

E6: How White Parents and Caregivers Can Become Antiracist (Part 1 of 3)

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Guest: Dr. Kathleen DeVore

Intro (music by Mike Myth Productions):

SooJin: Welcome to the Antiracist Parenting Podcast, where we're working to create an antiracist world for ourselves, our children, and future generations to come.

Hannah: We are Hannah Carney and SooJin Pate. And we're coming to you not as experts but as parents who want to share our missteps and successes on raising antiracist children. Thank you for being on this journey with us, as we work together to build a community of antiracist parents who are raising a generation of antiracist kids.

SooJin: Welcome to episode six, as we enter the corner to say goodbye, and in some cases, good riddance to 2020 and enter a new year, we wanted to start 2021 with a new three-part series on how white people can become antiracist. To that end, we'll be featuring three different guests who will share their journey of how they came to commit to antiracism, and their work and home life as caregivers and parents. Before we get started, we have just one update to share transcripts for all the episodes are up on the website. Yay.

Hannah: Woo hoo!

SooJin: Yes, yes. And now we'll move into our accountability check in where Hannah and I check in about the commitments that we made from the last episode. So Hannah, can you remind our listeners what commitments you made from the last episode and update us on how that's going?

Hannah: Yes. So I had committed to learning the truth about Thanksgiving and then talking with my kids about it. And so this was actually leading up to the day of Thanksgiving. And so I had attended a community education training last year, so I had a little bit of knowledge that I was sort of building on. And so I was, you know, reading articles, I was watching YouTube videos, especially YouTube videos that were from Indigenous people and Indigenous groups, so that I could have, you know, an authentic perspective about experiences related to Thanksgiving and kind of how it's contextualized. And then I also have been reading books by Indigenous authors, and also just about the history of the U.S. from various perspectives. So once I kind of had enough information, I mean, I don't think anyone ever maybe feels totally prepared for these conversations. And that's okay. But I felt ready enough to have that conversation. So I started sharing with my kids. So again, Tony is seven and Teo is five. And we started talking kind of about what I was learning. We talked about the history of white people colonizing the land that is now called the U.S. We talked about what these different experiences might

have been like for both the Indigenous people as well as the white people. We watched a couple of the YouTube videos together so that we could see how Indigenous people were framing this and, and sharing in their own words, what Thanksgiving means to them. And then we also talked about how Thanksgiving even came to be a holiday. Abraham Lincoln was the president that officially instituted it. And so there's really a lot of complex history. And so we were discovering together that, you know, just different aspects of how Indigenous and white populations have interacted over time. And then we also realized that we had a lot more to learn, but that we had, you know, kind of initiated a foundation and a starting point. So a few days later, Tony, so he's in first grade, came to me after his morning meeting, which he does, generally sort of upstairs on the iPad. So I don't overhear, generally what's going on. But he really kind of came down from that meeting and had some concern in his face about the fact that they had been talking about Thanksgiving. And he was telling me that he had been, you know, sharing some of the things that we had learned together and he was kind of getting some pushback from his teacher and you know, he was like, she told me I was wrong. And then he had this like card in his hand and it was like this bingo card and it was like filled in with kind of like, quote unquote, Thanksgiving words that to me read as very offensive. And so, um, so we kind of talked through, you know what he was feeling what he was experiencing kind of what he had said and what he had heard back from, you know, just in that interaction. And so ultimately, I decided to email the teacher to just get a little bit more information as to what was going on. And we had, you know, a good conversation. And ultimately, she apologized, she felt terrible. And she invited us, both Tony and me to engage in a video conference kind of later in the day to like, kind of talk through this a little bit more. And so we, you know, did all that. And ultimately, she decided to totally cancel the turkey bingo thing. And instead did a different activity with the children. And so, I felt like this was a really good example of, like, advocacy, like Tony brought up like, you know, something he believed in, in his class.

SooJin: Yeah.

Hannah: He initiated a conversation with the teacher, which, granted, she was open to so that's a huge piece of this.

SooJin: Yeah. Yep.

Hannah: And I also just felt really good that he felt like he could come to me with a concern about something that was going on in class, and that we could work together to, you know, have a really challenging conversation. And in this case, like, ultimately saw a change as a result of that, of speaking up. So. So I felt like the, the learning that we did around the truth about Thanksgiving, you know, really had tangible, like, immediate kind of change happening. And, you know, on top of that, I had also mentioned in our last episode, that I facilitate a social justice book club, and I kind of circled back and have, I'm now going forward going to make a more intentional effort around uplifting Indigenous

voices and culture in every meeting that we have together. And so I started that work. And then the other thing that I did as part of accountability was I signed up for two of the trainings from Crixell Shell's [org] the Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute, they run trainings. And so I signed up for two of those trainings. So that's where I'm at.

SooJin: Oh, that's great, Hannah. So I, like Hannah, made a similar commitment in terms of speaking to my family, about how we could honor the truth about Thanksgiving. And the main ritual that we have outside of the food that we eat is to go around and share what we're grateful for. And I realized that's, you know, pretty common in a lot of families. For future Thanksgivings, though, we decided that we're going to institute a couple of new rituals. So first, we're going to pool our money together and donate to a local American Indian organization each year around this time, and we're also going to individually do research to learn more about Indigenous peoples on this land and then share out what we learned during mealtime. So kind of do a mini kind of research presentation. Over dinner. The year-round commitment that I've made as a settler of Dakota land is to make monthly donations to Makoce Ikikcupi or the Dakota Land Recovery Project that was started by Waziyatawin. I heard her share how other Minnesotans give money like it's back pay or rent to honor the fact that we're on Dakota land that was stolen and forcibly taken from them centuries ago. And that really resonated with me. As a settler colonizer, I should be paying them, you know, to be on their land. So I've actually been doing that for years sending money each month, like it's a part of my rent or mortgage. And I will continue to do that. As long as I'm living in the United States. I also made the commitment to talk to my daughter about social media. I have yet to do that. But I'm planning to take time over the holiday break to do that. And once I have that conversation, I will. Yeah, I'm looking forward to kind of circling back with you and with our listeners on how that goes. And I've continued to text bank and phone bank for the Georgia runoff elections, which has been really energizing and quite a positive experience. So did you know that over 168,000 Georgians voted on the first day of in-person early voting on Monday? That's a 23% increase from the first day of early voting in the general election.

Hannah: Oh my goodness!

SooJin: Isn't that amazing? Like even more people turned out for the Georgia run off elections on the first day then for the general election? Yeah. So that is so cool. So our efforts are working, which is so satisfying to see. And I also donated to Black Vote Matters, because they've been super effective at mobilizing people to vote as they drive their bus through neighborhoods and encourage people to vote through a bullhorn. So for our Georgian listeners, you have until January 5th to vote, so please get out and vote. Hannah, can you set the intention for this episode?

