

Before discussing the actions individuals can take to solve problems of discrimination, violence, and anti-semitism, it is important to first address the causes of these problems. While this is a multifaceted issue, some causes include cultural influence, insecurities, generational trauma, deep-rooted inequality, lack of empathy, and much more. When discussing racism, discrimination, and anti-semitism, cultural influence, generational trauma, past events, and deep-rooted inequality especially apply.

When referencing racism and discrimination, I have experienced my fair share of it. As a child of parents who immigrated from India, we had much to learn while assimilating to the “American” lifestyle. While I met individuals who went out of their way to help us, I also met many who made it in their best interest to be nothing but rude and insensitive, including calling me derogatory names, shaming me for my race, food, and appearance, and even trying to get me into serious trouble at school when I had done nothing at all. While this can be chalked up to ignorance, it’s much deeper and can be attributed to cultural influences, home lives, and more. While I am not Jewish and can’t speak to experiences of anti-Semitism, it’s clear that this issue is similar to racism in that it can be attributed to several reasons. However, its causes are much deeper, stemming from religious differences, historical events, and resulting cultural divides. So, this too can be extremely hurtful and harmful. I have had many Jewish friends tell me about microaggressions they have experienced around town and even at schools with teachers. This especially was shocking to me, as teachers – our school support systems – can even be trusted to stay impartial and kind.

Now, let’s discuss possible actions and solutions that can be taken/done to try to mitigate these issues. The first one is education. As trivial as this may seem, education can change people’s mindsets. Through campaigns, school clubs, and fundraisers, we can take the time to address the experiences of our community members, discussing why this issue must be solved is crucial to educating people that, 1) it’s a prevalent issue that can’t be overlooked, and 2) it’s unacceptable and must be stopped. This could also affect those who contribute to discrimination by making them feel guilty and singled out, possibly leading them to stop their actions.

Another one is to make sure the issues are confronted whenever they happen. Especially in our communities, discrimination takes place in the workplace, schools, and community areas such as cafes and restaurants. When it happens, steps must be taken to record it and/or deal with the issue right away. Discriminators must be punished adequately, whether it’s being suspended or fired from school/work, being fined if it happens in a public area, or other possible solutions. It is completely unacceptable and shouldn’t be tolerated in any manner. This works to instill fear in those who discriminate, turning them away from doing this in the future.

An additional solution is to host community events where we discuss events such as the Holocaust, massacres of Black people throughout history, racism against immigrants, and more. We can take time to discuss these issues, what happens, how/where it still prevalent, and what people can do to stop it. This works to educate people more, along with making sure we aren’t ignoring or silencing those who have been affected by discrimination, helping us become a more inclusive community.

Overall, it's clear that solutions need to be created, as this will be a substantial step in the way toward eradicating discrimination all together.