

DAILY GUIDES

FEBRUARY 2024 BY ANDRIETTE EARL



WE HAVEN'T CREATED MANY SPACES IN AMERICA THAT MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO SAY, "NEVER AGAIN," TO THE RACIAL VIOLENCE AND BIGOTRY THAT SO DOMINATES OUR HISTORY.

— Bryan Stevenson

Photo by Mickey Welsh



REV. DR. ANDRIETTE EARL

Black history is American history, full stop. My intent this month is to share how Black history is filled with “how I got over stories” — the success stories of oppressed people.

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At left: The likeness of Rev. Dr. Andriette Earl (hands clasped in forefront) is part of a powerful sculpture by artist Branly Cadet at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice located in Montgomery, Alabama. The installation memorializes the people working to advance community remembrance of the history of lynchings, modeled after the descendants of lynching victims. The memorial honors more than 4,400 Black people killed in racial terror lynchings between 1877 and 1950.

Black History Is American History

The only difference between a burglar and a “settler” is who writes the police reports.

— Michael Harriot

Our horizon is limited to the confines of our own consciousness.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 448

It helps to know and hold in context what it was that Black historical figures were getting over. It helps to have a clear context of the time, laws, culture and power dynamics to better understand what was required for Black folks to succeed.

My research reveals an upward striving based in determination, perseverance, tremendous faith, courage beyond what I have seen or known, unconditional love, open heartedness, compassion and empathy. This striving seems the catalyst that drove these historical figures from what might have been their destiny, had they bought into the constraints forced on them.

Instead, they nurtured and harvested a larger vision, a healthy sense of self, a divine knowing that something more was possible and ultimately inevitable. And they didn’t stop there. They stayed the course and worked to create a way out of no way.

This can be instructional for all of us, to acknowledge and honor the horrendous circumstances and immense risks. Although many did not make it to the mountaintop, they never gave up. And many thrived. I am blessed to see myself and this teaching — the principles we teach and endeavor to practice — evidenced throughout these stories.

All sustainable progress depends on us working together toward our collective greater good. Some will be resistant. Some will serve and support as allies, some as advocates. And some will step up as co-conspirators, committed to doing whatever it takes, including what the Honorable John Lewis called getting into “good trouble, necessary trouble.”

AFFIRMATION

I am empowered by my awareness of and commitment to our collective greater good.

And So It Began ...

The life of a nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful and virtuous.

— Frederick Douglass

When thought reaches a higher degree of perfection, as the race consciousness unfolds and evolves, it will bring out a still greater development of life than we know now.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 198

My ancestors survived the Middle Passage. Some crossed the Atlantic Ocean chained to other humans, many sick or dying for months, in the hulls of disease-infested ships. Stripped of their cultural and personal dignity, they were sold immediately upon landing. This peculiar institution — chattel slavery — was brutally torturous. Women and men were raped, maimed, beaten and killed. Newborns were snatched from their mothers' arms and sold, while the mothers became wet nurses for White newborns. Renamed, they surrendered their heritage, picked up essential words from the local vernacular, and some risked their lives to learn to read and write.

I am grateful to *be*. I know only the strong in mind, body and spirit survived. I come from these people. We are among those who refused to die. Once emancipated, those who survived the horrors of slavery were again enslaved by an intentional poverty cycle of sharecropping, a penal system designed to provide free labor, the calculated terror of the KKK and the recurrent anguish of mutilated Black bodies hanging from trees.

After the Civil War, we fought in wars, boycotted, sat-in, rode buses and marched in hope of securing equal rights. We were met with violent threats, firehoses, vicious dogs, burning crosses, beatings, incarcerations and assassinations. These racist actions continue to morph, now being tweaked for the 21st century.

I am and we are our ancestors — the ones enslaved, those who enslaved, the ones who escaped, the ones who assisted and those who hindered. We are the ones who survived, the ones who have a human right to thrive. I tell our stories because each of them is about all of us.

AFFIRMATION

I am willing to know the truth.

Trek Into Darkness

The injustices endured by Black Americans at the hands of their own government have no parallel in our history, not only during the period of slavery but also in the Jim Crow era that followed.

— Jim Webb

Peace is the power at the heart of God. It is through the revelation of the self to the self that one understands life, that we approach the power at the heart of God.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 444

For me, Black history is a source of ever-increasing pride, awareness, clarity, access and focus. We could break Google if we were to include the complete story of the African role in establishing the British Colonies and the wealth-economy of these United States. It also would require a trek into darkness. Our true history is rife with invalidating and discrediting the wisdom, intellect and ingenuity of the enslaved. Black history, at its best, illuminates a legacy of faith, love and perseverance. It returns us to wholeness. It also exposes an intentional culture of inequity and exclusion, terror and brutality.

Preparing these Guides immersed me in feelings I suspect are linked to generational trauma. This project triggered the trauma of being Black in America, while increasing my awareness of our racial history. The task proved challenging and exhilarating, inspiring and triggering. These Guides are my North Star to freedom and historical truths.

I am aware of how difficult it is to comprehend stories of triumph without a sense of the circumstances from which these triumphs reigned. So I am excited to share some “how I got over” stories. What our protagonists “got over” often was the most uncomfortable part — the divine discomfort — within their stories. We must engage our intuitive discernment to see within and beyond the suffering, to glean the deep faith, courage, discipline, determination, wisdom and love. I fully understand this may be read through a completely different lens by those less aware of America’s authentic history and ethnicity-based laws and policies. I especially request grace and open heartedness from those for whom that is the case.

AFFIRMATION

I am ready and willing to see.

