

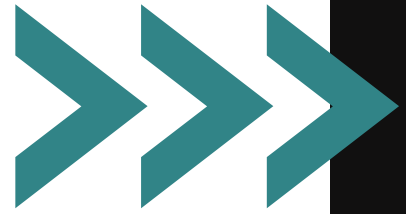
SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

FROM SCARCITY TO SOLIDARITY

SURJ

A GUIDE TO PIVOT WHITE PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE GREAT REPLACEMENT THEORY AND OTHER WIDESPREAD RACIST IDEOLOGIES, TOWARD CAMPAIGNS ROOTED IN MULTI-RACIAL SOLIDARITY.

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INTRODUCTION

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) organizes white people to take action for racial and economic justice in partnership with communities of color. In order to win campaigns, elect progressive leaders, and end white supremacy, we need to bring hundreds of thousands more white people into the work of justice by engaging their shared interest– what they stand to gain– by fighting for racial and economic justice.

When white people understand our personal investment in transforming inequitable systems and find belonging in working in multi-racial solidarity for those changes, we take away our consent from racist institutions and cultural practices. We find that when we organize white people to take action based in shared interest, people are more likely to bring their children, family members, and neighbors along with them in this new way of understanding the world and to take action to undermine white supremacist culture and institutions, creating more thriving communities.

We believe that in order for change to happen, white people must recognize that when we win campaigns for racial and economic justice, our lives are materially improved alongside communities of color: what we call shared interest.

The racist conspiracy theory known as the “Great Replacement Theory”– the idea that white people’s political power is being systematically and intentionally decreased by adding more people of color to the US population– has been explicitly espoused by the **shooters in at least four mass murders** in recent years, including the recent murder of 10 Black shoppers in a Buffalo, NY supermarket. These shootings by white men targeted people who are Black, Mexican, Jewish, and Muslim. However, these beliefs are not isolated to individuals or small, extremist groups.³ They are acting upon an underlying idea that is alive and well in our cultural beliefs and institutional practices - that race determines the value of someone’s life. Research shows that a version of these beliefs are widely held not only by conservatives, but by self-identified Democrats as well.⁴

3. They are also not unique to the United States; the “great replacement” conspiracy circulates **in Europe** and countries throughout the Global North.

4. **Tulchin Research / Southern Poverty Law Center poll in 2022.**
AP NORC poll in 2021

The Great Replacement Theory is a specific way of understanding the world within a broader constellation of racist messaging rooted in ideas of scarcity– that there’s not enough for all of us and that some groups of people are better off when others suffer OR those that currently have enough will suffer if everyone has enough. The Great Replacement theory is one inflection point within a range of racist ideologies that are repeated throughout our cultural institutions, including, for example, being repeated and repackaged regularly on Tucker Carlson’s Fox News show which is viewed by 3 million people each night. When not given another way to understand the world or a community of support, white people can and do attach to base ideas within the Great Replacement Theory and other scarcity-based ways of understanding the world. It is our work to organize to reach people who are not yet with us, give them a different way to understand the world, and a community to belong to as we create a more just world, together.

The Great Replacement theory is one inflection point within a range of racist ideologies that are repeated throughout our cultural institutions, including being repeated and repackaged regularly on Tucker Carlson’s Fox News show which is viewed by 3 million people each night.

The Great Replacement theory is an iteration of what Heather McGhee identifies as zero-sum thinking. Zero sum thinking is the set of ideas embedded in the system of racial hierarchy by those at the top to make everyday white people think we’re competing against everyday people of color for limited resources. As McGhee noted in her book, The Sum of Us: What Racism cost everyone and how we can prosper together, white people overwhelmingly seemed to think that if a group of people of color gained something, like better wages or long-delayed access to quality school, white

people must have lost something; meanwhile, communities of color did not hold those same transactional beliefs. This kind of thinking is deployed to ensure that white people side with those at the top and their policies, instead of fighting together with people of color to win changes that will improve the lives of people of color and white people, such as healthcare, housing, and quality, affordable education, strong wages and a thriving democracy.

For those of us who are organizing in majority-white communities, it is critical that we understand the theories and cultural movements that white nationalism and the far right use. While they deploy Great Replacement Theory and scarcity-based, racist messaging to compel

“White, anti-racist Civil Rights activist Anne Braden was very clear that those of us who are white need to fight racism as if our lives depend on it, because in fact they do. In our projects in Ohio, Tennessee, Georgia, and Kentucky we’re seeing when we go talk to people and we show them a different way, they come with us.”

