How do you build relationships with people of different cultural backgrounds than your own?

Here are some common-sense guidelines:

Learn about the person's culture. Any effort will go a long way in showing that you care enough to find out about the reality of another person's life.

Put yourself at the center of another person's culture. Especially if you are getting to know someone who is not a part of majority culture, try going to their cultural events where you are the minority. If you are willing to take risks and put yourself in a situation in which you might feel uncomfortable, people will be more inclined to want to get to know you.

Take a stand against the person's oppression. Actions speak louder than words. People who experience oppression need allies to speak out against injustice. Strong relationships are forged when people act courageously on behalf of each other.

It's okay to make mistakes. You may have to make mistakes as you build relationships with people who have different cultural backgrounds than your own, but people are generally forgiving, especially if your intentions are good. Remember, hang in there even if you feel rejected.

Source: The Community Toolbox