

WHAT IS MY LEGACY?

*The Guide for
Connection, Love
and Fulfillment*

THE WORKBOOK

**BY MARTIN LUTHER KING III,
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CRAIG KIELBURGER**

*With contributions by Melinda French Gates, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Jay Shetty, Yara Shahidi,
Rev. Al Sharpton, Billy Porter and Simon Sinek*

MYLEGACY.COM

Dear Friends,

Thank you for being here! We're so glad you've joined us on this journey to rethink and redefine what legacy truly means.

When we wrote *What Is My Legacy? Realizing a New Dream of Connection, Love and Fulfillment*, we set out to shift the way people think about legacy—not as something you leave behind, but as something you live every single day. We call this approach *Living Legacy*, and we believe it has the power to give you life's most desired outcome: fulfillment.

But it's bigger than that. We believe *Living Legacy* has the power to help heal the deep divisions in our world and bring us one step closer to realizing my father's dream of the Beloved Community.

We know that sounds bold. Maybe even a little ambitious. But with all our hearts, we believe in the profound impact of this vision. *Living Legacy* isn't just a concept—it's a way of life, a way of being. It's a way of living in deep alignment with your true self and a path that leads to greater connection—with yourself, with others and with something larger than all of us. And at its core, *Living Legacy* is built on one undeniable truth: the astounding, transformative power of love.

Each of us came to this work with years of experience in understanding and shaping the power of legacy. As the son of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King, I've inherited both their mission—to combat hate and build the Beloved Community—and the traumas of their sacrifices. These experiences have shaped my understanding of legacy's complexity in ways I could never have imagined.

My wife, Arndrea, has dedicated her life to healing the legacies of hate and protecting the rights of all people. She carries forward my mother's legacy, both as a nurturing mother to our daughter Yolanda and as a tireless advocate for mothers' rights everywhere.

Marc and Craig began their legacy work as teenagers, fighting to free children from slavery. Their journey taught them the importance of addressing the root causes of poverty and exploitation. Today, they are renowned for their work helping individuals and communities build legacies that truly change lives.

For more than a decade, the four of us have worked together as friends and allies, united by a shared commitment: to alleviate human suffering and address the crises that stem from the legacies of the past. Seeing the increasing division and trauma in the world, we knew



it was time to share a new vision. That vision became *What Is My Legacy?*—and now, this companion workbook.

In the pages ahead, we'll introduce you to the key concepts of *Living Legacy*, and more importantly, show you how to put them into action. This workbook is filled with clear, actionable steps to help you start crafting—and living—your own unique *Living Legacy* every single day.

Our goal with this workbook is simple: to help you turn the inspiring ideas in *What Is My Legacy?* into real, tangible change in your life. Here's what you can expect:

Reflection Prompts

Thought-provoking questions to help you explore your values, the legacies of the past that you've inherited, and what a new *Living Legacy* could look like in your life.

Actionable Exercises

Practical activities to integrate *Living Legacy* principles into your daily life.

Daily Practices

Simple, repeatable habits to build a life with greater love, purpose and connection.

Progress Check-ins

Opportunities to reflect on your growth and recalibrate your efforts.

We invite you to commit fully to these exercises, setting aside dedicated time for reflection and action. We know from experience that this work can be deeply rewarding—sometimes even life changing.

Please remember: *Living Legacy* isn't about overnight transformation. It's about small, consistent steps—daily choices that, over time, lead to profound and lasting change. And the best part? It's doable. It's available to anyone, at any time.

In the coming pages, we will break it down more for you and show you how you can be your own *Living Legacy* architect. You will be amazed at how living your legacy every day will benefit your life and help you experience a more soulful connection and impact in the world.

Thank you for joining us.

With love,

Martin Luther King III

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Luther King III". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent "M" and "L".

MYLEGACY

ON SALE NOW!

THE MUST-READ BOOK THAT WILL FILL YOUR SOUL—AND YOUR LIFE.

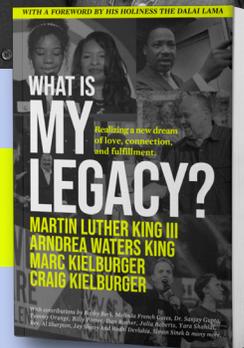
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*SWIMMING
IN LEGACY*

SECTION ONE

MYLEGACY

Introduction

When we started contemplating this book and researching the meaning and impact of legacy, we were surprised by how little people realized or acknowledged the influence that legacy has on our lives, especially the permacrisis we're experiencing.

Legacy literally shapes us all. It is embedded in the physical, mental and emotional structure of who we are and in the culture we live in. One day, as we discussed this book, Craig put it simply, "We are like fish swimming in an ocean of legacy! It's so fundamental to our existence we can't even see it as separate from us."

Yet recognizing these legacies that have shaped us is actually a huge part of healing the inner crises that plague our personal lives and the outer crises that are overwhelming us in the greater world. Whether we're facing an outer crisis or an inner one, we can almost always trace it back to a legacy we've inherited.

Traveling Upriver

Imagine standing by a river, rescuing children swept away by the current. As you pull them to safety, more appear, helplessly tumbling downstream. Eventually, you'd ask: *Why are they falling in?* Archbishop Desmond Tutu shared this metaphor with us many years ago to highlight the need for upstream action—addressing the roots of our challenges rather than their symptoms.

Today, we stand in a river of crises—global, societal and personal. All four of us have dedicated our life's work to alleviating suffering and elevating humanitarian causes. Feeling pained by the permacrisis we see the world drowning in, we took Archbishop Tutu's parable to heart and decided to journey upstream together. The first thing we discovered was the impact of legacy on our permacrisis.

How Legacy Created Our World

The world we live in today is shaped by two primary types of inherited legacies:

Collective Legacies stem from historical and cultural events—colonialism, war and systemic racism—that still impact society. For instance, the legacy of slavery in America persists through systemic inequality and poverty cycles.

Familial Legacies include beliefs, behaviors and even traumas passed down through families. Emerging research in epigenetics shows that ancestral experiences, even going back multiple generations, influence how we perceive ourselves and the world today.

The Root Cause: Disconnection

Examining the interconnectedness of harmful legacies from the past led us to a deeper question: *Why do these legacies exist? What started them in the first place?* At the core, we found **disconnection**—from ourselves, our values, nature and each other.

- The **climate crisis** stems from a legacy of materialism and consumerism that overshadows our connection to the Earth.
- **Slavery and racial oppression** cannot exist without a profound disconnection from our humanity.
- **Political and social divides** are fueled by long-standing legacies of fear, distrust and individualism absorbed across generations.
- **Loneliness**, an epidemic in modern society, arises from cultural legacies that prioritize productivity over community. This disconnection not only damages mental health, but it also takes a life-threatening toll on our physical health.

Rewriting the Legacies We Inherited

The good news? Legacies of disconnection can be transformed into legacies of connection. By recognizing harmful patterns and choosing a different path, we can heal ourselves and the world around us.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a *Beloved Community*—anchored in love, justice and connection—wasn't just a dream. It was a call to action. As Martin Luther King III often reminds us,

his father knew in his heart that building this community requires dismantling the harmful legacies that disconnect us and creating ones that unite us.

This workbook will help you identify the legacies that have shaped you and provide tools to transform them. But before we begin, let's take a look at the conventional definition of legacy and how we've got it all wrong.

What We Got Wrong About Legacy

Our outdated, conventional definition—Old School Legacy—is rooted in four pervasive myths:

Myth #1:

Legacy Is for the Dying or Dead

We think of legacy as something we leave behind—money, property, reputation—but this mindset delays meaningful impact until it's too late.

Myth #2:

Legacy Is for Sale

Some try to buy a legacy, as seen in corporate philanthropy, aimed at erasing wrongdoing. True legacy is built through genuine, heartfelt contributions, not nameplates or monuments.

Myth #3:

Legacy Is Only for the Famous

Icons like Dr. King or artistic geniuses such as Miles Davis or athletic greats like Serena Williams inspire us, but legacy is not reserved for the elite. It's about daily actions that uplift your community and inspire positive change.

Myth #4:

Legacy Is How Well Others Perceive You

The pursuit of admiration leads to external validation rather than meaningful action. True legacy is built through authentic connections and contributions.

To counteract these myths, we needed a new framework that is accessible regardless of age, fame or financial status. A framework that integrates into our daily lives in an outward rather than inward-focused way and connects us to others.

That framework is a *Living Legacy*.

What Is Living Legacy?

Unlike traditional legacy, a *Living Legacy* isn't about what we leave behind—it's about how we live now. Instead of waiting to amass wealth or achievements, we cultivate our legacy daily through our choices, values and relationships.

- It's a way of being.** *Living Legacy* shifts the focus from leaving a mark after death to making an impact in the present.
- It happens every day.** Small acts—kindness, integrity, generosity—shape our legacy far more than grand achievements.
- It's about connection.** Legacy isn't measured in possessions but in how we support others and uplift our communities.
- It's both personal and universal.** Our individual actions ripple outward, shaping not just our lives but the world around us.

The Transformative Power of Living Legacy

Living Legacy is a daily practice of transformation. It allows us to:

Heal inherited wounds. Instead of being burdened by harmful legacies, we use them as soil for new growth.

Create fulfillment. Unlike fleeting happiness, fulfillment stems from connection, purpose and authenticity.

Foster love as a guiding force. Love reconnects us—to ourselves, our families, our communities and the planet.