- Erin Heaney, Executive Director, Showing Up for Racial Justice

white people to support racist and classist policies and candidates, we must be both nimble and steady in our responses. This will allow us to more effectively counter their use of GRT and similar scarcity-based messaging by bringing more white people from different backgrounds to understand our shared interest with communities of color and invite them into campaigns rooted in racial solidarity to win real changes that impact our everyday lives.

This guide was created in collaboration with organizers at Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) who work in majority-white communities. We hope you can use it to:

- Develop a shared understanding that ideas like “the Great Replacement” and other racist ideologies are a strategy of white nationalism and white supremacy to prevent white working people from uniting with communities of color in demanding a better world for us all.
- Notice when racist scarcity ideas emerge in conversation with white people in your communities.
- Talk about racist scarcity messaging with the goal of undermining or placing doubt in the scarcity or zero-sum ways of thinking.
- Bring people along with you into the shared belief that we can have a much better community when we unite across racial division and take action to create better communities for all of us.



At SURJ, we particularly focus on white people who could go either way— with us or with the Far Right— people who the Far Right is also targeting. This conversation guide is not meant to attempt to change the minds of those who are explicit white nationalists or racists, but rather engage and offer an alternative to those who have, because of exposure, unconsciously absorbed the zero-sum thinking framework of the Great Replacement Theory.

To combat this framework, we must recognize when zero-sum frameworks are being used, connect over shared values, recognize when our behaviors and our beliefs don't align, name cognitive dissonance, and support them in processing it. **We must also invite people to be part of a community working for a different future.** SURJ believes a just community will be created with millions of people taking action in multi-racial solidarity to shift political, institutional, economic, and cultural power for justice. This guide is just one piece of the broad work required to build the world we all deserve.

WHAT IS THE “GREAT REPLACEMENT” CONSPIRACY THEORY?

The “Great Replacement” is a racist conspiracy theory that claims leftist elites– sometimes named in antisemitic tropes explicitly as Jewish elites– are intentionally increasing non-white immigration and supporting communities of color in order to dilute the political power of white people in the United States and globally.

While this specific theory focuses on immigration, Political Research Associates situates it as part of a [demographically focused aspect of white nationalism](#)⁴ that underlies other that underlies other racist ways of thinking such as Ecofascism, “an ideology that [blames environmental problems on immigration and overpopulation](#) and “[Demographic Winter](#)” the belief that the birth rate of white babies in the U.S. and Europe is declining relative to children of Black and brown people in these countries, and that this is caused by left-wing priorities such as contraception, access to abortion, and queerness being widely accepted in our culture.

In some communities, white women are encouraged or expected to have many (white) babies as part of a patriotic and cultural duty. The Great Replacement Theory and Demographic Winter connect to strategies of Naziism- the belief that having more white babies, for racist reasons, is a good and necessary practice to sustain domination and that some lives matter over others, which informs political decisions about whose life is considered worthy of living.⁵

SURJ Buffalo Member, Brigitte Holbert, [shared with NPR](#) that this was expected of her in the conservative evangelical community she was raised in. “Being raised evangelical, you know, persecution narratives are extremely powerful. It's me against the world. It's us against the world. You know, they hate us because of what we believe. But we are right. It's the same narrative for white supremacists and for [Christian] evangelicals. We were taught that having lots of children and raising them with Christian values was the way to win the culture wars.”

These zero-sum, scarcity-based, demographic ways of thinking about race circulate widely and frequently in many white people’s media and political landscapes.

- Parts of these theories are repeated in conservative news outlets all day long. From millions of viewers on Fox News each day to popular podcasts to religious outlets- and remember, they’re a variation of the zero-sum thinking that has characterized most white people’s resentment of racial equity throughout the history of our nation.
- In the days after Roe was overturned by the Supreme Court and access to safe, legal abortion was restricted in the U.S, a Trump-backed Republican Illinois congressional representative, Mary Miller, said the overturning Roe v. Wade [was a “victory for white life.”](#)
- “I oppose Obamacare because those people who do not work should not get a free ride.” Healthcare hearing in Louisville, Kentucky in 2009.

4. Demographically means in a way that relates to the structure of populations, or looking at our relationships through the lens of the large population (of a nation, for example) in relation to sub-populations (based on racial categorization, for example).

