

## **E8: How White Parents and Caregivers Can Become Antiracist (Part 3 of 3)**

Co-hosts: SooJin Pate and Hannah Carney

Guest: Robin Alpern and Edie Grauer

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 in 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: Hello, welcome to episode eight, where we continue our three-part series on how white parents and caregivers become antiracist. In the last episode, we heard from Mary Moriarty, the former chief public defender for Hennepin County, talk about her journey to becoming antiracist primarily through her being in connection and relationship with people of color. And it was through her decades long relationships and friendships with Black people and other folks of color that helped her develop a consciousness around the importance of white people stepping up and doing their part in the fight against white supremacy and other systems of oppression that disproportionately harm Black and Indigenous communities and communities of color. Today, we round out our three-part series with two special guests, Edie Grauer and Robin Alpern from the Center for the Study of White American Culture. But before we get started, we want to take a moment to acknowledge some of the pressing issues that have been happening in our country. So we all know about the attempted coup that took place on the attack of the Capitol, and our hearts are heavy with the display of white supremacy, right, that that's exactly what we saw on display. And, and, you know, hundreds of thousands of people working to usher in and reinforce and reify and strengthen white supremacy in our nation. And I just feel I don't know about you, Hannah, but I just feel that seeing that moment, just reinforced for me how important the work that we are doing, you know, you and I through this podcast, in terms of like, rallying folks, rallying troops for antiracism. In the same way that these groups and these people are rallying, you know, for white supremacy. We are trying to create a cadre of, of folks I don't want to use, like militaristic language, you know, of like soldiers and armies, but in some ways, that's the moment we're in. We are in a war.

Hannah: And we've been here before, as a nation.

SooJin: Yes, we have.

Hannah: This is the cycle. And we are continuing to come together to resist. And, you know, I actually saw a TED talk recently that it's a researcher who was looking at nonviolent and violent movements across the world, in the 1900s, so 20th century, and had found that nonviolent movements are more effective. And also, when you think about how many people do we need to come together to do these nonviolent movements, it really is a very small percentage, like 3.5% was the research, which is still a lot of people in the U.S., but still, I think we think we have to get 70% of people are, you know, we have kind of these bigger ideas of what it takes. And, and so I agree SooJin like, what we're doing is, you know, like we're working together and we're, you know, just continuing to nonviolently resist and to be open to, you know, listening and learning each other's truths.

SooJin: Gosh, how amazing would that be if we got, you know, 3.5% of our country to be antiracist? You know, I mean, if that's if that's kind of the percentage that that it takes to actually drive a movement and to drive like sustained change, like that's totally doable.

SooJin: So before we move on to our guests, we will take time to do our accountability check in. So Hannah, do you mind reminding our listeners what your commitment was and how you're doing with that?

Hannah: Yeah, so I had two. The first one was to watch Gideon's army, which is a documentary, which is part of Gideon's promise. And then I also am committed to thinking about how to gather more information from white people around what holds us back. And I did start putting together like a draft of a survey. And so I'm still kind of working with that. And so I don't really have much more of an update on that at this moment. But I wanted to kind of go back to the Gideons army and talk about a couple other things as well.

SooJin: Sure.

Hannah: So the Gideons army documentary is about public defenders who are practicing law in the southern United States. And for me, it really highlighted the barriers that people and communities face when their lives intersect with our country's criminal legal system. The documentary demonstrated the need for people to have access to high quality public defense, and how public defenders how public defenders can struggle to handle outrageous case loads and, and support their families at the same time. So I learned that we could avoid many of the issues if we could, if we could provide marginalized communities with more jobs and resources, which would decrease run ins with law enforcement. And we have to pay our public defenders more. One of the people interviewed had to quit her career as a public defender, because she wasn't able to pay her rent and student loan bills with her full-time salary. So that was really important learning for me. I also watched a new documentary called the Re-United States, which looks at how our country is extremely divided, particularly across party lines. And

it resonated with me because my family is divided across party lines. And this documentary gave me hope. Because people representing different political views and life experiences came together to listen to each other's stories and open their hearts and minds to make room for multiple truths. I learned how young millennial generation legislators, both Democrat and Republican, are working together to help bridge this great divide. And I was truly inspired and feel a calling to do this work in this bridge-building space, to take responsibility, and to work through differences when our rights clash.

SooJin: Oh, that's fantastic. Is that on Netflix?

Hannah: I paid \$4.99 on Amazon Prime to watch that.

SooJin: Okay.

Hannah: And then I'll share one last story. And this one is about my kids. So recently, my five-year-old, Teo, was on an iPad call for school. And the teacher asked the students to go grab something from around their home to share with the class. So Teo decided to share our two kittens who are Jett and Jazzmin. And he first you know, held Jazzmin up to the camera. And Jazzmin has kind of an even mixture of black fur and white fur on her face and body. And so Teo listened to his classmates kind of offer very positive affirmations like "Oh, she looks beautiful, friendly, calm." And so then he lifted up Jett who is all black to the camera. The class instantly changed their tone to "Oh, she looks mad and scary." Teo was completely thrown off by this and didn't really say anything in the moment. Later, we kind of processed through how our internalized messages about Blackness can come out looking like this interaction that he had with his class. And we talked about how he could interrupt that type of discrimination in the future. And for me, it was disappointing that his teacher didn't intervene and use the opportunity to discuss the ways in which our society associates Blackness with negative words, perpetuating really harmful patterns and stereotypes.

