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Why It's Not Up to Indigenous People to Educate Everyone Else About Racism

Over the last year, we've seen many non-Indigenous people with only the best of intentions, reach out to their Indigenous friends and contacts so they can better understand racial and cultural issues affecting society.

While that's a good sentiment, we think it's important that non-Indigenous people start to do more to educate themselves to help alleviate racism and cultural insensitivity within Australia.

The problem is that for any Indigenous person it becomes exhausting. It becomes a 24-7 job, constantly helping people better comprehend the historical and cultural issues at play.

In our training and our book, we use the 1/30 rule to help illustrate the point. If the Australian population was a classroom of thirty children, only one of those would be Indigenous.

In that situation, it would be up to the 29/30 to learn more and do more, not for that one person to educate the rest.

The same applies to the country.

Now understandably, many non-Indigenous people are concerned about mis-appropriating the culture or teaching something that they can't have a true understanding of.

The difference is – you can't teach the culture itself – but you can teach learning about the culture. You can teach about why it is important to learn and what practical things you can do to be an ally. That's the crucial distinction.

We work with many businesses and organisations to develop their cultural awareness, and the most common query is "If I want to educate myself, where do I start?"

We tell them start with the simple things: watch Indigenous programming like Black Comedy or The First Australians, films like Rabbit Proof Fence, learn about Indigenous art.

Find out which businesses near you or online are Indigenous-owned and support them.

A recent Supply Nation study found that Indigenous [businesses are 100 times more likely](#) to hire Indigenous staff.

We still have an enormously long way to go in this country, but if the 29/30 of us start taking steps to better educate ourselves, that can make a huge difference.