

**Society for Healthcare Volunteer  
Leaders  
Virtual Education Conference  
March 22-23, 2021**

**From Pandemic to  
PLANdemic:  
Moving Forward in the  
Midst of a Continuing  
Global Crisis**

**Sabrina C. Clark, Ph.D.**  
Director, VA Center for Development  
& Civic Engagement  
Veterans Health Administration



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The logo features a large white '75' on a blue background. The number '5' has the word 'YEARS' written in white inside its lower curve. To the right of the '75' is the text 'VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION' in white, stacked in three lines.

75 YEARS VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

*Celebrating 75 Years of  
VA Voluntary Service*



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# My 5 ½ Journey with Positive Psychology



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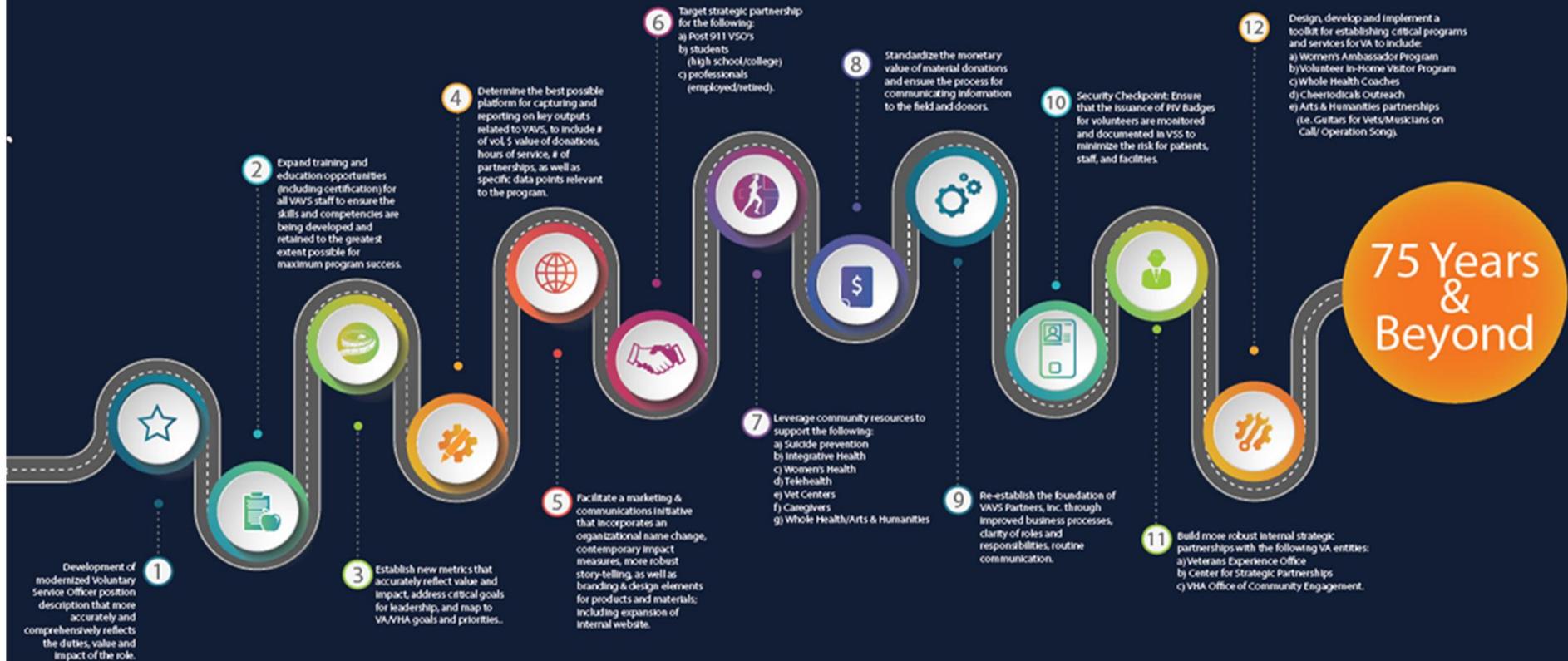


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# VAVS 2020 Vision & Modernization

To ensure the capacity and expand the potential for VAVS to:

1. Recruit and retain quality leaders to guide facility-based programs.
2. Identify and establish critical strategic partnerships that foster more valued services and support for Veterans, families and caregivers.
3. Build stronger, better informed advocates among internal stakeholders for the purpose of establishing meaning and value through service opportunities.