A New Origin Story

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

— Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence

There is a law of unfoldment in humans, which says we can advance only by going from where we are to the place where we would like to be.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 271

It was a game changer for me: “The 1619 Project.” The tagline for the book is “a new origin story,” and that is exactly how I received and filed it. This new origin story of the United States shifted my awareness and sense of my place and my people’s role in history. The origin of America and the people of African ancestry’s contribution are inextricably intertwined. The first record of enslaved Africans in America was when the White Lion dropped anchor in the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. This was a year before the Mayflower landed in 1620.

This previously concealed history, now publicly exposed, reveals the impossibility of separating chattel slavery from our American economy, an economy built on the backs of the enslaved and documented as early as 1619. There is no legacy of the American wealth economy without slavery. The truth is that our current American economy is based on wealth generated during slavery. It was built on a foundation of enslaving Africans to create a “new prosperous world.”

Too many learn late in life the degree to which African people contributed — as enslaved people — to the “greatest economy in the world.” Key to how we understand who we are and our place in the world are our stories — stories of and about where we came from, what we have contributed, the past on which we now stand and the awareness from which we launch our future.

I see why this history was hidden in plain sight and not universally taught.

AFFIRMATION

I accept and embrace who I am, and
I trust my place and role in the world.

1619: Oneness Is Not Sameness

A battle lost or won is easily described, understood and appreciated, but the moral growth of a great nation requires reflection, as well as observation, to appreciate it.

— Frederick Douglass

When we know our oneness with God and Law, what a great burden is removed. Any sense of opposition is removed from the consciousness that perceives unity.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 127

I’m reminded by “The 1619 Project” that oneness is not sameness and that we each have our individual and ancestral points of origin. Our point of origin in any experience is unique, encompassing the significance of how we got here and how our lives got to be the way they are. This is true for us individually, as well as for America.

In addition to our cultural-historical mindsets and practices, we each bring different belief systems, values and cultural norms. Because it is done unto us as we believe, being led to believe that those of African ancestry have less or no value and should be treated as such negatively impacts our sense of who we are — our sense of our worthiness, capabilities and ability to contribute to the greater good. Until we set straight, acknowledge and respect everyone’s origin story, we remain at the effect of the oppressor’s power and gaze.

The notion of changing your thinking to change your life also applies to our nation’s consciousness in terms of how we see the oppressor and the oppressed, how we hold African Americans, and how we see and hold and often reinforce the origin stories of White Americans.

In our pursuit of truth and discerning ancestral and historical cause, we must seek and embrace an accurate world history. When appropriately honored and accurately represented, this history allows us to focus on, pursue and uncover our true shared past. Only then can we hope to understand. Once understood, our shared past and original points of connection are certain to reveal how our current reality is the logical outcome of our beliefs, practices and treatment of each other.

AFFIRMATION

I perceive, honor and embrace oneness.

To the Degree We Become Conscious

Slavery can only be abolished by raising the character of the people who compose the nation; and that can be done only by showing them a higher one.

— Maria Weston Chapman

Humans must be created with the possibility of limitless freedom and let alone to discover themselves.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 109

C SL’s Declaration of Principles says, “We believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us and that we experience this Kingdom to the degree that we become conscious of it.” Harriet Tubman’s life — her beliefs and her fearlessness — offers an example of how we might demonstrate this exalted consciousness in our living. Her life and living reveal the power at the center of her knowing.

Mother Harriet’s story is well known. There are books and movies detailing her head injury at an overseer’s hands, her determination to be free and her willingness to risk her life in support of others’ freedom. There is something about her that is never fully acknowledged — her determined spirit and resolute faith, her drive to escape and intuitive ability to avoid capture and death at the hands of slave catchers.

The a capella group, Sweet Honey in the Rock, has a song called, “I Remember and I Believe.” The lyrics say, “I don’t know how my mother walked her trouble down. I don’t know how my father stood his ground. I don’t know how my people survived slavery. I do remember, that’s why I believe.”

Well, I cannot fathom how Harriet Tubman survived as an enslaved person for more than 25 years, ultimately escaping, only to return time and again to free other enslaved persons and to serve as a trusted spy for the Union Army.

She is my hero, a champion of those othered and dehumanized. I lift her up as the epitome of inner knowing, clear intention, endurance and freedom. Her sense of personal responsibility and justice freed so many, then and now.

AFFIRMATION

I am open to infinite possibilities.

Seven Years

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2024

Whenever I hear anyone arguing for slavery, I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally.

— U.S. President Abraham Lincoln

We need not coerce; we do not create the power, but we must let this Great Power operate through us.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 140

I have heard that the number seven is related to our spiritual journey and may foretell a spiritual awakening. I do not know whether this is so. I do know, however, that Harriet Jacobs’ seven years in hiding led to an amazing shift in her life and circumstances.

Born enslaved in 1813, she suffered the trauma of being abused, sold and moved between owners, giving birth, having her children enslaved and witnessing some being sold. She had the utmost faith in God and believed God would be her rescuer. She relied on and exemplified an abiding faith that her condition and circumstance could and would change. Eventually, she escaped.

What is most unique about Jacobs is that once free, she wrote “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl,” documenting her experience as a slave in North Carolina. She is the only woman known to have left papers testifying to her life while enslaved. Her autobiography stands as an essential slave narrative.

Jacobs suffered in her enslaved circumstance until she made the decision to be free. In June 1835, she escaped. For a short time, she found safe harbor with various Black and White neighbors. When she realized she could not make it to freedom, she returned and hid in a crawl space above her grandmother’s porch. She stayed there — self-imprisoned under a tin roof, freezing cold in the winter and sweltering in the summer — for seven years. Then came a shift — an opening — through which she successfully escaped. Once in Rochester, New York, she became an active abolitionist.

I am enriched and inspired by Jacobs’ perseverance and willingness to tell her story.

AFFIRMATION

No longer imprisoned, I choose peace and freedom.

Changing the Status Quo

We all have a responsibility to create a just society.

