

**GUIDE TO
THE GOOD LIFE
CHICAGO**

THE South Side Drive

NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2020



**Cover Story – Black Men
Bringing Healthy Food**

**2020 Presidential Election –
Never Before, Never Again**

**Black Men – Sensitivity
Signals Strength**

**Music – Some Sending
Message You May Not Need**

**Art, Business, Culture &
Community, Dining, Events,
Entertainment, Health &
Heritage to Build and Thrive.**



**WE GOT THE FLU SHOT BECAUSE
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NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2020

THE South Side Drive

GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE CHICAGO

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We proudly acknowledge support for our work from the Chicago COVID-19 Journalism Fund. (A McCormick Foundation Fund)

Please join us in thanking the MacArthur Foundation and most recently, Chicago Community Trust, for grants that allow the **South Side Drive Magazine: Guide to the Good Life Chicago** to build, grow, and serve as a major Chicago publishing influence.

**Art, Business, Culture & Community,
Dining, Events, Entertainment, Health & Heritage
to Build and Thrive.**

The South Side Drive magazine is published by Real Men Charities, Inc. The organization's mission is Building Healthy Families and Communities. The magazine is designed to be a catalyst for economic development, reflecting a truthful image and examples that demonstrate the art of living. We seek to share the Good News about Chicago's south side and Black culture and serve as the Guide to the Good Life in our city. We are placemakers and keepers of the culture.

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Publisher's Statement



By Yvette Moyo

Now you know how strong you are. You made it! Well almost...But I'm confident that you will do what you need to do during the holidays to stay safe. Hopefully it's the right thing. You must be around for the January 20, 2021 transition from nonsense to common sense. Then we can once again start to live purposeful lives.

Many say that 2020 was the worst year of their lives. That may be true. However, I believe that things happen for a reason. A global pandemic clashing with systemic racism exposing health and economic disparities? Maybe somebody was trying to tell us something.

Who knew that many of us were a pandemic away from standing in a food line...searching for hand sanitizer and toilet paper...wearing masks... And if you were lucky waiting on an unemployment or stimulus relief check? Who knew that what was thought to be the random murders of Black people, especially Black men, was right on the edge of some kind of ethnic cleansing program? Who knew that Black Lives Mattered, until we stood up and put the world on notice?

Who knew?

If nothing else 2020 has made us realize that we are strongest when we stand together as a community, collectively protecting our interests. It also made us realize that even at its best government will not protect or provide. That's up to us.

At its worst? The last four years have shown us what can happen. If we understand that when it comes to government largess...Black people are always at the end of any line... Maybe we will better appreciate the value of com-

munity over self-interest.

South Side Drive Magazine has kept the community on top of what is going on. We have presented articles that uplift, inform and alarm, as necessary. We believe that information is power. We have introduced you to some of the many heroes in our community...People working to make it better and stronger.

We have also given thoughtful perspectives on what it all means for our future.

Even as the year plays out there is more to consider. As I write this, two Covid 19 vaccines are being rolled out, not just at a pharmacy near you, but nationally, globally. And, this just in, the emergency medicinal cocktail given to the soon-to-be former president a few weeks ago, will soon be made available to some early stage virus patients.

Given how long it has historically taken to develop safe vaccines, this seems to be a "warped speed" rollout. Warped speed, why does that sound familiar?

Well being an informed journalist, I looked up the word warped. Dictionary.com informs me that warped references someone "who has thoughts or ideas that most people think are very strange and frightening."

Now I get it.

Since "warped speed" was introduced by the soon to be former president, Black people, in particular, should proceed with caution.

When these vaccines are available, we don't necessarily want to be at the front or back of the line. We do want to inform ourselves so we can make the best decision. We want to listen to the "experts." Begin by talking to your own doctor, or one whom you trust. Talk to your pharmacist. Follow closely what is being said in the media. Make sure to access credible sources.