Living Legacy: The Pathway to Fulfillment, Connection and Lasting Impact

At its heart, *Living Legacy* is the path to finding one of the most sought-after and valuable treasures life can give you: **fulfillment**.

Unlike happiness, which is conditional and fleeting, fulfillment is lasting. Research shows that people who feel fulfilled are more resilient, lead authentic lives and experience a greater sense of well-being. They feel a sense of wholeness and know that their existence has significance.

Fulfillment comes from:

- Living in alignment with our values
- Creating meaningful relationships
- Contributing to something greater than ourselves

When we cultivate a *Living Legacy*, we experience fulfillment not as an outcome, but as a way of life.

Living Legacy Is Our Call to Action

The traditional view of legacy—focused on wealth, fame or achievement—often feels inaccessible to those without significant resources. However, *Living Legacy* offers a more inclusive framework. It positions each of us as an ambassador or “envoy,” carrying forward the values we hold dear, regardless of material wealth. The Latin root of the word “legacy,” *legare*, means “to send as an ambassador,” reinforcing the idea that our lives can be a vehicle for connection and love. We can all be ambassadors of kindness, compassion and justice, leaving behind a legacy of positive impact through our actions.

Dr. King called us to courageously heal the legacies of the past and build a new world based on the power of

love, human decency, non-violence and equal justice and opportunity for all. *Living Legacy* is more than just a philosophical idea; it’s our united call to action. It challenges us to live intentionally, make daily choices that reflect our values and contribute to the common good. By doing so, we not only transform our own lives but also contribute to the healing of the world.

Living your legacy today means being the change you want to see in the world—through your actions, your words and your choices. As you embrace *Living Legacy*, you’ll also find greater fulfillment, deeper connections and a lasting sense of purpose. This is not about waiting for change to happen; it’s about creating it through the legacy you live every day. This is about becoming the hero of your own life so you can be a hero for the world.

Let’s begin crafting your *Living Legacy* today!



Coretta Scott King (56) and Martin Luther King III (25) at a rally in Washington, DC, for the twentieth anniversary of the “I Have a Dream” speech and March on Washington in August 1983. (Getty)



Women's Empowerment: A Legacy That Continues to Give Back

Melinda French Gates

Many years ago, I met a group of women in Malawi who were standing in a long line on a hot day to get their kids vaccinated. Many of them had traveled far to be there, and I was moved by their commitment to their children's health. When I noticed one young mother with small kids, I asked her, "Are you taking these children to get their shots?" She answered, "What about my shot?"

She wasn't talking about a vaccination. She was talking about Depo-Provera, a long-acting birth control injection. She knew that if she wanted to give her children a chance at a better life, she needed to be able to hold off on having any more. But she'd have to spend a day walking with her kids to a far-off clinic to get it, and there was a good chance the shot wouldn't be in stock anyway.

That conversation, and the countless like it that I had with other women in similar positions, ultimately inspired me to advocate for contraceptive access, which in turn opened my eyes to the countless barriers and obstacles that keep women from having their full power in

society. It taught me something else, too: I'm not the expert. Women know what they need to lead the lives they want, and the most important thing I can do is to first stop and simply listen to what they have to say.

I often think of the quote "To know that one life has breathed easier because you lived here. This is to have succeeded."

Everything I do is in the hopes that women and girls around the world will be able to breathe easier—to have access to the opportunities and support they deserve, the freedom to decide whether and when to have children, and the power to live life on their own terms.

One of the reasons I'm so passionate about this work is because I've seen the ripple effect of women's power. When women are empowered, their kids are healthier, their communities are safer, their countries are stronger economically. Some people see legacy as a static thing that never changes. But in my view, empowering women and girls creates a living legacy, one that continues to grow and give back.



*Melinda French Gates is a philanthropist, businesswoman and global advocate for women and girls. Today, she heads Pivotal Ventures, an organization she formed in 2015 that works to accelerate the pace of progress and advance women's power and influence in the US and around the world. Previously, she founded and cochaired the Gates Foundation. French Gates is also the author of the bestselling book *The Moment of Lift* and the creator of *Moment of Lift Books*, an imprint publishing original nonfiction by visionaries working to unlock a more equal world.*

*YEARNING FOR
FULFILLMENT,
CONNECTION
AND LOVE*

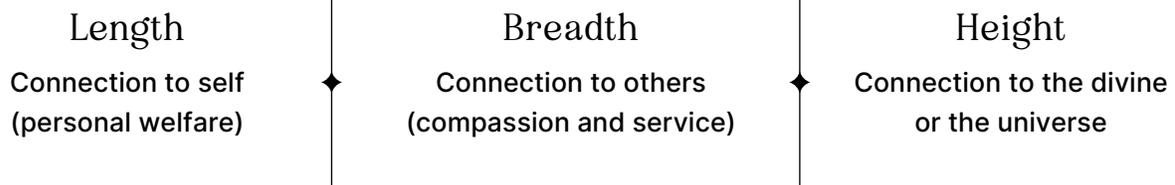
SECTION TWO

MYLEGACY

Introduction

This section is your guide to exploring the deep human yearning for fulfillment, connection and love. Inspired by Chapter 5 of *What Is My Legacy?*, we'll dive into what it means to live a fulfilled life, how fulfillment differs from fleeting happiness, and how love—particularly agape love—serves as the fuel for building meaningful connections with yourself, others and the world. By reflecting on your Inner Purpose and Outer Purpose, you'll begin to align your life with what truly matters.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. described a fulfilled life as having three dimensions:



Reflection Questions

*Which of these three dimensions feels strongest in your life?
Which dimension needs more attention?*

PART ONE

Understanding Fulfillment

Fulfillment is a state of being deeply connected to yourself, others and the world. Unlike happiness, which is fleeting and circumstantial, fulfillment is enduring and rooted in a sense of wholeness, authenticity and purpose. And let's be clear: pursuing fulfillment is not a luxury. Research tells us fulfillment is not only essential for preventing mental illness, it is a primary ingredient for thriving in all stages of life.

Fulfillment happens when:

- ◆ You feel your existence is significant
- ◆ You leave a meaningful mark on the world
- ◆ Your life aligns with your Inner Purpose (personal growth) and Outer Purpose (impact on others)



Reflections on Reciprocal Altruism and Our Shared Humanity

Dr. Sanjay Gupta

In contemplating my *Living Legacy*, I find solace in the intricate interplay of my three identities—each intertwining to create the fabric of reciprocal altruism. As a doctor, my hands extend beyond healing; they cradle lives, nurturing individuals toward their best existence. As a journalist, I wield words as tools, asking, “How can I craft narratives that serve the collective good?” And as an individual—a husband and father to three remarkable daughters—I nurture our family’s actions to create positive change.

Reciprocal altruism is the delicate balance between selflessness and self-preservation and is our best chance for humanity’s survival. It defies the Darwinian dogma of “survival of the fittest.” Instead, it suggests that our brains harbor a deeper impulse—a yearning to care for one another.

My first love and primary job is being a neuroscientist. From a scientific perspective, we would believe we are all programmed to live a life defined by looking out for number one, but that isn’t the case. Societies that have thrived have been societies that cared about each other. The idea that our brains somehow predispose us toward wanting to care for other individuals is mysterious but hopeful. Perhaps it’s rooted in our primal survival, transcending mere individualism.

As a journalist, I’ve covered almost every conflict and natural disaster in the world in recent decades, from wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to Hurricane Katrina, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the 2011 famine in Somalia to the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. People often ask me how I do it and how I keep

showing up to these tragic moments in history. I have seen people profoundly suffering, and it has left me feeling deeply wounded and powerless. But through them, I’ve learned something about the untapped capacity of humans to help others. People rise up all the time. And frequently, these are the same people who, a week earlier, might have said they’d never help out if something terrible were to happen. Being in the presence of these everyday heroes is deeply inspiring.

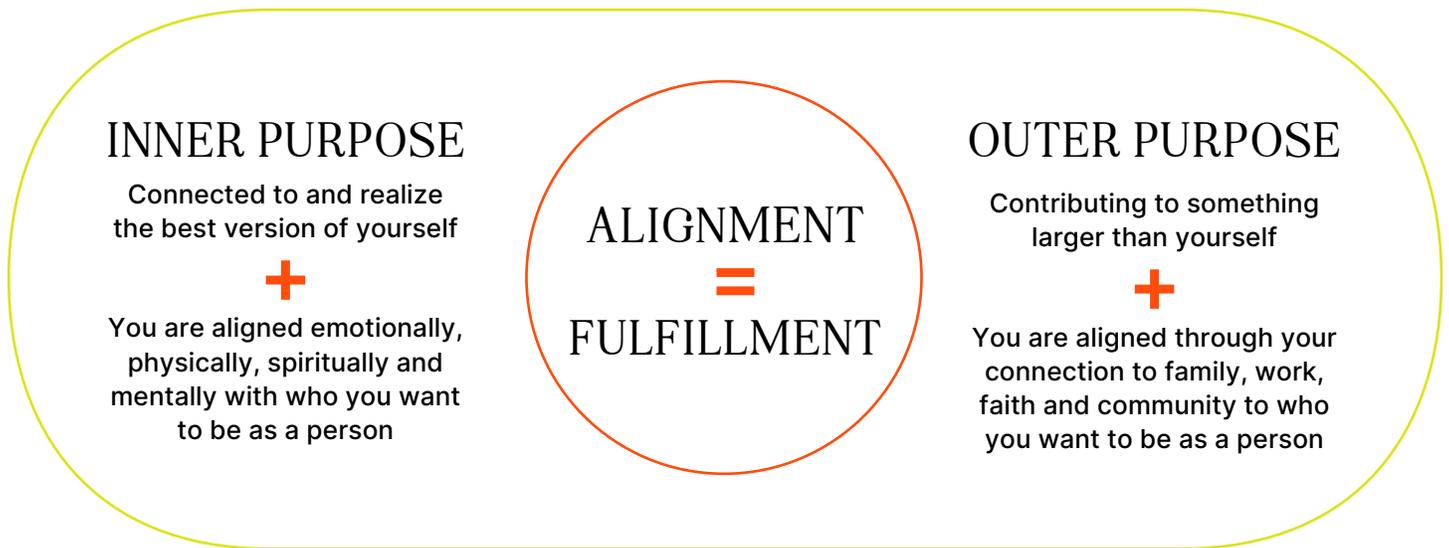
It also feels good to do good. I know this to be true because I feel it in my bones. I feel good when I am in service to others. Some of the moments of greatest joy for me and my family are when we are in service to others. As a family, we look at the injustices in the world and where we can make a difference. Childhood hunger is important to us. It’s unacceptable that 12 percent of American children go to bed hungry while 40 percent of the food in our country goes to waste. My family comes together to support charities that tackle hunger.