– Bryan Stevenson

A realization of the Presence of God is the most powerful healing agency known to the mind of humans.

– Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 145

I often hear folks I wish would behave as allies and advocates engage in discourse around not being responsible for slavery, Black Codes, Jim Crow, and separate and unequal housing, schools and policing. It is obvious to me that while so many benefited for generations from these and other inequities, far fewer see themselves stepping forward to acknowledge and take responsibility and accountability for current inequities. When we study our common history, we may not perceive ourselves to be responsible for slavery and systemic oppression. However, we are all accountable for setting right the truth of our past and working to create a just and fair future.

This is a call out to everyone in divine discomfort, everyone with a heart for freedom, justice and equality. There is a higher calling for us to be and do from an intention of freedom, peace, justice and equality for all.

This is also about change, about changing how we are and how we deepen our listening and act in alignment with what we say we believe. This call to action is to not just hear each other but to listen and respond with understanding, acceptance, support and love.

Sometimes change occurs through individual advocacy, through policy reform, through protests, boycotts or lawsuits. Sometimes a photo speaks a thousand words. Remember the iconic photo of a young man blocking a line of military tanks at Beijing’s Tiananmen Square on June 5, 1989? He and that photo remain powerful symbols of courage and defiance.

If our intention is to change the status quo, we need more allies, advocates and co-conspirators to demonstrate commitment, clarity and courage in defying our current oppressive models.

AFFIRMATION

I listen and respond with understanding,
acceptance, support and love.

Many Feelings About Segregation

The organizers and perpetrators of segregation are as much the enemy of America as any foreign invader.

— Bayard Rustin

If we will have faith in ourselves, faith in our fellow people, in the Universe and in God, that faith will light the place in which we find ourselves, and by the light of this faith, we will be able to see that all is good.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 158

Drew Gilpin Faust, the first female president of Harvard University, demonstrates the qualities of an advocate. She seems to have been born with a spirit for necessary trouble. She said she was raised to embrace the revisionist “glorious triumphs” of Confederacy myths.

In 1954, the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision challenged racial segregation, and integration was to become the law of the land with “all deliberate speed.” However, by 1957, multiple states challenged the decision, including Virginia, Faust’s home state. She knew, even then, she needed to act. She wrote to President Eisenhower, urging him to integrate schools. “Dear Mr. Eisenhower,” her letter began. “I am nine years old, and I am White, but I have many feelings about segregation.”

As Faust’s advocacy evolved, she became a Civil Rights activist and historian of the cultural incongruence that shaped her youth. As a lifetime ally, she created a legacy of advocacy for the greater good, finding historical truth being distorted “preposterous and extremely distressing.” Although raised on myths of faithful servants and benevolent masters, as a historian, she was unafraid to tell the story of a South Carolina planter who recorded his own oppressive and cruel slave mastery. She communicates a certain clarity about the importance of ensuring truth and accuracy in our recorded history and truth in education. She challenges the notion that our children should not be uncomfortable with our past. “History,” she says, “*should* make us uncomfortable.”

She calls us into an awareness that truth is key to our healing and necessary trouble an antidote to the current dishonest discourse on Black history.

AFFIRMATION

I have faith in God, in humanity and in myself.

When my friend was assassinated for being nothing more than a Black man, I decided it was time for that thing to be off the Statehouse grounds. It's not just a symbol of hate; it's actually a symbol of pride in one's hatred.

— South Carolina State Rep. Doug Brannon

In gladness, then, we should make known our desires, and in confidence we should wait upon the Perfect Law to manifest through us. Our part is to be ready and willing to be guided into truth and liberty.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 272

Remember Bree Newsome, who climbed a flagpole at the South Carolina Capitol to remove a Confederate flag on June 27, 2015?

Newsome had many allies on her way to that flagpole and on the day she demonstrated such immense courage. Allies taught her how to climb the flagpole. Advocates arrived with bail money when she was arrested. Known and unknown co-conspirators were in the crowd.

As the police arrived to arrest Newsome, they approached the flagpole with tasers. Seeing this situation about to unfold, a White man placed his hand on the flagpole and stared into the eyes of the White police officers. This man knew that his privilege would interrupt the plan and keep Newsome safe. In that moment, this unknown man was a co-conspirator.

Action is the difference between an ally and advocate. Assuming personal risk is the mark of a co-conspirator. This inspires me to update "When you see something, say something" to "When you *know* something, *do* something." Our superpower is our knowing. We believe and know that all people are incarnations of the One Spirit — and each of us has an essential role to play in calling forth the greater good and a world that works for all.

Newsome unhooked the flag from the pole and passed it to a White man, James Tyson. When she made it down to the ground, police offers arrested them. She recited Psalm 23 as they were taken to jail.

AFFIRMATION

I am ready and willing; I am guided into truth and liberty.

Flagpole Co-conspiracy

White supremacy and racism are perpetuated by White people, so the only way it's really ever going to end is if we end it. We can't expect Black people to end racism.

—James Tyson

Whatever is true of the Universe as a Whole must also be true of the individual as some part of this Whole. Humans evolved from the Universe as self-conscious, thinking centers of Living Spirit, and as such we must, in our nature and being, reproduce the Universe.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 106

James Tyson, the White man who helped Bree Newsome, said he felt called to be "something bigger than myself." This is exactly how he evolved from advocate to co-conspirator and went on to help Newsome over the fence and, upon her descent from the flagpole, stood with her and was arrested alongside her. He committed to something bigger than himself and fulfilled his intention to be a demonstration of what and how White people are called to be and do in support of eradicating racism.

"We never have the conversations we need to have," Tyson said, "which is about racism in America. The reason I felt compelled to get involved with this is because racism in America is perpetuated by White people. Being an informed White person, I feel like I have moral obligation to try to dismantle it."

