

EVERY DAY ACCOUNTABILITY



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Accountability has a bad reputation for many people.

Not because it deserves that reputation but because few of us have experienced real, life-affirming accountability. When accountability is used as a weapon to assess blame or coerce someone into behaving a particular way, it's not accountability at all.

Accountability is a **practice** to reckon with the damage we cause in our relationships. It is:

- personal, inviting us to relate with the hurts that fuel separation
- interpersonal, inviting us to relate with all people
- communal, inviting us to become a white community we could be proud of
- collective, inviting us to take our place among all living beings on our planet



ACTION STEPS

When we practice accountability **every day**, we cultivate our capacity for accountability tomorrow. Here's how to practice:

- Ask yourself daily: Is there anything I need to take accountability for today?
- Use 5-Fingers of Accountability (on flip side) as a guide



THE TIME IS NOW

White people sometimes ask, "this is great, but how do we take accountability as white people for systemic racism?" While we agree that white people must reckon with the damage we've caused communally, avoiding personal accountability won't get us there.

Every day accountability is the **training ground** for communal accountability. It's where we develop the courage to become the people we have always wanted to be and the will and skill to do what has always needed to be done.



5-FINGERS OF ACCOUNTABILITY



0: "UH-OH" MOMENT

Exposes the need for accountability

Body: constricted, tense, trembling

Emotions: anxiety, fear, defensive

- trust when I notice it (not when someone says)
- acknowledges damage to the relationship
- refuses blame/shame

Brief + specific description of the mistake I made:



1: REMORSE

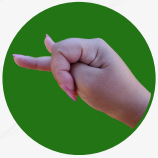
Fuels further steps to undo hurt/harm

Body: curled in, heavy, tired, achy

Emotions: sad, humble, worried

- regrets the behavior and its impact
- airs feelings often suppressed (humanizing)
- often layered

Knowing I've hurt someone, I feel...



2: FORGIVE MYSELF

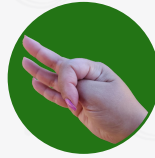
Releases grip on the outcome

Body: sweaty, tender, warm

Emotions: surprised, secure, clarifying

- notices dominating pattern(s)
- attends to the hurt masked by the pattern(s)
- strengthens relating patterns

How will I stop punishing myself for the mistake?



3: CHANGE MY BEHAVIOR

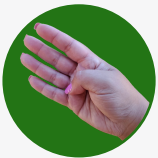
Strengthened by admission

Body: loose, energized, spacious

Emotions: creative, grateful, aware

- the only apology that matters
- refuses helplessness
- requires thoughtful, strategic effort

In detail, what will I do differently in the future?



4: ADMIT

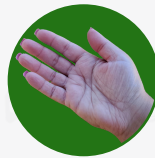
Proof of previous steps, not yet repair

Body: trembling, sweaty, relief

Emotions: trusting, connected, hopeful

- brief: what I did (0), feel (1), & will change (3)
- practice first (call a friend)
- consent needed*

After gaining consent, I will share:



5: REPAIR

First possibility of just relationship

Body: steady, open, balanced

Emotions: resolute, loving, courageous

- asks: "what do you need to be whole?"
- often skipped or mishandled
- solidifies the transformation because it's costly

What is wholeness and am I willing?

* We use: "There's something I'd like to take accountability for if you are open to that"