Through all this, I remember the importance of connection—the invisible thread binding us. During my grueling neurosurgery residency—110-hour weeks, head bowed at a microscope—I realized that contentment blooms in shared endeavors. Moments of true joy emerge when we collaborate.

Reciprocal altruism isn’t a lofty ideal; it’s a practical path toward a better future—one where compassion, cooperation and shared responsibility prevail. We can all be everyday heroes, shaping a legacy that transcends our individual lives and echoes through generations.



Dr. Sanjay Gupta is the multiple Emmy-award winning chief medical correspondent for CNN, host of the CNN podcast *Chasing Life*, associate chief of neurosurgery at Grady Memorial Hospital and an associate professor at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta. He has covered some of the most important health stories in the US and around the world.



Inner Purpose

A path of personal growth: a continuous journey of becoming the best version of ourselves.

Why is it important?

Reconnection. Our Inner Purpose will solidify and deepen our connection to ourselves. This allows you to also reconnect with others and to the world.

It is a path to more happiness, peace of mind, wisdom, connection and freedom.

Outer Purpose

A path of connection and contribution: a continuous journey of becoming the best version of ourselves by living a life larger than ourselves.

Why is it important?

Reconnection. Our Outer Purpose will solidify and deepen our connection to others and to the world. It is a path to our deepest humanity: to feel connected and to belong. To honor and love Earth as our home, and to become conscious of our connection to The Universe.

Ultimately, this is how we cultivate and nurture the quality of our very own life experience.



Reflection Questions

What does fulfillment mean to you?

Recall a time when you felt truly fulfilled. What contributed to that feeling?

What areas of your life currently feel unfulfilled?

Exercise: *Fulfillment Inventory*

Objective: Identify areas of your life that contribute to, or detract from, your sense of fulfillment.



How would you describe your IDEAL state of each pillar for you? What would it look like if you lived your best life in each of these areas?

INNER PURPOSE	
Physical	Mental
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Emotional	Spiritual
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



OUTER PURPOSE	
Family	Friends
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Work	Community
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PART TWO

The Pursuit of Connection

Fulfillment is fueled by meaningful connections:

- ◆ Inner Connection: Knowing and loving yourself
- ◆ Outer Connection: Building relationships and serving others
- ◆ Universal Connection: Feeling part of something larger than yourself



Reflection Questions

In what ways are you currently connected to yourself?

How do you nurture connections with others in your life?

When do you feel most connected to the natural world or a higher power?



Martin and Dr. King walking up the front steps of their Atlanta home. There was a time when Martin was called Marty. His mother feared Martin would be too burdensome of a name to live up to. Martin says, "I wish I could hug that younger version of me and assure him that one day, he would proudly grow into his father's name." (Getty)

Exercise: *Building Connections*

Objective: Take actionable steps to deepen connections in all quadrants of Inner Purpose and Outer Purpose.



What is one important action you need to focus on in each pillar? If you could choose just one thing per pillar, what would it be?

INNER PURPOSE	
Physical	Mental
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Emotional	Spiritual
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



OUTER PURPOSE	
Family	Friends
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Work	Community
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PART THREE

Agape Love and the Beloved Community

Agape love is universal, unconditional love that transcends personal relationships. It's the love we feel for humanity, nature and the interconnectedness of life. This kind of love fuels the creation of the Beloved Community—a society built on equity, compassion and justice.

*Reflection Questions*

*When have you experienced agape love?
How can you practice this kind of love in your daily life?
What would a Beloved Community look like in your world?*

Case Study: Forgiveness and Agape Love

Martin Luther King III knows all too well the central role agape love plays in finding fulfillment. Throughout his life, Martin has drawn inspiration from others who've shown incredible acts of agape love and forgiveness, like his granddaddy, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr.

When Martin was sixteen, having just finished his junior year of high school, he courageously headed to Washington, D.C., to work as a Page for Senator Edward Kennedy, the brother of the late John F. Kennedy. Martin felt he was ready to step outside the close-knit world he lived in with his mother and siblings and, despite having lost so much, venture out into the world alone—or at least somewhat alone.

The King and the Kennedy families had been friendly since Martin's father first wrote to President Kennedy in 1961, congratulating him on his election and requesting a conference with him to talk about civil rights issues. Caroline Kennedy also worked in her uncle Ted's office, and like Martin, her dad had also been assassinated

in the prime of life. The two became fast friends and confidantes. Martin felt safe there and was grateful for the chance to work with the Kennedys.

But on June 30, 1974, a special news bulletin shattered the veneer of safety to which Martin clung. His dear grandmother, Alberta, was shot in Atlanta.

Mama King, as everyone called her, was playing "The Lord's Prayer" on the organ during Sunday service at Ebenezer Baptist Church when twenty-three-year-old Marcus Wayne Chenault opened fire with two revolvers.

Alberta was shot in the very church where her father, her husband and her son (Martin's dad) had each served as pastors. As the 400-some worshippers bowed their heads, Chenault had entered the church determined to kill Mama King's husband, Daddy King. When Chenault found out Daddy King wasn't there that day, he turned his guns on Mama King. She died later that day at age sixty-nine.

Martin immediately rushed home to Atlanta. Again, Martin's family had been ripped apart. And again, the precious life of a thoroughly nonviolent person ended with violence. Mama King's life embodied love and demonstrated unselfish service to humankind. Again, the indomitable faith of the King family was tested. But again, love would prevail.

After Mama King's assassination, Martin reflects that his own festering bitterness could have surfaced and overcome him with hatred. But his grandfather, Daddy King, showed him a different path. He refused to allow any man to reduce him to hatred.

Martin often thinks about the story his granddaddy told him about going to the jail where the gunman was held, staring him down and asking, 'Son, why did you kill my wife?' His granddaddy recalled how Chenault's eyes were wild. Chenault told Martin's granddaddy that when he got out of jail, he was going to come find him and finish the job. His granddaddy could have smacked the crazed gunman on the head with his cane, and no doubt the sheriff and deputies would have looked the other way. Instead, he offered the killer forgiveness.

Then Martin's granddaddy said: "I won't let the person that killed my son and the person that killed my wife

turn my heart to hate. I still believe in love." He used agape love to counter those negative forces, but he also used it to protect the humanity within himself. Martin saw his grandfather do exactly what Dr. King also asked us to do: separate the evil act from the person, and he was able to hate the act of violence but love the person. For Martin, it was a lifelong lesson to refuse to let hatred poison one's heart and instead, let the healing power of agape love shine within.

Chenault claimed insanity during his trial but was convicted and sentenced to death in the electric chair. His sentence was later changed to life in prison due in part to the wishes of Martin's family, who opposed the death penalty.

We recognize that is an extreme example of agape love and forgiveness. We know many of us will, thankfully, never be in that position to make the choice Daddy King made. However, we can all draw inspiration from this path that helped Martin and his grandfather live a legacy of fulfillment rather than a legacy of bitterness and hate. Remember: pursuing fulfillment is not a luxury—it is a necessity for our mental health and our ability to thrive. Cultivating agape love is a key ingredient to a life of fulfillment.



Reflection Question

How can forgiveness and agape love help you move closer to fulfillment and connection?

Exercise: *Practicing Agape Love*

Objective: Cultivate agape love through intentional acts of kindness and understanding.



Identify one person, group or cause that needs love and compassion from you.

Write down one action you can take to demonstrate agape love toward them (e.g., listening without judgment, helping someone in need, standing up against injustice).

Reflect on how this act aligns with your Inner Purpose and Outer Purpose.



Reflection Question

What did you learn about yourself through this practice?

Exercise: Practicing Agape Love cont'd



Conclusion: Fulfillment is not a destination but a lifelong journey. It is how we can realize the true potential of *Living Legacy*—allowing us to live and leave a legacy of connection, love and purpose. By aligning your life with your Inner Purpose and Outer Purpose, you contribute to the Beloved Community while experiencing the length, breadth and height of a life well lived.



Final Reflection

Ask yourself, "Am I fulfilled?"

If not, what is one step you can take today to move closer to that state?