Racism, inequality and injustice form our nation's dark shadow. This is ours to eradicate. We need co-conspirators, people who tap into their divine discomfort and engage their moral obligation to prepare themselves, take a stance, get involved and do the work required. They knowingly take necessary risks and move outside their comfort and safety zones.

With Tyson, we see and are grateful for his intention and commitment to the greater good. He empowers us to challenge our fears, have the hard conversations and harness the courage to do what is morally right.

AFFIRMATION

I am a perfect and active demonstration of the Living Spirit.

A Dream and a Call to Stay Woke

Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a better person of yourself, a greater nation of your country and a finer world to live in.

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Consciously and definitely we now place our hands in the outstretched hand of the Infinite, and all fear is gone ...

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 311

Martin Luther King Jr.’s enduring legacy encompasses leadership, inspiration and mobilization of the broadest possible constituency against racism and social injustice. In 1968, just as legislation he fought for was finally coming to fruition, he was assassinated. I am always stunned to recall he was only 39 years old. He spent his brief adulthood preaching faith, fairness, dignity, brotherhood and justice. Eighteen years after his assassination, his birthday became a national holiday.

King is remembered and acclaimed for his March on Washington and his “I Have a Dream” speech, and for his final sermon, in which he declared that he might not “get to the mountaintop.” He gave an early version of his “Dream” speech at the Walk to Freedom, a mass march in Detroit, Michigan, on June 23, 1963, where demonstrators protested racism, discrimination, segregation and the brutalization of Civil Rights activists. It was also a dress rehearsal for the March on Washington, scheduled for two months later.

On March 31, 1968, King unknowingly preached his last sermon, “Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution.” He reminded listeners that Rip Van Winkle slept through the American Revolution. He prophetically spoke of a “triple revolution: ... a technological revolution with the impact of automation and cybernation; ... a revolution in weaponry with the emergence of atomic and nuclear weapons of warfare; ... the human rights revolution with the freedom explosion that is taking place all over the world.” He implored us not to sleep through these revolutions, saying, “Many fail to develop the new attitudes, the new mental responses that the new situation demands. They end up sleeping through a revolution.” His advice to “stay woke” serves us well.

AFFIRMATION

I choose to be awake and fearless.

Many Firsts

I have a great belief in the future of my people and my country.

— Marian Anderson

Success and happiness are ours when we deal with Absoluteness. This is the attitude we should have. What we need to know is the Truth.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 277

I am often in awe of Black folks born at the turn of the 20th century who achieved great success and left a compelling legacy. I marvel at how they persevered and thrived under oppressive racial segregation and animus.

I am awestruck by Marian Anderson, born in 1897. I can only imagine what the full fabric of her life experiences included, being the first Black and/or woman to:

- Receive a scholarship from the National Association of Negro Musicians
- Sign with RCA Victor Recording Company and perform solo with the New York Philharmonic
- Perform at the White House in 1936 and solo at the Lincoln Memorial
- Perform on the main stage at the Metropolitan Opera and sing at the inaugurations of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy
- Be named a Goodwill Ambassador for the U.S. State Department and a delegate to the United Nations

It seems she did it all. She performed at the Lincoln Memorial because the Daughters of the American Revolution denied Howard University’s request to hold her concert at Constitution Hall. Eleanor Roosevelt, a DAR member, resigned in protest and formed a committee to find a new venue.

On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1939, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Interior Secretary Harold Ickes introduced Anderson, saying, “Genius draws no color lines.” This 25-minute concert is often viewed as a defining moment of the Civil Rights Movement.

Amazingly, by the time of her death in 1993, she had performed at every major concert hall in America.

AFFIRMATION

I am receptive. I trust humanity. And I surrender to the Absolute.

Awareness Can Be Curative

Who talks most about freedom and equality? Is it not those who hold a Bill of Rights in one hand and a whip for affrighted slaves in the other?

— Alexander Hamilton

As the inner light dawns, it delivers the outer life from bondage. ... When the soul knows freedom, the law will free the body.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 485

From 1790 until 1797, President George Washington resided in the temporary seat of the nation's capital, Philadelphia. Pennsylvania law required enslaved people be set free after six months of residency in the state. Rather than comply, Washington circumvented the law. Every six months he sent his slaves down South, just as the clock was about to expire.

Ona Judge was one of his slaves. Born at Mount Vernon around 1774, when the opportunity presented itself, she escaped during dinner service on May 21, 1796.

Many were incredulous that she could and would leave the Washingtons' enslavement. Judge became the subject of an intense manhunt run by President Washington, who used his political and personal contacts to recapture her. Although enculturated to obey Whites, Judge stood her ground when pressured to return to slavery. She said she looked Washington's agent straight in the eyes — her response final and courageous — and said, "I am free now and choose to remain so." Washington was a powerful man, yet she stood up to his agent on her new-found ground, rejecting his demands and the legal system of slavery.

Harriet Tubman said, "I could have freed more people, if only they had known they were enslaved." Well, Judge knew she had been enslaved, and she knew she wanted more. She demonstrated faith, wisdom and determination. She clearly read the writing on the wall, realizing if she stayed, she could be forever enslaved. She chose freedom.

Ona Judge Staines died on February 25, 1848, in Greenland, New Hampshire, a free woman.

AFFIRMATION

I claim freedom and clear vision.

Whitewashing History

Whose children are we talking about? Black parents talk to their kids about racism. Asian American parents talk to their kids about racism. Just say that you don't want White kids to learn about racism.

— LaGarrett King

Now this is going to call for faith and perseverance and fortitude. It is going to call for persistency of effort and certain flexible determination to see the thing through to a final conclusion.

— Ernest Holmes, “How to Increase Your Good,” page 3

President Joe Biden said, “Acknowledging some dark periods in our past is important,” alluding to efforts to sanitize American history.

