Becoming a Strong Ally 101:
Guidelines for Dealing with Oppression in Community

♦ Assume that oppression in some form is everywhere, everyday.
♦ Notice how oppressions are denied, minimized, and justified.
♦ Read books and articles to increase your understanding of, and sensitivity to, the needs, aspirations, and concerns of others.
♦ Understand and learn from the history of racism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, etc.
♦ Understand the connections between oppressions, economic issues, and other forms of injustice.
♦ Take a stand against injustice.
♦ Be strategic. Decide what is important to challenge and what is not.
♦ Intervene when someone disrespects or demeans another because of their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, economic status, etc.
♦ Support the leadership of people who have historically been oppressed.
♦ Don’t do it alone. Build coalitions and networks, work with already established groups.
♦ Talk with your children and other young people about oppression.
♦ Work to bridge differences rather than insist on similarity of views.
♦ Learn as much as you can about the shifting tactics of hate groups.
♦ Don’t assume you know what’s best for an individual or group.
♦ Listen to the stories, experiences, and voices of others.
♦ Reflect on the impact of your own background and challenge your own cultural assumptions.
♦ Notice who is the center of attention and who is the center of power.
♦ Eliminate outdated and unhelpful terms such as “minority, oriental, handicapped, homo, etc.”
♦ Write letters to the editors and management of newspapers, television and radio stations expressing support for efforts to reduce prejudice, discrimination, and oppression.
♦ Notice and name dynamics of privilege and oppression that occur in coalitions.
♦ Form partnerships with communities and congregations of color.
♦ Work with advocacy groups for bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people’s rights.
♦ Connect service efforts with advocacy for economic justice.
♦ Create accessible spaces and communities.

For more information contact socialjustice @ uua.org. Last updated on Friday, April 18, 2008. Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations | 25 Beacon Street | Boston, MA 02108 | 617-742-2100 | info@uua.org

© Copyright 1996 - 2006 Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. All Rights Reserved.