Hannah: Yeah. And first, I just want to say awesome, and I will definitely start donating to the Dakota Land Recovery Project. And I will share that with book club that would be perfectly aligned. And I also didn't know about that. So thank you for bringing that to my attention. So yes, our intention for today

is around commitment. As we close out 2020 many people may be thinking about new goals they'd like to reach and behaviors they'd like to change in the new year. And the work of antiracism takes ongoing commitment. So we are inviting all of us to be intentional in this work, making specific actionable goals related to antiracism, and ultimately holding ourselves accountable to these goals.

SooJin: And folks, we are in for a treat, because we have an amazing, incredible guest with us, my dear friend Kathleen Devore - who is well, actually, you know what, I'm just going to let her share. But yeah, we're starting this three-part series as Hannah shared, and I can't think of a better person to launch this series, because Kath is one of the best white people I know. And our society needs more models of antiracist white people. So I would love for you, Kath, to share your journey of how you committed yourself to being an antiracist. But before we get there, can you please share with our listeners who you are and what you do?

Kathleen: Hello, and first, thank you, thank you for asking me to be part of this conversation. So necessary. Also SooJin, having known you a while, I got one little correction or shift I want to make. The "best white person you know," right. So if we understand whiteness as an abusive, dominant system, being the best of an abuser is not the best thing. So what I would love to say is, and I appreciate the love, but what I feel I am is somebody who learned early how to stay in the room. And that links to who I am, how I got here, but I'm staying in the room when things get uncomfortable when directly whiteness is called out when white women are, you know, we start to cry many of us. When that crying starts when we're having hard conversations and folks want to flee the room, I learned very early stay in the room. That's when the really important work happens. And I guess part of what I would say about how I learned to stay in the room. I've been teaching in Minnesota for 30 years because I'm old. And but I grew up in Boston and I'm the first generation out of public housing in East Cambridge represent Newtown Court. And, you know, a lot of that heritage is pretty rich, loving family. A lot of it is pretty damaged. Poverty, depression, addiction, mental illness. And so from the rich to, I learned to stay in the room, hard stuff happens all the time. Life is hard shit. That's what it is. And what whiteness sometimes does is it pretends that it isn't and it hides things like land theft and labor theft and genocide. And so how I got here in another from another perspective, because my family heritage was so rich in love and pain. I went right out of undergrad to the Peace Corps in South Africa. And this is 86 to 89. I was in a country called Lesotho which is landlocked, surrounded by South Africa last years of apartheid. Right? So the universe wasn't saying, hey, white chick, get some skills, get some education and get this change. That helped me down the road, right. So I'm there, surrounded by South Africa not far from Johannesburg, when literally, mostly black men, black African men are being thrown out a 13 story window in a police building. And every single one of those deaths is called a suicide. I'm 22 and I'm teaching black students and their family is coming back from working in South Africa and they're telling me about these deaths and these losses. I had a South African Defense Force helicopter land in the schoolyard where I was teaching, and the kids showed me dumb ass, I go to the window and I want

to shout, what are you doing? Because that's what you do where I come from. They're like, "Madam get under a table," right? These little kids are helping me understand the context of violence that I was living in, I come back after three years, to South Boston, where all the signs are gone – "whites only," "colored," you know. Those signs are still in South Africa in '86, '87. Those signs are all gone. But I see the same society that I had been raised in, but hadn't seen it when I left. That's how heavy whiteness is. It's a social conditioning, right? That causes you to not see. And our children see, white children see they learn at home, early, what not to ask, what not to see. So flash forward, come into a PhD program at Minnesota know that I want to do work in literacy. Because even with all that violence and pain, I understand access to language of power is helpful. So I get into composition rhetoric program takes me 10 years, have two kids. And then I started at MCTC and Minneapolis Community Technical College twenty years ago. And so is that enough of a journey? I mean, that's sort of how I got here to Minnesota.

SooJin: Yeah.

Kathleen: I mean, if I can keep going into the journey of antiracist work.

SooJin: Yeah, yeah, sure. But before, I do want you to say more about that. But before you say that, first of all, thank you for correcting me, and for, you know, giving me a new perspective around like the whole, you know, like, best white person thing. I appreciate that. Because you're absolutely right. And that, yeah, I think that's kind of the key is to stay in the room, right, like what you're talking about. And that's really not I mean, if you think about it, it's really not that much to ask, given the burdens that you know, people of color bear. So yeah, very good point.

Kathleen: No, absolutely. And I'm not trying to set myself up as having had this additional clarity. I've been called the best white person quite often by other white people, as I watched them, leave the room. I'm like - hold up. I've had people hand me articles who I will not name but you know them SooJin. White people, social justice teachers hand me articles on white privilege and say, this is your shit, right Kath? Like I become the repository. I've been called the gold standard of antiracist work by white people. And I'm like, come on into the party. Stop labeling me. So yeah, it's not like a correction at all. It's more that I recognize it as an unhelpful kind of identity, particularly for white people to step into. I'm a really good white person, ooh, that shows that you are not doing the work. Because we understand again, the only reason for whiteness. And as a system, a historic system, was constructed in this country, but it's, it's replicated in settler economy, countries, settler colonial countries around the world. South Africa, which is where the universe put me at 22. So I better be doing this work, right. Australia, and certainly Europe as the colonized, exploited people came home to empire came back to Britain and Spain. And those centers become settler colonial sites themselves, right, even though they were the empire. So being called a good white person is like a wonderful place to rest among so many

other folks just not doing the work at all. So the other thing I guess, I would say is, whenever you feel like you are really getting comfortable as a dominant class person, as a white person, you're not something's wrong. It's not about you know, self harm. It's not about running to the pain. It's just understand. It's a system of dominance, as is patriarchy. When you are comfortable as a man, it means you're not doing the work when you're comfortable as a white person, right? You are not engaging. And so yeah, so some of the background I come from working class, addiction, mental health, we know discomfort, my cousins and I joke about what we know right and so working class white people should be leading a lot of this work. We don't always because maybe we got a leg up and maybe we're starting to make middle class income and so then we're going to cling to whiteness even more tightly, but um, but also wealthy white people are a whole nother thing. Then you get the overlay of economic dominance. So anyway, um, anyway, yes. I what I what I try to be as a white person can stay in the room, somebody that keeps showing up for the work and understanding and again, mostly women of color, often black women have taught me this. Racial equity, allyship, whatever it's not a destination it's not a label. It's a lifelong practice. A daily practice. You know, we think about a lot of us who have had trauma, have a spiritual practice a lot of us in the morning, right, we try to start a daily practice - antiracism for white people particularly. Absolutely. Every morning. What is your practice going to be that day? How do you? So how do you set intention? How do you recognize that we've been trained not to see racial and economic injustice, and they are linked.