5. This mirrors the logic of a Nazi slogan “[life unworthy of life](#)”- used in attempts to justify the mass murder of disabled people.

This theory is showing up all over the place– but not by people saying, “I believe the Great Replacement Theory.” Rather, the ideas behind it show up - indirectly and sometimes directly - in political discourse. What do these ideas sound like in conversation?

- “I very much believe that the Democrats– from Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi, all the way down– want to get the illegal immigrants in here and give them voting rights immediately.”
- “Soon the whole country will be run by illegal immigrants, and that’s exactly what the Democrats want” [Sally, quoted in the AP](#)
- “Illegal immigrants are responsible for bringing drugs into our country. They are killing people and making our community dangerous.”
- “They just want those people to take over the whole city- the whole country! They’re encouraging it! Giving handouts to them.”
- “The reason I cannot get support from all these programs is because the Blacks and the illegals get it first” a white woman in Louisville, Kentucky

The idea of the “Great Replacement” and “Demographic Winter” are two extreme ways of talking about many of the shared political priorities of the far right.

Many of the priorities of the far-right over the last thirty years have been about restricting the presence and thriving of communities of color through:

- anti-immigration policies
- restricting voting rights
- criminalizing Black and brown communities and locking people away
- targeting Muslim and Middle Eastern community members through the “War on Terror.”

Meanwhile, other priorities have been concerned with [limiting reproductive justice](#) and the rights of queer and trans people, and increasing the ability for conservative Christians to educate more children in religiously and often racially segregated schools using federal funds. They do this through:

- Anti-abortion campaigns that wield political power at the state and national levels, successfully using our political mechanisms to overturn Roe v Wade.
- Implementing policies to target trans youth and their parents.
- Implementing anti-LGBTQ policies in schools by limiting a teacher’s right to free expression, as well as banning books, and blocking curriculum that tells the truth about both gender and racism in the United States.
- Expanding federal funding for religious and private schools.

The “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory is focused on the presence of ‘unwanted’ others– Black and Brown immigrant communities, non-Christian communities– in the United States. The idea of “Demographic Winter” is concerned with white people creating many more white children. **Both theories take for granted two racist assumptions based in a scarcity mentality:**

- That the United States should be run by white people.
- That white people must be in a numerical majority for white people to be okay.

It does not hold space for white people– for white Christians– to have shared belonging and democratic participation with people of other races or religions.

The media organizations and politicians who spread these types of ideas are bankrolled by billionaires who profit from spreading lies, hate, and division. They then get richer from policing, weapons, and surveillance systems they and their friends run. Take, for example, Peter Thiel, who made his wealth in tech, was on the board of Facebook until recently, and created a tech company, [Palantir](#) which was used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other government agencies to [track and monitor people](#). Thiel also bankrolls [political campaigns for candidates like JD Vance](#) and [intellectual and media projects](#) led by people who spread racist ideologies and support authoritarianism as solutions to the world's problems.

Meanwhile, organized white nationalist groups such as the Patriot Front, Oath Keepers, The American Nazi Party, the Ku Klux Klan, and Nationalist Social Club 131 continue to organize, recruit, harass, and assault people across our nation. Their extreme ideas are further developed in conservative think tanks and circulate person to person, on cable news, and online. White leaders of far-right and conservative groups are publicly silent or point the blame elsewhere when white men repeat these white supremacist ideologies and then use the widely available assault rifles to murder masses of people.

These ideas are not new– they are extensions of long-held white supremacist beliefs that white people are somehow inherently better than people of color, that segregation is better than cooperation. Segregation and white supremacist ideas are utilized to keep white people and people of color separate and to convince working-class white people that they are somehow different and often more deserving than working-class people of color they work alongside.⁶ These have shown up in our national narratives over the decades as “special rights,” “government handouts,” “taking our jobs” and “taking over the neighborhood.” These narratives are often introduced and circulated by politicians, think-tanks, and media-makers, then repeated by the general public, setting the stage for how people understand the world around them, even when it doesn't align with reality.⁷