The world remembers Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a civil rights icon, but Martin remembers him as a loving dad. Left to right: Yolanda (7), Dexter (18 months), Coretta Scott King (36), Dr. King (33), Martin (4) at their home in Atlanta in July 1962. (Getty)



The Transformative Power of Purpose and Service

Jay Shetty

In my journey of understanding purpose, I've come to realize that many of us approach it as if it's finite, certain, end position, that we find, almost like a treasure chest or a lost item. And once you've found it, you can never lose it. This static view of purpose, however, can limit us and hinder our growth. Instead, I've learned that purpose is a dynamic, ever-evolving aspect of our lives, shaped by how we choose to live, act and perceive the world.

When I was a monk, I believed my purpose was tied to that role. Leaving the monastery left me feeling conflicted, as if I had lost my purpose. I'd externalized my purpose; it meant being a monk, dressing as a monk and living as a monk. That felt purposeful. But all of a sudden, when I was back in the "real world," it almost felt like I couldn't be purposeful here. But I was wrong. There was a way to still care about people. There was a way to carry myself mindfully. There was a method to focus on the things that were important to me and significant to me.

I had to reframe my understanding: being a monk was an occupation, not the essence of my purpose. My true purpose lay in the values and practices I embodied—meditation, service and mindfulness. I could still choose to embody the best parts of that lifestyle without having to live that way externally. This shift taught me that purpose is an internal pursuit, not dependent on external labels or roles.

Two people can perform the same act—such as donating to charity—but their underlying motivations make the difference. One person does it because it makes them look good in society, and the other does it because they deeply care about the people it affects. And the latter is the one who's going to experience purpose.

A powerful quote by Charles Horton Cooley resonates with me: "I am not what I think I am, and I am not what you think I am. I am what I think you think I am." This highlights how we often perceive ourselves through others' eyes, leading to incomplete and inaccurate comparisons. Instead of avoiding comparison, I encourage deeper understanding. By fully understanding others' lives, we realize that everyone faces challenges, and this understanding can diminish envy and foster empathy.

People often ask me, Jay, how do I find my purpose? And the answer is through service. Serve with your time. Serve with your money. Serve with your energy.

Become successful. So that you can serve. Become great. So that you can serve. Achieve more. So that you can serve. Make service the guiding principle of your life, the underlying intention, and recognize it as the epitome of all experiences. When you feel lost, serve. When you feel happy, serve. When you feel sad, serve. Find a way to improve the lives of others, and you will always find your way.



Jay Shetty is a global bestselling author, an award-winning podcast host of On Purpose and a purpose-driven entrepreneur. Shetty possesses a talent for making purpose and ancient wisdom not only relatable but also practical and easily accessible to millions across the globe.

*HOW
DO YOU
MEASURE
A LIFE?*

SECTION THREE

MYLEGACY

Introduction

Imagine standing at the edge of your life, looking back. What will you see? Will it be a collection of accomplishments, titles and accolades? Or will it be something more profound—moments of connection, acts of kindness and the enduring ripples of love you left behind? How we measure a life is not just an abstract question; it's the foundation for how we choose to live our legacy each day.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. grappled with this question in his iconic sermon, *The Drum Major Instinct*, delivered just a couple of months before his death. In it, he redefined greatness—not as the pursuit of fame or wealth, but as the quiet, humble work of serving others. He envisioned his legacy not through a list of achievements but through the love and justice he sought to bring into the world. His words remind us that legacy is not measured in monuments or awards but in the lives we touch and the values we uphold.

In this section of our workbook, we'll embark on a journey to explore what it means to measure a life well lived. This is not about morbid reflections or hypothetical eulogies—it's about taking stock of where we are and where we want to go. It's about recognizing the power of our daily actions to shape our legacy and embracing the truth that we are all works in progress.

We will challenge the traditional ways of measuring success—wealth, status and external accolades—and instead, focus on what truly matters: connection, purpose and love. Together, we'll confront the reality of mortality, not to fear it, but to let it guide us toward a more meaningful, intentional life.

PART ONE

Death and Taxes

How do you measure a life?

This age-old question connects us to human mortality, purpose and meaning. Cultures worldwide grapple with this, from Socrates' belief that "the unexamined life is not worth living" to Indigenous traditions of considering seven generations in decision making.

By confronting our mortality, we unlock the ability to live fully, transforming fear into focus. Acknowledging that life is finite allows us to clarify what matters most. Mortality isn't something to fear but a reminder to live with urgency and intentionality.



Exercise: *Reflection on Mortality*

We all live with the knowledge that we will one day die. This knowledge doesn't have to create fear; it can create urgency and focus. It pushes us to make the most of the time we have.



INTERACTIVE REFLECTION

If you knew the exact date of your death was in one year:

Write down three meaningful experiences you would want to have in that year.

1

2

3



Who are the two people you need to connect with and tell them how much they mean to you or make amends to?



What is one thing you would want to achieve that would give you a sense of fulfillment?

PART TWO

Lessons From Scrooge

In Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge undergoes a life transformation when he's confronted with his own mortality. The headstone that bears his name and the legacy of how he was remembered shocked him into changing his life.

Introducing the Headstone and Obit Test

Headstone Test: What would be written on your headstone?

The Headstone Test is a thought exercise where you imagine the few words that would be inscribed on your tombstone after you die. It's a way of distilling the essence of how you will be remembered, in just a few lines or phrases.

- ◆ **Simplicity and impact:** The headstone (or gravestone) is often brief, leaving room for just a few words that capture the essence of a person's life. The exercise forces you to think about the core qualities or values you want to be remembered for.
- ◆ **Example:** Someone might imagine their headstone saying, "Loving Father, Devoted Teacher, Advocate for Justice," emphasizing how they lived in relation to others, not their professional accomplishments.
- ◆ **Limitations:** The headstone test can sometimes oversimplify a life, focusing only on what others perceive or what fits within society's expectations. It might miss the intangible, more private aspects of a person's legacy, such as their inner struggles, personal growth or acts of kindness not publicly known.

Obit Test: What would someone write in your obituary?

The Obit Test is a similar thought exercise but more expansive. You imagine the obituary someone would write about you if you died tomorrow. Obituaries are typically published in newspapers or online, recounting a person's life and achievements in more detail than a headstone.

- ◆ **Measuring legacy:** This test pushes you to think about how your life will be summarized by others. What will people focus on when recounting your story? What actions, achievements, or relationships will they highlight?
- ◆ **Values and achievements:** Obituaries often reflect what society values—achievements, success or roles played in public or private life. You might be remembered for your professional accomplishments, your community service or your personal relationships.
- ◆ **Example:** An obituary might say, "She was a trail-blazer in her field, a champion for women's rights and a loving mother who cared deeply for her family."
- ◆ **Limitations:** Like the headstone test, obituaries can be biased toward certain achievements or societal expectations. For example, men are often remembered for their public or professional accomplishments, while women's obituaries may focus on their roles within the family or community.

This test can also prompt introspection on the gaps between how we want to be remembered versus how we might currently be living. It's easy to focus on external achievements rather than the deeper connections we've built with others.

These are common ways of measuring a life, but they often focus on how society measures success—money, achievements, and public accolades. But is that really what defines a fulfilled life?



Reflection Questions

*What do we think would appear in our own obituary if we passed tomorrow?
What do we want to be remembered for?*

Exercise: *Obituary Writing*

A fulfilled life isn't just about checking boxes or achievements. It's about how we lived, who we connected with, and how much love and purpose we brought into the world.



Come up with two points your family, friends and colleagues would write about you.

What would you want to be said about you?

Friends	What would you want them to say?
1. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____	2. _____ _____ _____

Exercise: Obituary Writing cont'd



Friends	What would you want them to say?
1. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____	2. _____ _____ _____

Colleagues	What would you want them to say?
1. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____	2. _____ _____ _____



Reflection

Where is the gap?

Why do these gaps exist?

What are some actions you can take to make the columns line up?

PART THREE

A Work in Progress

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s *Drum Major Instinct* sermon models how to evaluate a life based on service, love and justice. He imagined his legacy not as a list of accomplishments but as a commitment to values:

I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

This lesson invites us to recognize that our lives are works in progress, and we have the power to shape our stories by *how* we live our legacies every day.



Reflection Question

Picking up on Dr. King's *Drum Major Instinct* speech: Imagine your eulogy didn't highlight what you accomplished, but rather what you *tried* to accomplish.

What are the things you'd like to be said you tried to do with your one precious life?

Exercise: *Storyboard of Your Life*

Objective: Reflect on your past and imagine the future chapters of your legacy.



Use a storyboard template to map your life. If the first box is your birth and the last box is your twilight years, where are you now? Write “today” in that box.

All the boxes before today are the key moments that defined your life so far—triumphs, challenges or turning points.

For the boxes that follow “today,” how do you want the rest of your story to unfold? What do you want to write in those boxes?

1
Birth

6

2

7

3

8

4

9

5

10
Twilight Years

Exercise: Storyboard of Your Life cont'd



Reflection Questions

*What themes or values emerge from your life's story?
What steps can you take today to move toward the legacy
you envision in the boxes after today?*

Our lives are like movies. Heroes face challenges, but the story isn't over until the end credits roll. You are the hero of your own story, and as long as there's a tomorrow, your story is still being written.

Conclusion: *Living Legacy* is not about accolades or checkboxes. It's about the love, connection and purpose you bring to each day. It's about what you try to do with your life, not what you ultimately accomplish. By examining your life through the lens of mortality, you can live more intentionally and build a legacy that aligns with your values and fulfills your purpose.





