

The CAB Approach

The Community Advisory Board's approach to social justice and being of service should be based upon the history and spirit of the Black Woman. The reasons for adopting this approach to re-entry and realignment are below.

Earnest Hemmingway, the white boy's white boy, claims, "Courage is grace under pressure." He thought he was describing the Western white male, the so-called epitome of masculinity. In actuality, he was describing, the epitome of humanity, the Black Woman. If courage is grace under pressure, then the Black woman is the most gracious and courageous human being on the planet bar none. She not only catches hell from institutionalized racism, she also catches it from her community. The world considers her less beautiful than other races of women. Yet, if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then Black Women are the paradigm of pulchritude because women from other races, darken their skin and enhance certain body parts: the bustle was used in the past, collagen and silicone injections today.

Despite everyday challenges, the Black Woman does more with less. She raises a community despite having fewer resources than any other female group while at the same time experiencing the deleterious effects of institutionalized racism and white supremacy. Her ability to do so is due to her indomitable spirit combined with compassion, forgiveness, and love. In her body and soul runs the DNA of African or Black rulers or queens who refused to submit to oppression, Queen Amanirenas, who defeated the Romans, Queen Ya Asantewa, who fought the British, Asata Shakur, who fought for Black equality in America and is still banned from the county because of her potential to be the Black Messiah that J. Edgar Hoover feared would unite the Black community. It has been erroneously assumed the Black Messiah would be a man and not a woman.

It is with the indomitable spirit of our African and Black Women, the spirit of love, the practice of forgiveness and compassion laced with courage and grace that the women of the CAB, and the Black Men and allies that stand with them approach service to and for the diversity of the Black Community. As male members of the CAB, in order to be effective we need to incorporate the attributes of the Black Woman. More specifically, we need to be more loving and forgiving in order to be truly effective social justice advocates and role models.

I am reminded of how Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) proclaims, "I'm an intellectual who is not afraid of being loving. I love people and I love the world, and it is because I love people and I love the world that I fight so that social justice is implemented before charity." Freire reminds us that we cannot just exercise our minds, but also must exercise our hearts. If you open your mind, you must open your heart and if you sharpen your mind, then you must soften your heart. We also appeal to the Rogation Treaty and Pledge, written by an individual who spent twenty-three years behind the wall as a model of reconciliation.

Therefore, based upon the above reason and logic, the Alameda Community Board, the CAB, will approach social justice and public service with an indomitable spirit, the spirit of love, grace, forgiveness and compassion. We ask all stakeholders, the justice impacted, the system impacted, the providers of services, law enforcement, and other allies to join us in the same spirit so that all voices are heard and served.

The Rogation: Pledge to Life and Reconciliation

We Pledge...

To acknowledge and affirm that the life of every human being is sacred and that we all have a God given right to live in peace.

To actively support, and call for an immediate end to all violence.

To never be the aggressor or provoke a violent confrontation.

To have respect for myself, the rights and property of others.

To never participate in gossip, slander or the spreading of rumors that promotes or may lead to violence.

To Recommit myself to personal, family and community development (moral, social and economic).

To compete in a positive manner that promotes unity, growth and advancement for myself and the community.
