

Unity: Make it Your Lifestyle (Humanity's Song: The Unification of a Divided World)

Merriam-Webster defines unity as “a state of harmony”. Martin Luther King Jr. embodied a lifestyle of unity and a drive to create it. He took the first steps, but we must continue his work in 2016 and beyond.

Unity is a general concept that is easy to understand but hard to implement. Understanding different people leads to unity. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke to many people at once. He was able to sympathize with the enforcers and victims of Jim Crow and with people who were apathetic on the issue. In order to create unity, our world needs to strive to understand different points of view. Currently, social media is the vehicle through which we frequently interact with others. Attacks through social media are frequently based on differences such as appearance or perspectives. Take the recent election as an example. While the days between the election and inauguration should focus on uniting a divided nation, many have abandoned the commonalities that we have in favor of focusing on our differences.

Unity, however, does not mean agreement. Unity includes respecting one another. Unity is the willingness to fight for the rights of everyone, not just for the people with whom you agree. Unity is the idea that everyone is entitled to a way of life that is reflective of his or her personal values. Consider the LGBTQ community. Even if you do not agree with their life choices, because they are citizens of the world, they have the same inalienable rights as any other member of the global community. The willingness to respect the choices of others is the current step that we as a society must take to achieve unity. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “Unity has never meant uniformity”. It is not necessary for me to look like you or to think like you to call you my brother or my sister. King also said “we may have all come in different ships, but we are in the same boat now”. As individuals we are all different, but at this point in human history we must work collectively to achieve the dream of Martin Luther King Jr. that we will live in a nation where we will not be judged by the color of our skin, who we love, how we dress, how much money we make, but by “the content of our character”.