Prioritizing *Impact* Guarantees *Legacy*

Yara Shahidi

I was eighteen when I excitedly got “63” tattooed on my arm.

Only three characters, but a world of meaning. Representing the year 1963—a pivotal year of the civil rights movement. When I look at my arm I am reminded of the March on Washington, the release of James Baldwin’s *The Fire Next Time*, the bombing of the Birmingham church (which shaped the trajectory of a young Angela Davis), the assassination of Medgar Evers, the first woman in space and the passing of the Clean Air Act. And while the history is heavy, that year helped define my understanding of legacy.

To know me is to know I have *always* been a history nerd. I inherited it honestly from my papa and Gramps. Since before I can remember, I turned to history books, intergenerational dialogue and family dinner conversations to make sense of the world and my place in it. Luckily, my parents and family leaned in and honored my curiosities, helping me become a global citizen by intentionally introducing international reading lists, folklore and experiences. I could appreciate the universality of the human experience and the beauty of our cultural differences.

This type of growing up was a perfect primer from which my social and political consciousness blossomed. Being raised to appreciate our expansive community as a part of one whole, and understanding we are all responsible for one another, translated into a deep passion to be of service. (I think this was my parents’ plan all along.) The power of curiosity and care can make the most “convoluted” of political issues just that simple: *Why is this happening? How can I help?*

In tandem with this unique childhood, my equally unique career path was unfolding before me. Even though I never watched much TV, I was moved by the creativity and power of storytelling. Gratefully,

my first proper foray into television, *Black-ish*, was a show that unabashedly took its place in a lineage of shows that sought to have real conversations on racial, social and political realities.

Through *Black-ish* and *Grown-ish* (my college spin-off) we discussed police brutality and mental health, honored legends such as Prince and helped make Juneteenth a federal holiday. This experience only further cemented what artist-activists such as Sidney Poitier, Josephine Baker, Lena Horne and Harry Belafonte had taught us: that art helps *redefine* culture. Artistic endeavors can powerfully create the right social climate and prime our communities for positive change.

This perspective serves as a constant anchor. It defines the work myself and my mother and business partner, Keri Shahidi, do at our production company, 7th Sun. From supporting writers and telling underrepresented stories, to ensuring we are advocating for the causes that matter to us in every room we are lucky enough to be in.

Even though my work has been rooted in my values of curiosity and care, the entertainment industry is often more than any actor and artist signs up for (myself included). Even the once-in-a-lifetime experiences and award ceremonies in fancy gowns can feel detached from our reality. In such a public-facing environment we can often be guilty of thinking of our own legacies too soon and trying to control how we are perceived for years to come.

That’s why my little arm tattoo means so much to me. *So, 1963 is more than a year. It is a reminder of the generations who fought for a future they were not guaranteed but knew was essential.* They dreamed of new futures but could not have known about my tattoo, how we share clips of their speeches, convene to their music and take on after their struggle. In short, *prioritizing impact guarantees legacy.*

Yara Shahidi is an actor and producer who rose to fame with the ABC sitcom *Black-ish* and its spin-off, *Grown-ish*. A graduate of Harvard University, Shahidi has been named one of *Time*’s “30 Most Influential Teens of 2016,” a 2019 *Glamour* “Woman of the Year” and one of *Forbes*’s “30 Under 30” in 2018.

*LEGACY
WITH
INTEGRITY:
ESTABLISHING
CORE VALUES
AND BELIEFS*

SECTION FOUR

Introduction

Your core values and beliefs form the foundation of your *Living Legacy*. They function as a navigation system, guiding your decisions, actions and interactions. Dr. King's core values and beliefs were reflected in what he said he tried to accomplish in his *Drum Major Instinct* speech. His iconic values and beliefs around non-violence, poverty and racism were also part of his *Living Legacy* that is still rippling out into the world in profound and everlasting ways.

This workbook will help you uncover your values, distinguish empowering beliefs from disempowering ones and align your Inner Purpose (who you are) with your Outer Purpose (how you contribute). By defining and living your values, you can live a legacy rooted in authenticity, love and connection.

PART ONE

Defining Core Values

What Are Core Values?

Core values are your deepest, most essential principles—your internal compass. They reflect how you want to exist in the world and serve as the backbone of your *Living Legacy*.

What values did
your family
emphasize while
you were
growing up?

+

What values
do you hold most
dear today?

+

What values
do you want
to pass on to the
next generation?



Exercise: Core Values Exploration

Objective: Identify the values that resonate most with who you are and who you want to become.



Here is a list of values from Aristotle and author Victor Stretcher, who has written extensively on identifying your values, in order to find your purpose.

Circle all the ones that you feel are relevant to you or write each one down on a Post-it note, index card or other piece of paper. Add any others that aren't on this list, but that you feel are your values.

courage	temperance	generosity	magnificence	justice
ambition	good temper	truthfulness	wittiness	friendliness
modesty	achievement	community	creativity	enjoyment
expertise	independence	kindness	relationships	reputation
security	self-control	spirituality	tradition	responsibility



Reflection Questions

How do these values show up in your daily life?

Are you living in alignment with them?

Core Values Connect Us

When we live by our core values, we are more connected to ourselves because a powerful inner GPS guides our actions and reflects our most authentic selves, bolstering self-love. This logic is clear, but it's just as important to remember how much our core values and beliefs connect us to others. Shared core values are a catalyst for richer conversations and learnings from one another. They also enable us to identify people who share our values—which is fundamental to deepening trust and connection in relationships. Core values are also fundamental to finding and sustaining loving partnerships.

Case Study: *How Core Values Rescued Martin and Arndrea's Rocky Start*

Arndrea was a psychology student at Emory University in Atlanta when she first met Martin, then thirty-eight and still living at home with his mom, Coretta. With his father gone, Martin had taken on the role of protector—indeed, looking after his mother's safety and wellbeing was one of Martin's most important core values. Given his traumatic childhood, Martin didn't trust easily, so much so that the couple's first date almost didn't happen.

A friend of a friend had given Martin Arndrea's number. But when Martin first called her, his best friend and wingman, Phil, was also on the line. Because of all he'd been through, Arndrea thought it made sense he would come with an entourage, some insulation from strangers. She gave him a pass. Then, on the day of their planned meeting, Arndrea was left waiting in the skin care spa where she worked part-time. Naturally, she was furious. When Phil finally called with an excuse, he explained Martin had rushed out of town on an urgent matter. Martin still swears this is true.

Reluctantly, Arndrea agreed to meet again, still curious about this man she'd heard so much about. She waited at the Crab House on Atlanta's outskirts—book in hand, with low expectations. Phil walked in first, checking her out. He turned on his heel to reappear with Martin, who'd been "parking the car." By then, Arndrea was really looking forward to telling him off. But as Martin strode into the restaurant, she was immediately drawn to his energy. After just a few minutes of conversation, she realized how much they had in common. Martin escaped her scolding.

Once the two got talking, Arndrea recognized that she and Martin both wanted to spend their adult lives empowering people and fighting against the violence of hate. They both believed in the principles of the Beloved Community and deeply valued and honored the King family legacy. Each of them had inherited the core value of service from their parents. Dr. King and Coretta Scott King's service was more renowned, but Arndrea carried and cherished her mother's core value of helping people in need. Everyone who knew Arndrea's mother, "Mrs. Gladys," knew she was the person to go to if you were going through a hard time and needed some loving care and wise counsel. Arndrea quickly recognized how Martin's parents instilled in him that same legacy of care and compassion for others.

Arndrea always says her mother had the biggest heart she's ever known—her only competition being Martin's. Because of their shared core values, Arndrea saw the bigness of his heart within minutes of meeting him. Martin more than made up for his dating mishaps with the deep connection they established around their core values.

This story isn't just the makings of a cute rom-com, it shows us the profound power of knowing our core values and being able to share them and live by them. Martin and Arndrea have since married, raised a child, and continue to travel the world together, teaching and practicing the core values that initially united them and deepened their love. Not only are these values the foundation of their love story, but they have also formed the essence of their Living Legacies.



Reflection Question

Thinking of the people you have loved and trusted the most in life, what role did shared core values play in your connections?

PART TWO

Understanding Core Beliefs

What Are Beliefs?

Beliefs are shaped by your experiences and cultural surroundings. Unlike values, beliefs can change over time and may be contextual.



Reflection Questions

What beliefs about yourself, others and the world do you hold most strongly?

Have any of your beliefs changed significantly over time? Why?

Do your beliefs align with your values?



Martin likes to remember happier days in the King family household, before the devastating loss of his father.

Left to right: Yolanda (8), Bernice (11 months), Coretta Scott King (38), Dexter (3), Martin III (6) in February 1964. (Getty)

Exercise: *Identifying Core Beliefs*

Objective: Clarify the beliefs that influence your actions and mindset.



Write down responses to these prompts:

I believe I am _____

I believe people are _____

I believe the world is _____

I believe one of the most important things in life is _____

Reflect on whether these beliefs are empowering (propelling you forward) or disempowering (holding you back).



Reflection

*Which beliefs inspire you to take positive action?
Which need to be challenged or transformed?*

PART THREE

Empowering vs. Disempowering Values and Beliefs

Empowering Values and Beliefs

Empowering values and beliefs align with love, connection and purpose. They inspire positive action and foster deeper relationships with yourself and others.