And I have to stop here for a minute and say, somebody who's been one of my recent teachers for the last three or four years, a woman named Catrice Jackson. She has a company and she's an entrepreneur, speaker, writer. It's called Catriceology. So it's catriceology.com. I have a couple of her books here. *Weapons of Whiteness* just came out, *Antagonists, Advocates and Allies*, but she's got a number of them. And why I jumped to her right now is Catrice talks about you have to see economic justice is racial justice. Because race has been used to economically disenfranchised so many people in this country. So, so early on, in some of my work, I thought I had to just stay in the uncomfortable room, I had to be sure I supported my colleagues and friends and students of color, tried to raise my children with awareness that I didn't get raised with. But I was late to the economic component, because I've been broke a lot thinking I didn't have it. But you always have something I appreciate SooJin what you were sharing about the Dakota lands piece, which I'm not aware of, I'm going to grab that too. Paying rent, pay rent for the land you occupy that belongs to other people, as a human being paying rent on the planet, coming from a dominant group paying rent, recognizing the system of dominance, we come from the inheritance that is our legacy. And every day, trying to come up with a strategy to address it. Another piece, and this has to do with my own work coming out of some childhood trauma. This is also healing work. Because whiteness is damaged. It's super damaging to people of color, right, black and Indigenous and people of color. It's also very damaging to the psyche and spirits of white people, raising children. And Hannah I appreciate the story you shared. And I'm so glad that Thanksgiving story - that Indigenous Peoples Day story - went the way it did. Being an older

teacher, I was afraid that teacher is going to come hard and say no, you know, this is not the place to be political Thanksgiving is what it's always been. I'm so glad you found a teacher that was open. And it actually reminded me of a story and just stop me or redirect me if it's going in the wrong way. But when my son is now 24 when he was five, our kids went to a magnet here in South Minneapolis. Northrup magnet school and one of the reasons I keep mentioning magnet they're younger schools they tend to have younger staff and they were much more diverse faculty that was what we were looking for. And so from Kindergarten they had a practice of doing a civil rights march around the school on Martin Luther King day. So my son came home at five and said to me Mama, if we lived during that time - that Martin Luther King's time - what kind of white people would we be? He initiated that conversation. Our kids, if we're if we're doing some things right getting them to the schools, neighborhoods, environments they will thrive in (in terms of racial equity) they come home with questions. Even if you got them in a kind of white dominant place children, until they are damaged right, children see inequity. How come this neighborhood's all white? How come the homeless people that I'm passing holding signs are largely native? You can talk about land theft when you have native people. So our children if we are open, open hearted, open spirited they are they come here open spirited, it's that we get fearful, I think especially as white people and we want to keep them safe. So we teach them how to survive a violent system. And we put the violence in them.

SooJin: This is so rich. I'm curious has there ever been a point in your journey where you're like, like, you know, like screw this, this is too hard? I have the privilege as a white person not to do this work. And I could take an easier path. And it looks like you have felt those things and thought those things. What is it that has kept you to continue to commit when you could take the easy route?

Kathleen: So a part of it has to do with like defining easy and understanding that the first thing I want to say is, yes, humans get exhausted and humans that are awakened, aware and open. You know, get hurt and their hearts get trounced as I know, you know SooJin and a lot of people know. So what I will say is as a younger person, even with the economic hardship that I came from some family trauma, I was able to get a scholarship to undergrad, I finished my undergrad was able to have the mindspace to do something like Peace Corps, which is not a perfect organization. And it is colonial right? That said, the people that go to do that work, have their minds blown. American young people living in a village without electricity and water and really being in a black dominant country. You know, so I had privilege to get through school and to get into Peace Corps and even into grad school. So for a long time, I was, I had gotten so much support that I wasn't tired, when I've gotten tired is actually been more recently. And that has to do with being a 55 year old woman, with some anxiety, depressive family stuff catching up with me with some of that mental health history coming through the next generation and like my kids, so as a person, the weight of being 56. And coming from a family background, and living as a white person in white supremacist America, that weight has gotten heavy more recently. And so I've had moments where I'm like, I don't have the reserves to show up in the ways I need to show up. At

the same time, this country is killing Black people and people of color and Indigenous people at higher rates. On camera more often, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Jamar Clark, Philando Castile, George Floyd. So at the same time, as I'm feeling this emotional drain as an aging white woman, the country's on fire, and I can't, I can't certainly can't check out I do have to think about how I can show up. Because if I'm emotionally unbalanced. I'm not I'm not helpful. And what I appreciate about appreciate about Catrice Jackson's work - this trainer teacher that I've been working with more recently - she does make space and she'll talk about if you are not emotionally well. If you are dealing with depression, this is not the time to take on super aggressive sort of leadership in antiracist work, there's personal work you can always do, you can do that lying on your back, you know, in terms of reading and listening. But the real aggressive showing up takes some help. You can't be unhealthy, right? You have to. And I feel a little hesitant as I say that because I know my white sisters, my white women, and I know that some folks will say oh, I better wait till I'm really all set to do this. No, no, there's no time not to be doing antiracist work. But you have to be real about emotional resources and what kind of work maybe write a check for a while until you have taken care of and heal some of the other stuff? Yeah SooJin. Absolutely there have been days. Again, more recently, another piece of staying in it when I was younger colleagues and friends of color, women of color are right there next to me. And so as I show up and be open and don't leave the room, I notice how quickly, you know, friends of color will show up next to me. And so then when I do start to have issues in my life, they know that and there's a way that folks also give me some support. I also am aware I'm not trying to tell white women go get all your support from women of color. That's what I'm trying to say. But if you show up in the work and you walk the road, as a human being you're making friends and connections with other human beings who can help you this is not an isolated journey - whiteness tells that lie that we're individuals - we are not ever have been. So yes, there are days. I know, I never step away from it entirely. Because also stepping away is not easy. I have the awareness, I've stood next to close friends and family in pain, people of color in pain and I can't not know that. So, so it isn't easier to sort of move to the suburbs. In fact, when I'm in really white dominated spaces, I'm about to lose my shit a lot, right? Because you hear stuff said as I know, you know, as a woman of color. Hannah you might know from your experience as well. You know white people will just say these blatant, racist, thoughtless, violent things and they have those thoughts. In 2016 53% of white women voted for Trump 2020 55% voted for him. Seventy percent of white men both times. So when you go to those easier spaces as a white person, which is a white dominant space that's asleep and medicated and, and violent, it's not easy space. We want to be in a healthy space where folks recognize our shit is wrong on racial equity in this country. And we need to do work. And those spaces are often led by women of color. Right? And so you have days that your own life is on fire and your emotions are not right. So you shouldn't lead stuff that day. You still find other work. You take a rest and you come back.

