



## Message from EDC President: Injustice, Racism, and Us—a Call to Listen, Learn, and Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 5, 2020) — *Dum spiro spero*—"While I breathe, I hope." Words of the ancient philosophers carved into the great seals of governments in order to inspire citizenry around the world. "While I breathe, I hope."

Yet George Floyd could not breathe.

Lofty institutional promises to be 'inspired' or 'lifted up' have long been morally bankrupt for persons of color in this country. We cannot pretend to inspire those we do not protect. We cannot pretend to protect those we do not value. We cannot pretend to value those upon whose necks we kneel, whose futures we neglect, or whose very humanness we disregard.

'While I breathe, I hope' is carved into marble in privileged squares. 'I cannot breathe, I die' is carved into the hearts of those who mourn aside gravestones etched George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Sandra Bland, Ahmaud Arbery. *Non spiro, mori.*

The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action joins organizations around the world in naming the horror of these murders. We acknowledge the onslaught of injustices, prejudices, and indignities faced by the Black community every day. We own that statements like this are inadequate in the face of the need; the EDC's Board of Directors commits to listen more, think more, act more, show up more, be more—to examine where we fall short in advocating for systemic change.

Listening, then acting in the struggle for racial justice will pave our future. EDC will further engage with mental health advocates across the community to better listen and learn how we can effectively and collectively elevate the voices of advocates of color.

To our white colleagues and community members: educate yourself. Read, listen to podcasts, join in discussions to better understand how our history brings us to this moment in time. Listen to communities of color. Learn new ways to think about old narratives. Create space for others to breathe.

Then, act. Use your voice to call for change. Policymakers are our elected officials; they are the channel of our voices. Through our collaborations on Capitol Hill with peer organizations and the Mental Health Liaison Group, the Eating Disorders Coalition will listen, learn, amplify, and act to champion the needs of communities of color and those we as a nation have collectively failed for so long.

For more resources on understanding the context of racial inequality, addressing social determinants of health & mental health, or learning ways to take action as an ally or champion for people of color, our colleagues at the National Alliance on Mental Illness offer a compendium [here](#).

Join us in this imperative. The only meaningful path forward will be that which we chart together.

With humility and solidarity of heart,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chase Bannister'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Chase' and last name 'Bannister' clearly distinguishable.

Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS  
President, Board of Directors  
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action

*The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) is a Washington, DC-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of advocacy organizations, academics, treatment providers, family/loved ones of children with eating disorders and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. The EDC advances the recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority throughout the United States. Additional resources can also be found at [eatingdisorderscoalition.org](http://eatingdisorderscoalition.org).*

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