

Our Mission Statement

The continual unification of as many organizations as possible starting at the local level and branching out to both the state of North Carolina and then the entire nation.

Spotlight

HUMANITY-RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS



By DonnaMarie Woodson

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS



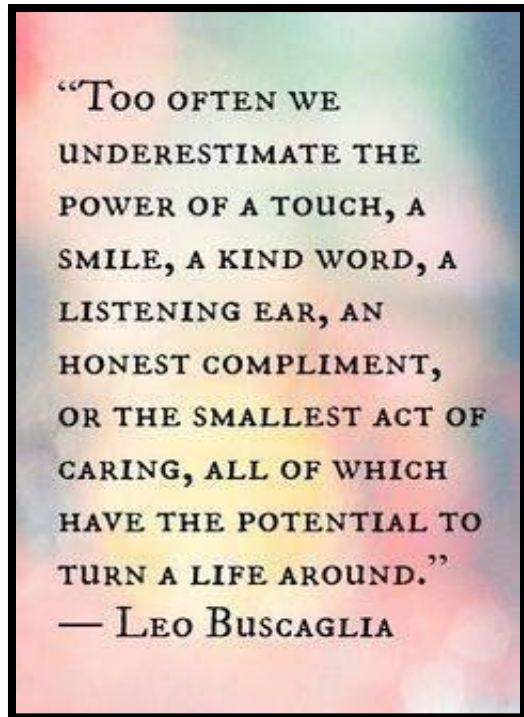
I am sure like me, the tension and anxiety of living through Covid-19 is taking you on an emotional roller coaster ride. Writing has always been a vehicle for me to better understand the events in my life and my spirit has always been drawn to being active not just politically but also in the practice of human kindness.

I subscribe to Rodale Wellness and receive their daily newsletter for ideas and inspiration for living a healthy life. This particular article stood out as an excellent and relevant topic during this historic pandemic. The idea of this piece is instead of focusing on negatives, we make positive changes in our lives.

Practice acts of kindness.

Here is the challenge:

In the next seven days complete at least one random act of kindness. But, not just any act, it must be an unsuspecting random act of kindness.



Ordinarily a random act might be opening doors, giving up your seat for the elderly, and picking up trash on the street, however, we've got to be creative using virtual acts of kindness. Plus, under ordinary circumstances you should do those things all the time!

Some examples of an unsuspecting random act of kindness could be sending flowers to someone who lives alone, ordering a special delivery pizza or favorite food to someone who you

know wouldn't expect it, or Facetime a friend you haven't spoken to in awhile.

But here's the catch:

Please do not tweet, post, or brag about anything you do for this homework assignment. Bragging about doing nice things defeats the purpose of that very same act. The only two people that will know the exact details of what you did is *you* and the person that you surprised. Now go make our city and the world a better place!

I'm up for the challenge, how about you?

if we all do
one random act of
kindness daily
we just might set
the world in the
right direction

martin kornfeld

Inspired by an article in Rodale Wellness by -- [BROGAN GRAHAM & BOJAN MANDARIC](#)

This is the primary point here. All workers are valuable. A cashier can be just as valuable as a CEO, given the right set of circumstances. In fact, networking has deemed it so. The rise in information

technologies has flattened the authority hierarchy in our society. All people are being made equal through information. There is no aristocracy hoarding society's



knowledge. Albeit, some people cannot afford the internet, for most the internet and communications technologies such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, and WebEx have given anyone with a laptop and an idea a voice.

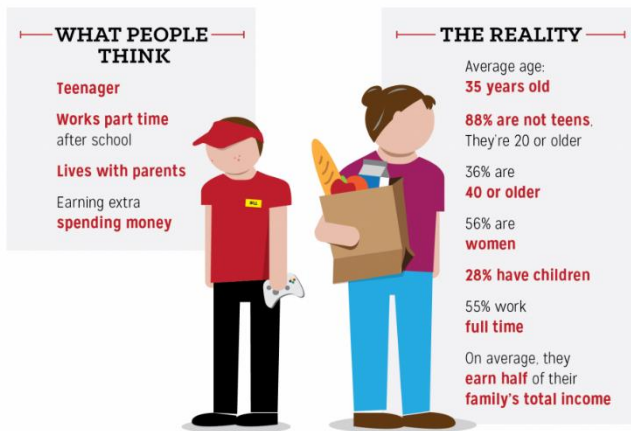
For example, musicians are broadcasting their content over Instagram and having virtual concerts over Zoom. Huge behemoth corporations no longer are the only ones with the means to be heard in the music marketplace. These days having an idea and a computer seems to be enough. Hence, there is a new way of organizing on the horizon. CEO's are not the only ones who are in a position of making the decisions to keep companies competitive—at least not anymore.