SooJin: And how old is Teo, again?

Hannah: Yeah, so he's five. So these are five- and six-year-olds.

SooJin: Yes. So already they've already been socialized to equate Blackness as all these negative things. Yeah, that anti-Blackness is so deep in our society in our culture. Wow. Wow, thanks for sharing that. So I had made the commitment after Mary Moriarty's conversation around kind of reframing allyship. Not so much about like using the word ally. But reframing ally within the context more around relationships or being in relationship with people who are different from you, who have different lived experiences than you. It's building those connections that helped her to gain an understanding that our

systems work disproportionately unevenly. And that attribute to, you know, disparities in outcome. And because, you know, I saw in terms of that relationship component being the common thread, and all of our guests so far, that having meaningful relationships, like intimate relationships with other people who look different from you, who have different lived experiences, who have different backgrounds from you, that's what motivates and sustain us in this work. That is what helps to transform people's minds and hearts in this work. And it's also what keeps us going in this work, when things get hard, and when there's losses and sacrifices that are required along the way. And then the other thing I wanted to follow up on is remember when we talked with Crixell Shell about the dangers of social media on minds? And I had shared with you that I had that conversation with my daughter. But one of the things we also did was we watched *The Social Dilemma* together. So it's a documentary on Netflix, it is fantastic. So we watched it together, she didn't get everything, you know, that was that was being said. But after we watched it, we talked about it. And I answered, you know, whatever questions that she had about it. And for our listeners, the primary thesis of this documentary is that the people behind social media who create the algorithms to provide you with the notifications and all that stuff, like they are purposefully making you addicted to social media. And that process of addiction is messing up with our minds. And messing up our ability to relate to others and build relationships and connection like with real life people because we are building a relationship to this technology to our phones and all that stuff. And, and it has profound implications like to our mental health. And so after watching that, I asked my daughter, you know, so given everything that you learned about the dangers and the impact of social media, on our minds and our mental health, when do you think is a good time for you to get on social media? And she looks at me and she's like, "um college?" And I'm like, "Sure, yes. Fantastic." So I was really delighted and happy that both of us came to an agreement that that's when she'll start is when she starts college.

Hannah: Yeah, that's so great. And I love to see that. You know, she has a voice in that decision. And you're researching it together.

SooJin: Yeah. Okay, Hannah can you set our intention for today?

Hannah: Yes. So we are joined by Robin and Edie from the Center for the Study of White American Culture and they will introduce themselves in a second. But in recognizing their work, our intention today is around de-centering and detaching from whiteness.

SooJin: Love it.

Hannah: Yes. So we'll just open it up, Robin and Edie welcome. And if you could just share a little bit more about who you are, where you're from, what you do in your own words.

Edie: My name is Edie Grauer and I am the mother of two now adult children. My daughter is 21 years old and in her senior year of college, and my son just turned 18 barely two weeks ago, and is a senior in high school. I am biracial. My mother was African American. My father was white from parents who were Romanian Jewish immigrants to this country. And I grew up in Newark, New Jersey. In what was initially a racially mixed community and within a very few years became completely black, after white flight. My children actually are multiracial. They are African American, white, and Japanese. And so given just that, and they've actually grown up in and gone to public schools in Franklin Township, New Jersey, which has often been at the top of the list of best places to live in the United States. And what, what typically puts them in that category is because it's one of the most racially diverse communities around the country. Not absent from racism, I must say, but it certainly gives them and gave them a very different kind of experience, and a different one than I had growing up in as well. So I have been, and I'm going to leave it to Robin, when she introduces herself to make mentioned to give more description about the Center, but I have been involved with the Center have known about it probably as long as it existed, but I have been involved with it for the last five years. I think it's been in first doing training to become a trainer with the Center. And then for the last four years I think actually doing the training, including one of the signature workshops of Raising Antiracist White Children.

Robin: My name is Robin Alpern. I'm white and use she/her pronouns. I had the very good fortune to be raised in a Quaker family. And I've been realizing recently that this is especially important to mention when I'm talking with audiences who are interested in raising antiracist children, because I can state without a doubt that it made a huge difference in my life, that my parents from the beginning taught me that there was such a thing as racial prejudice, as we called it back then, and that this was not okay, and that we needed to do what we could to act against it. And in my work, currently, I find so many families where that's not the message that children are given they, they don't know that racism exists, or they think we're post racial or that kind of thing. So it makes a huge difference for parents from the beginning to be educating their children. That said, it wasn't actually until about 20 years ago that I discovered the difference between being what I might have called nonracist. Now I'm a person who doesn't perpetuate or support racism or act in a racist way that I discovered that well, actually nonracist isn't, isn't an option, you have to be antiracist, you need to be actively standing up and speaking out against racism, and that that really changed my life. For the past 20 years, it's been a central focus for me to work for racial justice and equity. And I've done that in a variety of ways, community organizing and activism, with many different groups of people. And I also, about 12 years ago, started working with the Center for the Study of White American Culture. I'm currently the Director of Training there, and the bulk of my work is designing and leading workshops with my very worthy colleagues such as Edie.

