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#IHaveSomethingToSay

Profound Gentlemen [profoundgentlemen@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 11:46 AM

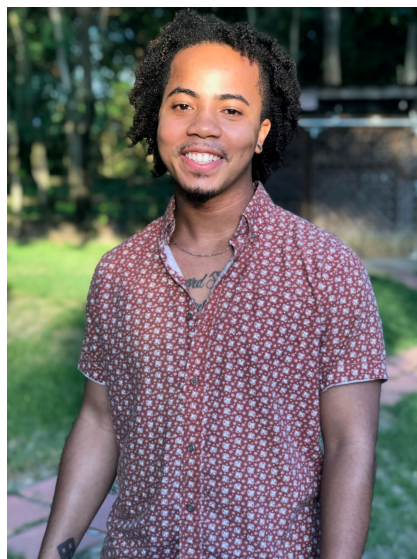
To: [Steve Johnston](#)

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For the past week or so, many people within my village reached out and asked how I was doing. I was always quick to respond so that we could move past this uncomfortable check-in. The truth is, I hated talking about where we are as a people and the condition of this country as it burns in a fury. I felt detached. I even tried suppressing everything that was happening around me. Certainly not in a way that erases the legacy of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others that we never hear about, but the feelings associated with it. I thought I was "good" until my eight-year-old son called me and asked, "Why do police officers kill Black people?"

It's disheartening because, in this day and time, as a Black man raising a Black boy, you anticipate "the talk," but it's not the innocent conversations you envision in shows like Boys Meet World or Full House. It's not the talk about the birds and the bees. Or the talk about when he will first fall in love. Nor is it the talk about how to live a life so that the world will remember his name. Instead, it's the talk about why he's a target. His eight-year-old perception of the world will forever be distorted, forced to learn to always be on his guard. When he goes to bed at night, he won't be thinking about our mountain hiking trips or our next family vacation. The state of this country leaves him wondering, will he be the next #hashtag. So when he asked me this question, all of the feelings I tried to suppress resurfaced. Tears began to flood my eyes nearly making it impossible for me to breathe, let alone speak.



Tonight, he kissed me on my cheek, squeezed his arms around my neck as if these were our final moments together, and said, "I'm really happy to be here." As pure and innocent as this may be, my moment with my son was interrupted by the chilling thought that this could be taken from us simply because White supremacy patriarchy finds our existence distasteful. For generations, this level of systemic hate has physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally traumatized black and brown communities. My brothers, it's time to break the cycle of generational trauma.

My teammate Jason said something that resonated with me in his address to this movement. If you haven't read it, I invite you to read this as well as the thoughts of a few of my other PG brothers. In short, he encouraged us to "use our privilege to support the best way we know how." So as a father, a leader, a teacher, and a student, I choose to respond to this movement by responding to my son's question. A question that we are all processing...

It pains me that the world, your world, our world will never see you in the light as your mother and I do. Instead, they see black. They say conquer or be conquered. But this is not your problem to solve. Nor is it your burden to carry, especially as a Black boy learning to navigate masculinity and living in a world that tries to destroy you. Your ascension in this life is not dependent upon their acceptance of you. You are the source. You are the joy. You are the light. And your worth should never be defined by how someone treated you. You, Black boy, are the power you need to manifest your dreams within.

The climate in which we live may have you questioning if you are enough. Your lived experience makes you enough. Your ambition to survive as being Black and male in America makes you enough. Your ability to love in a world engulfed by hate exudes your resilience but also affirms that you are enough. However, as much as I know this to be true, it will never be enough for you. You must ask yourself, what makes you enough. As you explore that answer, your self-validation will overwhelm you with peace throughout the most challenging moments in life.

I employ you to find your way. Like me, you have learned about systems through the lens of oppression. So to own your narrative, it's imperative to decide what it is that you stand for. And when you take that stance, do so with strategic intent. In doing so, you'll begin to develop a new system that will create your seat at the table and liberate those you choose to fight for tirelessly.

Take it one day at a time. Self-define yourself. Live authentically and love vulnerably. We can make the world a better place, but we must do it with love.

To everyone reading this, I hope you can reflect on your impact and decide what you will stand for. What will be the story, you tell?

To my allies, LOUDER!

To my sisters, I'm standing with you.

To my young Black boys, I'm fighting for you.

And to my brothers, I love you on purpose.

In love, in light, and hope,  
C. Moyer

## More PG Updates

[TFA Corps Speaker Series: Juneteenth](#)- Watch Keiyonna Dubashi, founder and executive director of Profound Ladies, Jasmine Johnson, a school leader at Kipp Bay area public schools, and Mario Jovan Shaw, co-founder and CEO of Profound Gentlemen, discuss building culturally responsive classrooms.



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