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Volunteer.va.gov



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# Family devastated when pet chews up life savings



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SHOULD WE SCHEDULE  
OUR NEXT ZOOM  
MEETING OR JUST HIT  
OURSELVES REPEATEDLY  
IN THE HEAD WITH A  
HAMMER?



TOM  
FISH  
BURNE

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"Alice, turn your video on. No, it's the button on the bottom. Not that one, over to your left FFS. Jan, you're on mute. UNMUTE YOURSELF!"



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“If who I am is what I have and  
what I have is lost.....then  
WHO AM I?”



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# What is Positive Psychology?

- “.....*the scientific study of what makes life worth living.*”
- The scientific study of strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive
- The study of wellbeing, hope, life satisfaction, self-confidence...
- A scientific approach to living on purpose

## What it's not?

- Positive thinking
- A new fad
- A dismissal of mental illness, psychological trauma, or negative life events
- A “happy pill”

[What is Positive Psychology & Why is It Important? \[2020 Update\]](#)



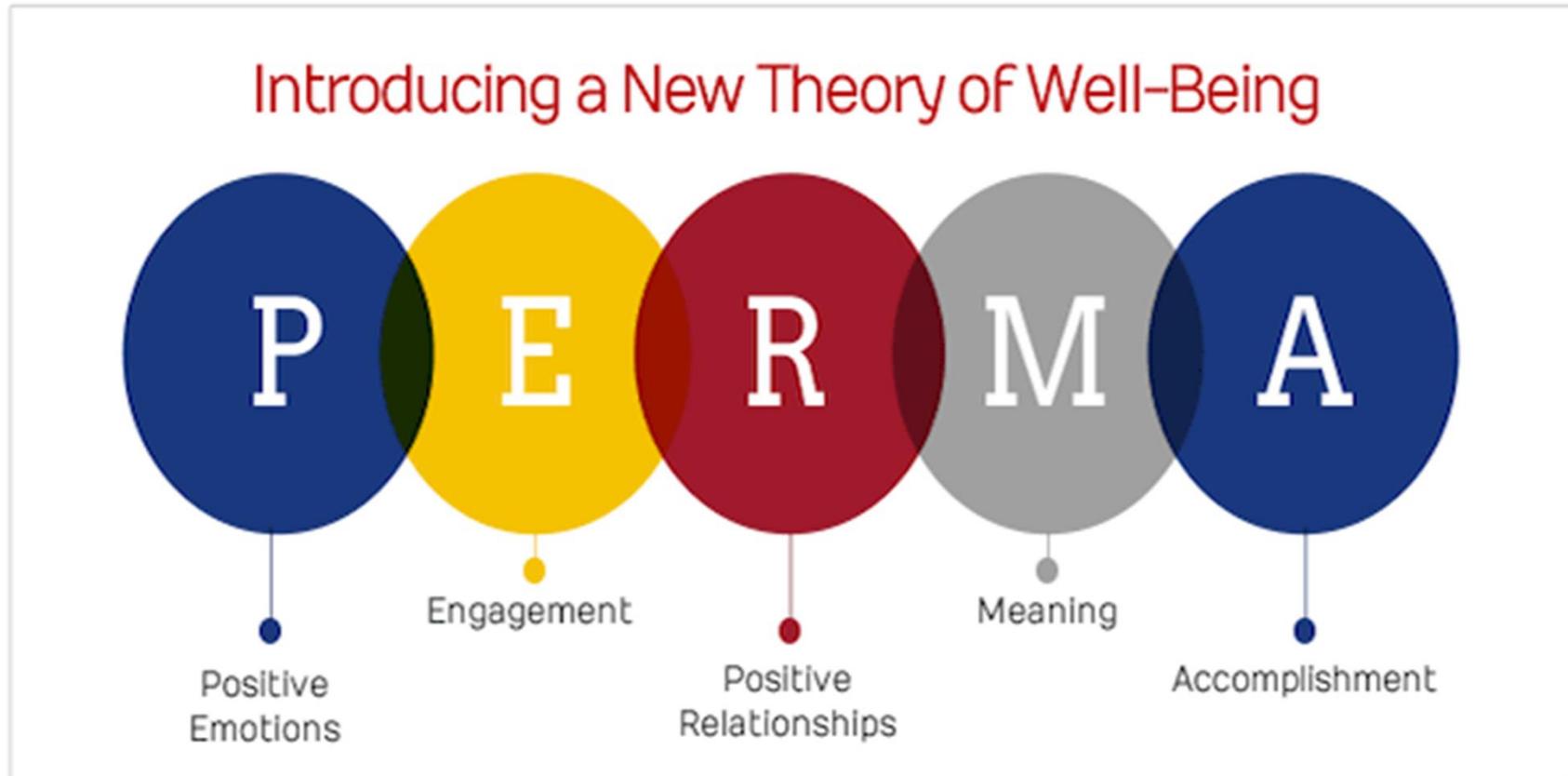
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# The Framework: PERMA