6. See: [The Wages of Whiteness](#) by David Rodeiger.

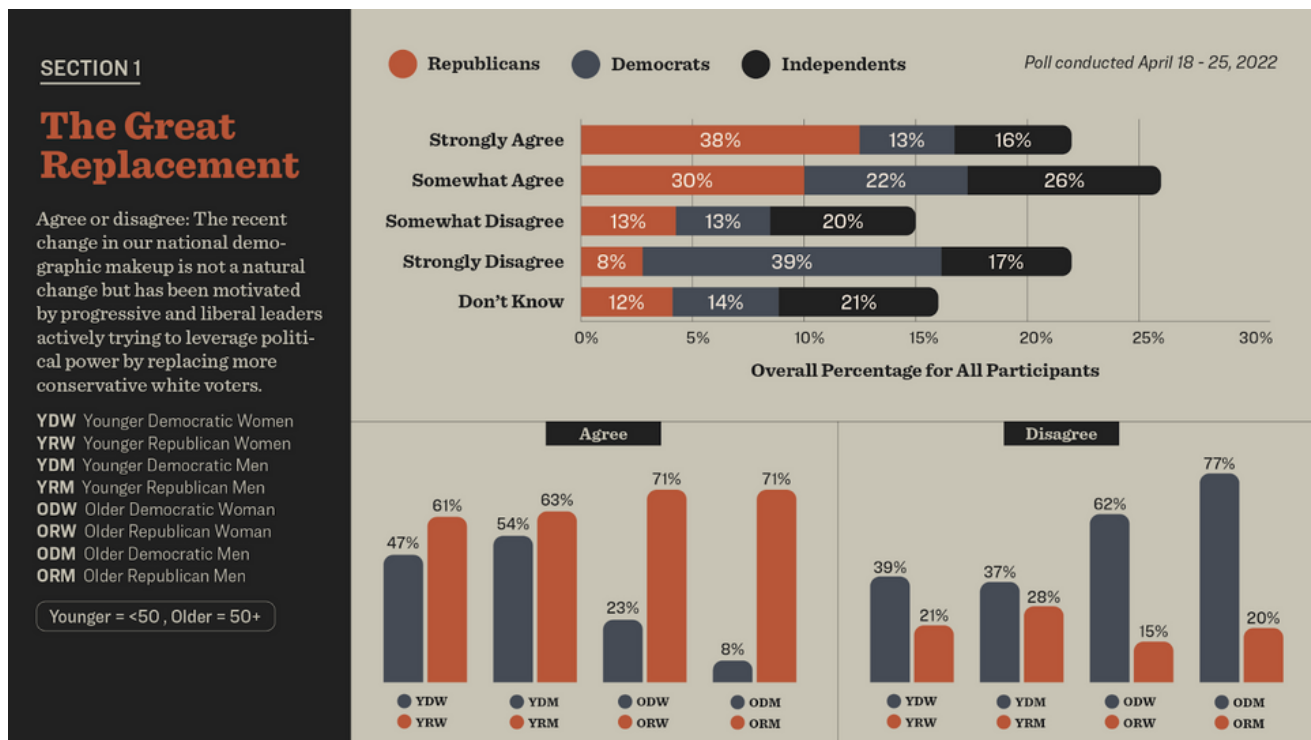
7. For example, white people are the racial category of Americans who [rely on public assistance](#) programs the most - and they should - because when economic inequality makes the basic necessities out of reach with what you have, we should help each other out. Banks, investors, landlords, large business owners, and city decision makers are the entities whose decisions impact neighborhood change the most through such as lending practices, [block-busting](#), who they rent to and at what price, where they site and close business operations, and where they permit and invest in new housing.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS AGREEMENT WITH THESE IDEAS?

The murderer who killed 10 people in a Buffalo supermarket in a majority-Black neighborhood referenced the “great replacement” in the manifesto he posted online. A month later, a poll of 1,500 people in the U.S. conducted by [Tulchin Research for the Southern Poverty Law Center](#) found that two thirds of Republican respondents agreed with the statement that demographic changes in the U.S are “not a natural change but has been motivated by progressive and liberal leaders actively trying to leverage political power by replacing more conservative white voters.”

That includes 38 percent who strongly agreed with the statement, with 30 percent of Republicans saying they somewhat agreed. 35% of registered Democrats and 42% of registered Independents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

National polling released in 2021 and 2022 show that a significant number of Americans agree with these ideas– in whole or in part. It’s not just registered Republicans who agree with these scarcity statements.



National polling released in 2021⁸ and 2022⁹ show that a significant number of Americans agree with these ideas– in whole or in part. It’s not just registered Republicans who agree with these scarcity statements.

8. AP NORC poll in 2021

9. Tulchin Research/Southern Poverty Law Center poll in 2022

WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IT.

