

Medi Trip Volunteers

**ACTIVE
ALLYSHIP
AND
ETHICAL
ENGAGEMENT
WITH BLACK
COMMUNITIES.**

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WHAT IS AN ALLY?

An ally is a person of privilege who actively works towards understanding the challenges and hardships of marginalised people.

An active ally builds a relationship championing inclusion, empowers and advocates for others.

CHALLENGE YOUR OWN BIASES AND PREJUDICES.

This shouldn't have to be a taxing effort. Simple self reflection and understanding of whether your own perspectives may be harmful, humiliating towards another person should be a priority. Ask yourself if you have gathered enough balanced information to make a sound judgement on a person, situation or place. This can be a confronting place to be, however it is a crucial starting point.

LISTEN TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND.

You need to learn to listen to black people when they are imparting their knowledge, experience or information. Particularly when you are a guest in their community or environment. This is the starting point in gathering balanced information and understanding. Listening can also be in the form of respectfully taking a step back and observing before asserting yourself.

BECOME A PARTNER NOT A SAVIOUR.

As a volunteer or foreigner you are an invited guest in the black community. Medi Trip is a volunteer organisation for skilled volunteers who want to partner with local professionals. We do not condone white saviour behaviour within black communities as this serves no purpose and has shown devastating impacts wherever it has happened. Our volunteers often learn that you must be humble in order to have any kind of understanding. And remember that the results of your work are not self determined, they should be positively recognised by the very people in the community you are serving.

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EMPOWER.

Advocate for and empower black people. You cannot be a silent ally. You should be positively vocal when required to positively advocate for those who's community you are serving. Share opportunities for growth, economic empowerment and self sustainability. Ultimately as an active ally that is one of your main priorities. Instead of the cliché'd "even through their hardship they're still strong and inspiring", this is patronising and unhelpful. Ask yourself "what can I do to ease their hardship and lessen their challenges". That is active allyship.

RECOGNISE THE IMPACT OF COLONIALISM, RACISM AND INEQUALITY ON BLACK COMMUNITIES.

Do not be dismissive of the impact of colonialism. The devastation of which has manifested into racism and inequality on a global scale. Remember that racism and inequality are complex systems that exist and create a major challenge to the empowerment of black people as a whole. It is important for you to acknowledge this as an active ally. Simply minimising challenges and hardships to surface level issues limits your understanding to the community you are serving.

BELIEVE BLACK PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE.

Do not dismiss black people's experiences. Do not deny their reality. You are immediately covertly oppressing a black person when you do this. You are oppressing their right to have their own feelings about their experiences and their right to express themselves. That is very wrong. Listen to learn and to understand. That is active allyship.