Case in point: The Florida Board of Education approved new standards for African American history, and it seems high school students will be taught a distorted and whitewashed history of the Ocoee massacre of 1920. A more accurate telling of this tragedy reveals that Whites attacked and killed Black residents of Ocoee, Florida, when two Black men attempted to vote.

It was not true, as was reported at the time, that “acts of violence were first perpetrated by African Americans.” Dozens of Black residents were killed in the ultimate act of voter suppression, the rest forced to flee and their property seized. This is not accurately reflected in many history books.

In his address, President Biden said, “At a time when some seek to ban books and bury history, we’re making it clear that we can’t just choose to learn only what we want to know. We should learn everything that’s good, bad and the truth about who we are as a nation. That’s what good nations do, and we are the greatest of all nations. Only with truth comes healing and justice and another step toward forming a more perfect union.”

Only by telling the whole truth is reconciliation possible. Just as the truth was withheld and whitewashed to conceal what happened in Ocoee, the current legislation strives to do the same thing by conflating historical facts with contrived revisionist narratives. Now is our opportunity to declare the truth and commence healing and reconciliation.

AFFIRMATION

I have the faith to see it through.

A man does what he must — in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures — and that is the basis of all human morality.

— John F. Kennedy, “Profiles in Courage”

I now decree and declare that I am free from all sense of bondage. I am made perfect and whole through knowledge of the Real Life within me.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 517

There is something exceptional about people who go way out of their way to assist and support folks in need. It’s a current-day Good Samaritan scenario: someone left in desperate need, after certain abuse, rejection and abandonment, and then the timely appearance and focused attention of someone who responds to divine discomfort with the intention and commitment to make a positive difference. Many debate whether our modern-day Samaritan is taking unnecessary risks or would be better served letting someone else address the situation.

Attorney Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), strikes me as a modern-day Good Samaritan. His commitment to justice for those who have been locked up and whose keys have been thrown away is evidenced in his perseverance and dedication to acknowledging everyone’s humanity.

“I came from a world where we valued redemption over revenge,” he says. Under his leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death-row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill, aiding children prosecuted as adults and protecting condemned prisoners suffering from dementia. Stevenson and his staff have won reversals, relief or release from prison for more than 135 wrongly condemned death-row prisoners and relief for hundreds of others wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced.

“Each person in our society is more than the worst thing they’ve ever done,” he says. He demonstrates principle, is God-sent for so many and is my spiritual hero.

AFFIRMATION

I can be counted on to be and do what is mine to be and do.

National Memorial for Peace and Justice

Sometimes we're fractured by the choices we make; sometimes we're shattered by things we would never have chosen. But our brokenness is also the source of our common humanity, the basis for our shared search for comfort, meaning and healing. Our shared vulnerability and imperfection nurtures and sustains our capacity for compassion.

— Bryan Stevenson

When we shall all know the Truth, then ways and means and methods will be found for the freedom of all.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 161

The Equal Justice Initiative offices in Montgomery, Alabama, are near where slaves were unloaded at the Alabama River, an area said to be one of the largest slave auction sites in the country. Bryan Stevenson says there were dozens of historic markers and monuments commemorating Confederate history in Montgomery, but nothing acknowledging the history of slavery.

To commemorate those enslaved, Stevenson acquired six acres in Montgomery for the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. The memorial opened in April 2018 and commemorates more than 4,000 who were lynched. He draws a corollary between this traumatic history and how racial bias manifests in disproportionately high mass-incarceration rates. Associated with the Memorial is the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration.

Reconciliation and healing require that we acknowledge and remember the past. "We think it's important that truth and justice work become local," Stevenson says, "and that every community that has witnessed the horror of lynching reckons with that history through memorialization." In 2022, a new sculpture, "Arise," was installed. I am honored that my likeness is included in artist Branly Cadet's historic sculpture, representing thousands of people nationwide engaged in community remembrance work.

These memorials stand as reminders that the horrors of slavery, the false freedom that followed and the reprehensible treatment of Black people under the criminal system are inextricably related. They also serve as a testament to the resilience, courage and determination of Black people to persevere, no matter what.

AFFIRMATION

I advocate and stand for freedom for all.

The Heart of the Question

Racism is so universal in this country, so widespread and deep-seated, that it is invisible because it is so normal.

— Shirley Chisholm, “Unbought and Unbossed”

An absolute unexpressed has no reality.

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 287

It is certain that in the exact moment a baby takes its first breath, someone, somewhere is simultaneously releasing their final breath. In a similar fashion, I have taken the liberty of connecting two major historical events that took place on June 11, 1963, the first in Washington, D.C., the second in Jackson, Mississippi.

That year was a key time in the Civil Rights Movement, and President Kennedy was focused on the ever-increasing number and size of demonstrations, and the violent backlash from White supremacists and segregationists. We saw photos of Black children attacked by dogs and blasted with high-pressure firehoses.

When Governor George Wallace blocked the doorway of the University of Alabama to prevent two Black students' entry, Kennedy knew Civil Rights legislation was necessary. He decided to speak to the nation about this.

“The heart of the question,” he said, “is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities, whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated. If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public, if he cannot send his children to the best public school available, if he cannot vote for the public officials who will represent him, if, in short, he cannot enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed and stand in his place? Who among us would then be content with the counsels of patience and delay?”

The next morning, the news reported the assassination of Medgar Evers.

AFFIRMATION

I embrace and respond to heart of the question.

Jim Crow Must Go

Let me appeal to the consciences of many silent, responsible citizens of the White community who know that a victory for democracy in Jackson will be a victory for democracy everywhere.