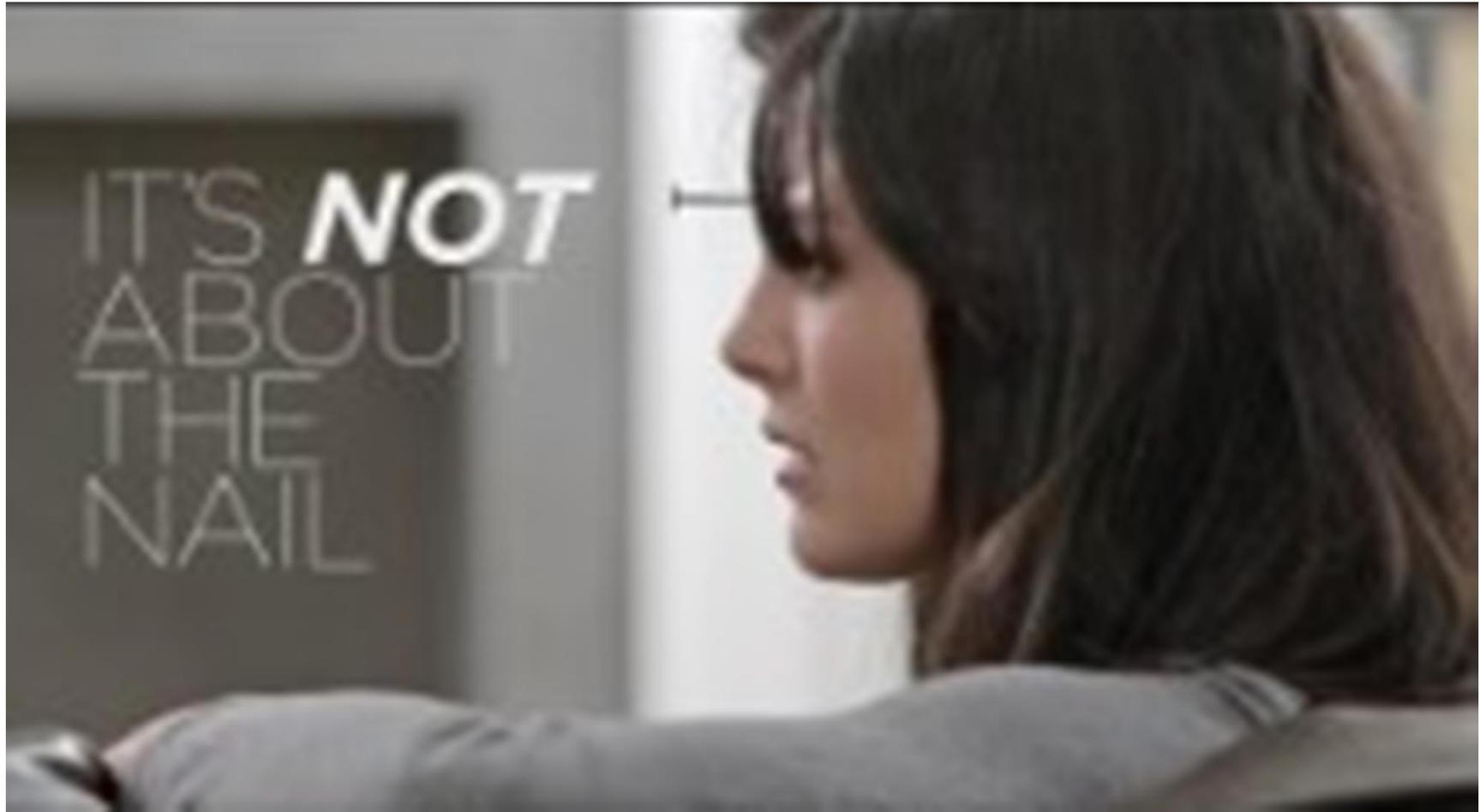
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# It's Not About the Nail!