Examples of empowering beliefs:

“I believe I can make a positive difference in the world.”

“I believe people are inherently good.”



Reflection Questions

Which of your values and beliefs make you feel hopeful and connected?

How do these beliefs shape your actions and relationships?





Embracing Nonviolence: My Journey of *Faith, Leadership and Change*

Rev. Al Sharpton

From my earliest days in Brooklyn as a boy preacher, I felt a pull toward the nonviolent movement of Dr. King. Yet, where I come from, it was seen as a Southern, weak approach that didn't work in the North. But I delved into the teachings of the church I grew up in; from the Exodus of the slaves to Saint Paul's letters, I found a powerful alignment with my own beliefs.

Despite the popularity of other paths among my peers, I chose to follow Dr. King's philosophy wholeheartedly.

The true test of my commitment came in 1989 when I was thirty-five. I was responding to the tragic death of Yusef Hawkins, a young Black man killed in Bensonhurst, a predominantly Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn. He was mistaken for someone else and murdered. To combat this blatant racism, I organized nonviolent marches every Saturday for a year despite the hateful and violent reactions we received from the locals.

One January day in 1991, as I led the march, I was stabbed in the chest. The attack only strengthened my resolve. Lying on a gurney in Coney Island Hospital, unsure of the severity of my injury, I made a vow: if I survived, I would continue to march, to fight nonviolently.

After my recovery, I returned to holding our rallies. When a fellow organizer attempted to exclude white participants, I stood firm in my belief in inclusivity, a core tenet of Dr. King's teachings. This led me to found the National Action Network in Harlem, marking a new chapter in my journey for justice.

Reflecting on my journey, I saw nonviolence not as a sign of weakness but as a powerful form of protest. It resonated with my religious teachings and the civil rights movement's strategic use of economic boycotts and mass mobilization.

My commitment to nonviolence was solidified through these events. It was a commitment not just in theory but proven in the face of adversity, embodying the teachings of Dr. King and the ethos of the civil rights movement. Embracing nonviolence—even when it wasn't a popular approach in the North—came when I took stock of my beliefs and what was required to defuse the violence.

A few years later, in 2000, I had another opportunity to evaluate my path and make a change. It was during a poignant conversation with Coretta Scott King.

Martin Luther King III and I had become very friendly through our shared dedication to activism and nonviolence. He wanted his mother to get to know me. I thought, *I've been around her a million times*, and he said, "I want her to really get to know you."

I guess she had an agenda. Mrs. King expressed her support for our planned March on Washington against racial profiling. But she also gently questioned my use of divisive language, including the N-word.

At first, I said, "Mrs. King, that's how we talk in the North, and I try to relate to the people in the street." She challenged me to consider the impact of my words and the responsibility I had to elevate others and set an example through our language.

This exchange was transformative. It wasn't a reprimand but an opportunity for self-reflection, guided by the wisdom of the civil rights movement's matriarch. Mrs. King's insights prompted me to shift my approach to leadership. Leadership entails upholding certain standards, including the language we use and a deeper sense of accountability.



Rev. Al Sharpton is a social justice activist, Baptist minister, radio talk show host and TV personality. As a disciple of the teaching of Dr. King, in 1969 Sharpton became the youth director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Operation Breadbasket, NY chapter. In 1991, he founded the civil rights organization the National Action Network (NAN).

Exercise: *Empowering Values Action Plan*

Objective: Strengthen empowering values and beliefs in your daily life.



Choose one empowering value or belief from your list.

Write down a specific action you can take this week to live by that value or belief.

Example: If your value is compassion, commit to practicing active listening with a loved one. Reflect on how this action impacts your sense of connection and fulfillment.



Disempowering Values and Beliefs

Disempowering values and beliefs create disconnection and leave you feeling unfulfilled.

Examples of disempowering beliefs:

“I believe I’m not good enough.”

“I believe success is measured only by wealth and status.”



Reflection Questions

*What disempowering beliefs might be holding you back?
How can you challenge or reframe these beliefs to align with your values?*

Exercise: *Reframing Disempowering Beliefs*

Objective: Transform disempowering beliefs into empowering ones.



Identify one disempowering belief you want to change.

Example: "I believe I'm not good enough."

Reframe it into an empowering belief.

Example: "I believe I am capable of growth and learning."

Write one action you can take to reinforce this new belief.



Reflection

How does this shift change your perspective or actions?

PART FOUR

Living Your Core Values and Beliefs

Aligning Inner Purpose and Outer Purpose

Living your values means aligning who you are (Inner Purpose) with how you contribute to the world (Outer Purpose). As discussed in Section 2, this alignment creates a sense of fulfillment and integrity. Core values like compassion, nonviolence and service foster agape love—the unconditional love for all humanity. These values are essential for building a Beloved Community rooted in equity, justice and connection.



Reflection Questions

Are your actions aligned with your core values?

If not, what adjustments can you make?

How do your values guide your relationships, work and daily decisions?



Exercise: *Creating a Values-Based Life Plan*

Objective: Design a life aligned with your core values and beliefs.



Sort the values from Part 1 into three columns.

Extremely Important to Me	Important to Me	Not Important to Me
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____	5. _____

When you have completed your lists, review the **Extremely Important to Me** column.

How Well Am I Living My Values?

Take the three to five top values you identified and, for each one, write down a situation where you have applied that value in your life in the past year.

I've Applied This Value in My Life in the Past Year

Conclusion

Your core values and beliefs are the foundation of a life lived with integrity and purpose. By identifying and aligning these principles with your daily actions, you create a *Living Legacy* rooted in connection, love and contribution.

This workbook is a tool for cultivating a life guided by your deepest principles. By living your core values, you contribute to a better world and build a legacy that inspires others.



Final Reflection

Write down one core value or belief you will focus on this week and one action you will take to live it fully.



*TRANSFORMING
THE LEGACIES
WE'VE
INHERITED*

SECTION FIVE

MYLEGACY

Introduction

This section of the workbook is designed to guide you through a deep and empowering exploration of the legacies you've inherited. Drawing from Chapters 8 and 9 of *What Is My Legacy?*, this section will help you recognize the familial and collective legacies that shape your life, assess their impact and make conscious choices about what to carry forward and what to transform. By the end of this journey, you'll be equipped with the tools to create a *Living Legacy* rooted in connection, healing and purpose.

PART ONE

Understanding Inherited Legacies

What Are Inherited Legacies?

Legacies aren't just material possessions or family heirlooms. They include beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors passed down through generations. These legacies shape how we view ourselves, others and the world.

Familial

Traits, traditions, stories and even traumas passed down within families.

Collective

Broader societal or cultural legacies, including privilege, systemic inequality or collective trauma.



Reflection Question

What comes to mind when you think about the legacies you've inherited from your family or culture?

List three positive legacies and three burdensome legacies.

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

Exercise: Legacy Mapping

Objective: Identify and visualize the familial and collective legacies that influence you.



Use this timeline starting with your grandparents (or earlier ancestors, if known) and ending with you. Note significant events, challenges and traits passed down through generations (e.g., resilience, trauma, a commitment to education).

Your Beginnings

<p style="text-align: center;">Event and Challenge</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	=	<p style="text-align: center;">Trait</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Event and Challenge</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	=	<p style="text-align: center;">Trait</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Event and Challenge</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	=	<p style="text-align: center;">Trait</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Event and Challenge</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	=	<p style="text-align: center;">Trait</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

You Now

Circle legacies you feel have positively impacted you. Mark burdensome legacies with an "X."



Reflection Questions

What patterns do you notice?

Are there recurring themes of strength or struggle?

How have the collective legacies and historical events on your timeline shaped your familial legacies?

PART TWO

Assessing Your Legacy's Impact

Exploring Familial Legacies

Our family histories often hold stories of resilience, love and sacrifice, but they can also include trauma or unspoken rules that shape our behaviors and beliefs.



Reflection Questions

What family stories, traditions or values do you cherish most?

Are there unspoken "rules" in your family that have influenced how you live (e.g., "Don't draw attention to yourself,"

"Hard work is the only path to success.")?

Which of these rules serve you and which hold you back from living your most authentic life?

Case Study: Arndrea Waters King

Arndrea's parents, Arnold Waters and Gladys Howard, met at an all-black high school in Live Oak, Florida. Growing up, Arndrea's parents played with children of the survivors of the 1923 massacre in the nearby town of Rosewood. That predominantly African American community had been destroyed by a white mob, and as many as 80 residents were murdered in cold blood. Many of the survivors ended up in Live Oak. So it wasn't surprising that, beneath the town's pleasant veneer, racial tensions boiled.

When Arndrea was still young, her parents moved to Tallahassee, where they continued to break boundaries and overcome the legacies of racism. Arndrea's father, Arnold, became one of the first Black insurance agents in Tallahassee. Gladys was the first nurse at the hospital where she worked to be named Nurse of the Year, even as she endured racism from doctors, other nurses and even patients, some who refused to be treated by her.

Gladys and Arnold were impressive by any measure—both of them lived transformative legacies that broke racial boundaries and uplifted lives. But while they worked hard to serve and do the best they possibly could for the world, the inherent fear associated with the collective legacy of racism made them understandably cautious. Having been raised around the descendants of Rosewood, Gladys knew the potential danger of a Black person drawing attention to themselves. Arndrea believes her mother feared that if Arndrea stood out, it could invite backlash. Because of this, Arndrea was consciously and subconsciously told not to stand out. Not to shine.

