

8 Things You Can Do to Prevent Misplaced Fear

For Allies and anyone else that needs it

A Project of the International Black Business Agenda

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Police brutality has been a problem for hundreds of years; however 2020 was the year that the world started to see it with their own eyes. George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Aubrey, and Jacob Blake, just to name a few showed us that calling the police in unnecessary times can be fatal. It's the wrong thing to do. Unfortunately, we are still seeing people that traditionally called themselves "allies" use 911 like customer service. In some cases it is outright racism. In other cases people may be authentically be afraid and do not know what their alternatives are.

This is a guide that was created by Nselaa Ward, JD with the International Black Business Agenda. It is meant to be proactive, not reactive. This means that it should be read, used, and acted on prior to emergencies. This guide offers a proactive process using the acronym "M.I.S.P.L.A.C.E." to prevent misplaced fear and calling the police in non-emergencies.

M - Mental Health

(If the situation is not an emergency and involves someone struggling with mental health, most states have a mental health hotline that can be called instead of 911. They are better equipped to handle individuals with mental health scenarios. Find out this number in advance and keep it saved in your phone.)

I - Inappropriate Call List

(911 is to be used in cases of emergencies when your life, health or property is being threatened. If your situation involves a civil case, contact the appropriate administrative agency, document as necessary, and follow up by filing a police report using the non-emergency line.

S - Speak Up

(As an ally your voice is often projected in ways that oppressed communities can not be. If you see oppression, discrimination or racism we need you to speak up!)

P - Procedures (Prepare & Plan)

(Plan your procedures in advance. Make sure that your household, neighborhood, organization, or company has a documented procedure that everyone is aware of. This should explain your protocol for handling non-violent civil matters, instead of calling the police. Be Prepared! Most people that call 911 for inappropriate matters do so because they were not prepared and it was the only number they knew)

L - Listen, Learn & Leap

(This is a learning process for everyone. We all will make mistakes. Don't take offense if you are told that you are being racist or oppressive. Listen to what the person has to say. Learn from the experience. Keep Leaping and trying to make this a better place for everyone)

A - Attend & Befriend.

(When you see someone that doesn't look like you and they make you uncomfortable, angry, or afraid, you should "attend and befriend." Push yourself to get to know that person. Speak to them first. Find something about them that you like or that you have in common. If you are nervous you don't have to do it alone. Take a friend that can also use a new experience.)

C - Conversations

(Have conversation with your own communities about when it is appropriate and inappropriate to call the police. There is work in your community that only you can do.)

E - Education

(Keep educating yourself around race, discrimination and the history of oppressed communities. The history of systematic oppression creates different reactions in different communities. You can't base another person's actions on your experience. The more you educate yourself about the history of oppression and what it looks like in our society today, the closer we can get to understanding the solution)

Nselaa Ward, JD and the International Black Business Agenda are available for anti-racism and allyship training and workshops around the world. If you would like to deep dive into how to become a better ally you may reach out to us at www.internationalblackbusinessagenda.org or support@theibba.com.

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