I've also been around white women. You know, social justice teachers hearts in the right place, who will say things like I just can't there's only so much I can do. And I understand if somebody is in a rough

spot. I'll try to be gentle, but I'll say our friends and colleagues of color can't take a day off in a white supremacist country. You can't just not be of color and sort of move through. So you rest, heal get the help and support you want. But no, you can't be done, you can't be done.

SooJin: Wow. You know, when oftentimes, like, in my antiracist journey, when I'm coming to either feeling fatigue, tiredness or feeling like I have a hard decision to make, I always put myself within the context of slavery, like, given the choice ahead of me, if I make a choice A, choice B, or choice C, who would I be in the context of slavery? Yeah. And when I think about you, you're like one of the very few white people that I could say this about, when I think about you, and the decisions that you have made on your antiracist journey, I think of you, you're the white person who's part of the Underground Railroad, like being the waystation. Taking the risks to house, you know enslaved Africans, on their way to the north to freedom. And so I say that to ask you like, because so many, so many white people, like, the reason why they, they don't engage in this work is because of the risk, it's too risky, because they could lose things. So I am saying that to ask you, like, how did you come to a place where you, like, embrace these risks?

Kathleen: Well, I think what I was sharing earlier, right, my family background has been full of risk, like part of what landed my family in the projects was my grandma came over at 18 from Ireland. My grandma on my dad's side came at 16. So we're really second generation immigrant first generation out of public housing. We've only known risk, and that's why my hope is often in working class white communities. I feel like you know this is not an equal country, you know, but what always breaks my heart is when some working class white people get a little purchase on middle class a little bit. There's this allying with wealthy white people, right? The whiteness, and that's what's happening with Trump, Trump and conservative, repressive racist voting and white people. So um, so we've known my family has always known risk within my family, my cousins, and I see some people making those choices try to choose whiteness. And so I try to call them out like, listen, just as an example, you'll hear somebody make a comment about somebody having an accent at the coffee shop, right? My grandmother's brogue were marbles in her mouth, right? I mean, her brogue she held on to for 16 years. So I'm like, dude, what are you talking about? That shows immigrant. So whiteness is so seductive. And it's, it's there and it's ready and affluent, white people are ready to pull you in, in certain ways. Not all the way but pull you in. And so, for me, it certainly feels less of a choice and more that my family life - family's life - has been very risk full. And whiteness was not going to be a way out of that. It's bullshit, right? It's a constructed category. I'm picturing right now. You know, if you guys are on social media very much. But the two white people somewhere in the south. I can't remember exactly where they're in an affluent community. They come out with their guns when there's a Black Lives Matter protest. They're holding guns, a woman's got a handgun and the man's got some sort of, and there, they look again, had cocktails already, they've got sort of stains on the shirt, their beautiful house. There's something so sick and unwell in lightness, when you really look at it, right? That it isn't a risk to try to show up for

racial justice. It's actually much healthier because it's naming what's real. And again, that whiteness is is killing a lot of white people it becomes materialism pure, you know, buying things to try to shore up the damage and in the emptiness. So when I was thinking about it as having this conversation, and you guys have framed the sort of title how white people can become antiracist and also antiracist parenting, and I get that appreciate the lens. White people had to become white, right, because we're born human and white is constructed. And so to become antiracist, to become effective parents, we just have to really tap into and dig up that humanity and really carve away all the layers that whiteness has put on us. That Thandeka book, Learning to be White and the image on the cover is actually white people painting whiteness on. It's a constructed identity, that families teach their children unconsciously because they want their children to be safe in a white supremacist country.

SooJin: Yeah.

Kathleen: Right. And so, our job, I would certainly say now 2021, around the corner, we need to not paint that whiteness on our children. And we need to help them see how constructed it is. And so Hannah, that example that you have where you and your son spoke to the teacher was wonderful, because you were able to then show your son, this is made up what Thanksgiving is this is constructed to serve a certain national story, and we can undo it. I'm so thrilled by that example, like your little guy is going to be asking that question as he gets older in every site. And that's what we need to be doing. Peeling away the layers of this constructed racial identity, and asking the questions. Let me let me throw out something else. I just think this is a really good, good example. And it's not about me, it's about a local Black leader, Nekima Levy Armstrong. So right after the George Floyd murder, so many protests, certainly Minneapolis but Portland, and Seattle, I'm thinking this is mostly Portland, though. A number of white women started to show up dressing in certain ways. And they call themselves a Wall of Moms. And so they continue to show up. And there were certain things that happened in Portland. In Minneapolis, suddenly, a small group of white women started online, a Wall of Moms Twin Cities. And I got tagged by some social media connections. And so pretty soon, it's 700 white women. And the administrator is talking about how she's going to control the messages. And we're going to show up in this way, we're going to dress that way and this and that. And because I had done some work and because Catrice Jackson has led me in a lot of my thinking, right away I was like, there are no women of color here. And, and Black moms?

SooJin: They're the ones hurting the most.

Kathleen: Hurting the most and leading this for centuries. Really? Yes. So I raised that question. The administrator took down my question right away. At same time, I'm following Nekima Levy Armstrong, a local, amazing leader and civil rights professor and had run for mayor and should have won because we'd be in a better situation if she did. But she had shared on her page, what is this thing happening in

Portland this Wall of Moms? She didn't know there was this Minneapolis one because nobody reached out to women of color. And so anyway, she asked the question, what's happening with Wall of Moms? Why aren't Black women being involved, women of color. So I bring that I just screenshot Nekima's post and I put it in. The administrator freaks out over the weekend, the whole thing gets shut down. What is great is that information finally actually got to Catrice Jackson, this woman who leads workshops, and she lives in Omaha, Nebraska, she's now become with a lot of people discussion, a lot of work, she's become the administrator of that list. And the list is no longer Wall of Moms Twin Cities. It's Follow Black Women Twin Cities. And it's a site where reparations payments helping black women buy houses, trainings, so Follow Black Women Twin Cities on Facebook. And I'm saying that to say, similar to you Hannah when you and your son asked the question of the teacher, I just asked a question. And it wasn't even my question – because Nekima Levy Armstrong. To be honest, women of color, as you noted, are here doing it. White women - listen, amplify, uplift, write the check, show up. In this persistent white dominance, even in social justice work, is going to continue because that white woman that started Twin Cities, while moms – she's not a bad person - she wanted to show up for George Floyd. She also was not wanting to do the work to see her own white privilege was hampering that effort. The opportunities will continue to arise to address it. Just stay in the room.