Also, there was a fundamental flaw with the old way of thinking about labor economics. If a food worker, to continue with the example, was worth so very little to the economy, then the whole group of food workers was literally begging for scraps from the table, as they struggled to live off of the low wages offered from

the company which employed them. On a global scale, this resulted in a race to the bottom for wages. As people were willing to work for less and less worldwide, companies found themselves moving to countries where people would do the most work for the least amount of pay. This undoubtedly exacerbated existing poverty in certain countries and didn't lead to the universal opulence of Adam Smith. So really, understanding this logic, it is better for workers the world over, to demand higher wages, so that workers are not undercutting one another simply to get scraps from the company's table.

All workers are valuable given the right circumstances.

WHO'S HELPED BY RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE?



Note: Statistics describe civilian workers, ages 16+, that would be affected by an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over three years, as explained in *Raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would give working families, and the overall economy, a much-needed boost*. The median age of affected workers is 31 years old. Visit epi.org/issues/minimum-wage for more details.

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Greed is also a big problem in capitalism as well. I understand the need for profit—for the entrepreneur and the decision makers to take the lion's share. But, do CEO's, investors and entrepreneurs need to take that big of a share? There is only so much money that one person, or even one family can spend. Should

there be such greed that one person has a ridiculous surplus, while others face starvation and deprivation?

I'm also rethinking the idea of the able bodied male and the work ethic. The myth of the abled bodied male says that all men of able body and mind should work for their income, and that any type of

assistance is a “handout.” Also, the work ethic, particularly for men, says, “if you don’t work, then you don’t eat.” But what happens in times of recession, when there are not enough jobs to go around? A man’s whole identity is tied up in his ability to stay employed, but when he becomes unemployed through no fault of his own, and is relegated to the soup line, his dignity suffers and personal feelings of depression set in.



Also, think about homelessness which is a very real threat to face, if a man loses his job. Here, I am specifically talking about men, because welfare policies have traditionally, in the USA, been targeted towards helping the deserving poor—women and children, the elderly and those with disabilities.

Unemployed men have been historically categorized as the underserving poor. What if you are homeless? Then maybe that is your fault? But, what if at any one time 58,936 homeless people are living in Los Angeles County and 36,300 are living in the city of Los Angeles—of course, this number probably includes more than the count of men. Could 58,936 people be at fault? Or, is there a systemic challenge at hand? I would argue the latter. There is something wrong with the existing system.



There is also the question of how racism maintains economic inequality. A racist decision maker, such as President Trump, will point the finger at immigrants, an obvious red-herring, to keep

White workers from demanding more scraps from the table. As long, as immigrants are “taking jobs away from Americans”, as the rhetoric goes, then poorer working class Whites, will never ask the question as to why, wealthy Whites have some much more than them. Because, according to the rhetoric of the wealthy Whites, it is poor, brown people “stealing” jobs, as opposed to the rich Whites hoarding wealth for themselves. So, poorer Whites continue to vote against their own interests—as long as they get the smug satisfaction which racism gives them.

And, why do conservatives scream socialism every time someone calls for lending help to the working class?



Personally, I'm not a communist. I know from the study of history that communism only made everyone equally poor. Communism doesn't work. But, there are some ways to help people out of



compassion that makes sense to me, and which I wouldn't consider communism at all—for example, health care. I know that doctors and health care workers deserve an incentive in terms of higher pay because of all of the years of training they go through, the high stress level of their jobs, and just the amount of

care it takes to be them. But at the same time, it makes no sense to have a world-class health care system that no American can afford. The whole purpose of health care is CARE, so why not subsidize the care, in order to make it available to everyone? Is that socialism, or it is just basic care for your fellow human being?

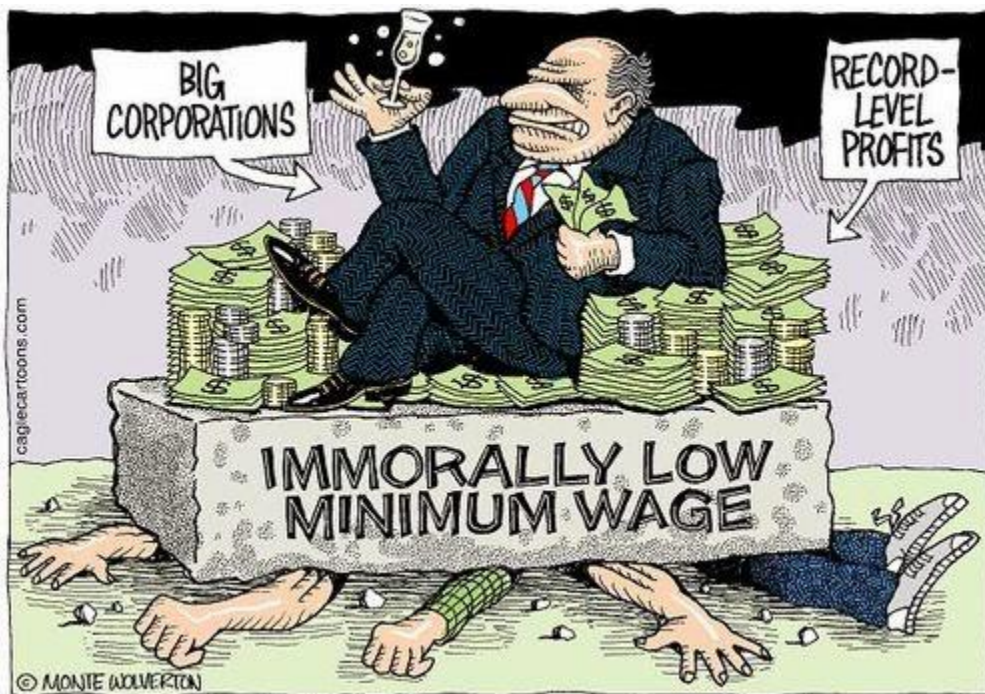
A healthier, more cared for workforce, is a more productive workforce.