SooJin: Wow, Robin, that is such a powerful story. And I love how you are lifting up that there's no such thing as a nonracist or not racist. It's you're either racist or antiracist. Those are the only two options.

Robin: Yeah. If you're not acting against the system, then you're colluding with it. You're supporting the status quo. So people need to think very carefully about that.

SooJin: So could you both of you share, tell us a little bit more about your journey around antiracism, like what led you to that commitment?

Edie: I had a strong consciousness about racism and racial justice from the time I was a child. I grew up in a household where my parents were very politically and I guess socially - in terms of social justice - very active in the community. So I grew up with them being role models with that. I went to college and started working in the field of social work. And at a later point, kind of a midpoint in my career, began teaching in that field. And so I always had a consciousness about it, was always outspoken about it. And when I began working in the real world, in my profession in my career, and began to, to see more intimately, not surprisingly, but being able to see more intimately and experience a lot of the structural and institutional racism that then was affecting people, it was more than, than just the personal or interpersonal, I began to see the bigger picture even better. And so in the work that I did, at a policy level, at an administration level, in a research level brought that consciousness to the work that I did. It was really when I began teaching that I realized and felt a commitment to infuse that in the way that I was educating not just young people, but also people returning to school. And in the last five years, as I said, working with the Center for the Study of White American Culture, I've done that obviously much more actively. It's not my full-time job, but I certainly love doing it. And feel it's really important work. It's really satisfying to be working with people that we do in our workshops, who really want to make changes in themselves who are curious and wanting to learn. And it keeps me energized and going.

Robin: I would say there were three main pillars, to my developing towards being the antiracist, activist and educator that I am now. And one I already mentioned was the Quaker upbringing. So having that foundation of knowing about race, racism, and antiracism was critical. Another piece is that, I think, naturally, I am an empathic person. And that's been hugely important that I, I genuinely feel the pain of other people. And it's excruciating to look around the world and see what is happening to other people. And that that just matters to me very much, I can't really be a happy, healthy, whole human being, when other people are being trampled. So I did, I do feel that that's maybe a natural, inherent quality that I have. But I have also been taught that you can teach children empathy, if they might be lacking in that. And the third thing, which again, I think is an innate quality I have is just very strong sense of justice and fairness, I really can't abide watching unfair treatment of myself or other people. And again, I suspect that that's a quality that can be taught to kids who might not have it. I want to say a little bit more about that transition point that happened for me about 20 years ago, that was so life changing it just seemed kind of to happen, you know, coincidence, that I was at a Quaker conference, where most Quakers in this country are white people. And so they were predominantly white people

at the conference, but there was a Black woman there who took me aside at one point and started telling me about the racist treatment that she had received in our Quaker community. And if you know anything about Quakers, you know, we love to think that we ran the Underground Railroad, and, you know, really led the fight against racism and many Quakers did do many things, and some gave their lives to that cause but many Quakers also did not support abolition and currently, many Quakers do not really get it about race and racism. So anyway, so this Black woman took me aside and, and told me about incidents that had happened. And I was appalled. And at the same time, I thought to myself, well, maybe she's exaggerating what happened. Maybe she misunderstood what that person meant, when they said it, those were the thoughts in my mind. Six months later, I was in a different community I belong to called Reevaluation Counseling. And almost the identical exact same incident happened with a Black woman taking me aside, and, and that's when I said, "Oh, my God." Okay, this is not about misunderstanding, this is not about accidents, something is going on. And not only something is going on, but it's going on in my home. It's in my communities, it's not those bad people over there. It's, it's in the in the places that I call home. And I had the good fortune soon after that, to go to a workshop led by Dr. Charlie Flint and Jeff Hitchcock, they are the interracial couple who founded the Center for the Study of White American Culture. And Jeff is the white member of the couple, and I talked with him afterwards. And he affirmed for me that white people are the creators of white supremacy culture. And that as a white person, even if I'm not acting out overtly racist, I'm still part of the system. So to cut that story short, I'm very grateful that I was able to take that learning and be galvanized into action. For me, that was the call to action that, well, if I am part of this, and I hate it, then I need to be doing everything I can to tear it down. So that's what I've been doing with the last 20 years.

Hannah: Yeah and I love how you brought attention to, I think it was your third pillar around justice. I went to training from the Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute recently. And they were talking about kind of something many of us are familiar with the Maslow's pyramid of like our basic needs and then it kind of goes up all the way to self-actualization. And so they kind of asked the group, you know, like, what do you see as basic needs and people are like, you know, food, sleep, you know, those kinds of things. And really what research has uncovered that is that even below like what we think of as our quote, unquote, basic needs, is this layer of fairness and justice as one of our most core basic needs. And, and we see this we, I mean, my kids without any training, know, who got the bigger half of the cookie when we cut it in half. I mean, there is just this innate understanding about justice and fairness. And it is a need.

