

NON-BLACK POC CHIME IN:

**CHALLENGING ANTI-BLACK  
RACISM AND COMPLICITY  
WITH DIALOGUE**

**WHAT'S  
WORKING  
(AND WHAT'S NOT)**

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**disclaimer**

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- Fiza Pirani, Nabila Jamal

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"It's okay to be friends with him, but not okay to marry him because your children will be discriminated against."



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"It's not our fight."  
+  
"We don't owe anyone anything."

**What's worked:** "What really broke down [my mom's] wall was when I explained how the Civil Rights Movements in 1950s and 60s basically made it possible for immigrants that look like us to even be remotely successful in the US, let alone move here in the first place. This then led to a whole lesson in systemic racism, voter suppression, Jim Crow laws, etc. I think that's biggest set back in South Asian communities, they just don't know the history."

"OK, but what about Black on Black crime?"



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"They're uneducated."

**What's worked:** "BEN & JERRYS HELPED MY MOM OVERCOME THIS. Specifically, this explainer on how systemic racism infiltrates education and affects Black people from a very young age. I don't really know why she trusted them above, like, the New York Times but..."

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"They don't take care of their own families."

**What's worked:** "When I share stories of how racism and systemic oppression specifically affects children and the family dynamic of Black people (the unjust incarceration/low crime offenses), it seems to get through to them more."

"Property damage, looting or violence is never the answer."

**What's worked:** "I tried to flip that statement to say, what if we said, 'The loss of property is bad but the unlawful killing of an unarmed human being is really bad.' What if we revisited our priorities? This really got my relative riled up because he thought I was shaming him for what he believed in. Believe it or not, I think that means it got through to him."

+  
"Explaining the understanding that the protests are the language of those who are desperate and beaten down by society. This is a reckoning for people who rejected earlier forms of protests."

"I'm sure they did something to deserve police brutality."

**What's worked:** "What has worked for understanding police brutality is saying that just because someone committed a minor crime does not mean that they deserve police brutality. They should face the consequences, but the consequences should be what any other person experienced, not cruel/unusual punishment and excessive force or death. And then, of course, pointing out the countless times that black people have done nothing wrong at all, fully complied, and yet still end up being hurt or killed. It is hard for even the most biased person to deny police brutality exists when shown evidence."

"Muslims have also faced prejudice - so how are we privileged?"



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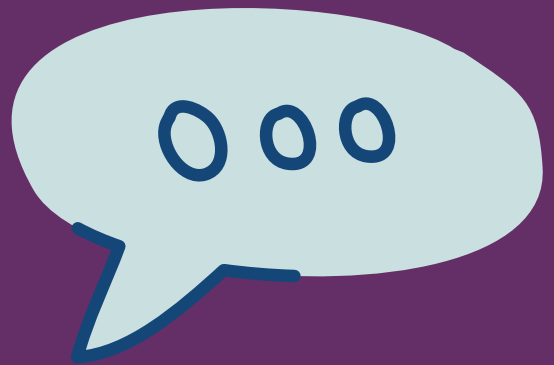
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"Statistics show that Blacks are the most violent."

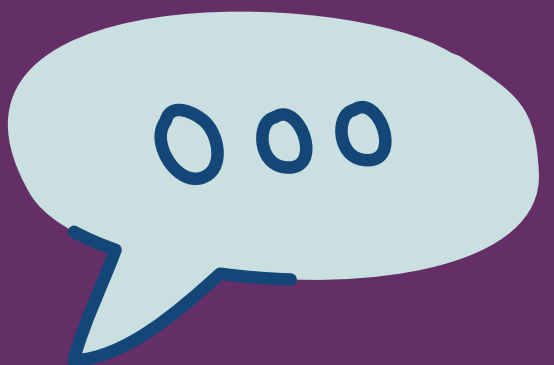


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"How can I be racist if I've never done anything racist to Black people?"

**What's worked:** "I try to them that anti-racist work isn't meant to make you feel better about yourself- its hard work where you confront your own prejudice and racism and work to dismantle that thought- but it is what Black people live through everyday. I've also used the example of Indian colonialism and the struggle that our ppl went thru as a way to empathize."

"If they would just listen to the cops, they won't get killed."



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"We had a Black president."



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"Our ancestors came here with nothing and built their way up, so why can't black people do the same now?"

**What's worked:** "I actually tried to sit down and walk through how the system is and has been skewed against African Americans from the moment they are in grade school to when they are adults. That helped, albeit 4 hours later lol."

If your parents have negative experiences with a few Black people and have trouble moving past that...