I'm not arguing for excessive government interference in the economy, as I'm no socialist, but I would say that sometimes government intervention is necessary. For example, the fact that companies would not stop air pollution, oil spills and other environmental harms, of their own accord, made the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) necessary. I still believe that people should be able to make private decisions in the market, but I don't think that those with money and power should be able to do whatever they want.

With money and power comes responsibility!

I still believe that competition in the private market is good for the economy. A competitive company is making a product that people want. If you are making goods that people want, then they will buy your products, keeping your company healthy. Now, this means that the concept of utility holds. As long as your company makes useful products, as society defines usefulness—as, sports for example may not be useful for sustaining life, but useful for entertaining oneself—then, your company will succeed. Useless products fall by the wayside, and better and more useful products become more predominant over time. This is how technology advances for example. The rise of the automobile made buggy whip makers obsolete.

My problem is the violence and suffering which capitalism allows.



Unemployment, poor health, racism, classism often inflicts violence on people. It could be physical violence or emotional violence.



Lastly, I would like to talk about the importance of civil society. The market doesn't have the only means for people to gather and work together. People have shared interests and have worked together voluntarily at times, to further their common interests. Voluntary relationships are the backbone of family structure, for example, and people have often created "families" in affinity groups. Every form of human cooperation doesn't necessarily involve the exchange of money.

Civil society and free association are just as important as making money.

I hope that my words here are helpful, and instructive in how we look at one another in society through the lens of money, power and privilege. All ideas need to evolve over time, and every economic idea doesn't need to necessarily fall in the either-or fallacy of communism/socialism vs. capitalism.

Works Cited

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Announcements



Screening for COVID-19 for People with Symptoms

Available from Atrium Health

Friday, May 1st, 1-7 p.m. in YMCA parking lot
1946 West Blvd.

Fliers in English and Spanish.

More locations and times listed here.

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For More Information,
Contact Avery Bonifati at
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or at 704-344-9950

Virtual meeting sponsored by Congressional Black

Caucus on COVID-19 and Black America,

Monday, May 4th at 4:00 p.m. Info here.

Announcements



Lights of Hope at Home

American Cancer Society North Carolina

Friday, May 15, 2020 at 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Facebook Live (register on FB)

(Stand together virtually to honor or remember our loved ones who have faced cancer. You may purchase virtual luminaria bags for a suggested \$5 donation and virtual torches for a suggested \$25 donation on your local Relay for Life event website. visit www.relayforlife.org. Luminaria bags and torches can be dedicated in memory, in honor, or in support of a loved one. Any virtual luminaria bags and torches purchased between Tuesday, April 28th, and Wednesday, May 13th, will be guaranteed to be in the virtual luminaria slideshow on Friday, May 15th, at 8:00 PM.)

Congressional District 12 Convention 2020

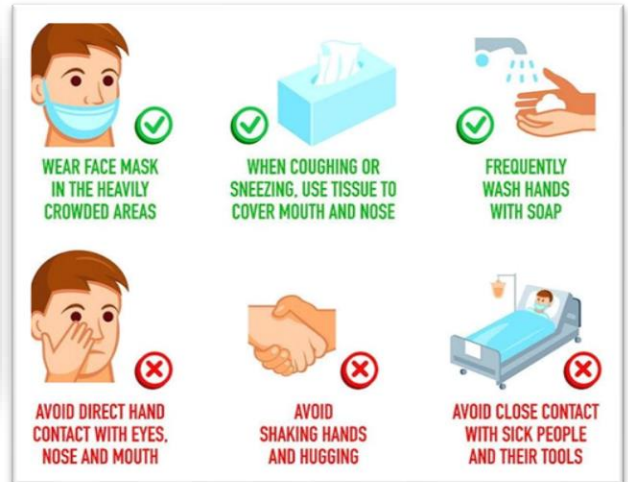
Saturday, May 16 at 9:00 am – 11:00 pm

Zoom



Please submit your group events to donnamarie93@gmail.com by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.

Happenings Gallery!



The Executive Corner:

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