SooJin: And Robin, I just love how you talked about your journey. Just, yeah, those three pillars and you're admitting, you're recognizing that this is an issue in my community, it's not over there. And so often, that is what white people do, you know, it's like, it's those people, I don't do this. And so it's a way for them to put themselves off the hook from doing this work. And so, thank you for kind of being

a model for others, in terms of like taking responsibility, first and foremost, and then also, yeah, holding yourself accountable, and your community accountable to the ways in which that they are complicit in these systems of oppression. I was wondering if you could say a little bit more about the Center? I love the focus on de-centering and detaching from whiteness. Could you say a little bit more about what that means? Like what does it mean to detach and to de-center from whiteness? And how does that show up in the work that you do at the Center, especially in the context of raising antiracist white kids?

Edie: So when the center was founded a little over 25 years ago, some of the studying and research that had been done at that point by Jeff Hitchcock, who's the executive director and co-founder was around that idea. And that has really, I would say, been the founding mission, and continues to be that of the Center. We now have seven workshops that we provide, including De-centering Whiteness, however, that concept is a part of every one of our workshops. So even in Raising Antiracist White Children, that is part of the focus. One of the things that we do with at workshop is take participants through an exercise of auditing books. Auditing children's books. And that's a big focus of that audit, to raise their awareness to raise their consciousness to look at, what is it that you're that you're feeding your children's minds with? You know, are white people the center of this book, what are the roles? If there are people of color in that book, what role do they have? You know, are they being saved by white people? You know, are they just on the periphery, is there an illustration of a Black child, but it's really just the coloring of the complexion. So in lots of ways, in every single course, that's the focus.

Robin: And I want to add to what Edie said about the mission, which, as she said, is decentering whiteness, and with the companion piece of building multiracial community. So we see that moving, ending white supremacy, culture is a two part process. And the decentering whiteness piece is important, because currently, and for hundreds of years now, whiteness has been dominant in our society, to the point to the point that most people, well, white people, especially don't even see it don't even recognize how whiteness is dominant. And so we can't have a just and fair society, as long as there's this whiteness, ruling and controlling, owning the resources and having all the power and privilege. So decentering has to do with finding the ways to move whiteness, to identify whiteness, and move it away from the center. And I want to just give an example of how whiteness predominates. My local city council is made up of, I think, seven members, only two are white people. But the antiracist collaborative I belong to locally has butted heads with that council innumerable times over instances of racial discrimination in our town that the council refuses to recognize as instances of racism. So even when you have people of color included, there can still be the culture of whiteness running the show. So decentering whiteness, we say needs to be accompanied by building multiracial community. That's what we see as, as the center, the social center that is needed an antiracist, multiracial community.

Hannah: So I have a kind of a follow up question to you, Edie, about, you had mentioned that your children identify as multiracial. And like what conversations have you had with them kind of growing up and also have they had with their peers around kind of de-centering whiteness from like, a multiracial lens?

Edie: So I also mentioned that I'm biracial. And the kind of community that I grew up in, although my parents always had multiracial friends. So you know, and I clearly had multiracial relatives. So there's a comfortability that I have always had with that. Because it's naturally what I was used to. However, I grew up in a, in pretty much a Black community. That's where my cultural ties and upbringing mostly are. But I've always had a consciousness to that. And there's also always been an interesting, racist phenomenon. My first name is Edith, I go by Edie. My last name is Grauer and so people conversing over the phone with me, there was no Zoom around till more recently, would often make one assumption about who I was that in some cases, when I showed up in person, things got very different. And so what I mean by that is I was assumed to be white and probably Jewish. And, folks, you know, listening to this can't see me, but if you did, you would look and probably assume that I was Black, that's the features that I have, although I'm a lighter skinned, Black person. My children, I never tried to push that they were one race or the other, given that they are multiracial. And they've had a keen awareness of that. But it's interesting that I think in the end, they identify, in addition to being multiracial, that they identify with being Black, because they have one parent who is biracial (Asian and white) and then me, because they are perceived as being Black. And so your own perception and other people's perceptions of you can, as we all know, be very different. Because of other people's perceptions, the outside world's perceptions of them, some of my discussions with them, particularly as they have gotten older have been the realities of being Black out here in this world, in terms of how you may be dealt with it with the police, it sometimes has been, I think, hard for them to see things as I do, because they have grown up in such a multiracial community and schools and so on. And so there have been times they had been resistant to what I present to them, that has changed in more recent years as they've grown older and experienced and seeing things more differently. But, you know, it has helped them to learn, you know, it's helped them to, unfortunately to learn what, you know, what the world is that they live in, which can be very racist.

Hannah: Have you and Robin I believe you have children as well. Have you worked, like alongside the schools where your kids attend around like curriculum? Or do you do you have, like, what they're learning at school versus what they're learning at home? Like, what has that looked like?