Make sure you make informed, not emotional decisions. This could literally be a "life or death" decision.

In the meantime, enjoy this issue and join me in commending our Associate Publisher, Dr. Obari Cartman for leading the effort to produce this issue of the South Side Drive. Truly, I believe the articles point the way to our good life in Chicago. By the way, you should also know, in this time of challenge Dr. Cartman is serving his second term as president of the Chicago Association of Black Psychologists.

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Healthy Food, Community Partnerships and the Men that Make it Work

By Obari Cartman

When the world tries to divide us, when the country is split in half, while a pandemic urges us to isolate for our safety, it is imperative to find ways to build and maintain relationships. Collaboration is key. Soul Veg City is making some upgrades to its original location at 203 E 75th. During renovations Soul Veg City is in short-term residence at The Quarry Event Center, 2423 E 75th.

The need for healthy food options on the south side was too critical. It wasn't easy to pick up shop and re-locate temporarily. Arrangements such as this can be difficult, but there were enough people committed, who believed the community needs are more important than some logistical challenges, and they made it happen. They are currently making it happen.

To make it extra clear that this partnership was about serving the community The Quarry and Real Men Charities and Soul Veg City formed a partnership with New Era Chicago to invoke the Black Panther Party's Free Breakfast Program for the children in the neighborhood.

Every morning, Monday thru Friday, the team arrives at The Quarry to prepare meals that are mostly delivered by foot to neighborhood childcare centers.

Donations of food and money come primarily through New Era Chicago's community engagement network. The people are feeding the people. To date over 1,000 meals have been prepared and delivered.

There are several brilliant women who have made these collaborations and initiatives possible: Yvette Moyo, Ericka Burton, and a chef from Soul Veg City who wants to remain anonymous. In honor of the International Men's Day celebrated in November, we decided to highlight a few of the men behind the scenes, to challenge the narrative that Black men have given up. Meet these wonderful brothers, who are about healing and uplift. Not just talking about it. They are doing the work.



Arel:
WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION?
My name is AREL BEN ISRAEL. I'm one of the owners of Soul Veg City, formerly known as Original Soul Vegetarian.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THIS WORK?
It gives me the opportunity to engage with people in a meaningful way. It also allows me to feel as if I'm living fully, being the person that I was born to be. That is a servant to GOD people.

WHY IS HEALTHY FOOD AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT DURING COVID?
One of the things said about Covid is, if you have a healthy immune system which comes from eating the right food, then the likelihood of you getting Covid will be very slim. During this time of Covid, community engagement is important because human interaction is a form of mental and physical healing.

TELL US ABOUT A MOMENT SINCE THIS PARTNERSHIP BEGAN THAT REALLY MOVED OR INSPIRED YOU?
I would like to first thank Charles and Khan for opening their house, The Quarry to the Soul Veg City family and team. One thing that really moved me was a time when we needed some electrical outlets ran. They had been there since 6am and the electrical work did not start until 9pm. They stayed until 1am so that we would be able to open for business the next morning! That is what I call going beyond the call of duty.

Healthy Food, Community Partnerships *(Continued)*

WHAT DO YOU LIKE DOING FOR FUN WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING HARD FOR THE COMMUNITY?

One of my biggest joy's is spending time with my family, taking my children on short road trips. I love taking myself to the movies because it gives me time with myself, something I realize I need.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEANED THE MOST TO MAKE IT THROUGH THIS CHALLENGING YEAR?

My greatest asset through this challenging time has been me talking and communicating with older and elderly people because they have been through rough times like these before.

Ooval: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION?

Cook, food prep, make sure everything is good and healthy everyday! Been here for 10 years.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE THE MOST ABOUT THIS WORK?

I love providing healthy food to the community. You meet people with underlying health conditions and get to see them progress just from eating healthier. It gives them an opportunity to get off medications and all the other stuff that's not really healthy. That brings me joy, being able to provide.

WHY IS HEALTHY FOOD IMPORTANT DURING COVID?

