had and the truth that settler-colonial violence and racism are still having a harmful impact on Indigenous lives and land is one step to accepting what anti-racism and decolonization mean and what it takes to advance them. In line with this, the decolonial truths expressed through the Seven Sacred Teachings in the film offer an example of living "a better way of life" and the grandmother tells us when they are lived and practiced, they "educate those who do not know these important values that the Creator gave to all of us".

**What were some ways the granddaughter and the grandmother took care of themselves having experienced racism? What are some other ways to practice self and community care as a way of coping with racism?**

Some ways in the film that the granddaughter and grandmother practice self and community care are through connecting with and supporting each other and through practicing and living their shared Anishinaabe culture. Some other ways might include therapy, exercise, attending community events, spending time with nature, creating healthy boundaries, advocacy, etc.

**The grandmother helps her granddaughter deal with racism. How would you help the next generation deal with racism?**

There will be many answers to this question. For example, some participants may have their own cultural and/or spiritual teachings to help guide future generations. A few other examples might include increasing and improving anti-racism education, especially for young children, finding personal healing to allow for support extension, and supporting land back movements and Indigenous-led climate action to help address land theft and environmental racism for future generations.



# RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

The following four toolkits are curated lists including blogs, books, websites, videos, and more. They are helpful resources for further exploration.

**Black Anti-Racism Resources:**

<https://www.bucares.ca/black-antiracism-toolkit>

**Immigrant Anti-Racism Resources:**

<https://www.bucares.ca/immigrant-antiracism-toolkit>

**Islamophobia Resources:**

<https://www.bucares.ca/muslim-anti-racism-toolkit>

**Indigenous Anti-Racism Resources:**

<https://www.bucares.ca/indigenous-antiracism-toolkit>



## ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES



# USEFUL DEFINITIONS

## ALLIES

"A member of a different group who works to end a form of discrimination for a particular individual or designated group" (CRRF Retrieved 8/13/20). For example, a more privileged group or individual may work to end a form of oppression that gives him/her privileges; this could be men who work to end sexism or white individuals who engage in anti-racist work." (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## ALLAH

The Arabic word for "God". Word used to describe God in many religions by Arabic speakers and cultures (adapted from facilitation guide focus group discussion).

## ANTI- BLACK RACISM

"Anti-Black racism is prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, to the extent that anti-Black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger White society. Anti-Black racism is manifest in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians, which includes unequal opportunities, lower socio-economic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system." (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## ANTI- INDIGENOUS RACISM

"Anti-Indigenous racism is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada. It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers, and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada. Systemic anti-Indigenous racism is evident in discriminatory federal policies such as the Indian Act and the residential school system. It is also manifest in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in provincial criminal justice and child welfare systems, as well as inequitable outcomes in education, well-being, and health. Individual lived-experiences of anti-Indigenous racism can be seen in the rise in acts of hostility and violence directed at Indigenous people." (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## BELONGING

"Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group. It is when an individual can bring their authentic self within a community. When people feel like they don't belong in a community, their performance and their personal lives suffer." (adapted from [Diversity and Inclusion](#), Cornell University, 2021)

## BILL 21

"A new Quebec law that bans Canadians working as teachers, lawyers, police officers, and more from wearing religious symbols such as crosses, hijabs, turbans and yarmulkes. Bill 21 harms immigrant and racialized communities in particular. This not only affects people currently working in the public sector, but also the youth who aspire to those careers." (adapted from [Canadian Civil Liberties Association](#), 2022)

# USEFUL DEFINITIONS

## BIPOC

"An acronym that stands for "Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour." Some see the term as inclusive as it acknowledges that "POC" (People of Colour) alone does not accurately represent the disparate ongoing and historical experiences of both black and Indigenous people. On the other hand, some argue that using an all-encompassing term like "BIPOC" is lazy, homogeneous and a "product of colonialism" (Luger qtd. in Garcia). The term can be used generally to represent the non-white experience, however, many "BIPOC" individuals agree that using specific language when referring to racialized groups or experiences is ideal. (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## EQUITY