The idea that non-white immigrants are replacing white conservatives is not new, and neither is racist scarcity thinking. SURJ Board Member, Carla Wallace, reminded us that in the 90's, white people resistant to justice for people of color and LGBT people called demands for fairness and equality "special rights." The argument went that civil rights protections such as anti-discrimination in the workplace or housing were "special rights" because the protections necessitated naming race, gender, or sexuality as a category that ought not be harmed. That framing attempted to make protections and opportunities, that the law says should be afforded to everyone, seem like extra or additional protection that is missing for white people, and white (cis gender, heterosexual) men in particular – people who had those protections all along.



Scarcity- the idea that there's not enough for all of us- is central to these racist arguments and ignores the possibility of a shared, multi-racial, multicultural democracy.

You - our members, and organizers who talk with white people as part of your work in the world - have the best opportunity to reach people who are repeating these scarcity talking points that put the blame of our problems on people of color, Jewish people, and Muslims. **You have the best opportunity to offer a different way to understand what's happening, and get involved in the solutions that create the literal material support and belonging so many of our people long for.**

We know that individual conversations for the sake of individual transformation to make

better, less racist white people are not sufficient to get us where we need to go. The conversations we have on the doors are to bring people into deep belonging to get involved in organizing campaigns where they have a shared stake in the outcome. We share these pivots and conversation tips to remove roadblocks people have that prevent them from getting involved. **Ultimately, organizing is what will combat the Great Replacement Theory and other scarcity, racist ways of seeing the world, not a one-off conversation.**

Beth Howard, SURJ's Rural Kentucky Organizing Director, recently wrote about how the disinvestment from working-class communities in Appalachia has laid the groundwork for devastating conditions amidst intensifying storms and white supremacist organizing:

"The pairing of climate change with decades of divestment in our infrastructure leaves a vacuum that white supremacists and militia groups try to use as a recruitment tool. They try to tell us to blame Black people and immigrants if long-term recovery plans are stalled while they come with offers of food, shelter, and volunteer labor.

The floods in Eastern Kentucky are laying bare the wreckage of a more than 50-year Southern strategy by the right to systematically dismantle the social safety net of this country by convincing poor and working class white people — my people — that we have more in common with millionaires and billionaires than our Black and brown and immigrant brothers and sisters.

Tucker Carlson and the like come through our televisions screens and radios to circulate lies about immigrants taking our jobs but not one word about how the Green New Deal could bring good jobs and better infrastructure right here to Eastern Kentucky and to disinvested communities across the nation. Dunking on working-class people who just lost everything — including loved ones — is not a hot take. The political and economic decisions that created this mess are caused by those who will likely never have to cling to a tree as their home is ripped away."

- Beth Howard, **Boston Globe**, August, 2022

We asked our team of organizers at SURJ, who knock doors in majority-white working class neighborhoods in rural and urban settings, to share tips about how to recognize and pivot a conversation away from racist scarcity ways of understanding. **They shared that in order to do this, we must also pivot people toward another way of understanding what's happening.** In the suggestions they provide, we can offer a frame of understanding how white people's needs for security, care, and belonging are shared— not in opposition or competition - with communities of color. We provide suggestions for helping people recognize that the lack of something someone needs is caused by greed that benefits a small handful of people who hoard money, resources, and decision making at the top. Our work is to show, in practice, that we have everything to gain by working across lines of race, class, and religion, and that work can start with a conversation.



HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

AFFIRM, ANSWER, REDIRECT

Emma Keeshin is an organizer with our Ohio SURJ team. She's been knocking doors and ringing the phones to talk with people about changing Cleveland, Ohio's laws to set up strong community oversight of the Cleveland Police Department¹⁰. She recommends a tried and true canvassing technique: Affirm, Answer, Redirect.



Example: You're knocking doors and someone says "The reason this country's going to shit is all those immigrants coming in."

Affirm: Affirm whatever tiny part they're saying that you could possibly affirm. Don't be dishonest about your values, but find a sliver of connection that you can affirm. Even if people's fear is totally racist or classist, they're not going to be able to move past that fear unless we affirm something in the anger, despair or fear they are expressing. Try asking how they FEEL about what they just said, ("Interesting. How do you feel about that?") and then affirm their feeling even if you can't affirm their statement.

"You don't think things are going well for people in this country right now. I hear you! A lot of us are suffering right now." or "I hear you're angry! There's so much to be angry about right now."

