

**Anti-racism learning (for home or groups) – JANUARY
Characteristics and Antidotes of White Supremacy Culture**

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html>

**January - Paternalism & Either/or Thinking
February - Power Hoarding & Fear of Open Conflict**

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHILE READING:

Where is this characteristic in myself? How is it present in my life?

Where is this characteristic in our Fellowship?

How is it present in Unitarian Universalism?

How am I challenged by understanding this characteristic as part of White Supremacy Culture (WSC)? How is it surprising and/or obvious?

Which antidotes to this WSC are also present in myself and our Fellowship? What new ideas could be employed to address this characteristic?

What are some ways we, as individuals and as a congregation, can understand more about this characteristic and countermeasures we can take to unlearn it *as our default*?

101 Information on White Supremacy Culture:

What is WSC?

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture.html>

Ten insidious examples of WSC:

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/09/white-supremacy-everyday-life/>

Paternalism

- decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it
- those with power think they are capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power
- those with power often don't think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions
- those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does
- those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them

Antidotes: make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decisions in the organization; make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization; include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making

Either/Or Thinking

- things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- closely linked to perfectionism in making it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict
- no sense that things can be both/and
- results in trying to simplify complex things, for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education
- creates conflict and increases sense of urgency, as people are felt they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources

Antidotes: notice when people use either/or language and push to come up with more than two alternatives; notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made; slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis; when people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break and give people some breathing room to think creatively; avoid making decisions under extreme pressure