SooJin: I was wondering, first of all powerful example. Thanks so much for sharing that. I was wondering if you could say a little bit more given, you know, our focus on parenting and caretaking, how you were able to kind of take all of this, your passion, your commitment, your history, your journey. And, I don't know curate in such a way where you're passing on the lessons you're learning to your children to raise them with the awareness of how whiteness is a construction and how you're trying to remove the layers of whiteness to raise, you know, more humane, white kids, white people who are now adults.

Kathleen: Yeah, well, a couple of things. I'm going to get in trouble for this but I'll say it anyway, um, so I was talking about this podcast, and one of my children in their 20's said, "sell, you didn't do anything." And they're not wrong. They're not wrong. Let me say this. I'm trying to save my ass but not by not identifying who said that. Somebody said that. They're not wrong. I didn't have my partner Brian and I didn't have this agenda. We didn't sit down, you know, when the kids came, what I will say is, we are trying every day to live authentic, present, whole, risk- and love-filled lives, right? Because that's what's real. That's what he knew growing up in a small town in southwest Iowa, where in the 80's, everybody was losing their farms. Working class, it's what I knew, from what I shared. So you don't live a risk free life that doesn't exist. The suburbs don't have it, you know. So we try to live authentic lives. And like I say, so we make choices about neighborhoods, you live in very frustrating conversations. I've had at MCTC with white administrators, who will say at workshops, Kathleen, I just wish I could have the experiences you have. But my neighborhood is all white. What are you doing? Why did that draw you? I do know why it draws people – people are fear driven. White people are fear driven, right? I'm

flashing on this. And I'm sorry. It's how my mind works. But in a later season of the TV show *Fargo* Chris Rock's character says, "why does America love crime stories? Because it is a crime story." White people in our core, we don't understand it, we're afraid because our history here has been theft of land, theft of people, genocide. So we're so afraid we have to build a higher wall, we have to get to the gated community. What we don't understand is the elite school, the affluent neighborhood, is a white supremacist school and neighborhood. So when my partner and I were looking for housing, we wanted to be in a neighborhood that reflected somewhat diversity, it's still especially has become more white actually, with economic downturns. But it was a couple of blocks, 50th and Nokomis kind of that area. And so we looked at schools, it's very like every city is very much a neighborhood by neighborhood is the school in a more affluent neighborhood is going to be mostly white. So we ended up finding this magnet that not only had faculty that was diverse, it was literally it was like a little dream. It was a third white, a third, Black or African descended, and a third Latino. Now a very small percentage native, but I mean, just very diverse. And probably has to do with the neighborhood too, because that neighborhood is much more diverse, a little north of us. Anyway, so then the kids are in that school, their friends more diverse, the teachers are asking questions, they do their civil rights march, the five year old come home and says what kind of white people would we be? I mean, you know, when my girl was five, she came home again, five, six, it's like as it's getting acculturated to school, and they're moving into a broader culture. She came home she said, Mom, um, somebody talked about African American, Black American, Native American. Why can't I just call my friend by her name?

SooJin: Hmm.

Kathleen: Children should be running shit, right? Yeah, absolutely. So being what I will give myself the perhaps I'll give myself as I've stayed pretty open. When my kids come with those questions. I stop. And I'm like, you know, this is real. And so at the same time, I was raised white during busing in Boston, I've got a ton of internalized, like fear and need for separation and racist thoughts, right, that that I was raised with. So I'm not at all trying to put myself out there as like, I had this perfect experience. And so my vision is clear. No, I was absolutely raised as a white working class girl had a really close Black male friend, when I came back from Peace Corps and a job that I had, I think I brought him over once. And I watched my dad's interaction with him I and it wasn't like, you know, get out of here. It wasn't like you might imagine, but just that I just knew it wasn't a good space for this friend to come into my home was not welcoming to folks of color. It breaks my heart to say that because my I just lost my brother actually in August and my mother has struggled with mental illness, my whole life. Really loving really kind people really held a lot of pain themselves. But to survive, they had to take on the race identity, you know, that they saw would allow them to move out of the projects and out of immigrant identity. So complicated stuff, right? And that's all in me, but we can all like our negative thoughts, right? We

can do the work to recognize what they are and to balance them with other experience to teach ourselves. So I got a little lost.

SooJin: No, see, I would say what you shared isn't nothing, right? Because how many white families are like, like segregate themselves, right into all white communities, all white neighborhoods, all white schools. So the fact that you were conscious about we're not going to we're not going to live in a place that is all white anything, you know, or I'm not going put my kids in a learning environment where all they see are other white teachers and other white kids. And, and to me, like I, you know, people of color, we're constantly telling white people like, you need to build significant meaningful relationships with people who don't look like you. Right. Like, because once you do, then all of the things that you talked about, like, it's not a risk, you know, to take because it's like, you're doing this on behalf of the people you love. Right.

Kathleen: And you're not alone in it.

SooJin: Yes.

Kathleen: In a white dominant environment, to be antiracist you are alone. But when you walk the road, you start to be among friends of color, and you're not alone. Yeah.

SooJin: Yeah. And, and so because of, because of that kind of environment that you helped shape and create, and were intentional about with your children. I mean, they have, like, their, their relationships with people are not all white. Right?

Kathleen: Exactly. What was interesting having older kids as they both started college, and I hadn't thought about this, because as a mom, and as a college teacher for 30 years, I'm like, go to college, let's try to get the money. Let's get you where you got to go. They both entered, white dominant environments and, and noted it and we're like, this is weird. And some of the early conversations were hard, because they went to South High, fairly diverse, not perfect, right? There's still racial segregation within the schools, because our broader society has it but with, you know, exposure experience comfort, so that when they got to a higher ed, which is appallingly white dominant, and faculty, you know, SooJin, right, holy crap. You know, some places 100% white faculty.

SooJin: Yes.

Kathleen: So my kids see that as wrong and not the world and not comfortable and not how they where they want to stay, you know, not where they want to live. And my husband and I talk about this, like, they are so much sharper on so many of these issues, and just life and just American history. And

as you're doing with yours Hannah, and I know that Sxela is so aware of, so that they're more skilled as they get older, right? They're more able that one of the biggest bits of violence that white supremacy does to white families is well meaning white people, the way that I was raised as well tell their children don't talk about race. Flaming racist white people use the language and use the hate, but well meaning but unprepared white people say just don't talk about it. So you get the whispering - oh, he's Black. You get the whisper. He's Native, whatever. So our children, if we're doing what we need to do they have facility they expect to talk about inequity, they expect to see this change. Some interesting conversations have been around work, you know, as they finish school and move out. If I enter a field that's white dominant, what am I bringing as a white person? Again, my children's questions are leading me down a road that I hadn't thought of.