Going back to the underlying conditions, if your immune system is strong then it is able to fight off all these diseases. Food can keep your body and mind strong, working at its highest level.

WHAT CAN MEN, FATHERS, OR ANYONE DO AT HOME TO INTRODUCE BETTER HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES INTO THEIR FAMILY LIFE?

First, they have to start with themselves. Then, you can bring it to your family, so when you introduce it to them you can explain why it's healthy and show them that it actually works.



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HEALTHY MEAL OR DISH TO PREPARE? CAN YOU SHARE THE RECIPE?

I like pasta. I prefer a nice veggie pasta, with fresh vegetables: tomatoes, onions, mushrooms and spinach. And you wanna have you a nice little side of kale greens. And if you are into the tofu you can have some nice battered tofu. Or if you are into other proteins, you can have some battered kalebone, which is flour based. That's what I prefer.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING HARD FOR THE COMMUNITY?

I like to party. I like to bowl. I like to go to the lake and refresh my memory and meditate.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE FROM OTHER MEN IN ORDER TO MOVE US FORWARD AS A COMMUNITY TO ELEVATE TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

Start off by being examples to our younger brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews. Show them the right way, the right path. That even if you make a mistake you can acknowledge it, repent and keep moving. You don't have to hold on to bad blood or situations. Anytime you hold on to bad situations, or you can't forgive someone, not saying you have to forget, but you forgive so you can move on. You clear your mind and focus on what you are striving for. That's what I would like for the men in our community. To start by example.

Not just tell young people what to do but show them. Explain the consequences of the paths they might be going down, if it's not good for them.

Khan: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION OR PROJECT?

Facility manager for The Quarry. I've known Prince Asiel for a long time, so I was a part of the team that arranged the terms and agreements to make this vision come to life. As the facilities manager I'm up at The Quarry every morning at 6 am to help them get the day started.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE THE MOST ABOUT THIS WORK?

Helping the people, keeping them uplifted during these hard times. Letting them know there's somebody, somewhere that cares about them. I'm from this community and attached emotionally to the well-being of people here in South Shore.



WHY IS SAFE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT DURING COVID?

Because people have to stay in the house so much, can't move around, so they feel stuck. There are many opportunities for some people to get resources. These giveaways are important. If we don't help give resources, there's no telling what people will do.

WHAT CAN MEN, FATHERS, OR ANYONE DO AT HOME TO INTRODUCE BETTER HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES INTO THEIR FAMILY LIFE?

They can bring better food home. Eat better themselves. Lead by example.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING HARD FOR THE COMMUNITY?

Spend time with my family and grandbabies.

Healthy Food, Community Partnerships *(Continued)*

IN ADDITION TO HEALTHY FOOD, WHAT OTHER TYPES OF ACTIVITIES, EVENTS OR PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE OCCUR AT BLACK-OWNED COMMUNITY CENTERS SUCH AS THE QUARRY?

Real black history education to learn self-awareness and self-respect, Self-defense and tech skills. Teaching how to be real men, which I believe only real men can do.

Charles Phillips: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION OR PROJECT?

General Manager at The Quarry.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE THE MOST ABOUT THIS WORK? I love being part of a team that is full of people that genuinely care about others and the community they work in. I really enjoy getting to know people and building bonds with both co-workers and community members. I'm thankful to be part of a team that's in a position to help our community by providing healthy and nutritious meals to people. I'm also enjoying building relationships with other organizations, there are many people out there that deserve recognition for the work they are doing in their respective organizations.

WHY IS HEALTHY FOOD AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT DURING COVID?

Now more than ever it is clear why eating healthy food to build a healthy immune system is important. There is no better time to start changing dietary habits and making different choices. A poor diet leads to poor health conditions that can cause serious complications with Covid19. Food is medicine. We must strengthen our minds and bodies and feed ourselves nutritious foods that help combat disease. Community engagement is important during this period of social distancing because we still have to show up and show support for each other. Covid has impacted our community disproportionately. There are going to be serious long term consequences, both in terms of health and economics. We have to be ready to emerge from all of this with a plan of action and we must be ready to do the work.