— Medgar Evers

We cannot be good students of the Science of Mind and be filled with fear and confusion. We must keep ourselves in a state of equilibrium, in a state of poise, peace and confidence ... in a state of spiritual understanding.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 160

Medgar Evers was the first field secretary for the NAACP in Mississippi. He demonstrated. He organized voter registration drives and boycotts. He investigated murders throughout the state for nine years and heroically worked to find justice for Emmet Till. He doggedly helped integrate Ole Miss, supporting James Meredith in successfully registering and being admitted. Although his work was met with hostility and made him a target of White segregationists, he never lost faith.

Evers, feeling overjoyed by President Kennedy's speech, as I described yesterday, arrived home shortly after midnight, carrying t-shirts that said, "Jim Crow Must Go." He was shot in the back as he exited his car. Evers' wife and three children, still awake after watching the President's speech, heard the shot, quickly came outside and found him lying in a pool of blood. His eyes met hers and he bravely asked her to, "Sit me up, turn me loose." Evers died within the hour.

I imagine that Evers planned to participate in the iconic March on Washington on August 28, 1963. There, thousands of demonstrators of many ethnicities marched and celebrated the proposed Civil Rights bill and mourned the death of Evers, a Civil Rights hero. It would take 31 years to convict his assassin.

Kennedy was assassinated just three months later. The reforms he envisioned and shared that fateful night would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the most comprehensive social justice legislation to date. Although Kennedy and Evers never met, their aims and visions are forever intertwined in history.

AFFIRMATION

I am committed. I speak truth with poise, peace and confidence.

Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning.

— Frederick Douglass

And may angels light your path to that indwelling city of God in your own soul.

— Ernest Holmes, "Ernest Holmes at Asilomar," page 28

Last summer, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the largest gathering for Civil Rights of its time, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. On August 28, 1963, an estimated 250,000 people assembled at the Washington Monument to protest racial discrimination and promote the pending Civil Rights bill. This was the largest, most diverse, most integrated protest our nation had.

I recently viewed photos from the march. I saw a sea of protest signs and thought, "Sometimes, all we need to see is a sign." The signs read: "America has a centuries old debt to pay contracted on Emancipation Day." "Jobs and Freedom for Every American." "End Segregated Rules in Public Schools." "Voting Rights Now!" They foretold a world that works for all, declaring the dreams, visions and action required for us to live in freedom and justice.

This iconic march was the only one of this magnitude. A sense of oneness prevailed. Hope fueled dreams and fanned the flame of faith. It was a perfect demonstration of our allies, advocates and co-conspirators walking their talk.

Allies are willing, understanding, accepting and supportive of our wholeness, freedom and justice. They demonstrate integrity, empathy, and uprightness. They speak up and stand up.

Advocates support and encourage engaging in "good trouble, necessary trouble." Their advocacy is creative and value-added. They are spokespersons, game changers and positive influencers.

Co-conspirators always are in the deep end, fully engaged. Their participation assures the objective, often at great personal and professional risk.

At the March on Washington, we were one. Black accord and interracial unity challenged our nation's conscience.

AFFIRMATION

I walk my talk in love and oneness.

The Architect

In a democracy, every citizen, regardless of his interest in politics, "holds office;" every one of us is in a position of responsibility; and, in the final analysis, the kind of government we get depends upon how we fulfill those responsibilities.

— John F. Kennedy, "Profiles in Courage"

Within us is the unborn possibility of limitless experience. Ours is the privilege of giving birth to it.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 161

In honor of the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington, I recognize and acknowledge A. Philip Randolph, founder and president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union and AFL-CIO executive, for his role as the march architect and his long-term commitment and contribution to the Civil Rights Movement.

In the 1900s, the Pullman Company was the largest employer of African Americans. In 1925, Randolph created the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. I recall the deep admiration our community held for Pullman porters. Although many were college graduates and respected in their communities, they were still paid low wages and subjected to disrespect and discriminatory practices. In the ten years Randolph led the union, porters realized increased wages, a shorter work week and overtime pay.

He served as president of the National Negro Congress, an organization created to pressure President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to institute policies designed to treat African Americans fairly in the workplace and to protect their civil rights.

He initiated the 1941 March on Washington Movement, calling for thousands of Black people to assemble at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., on July 1, 1941, to demand the president act. When Randolph refused to call off the march, Roosevelt responded by issuing an executive order forbidding "discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color or national origin."

Randolph collaborated with other Black leaders on the 1963 March, calling for freedom and prodding the pending Civil Rights bill into law.

AFFIRMATION

I say yes to freedom, justice and equality.

The Strategist and Tactician

The soul that is within me no man can degrade.

— Frederick Douglass

*Nonresistance is the only thing that cannot be resisted.
Nonviolence cannot be violated.*

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 360

Leaders of six prominent Civil Rights groups joined forces in organizing the 1963 March on Washington: A. Phillip Randolph, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Roy Wilkins, NAACP; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); James Farmer, Congress of Racial Equality; John Lewis, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; and Whitney Young, National Urban League. The organizations they represented proffered that economic issues and racial justice are inextricably intertwined.

In their wisdom, organizers included Bayard Rustin as the strategist and tactician. A master organizer, political intellectual and pacifist, Rustin in 1947 created and rode in the first Freedom Rides, challenging segregation on interstate buses. Along with King, Rustin was one of the founders of the SCLC.

As an openly gay man during a time of fear and intolerance, Rustin was directed to work largely in the background. His skill, moral courage and commitment to nonviolence made him enormously valuable and influential. The success of the march is attributed to him. At its close, Rustin confidently took the mic and read the demands the Civil Rights leaders would take to President John F. Kennedy.

A lifelong activist, Rustin stood boldly for peace and equal rights, demonstrating, organizing and protesting around the world. He died in 1987 at age 75. In 2013, President Barak Obama posthumously awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, saying, “Fifty years after the March on Washington he organized, America honors Bayard Rustin as one of its greatest architects for social change and a fearless advocate for its most vulnerable citizens.”