Robin: I totally left out saying as part of my journey that I have four young adult, white, antiracist children, and that has been a huge part of my journey, because they have taught me so much. We actually homeschooled our four children to college. So we didn't take on the issues of okay, this is what they said at school. Here's what we want you to think about instead. But, and honestly, since it was

only 20 years ago, that I – I really hate using that word “awakened” - but really realized the need to be antiracist. My earliest children's years were not so much marked by that, but definitely going forward. We, their dad, and I did, you know, bring them into conversations frequently about race, racism and antiracism. They watched me going out, you know, night after night after night to my antiracist groups, and eventually leading workshops and so on. They began reading books and listening to podcasts, and watching films on their own. And, you know, what I find now is that I can go to them sometimes with my questions. My eldest daughter likes to listen to a podcast called Yo, Is This Racist? And they bring up questions from listeners about, you know, such and such incident happened, is that racist? And so, you know, I sometimes go to my daughter now with huh, I heard somebody say this “yo, is that racist?” And she helps me, you know, think things through. And the same with my other children. I'm sorry, I may have veered off from what the question was.

Hannah: Yeah. Well, I mean, I was just curious kind of about the, you know, messages coming from school versus at home. And I mean, in your case, school was at home. Edie was that the same for you?

Edie: Oh, no, not at all my children went pre-K through 12 in public schools. And, in spite of the racial mix, there were still issues within the system, I have never been involved with them with the school system in terms of curriculum, but I have had to address other types of racial issues in the school. One that I can think of was when my daughter, I think, when she was in middle school, and the school system, she was at the point that they started having, that the children would start to be moved into honors classes, if it was felt that that was appropriate for them. And my daughter had been a straight A student. And actually, language arts was her favorite. However, she did well in all her subjects, and they did not put her in honors math. And so we questioned why, you know, obviously, first with the teacher, and the answer was, well, you know, they, it's based on them taking these tests. And yes, grades are part of but also the tests they take the prior year. So inquired as to what her test score was, actually, we knew what her test score was that asked what was the range to put her in the category. And in fact, this was within the range to put her there. You know, it took that and a teacher recommendation. So went back to the teacher and said, do you recommend her? You know, she qualifies, um, you know, we ended up getting her moved to honors math, so that she could be in a class that was at a level that that she needed. And, but that, unfortunately, was commonplace and I know not just in our school district, but in many of children of color being overlooked. Things have changed, but you know, they haven't. I have a sister, three years older than me, who when she was in high school, when she went to ninth grade, she was put in honors classes. Interestingly, I mentioned our community very quickly changed from being multiracial to being all Black. And it was on the edges of that when she went. And all her friends from the elementary school she had attended were - not all but many of her friends were - in honors classes. But they were all in the same honors class. She ended up being the only Black person in her honors class, because she was the oldest in the family and the high school didn't know our family, so they looked at the name and thought she was a white Jewish

student. And so, you know, fast forward several decades, and it's still the same racist mentality. And folks not having some awareness but not enough awareness to not hold students of color back in that way.

Eddie: You know, I had another situation very, very different. But I think race and racism issues were a part of, and it was also my daughter was in middle school, and she came home and actually, I was at her physical therapy appointment with her. And while we're waiting, she tells me about an incident that happened in one of her classes. It actually was a Black Latinx teacher, who I really had issues with and had been talking to the administration about for months. This was sometime in December. Anyway, what she told me about was there were a couple of kids bickering in the classroom, and this teacher picked up a chair and threw it across the classroom. Well, it was about six o'clock in the evening, and I could do nothing about it at that point. But 7:15 the next morning, I was at the principal's office, waiting to talk to them about what the heck is this, they had no awareness of it. Not only that, I was the only parent there complaining. I expected to be in a line of parents. And so the connection I make in terms of race and racism with that is that there was a mixture of kids in the classroom. The parents of color didn't want to cause a problem for a teacher of color. And white parents, perhaps being afraid of being seen as being racist. And so this teacher, unfortunately, was still there. But I very quickly got my child moved out of that classroom, because I couldn't guarantee what would happen if she ever did anything, again, in terms of my reaction. And they moved my child out of the class, which my daughter wasn't exactly happy about being moved out of but understood all of the dynamics of why, you know. The teacher, I wasn't apprised of what happened. I know, there was some type of hearing, and she is still in that school system today.

SooJin: Eddie, I think what you're highlighting is just how important that when we talk about whiteness and white supremacy, we're not talking about skin color. We're talking about a culture, we're talking about an ideology, we're talking about a way of thinking and seeing things and that you're not immune, you know, like the culture of whiteness, as if, if you're not white, you're not immune to that. It's the air that we breathe. And so it's that system that we have to tackle. And yeah, so thanks for highlighting that.

Eddie: Absolutely.

SooJin: I was wondering if you could share with our listeners, what would like if they signed up for this class on how to raise antiracist white kids? What could they expect? Could you share a little bit about that particular workshop?