Arndrea believes this parental injunction to keep her head down was also rooted in her mother's adherence to the

values of humility and selflessness. But it was also rooted in the collective legacy of racism they had inherited and, indeed, had experienced firsthand.

Arndrea's story is a living illustration of the complexity of the legacies we inherit. From her parents, Arndrea inherited a legacy of humility and service, but also a pressure to hold herself back. In assessing how she wanted to live those legacies, she made a conscious decision to carry forward the legacies of humility and service but to alchemize them so they lived differently in her family.

From the time Yolanda was very young and came to know of her iconic lineage, Arndrea instilled in her daughter the importance of humility and being respectful of the legendary legacy she inherited. To this day, Yolanda remains humble about her heritage and never boasts.

Even so, Arndrea still wants Yolanda to become her brightest, most joyful, authentic self. She wants Yolanda to shine, just as Arndrea has learned to shine her light in the world. One of Arndrea's life-guiding quotes is from the author and politician Marianne Williamson: "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world."

Arndrea's examples of how she's sifted through her legacies and made choices about how she wants to live them show us what's possible when we begin to sort through and update the collective and familial legacies we've inherited. This is an ongoing process—recognizing the legacies we carry and making daily choices to continue or transform them.



Reflection Question

Think about a legacy in your family or culture that carries both gifts and challenges. How can you transform it into something that serves you and others?



Reflection

Write a sentence or two about one legacy you're committed to embracing and one you're ready to transform.

PART THREE

The Role of Collective Legacies

Understanding Collective Legacies

Cultural and societal legacies, such as privilege, systemic oppression or inherited trauma, shape our worldview and opportunities. Recognizing these influences can help us act with greater awareness and responsibility.



Reflection Question

What societal advantages or privileges have you inherited (e.g., economic privilege, racial privilege)? How can you use them for good?

What societal disadvantages have you inherited (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia)? How do you want to challenge or transform them?

Epigenetics Insight

Scientific research shows that life experiences can influence gene expression and be passed down to future generations. This means the traumas or triumphs of our ancestors can shape us physically and emotionally, but they're not fixed—they can be changed.



Reflection Question

How does the idea that you can “recode” inherited traits inspire or challenge you?



PART FOUR

Healing Familial and Collective Trauma

Trauma is often a hidden legacy, creating disconnection within us and between us. Healing begins with acknowledgment and intentional action.

Case Study: *Martin Luther King III*

Martin Luther King III inherited a legacy of courage, nonviolence and agape love from his parents and grandparents. But he also inherited the collective trauma of racial violence that resulted in the family trauma of losing his father to a bullet of hate. Even before and after Dr. King's assassination, Martin's household constantly received terrible threats of racial violence.

While Martin's story is unique, it is typical of how collective legacy traumas, such as racial violence, often leave traumatic familial legacies in their wake. Martin knows inheriting both the collective trauma and the resulting familial traumas of racial violence could have made him a tortured and isolated man. But every day, Martin actively chooses to lay down the hatred and

bitterness he might carry—common symptoms of the kind of traumas he inherited.

Instead, he actively tries to transform the legacy of racial violence by traveling the world with his wife, Arndrea, spreading teachings on racial justice, nonviolence and peaceful conflict resolution. He finds that consciously living his legacy in this way has strengthened him and helped him heal the traumatic legacies he inherited while spreading a new legacy of agape love into the world.

While Martin's story of the inherited collective and familial legacies of trauma is extreme, he shows us how *Living Legacy* can become a powerful medicine that heals us personally while also helping to transform the collective legacies we live and leave in the world.



Reflection Question

What conscious choice can you make today to begin transforming a burdensome legacy into a source of strength?

Conclusion

The legacies we inherit are both gifts and challenges, shaping who we are and who we can become. By reflecting on, transforming and intentionally living these legacies, we not only heal ourselves but also create a ripple effect of connection and love in the world.

Transforming legacies isn't a one-time decision, it's a daily practice. Small, intentional actions can create lasting change.

Use this workbook as a guide on your journey to crafting a *Living Legacy* that serves you and others for generations to come.



Reflection Questions

*What daily habits or rituals can help you live the legacy you want to leave?
How can you involve others in this journey (e.g., family, friends, mentors)?*





What Now

Billy Porter

I missed the whole thing. The actual civil rights movement. Dr. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, a mere seventeen months before I was born. I grew up in a Christian household. Dr. King was anointed in our home to watch over us. Sainted. The power of his legacy based in nonviolent resistance, the bulk of which he learned from the queer leader Bayard Rustin, is what we all held on to. And I still do to this day.

And... What now... ?

For you see, the change came and the change went. We overcame and now we're back to domestic terrorism to silence anyone or anything that dares to speak truth to power. Of course, "when they go low, we go high." And it's time to put our activist heads together to figure out what "going high" looks like in this new world order. I love y'all, but it is not 1965.

As an out, Black, gay, Christian man in the country—and in this world, quite frankly—the messaging I've received from all of the spaces, including "the movement," was that I was to shut up and sit my faggot ass down somewhere and wait for a more "convenient time." Women were also silenced in our original movement. And we took a back seat, and were silent ... for the greater good.

What now, Dr. King?

Freedom and justice for all, right ... ? The movement has evolved, and I'm grateful for that. But I always ruminate and dream—What if the women and the queers were all represented in the movement in the first place, how much further along would the world be? I don't know and I don't dwell. I simply hold on to hope. Albeit by an emotional thread at the moment. I still do believe in humanity and the resilience of the human spirit. I do believe that when we fight, we win!

I hope that my truth does not come across as negative. I don't mean it to be. *And...* the truth will set us all free. We must be in the moment we're in, not the moment we wish for. We ain't there yet. But we must be present for the urgency of this moment in order to move forward with grace, loving-kindness, compassion and nonviolence.

As Maya Angelou has taught, people know themselves best, so believe them when they show you who they are. We did this already. Our ancestors fought and died for every right and freedom we have. We cannot let them down. We will not abandon our history.



Billy Porter is an award-winning actor, singer and fashion icon known for his groundbreaking role in the TV series *Pose*. He has won numerous accolades, including an Emmy, a Tony and a Grammy. Porter's fearless style and advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights have made him a powerful voice in the entertainment industry, and he received the Isabelle Stevenson Tony Award at the 77th Annual Tony Awards for his humanitarian work with the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation and the Entertainment Community Fund.

LIVING
MY LEGACY
EVERY DAY

SECTION SIX

MYLEGACY

Introduction

This final section is about putting everything you've learned into practice. It ties together the principles of *Living Legacy*—Inner Purpose, Outer Purpose, love and connection—and helps you create an actionable plan. By focusing on daily victories, fostering meaningful connections, and aligning your actions with your values, you'll take deliberate steps toward creating your legacy and contributing to the Beloved Community.

More than fifty years ago, Martin came upon a quote that shaped his *Living Legacy* from that day forward and his understanding of how each of us can build the Beloved Community step-by-step. Martin was still a teenager visiting Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, with his mother, who was being honored as a distinguished alumnus. Before the ceremony, Coretta took him on a tour of her old campus. Together, they stood at the foot of an imposing bronze statue of Horace Mann, the school's first president, a slavery abolitionist who is known as the father of the American public education system. Side by side, mother and son read Mann's quote, inscribed beneath.

“Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.”

Many times, throughout his life, Martin has thought about this quote as if it were a dare—challenging Martin to do something important. Being a realist, Martin broke down Mann's insistent message. While we can't all win monumental victories for humanity, Martin thought, we can all tackle smaller aspects of the goal to improve the circumstances of people or our planet.

We can probably get a victory on our street, Martin thought. Maybe we can come together as a neighborhood to clean up a local park or gather food for those who don't have enough to eat. Maybe we can win a victory in our school—by getting elected to student council, running for school board, or even being a wonderful teacher. There are so many possibilities if we just start small.

Mann's message has long guided Martin's vision for building the Beloved Community—one action, one victory at a time—trusting that, ultimately, it all adds up to a victory for humanity.

The essence of this takeaway is also the essence of *Living Legacy*. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for all of us to recognize the impact of our daily actions. This is not a lofty belief; this is a fact: every action, every decision, every choice of words, every act of kindness and every victory for humanity (no matter how small) has a ripple effect in the world. And those ripples are our own *Living Legacy*. You don't need all the answers to begin living your legacy in ways that create victories for humanity, but an open mind and an open heart helps. So does a roadmap to guide you.

Let's start by reflecting on what you've learned so far and move toward creating a personalized map for *Living Legacy*.



Martin and his late sister Yolanda outside a trailer, listening to their father address a group about the importance of voting. To this day, Martin remains a passionate activist on behalf of voting rights. (Getty)



Developing Human Skills to Live Your Legacy

Simon Sinek

Think back to your school days and think of a teacher or a coach who had a unique impact on you. Perhaps they saw something in you that no one else did. Perhaps they believed in you and pushed you more than others. Whatever it was, who you are today is due, in part, to that person. I am sure you can recall their name easily. Now tell me the names of all the other teachers you had during the same time. You can't.

This is what it means to have a legacy. The lessons we have passed on to others, the impact or influence we have had in their lives, will live on long after we are gone.

Legacies are not created by trying to have one. It's not about having your name on a building. Buildings can be torn down. Legacies are built by giving in a way that will help those around us rise. True legacies live on through people. And those people will pass on what they learned from us to see those around them rise ... and in so doing ... we can live forever.

