

George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter Movement

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I first heard about the death of yet another Black man at the hands of police from my mother and Facebook.

I didn't want to believe it, after all we were supposed to all be in time out still, right? I couldn't make myself sit and watch the video that had been recorded of Mr. Floyd's untimely death by the hands of police who clearly weren't bothered and didn't give a damn about the life they were taking. Pictures had flooded my timeline of this man and the cop on his neck. Little did I know that this was only the beginning in a shift change. People started crying out from everywhere demanding justice for this man. The veil of the so-called "America, the beautiful" was lifted and the world saw firsthand just how wrong this was.

Then people started saying how George Floyd was a criminal and deserved what he got but yet people like Kyle Rittenhouse and George Zimmerman were the supposed heroes. George was in cuffs. Once those cuffs were put on, that should've been it. How could this man possibly resist arrest if he was already in handcuffs? I had heard the same story many times about how this poor man was calling out crying for his deceased mother and my heart dropped.

I am a single Black mother and that could've just as easily been my son or my daughter in that position. I hope and pray that this never happens just as we all do. It's so funny to me how we all live in this supposed melting pot and yet have to have completely different conversations with

our kids. I refuse to buy my children water guns because of what happened to Tamir Rice. I tell my children not to wear hoods or have their hands in their pockets because of what happened to Trayvon Martin. You tell your children to be honest and upfront with officers and when you are honest about a weapon in the car, you get shot point blank in front of your daughter and your significant other, like Philando Castile. There are too many names, too many horror stories, too many people NOT being held accountable for their actions.

In just about every other occupation, if someone messes up big time, they are stripped of their title and can't ever find another job in that same field again. What makes these officers so special? Yes, there are most certainly good officers out there, however they often times are being ostracized by their department and labeled as trouble. So, what happens? Well, they end up leaving the field because no one will listen.

When we first started screaming about reform and defund, people took that to mean we don't want to pay the officers at all. This simply isn't true. We just don't see why you need military gear and over a million dollars for funding. We realize police are over worked, that's why we're also yelling and protesting for social workers and therapists to be available and take some of those calls and take some of the pressure off. But when you have officers like Derek Chauvin, Kim Potter, and countless others, the message gets jumbled.

Allow me to make it clear for you: Get rid of ALL bad officers, starting from the top of the chain all the way down to the rookies, take that huge fund that goes to the police every year and spend it where it matters most: our classrooms. Hire staff such as social workers and mental health specialists to help both the officers and the civilians.

But this all starts at the top, with our Commander in Chief, President Joe Biden, and Vice President. Kamala Harris. Until we recognize

that, nothing will change. Black Lives Matter is not an enemy, they're an ally; and not just to the Black community, but to all other communities as well, much like the Black Panthers were.

Black Lives Matter does not mean that only our lives matter, but that our lives ALSO matter. Yet we are constantly retorted with "All Lives Matter." Where was ALM when those school shootings happened? Where was ALM when the Waffle House and the Walmart shootings happened?

They were silent! They did nothing. Why?

If you truly valued all lives and didn't just say that to try and quiet a people who have been quiet and docile for the longest time, then you should have and would have been the first ones on the scene making sure everyone was okay. Am I saying BLM is perfect? NO, of course not because there is no such thing as perfection. Hell, even God made mistakes. Do people loot and riot in the name of BLM just like with any other main protagonist group? Absolutely. But this isn't a black and white issue. It never really was. It's always been right versus wrong and rich versus poor. When the community as a whole wakes up to this realization, things will then begin to change for the better.

There is a very ugly, very dark, very disturbing invisible creature that grows and thrives off of clear and blatant hatred. We know it better as the boogeyman. This creature has gotten so big, feeding off of so many people, that it's going to take years of hard work and breaking bad habits to finally be rid of this creature and make sure it cannot return. Does this mean we have to always get along and agree with everyone? No, because that's psychologically impossible.

We get mad at people demanding basic things, like living wages and respect, and then turn around and wonder why no one wants to do these jobs anymore. It's not because people are lazy, it's because they realized, just like we all have at one point or another, that they deserve more. We all have to start somewhere and some

of us like where we are so much that we work towards becoming a higher up like a manager, supervisor, or even beyond that. I am a firm believer that whatever you put out into the world you get back tenfold. We all need to practice brotherly love towards everyone.

You know how at Christmas time everyone says, "Peace on Earth and goodwill towards Man"? We really need to practice that year-round. Only when we continuously practice peace on Earth and goodwill towards all will we see that our perceptions of people were way off base. Maybe then for the first time ever, we could all stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with one another and make this a better place for my children, your children, and their children's children.