

Actor-Ally-Accomplice

The material below is from the website WhiteAccomplices.org. (<https://www.whiteaccomplices.org/>)

Explore the Distinction between Actors, Allies, and Accomplices

When Malcolm X was asked how white people could be allies and accomplices with Black people in 1964, he responded: “By visibly hovering near us, they are ‘proving’ that they are ‘with us’”. But the hard truth is this isn’t helping to solve America’s racist problem. The Negroes aren’t the racists. Where the really sincere white people have got to do their ‘proving’ of themselves is not among the black victims, but on the battle lines of where America’s racism really is—and that’s in their home communities; America’s racism is among their fellow whites. That’s where sincere whites who really mean to accomplish something have got to work.”

Keep in mind that White people, whether as Actor, Ally, or Accomplice, we are still part of the ‘oppressor class’. This means we have to be very creative in flipping our privilege to help Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples.

Actor	Ally	Accomplice
<p>The actions of the Actor do not disrupt the status quo, much as a spectator at a game. Both have only a nominal effect in shifting an overall outcome. Such systems are challenged when actors shift or couple their actions with from ally or accomplice.</p> <p>The actions of the actor do not explicitly name of challenge the pillars of white supremacy which is necessary for meaningful progress towards racial justice.</p>	<p>Ally is typically consider a verb— one needs to act as an ally, and cannot bestow this title to themselves.</p> <p>The actions of an Ally have greater likelihood to challenge institutionalized racism, and White supremacy. An Ally is like a disrupter and educator in spaces dominated by Whiteness.</p> <p>An Ally might find themselves at a social gathering in which something inappropriate is being talked about. Instead of allowing that space to incubate Whiteness, the Ally wisely disrupts the conversation, and takes the opportunity to educate those present.</p> <p>Being an Ally is not an invitation to be in Black and brown spaces to gain brownie points, lead, take over, or explain.</p> <p>Franchesca Ramsey’s Video: 5 ways of Being an Ally https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg86g-Q1M0</p>	<p>The actions of an Accomplice are meant to directly challenge institutionalized racism, colonization or impending racist people, policies, structures.</p> <p>Realizing that our freedoms and liberations are bound together, retreat or withdrawal in the face of oppressive structures is not an option. Accomplices’ actions are informed by, directed and often coordinated with leaders who are Black, Brown, First Nations/Indigenous Peoples, and or People of Color.</p> <p>Accomplices actively listen with respect, and understand that oppressed people are not monolithic in their tactics and belief.</p>

The White Accomplices website offers concrete suggestions on actions in many various venues (protesting, money, advocacy, job, time, volunteering, our vote, interrupting violence and intimidation, self-education, children, art, and home). Click [here](#) for more information.



Here are two examples of what this looks like:

Your Advocacy		
Actor	Ally	Accomplice
<i>Make phone calls and send emails (at the city/state level, with school districts, etc.) advocating on behalf of policies being put forth by racial justice organizations.</i>	<p>Diversify your social media. Follow radical/progressive Black, Brown, Indigenous figureheads and leaders in the movement. Then do you best to share and amplify their voice with your white social circles. This is great way to culture shift ideas, art, and media.</p> <p><i>“Amplifying voices of color to your network is an important part of solidarity work. We are not the experts on race, but we have an opportunity to learn from so many experts and boost their influence.”</i> - Amanda Gelender</p>	<p>Attend meetings, hearings, and other public events to advocate in person on behalf of policies being put forth by racial justice organizations. Be careful not to speak instead of People of Color, but rather to add your voice to show solidarity. Bring other White people with you.</p>

Confronting Violence, Intimidation & Harassment		
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<i>Use proximity (stand close and watch) when you observe any form of intimidation, harassment, or violence against a person of Color by another white person or police officer.</i>	<p>Film any such confrontations.</p> <p>Shout as a way to try to stop such a confrontation.</p> <p>Engage White people in conversation about their actions (perhaps focusing on intent v. impact) when you observe or hear about racialized microaggressions.</p>	<p>Physically intervene in confrontations when a person of Color is being intimidated, harassed, or the target of violence from a White person or police officer.</p> <p>Feel comfortable putting your body on the line? Call organizers, Mosques, protestors, and other groups ask if you can be trained to handle their security and absorb threats from the police.</p>

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the circumstances that call you to be in different roles (Actor, Ally, Accomplice) when you see or identify injustice?
2. What are the values that motivate you to move from Actor to Ally or Accomplice?
3. It's often easy to talk about working towards anti-oppression, but more difficult in actual practice. What might be difficult or hold you back in your journey from Actor to Ally or Accomplice? Provide some specific examples.
4. This article and website presents a clear call to action. What risks are you personally willing to take as you move from Actor to Ally to Accomplice? Can you commit to take one or more actions in the next month and share these with a trusted friend or colleague in order to increase your accountability to follow through on your commitment?
5. What are some examples of what your organization is willing to do to move from Actor to Ally to Accomplice? How can your organization overcome any resistance or fear, either internal or external?