Action Steps for Anti-racist Social Work (for local social workers/students)

1. Some basics:
   - Realize that policy brutality against Black people is real, systematic, and has existed for decades.
   - Recognize the raw pain that exists as a result.
   - Humanize the experience and don’t judge the expression of pain—it might look different from your expressions.
   - That pain is driving the protests, focus on that. The law will handle the looters.

2. Inform yourself—see anti-racism resource guide compiled by Tasha Ryals
   a. Start with reading the Introduction!
   b. This guide lays out steps to begin a *lifelong journey*.

2. Identify possible actions you can take right now
   a. See “Places to Donate NOW” (May 31, 2020) on this document:
      - [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F8v8BQQOcN3kODBxntkPS7snNjluV1Cz5QDLb0x8/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F8v8BQQOcN3kODBxntkPS7snNjluV1Cz5QDLb0x8/edit#)
   b. Join an anti-racist organization (see above resource guide)

3. Inform yourself—what is anti-racist social work?
   a. Start with understanding all of the ways that social work perpetuates marginalization and oppression
      - [http://decolonizesocialwork.org/#episodes](http://decolonizesocialwork.org/#episodes)
      - [https://dointhework.podbean.com/](https://dointhework.podbean.com/)
      - [https://www.wokeatwork.org/post/white-women-doing-white-supremacy-in-nonprofit-culture?fbclid=IwAR3YuIQC7xnRCaPSwM1gYaW-R4Qc67Hemoltb5zlLPByUBF3F8yMMIN3Y](https://www.wokeatwork.org/post/white-women-doing-white-supremacy-in-nonprofit-culture?fbclid=IwAR3YuIQC7xnRCaPSwM1gYaW-R4Qc67Hemoltb5zlLPByUBF3F8yMMIN3Y)
   b. Educate yourself about what anti-racist social work is:
      (see p. 237 in particular)
   c. Specific ways to practice anti-racist social work right now:
1. Change the narrative and the language you use:

Meme on Facebook: “Ahmaud Arbery was not killed because he was Black, but because those men were White racists. **Black is not the problem; being White and racist is.** Change the narrative, otherwise being Black will continue to be the deficit.”

Saying “all lives matter” is like saying that all houses in the neighborhood need the water from the fire truck when only my neighbor’s house is on fire.

Health disparities, including the incredible racial disparities in those dying from COVID-19, are not due to race, but due to systemic racism and injustice.

2. SEEK SYSTEMIC CHANGE, SEEK SYSTEMIC CHANGE, SEEK SYSTEMIC CHANGE

If we continue to work within the system without trying to change it, we are simply helping people cope with normal reactions to injustice.

If we do not offer the people we serve the tools to create systemic change, we are serving the system.

Dr. Desiree Stepteau Watson and Amy Fisher J.D.