



## Episode 48: BEING ANTI-RACIST

This is the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast with Lindsay Preston Episode 48, Being Anti-Racist.

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Welcome to the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast, the show for goal-getting, fear-facing women for kicking ass by creating change. I'm your host, Lindsay Preston. I'm a wife, mom of two, and a multi-certified life coach to women all over the world. I've lived through enough in life to know that easier doesn't always equate to better. We can't fear the fire, we must learn to become it. On this show, I'll teach you how to do just that. Join me as I challenge you to become even more of the strong, resilient, and powerful woman you were meant to be. Let's do this.

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Hi there, Miss Unstoppable. Welcome to a very important episode on the show. I'm so grateful you're listening. You're opening your mind to what being an anti-racist is. I must admit I've been wanting to do this episode for a while. For whatever reason, I just kept putting it down on the list and not making it happen. To be honest with you, a part of me was scared to make this episode.

I did not think a lot of you would be ready for it. I thought I would get a lot of backlash from it, which just shows that I'm living in a place of privilege. I am not putting the needs of people in the black community before my own comfort and we're all growing. Today I want to expand you to grow and I want to encourage you to look at your life in a little bit different way.

I'm not here to educate you as obviously I am very much on this journey of becoming anti-racist but I just want to open your mind enough. I'm going to share a resource with you today that will really help you start to see how maybe some of the behaviors that we're doing is more harmful than you think. There's a quote and it's from Angela Davis. She says it's not enough to be non-racist we must be anti-racist. What that means is that many times silence is considered-- you're just not racist. You're just being silent. Maybe you're not actively practicing racism and so you would think "Well, I'm not a racist". At this point in time it's very important that you speak up and you start actively saying to your loved



ones and your community wherever you're around that you're anti-racist and you were doing anti-racism work.

We all have a race bias. As a white woman, I'm speaking to a white woman here. We all have a bias. Harvard has actually this assessment that's out there where you can go and you can take it and you will see that you have some racism and I'll link it in the show notes. It's very hard for a lot of white women to hear like, "what do you mean you're calling me racist?"

I remember the first time that I heard it about two years ago and I was like what are you talking about? I grew up my childhood best friend was half black. My best friend in high school and college was black. Even at my wedding I invited just a few friends and I had them all sit at one table together because that's how few friends I had.

I realized in that moment that every single one of them was either black or half black. I remember thinking, wow I didn't realize I hung out with so many people who were black and I must just be color blind. My daughter's father is Hispanic. Again I was just thought Oh I just don't see color. I thought that was just such a beautiful and amazing thing.

I realized later how harmful that is. Today we're just going to talk through some behaviors that could be harmful and I'm actually going to step back. I'm not going to be teaching here directly because again I am very much a student in this, I really want to highlight somebody who has been extremely helpful to me in this journey of being anti-racist in the past two years, her name is Rachel Cargill. There was an article specifically I read just about two years ago. It's called *When feminism is white supremacy in heels*. It was published in Harper's Bazaar in August 2018.

I remember when this article came out it kicked my booty and I saw just some of the things that I'm doing that aren't helpful. They are taking away from black women and black people in general that I really want to be an ally for and I know you have a heart to do that too.

I'm actually going through reading that article here in a bit before I get to that, I also want to just put out there with you going on your social media the past few days and maybe posting a box square for blackout or whatever it was called. That is a great step in the direction but we have to do more. We have to really look at ourselves.

We have to do the work here to really unpack racial preferences or tendencies that we have, whatever you want to call it, biases, racism even, that you have we have to sit down



and do the work. I'm going to give you some resources today that you can go and do that work for free or just for the cost of a book and to just follow certain people so you can start to get into action.

I also really want to encourage you if you're able to make a donation to a black organization. I am going to be committing to making a donation myself. I'll be sharing more of that in my community about what that looks like. I'm also going to be opening myself up in my community. My online community is what I'm speaking of to just any questions and just talking through things with other white women as we unpack all of this.

I am going to, as I said, read this article from Rachel called *When feminism is white supremacy in heels*. As I said it was published in the Harper's bizarre August 16th of 2018. Here it is. Really sit as I'm reading this and start to take in a couple of things. Here it is.

She starts and she says "When I heard about the tragic murder of 18 year old Nia Wilson who was stabbed to death in an unprovoked attack in Oakland last month, I could feel my heart begin to bleed. My community of black women were grieving yet again. As we grappled with the realities of Nia's death I began to use Instagram to facilitate a discussion and flush out questions like how many more black women and girls must die before mainstream media considers it a worthy story to cover? How could they possibly take away her white male murderer so gently in handcuffs while black men are thrown to the ground during traffic stops? Why aren't the recorded wails of her mother and the tears of her father enough for the whole world to be demanding justice right now? Where are the voices of all my white feminist friends when a black woman had been tragically murdered?"

Almost immediately at my request hundreds of commenters asked the white women, who they saw as friends and leaders to use their platform to highlight the tragedy of Nia's death, with the same outrage of their black feminist allies and many did, both demanding that justice be served while expressing their disbelief that such a story hadn't gained national attention in the same way that Lacy Peterson's or JonBenet Ramsey's had.

