

Ten Actions We Can Take in Honor of Dr. King

Creating and sustaining King's "Beloved Community"

January 16, 2012

1. Act with kindness

We begin inside, with kindness to ourselves and those around us. Compassion is the core of and empathy the glue for the beloved community. Act without enemies.

2. Celebrate and embrace diversity

Diversity is a gift and a resource, not a problem. Move beyond tolerance to celebration. Approach diversity as an opportunity to learn, grow and connect.

3. Learn and help others learn

Read, listen, and watch films that help us learn more about the kind of society we want to create. Introduce others to these resources. Read with our children, friends and elders.

4. Look beyond the surface

Understand the roots of violence; nurture the roots of peace and justice. Look beyond appearances -- for new, subtle forms of injustice, but also for new opportunities to connect, grow and transform. What is essential is often invisible to the eye.

5. Speak for justice

Use our voices to support those who are treated unfairly. Try not to speak for them but **with** them – gently, persistently, and forcefully. Find courage in our hearts. Speak with those close and far away, those like us and very different. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

6. Keep the stories alive

With each new generation, the stories that led to Dr. King's work, and those who extended his work, can become more distant. Keep these people and their stories alive, because we stand on their shoulders – and we need strong shoulders for our children.

7. Sing the songs, listen to the music

There was a soundtrack for King's revolution. Listen to it, let the words enter us .. and sing the songs, especially in times that feel dark or lonely.

8. Act locally

Change begins close to home. Work with family, neighbors, friends, strangers, and local leaders to transform our communities – so that they in turn can become models for others.

9. Act nationally

Our nation has a long road ahead as we move toward the beloved community. Transformation calls for political action that is grounded in human value.

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10. Act globally

Our earth is fragile and resilient, and time is short. Our beloved community includes all of Earth's peoples and species, and our individual acts can help sustain this miracle for the generations that follow.

Steven Brion-Meisels, Ph.D.

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