



The Cornerstone Conduit

January 2019 Newsletter

Ecosystem



January 2019 has begun with new opportunities in Palm Beach County to serve those reentering community following detention or incarceration, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and people who have battled addiction and are seeking training and development of workplace skills. Our Ecosystem for social good and community development focuses on establishing pathways to success for those most in need of help and support.

Working with educators, social workers, law enforcement, health professionals, community activists, public officials, legal experts, volunteers, and business innovators, Cornerstone Collaborative Florida connects like-minded people who are passionate about and committed to helping others achieve personal stability and strengthen the communities in which we live.

[Our Growing Ecosystem](#)

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Community Engagement



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Each January in the United States we acknowledge the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. To commemorate the holiday, we have decided to share a speech delivered to middle school students in Marblehead, Massachusetts in 2011 to acknowledge the importance of Dr. King's life and work.

With current national discussions about the value and importance of teachers, school safety, diversity, and the integrity of civic leadership, we found the words offered eight years ago to be equally relevant in 2019.

The themes of the speech align with the work to which we endeavor in the hope of improving the lives of those who are voiceless or vulnerable to poor health and economic despair. The speech in its entirety follows:

Marblehead, MA – January 14, 2011

Good morning. The importance of MLK Day is not to remember the attitudes and beliefs that once separated our country but to remember Martin Luther King Jr.'s

Across Florida
Cornerstone Collaborative Florida's network of caring individuals and committed organizations directly engages the most vulnerable populations and people most in need of support for education, training, employment, legal advocacy, housing, health, nutrition, wellness, and whose underserved

communities need immediate and sustainable economic development.

life and contribution to our society and the beliefs we hold important and valuable that bring us together in our development as human beings and as an evolving American society.

Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929 and lived 39 years until his assassination on April 4, 1968. Thirty nine years. How many of you think that's old? [show of hands]

I will let you all know that I am 39 years old. [laughter]

Many of you may know that Martin Luther King studied at Boston University to earn a PhD in Theology. Who knows what Theology is? [show of hands]

It is the study of divine things or religious truth.

Did you know that at the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., received the Nobel Peace Prize? It's true.

Taking time to remember Dr. King on his birthday each year reminds me of how important it is to make life count – to make every day count and take advantage of the opportunities provided to us to do good for others, our families, and our society. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed before his 40th birthday but he accomplished so much in his lifetime. I admire Dr. King because he allowed himself to be an instrument of peace for the betterment of others. He was able to accomplish what he did through education and unwavering commitment to his beliefs.

Sixty four years ago, in 1947, Martin Luther King Jr. talked about the importance of education. He said "Education must ...train one for quick... and effective thinking. to think for one's self is very difficult.....Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction."

Dr. King said "...The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But ...We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character- that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate..."

This is what I want you to relate to. I would like you to keep in your minds the importance of education and strive for "intelligence plus character".

Part of that character development is embracing the differences among us – or what we call diversity – drawing upon it to further develop your view of the world and your understanding of yourself. Keep in mind that diversity is not just about race. Diversity is also about gender and religion and culture and the many other things that make us different from each other beyond our skin color.

High School is on the horizon, and as a Vice President of a highly selective University, I will tell you that your grades are very important. But I can also tell you how important it is to be involved in some

activity, whether it is drama, playing an instrument or sports or community service. The work ethic and skills that you have begun to develop and will develop further in high school will provide the strong intellectual foundation as you go to college and beyond. It will also provide you with the strong foundation of character that Martin Luther King Jr. was talking about.

Over the next several years you will further develop your minds and attitude and interests and grow in intelligence hopefully into adults of good character, avoiding malice and hate and bitterness as Dr. King would say.

Some among us may not share our desire to live and grow in good character. These are people we have come to know as bullies.

“Now, I’m aware of the fact that some people will not like you, not because of something you have done to them, but they just won’t like you. I’m quite aware of that. Some people aren’t going to like the way you walk; some people aren’t going to like the way you talk. Some people aren’t going to like you because you can do your [work] better than they can do theirs. Some people aren’t going to like you because other people like you, and because you’re popular, and because you’re well-liked, they aren’t going to like you. Some people aren’t going to like you because your hair is a little shorter than theirs or your hair is a little longer than theirs. Some people aren’t going to like you because your skin is a little brighter than theirs; and others aren’t going to like you because your skin is a little darker than theirs. So that some people aren’t going to like you. They’re going to dislike you, not because of something that you’ve done to them, but because of various jealous reactions and other reactions that are so prevalent in human nature.”

Does this sound like bullies that we may know? Martin Luther King Jr. said this in 1957 (54 years ago), and he was talking about the people who oppressed him and others at the time. He was talking about his enemies. What do you think his response to the fact that people did not like him or that people may not like you for various reasons or for no reason at all? What do you think his advice would be?

His advice and my advice to you as you go through you 7th and 8th grade years and as you make your way through high school would be to love your enemies.

Dr. King gave a lecture at Brandeis University in April 1957 and he talked about loving your enemies. Fifty four years ago he talked about achieving justice without violence – through love. He said that the “Universe is on the side of Justice” and I agree.

To any bullies among us, I say to you, love yourself for who you are and do not hate yourself for what you are not. The best thing we can do in situations where you feel the pressure of a bully is to talk with your teachers or counselors or parents. That will show love for your enemy and for yourself and your friends.

As I close, I would like to address your teachers. First, I thank you for the tremendous and important work that you do each day with our young people. I urge you to be encouraged by your good works, the positive results of which too often you do not see but do exist. I also want to remind you that "it is the duty of teachers to direct the thought and outlook as well as mold the character of [your] students. For this reason, the responsibility of teachers...and the proper upbringing of students, could hardly be underestimated." These are words from Haile Selassie, King of Ethiopia.

Thank you for listening...

-Keelyn McFarlane
Founder, Cornerstone Collaborative Florida, Inc

Share your ideas to Help!

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