

THE BLACK FRIEND

ON BEING A BETTER WHITE PERSON

BY FREDERICK JOSEPH · RELEASE DATE: DEC. 1, 2020

A smartly researched, well-intentioned provocation to inspire change.

Part memoir, part guidebook, this title explores scenarios of interpersonal and institutional struggle to introduce the next generation of White youth to anti-racism.

Following well-received 2020 releases for young people, including Tiffany Jewell's *This Book Is Anti-Racist* and Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped*, progressive marketing professional, activist, and philanthropist Joseph offers his own experiences in a text that aims to "provide teaching moments, cultural history, and context for white people." Why the singular focus? The author notes that "the world needs to be better, and because of the power that white people hold in our society, much of that change needs to start with white people." Joseph invites contributions from YA author Angie Thomas, Academy Award-winning playwright and actor Tarell Alvin McCraney, and sports journalist Jemele Hill, among notable others. The language strikes a congenial yet firm tone, recognizing that those who have made it this far are to be met with genuine intention; his message is that it's about becoming better and understanding how your own behavior and knowledge are critical to leveraging the change needed to overhaul oppressive systems. Joseph navigates the sensitivity of such a project and poses a sincere question that challenges the long-held promise of reading amid widespread injustice: "If I show people how they're hurting others, will some of them be willing to change?" Here's to many readers digging in to find out.

A smartly researched, well-intentioned provocation to inspire change. (glossary, people and things to know, playlist, source notes, index) (*Nonfiction. 12-18*)

Categories:

TEENS & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL THEMES | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR | TEENS & YOUNG ADULT NONFICTION

The Black Friend: On Being a Better White Person

Frederick Joseph

4.47

4,998 ratings 828 reviews

From the perspective of the friend everyone should have, Frederick Joseph offers an essential read for white people who want to be better about race—and people of color who long to see their experiences validated.

“We don’t see color.” “I didn’t know Black people liked Star Wars!” “What hood are you from?” For Frederick Joseph, life in a mostly white high school as a smart and increasingly popular transfer student was full of wince-worthy moments that he often simply let go. As he grew older, however, he saw these as missed opportunities not only to stand up for himself, but to spread awareness to the white friends and acquaintances who didn’t see the negative impact they were having and who would change if they knew how.

Speaking directly to the reader, *The Black Friend* calls up race-related anecdotes from the author’s past, weaving in his thoughts on why they were hurtful and how he might handle things differently now. Each chapter includes the voice of at least one artist or activist, including Tarell Alvin McCraney, screenwriter of *Moonlight*; April Reign, creator of #OscarsSoWhite; Angie Thomas, author of *The Hate U Give*; and eleven others. Touching on everything from cultural appropriation to power dynamics, “reverse racism” to white privilege, microaggressions to the tragic results of overt racism, this book serves as conversation starter, tool kit, and invaluable window into the life of a former “token Black kid” who now presents himself as the friend many of us need. Back matter includes an encyclopedia of racism, providing details on relevant historical events, terminology, and more.

Genres **Nonfiction** **Race** **Social Justice** **Memoir** **Anti Racist** **African American** **Biography**
...more