But there were just as many white women. Women whose bios claimed titles like social justice warrior and intersectional feminist that somehow took this call for solidarity as a personal attack. Instead of sharing in the outrage of Nia's brutal murder, they came with fury for being tagged in a post that they felt challenged their own perceived feminist accomplishments.

There were grand displays of defensiveness demands that they be acknowledged for all the things they had done for black people in the past and a terrifying lashing out that



included racial slurs and doxing. The fragility of these women was not a surprise to me. In a crucial moment of showing up for our marginalized community, there was more concern about their feeling as an ego as opposed to the fight forward for women as a whole.

What could have been a much needed and integral display of solidarity and true intersectionality, quickly became a live play by play of the toxicity that white centered feminism can bring to the table of activism. It is a type of behavior that rests under the guise of feminism only as long as it is comfortable. Only as long as it is personally rewarding. Only as long as it keeps on 'brand'. If the history of this movement taught us anything is that intersectionality and feminism is vital.

We cannot forget the ways the suffragettes dismissed the voices of black women, sending them to the backs of their marches. Only for black activists like Ida B Wells and Anna Julia Cooper to make major moves while fighting for the vote in tandem, with their fight for their rights as black people. Ultimately shifting the shape of this country. If there is not the intentional and action-based inclusion of women of color, then feminism is simply white supremacy in heels. Going up against liberal progressive white feminists who refuse to let down their guard of ultimate liberation to actually learn from women of color who have been fighting this fight with grit and grease for generations is the most straining part being a black feminist activist. Still, as disheartening as the actions of many of these women who were called in became, my highest hope is that this bizarre episode serves as a lesson.

It's a section, if you will, of what toxic white feminism actually looks like. Let's take a dive into a few of the items in the toxic white feminism playbook. The first of these items in the playbook tone policing. When women of color began to cry out about their pain frustration and utter outrage with the system that is continuing to allow our men to be murdered, our babies to be disregarded and our livelihood to be dismissed.

We are often met with white women who tell us perhaps we should "say things a little nicer if we want to be respected and heard".

*I'm just going to recap what she says there.* Tone policing is saying change your tone please and make it nicer.

Back to the article. The second item she says that is toxic white feminism is spiritual bypassing. "The easiest way for white women just skirt around the realities of racism is to just love and light it away.



When confronted with ways they have offended a marginalized group with their words or actions, they immediately start to demand unity and peace. Painting those they harmed as aggressive mean or divisive". Just to recap what spiritual bypassing is is just just blow it off just 11 light in a way. What I see a lot with my friends is just I'm just going to pray about it.

Instead we need to go in and we need to really listen. We need to open our eyes and our ears to what they're saying and take that in. Back to the article, this is the third item in the toxic white feminist playbook. "White savior complex. Many white women insist that there is no way they could be a part of the problem because of their extensive resume of what they've 'done for you people'.

Instead of listening to what the women of color are trying to express they instead whip out the nice things they've done for black people in the past which often includes everything from saying hi to a black neighbor every morning, to saved a black child through adoption and treats them justice nicely as my white children". Stepping away from the article here white savior complex is saying I've gone in and I've helped black or marginalized communities, look at what I've done.

I see this a lot with people going to overseas countries and doing mission work or doing that and they're posting all over, on their social media in essence to say look at what I've done, I'm a good person. Whereas instead of just going in there and trying to help somebody does that make sense? In essence they're trying to portray themselves as this white savior. I know that one can be a hard one to really take in.

Really start to think about that. As you're listening to these different items in her playbook, tone policing, spiritual bypassing, white savior complex, these are things that you can research a little bit deeper. The next thing that's in her playbook is something called centering. She says this is the most common of all. "White women get so caught up in how they feel in a moment of black women expressing themselves that they completely vacuum the energy direction and point of conversation to themselves and their feelings.

They start to explain my race as hard for them to talk about, what they think would be a better solution to the topic at hand and perhaps what women of color can do to make it easier. As these things play out over and over again, it is made painfully obvious that many women believe that the worst thing that can happen to them is being called a racist. Let me be clear, it is not. Seeing your child gunned down in the street by the police unjustly is much worse.



Being turned away from medical care due to race and underlying biases by medical staff resulting in death is much worse. Being harassed by authorities only to be charged yourself is much worse. Even moments of explicit dehumanization to the black community haven't been able to rally the majority of liberal white women to join us in our fight for racial justice.

I've learned through my work that white women seem to only digest racial issues when it's reframed in the light of white feminism. I often have to lay it out like this. When you try to exclude yourself from the conversation of race by saying things like I don't see color or I married a black man and have Brown kids, that's just as irrational as a man saying there's no way he could be sexist or misogynist because he has a daughter.

Also when you seek to not be lumped into the conversation about oppressive systems against marginalized people because you view yourself as woke, you're essentially screaming not all men. When you try to rationalize police brutality by saying but black people also kill black people. You're coming in with the same argument that men have when they say, she shouldn't have worn that skirt, she deserves to be raped.