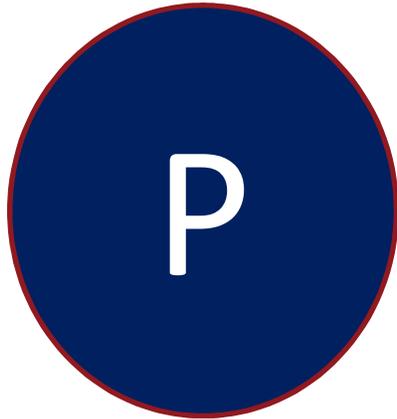
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# Positive Emotions



- Emotions don't like to be ignored
- Become more self-aware....conscious observation
- Find productive ways to express yourself
- You ARE NOT your feelings

## EXERCISE:

- Journal
- Positive Moments Scavenger Hunt
- Savouring



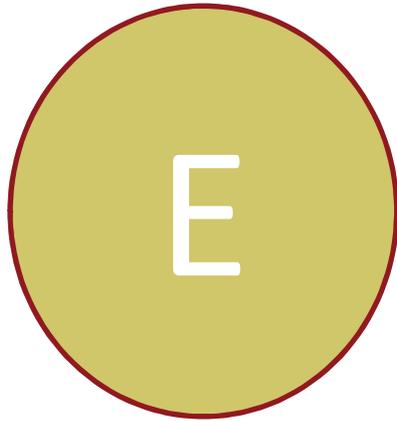
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# Engagement



- Where “time flies”
- Lost in activity- “flow”
- Most creative
- Enjoyable



## EXERCISE:

- Think back on a time when you were involved in an activity when you truly felt like you were in a “flow” experience.
- Take a walk
- Yoga/Reiki/Tai Chi



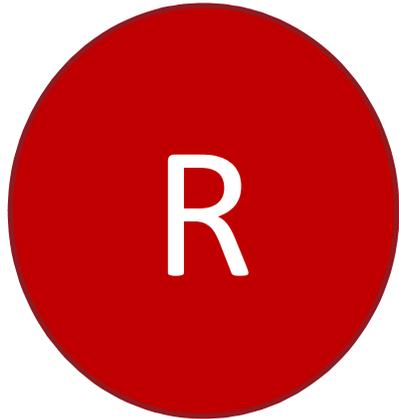
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# Positive Relationships



- People who matter
- People who build you up
- People who support your dreams
- “Provision Friends”- Double your joy and ease your pain.



## EXERCISE:

- Make a list of your “Provision Friends”.
- Think of someone you have not spoken to in a while, but always enjoy when you do. Call them, drop an e-mail, send a text.
- If you don’t have a “Provision Friend” --- ”BE ONE” to someone else.



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# Meaning/Purpose



- Life's Calling
- "If you're still here....you have one."
- It doesn't have to make sense to anyone but you.

## EXERCISE:

- Prayer & Meditation
- Ask (3) people you trust and that know you well what they believe your calling is.
- Revisit PERMA



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# Accomplishment

A

- Achievements and success
- Accomplished goals
- Past success over challenge and disappointment
- Individuals you have served

## EXERCISE:

- Name your three greatest accomplishments?
- What are you most proud of at this moment in your life?
- How can you be of greater service at this time?



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# WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

"It's a hard thing when you get taught how to fear and hate, go to war—and forget how to love," says Ian Michael, Marine Corps Veteran.

With that thought, Ian and his friends began the Human Hug Project, traveling across the country visiting Veterans at facilities nationwide.

**Why?** Because they believe there is love, hope, and healing in something as simple as a hug.

If you'd like to find your **why**, consider becoming a volunteer at a VA facility near you. Visit [www.volunteer.va.gov](http://www.volunteer.va.gov) to learn more.