SooJin: That is amazing that they're even asking that question in their early 20's. That is fantastic.

Kathleen: You know, like, it's such an awareness that there's been so much white dominance historically, yeah. Where will I do my work? And how will that contribute? Well, you know, so, and I have students ask at times, because my, in my teaching for a good 10 years, probably more than that, a lot of it led by Soojin Pate and guided by her work has really become very much decolonizing education decolonizing English instruction. So we read texts from pretty much every culture. Some semesters, I'm like, oh, I forgot white people. And I have students note it all the time, all students but white students will say to me later, I was thinking about getting into education. We don't need more white teachers. And I just sit with them. And I'm like, we need a whole lot more teachers of color for sure. If you feel somehow education is your calling your passion. Please begin right now becoming a decolonizing, antiracist teacher. You won't get hired as easily when you do that. But that's the work. That's the work, we have to certainly be hiring and producing more teachers of color that reflect, you know, our society. Minnesota has 96% white teachers statewide. When you look at K-12. Some neighborhoods in Minneapolis and St. Paul are 90%, African descended, Black families. So what the hell? Yeah, that is just and we still are told in meetings and even at the state level. Well, it's a pipeline issue. That's not an answer. You built the pipeline, and you're using a thing like a pipeline right now. Right, given the pipeline protests, and they're constructed to crush communities of color. So if there's a pipeline in education, we need to dismantle it.

SooJin: Yeah. Yeah.

Kathleen: I've been doing this a while. And I'm not trying to say I know, answers, I need to really be clear on this. I'm not any kind of expert. I had enough pain in my childhood. And in the family, I come from that I stayed very open hearted. And I know, economic dominance and racial dominance are lies, male dominance, are lies, they're constructed to serve a small group. So that's what I know. And I just

know enough because of some of the family backgrounds to stay in the room, you just stay in the room and figure out how to heal the deep damage that you're that you're part of.

SooJin: Wow, thank you so much.

Kathleen: Thank you for the conversation, can I please plug again, particularly this one site, by Catrice Jackson. Follow Black Women Twin Cities, which is on Facebook. Nekima Levy Armstrong is out there leading in the community. For years and years, some of the really powerful work lately has been helping to organize funding so that Black families can buy homes. That's some real shit right there. You know. And we're able to do it when you locally organize enough people 100 grand, 50 grand over a series of months, that's to come together. So. And I guess the other thing, catriceology.com, where she lists some of her seminars. So there's a webinar coming up in January. I'm going to completely space. I think it's around the economic justice, its economic justice is racial justice.

SooJin: Great, thanks for lifting all that up.

Hannah: Should we move to our lightning round.

SooJin: Yeah. Sure.

Hannah: Is there anything else, Kathleen, that you would like to answer that we didn't ask or anything else you'd like to share? Before we do our lightning round?

Kathleen: Oh, my goodness, I feel like I kind of talked and talked. Um, I guess I don't have this worded perfectly. But I think that one of the ways, I'm starting to understand how to call more white people into this work, that leaders of color that are doing antiracist work, don't need to be worried about calling anybody in. Right? Folks of color have been living the pain and the violence and so do the work. If some people don't feel invited, they aren't your people, you don't want them. I think that white people, white women can do more work calling in other white people. And I think one of the ways to call in is to understand antiracist work is actually healing work. Healing for white people, is not the job of people of color. But it is the job of other white people that have a little more experience or understanding. When the universe at 22 put me in South Africa, in the last two years of apartheid. When it put me first generation out of public housing in Boston, I love her to death. And I want to say this was nothing but love when it had me be the daughter of a severely and chronically medically depressed Mother. My whole life. When I got put here by the universe, I have a certain responsibility because of what those experiences have taught me. So I know I'm supposed to be doing more in terms of antiracist leadership among white people. I'm not super popular among a lot of white people, but that's okay. That's part of my work. And as I'm understanding healing, that fear you have that anguish

you have that desire to hold the gun that you have, or whatever it is to vote crazy. 55% more than in 2016. That desire is all born in pain, pain that people of color don't need to worry about and carry but other white people do. And I find myself looking at you, but I feel like some of us that are doing the work already white women we need to know another piece of our work when our own family stuff is okay. And when our own pain is managed, somewhat managed. We need to call more white people in. And I think recognizing it as healing work and that's where that Thandeka, *Learning to be White* comes in. She says look, all this privilege comes from - privilege doesn't come from this - but the continued white privilege behavior comes from white shame. Yeah, unless we – no I'm going to take that caveat away. White people know what's going on in this country. We know that privilege. We know the doors that open we know the rooms we're welcomed in and when clearly people of color are not welcomed. We know white people talk openly around each other. It's here and we know, but to not act on what we know, is killing our soul every single day. And so when Thandeka says, you know, white childhoods, if there is not antiracist work are abusive childhoods, we are harming the spirits and souls of our children. Ours have been hurt already, because we did not have a generation prior to this. Not broadly getting at – Hannah you said, Is there any question that I wished you'd asked or something else I want to answer? When Soojin you were talking, you were complimenting me, which I appreciate. But I'm always very uncomfortable around. I started thinking about we don't know enough about white people who have been engaged in antiracist work because whiteness has silenced that. It doesn't let us know the names of underground railroad houses, doesn't let us know the names of people who died in civil rights struggle, white people.

SooJin: Yes.

Kathleen: Folks of color don't need to be lifting those names up. People are trying to survive, but antiracist white people, we need to be doing that recovery work, getting those names. So we can tell our children. I think about the children's TV show Mr. Rogers. The helpers. Tell your children to look for the helpers. White supremacy doesn't let us look at white helpers. They've been there. So as we recover that we tell our children, there has always been folks doing this work. We can become the people who now are doing that work. You can show a history and a legacy and also therefore find a path forward and not feel like we're some sort of crazy anomaly.

SooJin: Yes, and and that's what this whole series is about, you know, to help lift up, you know, the models and the white folks who are antiracist and doing this work and committing to this journey, because they've always existed, but the project of white supremacy is to silence, deny, exclude, you know, those people, you know, in our history, you know, Ibram Kendi, he says that, you know, antiracism has been around as long as racism. It has. It's just that racist power has taken over and subverted, you know, antiracist power.

Kathleen: When you make that comment SooJin, one more title, and I know you know this one, Saidiya Hartman's *Lose Your Mother*.

SooJin: Yeah.

