



This newsletter issue is a personal one. I am a 1.5 generation Taiwanese-American, born in Taiwan but raised in the US from the age of six years old. In many ways, I am “American” but not entirely. Growing up, I was keenly aware of the chasm between my Chinese heritage and the American culture in which I was educated and raised. There was oftentimes a feeling of living in two separate worlds, like a split in my identity. I have learned how to navigate between these two cultures and over the years, I have come to some peace and balance in the bicultural identity I embody.

As I reflect upon the anti-Asian hate that has plagued the AAPI community over the duration of this pandemic, I am reminded of how fortunate I have been to be spared of the vitriol committed against many in the AAPI community. Perhaps it’s because in some ways, I can “pass” as more American than Asian. Or perhaps I have lucked out in living in a more compassionate, loving, and accepting community. Nonetheless, this doesn’t mean I haven’t lived with some degree of anxiety and fear because, like all ethnic minorities, I cannot hide my race. I have noticed a growing discomfort in certain spaces I occupy, wondering if some may be looking at me, and thinking, “people like her have brought this pandemic on and should just go back to where they come from.” I have also noticed how these thoughts are more muted when I am with my white spouse than when I’m by myself, as if his whiteness offers a layer of protection against the racism directed at people like me. An Asian American friend of mine recently echoed a similar sentiment when she expressed, “there are places in this country I don’t think I’ll ever feel comfortable going by myself without [J],” who is her white spouse. It was also a sobering feeling when, for the first time in my adult life, I worried about my mom’s safety, due to the color of her skin. My mom has traveled countless times by herself on Amtrak to come visit us from Los Angeles but, during this pandemic, it was no longer an option--*What if someone attacks her for no reason other than being an elderly Asian woman?*

I share these experiences because I believe the first step to a racial reckoning is to break the silence on a subject deemed taboo or too sensitive to discuss. When we have a discourse on racism, we begin to peel back the layers of its insidious nature, and we can begin to heal. To this end, I am grateful for my colleagues on the Diversity Subcommittee, who are all courageous enough to confront the discomfort of talking about racism. I hope our dialogue can extend to our SBCAMFT community and beyond, so that we can all learn, grow, and support one another.