"A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences" (CRRF Retrieved 8/18/20). The claim (often by white, middle-class people) that one treats everyone "the same" is not only false but is not the goal of anti-racism." (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## NEWCOMER OR IMMIGRANT

"One who moves from their native country to another with the intention of settling permanently for the purpose of forging a better life or for better opportunities. This may be for a variety of personal, political, religious, social or economic reasons." (adapted from [Canadian Race Relations Foundation](#), 2015)

## INTER- SECTIONALITY

"The experience of the interconnected nature of ethnicity, race, creed, gender, socio-economic position etc., (cultural, institutional and social), and the way they are imbedded within existing systems and define how one is valued." (adapted from [Canadian Race Relations Foundation](#), 2015)

## ISLAMOPHOBIA

"Fear, hatred of, or prejudice against the Islamic religion or Muslims" (adapted from [Canadian Race Relations Foundation](#), 2015)

## MICRO- AGGRESSION

"Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group. They are not limited to human encounters alone but may also be environmental in nature, as when a person of color is exposed to an office setting that unintentionally assails his or her racial identity (Gordon & Johnson, 2003; D. W. Sue, 2003). Three forms of microaggressions can be identified: microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation. A microassault is an explicit racial derogation characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions. A microinsult is characterized by communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity. Microinsults represent subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator, but clearly convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient of color. Microinvalidations are characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or

# USEFUL DEFINITIONS

nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color." (adapted from [Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life](#), Teachers College, Columbia University, 2007)

## UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Also known as implicit bias. "Thoughts and feelings are "implicit" or "unconscious" if we are unaware of them or mistaken about their nature. We have a bias when, rather than being neutral, we have a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people. Thus, we use the term "implicit bias" to describe when we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge. A fairly commonplace example of this is seen in studies that show that white people will frequently associate criminality with people of colour without even realizing they're doing it." (Adapted from Perception Institute, "[Implicit Bias](#)")

## WHITENESS

"The word "white" is sometimes used to refer specifically to skin colour, but it is also used as a shorthand reference to whiteness; that is, to the social meaning attached to the privileges and power that people who appear white receive because they are not subjected to the racism faced by people of colour and Indigenous people. Whiteness is multidimensional: this means the privileges and power associated with whiteness may manifest at the individual, communal and systemic level. It is a state of unconsciousness: whiteness is often invisible to white people, and this perpetuates a lack of knowledge or understanding of difference which is a root cause of oppression (hooks, 1994). Cultural racism is founded in the belief that "whiteness is considered to be the universal ... and allows one to think and speak as if whiteness described and defined the world" (Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 327). It shapes how white people view themselves and others, and places white people in a place of structural advantage where white cultural norms and practices go unnamed and unquestioned." (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021)

## WHITE PRIVILEGE

"Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally, white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it. Examples of privilege might be: "I can walk around a department store without being followed." "I can come to a meeting late and not have my lateness attributed to [my] race." "Being able to drive a car in any neighborhood without being perceived as being in the wrong place or looking for trouble." "I can turn on the television or look to the front page and see people of my ethnic and racial background represented." "I can take a job without having co-workers suspect that I got it because of my racial background." "I can send my 16-year old out with his [or her] new driver's license and not have to give him [or her] a lesson [on] how to respond if police stop him [or her]." " (Peggy McIntosh. "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies," qtd. in Racial Equity Resource Guide) (adapted from [Calgary Anti Racism Education](#), 2021).

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR K-12 EDUCATORS

The following is adapted from Manitoba Education's [Diversity Education](#)

The *[Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies](#)* curriculum provides students with the opportunities to explore how Canadian society has developed, beginning with the Indigenous Peoples, through the colonial era, to present-day Canada. Students explore the diverse peoples and changing composition of Canadian society. The impacts of slavery, racism, and colonialism are key aspects of Active Democratic Citizenship.