Answer: Give a short, direct answer if their comment requires it to stay in the conversation.

"I think the reality is that a few people who [run corporations, etc] are getting rich [or hoarding power], all while most of us can barely pay our rent."

Redirect: Redirect the conversation away from what they think other people are doing (taking jobs, ruining the neighborhood etc.), to ask about the problems facing them.

"What are the biggest concerns facing your family right now?"

From here, you are likely to start talking about real grief and challenges facing white people right now related to real, movable issues such as housing, healthcare, employment, isolation, and violence. That is an opportunity to build a bridge.

10. In 2021, our SURJ Ohio staff and SURJ Northeast Ohio chapter members worked in the Citizens for a Safer Cleveland coalition that won Issue 24, strengthening and making permanent a Community Police Commission that has oversight over police discipline, department policies, and officer training. [You can read more about it here.](#)

BUILD A BRIDGE.

Some people will talk about real issues they are struggling with - housing insecurity, healthcare access, how addiction and its criminalization has harmed their family, the impact of job loss or changing economic conditions on their family. **Here is the opportunity to build a bridge from scarcity as the source of their problems, to solidarity as the solution.**

One organizer noticed that many of the people in the small city she was talking with were upset about the presence of unhoused people living on the street, blaming them as a source of problems in their community. They believed that the government and local organizations were encouraging this by “giving handouts” and were quick to name the solutions to this should be punishment, such as prison. However, when she keeps asking questions, she hears about how they or someone in their family has faced housing insecurity because of the high cost of rents, tricky lending practices, disability, or job loss.

This is a scarcity way of thinking about widespread problems of inequity in our communities. As organizers and members of our community, we are committed to moving white people away from supporting a system of racial capitalism that takes from the masses by using the lie of white supremacy and instead help people focus on getting what we need through multi-racial cross-class solidarity. We can use these hard conversations to build a bridge from “I’m struggling, but my community would be better if the unhoused people go away” to “I’m struggling, the person who is unhoused is struggling too, maybe more than me, and I can look upstream to what made it so both of us are struggling with the cost of our housing.”



Here's an example of how that might conversation might go:

If someone says *"Our community used to be a nice place, but now there's all these people living on the street two blocks up, because they get handouts from the government and all those service organizations. They just don't want to work."*

Affirm: *"It sounds like you care a lot about your town and you're worried where it's going."*

Answer: *"I Think the reality is, a lot of people who live on the street want to work, but something's getting in the way."*

Redirect by building a bridge away from blame and toward empathy: *"That's interesting. I'm wondering - have you or anyone in your family ever had a hard time paying rent or mortgage?"*

[Listen]

Keep building that bridge: *"What did they do?" "How did it feel" "Why did it feel that way?"*

[Listen: Empathize.]

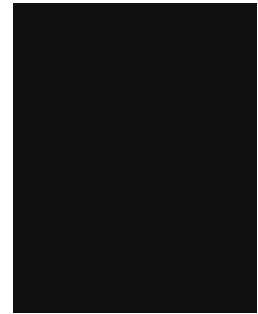
Wonder together to the other side of the bridge: *"I wonder if some of the people living a few blocks away might have had something similar happen - maybe an injury, or the family member whose house they were living in passed away - but they didn't have a sister like your aunt did that was able to move in and help cover the rent?"*

[Listen - if they seem to be open to where you've led them without returning to the initial blame strategy, invite them into ongoing engagement]

Give an invitation to relate differently: *"Thanks so much for sharing your experience and your thoughts on this. I'm part of a group of people - there's three of us out here today - that are working together to try to make sure everyone in this town has what they need to stay housed. We're having a meeting tomorrow at Clay Park - near the playground - to make a plan for what to do next. Would you like to join us?"*

Really. Actually. Invite them to your next thing - people transform through organizing, not just one conversation!

POINT OUT CONTRADICTIONS, THEN PIVOT.



Some people you talk with will say they personally are doing okay, but are anxious or worried about changes they see in their community, or may repeat the fears about topics that are untrue or have nothing to do with their community, but run across the news ticker every night. If they can't yet identify specific challenges they face, but are keen on blaming others AND are still up for talking with you (no need to talk to someone that's yelling at you), now is the time to poke doubt in the stories they are repeating.