**What's worked:** "What works for my parents is showing them what is going on and pinpointing the Black experience as it pertains to the youth. By doing so, I am trying to show them that when a persons foundation is cracked due to their surroundings and the color of their skin, people inevitably may shift to engage in negative behaviors because, well, thats what society already thinks of them. When I put it in the perspective of a child, they can see how being afraid of the police when you're in elementary school can truly change a person and create a large distrust towards, well, everyone who isn't the same color as them."

"You're not going to get a job if you speak about this on Facebook. You're going to lose white friends if you play this race war."



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"There are countries doing much worse. Be grateful."



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"Change won't happen so fast, it will take time. The generation older than me is less racist than the generation above them."

+

"We don't need to keep having this conversation."

+

"Your grandfather is too old to change, let him be."

**What's worked:** "It helps to explain why discussions with people you are close to are important in making change because those people may not be reached by other means."

"They 'create' their own problems and are just as disadvantaged as other minorities."

**What's worked:** "Relating information using medical facts has worked for me. I've discussed that African Americans are at an extreme disadvantage in most realms of life, especially when it comes to access to adequate healthcare. Georgia has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the US and interestingly, African American mothers experience an increase incidence of mortality when giving birth. African Americans are also experiencing poorer outcomes and more deaths when it comes to Covid 19. The BLM movement is especially geared towards the abuse and injustice that African Americans face in our "justice" system, but it also stems from outrage and disgust of historically and continuously being oppressed, mismanaged, and mistreated by most major federal and state systems in America."

If they keep reverting to a singular case of Black violence...

**What's worked:** "Very few instances of Black crime should not affect your perception of the entire race."

**What hasn't:** "The system is against them, They are people just like we are; if we help them, we are also helping ourselves. Don't know why this didn't stick."

"More Black people are criminal to begin with so of course more get charged."

+

If your parents don't acknowledge why this is the case in the first place ...

**What's worked:** "Seeing and watching people like Obama speak to this helps."

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"If an Asian person died in the same way, no one would fight for us so why should we."

also see: p. 2 / "It's not our fight."

**What's worked:** "I showed my dad this [@southasians4blacklives](https://www.instagram.com/southasians4blacklives) Instagram graphic that actually explains how Black people fought for all communities of color and why we owe our presence here to the work of the civil rights movement. He seemed to really respond to it. Hope he doesn't get an IG..."

"There will always be an oppressor and the oppressed. You just have to fend for and take care of yourself."

**What's worked:** "I think something I need to do is understand more of the political environment in Korea to make more understandable analogies and arguments. Something I said yesterday was 'I don't need you to change your mind about everything but even if you were to be a little more curious about the history of black people in America that would be enough for me' and that seemed to resonate a bit more."

If they're pleading you not to protest...

**What's worked:** "I've been using the example of if someone in our own community was in the same situation as George Floyd, would we just lock our doors and hide? Or would we stand up for justice because they are our people? This has been the best way to get the message across."

"They refuse to listen to me because I'm 'just a kid.'"

**What's worked:** "I think conversations among older people, led by older people might help. This has brought a bit more awareness; My mom and aunt now speak between themselves about racism and their own tendencies and have begun to reflect how this trickles down to their kids."

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"The police will get what they deserved. We should just keep praying and focus on purifying ourselves."

**What's worked:** "[That video](#) from Hasan Minhaj on how Asian Americans have played an implicit role this. They seem to be getting it, but they still haven't built up the courage to do anything."

**What hasn't:** "Showing them videos of police brutality and of George Floyd's murder/articles from the New York times to show that the police had complaints against them but they still weren't convicted."

"Protests are useless."

**What's worked:** "It really helped to explain the understanding that the protests are the language of those who are desperate and beaten down by society. This is a reckoning for people who rejected earlier forms of protests."

+  
"I literally sent a hundred texts to my mom about every major protest in history and what's resulted. It...worked!!!!"

"We had nothing to do with slavery."

**What's worked:** "I said 'true, and we can't change the past, but we can all help end these oppressive legacies for a better future.' I think my dad was....proud? And we didn't end up arguing. SO...win?"

"All lives matter" (eyeroll)

**What's worked:** "That one pic of that girl in Tennessee who was like we said 'Black lives matter.' We never said 'only Black lives matter.' We know 'all lives matter.' We just need your help with #BlackLivesMatter for Black lives are in danger! Yep. Took a 6 yr old to break my stoic father and contrarian SIL lol."