Kathleen: Where she's taking a journey along the Atlantic slave route, and she's searching for her own people, originally, women in America, but a piece of what she looks at is - the time passed since enslavement has actually added to the injury. And as a woman growing up and being born in the early 60's growing up in the 70's and 80's. My understanding earlier was "oh, things are better now." Things aren't as bad as back then. Which is what made Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* so powerful. She says we incarcerate more Black people, we know that violence is worse. But Saidiya Hartman, the time passed, has intensified the injury. So having lived now for almost 250 years in white supremacy in America, many things are worse now. Because of the weight of those years, and the ways that whiteness has broken European descended people. That is worse. We are whiter now than we were in 1776.

SooJin: Yep.

Kathleen: So it's opposite of what I understood as a woman, a white woman growing up, post-civil rights, I thought, of course, things are always getting better. Right? We're moving toward gender equity, we're moving toward racial equity. The weight of these years have actually damaged people of color and white people more than 200 years ago. When we know that we understand we have a lot more healing we have to do. Otherwise we are intensifying that injury more with each year that we do nothing.

SooJin: Yeah. Wow. Beautiful. Thank you.

Kathleen: Thank you guys. This is such an important conversation. I really appreciate you guys creating this. This space and doing this work.

SooJin: Yeah.

Hannah: Great to be able to do it together. So hard.

SooJin: We need each other.

Kathleen: That's it.

Hannah: We ready?

SooJin: Yeah.

Hannah: Okay. Antiracist parenting or caretaking is...

Kathleen: Necessary, hard, life-saving, the only way the only way forward.

Hannah: What's the last thing your kids did to make you smile?

Kathleen: Oh my gosh, come home once in a while, visit, 20's is tough. So, you know, my daughter's home right now and yeah, visiting and just letting me see who they've become is just awesome. Yeah.

Hannah: What are you reading right now?

Kathleen: This is going to be way too telling. So Brene Brown's, *Daring Greatly*. I found that when I read others of hers, this one I haven't even started so I can't really endorse it. But it's very telling. Ruth Soukup's *Do It Scared*. I'm trying to engage with how fear driven some of my life has been especially around mental health issues, and trying to shift from a fear driven to a hope driven outlook. So not expressly antiracist, but absolutely connected to because whiteness is fear. It's just this big coat of fear that we put on. So to unpack understanding how much fear drives us. And one of the things Brene Brown is talking about is scarcity, right? The lie of scarcity that drives the country and has driven our history. I can't find the exact wording but certainly whiteness was about stealing land and labor. And so then if you convince some people, they're white, and that other people or not, if you've only got a certain amount, right, the whole scarcity idea, I've got to hold on to mine or you're going to take it.

SooJin: Yeah, yeah.

Kathleen: ...to understand how damaging that is. It contributes to I think to this work as well. But I'll be honest, it's a little bit more personal with trying to get through some mental health stuff of my own and also relates to race. Certainly.

Hannah: What are you doing to take care of yourself?

Kathleen: SooJin and I lie or do I need to tell the truth?

SooJin: Tell the truth girl.

Kathleen: SooJin Pate introduced the term self-care to me about 10 years ago, I had never heard it, I didn't know what it was.

SooJin: I still remember, you're like "huh?"

All: Laughing

SooJin: You were so confused!

Kathleen: Again, in love in love. My mom had been hospitalized since I was about three off and on with manic depression and bipolar and, and so I was raised to very much understand myself as a caretaker of everyone else. So it's only been the last 10 years or so. And then my children, my grown children, particularly my son, have had some experiences and we've had some challenges where I've ended up recognizing that therapy would be a good thing for me. So I've just started some about two years now, I've been in kind of regular therapy. And out of that, and recognizing I've been shit for self-care, and I'm not going to front I landed in the hospital this summer with a heart condition because I was approaching things out of fear and anxiety and not taking enough care of myself. So I tried to walk an hour every day, I journal every day in the morning before the rest of it starts. And I'm trying to learn how to become better at self-care. It's not something I'm great at. I can't lie. SooJin knows. So I, I can't tell you I've got a great practice.

SooJin: The honesty is gorgeous. Thank you. Because I'm sure there's lots of other listeners, like that's their answer as well. So for you to reflect that back and affirm and validate, you know, their journey is healing in itself.

Kathleen: Yeah. You know, the body – you might know the book, *The Body Keeps The Score*, the body keeps you've got to listen to the body. And I'm going to tell you as somebody further down the road, age kicks your ass, and you got to deal with what you didn't deal with prior. So yeah, listening to your body and starting to take some care.

Hannah: What is one thing you're committed to doing in your antiracist parenting journey?

Kathleen: Again, I don't feel like it was ever sort of something I was aware of as I was doing it, but just being as open as I can and really hearing and I'm probably not great at this and they could tell you, but trying to hear my children because they've had a different experience than I did. Not saying perfect, but they've had a different their generation later and growing up in a different experience. So hearing them and committing to being open to what they bring me in what they reflect back.

Hannah: Okay, last question. What is one question you would like Antiracist Parenting Podcast to answer in a future episode?

Kathleen: Wow. I would love for you all to have conversations or find out maybe surveys find a way to pull out of particularly white parents, right? Why you don't engage this work. What is holding you back? I'm focusing on white parents, because I think that parents of color are just raising their kids. And then you got to raise kids with an understanding of white dominance in America to survive white supremacy. White parents are the ones who have to intentionally understand. We were raised to do harm, and we need to raise children not to do harm. So. Yeah. What's keeping you from doing it? What are the hesitations? What are the blocks with keeping you from doing it? Because it truly is a way to raise healthier children. Antiracist children are healthier children in a multi-ethnic culture, right? A multi-race culture. And so if we're not keeping them healthy in that way, why?

Hannah: Thank you.

SooJin: Powerful question gets at the heart. Yeah, I can't wait for us to dive deep dive into that question.

Kathleen: I want to hear, I would love to be part of it.

SooJin: Yeah. Okay. So okay, I got you on record girl. You said you'd love to be a part of the conversation. So that means you're open to coming back.

Kathleen: I can't talk like this and call it out and then say I'm out.

All: Laughing

SooJin: Great. Thank you.

Kathleen: I really appreciate it. I want to say one other thing. The ways you all are already doing this accountability piece. I think that that is so awesome. Because so often this work, especially at the institutional level, you know, you get to colleges and universities do the antiracist workshop. There's just never any – SooJin knows - there's never any accountability or follow up. There's no measuring. Where are we getting? It's always a new program. Oh, that's powerful. And so I appreciate being drawn in that too. So you have some of us in conversation, and then we come back later, with some accountability.

SooJin: Oh, I love that idea. Yeah. Okay, great. Um, so is there anything else that you you'd like to say or share before we say goodbye?

Kathleen: Just thank you for this. I love the whole idea of it. I'm not going to lie. I'm such a boomer. I have not listened to a lot of podcasts. I've got family members that are working with me on that. But I love this format. And I just thank you for putting it out there.