For example, one organizer shared that in a majority-white community, pretty far away from Michigan, people frequently said "people are coming from Detroit, they're bringing drugs." In this case, "Detroit," one of our nation's majority-Black cities, is being used as what is called a "dog whistle" for Black people. The city is a stand-in for the race of the majority of people who live in that city.

This echoes the logic of the Great Replacement conspiracy theory, doesn't it? What is meant is: *Black people are coming into the community from outside. They're bringing a thing that is harming the (majority-white) community. They are an external hazard. Because something is dangerous, it must be brought by outsiders*¹¹. The proposed solution is usually to disappear "those people" by imprisonment.

What our organizers find when they answer, affirm, redirect, and listen is that people are worried about how widespread addiction is impacting their families and neighborhoods. Many people in this nation are drug users, many people are dying from overdoses, and there's not enough support, especially for working-class and poor people and people in rural areas and small towns, for quality medical care, and support for people who want to reduce harmful effects of their substance use.

The underlying concern may be real, but the blame is focused on Black people. Here, we have an opportunity to interrupt that, even if the person doesn't share that they or someone they love have been impacted negatively by drug use.

11. Note also that this talking point relies on previous racist ideas circulating in our country- put forth by politicians as high up as the President Ronald Reagan - that Black people are more likely to use and sell drugs than white people and other people of color, which is not true.

POINT OUT CONTRADICTIONS, THEN PIVOT.

Here's how the conversation might sound using the model we've already outlined:

Affirm: *"You're worried about drugs being sold in your community - just a couple blocks away."*

Answer: *"Interesting."*

Start the redirect by pointing out contradictions or establishing doubt: *"I'm surprised that people would be coming all the way from Detroit - that specific city - to this community that far away. Have you talked with any of them and asked where they're from?"*

[Potential answer from the person: "No, but...."]

Keep listening, break down the scarcity thinking by building connection: *"I know that Detroit has a lot of similar issues to us here in [this region] and people there also care about creating a healthier and safer community... Do you know people from other places who also want their loved ones and neighbors to be safe and healthy?"*

When trust has been built, name the explicit way the way of understanding was shaped by racist framings that circulate in our culture: *"You know, I keep hearing this, and I know sometimes people say 'Detroit' when they mean people who are Black."*

You may not get to this in the first conversation, but it will be important to get to in political education and conversation as the person continues to deepen a relationship with the organizers and community members.

Redirect - then PIVOT to find a point of shared interest: *"We've been going around talking to people in your neighborhood for the last couple of days, and a lot of people seem concerned about how addiction is impacting their communities, but a lot of people also mention that their family member started using when they [got injured] [lost a job]. Did you work at X factory before it closed?"*

ADAPT THIS SCRIPT.

The examples above are rooted in real organizing experiences our leaders have working in majority white rural, small town, and working-class urban majority-white communities because that's a priority of our base building work at SURJ National. However, we know some SURJ Chapters and members will be organizing in communities that have different political dynamics.

You may be organizing in neighborhoods that are somewhat multi-racial, where people are primarily Democratic, and think of themselves as liberals. You may be organizing in communities who aren't suffering from acute financial stresses caused by the cost of housing, lack of well-paying jobs, or access to quality medical care. You may talk with people upset about homelessness in other cities and neighborhoods but not their own— people



who are invested in keeping people out instead of ensuring everyone has what they need and the more robust communities we will have when that happens. These techniques still hold, but the content of your script will need to adapt.

Your team of organizers will need to identify where people in your community often locate their shared interest with communities of color and working-class and poor white communities, the leadership that emerges from those communities, and the threat the racist right poses to what they hold dear.

Are they worried about rising authoritarianism and mass shootings? Are they upset about climate change and its impact on their lives? Do they feel deeply that our democracy should live up to its promise? Are they angry about restricted access to abortion? The right's strategy to roll back queer and trans rights? Do they or someone they love have a disability? Do they have a story about how frustrating the healthcare system is? Talk about it!

Affirm, answer, redirect, empathize, talk about the feelings, poke holes in the scarcity lies of how they fear tenant protections or affordable homes or taxing the rich may affect their lives, and build a bridge to connect it to the world we can create by working in cross-class, multi-racial solidarity with communities of color.



Far too many white people believe the lies of white supremacy and white nationalism, and the media and political mechanisms of the racist right are working hard to recruit and expand their hold on white people across this country. Extremist conspiracy theories are taken up by people who enact violence on communities of color, Jewish and Muslim communities. The scarcity-based, zero-sum thinking embedded in these theories is widely held by white people, and as white people committed to racial justice, we must turn to face it and actively organize people into campaigns rooted in multi-racial solidarity based on the shared interest white people have with communities of color in ending the harmful inequity white supremacy requires.