AFFIRMATION

I courageously commit to being nonviolent.

Standing on the Right Side of History

You have demonstrated over the years that you can stand up in moments of challenge and controversy. One day all of America will be proud of your achievements and will record your work as one of the glowing epics of our heritage.

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. praising Walter Reuther

When the whole world sees the right and does it, then, and not until then, will the problem of evil be solved for the entire race.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 111

If you look up some of the Civil Rights leaders shared in these Guides, you might wonder who the White guy is in many of the photographs. Without looking, I would respond, “It’s probably Walter Reuther,” a man fully engaged in the movement. He demonstrated compassionate allyship, focused advocacy and bold co-conspiracy. He shows up on the right side of history.

Born in 1907, Reuther was a respected organized labor leader and Civil Rights activist. He is credited with leading and expanding the United Auto Workers (UAW) union from 1946 until 1970. He saw labor movements as instruments to advance social justice and human rights in democratic societies, as evidenced in how he leveraged the UAW to advocate for workers’ rights, civil rights, women’s rights, universal health care, public education, affordable housing and environmental stewardship.

A powerful ally of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and co-conspirator in the Civil Rights Movement, Reuther often marched with King. When protestors were jailed in Birmingham, Reuther arranged \$160,000 for their release. He helped organize and finance the 1963 March on Washington, delivering remarks from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial shortly before King gave his historic “I Have a Dream” speech. An early supporter of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers, he got Robert F. Kennedy to visit and support Chavez.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton posthumously awarded Reuther the Presidential Medal of Freedom, saying, “Walter Reuther was an American visionary so far ahead of his times that although he died a quarter of a century ago, our nation has yet to catch up to his dreams.”

AFFIRMATION

I see *right*, and I act accordingly.

A democracy cannot thrive where power remains unchecked and justice is reserved for a select few. Ignoring these cries and failing to respond to this movement is simply not an option — for peace cannot exist where justice is not served.

— John Lewis

Unless we become a living embodiment of love, we have no way to say to somebody else, “God is love.”

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 80

Long before he became a renowned American politician and Civil Rights activist, serving in the U.S. Congress from 1987 until his death in 2020, John Lewis participated in the 1960 Nashville sit-ins and the Freedom Rides. He was chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee from 1963 to 1966. He also was one of the “Big Six” organizers of the 1963 March on Washington. In 1965, John Lewis led the first Selma to Montgomery march across Edmund Pettus Bridge. On “Bloody Sunday” in 1965, state troopers attacked marchers on the bridge, and Lewis was gravely injured. Even that did not stop him; his commitment endured.

In 1963, Rep. John Lewis was known as “the boy from Troy.” He was just 23 years old when he delivered a rousing speech and call to action during the March on Washington.

Even then, he knew and told us: “To those who have said, ‘Be patient and wait,’ we have long said that we cannot be patient. We do not want our freedom gradually, but we want to be free now! We are tired. We are tired of being beaten by policemen. We are tired of seeing our people locked up in jail over and over again. ... We do not want to go to jail. But we will go to jail if this is the price we must pay for love, brotherhood and true peace. ... Wake up America! Wake up, for we cannot stop, and we will not and cannot be patient.”

Lewis’ committed activism continues to challenge each of us to get into what he called “good trouble, necessary trouble.”

AFFIRMATION

I am the embodiment of love in action.

Oluale Kossola and Africatown

All these words from the seller, but not one word from the sold ... the thoughts of the "black ivory," the "coin of Africa," had no market value. Africa's ambassadors to the New World have come and worked and died, and left their spoor, but no recorded thought.

— Zora Neale Hurston, "Barracoon: The Story of the Last 'Black Cargo'"

Real unity cannot exclude anything.

— Ernest Holmes, "Holmes Papers, Volume 1," page 42

The radical power of history is on display in the Netflix documentary, "Descendant," about Africatown and the *Clotilda* slave ship, and in Florida's and other states' ongoing campaigns to erase history.

Africatown is a historic community located just north of Mobile, Alabama. It was formed by a group of 32 West Africans, who in 1860 were trafficked in the last known illegal shipment of Africans, enslaved until the end of the Civil War and freed in 1865 by the Emancipation Proclamation. They bought land, founded and created their own community — Africatown, Alabama.

I first learned of Africatown and its leader, Cudjo Lewis née Oluale Kossola, through Zora Neale Hurston's published interview with him. Lewis lived until 1935 and was thought to be the last survivor of the *Clotilda* living in Africatown. In the interview, Lewis recalls his violent abduction from Togo, his voyage aboard the *Clotilda* and his enslavement by Timothy Meaher. He revealed much about the Togo culture from which the Dahomey warriors seized him. He yearned for his homeland.

Africatown founders retained their West African customs and language, while their children and some elders also learned English. Africatown is the only American community created by West Africans who survived the Middle Passage.

From 1860 to 2019, when the *Clotilda* wreck was retrieved, equals 169 years of deception and denial. Attempts to hide the story failed, as descendants in Africatown and the Mobile area continue to preserve their families' legacies. Finally, in 2022, the Meaher family called the actions of Timothy Meaher "evil and unforgivable," recognizing his actions had "consequences that have impacted generations of people."

AFFIRMATION

I feel divine discomfort and respond with love and action.

Every man knows that slavery is a curse. Whoever denies this, his lips libel his heart.

— Theodore Dwight Weld

Psychology says the first adjustment is to the self, the next to the family, the third to society and the fourth with the universe. And we are not whole until we have made these adjustments.