Robin: So first, I want to say that although the focus of the workshop is on raising antiracist, white children, there's content in it that would apply to children of any race, and also adults of any race are

welcome to attend the workshop. And we do generally have a mixed-race audience. So I want to put that right out there. But we chose to focus on white children, because it's primarily in the white population that people are so clueless about racism and the need to be teaching their children. So that's our focus. It's a six-hour workshop, we hold it in three, two hour sessions, usually one a week apart. And we look at some things such as, what was your experience as a child learning about race and racism, or in the case of many white kids, not learning about race and racism. So just kind of grounding ourselves in, you know, what was our own foundation. And then we look at some specific strategies for teaching children, we talk about media literacy. And I have been really interested in hearing Soojin's experiences with her daughter about staying off social media. And I think that's really interesting. We know, of course, that even if you avoid social media, there's still media surrounding us. And it's really important for kids to be able to interpret, you know, that billboard, that magazine, that TV commercial. So that's one of the pieces we work on is a specific protocol for teaching critical media literacy. We also have a segment where we talk about supporting a white child to develop a healthy, antiracist identity. And I think it's just really interesting that in today's world, because white people have been complicit in creating and perpetuating this system, our ego, our sense of self has been severely damaged and traumatized. And so we need to support white children to learn how to be a strong, healthy, antiracist, white person. Those are some of the things and we do have small and large group conversations. In the workshop, we have slideshows and videos and that sort of thing.

Edie: And I'll just add that although most of the people in each of the session are parents, we also have teachers and school administrators who come.

Robin: Also grandmas and grandpas.

Edie: We've had therapists, social workers, psychologists, aunts, godparents. People that in one way or another have a role in raising the child.

SooJin: That's fantastic. Sounds really, really exciting that the workshop. Before we move to our lightning round questions, I was wondering if there anything else that you'd like to promote or uplift?

Robin: Well, as Edie mentioned, we do have seven workshops available. And if you go to our website, you'll see the many workshops there are. Maybe I will also mention that independently of the Center, I am also currently offering a workshop for white women called the Arc of White Womanhood. And that's for white, antiracist women who would like to learn more about how, unfortunately, white women have been complicit in building and maintaining white supremacy culture, and what could we do to change.

SooJin: Fantastic. Edie what about you, do you have anything that you want to uplift or promote?

Eddie: No, that's it.

Robin: Are you making jewelry again yet, Eddie?

Eddie: I'm not but I will be. Which actually is one of the ways that I stay sane.

Hannah: Yeah, well keep us posted. Whenever that happens, we'd be happy to promote it.

Eddie: Will do.

Hannah: So antiracist parenting or caretaking is...

Eddie: It's an active, deliberate commitment to go on a personal journey to be introspective to figure out and learn about your own personal issues in that regard, as well as structural and institutional ones. And to also be committed to address them, to come to terms with them to speak out about it and to make that an intentional part of your parenting and I use parenting broadly.

Robin: I would say antiracist parenting is an absolute essential part of parenting. And it is challenging, but you can do it.

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

Eddie: There was something that I needed, but was on my wish list. And when my children realized it, they talked amongst themselves and decided that they were going to pool their money and buy it for me. And they did. And even when they told me, this is what they were doing, actually, my daughter called me one day and said, "Mom, what are you doing in an hour?" And she came and picked me up and took me and, you know, told me what they were going to do and made the purchase. And I have been smiling ever since. You know that they cared that much. And we're really selfless about their money.

Robin: My four kids and I get together by Zoom once a week, so that I can read aloud to them from a chapter book that they all loved when they were younger. And we're recording the book, so they can listen over and over. And we did that last night. And that made me very happy.

SooJin: That's amazing, Robin!

Hannah: Yeah, the recordings can be used for future generations possibly. Okay, what are you reading right now?

Edie: I'm actually reading a book that's no longer in print. But I have a copy of it called *Stolen Lives: Killed by Law Enforcement*. It's a book that was actually the one I have is second edition. And it was published in 1999. And it gives a little story of people, mostly people of color, but not all of them, who were killed senselessly by law enforcement. It can be difficult to read, but it gives a life and a story to the person. And we're so used to hearing about this on social media and in other forms of media. And we're dependent on what media chooses to tell us about that person, and about that story, and about that incident. And these are people and these are lives. And they all have families and they all have people who love them, and who they meant something to. So that's what I'm currently reading.

Robin: I'm reading two books, one is *Say the Wrong Thing*, by a black Quaker named Dr. Amanda Kemp. And it's about having brave conversations, just, you know, speak up. Don't worry so much about saying the wrong thing. And the other one is *White Kids* by a white author named Margaret Hagerman, and I want to read you one line from her. She says, "We cannot fully understand the reproduction of racism without considering the active role that children play in this process."

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

Edie: Although I don't have a big liking for physical activity. I have recognized how important it is in terms of self-care, and in terms of you know, I call it maintaining my sanity. And so I have a gym membership and go to go to the gym. I have signed up and been able to participate in some virtual yoga, which I never cared for yoga before but I started with a virtual chair yoga because I thought okay, I can do that. And so I'm now doing both that one and a Hatha yoga, both virtual. I love gardening and in warmer weather do that, as well as, as Robin mentioned, my jewelry making. And I guess the other thing I do is allow myself to do nothing. And I could, I could say a whole lot more than that. But I think many people, especially women can appreciate what that is and what that means. I don't have to have something scheduled every moment and it's okay. It's okay, if I'm just taking time for me.

