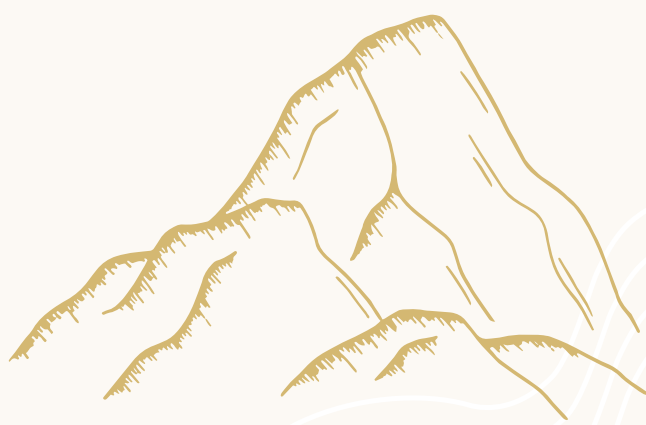


# HOW TO BE A GENUINE INDIGENOUS ALLY

Being a genuine *Indigenous ally* involves a lot of self-reflection, education, and listening. It means knowing that we're often coming into this space from a position of power and privilege. A privilege that we've gained through unjust systems that marginalize the groups we seek to ally with. It's not enough to show up in solidarity and speak out against the unjust system, we have to do what is within our power to dismantle the system and differentiate ourselves from the opponents of these groups. We have to change our own behaviors and be mindful that we are not contributing to keeping that system going. Here are some general tips on becoming a more supportive role in your country's Indigenous community.

## Know whose land you live on

Find out who the traditional owners and Elders are of the land you are on (you can start with this map [here](#)). Research the history of your local area and read as many Indigenous personal accounts of that history as possible. What are your country's Indigenous Peoples' current land rights? A great way to connect to the history of First Nation Peoples is through the history of their art. Start with a few books from your local library and see where your curiosity takes you.



## Enquire into your own past & unpack your beliefs

Ask yourself some hard questions while being non-judgmental towards yourself. What part have your culture and ancestors played in the discrimination of Indigenous communities? What beliefs do you have in regards to minority groups? Do you have any spiritual practices that originate from Indigenous culture and if so, do you promote them as your own?

## Join communities & attend events

Even if you do not live in an area that actively preserves Indigenous culture, you can volunteer and support your country's online's Indigenous community. Attend events that raise Indigenous voices and follow accounts on social media that empower your knowledge of Indigenous issues. Make sure not to just follow accounts because you want to be seen as a supporter without actively participating or supporting their content.



## Show up & offer yourself

Showing up to support groups and events is wonderful but offer to lend a hand as well. Use your labor, resources, and skills to help out. How can you best use your privileges? Be aware of what resources you're taking away from communities and make sure to never share a piece of inspiration as if it were your own, but reference the community and people by name if you can. Always ensure that you've given back to the community more than you've taken away and remember, you are a supporter, not a savior.



## Know your questions

One of the biggest fears we have as non-indigenous groups is if we say something wrong, or ask the wrong question when we are in the company of Indigenous people. Some basic guidelines are as follows:

- Never use abbreviated names to refer to Indigenous people as a whole. Instead, ask which *nation* they come from.
- Never ask what percentage of their ancestral DNA is 'Indigenous.'
- Never speak on behalf of an Indigenous person, especially online and on topics of rights, issues, and history unless you are an expert.
- If staging an event, acknowledgment of country (which is a respectful mention of the custodians of the land you reside upon) shows solidarity.