When you walk into black or brown spaces and suggest how they can more aptly reach white people on the topic of race, you're basically mansplaining. Only now it's whitesplaining how people of color should approach their own activism. When you begin to feel defensive about the conversation of race demanding explanations, it is like a man walking into a woman's face saying, make me feel more comfortable in this moment even though the point of this space is sorting out how I make you feel uncomfortable every day in multiple ways.

Just take that in for a second because those were the things that really hit me a few years was, oh my gosh, I see how I do some of these behaviors. Yet I'm wanting men to give me these kinds of behaviors too". Again I'm linking this article in the show notes so you can go read it and take it and reread take and see it visually. I'm going to finish it real quick. She finishes by saying "so what does allyship actually look like?"

Accepting the reality of this country's dynamics, white skin yields white privilege and an ally is willing to use their privilege to fight with for those who are marginalized. Ally ship means voting for elected officials who have a track record of ensuring the most marginalized among us are heard and advocated for. Ally ship means using your spirit of influence whether it be your dining room table or the boardroom of your company to call out racist actions and ideals.



Allyship means uplifting the voices and experiences of people of color so we are not continuously drowned out and ignored. What makes ally ship so hard for most many liberal white women have an immediate reaction of defense when someone challenges their intentions. It is in that precise moment they need to stop and realize they're actually part of the problem. It is never the offender who gets to decide when they've offended someone. If you feel yourself dismissing the words or experiences of people of color because you think they're "overreacting" or because "you didn't know" or because "it has nothing to do with race" it's often due to your ego, not rationale. Listen and learn instead. Dr. Robin de Angelo, a white woman sociologist who studies critical discourse reminds us in her new book *White Fragility* that the key to moving forward is what we do with our discomfort. We can use it as a door out, blame the messenger and disregard the message or we can use it as a door in by asking why does this unsettle me?

What would it mean for me if it were true?" Again if you are feeling unsettled by some of the stuff take that in, that is a great way for you to start to learn what is it that I need to do here? Because maybe some of this is right. Back to the article and I promise this it's the last paragraph. She says "Racism is as American as pie. In order for the feminist movement to truly be progressive and intersectional, white women must face the facts and begin to take their load of work. We are long overdue to dismantle the system which if it is not intentionally and aggressively addressed will defeat us all in the end". That's the end of her article. I'm hoping that this is opening your eyes to maybe some of the things that you're doing that could be harmful without intentionally meaning it to be. Again I want to just cover real quickly the couple of items she listed in the toxic white feminism playbook and that's tone policing, spiritual bypassing, white savior complex centering, those are the things that can be very harmful without intentionally meaning to be. Rachel is a really great resource to follow. I've been following her for years. She's my go-to person for this stuff. She also has a lecture called unpacking white feminism course. I believe it's \$20 or \$30 to take that. Then she also has a free 30 day hashtag do the work challenge, where you're going to sit down and you're going to actually do this work. I must admit I haven't done it. I just signed up for it.

Again, I still have a lot to learn here, my friend. I have a lot of journaling to do, a lot of unpacking to do of my own stuff to really make sure I'm a strong ally for black women and people of color, because I know I want to show up in this life and do that and I know that you do too. The other resource I want to share with you again, all of it in the show notes, is Layla Saad's book *Me and White Supremacy* on Amazon. I actually have not bought it. I just bought it today. Again I know, stop on the hand. I should have been doing this work but here we are. We're all going in this together. It's time to step it up. I've followed Layla for a



while. I really love her stuff. She actually has a podcast as well, that's really great. I've listened to a couple of episodes. Here's some great resources for you all lined out to make it really simple and easy for you to start getting into action in doing this work and getting uncomfortable. That's part of growth, is to get uncomfortable.

I hope this episode helps you today. If you want to continue the conversation, please go to my free online community, [lindsayepreston.com/community](https://lindsayepreston.com/community), and we can talk about these things there. I think it's really important for us to open our minds to this thing. Sometimes we think, "Oh, what if I say something that's offensive, or bad, or wrong?" Go to that community and say it there, and we can talk through it. I mean, I'm learning all the time, and I'm here to teach you what I know, and more so direct you in the right direction to learn from, specifically, people who are teaching anti-racism work. All right, my friends, so that's all I have for today. Thanks so much for tuning in and listening. I'm hoping you're starting to open your eyes to what being an anti-racist is. Just to recap real quickly for you. It's not being silent. It's going out there, and actively saying that you are a non-racist, and actively promoting people who are doing anti-racism work, and doing the work. All right, go and do the work, like Rachel's free challenge. Do the work challenge of really digging deep and seeing how you may have some racial biases, and even taking that assessment from Harvard to open your eyes even more to see how you could have some racial tendencies. Okay? All right, so I will see you next time on the show. Bye.

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Hey there, Miss Unstoppable. Thanks so much for tuning into this episode. If you enjoyed it, share it with a friend. Send them a picture of this episode via text, via email, share it on social media, I'm sure they would be so appreciative to know these strategies and tips on how to accomplish your dreams. If you are ready to guarantee you're going to accomplish your goals and dreams, then it's time to start coaching with me.

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