

## Why Society Needs the 'Black Lives Matter' Movement to Help Evolve Consciousness by Lauren Jones

Acknowledging and healing the injustice issues that black individuals have experienced throughout generations is what the Black Lives Matter movement means to me. These inequalities still permeate throughout the world in black people's lives today. The idea and importance of the Black Lives Matter movement is not to put black people on a pedestal, in which some people may think, but rather to bring awareness to the continuous discrimination that black people deal with still, in the 21st century. This movement is important to me because I feel that black people deserve the same opportunities and experiences to thrive in society as any other person would like. The injustices that black people face is detrimental to not only their lives, but everyone's lives as well. I feel this way because we, as humans, are all connected through a vast web of consciousness, so hurting one group of people, hurts all. Although I cannot say I have experienced racism, since I am white, I do see, hear, and acknowledge the hurt that black people undergo.

This movement has affected me because it has allowed me to really learn about the inequalities that black people experience every day. Because of this movement, there is a lot more information that is being brought to the surface about what black people truly endure. Many black Americans have to face police brutality, redlining segregation, and the pure hurt of not being seen or heard as a valuable human. I have friends who are black, and who have dealt with discrimination of their color throughout various issues. One issue that I notice a lot is getting pulled over by police quite often, while I rarely hear of my white friends being pulled over. There is a huge issue with black individuals being forced into impoverished neighborhoods, for many decades, with little to no opportunities of getting out and thriving in today's world. Black children in impoverished neighborhoods are growing up with it being normalized to not eat nutritious meals, experience criminal activity, and substandard education systems. These issues have been created through continuous racism towards black people because white individuals of power have segregated them from being integrated in diverse communities. The discrimination that black Americans face daily has drastically divided our society. But, this separation is rather an illusion, we are never truly separate from each other, and it is time to start acting like it.

For the future, I envision that this movement is going to help shift the awareness of these issues towards the unavoidable issues that black Americans deserve justice for. As a collective, we must come together to become conscious of these inequalities so we can help to heal them. Rather than be color blind, we must begin to hold space to hear and feel black people's truths and experiences. We need more understanding and love towards black people. These people are our brothers and sisters, our family! Every single human being is connected! As in "The Dhammapada", the book of the Buddha's teachings translated by Eknath Easwaran, "Hatred can never put an end to hatred; Love alone can. This is an unalterable law." (Easwaran 105). It is time to acknowledge the hurt and hatred that black people have endured solely for their skin color. And it is time now, to heal this hurt with love.

Works cited

Easwaran, Eknath. "The Dhammapada." Nilgiri Press, 2019.