— Ernest Holmes, "Ernest Holmes at Asilomar," page 50

Truth often is stranger than fiction. In 1859, Timothy Meaher, a White wealthy human trafficker, made a bet. He wagered "a thousand dollars that inside two years I myself can bring a ship full of ni**ers right into Mobile Bay under the officers' noses." He sent his slave ship, the *Clotilda*, to buy and transport captives from Dahomey (present day Benin). The crew returned to Mobile Bay with 110 African men, women and children, and under cover of darkness, smuggled them into Mobile, Alabama. Meaher illegally sold some of the enslaved and took the rest for his brother and himself. He directed the ship's captain, William Foster, to burn and scuttle the ship to conceal this sinister crime.

Meaher committed this crime 50 years after the "Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves" took effect in 1808, making it illegal for Americans to engage in the international slave trade. Violators who transported slaves risked arrest, fines, seizure of their ships and confiscation of their cargo.

The U.S. government attempted to charge Meaher, but he was never held accountable. Two years before his death in 1890, Meaher bragged in a newspaper interview about having masterminded this crime.

The *Clotilda* was the last known slave ship to bring African captives to the United States. The buried wreckage of this ship was located and retrieved in 2019. Some may wonder, as I do, why it took 159 years to definitively establish this crime and confirm the identity of the perpetrators.

AFFIRMATION

I am and we are whole, perfect and complete.

Jim Crow Code

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2024

The history of African American repression in this country rose from government-sanctioned racism. Jim Crow laws were a product of bigoted state and local governments.

— Rand Paul

Your life is my life; my life is your life. I cannot leave you out and understand myself. I am incomplete. I am lame and blind and halted without inclusion.

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 26

While researching the story about the slave ship *Clotilda* and how the government could not prove Meaher’s crime, I discerned an established a historical pattern of racist obfuscation. This troubling pattern, in which Whites can terrorize Blacks with lynching, rape, arson but without legal consequences, supported an entire culture of oppression. I refer to this pattern as the “Jim Crow Code.” It is fundamentally deep-seated and dangerous:

1. Do dastardly deeds under a cloak of invisibility and anonymity. Think: Klu Klux Klan.
2. Invoke the generational code of silence and secrecy. This is essential. Having done the deed, successfully deny it, and then skirt the legal consequence. Think: Emmett Till’s murder.
3. Gaslight anyone who pierces the veil and dares speaks truth to oppression. Instead, ask, “Why are you still talking about the past?” Think: Any slavery reference or assassination.

This consistent pattern of oppression, validating the Jim Crow Code, allows the truth to hide in plain sight. It was common knowledge that the *Clotilda* brought the African captives to Mobile, that the ship was then sunk by Captain Foster, that Timothy Meaher initiated this voyage and acquisition, intentionally breaking the law, and that the general location of the sunken ship was just off Meaher’s land. The crew was silenced, disbanded and dispatched North to minimize exposure, the criminals never held to account.

We need allies, advocates and co-conspirators willing to break rank, expose the deeds and dismantle the false narratives. We must disrupt these destructive multigenerational patterns.

AFFIRMATION

I discern my personal responsibility, and I honor it.

Where you see wrong or inequality or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.

— Thurgood Marshall

Only when we speak from the heart do we speak to the heart.

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 361

I was extremely grateful and a bit overwhelmed to accept this opportunity to write the Daily Guides for Black History Month. I began with great enthusiasm, meditating and visioning and then researching many of the well-known and several less well-known contributors to Black history. I created a spreadsheet detailing the individuals, organizations, legislation and historical events that immediately responded to my visioning invitation. I had some 60 entries of notable Black contributors to consider and prepare to share with you over these 29 days.

Among these possibilities were my all-time favorites, and I just knew they would be included. However, as I surrendered to this discovery process, I began to let go of my affinities and preferences. I commenced writing what wanted to be written.

I was shocked and somewhat dismayed when some of those Black history stories featured non-Black contributors. My heart knew they must be included; my mind was caught up in arithmetic, calculating how many fewer Black voices would be heard and stories told if I used these precious 29 pages in this way. My heart embraced my mind, and they collaborated on loving, creative ways to include everyone called to be part of this year’s Black History Month’s Daily Guides.

This is also a testament to how prayer, visioning and meditation work. The late Rep. John Lewis came through strong. I recalled that a few months before his death, he was on the Edmund Pettus Bridge during the 55th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, and he said, “Speak up, speak out, get in the way. ... Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America.”

AFFIRMATION

I envision freedom, equality, justice and prosperity for all.

Just Stirring Up Trouble

When I liberate myself, I liberate others. If you don't speak out, ain't nobody going to speak out for you.

— Fannie Lou Hamer

Somehow, out of the depth of the universe, some great demand is being made upon us. I know we will answer it in joy

— Ernest Holmes, “Ernest Holmes at Asilomar,” page 325

Rep. John Lewis gave me my marching and writing orders. I was to uplift some folks who committed and contributed to the highest and best for Black folks and their civil rights. I was to center my attention on some folks who spoke up, spoke out and got in the way, issue a call to action and highlight those who engaged in “good trouble, necessary trouble,” often at great personal and professional risk.

I made peace with the fact that my reticence at inclusion could rob readers of much-needed clear examples and exemplary models of how anyone and everyone can participate and of how so many can be allies. These few individuals model how to lead from love, commit to justice and land on the side of right, all the while working to demonstrate a world that works for all.

Those who are not Black and are featured in these Guides demonstrate loving allyship, active advocacy and the courage of co-conspiracy in support of freedom and justice for all.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. alluded to this in speaking of what “good men” must do as co-conspirators. He wrote: “When evil men plot, good men must plan. When evil men burn and bomb, good men must build and bind. When evil men shout ugly words of hatred, good men must commit themselves to the glories of love. Where evil men would seek to perpetuate an unjust status quo, good men must seek to bring into being a real order of justice.”

AFFIRMATION

I am called to support justice for all, and I answer in joy.