There is an entire industry designed to help us be

better leaders and parents. There are industries designed to show us how to work out, eat better and sleep better.

But there is no industry that exists to teach us how to be better at being human.

We all want to feel seen, heard and understood, and the first step to making that happen is to learn the skills that make others feel seen, heard and understood. The more we model the behavior, the more others will follow our example (indeed, that's what leadership is). We have to learn to listen actively, practice patience, resolve conflict peacefully, have uncomfortable conversations and learn other human skills.

The more we learn and practice human skills, the more the goodness will ripple from relationship to relationship for a very simple reason ... someone who is treated with humanity is biologically more likely to treat the next person with humanity. And if that happens enough, the result could very well be... world peace.



Simon Sinek is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Start with Why*, *Leaders Eat Last*, *Together Is Better* and *Find Your Why*. As an inspirational speaker, his TED Talk on the concept of "why" has been viewed more than sixty million times. He currently serves as "chief optimist" at *Optimism Press*, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

PART ONE

Reflecting on Your Living Legacy

Living Legacy begins with self-awareness. The daily actions we take create ripples that influence others and shape our world. In this section, we reflect on our values, beliefs and the kind of legacy we want to leave.

**Reflection Questions**

*What does a “victory for humanity” mean to you?
How do your current actions align with the person you aspire to be?
What lessons from this journey resonate most deeply with your
values and beliefs?*

Exercise: *Crafting Your Legacy Vision Statement*

Objective: Define your *Living Legacy* in a single, powerful statement.



Draft your Legacy Vision Statement by completing the sentence: “My *Living Legacy* is to... [e.g., foster connection, promote justice, inspire creativity].”

Add one sentence describing how you want to act daily to live this vision.

Example: “My *Living Legacy* is to create meaningful connections by showing kindness and compassion to everyone I meet. Each day, I will focus on one action that strengthens my bonds with others.”

My *Living Legacy* is to _____



Reflection

How does this vision align with your core values?

PART TWO

Making Daily Actions Meaningful

Meaningful change starts with small, deliberate steps. Each choice we make shapes our legacy. This section helps you translate your values into daily habits that create victories for yourself, others and the world.



Reflection Questions

What small victories have you created in your life recently?

*How can you use your Inner Purpose to fuel actions that connect
with others and the world?*

What barriers prevent you from making daily choices that align with your values?

Exercise: *The Three Connections Journal*

Objective: Commit to purposeful daily actions that connect you with yourself, others and the world.



Each morning, write down one action for each area:

- **Yourself:** How will I nurture my Inner Purpose today?
(e.g., meditate, journal, exercise, learn something new)
- **Others:** How will I connect meaningfully with someone today?
(e.g., reach out to a friend, offer help to a coworker, express gratitude)
- **The World:** What will I do to make a positive impact today?
(e.g., pick up litter, donate to a cause, support local businesses)

Yourself

Others

The World

Exercise: *The Three Connections Journal cont'd*



At the end of the day, reflect on how these actions felt. Did they deepen your sense of purpose or connection?



Reflection

*What patterns do you notice in your daily choices?
Are they helping you build the Living Legacy you envision?*

PART THREE

Building Deeper Connections

Connection is the foundation of a fulfilled life and the key to creating the Beloved Community. By strengthening our bonds with family, friends, coworkers and communities, we create opportunities for healing, love and shared purpose.



Reflection Questions

To whom in your life do you feel most connected?

How do those relationships make you feel?

Are there relationships or communities where you feel a lack of connection?

Why? What small steps could you take to strengthen those connections?



Exercise: *Connection Challenge*

Objective: Take intentional steps to build stronger connections in key areas of your life.



With Family

Choose one family member to reconnect with.
Write them a note or plan an activity that deepens your bond.
Reflect on past mistakes or misunderstandings. Is there an opportunity for forgiveness?



With Friends

Reach out to someone you haven't connected with recently.
Share something vulnerable about yourself
to foster deeper connection.



With Your Community

Participate in one act of service this week.
This could be volunteering, helping a neighbor
or supporting a local cause.



Reflection

*What did these actions teach you about the importance of connection?
How did they shift your relationships?*

PART FOUR

Aligning Your Actions with Your Legacy

Living Legacy requires alignment between your values, beliefs and daily actions. This alignment not only nurtures your sense of purpose but also creates the ripple effect needed to build the Beloved Community.

*Reflection Questions*

Are there areas of your life where your actions don't reflect your values?

What habits or behaviors would you like to change to better align with your Living Legacy?

How can you use your strengths to make a greater impact on the world?



The world remembers Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a civil rights icon, but Martin remembers him as a loving dad. Left to right: Yolanda (7), Dexter (18 months), Coretta Scott King (36), Dr. King (33), Martin (4) at their home in Atlanta in July 1962. (Getty)

Exercise: *Creating Your Legacy Roadmap*

Objective: Design a plan to live your legacy every day.



Core Values: How will I nurture my Inner Purpose today?
(e.g., meditate, journal, exercise, learn something new)

Daily Actions: For each value, list one habit or behavior that reflects it.

Example: Core Value: Compassion; Daily Action: Offer encouragement to someone struggling.

Core Value	Daily Action
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	5. _____ _____

Monthly Goal: Choose one area of your life (family, work, community or self) where you want to focus your efforts. Create a measurable goal that aligns with your values.

Example: "I will volunteer two hours at the local food bank this month."

Exercise: *Creating Your Legacy Roadmap cont'd*



Accountability: Share your blueprint with a trusted friend or mentor and ask for their support in holding you accountable.



Reflection

How does this blueprint empower you to live your legacy with integrity and purpose?

Conclusion: Taking the First Step

Living Legacy is not about achieving perfection; it's about taking consistent, intentional steps toward creating a life of connection, fulfillment and love. Each small action builds toward a larger impact, helping you win victories for yourself, your community and humanity.



Final Reflection

*What is one action you can take today to begin living your legacy?
How will you inspire others to join you on this journey?*



MY LEGACY PLEDGE

*“I commit to living my legacy every day
by aligning my actions with my values,
connecting with myself and others,
and striving to make
a positive impact on the world.”*





About The Authors

Martin Luther King III is a global human rights advocate and the eldest son of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King. A champion for nonviolence and social justice, he has inspired millions, advised heads of state and led civil rights initiatives on nearly every continent. Martin served two terms on the Fulton County Board of Commissioners before leading the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which was founded by his father. He continues his father's legacy through his work with the Drum Major Institute, focusing on poverty, racism and militarism.

Arndrea Waters King is president of the Drum Major Institute and a passionate advocate for social justice and equality. She organized the first National Conference on Hate Crimes and Hate Violence, partnering with over one hundred national organizations. Arndrea's work with the Center for Democratic Renewal (formerly known as the National Anti-Klan Network) and civil rights icon Dr. C. T. Vivian, a lieutenant of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has been instrumental in advancing civil rights. She coauthored *When Hate Comes to Town: Faith-Based Edition* and has written numerous articles and publications. She has spoken before mass crowds as a champion of democracy, justice and human dignity.

Marc Kielburger is a *New York Times* bestselling author, Harvard graduate, Rhodes Scholar and Oxford-trained lawyer. With thirty years as a movement builder and social entrepreneur, he's collaborated with leaders like Oprah Winfrey and brands like Virgin Group, headlining over 130 live events to inspire millions. A member of the Order of Canada and recipient of ten honorary doctorates, Marc has been named Canada's Most Admired CEO in the public sector.

Craig Kielburger is a *New York Times* bestselling author, humanitarian and social entrepreneur. An expert at driving movements for scalable social change and building mission-driven brands, he cofounded Legacy+ with his brother. Craig has received the Nelson Mandela human rights award and the World's Children's Prize and is a member of the Order of Canada. He holds fifteen honorary doctorates and remains a leading voice in global social change.

MY LEGACY

My Legacy is a vibrant global community that empowers individuals to live their best lives and lives larger than themselves. Our connection platform offers an array of tools, resources, education and inspiration designed to light a path toward the most sought-after yet elusive state of being: fulfillment.

From books and podcasts to educational courses, training programs and immersive travel experiences, My Legacy provides the knowledge and skills needed to build a meaningful and impactful life. Our exclusive events are designed to spark inspiration and foster deep connections, offering unforgettable experiences that celebrate personal growth and collective achievement.



*Join the community at
MyLegacy.com*

REALIZE the DREAM

Realize the Dream is a bold movement to rally communities to perform one hundred million hours of service by the one hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birth. It's a call for us all to reach out to people and causes in need—and make a difference through acts of love, compassion and goodwill.



*Get started at
RealizeTheDream.org*



Founded in 1961 on Dr. King's vision of a world free of racism, poverty and violence, the Drum Major Institute carries Dr. King's work and vision of radical nonviolence into the twenty-first century, democratizing it for all people. DMI leads through collaboration by convening leaders and organizations to identify common-sense solutions to our most pressing problems. DMI strives to inspire people to embrace their role in the King legacy, to empower them to build the Beloved Community and take action to promote peace, justice and equity for all.



*Learn more at
DrumMajorInst.org*

LEGACY+

Legacy+ is a foundry of strategists, designers, creators, storytellers and innovators that brings purpose to life for companies, foundations and individuals. It builds real movements and legacy-driven projects with life-changing impacts for people and communities around the world. They have partnered with globally renowned thought leaders, activists, CEOs, entertainers, athletes, celebrities and more to inspire millions.



*Learn more at
LegacyPlus.org*

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