*[Grade 9 Social Studies: Canada in the Contemporary World](#)* focuses on clusters of Diversity and Pluralism in Canada, Democracy and Governance in Canada, and Opportunities and Challenges. The impact of racism in Canadian society is explored throughout the curriculum. Building a Just Society and Citizenship Participation are important topics.

*[Grade 11 History of Canada](#)* emphasizes issues related to Equity and Diversity in a Pluralistic Society. It addresses the history of Indigenous Peoples, Black Peoples, and Peoples of Colour Peoples and the effects of racism.

The *[Grade 12 Global Issues: Citizenship and Sustainability](#)* course has several areas of inquiry relevant to Black Peoples, Indigenous Peoples, and Peoples of Colour, including the following:

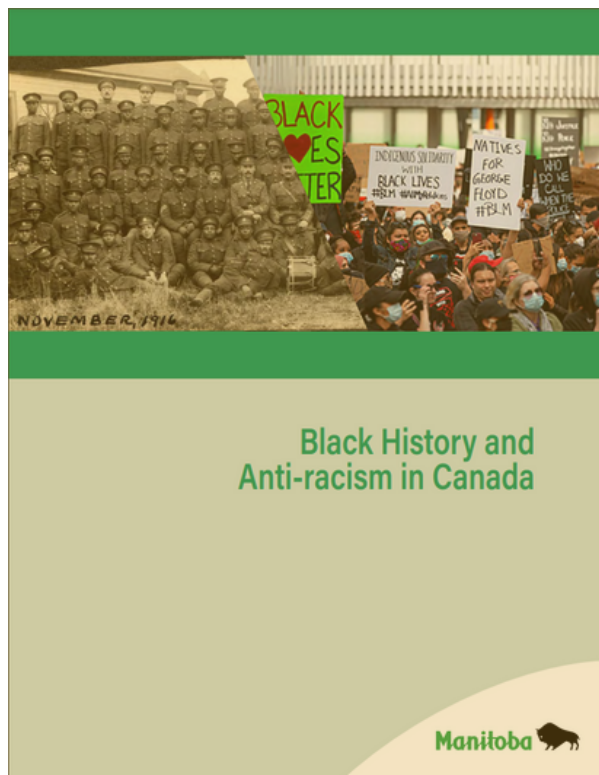
- [Modern Slavery](#)
- [Oppression and Genocide](#)
- [Poverty, Wealth, and Power](#)
- [Social Justice and Human Rights](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples, Global Issues and Sustainability](#)

The *[Grade 12 Cinema as a Witness to Modern History](#)* course provides an excellent vehicle for exploring systemic racism through film. The theme of systemic racism aligns with the topics of Oppression and Resistance and Social Transformation.

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR K-12 EDUCATORS

We wish to help educators bring anti-racism research into the classroom. Manitoba has two documents designed to help educators do this important work.

[Creating Racism-Free Schools through Critical/Courageous Conversations on Race](#) is for "promoting school divisions, schools, teachers, parents, and students to undertake critical and courageous conversations on racism to create inclusive and equitable classrooms and schools for First Nation Métis Inuit students and all students. The document helps to inform and encourage educators, describes the levels and effects of racism, acknowledges history, stimulates dialogue through critical and courageous conversations and contributes to the TRC's Call to Action."



## [Black History and Anti-racism in Canada](#)

From MB Education: "Manitoba Education recognizes the need for an inclusive curriculum to challenge discrimination and racism and to advance equity. It acknowledges the need to cover more fully and accurately the histories of marginalized groups, such as Black Peoples, Indigenous Peoples, and People of Colour."

# REAL CHANGE FACILITATION GUIDE

84% of Manitobans say racism is a problem in their area. It's time for #RealChange. Change happens through education and through building relationships. This guide is intended for educators, leaders, and professional developers who are seeking ways to spark honest and courageous conversations around racism.