SooJin: Amen to that.

Robin: Amen, indeed. And if we had a lot of time, I would give a long list here because I know it is critical for my work as an antiracist, that I have many self-care practices, it's not okay to charge in there burnout and leave. So, but one of my practices, which is pretty new is that recently I committed to leaving my desk by 7pm instead of eight or nine o'clock each night.

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

Edie: I'll give a short answer for that one. And it's continuing to learn. And making that a very deliberate effort.

Robin: I'm committed to spreading the message that racism is terrible for everyone, no exception. And that all of us will have much better lives when we get rid of white supremacy.

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

Robin: The question that comes to us most frequently from participants in our Raising Antiracist White Children workshop is, "what should I say to my child," and that's frequently followed by an age group. So I would love it if you could explore, first of all, the concept that a lot of white parents seem to have that there is some script out there that if only I could get my hands on that script and know what to say to my six-year-old, my 12-year-old and my 13-year-old, you know, so I'd love for you to explore why that's not a thing. And then follow that with some, some healthy conversation about well, okay, what are some things that can be said to kids?

Edie: You did something at the beginning of the podcast. And I think it's really important. So what I heard you do was that it seems that you make a commitment each time and then hold each other accountable. And we, we try to push when people come to our workshops, that they make some type of commitment to this work, and hopefully, they're not coming to one workshop. And that's it. However, depending on what kind of support system they have, or don't have, or depending on their own reluctance or willingness, that that may or may not happen, it can be it can be difficult. And so, I'm the question I'm thinking of is asking, how do you sustain this? What kind of commitment do you make and how can you sustain it? You know, what do you do to develop a support system? How do you keep going when it can be difficult, it can be frustrating. It can be personally challenging.

Hannah: Thank you. Great questions. Is there anything else you'd like to say or share before we say goodbye?

Robin: I would like to add one thought. Going back to what SooJin said earlier about the importance of relationships. I can say personally that that has made a huge difference to me as an antiracist to have relationships, both with people of color and with other antiracist white people. At the same time, I want to say that white folks often like to think that that is sufficient in and of itself. And if my child has some friends of color, then we're good here. And that's not true. It's essential to include along with those relationships, a training and education in antiracism.

SooJin: Great point. Thanks for adding to that.

Robin: Sure. Thank you.

SooJin: Yeah. Because like, in my history, white people are coming with all kinds of ways to shortcut, you know, to do the bare minimum. And yeah, you're right. Like, I don't want people to mistake this idea that all you have to do is build relationships. And then your work is done. So yeah, thanks for clarifying.

Robin: You're welcome.

Edie: You know, that that brings to mind for me, and I'm always full of stories, but I know we're at the end. And I'll just make this quick. So many times that my kids were invited to birthday parties of classmates, who may be of a different race. And my child and me were the only people of color there, which said to me, it's okay for the young children, to have friends who are racially diverse, but that they're not committed themselves or modeling that.

SooJin: Well, thank you both so much for sharing your stories, your experiences, your insights. Hannah and I we have a lot to digest and munch on after you go but thank you for being here.

Robin: You're welcome. Thank you so much for inviting us really appreciate the work that the two of you are doing, and that the people who listen to your podcast are doing.

SooJin: You too, as well. It's It feels so good to know that we're not alone in this work. Yeah, that's part of the sustainability piece I think, Edie that you're getting at.

Edie: Yeah.

SooJin: Okay. Well, thank you.

Robin and Edie: Thank you. Bye.

SooJin: What are some things that resonated with you based on our conversation?

Hannah: Well, I feel like immediately I am drawn to Robin's Arc of White Womanhood, like, I feel like that needs to be my commitment is to figure out when I can get into those sessions.

SooJin: Awesome.

Hannah: So that's kind of what's at the top of my mind, but I think it's just so important to hear these stories across race, and to, and to really realize, not only that racism hurts all of us. But that, you know, like, we like we all have a role to play, basically.

SooJin: Yeah, I really loved how both of them kind of drove home that message in different ways, you know, where Robin, like, explicitly saying that, and then Edie through her story about the racist, you know, Black Latinx teacher. Right? And how, like, you know, her body, the body that she lives in, is creating obstacles, like in the sense of, you know, antiracist white people not stepping up because they're afraid that they're going to be perceived as racist going against this person of color. And then also, you know, Black and Brown people not stepping up, because it's like, you know, like, there's this kind of unwritten agreement that like, you know, of solidarity, like, you know, you don't you don't publicly like out or try to go against, you know, someone. So, anyway. Complicated. So complicated. And that's really kind of at the heart of white supremacy is that it creates these kinds of unwritten rules and lines and boundaries that can't be crossed, that need to be crossed, right in order to undo it. And so I really appreciated kind of both of them, lifting that message, you know, in these different ways.

Hannah: Totally.