We hope this tool will help white people organizing in majority white communities have the conversations with people who can be moved away from white supremacist and white nationalist thinking. Ignoring race and racism doesn't make racism go away - we must talk about it and provide better alternatives. We know one conversation will not change decades of living in a racist culture, but it's an important step to bring people into ongoing conversation and our ongoing campaigns to win changes that benefit working-class people - communities of color and white people. We must directly engage white people who are currently not yet involved in work for racial justice to create communities that provide what we all need to survive and thrive together, in multi-racial solidarity with communities of color.



WHAT'S NEXT: ACTION STEPS



1. **Share this guide.** If you're part of a SURJ chapter or aligned organization, share this guide with your members and your networks.
2. **Practice the script.** If you're already organizing as part of a campaign, practice the script we propose, adapting it to your specific community or campaign. Even if you're not part of a campaign to elect a candidate, pass a ballot measure, change a rule, start a union, or enact a law, if you talk with white people in your day-to-day life, you're likely to encounter scarcity-based, racist messaging. Practice redirecting the conversation now so when it comes up, you're ready.
3. **Join us.** If you're a white person who's not involved with a SURJ yet or hasn't been involved lately, we invite you to come on in! Ending white supremacy is a group project, and we need to do this together. First, [sign up for our email list here](#). Then, join a [chapter near you](#) or [join as a national member](#).



READ MORE ON THIS TOPIC

Buffalo Massacre: An Act of White Nationalist Political Violence, Political Research Associates: <https://politicalresearch.org/2022/05/16/buffalo-massacre-act-white-nationalist-political-violence>

White Extinction: Metaphysical Elements of Contemporary Western Fascism, Chetan Bhatt, *Theory, Culture & Society* 38 (2021), 27-52: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0263276420925523>

No Fascist USA!: The John Brown Anti-Klan Committee and Lessons for Today's Movements by Hilary Moore & James Tracy: <https://citylights.com/muckraking/no-fascist-usathe-john-brown-anti-klan/>

Demographic Winter: Right-Wing Prophecies of White Supremacy's Decline And What They Mean for Reproductive Justice: <https://politicalresearch.org/2014/07/03/demographic-winter>

A deadly ideology: how the 'great replacement theory' went mainstream: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/08/a-deadly-ideology-how-the-great-replacement-theory-went-mainstream>

"Hitler Youth, Without the Hitler": At Gen-Z Camping Retreat 76Fest, Conservative Influencers Network with White Nationalists: <https://politicalresearch.org/2021/08/17/hitler-youth-without-hitler>

The GOP Is Lying About the "Great Replacement" Theory: Republicans think they've found the blueprint in a 2002 book, *The Emerging Democratic Majority*. Their arguments show they didn't read it: <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/replacement-theory-judis-teixeira/>

Two-Thirds of Republicans Believe Great Replacement Theory, New Poll Shows

A new poll shows that two-thirds of Republicans believe in a conspiracy theory similar to one that inspired the Buffalo shooter: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/y3va8g/republicans-great-replacement-theory-poll>

Suspect in Buffalo rampage cited 'ecofascism' to justify actions:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/05/17/suspect-buffalo-rampage-cited-ecofascism-justify-actions/>

Eco-fascism: What It Is, Why It's Wrong, and How to Fight It, Teen Vogue with Hilary Moore & Naomi Klein: <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/what-is-ecofascism-explainer>

Burning Earth, Changing Europe by Hilary Moore

<https://www.rosalux.eu/en/article/1588.burning-earth-changing-europe.html>

Beyond Policing: A Handbook for Community-led Solutions to the Violence of Policing in Western Europe by Hilary Moore: <https://www.rosalux.eu/en/article/2084.beyond-policing.html>

Showing Up for Racial Justice is the largest progressive organization explicitly organizing white communities across the US with local base building projects in working class communities, electoral projects, and over 175 chapters. We organize white people away from the racist lies of the far right and corporate actors through a framework of “shared interest”— moving white people based on what they stand to gain by joining fights for racial and economic justice. To get involved, [head on over to surj.org](https://surj.org).



To read a text only version of this guide, click here: <https://bit.ly/scarcitytosolidaritypdf>

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