



# FIGHTING ANTI-BLACKNESS IN AAPI COMMUNITIES

CONVERSATION GUIDE  
& RESOURCE COLLECTION

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# CONVERSATION GUIDE

Conversations about anti-Blackness and racism can be difficult, especially when held with people who are close to us. Here are some questions to consider and tips to keep in mind for when you choose to enter these conversations. Though not comprehensive, the next page will give you some common anti-Black statements, some starting dialogue, and ongoing resources and suggested reading.

## PRE-CONVO CHECK-IN QUESTIONS

*Where am I in my journey to fight anti-Blackness?*

What have I learned in educating myself about racism, inequity, systemic oppression, the Model Minority myth, solidarity history, etc.?

How do I perpetuate and benefit from anti-Blackness?

*What are my priorities in this conversation?*

### **Objective**

I want to give information to this person.

### **Relationship**

I want to preserve my relationship with this person.

### **Self-respect & Values**

I want to speak up for what I believe in.

What is my ideal outcome of this conversation?

What obstacles might get in the way of the ideal outcome?

Can I minimize any of these obstacles?

What perspective is the other person bringing into this conversation?

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Ask for consent before you give information: "Would you like to know more about this?" If the answer is no, revisit your priorities and decide if this is worth addressing.

Listen to understand instead of listening to respond or argue.

If possible, highlight points of connection and agreement. People tend to have more successful conversations when they share common ground.

It's okay to pause the conversation if tensions feel high. You can always return after a break.

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Remember that change is not immediate. Fighting anti-Blackness is lifelong work. One conversation is just the beginning.

Acknowledge the emotional labor you are engaging in and try to set aside time and space to take care of yourself.

Connect with your community for support, including others that are also fighting against anti-Blackness.

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Here are some common anti-Black statements, possible responses, and further reading to aid in your dialogue.

*But I'm Asian, I can't be racist.*

"Racism" can be commonly associated with white people being racist toward Black people. "Being a racist" can actually refer to anyone who supports policies or ideas that says one race is "better" or "worse" than another. In that sense, Asian Americans can be racist if they endorse policies or ideas that place one race over or below another in a hierarchy. In fact, not actively working to change these racist policies keeps racism alive. It's not enough to not be racist. We have to work to be anti-racist.

HOW TO BE AN ANTI-RACIST BY IBRAM X. KENDI

*Wow, that Black person is so articulate!*

While you may be intending to give a compliment, this statement implies that it is a surprise that Black people have the ability to be articulate. In contrast, this statement is rarely said about white people because they are assumed to be articulate. This is similar to saying to Asian Americans, "Wow, you speak English so well!" It sounds like a compliment, but it implies that it's a surprise that Asian people can speak fluent English. Maybe next time there's an urge to compliment a Black person, reflect on what that compliment may be implying.

[HTTPS://IDEAS.TED.COM/WHY-WE-NEED-TO-CALL-OUT-CASUAL-RACISM/](https://ideas.ted.com/why-we-need-to-call-out-casual-racism/)

*We're all human. All lives matter.*

All lives do matter and, unfortunately, that is not reflected in the U.S.'s long history of treating Black people as fractions of humans. It is important to specifically identify that "Black lives matter" because, historically and currently, Black communities and people are treated as if they do not matter. By saying "All Lives Matter", Black lives are once more excluded and undervalued. "Black lives matter" is about ensuring that all lives matter by focusing on the lives of Black people that continue to be ignored, neglected, and erased. Black lives matter, too.

[HTTPS://WWW.VOX.COM/2016/7/11/12136140/BLACK-ALL-LIVES-MATTER](https://www.vox.com/2016/7/11/12136140/black-all-lives-matter)

*I don't personally hate Black people, so I'm not part of the problem.*

It's great to hear that you value Black lives. The thing is, anti-Blackness is part of this country's history and current systems. These systems continue to target Black people so much so that their financial, mental, and physical health continues to be disproportionately impacted. So even if we personally are not anti-Black, there are so many ways that the systems around us are. In order to help dismantle anti-Blackness, we have to continue to fight anti-Blackness around us and in our own communities by first addressing that we are all a part of this problematic system.

[HTTPS://WWW.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/PMC/ARTICLES/PMC1446334/PDF/10936998.PDF](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1446334/pdf/10936998.pdf)

*You're too young to understand.*

You're right, you have definitely lived longer and seen more things than I have. I respect you and your experiences. I would love to hear your experiences with racism, prejudice, and hardship in the United States and/or back home. Based on your experiences of racism, what is your understanding of the current situation?

[HTTPS://LETTERSFORBLACKLIVES.COM/2020/HOME](https://lettersforblacklives.com/2020/home)

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*This country has given us so much. Why should I protest?*

There have been many valuable things that have come from living in the United States. The U.S., just like any other country, is not perfect. It can both give us so much while also having some areas to improve on. Protesting is one way of highlighting those areas to improve on so that the U.S. can give as much as possible to all people who live here.