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# WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

**Sean Stallworth** is a Social Worker at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center in Michigan, earning his MSW from Western Michigan University.

From a very early age, Sean dedicated himself to service, spending 10 years in the U.S. Air Force. These days, he's at VA helping homeless Veterans find their way back to the highest quality of life possible for themselves and their families.

**Why?** Because Sean knows the value of family, sees the significance of everyone and does his best to preserve their dignity every step of the way.



A career in Social Work at VA means spending every day connected to your **"why"** and honoring the sacrifice of those men and women who have earned the title of American Veteran. To find out more, visit: [www.socialwork.va.gov](http://www.socialwork.va.gov)



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# National Social Work Plan to End Racism



“As the world recently acknowledged the horrific events surrounding the death Mr. George Floyd, we recognize that African American, Native American, and other minorities continue to die as a result of law enforcement action(s). I am writing to acknowledge the collective trauma and pain experienced by an untold number of survivors who have also experienced (past, present, and future) injustice, suffering, and premature death related to racism. As the proud mother of a biracial daughter, I felt called to social work because of the profession’s commitment to social justice. I wanted to be a part of group that wasn’t afraid to speak up, a profession that not only had the courage to address discrimination head on, but also was required to do so through our professional code of ethics and licensure. “

*Laura D. Taylor, LSCSW*  
June 15, 2020

Challenge Statement:  
**IDENTIFY WAYS TO ATTRACT AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO SOCIAL WORK WITHIN VA**



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# JEDI

Justice | Equity | Diversity | Inclusion



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VOLUNTEERING  
**TOGETHER**

*Making a difference to  
people and communities*

IN THIS ISSUE:

**YOUTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

**THE RISE OF VIRTUAL &  
INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING**

**THE IMPORTANCE OF AGILITY  
& BUILDING RESILIENCE**

**...AND MORE**

**SOLIDARITY THROUGH  
VOLUNTEERING  
IN TIMES OF A GLOBAL CRISIS**

Citizenship  
Respect  
Accountability  
Fairness  
Trust

*To enhance and support a  
fair and just organizational  
culture within VA through  
the engagement of socially--  
conscious and culturally-  
competent volunteers and  
community organizations*

