allyship: begins when a person of privilege seeks to support a marginalized individual or group.

It is a practice of unlearning and relearning, and is a life-long process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals or groups.

allyship is not an identity, nor is it self-defined.

Our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with. Because of this, it is important to be considerate in how we frame and present the work that we do.

i.e. we are showing support for...

we are showing our commitment to ending [a system of oppression] by...

we are using our privilege to help by...
as people seeking to practice allyship, we have a particular set of responsibilities:

- we actively acknowledge our privileges and openly discuss them: we recognize that as recipients of privilege we will always be capable of perpetuating systems of oppression from which our privilege came.

- we listen more and speak less: we hold back on our ideas and opinions, and resist the urge to "save" the people we seek to work with as they will figure out their own solutions that meet their needs.

- we do our work with integrity and direct communication: we take guidance and direction from the people we seek to work with (not the other way around), and we keep our word.

Privilege is when you think something is not a problem because it’s not a problem to you personally.

- unknown
- **we do not expect to be educated by others:** we continuously do our own research on the oppressions experienced by the people we seek to work with, including herstory/history, current news, and what realities created by systems of oppression look, feel, smell, taste and sound like.

- **we build our capacity to receive criticism,** to be honest and accountable with our mistakes, and recognize that being called out for making a mistake is a gift—that it is an honour of trust to receive a chance to be a better person, to learn, to grow, and to do things differently.

- **we embrace the emotions that come out of the process of allyship,** understanding that we will feel uncomfortable, challenged, and hurt.

- **our needs are secondary to the people we seek to work with:** we are responsible for our self-care and recognize that part of the privilege of our identity is that we have a choice about whether or not to resist oppression; we do not expect the people we seek to work with to provide emotional support (but we're grateful if they do).

- **we do not expect awards or special recognition** for confronting issues that people have to live with every day.

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**We act not out of guilt, but rather out of responsibility.**
So what are our ROLES as practitioners of allyship? What place do we have, as people who hold specific privileges, in challenging oppressions that we don't face?

- we are here to support and make use of our privilege for the people we seek to work with.

- we turn the spotlight we are given away from ourselves and towards the voices of those who are continuously marginalized, silenced, and ignored; we give credit where credit is due\textsuperscript{15}.

- we use opportunities to engage people with whom we share identity and privilege in conversations about oppression experienced by those we seek to work with\textsuperscript{16}.

We act out of a genuine interest in challenging larger oppressive structures\textsuperscript{17}.

Be A Better Ally In 3 Easy Steps:

1. Shut Up
2. (also ableist)
3. As this is ableist, perhaps it is better to reframe 'listening' and address how we can be more receptive to folks we seek to support.

image created by Chelsea Kilpack
it is important to talk about allyship in this way, as much confusion has come out of the ideas of “being an ally”. these ideas may be well-meaning, but they often recreate the same oppressions or perpetuate new ones.

allyship is greatly valued and a huge step towards challenging oppression, however, we must understand possible feelings of resentment, bitterness, and even resistance towards us from the people we seek to work with. these feelings are not personal to us, but are reflective of peoples’ experiences with allyship with others like us (past and present.) building trust takes time, so we must recognize that what we can offer may not always be immediately needed or accepted, and that our work being seen as help by one person from a marginalized community may not be seen as help from another.18

in the meantime, we have opportunities to practice allyship every day:
- how much space are we taking up in conversations? in rooms? in organizing?
- how are our identities taking up space? physically? verbally?
- when is it appropriate to take up space and to back off completely?
- how much do we know about the people we seek to work with? what are our assumptions and where did they come from?
- what are our boundaries in allyship? who determines them?

take a moment to reflect on your own personal relationships with your lovers, friends, and family. in what ways do these relationships look like allyship?
How to deal with... being called out and how to grow from it. By think and die thinking collective.

Calling someone out is hard!! Don't pass it off as them needing to "chill" or "looking to be offended." People can react to feeling oppressed and you should not dictate that. Don't discredit the person by arguing – acknowledge them – stay open and don't get defensive. A callout is not about you as a person, so don't take it as a personal attack. A callout is a way to teach you something on an individual level.

Being oppressive is not the same as being offensive or hurt feelings. Your intent isn't relevant, it is perpetuating a larger system of oppression that you may not know exists and that's o.k. we're learning! Take a break to think about: Recognize these power dynamics between you and this person doing the out calling. Try to understand intersectionality... (i.e. you are a victim of classism, but still have a type of privilege maybe male or other). Knowing your privilege can help you reduce the way you oppress others. Because privilege is a passive form of oppression. Being aware of your privilege and acknowledging it is hard but strong.

Apologize to this person who cares enough about you to call you on this. The point of them calling you out is to help you work to change it and to help you reduce your oppression and to be a great ally. We are all taught to keep marginalized people in their "place" there are probably oppressive thoughts in your mind (conscious or not) that you absorbed unknowingly through being socialized in an oppressive society. Be happy that you have someone around willing to help identify & unlearn these things!

http://tinyurl.com/q6hokqj
* click on the images to enlarge

credit: Think & Die Thinking Collective in San Jose
author/designer: Rich Guitierrez

subject: allyship zine
**GLOSSARY:**

**accountability**
being responsible for one's actions; an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility
http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accountability

**marginalization**
the social process of becoming or being made unimportant and without worth, especially as a group within a larger society
http://www.memidex.com/marginalization

**power**
the ability to do something or act in a particular way; to make happen what one wants to happen in spite of obstacles, resistance, or opposition; the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of people, the course of events, and/or resources
http://www.thefreedictionary.com/

**privilege**
a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people; a privileged group views its social, cultural, and economic experiences as a norm that everyone should experience; rather than being something that is earned, privilege is something that is given to a person based on characteristics they are assigned at birth, such as cultural identity, ability, class, sex, gender, etc.
http://www.thefreedictionary.com/

**oppression**
the exercise of authority or power in a cruel or unjust manner; an act or instance of oppressing, the state of being oppressed, and the feeling of being heavily burdened mentally, emotionally, and physically; the exploitation of one social group by another for its own benefit—real or imagined; it is a systematic social phenomenon based on the difference between social groups involving institutional control and cultural domination over the oppressed group
http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oppression
Acknowledgements: this zine was compiled on unceded and occupied Coast Salish territory—Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations respectively. We acknowledge that colonization exists, and that without it, we would not be here. We also recognize that alternatives exist, that another world is possible, and without them, we would not be who we are today.

We also acknowledge the pervasiveness of ableism, and that this zine creates barriers by: using the English language, using academic words, having small print, not being in Braille, and other ways in which we are not yet aware.

This zine is not exhaustive—we encourage folks to expand this work. Below are the various zines, articles, and points of unity which this zine is based on.

“No More Allies” by Mia McKenzie
http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/2013/09/30/no-more-allies/ 1 2 3 4 13

“Ally Bill of Responsibilities” by Dr. Lynn Gehl
http://www.lynngehl.com/my-ally-bill-of-responsibilities.html 5 12 14 17
http://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/allyship/

“Allyship, Intersectionality & Anti-Oppression” by Kim Crosby

“10 Things Allies Need To Know” by Jamie Utt
http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/11/things-allies-need-to-know/ 6 9 10 15 16 18

“Allyship” by Anonymous
http://zinelibrary.info/files/allyship.pdf 11