[HTTPS://LETTERSFORBLACKLIVES.COM/2020/HOME](https://LETTERSFORBLACKLIVES.COM/2020/HOME)

*I agree with Black Lives Matter, but I don't like the looting.*

That's great that you agree with BLM! I would love to hear what you agree with and what BLM means to you. The news sometimes disproportionately focuses on violence and looting more than what is occurring in reality because it makes for a better headline. Violence and looting are separate from BLM; there are a lot of people (like white supremacists, police, etc.) who are using the protests as opportunities to follow their own agendas. Lastly, property can be replaced, lives cannot. If we agree that life is more important than property, maybe we could say, "I don't agree with violence and looting, but I agree with Black Lives Matter."

[HTTPS://WWW.VICE.COM/EN\\_US/ARTICLE/Y3ZVGV/HOW-TO-TALK-TO-RELATIVES-WHO-CARE-MORE-ABOUT-LOOTING-THAN-BLACK-LIVES](https://WWW.VICE.COM/EN_US/ARTICLE/Y3ZVGV/HOW-TO-TALK-TO-RELATIVES-WHO-CARE-MORE-ABOUT-LOOTING-THAN-BLACK-LIVES)

*Asians have also experienced racism. Black people don't help us.*

It's true that we've experienced a lot of racism in this country. Our experience of racism is different than those of Black communities. While our communities have undoubtedly been hurt by racism, people do not automatically label us as "violent criminals" as we walk down the street. Violent acts of racism in Black communities has been occurring since Black people were enslaved and brought to America against their will. In fighting for civil rights, Black activists have led movements that advocated for Black people, Asian people, and others. Black people have been beaten, jailed, and killed while fighting for many of the rights that Asian Americans enjoy today like immigration and interracial marriage. We owe them so much in return. We are all fighting against the same racist system that affects us and prefers we compete against each other.

[HTTPS://WWW.CNN.COM/2020/06/05/OPINIONS/TOU-THAO-ASIAN-AMERICAN-SOLIDARITY-WITH-BLACK-AMERICANS-YANG/INDEX.HTML](https://WWW.CNN.COM/2020/06/05/OPINIONS/TOU-THAO-ASIAN-AMERICAN-SOLIDARITY-WITH-BLACK-AMERICANS-YANG/INDEX.HTML)

*I've made it, why can't they?*

You have worked so hard to get to where you are today. Many Asian Americans have been able to "make it" for lots of reasons in addition to hard work- like coming with certain skills, resources, help of communities already here, taking opportunities where they could be found. These things don't take away from your success. It's just different from the experience of people who were brought here enslaved, without resources, and barred from opportunities since slavery and currently. In fact, this idea that Asians have "made it" not only obscures the hardship, poverty, and disparities faced by many Asian Americans right now, but was spread to further blame Black Americans for the disparities and barriers they face. Perhaps an alternative question to consider would be, "I've made it. What's gotten in the way of Black people trying to make it too?"

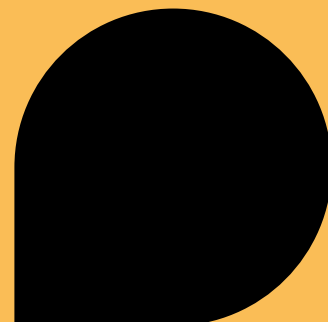
WHY DO WE CALL ASIAN AMERICANS THE MODEL MINORITY? | AJ+  
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=PRDBVSSBK8](https://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=PRDBVSSBK8)

# RESOURCE COLLECTION

Online compilation of resources continually updated and organized to aid in ongoing education and dialogue. Follow the QR codes for specific resources organized by topic area.

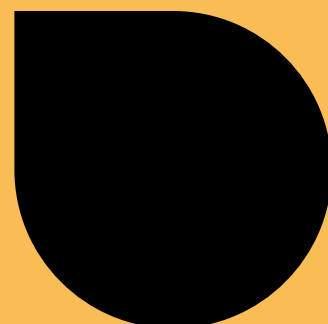
## *I don't know where to start*

Sometimes starting with an all-inclusive guide is a great place to start. This QR code will take you to a list of comprehensive guides that can act as a one-stop-shop for fighting anti-Blackness.



## *I want to learn more*

If you're looking to learn more about racism and anti-Blackness, the Model Minority Myth, solidarity between Asian and Black Americans, and abolishment of prisons and police use this code.



Each QR code will take you to a specific resource sheet as well as the whole resource collection.

You will also find resources grouped by language and community.

Resources are constantly being added, updated, and vetted by Stanford Asian American community members.

If you have resources to add or have questions, feel free to email Marissa at [mfloro@stanford.edu](mailto:mfloro@stanford.edu).

## *I need help talking to others*

For additional conversation guides, talking points, translation resources, and more, follow this QR code for support in having ongoing anti-racist dialogues with elders and community members.



## *I want to be a better ally*

If you're looking for more help in continuing in your journey fighting racism and cultivating Asian-Black solidarity, this QR code will take you to a list of resources.



## *I want to take action*

Here are a list of ways to take direct action in fighting anti-Blackness and racism, starting with directives from Black Lives Matter.