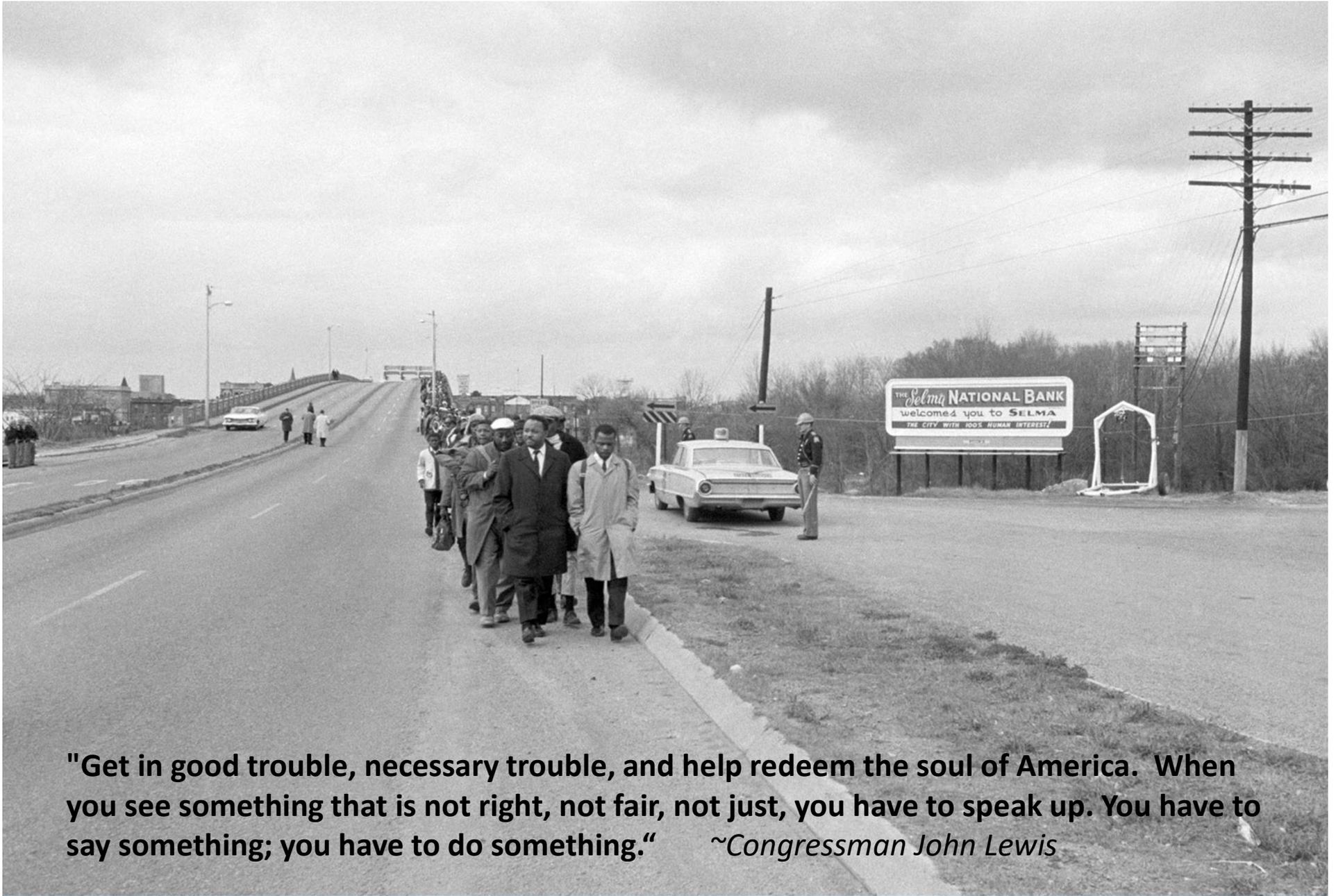


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**"Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America. When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something." ~Congressman John Lewis**



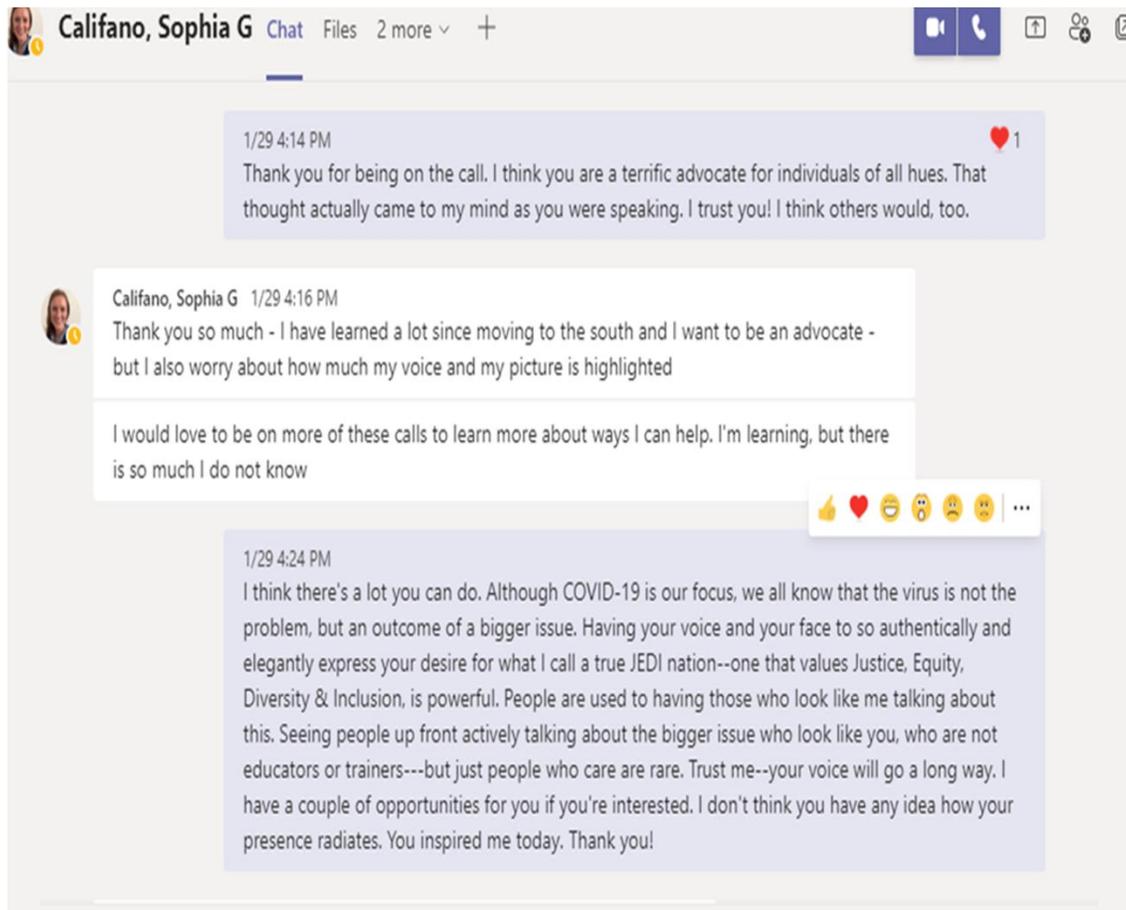
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# What color is your voice?



