

Dear Friend,

Racism exists because we allow it to – and we need to work for change. Now. Institutionalized racism is something we are all exposed to – all the time – and affects us all. Yet, dismantling it presents the same challenges as dismantling patriarchy – there are hundreds of years' worth of attitudes and practices that need to be addressed and changed. **The first step in ending institutionalized racism is naming and rejecting these messages and behaviors.**



We cannot achieve safety for all when our neighbors are being killed in the streets by those who have sworn to serve and protect. **How can a victim of domestic violence reach out to the police for help and safety from an abuser when the headlines consistently report the deaths of people of color at the hands of law enforcement officers?**

We are traumatized by the live streams and videos. We are heartbroken by the senseless loss of lives and futures. We fear for the victims whose stories are not told because the crimes against them were not recorded. We are angered by the steady stream of news stories that remind us how far we have to go. We are frustrated by how little is being done by those with the power to make change. We worry that the enormity of all this will lead to complacency and a lack of compassion for victims and their families.

Clearly, the United States has a problem with institutionalized racism and abuse of power, but that does not mean that all law enforcement officers are bad. As President Obama said [in his statement today](#), "...to admit we've got a serious problem in no way contradicts our respect and appreciation for the vast majority of police officers who put their lives on the line to protect us every single day." **We must work together to change attitudes, behaviors, and systems. Right now.** Because how can we plan for a better future if we can't change today?

[Please join us in working for safety and equality.](#) Reach out to your local domestic violence program or state domestic violence coalition and find out how they are working to train law enforcement officers, break down barriers, and eradicate racism. Donate to support their work. Talk to your loved ones. Volunteer your time. We cannot do this work alone. Change takes each one of us.

#BlackLivesMatter

For safety and peace,

Kim Gandy
President & CEO