# general advice from respondents

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## What some say is working:

- "It's important to know first and foremost if the individual is even willing to listen and have a constructive conversation."
- "It helps if they consume news from sources other than WhatsApp."
- "I usually get very charged and emotional when I speak on social issues, but my parents end up taking my tone as an attack on their egos, I've been trying to have them read articles/watch videos created by Black people and highlighting their experiences first and THEN having a discussion. It's been working pretty well in getting it through :)"
- "I've noticed it helps to use accessible language and not be overly academic (esp if English isn't the first language)"
- "For some reason, it helps seeing me, my brother, and other young members in our family sp upset about things. it's really made my mom want to understand how we feel and why." + "When my family saw how distraught I was by the injustice, they listened. And today I heard my mom explaining to others the injustice that blacks people face and that something needs to be done, even if she doesn't agree with protests."
- "Asking them to have a non-judgmental approach (I.e. who are we to judge someone else pain?); educating them on US history; pointing out examples of how we perpetuate colorism in our own communities. It's all worked to some extent."
- "Remaining humble in conversation and conduction discussions as though we are learning together rather than me trying to 'educate' anyone has worked wonders."
- "Explaining the historical hierarchy within colonialism which persists today, explaining a future without the protests of the Civil rights movement of 1964, without which brown folks wouldn't be what we are today, explaining the prison industrial complex, drug laws, housing practices - all of which have kept Blacks suppressed in America and we as brown folk have been able to build off of the backs of. Constructing an argument on historical data helped my close ones realize there's more to this than their day to day experiences."
- "My dad has been pretty receptive to what we have to say. A lot of it includes him showing us the content he's being exposed to, like on Facebook for example. He sees it, gives his piece, and we discuss it in a way that often reframes what he was previously taught to believe. The main thing is that he's willing to listen."

## And what they say isn't faring so well:

- What hasn't been getting through though, is the way I approach these conversations. I noticed I've been getting way too argumentative, "blamed" my cousin for being too silent, only to be hit back from my sister "How do you know she isn't supporting the movement?". I now know to approach with a more calmer toner in order to educate them rather to shame them.
- "Just screaming 'it's the system!! Doesn't always help lol"
- Yelling.
- Showing them videos from people they respect explaining things in a calm way that I can't haha

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# essential resources: challenging anti-Black racism/pushback

THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST.

- **A guide to starting anti-racist conversations with friends and family** (DoSomething.org)
- **Expert-approved tips: How to talk to your parents about Black Lives Matter** (Cosmopolitan)
- **Remember to tell your loved ones what protesting/collective efforts have accomplished so far, proving it's not for nothing** (@southasians4blacklives)
- **Letters for Black Lives** (multiple translations via Medium)
- **It's not just about George Floyd: An Instagram graphic to help you explain the magnitude of police brutality against Black lives** (@caitlynphu)
- **VIDEO: Systemic racism, explained** (@lavernecox)
- **On the model minority myth and why it's harmful** (@NPR)
- **Infographic: Overt vs. covert white supremacy** (@theconsciouskid)
- **If you need help explaining what exactly the BLM movement is seeking i.e. tangible policy change, defunding police** (NAACP)
- **VIDEO: Trevor Noah Explaining Looting** (Daily Show)
- **To claims you can't be racist because you're a person of color** (@southasians4blacklives)
- **VIDEO: What does "defund the police" really mean?** (VICE)
- **VIDEO: No, peaceful protests don't typically work** (Trevor Noah/Daily Show)

## Asian Americans

- **A Letter From Young Asian-Americans To Their Families About Black Lives Matter** (NPR)
- **For South Asian and any and all ally families, neighborhoods, and communities to start intergenerational conversations** (South Asians 4 Black Lives)
- **Explaining BLM to Asian parents** (@mtamdoesart)
- **Tips for talking to South Asian parents** (@southasians4blacklives)
- **Conversation starters** (@southasians4blacklives)
- **How to talk so the old folks listen** (@southasians4blacklives)
- **VIDEO: Hasan Minhaj to Indian Americans** (The Patriot Act)
- **Why saying Asian people also face racism is a bad argument** (Yasmine Ghattas)
- **The real reasons the U.S. became less racist toward Asian Americans** (Washington Post)
- **Cantonese terminology for addressing anti-Blackness** (@eugreenia)
- **Explaining to Asian parents that we have our rights thanks to the Black Civil Rights Movement** (@southasians4blacklives)

## Non-Black Africans

- **Addressing anti-Black racism in the Khoja community** (@mikylehassanali)

## Non-Black Latinx/Chicanx/Biracial communities

- **Webinar: Raising anti-racist humans/dismantling colorism and racism in latinx/Chicanx/Biracial communtieis** (Latinx Parenting)
- **Why I keep talking to my Latinx family about anti-blackness, despite them yelling, 'Why should I care?'** (Yahoo)

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