“.....I also worry about how much my voice and my picture is highlighted.....”

~Dr. Sophia Califano



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I  
SPEAK  
JEDI!



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# Mr. Rogers Goes to Washington



In 1969, Fred Rogers brought his neighborhood's message to Washington when he famously testified before a Senate subcommittee in support of National Public Television.



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# To move from pandemic to PLANdemic,

You must:

- **Tell the truth** to yourself....and extend **GRACE**.
- Be persistent with **PERMA**.
- Walk with your **“WHY”** in front of you.
- Once you’ve told the truth...**YOU CAN SPEAK YOUR TRUTH....**
- **Boldly, authentically, unapologetically!**



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# Community

A group of individuals who have learned how to communicate with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to “rejoice together, mourns together,” and to delight in each other, make others’ conditions our own.”

~M. Scott Peck, *The Different Drum*



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#REALLOVEREVOLUTION

SPEAK YOUR TRUTH NOT TO  
CONVINCE, PERSUADE OR EVEN GET  
YOUR WAY. SPEAK YOUR TRUTH  
BECAUSE YOUR HEALING AND  
EVOLUTION COMES FROM HAVING  
THE COURAGE TO STAND UP FOR  
BEING AUTHENTICALLY KNOWN.

*Terri Cole*

terricole.com

**"NEVER APOLOGIZE FOR BEING CORRECT**

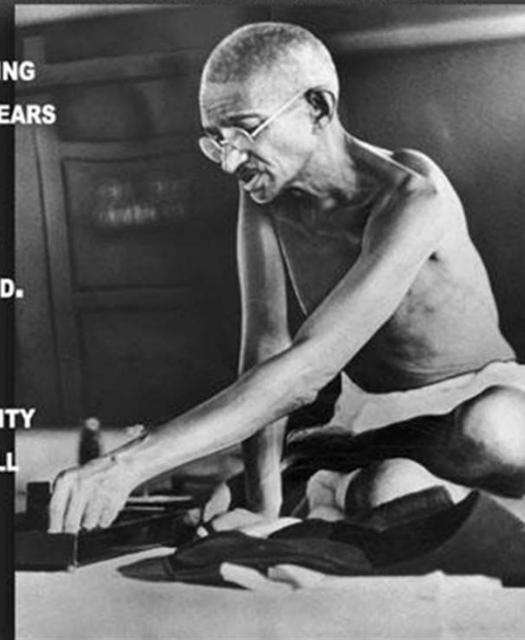
**MANY PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IGNORANT PEOPLE, WANT TO PUNISH YOU  
FOR SPEAKING THE TRUTH. FOR BEING CORRECT. FOR BEING YOU.**

**NEVER APOLOGIZE FOR BEING  
CORRECT, OR FOR BEING YEARS  
AHEAD OF YOUR TIME.**

**IF YOU'RE RIGHT AND YOU  
KNOW IT, SPEAK YOUR MIND.  
SPEAK YOUR MIND.**

**EVEN IF YOU ARE A MINORITY  
OF ONE, THE TRUTH IS STILL  
THE TRUTH."**

**~MOHANDAS GANDHI**



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