SooJin: Yeah. Um, let's see. I'm going through my notes here. I think another thing that I really appreciated from both of them is like, the more we talk about antiracism, and the more that we're talking about people and their journeys, the more it feels less about it being the side project. But that it is, but I mean, both of them, right? Like when they're talking about it, you can sense how fully integrated antiracism like that commitment is. It is a way of life, and not the side project that you do when it's convenient for you, or when you have capacity or when some crisis national crisis happens, right? Yeah so that's another thing that I appreciated so much from the two of them is, they didn't say it, but you could just tell in the way that they talk about this work, it is a way of life for them. And I mean, and it certainly for me, is a way of life for you as well. So the more that people can, in the same way that Robin was saying the more that white people can finally come to terms with like, there's no script, right? Check the box, kind of like, okay, this is when I have this conversation with my child, when they're this old. This is when I bring this issue up when they're that old, like, it's, the more we can get away from that kind of thinking, and seeing it as a way of life, the more we are able to kind of build this community that we were talking about, you know, at the beginning of the episode.

Hannah: Yeah. I definitely have heard that message through various podcasts and books and things of just like, this idea of everyone wants the tool kit. And people are like, there's no tool kit, forget the tool. Like, we're just like building trial and error. It's so complex, it really depends on your own social

identities, your own experiences, who you interact with who's in your life. I mean, it's so has to be so customized.

SooJin: It is. And therefore a way of life, right? I mean, in the same way, like when you think about kindness, or just social justice in general, like no one's asking for, like, okay, well, how do what's the script around kindness, you know, like, what do I need to say to my children at this age, and this age and this age to make them kind? It's ridiculous to think that way. And yet, that is the type of thinking and approach to antiracism or to anything, you know, related to taking down systems of oppression.

Hannah: Well, and then being like, well get back to me when that toolkit is ready.

SooJin: Yeah.

Hannah: Well, it's never going to be ready. So you've got to start doing things.

SooJin: Yeah. Which goes to my point about how, like, you know, it's not just white people, I think it's just part of, you know, people who have certain unearned privileges, you know, who hold dominant identities. We are constantly looking for the easy way, you know, out. Like what's the easiest thing, bare minimum thing I can do, and then coming up with all kinds of excuses for not doing more, because like in the straight communities. And those of us who are cis-gender, you know, like, we do the same thing, you know, asking, like going to the LGBTQ folks like, okay, give us a toolkit on allyship, like, tell us how to be a good ally. And it's like, no, no, it's a way of life. And we have to be committed to realizing and accepting the fact that this is not only a lifelong commitment, but a lifelong journey, and something that needs to be integrated in every aspect of our life, every aspect of our thinking and how we make decisions.

Hannah: Yeah, and it and it comes over time to like, you go through iterations and you build on your knowledge and you open doors to new people and experiences through this work. And then you're like, oh, I didn't know that before. Now, I can work that in.

SooJin: Yes, exactly. So I don't know if it's necessarily a new commitment. You know, um, but I think maybe in line with the commitment I made from Mary's conversation just about when I'm talking about this work, reframing it in such a way. So it's not so much as like, you know, these to-do items or actions that you do. And then you're all done. I've definitely been like, culpable like in doing that, especially when it's a workshop or a training, and I'm trying to package things up in a nice, neat way of like, next action steps that you can do. And I need to reframe that, because I'm just perpetuating this model, as if this is like a toolkit thing, or a check the box thing. So yeah, so that's what I'll commit to.

Hannah: Yeah, well, but I will say, clients come to you and ask for that and pay you for that. And that's part of this, you know, like, complex piece of it is where, you know, people think, well, we know we have a problem. And we think this is the way this is the thing, we need to fix it. And so we're going to pay someone to do that, to give us our checklist.

SooJin: Yeah. And Hannah, you pointing that out just makes me question, you know, what am I doing? Right? Because I certainly don't want to perpetuate that narrative. And so I think I can still work with clients, but I need to create kind of my own lines and boundaries around that kind of expectation. And that could be a teachable moment, right? In the sense of, I know, you're asking me this thing. You're paying me for this thing, but actually, I'm going to give you something different. Because the thing that you're asking me for isn't sustainable. And it's actually not doing the work.

Hannah: Yes. Totally.

SooJin: Yeah. So gosh, I got lots of reframing to do in my own work around working with clients and stuff. So thank you. Thank you for bringing that up. Because you're absolutely right. That's not the right approach. Okay, I guess that's it.

Hannah: Yes. I'm happy to have met Robin and Edie today. It's exciting for our listeners. It's our first guests that are out of state. So we're broadening our reach, which is so exciting.

SooJin: It is. And they reached out to us because they heard about us. And I think it's so generative, and like soul nourishing, to know that not only this podcast is reaching other people, but that there are other people already doing this work. I mean, the Center has been around for what 20 years, they've been doing these workshops for 20 years or so. And, and when Robin had shared that, in those 20 years, you know, they they'd have like an average of like, you know, 30 to 50, people sign up for these workshops. And then this summer with George Floyd, they, they had to turn people away, there were hundreds of people signing up for the workshops, and that's how it should be right, because this work is never done. And we have so much to learn. And so we encourage our listeners to sign up. We will have all the links in our show notes, so please sign up for those workshops that they were talking about. Thanks, everybody.

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](http://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.