SooJin: Thanks so much for spending your morning with us, Kath. Thank you. I've learned so much. And I know our listeners, their minds are going to be blown.

Hannah: Mine is.

Kathleen: You know, we stay in the room and we have conversation. And we always learn from each other. And SooJin brought a lot of this to me. I don't know if you even remember, but 10 years ago or so? When did you - when were you at MCTC?

SooJin: Yeah, 2011 is when I started.

Kathleen: 10 years ago, I've been doing some work, but I'm chatting with her. And I'm like, damn, I got a reading list. You know, I got stuff to do, which is excellent. We can all keep moving each other further down the road. So cool.

SooJin: I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. Thank you for being here for being you for speaking your truth. Thank you.

Kathleen: Thank you. Thank you. Love everybody. Have a great holiday. Take care. Bye, bye.

SooJin: Wow. I mean, well, first of all, I'm not surprised because every conversation with Kathleen is that robust, insightful. Brilliant. I mean, she's, she's a powerhouse of brilliance. And, and you can see like, what a great teacher she is right? To be able to talk about these very complex difficult things in such a way that like, you can, it's, you know, like you can see how it applies to like your everyday life and your everyday kind of way of thinking about things.

Hannah: Yeah, I just love, like, the whole idea of, there's so many different ways to plug into the work. And so I feel like, you know, one, you know, digging into this question of like, what are some of the barriers white people are up against or that they think are in the way is like, well, what do I do? Or like, I don't know, how, you know, my skills match, or I don't know, you know, what I'm supposed to be doing or whatever. And it's like, there's so much work to do, and there's so many different ways to plug

in. And so I feel like that really, and just the ultimate motivator of like, this is healthy for you and your children. This is the healthier way to be. And so why wouldn't you do? Like, let's actually look at why we why we do the unhealthier path.

SooJin: Mm hmm. Yeah, no, I think that's a profoundly deep question that we should interrogate on this podcast. So I'm looking forward to that. You know, one of the things that that I love about Kathleen is, you know, and I've, she's been saying this ever since I've known her, which is, you know, you don't have to be an expert to do this work, just show up, stay in the room, like come. And I don't know how many times, you know, when, when we were teaching together at MCTC, that that was, that was the advice, you know, when white people when white faculty staff will come to us, like, what can we do we're, like, come to this meeting, come to this event, just show up, be in the room, we need your presence in the room. And they wouldn't even do that. You know, you know, that takes us back to the her question that she asked. So what is stopping them? You know, like, what, first of all, makes you ask that question. But then secondly, what stops you from taking action? When that when your question is being answered? That's something, you know, that that I hope our listeners will be thinking about, you know, when you when you ask the question, how can I help? And we're telling you what people, you know, people have been telling you for centuries, like how you can help like what's stopping you from taking action on that then? Interrogating that investigating that as part of the work.

Hannah: Yeah, and I feel like I'm constantly confronted by, well, why did I do this task? And not this thing? And not, you know, why did I go to that event, and not this event? And, and I'm always, you know, analyzing, and, I mean, I generally am pushing myself to do more. I mean, that's the call to action is to do more. And, you know, try also trying to have, like, I love how Kathleen is talking about like, also, how does, like, how is all of these other factors? How are they playing a role in capacity and just your emotional ability to be present?

SooJin: Yeah, yeah. But I also loved how, you know, she, she put out there like, you know, what, when you know that you're not operating at full capacity or that, like you, like mental physical, psychological exhaustion. There's always other things that you can do, you know, like, write that check, for example, support people who do have the capacity, you know, who are doing this work. That could be a very, very easy thing to do. And also very meaningful at the same time. Right?

Hannah: And especially, you know, this time of year, a lot of people are buying things like buy from Black- or BIPOC-owned businesses.

SooJin: Yeah, contribute to that fun to help Black families buy houses, or, you know, the land recovery project. Mm hmm. Yeah.

Hannah: I mean, I definitely will start making a donation to the fund for the Makoce Ikikcupi. But I think, too, I'm really interested in this, like, the underlying factors of you know, what is keeping white people from engaging more in this work? And I want to figure out how to do that even just asking people in my network of, you know, even my family, yeah, what's keeping you?

SooJin: What's holding you back?

Hannah: And I mean, I don't know what type of responses I'll even get. But this is an area of interest of mine and I do like Kathleen said, kind of feel called in that direction to kind of pull more white people into this work and to better understand those barriers is helpful.

SooJin: Yeah, okay, I'm ready. I know what I want to commit to. So one of the lines that's resonating with me that Kath has shared was that we need to think about antiracist work as healing work. Yeah, and it's interesting because like I talk about this all the time, like in my day job, right. But not once have I framed it as this is how you heal as a company. This is how you heal as an organization. You know, I've never brought in that language of healing into like the professional setting because so much of this work is taking place now in corporations and nonprofits and government organizations and so I really love how she framed that. I mean, certainly, like, in my own personal like journey of antiracism, I see it as absolutely healing work, right. But I kept that frame separate, you know, like healing in terms of personal, but something else in terms of professional and so what she's helping me understand is like it's healing period, regardless of where the work is being done. It is healing work. So you know, whether it's done in a board room, whether it's done, you know, in a cafeteria or in the lunchroom or in my bed. Right?

All: Laughing

SooJin: So yeah.

Hannah: Well and just like the difference of like, individual healing and collective healing.

SooJin: Yeah. Yeah. Which reminds me of when Lena Francis was on our episode and talked about the generational trauma that we're all holding. Right? Because and how all this work is wrapped up in healing because as, as Kathleen was sharing, you know, as time has gone by the weight of the years, has actually made us more unwell. Which is tied to that generational trauma, right? When we're when we're not healing generation after generation, we're passing that on generation after generation. And so it's like, we end up holding three to four generations of trauma in like our bodies. So, that just, for me drives home even more clearly the point that this at the crux of it is healing work, regardless of the space that we're in.

Hannah: Yeah. And as we heal, like, we then pass down that resilience and that healing to future generations, and that's critical. Yep.

SooJin: Yep. Critical for sustainability.

Hannah: Oh, I just really hope especially as we start on this new year that we are all doing a renewed commitment to this work and, and if you're new to it, start - the timing is always right. I can't remember which episode that was on, but the timing is always right.

SooJin: Yeah.

Hannah: So yes, thank you to everyone, all of our listeners who are doing the work.

Outro (music by Mike Myth Productions):

SooJin: We just want to say thank you for joining us today. You can find more information about us and past episodes on our website antiracistparentingpodcast.com. A big shout out to Mike Myth Productions for the intro and outro music.

Hannah: This work requires us to challenge ourselves and take care of ourselves. Be well.

SooJin: Be antiracist.