**SOCIAL JUSTICE 103 SELECTING YOUR SOCIAL JUSTICE ENDEAVOR**

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN**

**THE ENDEAVOR**

**TOPIC 1**

**Some will shape central visions for a better nation. Some will serve in Congress. Some will march. Some will call. Some will donate. Some will run for office. Some will organize. Some will teach. Some will write.**

Each one of us matters.

**So, What Can We Do Differently? How Do I Make A Difference?**

Below is a starter of ideas from my experience and discussions everyday activists like you. This isn’t intended to be a comprehensive list.

There are as many ways to take action as there are people in the world. What actions might you envision in any or all of these spaces?

**1. Individual**

A couple items for you to think about for a question and answer later. What are your attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in relation to gender, race, sexual identity, obesity, bullying, climate change? What’s your personal history? How do you define yourself?

Can you change to support equity, respect, and nonviolence? How?

* Be introspective. Ask questions.
* Talk less, listen more.
* Consider your sense of humor and the tolerances it might reflect.
* Review the media you consume and set out to read, listen to, and watch more diverse stories and perspectives.
* Think about how your assumptions about race and gender shape your own identity and relationships. Are they full of stereotypes?
* Pace yourself at a speed that keeps you from crashing. How fast can you go, how much can you do, while remaining functional, healthy, and loving? Remember that there’s a rich and full spectrum of capacity. Some folks have the steel to work in an ER. Others don’t. But everyone can help exactly where they are.

**2. Relationship**

With whom do you live? Whom do you love? Whom do you take care of? Who takes care of you? Partners, family members, peers?

How do you influence their behavior and contribute to their experiences? How do they influence you? How might these relationships change, or change you?

* Have the hard conversations. Talk openly and honestly with children, spouses, family members about topics that, to this point, have often been categorized as unpleasant, “too political, not for polite company,” or just plain unacknowledged in any way.
* Be a good bystander, rejecting or intervening when you see or hear behaviors that support violence or discrimination.
* How are chores and responsibilities distributed in your home and among your family members? Does everyone do domestic work? Does everywhere share in leisure time? Are lines drawn in strictly gender-based ways? If you pay children an allowance for chores, do they get paid equally for their work?
* Say thank you to the people around you, and acknowledge their contributions to your life.

**3. Community**

Where do you work, go to school? What neighborhood do you live in? Are there meetings you can attend that influence processes or policies? Boards?

What could you organize to reach neighbors and friends?

* Reach out to neighbors you may not have spoken to or spent time with before.
* Consider the ways in which you might cultivate a sense of community and fun with the people around you.
* Find out which local, grassroots organizations are doing work that you support and donate time and money.
* In person, meetings, gatherings, challenge your institutions – churches, schools, libraries – to take firm stands on issues of social justice.
* Launch a social media campaign on campus, in your school, or church, create a work group that proposes a bill in that community.
* Start a book club or monthly dinner around key ideas and themes
* Find out how your school and after-school programs approach social justice conversations with students.
* Join your school board or PTA.
* If you’re a school volunteer, consider how traditional volunteering planning and opportunities exclude working and single parents.
* If your place of worship doesn’t allow girls and women to participate in ministerial roles and public leadership consider ways that might change.

**4. Societal**

Are you registered to vote? Do you have access to policy-makers? Are you a policy-maker yourself, with influence over social norms, policies, and laws that support or undermine equal rights?

Are you part of a political party, nonprofit, or company that influences health, economic, educational, or social policies that reinforce or maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in society?

* Through program creation – a social media campaign, a conference, a workshop, a community group – target lawmakers to increase support for policies that support equal rights.
* Press or support elected officials with phone calls, letter, petitions, and donations.
* Run for office.

**TOPIC 1**

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 1**

What are your attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in relation to gender, race, sexual identity, obesity, bullying, climate change? What’s your personal history? How do you define yourself?

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 2**

Think about how your assumptions about race and gender shape your own identity and relationships. Are they full of stereotypes?

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 3 with the Dean**

**PLEASE SET UP A PHONE CALL OR ZOOM CALL WITH THE DEAN FOR 15-30 MINUTES.**