

Ten Things Every Racial Bridge-Builder Should Know



BY TASHA MORRISON

IT'S EASY TO SAY that we want diversity in our homes, our neighborhoods and our MOPS groups, but it's another thing to intentionally do it. We want to share some practical tips to help move you from just wanting it to actually practicing it. Tasha Morrison, founder of Be the Bridge, shares some great insight and practical first steps to fostering diversity within our lives. For more resources and connections, check out bethebridge.com.

1. Become a student, and educate yourself on the issues.

- Read from various authors on the issues of race and reconciliation.
- Learn from others who don't look like you.
- Don't expect others to do the work for you.
- Understand racism from a systemic structure. Ask questions if you don't understand the systems.

2. Pray for opportunities.

- Don't expect opportunities to only come to you.
- Step out of your comfort zone to find opportunities. Be brave.
- Look for opportunities in your day-to-day life.
- Think outside the box.

3. Research those you can learn from, and follow them on social media.

- Diversify whom you follow on your social media platforms.

4. Surround yourself with diversity.

- Visit churches, gym classes, restaurants, playgrounds and grocery stores.
- Try out new types of media like magazines, TV shows and movies.
- Add more diverse events to your calendar such as concerts, plays, community and civic events.
- Diversify your medical and health providers.
- Explore new service providers such as nail or hair salons and car washes.

5. Listen.

- One of the most difficult things for many people is to listen to others who don't think like themselves.
- Don't get caught up in pride and being right; practice humility.
- Don't let political views drive you.
- Practice good listening skills – listen without speaking at times, ask questions for what you don't understand.

6. Learn from minorities.

- Sadly, not many are willing to learn from minorities. Our experiences are all different, but all valid in the conversation.
- Remember minorities are the experts in their experiences and history.
- Try to see the world from a dissimilar perspective.

7. Notice and take responsibility for negative stereotypes you hold.

- Pay attention to how media perpetuates stereotypes.
- Be honest with yourself. Pray against the stereotypes, confess and repent of your own sins.

8. Acknowledge truth.

- We must own our history as a country despite how horrific or how shameful it may be. We must lament it, confess it and repent of it so healing may begin.
- Stop defending injustice.
- Just because you've never experienced racism personally doesn't mean that someone else hasn't.
- Acknowledge any privileges you may have, and use them for good. Give your power to lift others up.

9. Stand as an ally for the marginalized.

- Hold those around you accountable for what they say.
- Bridge building needs collective and active participation. The problem will not solve itself.

10. Model reconciliation in your own relationships.

- These issues are not for the government to solve. The government can play a role, but the Church must embrace the process toward reconciliation.
- We can't take others where we are not willing to go ourselves. Lead by example.

To go deeper, go to vimeo.com/mopsinternational and check out our conversation with another bridge builder, Alisha L. Gordon.

Tasha Morrison founded Be the Bridge in 2016 to inspire and equip ambassadors of racial reconciliation. A native of North Carolina, Tasha earned degrees in human development and business leadership.