HOW DID THE SOUL VEG AND QUARRY PARTNERSHIP COME ABOUT?

First, I would like to thank Arel and the whole Soul Veg team for working with us to make this partnership happen. The idea was originally proposed by Yvette Moyo, CEO of The Quarry, after a conversation she had with a FoodLab connection. I and Khan, our facilities manager, then met with Arel. Our healthy community focus was a natural fit for Soul Veg. The Quarry's healthy food history and the legacy of Real Men Charities connect with the ideas and values of Soul Veg. Also, there is a historical connection between Arel's father, Prince, and Yvette Moyo, even before she met and married the co-founder of Real Men Charities, Inc. Khan gave the green light, so it was a go.

HOW DID THE FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM COME ABOUT?

The breakfast program was negotiated as part of the rental agreement we made with Soul Veg. It was only made possible knowing that we had the backing of New Era Chicago in terms of volunteers and community outreach.

WHAT CAN MEN, FATHERS, OR ANYONE DO AT HOME TO INTRODUCE BETTER HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES INTO THEIR FAMILY LIFE?

Make your own juice and smoothies.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT THE HOLIDAY SEASON?

Taking some days off and spending time with family.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING HARD FOR THE COMMUNITY?

I like to make beats and produce music.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE FROM OTHER MEN IN ORDER TO MOVE US FORWARD AS A COMMUNITY TO ELEVATE TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

I would like to see more accountability and teamwork.

Ayinde Cartman: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION OR PROJECT?

Executive Director of Real Men Charities Inc.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE THE MOST ABOUT THIS WORK?

I love working with individuals and organizations that are genuinely invested in our communities' well-being, and how we help revitalize people's faith and imagination.

WHY IS HEALTHY FOOD AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT DURING COVID?

Because we're dying at alarming rates from lack of nutrition. The need for hyper-focused community engagement around health and wellness has increased drastically.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF MEN STEPPING UP AND WORKING TOGETHER IN THESE TIMES?

Times of crisis create opportunities for growth. Men tend to struggle with sustaining a unified presence when it comes to addressing community needs. The more examples we have of men building relationships and combining skills and interests, the sooner consistent collaboration becomes our cultural norm. This speaks to a few Real Men Charities, Inc. focus areas over the years.

WHAT CAN MEN, FATHERS, OR ANYONE DO AT HOME TO INTRODUCE BETTER HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES INTO THEIR FAMILY LIFE?

Take note of you and your family's favorite fruits and vegetables and keep your fridge full of them. And don't buy no more cow's milk!

TELL US ABOUT A MOMENT SINCE THIS PARTNERSHIP BEGAN THAT REALLY MOVED OR INSPIRED YOU.

A group of young boys from across the street asking for drum lessons after breakfast.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED THE MOST ABOUT HOW TO MAKE IT THROUGH THIS CHALLENGING YEAR?

Positive thought replacement, prioritizing self-care, the kind of food distribution PPE and mental health support Real Men Charities, Inc. has been providing since April, and hugging my mother.

(Continued)

Healthy Food, Community Partnerships *(Continued)*

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE FROM OTHER MEN IN ORDER TO MOVE US FORWARD AS A COMMUNITY TO ELEVATE TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

Open minds and hearts.

While the principals of the Real Men Charities are forwarding their healthy community objectives from the Quarry, and some have been customers of Soul Vegetarian since it opened, referral to the Quarry came from a collaborative of restaurant owners called The Food Lab, which helped to initiate this collaborative agreement. During this season of giving Real Men Charities, Inc. invites your support. www.RealMenCharitiesInc.org/Donate.

FOODLAB CHICAGO : Upping the game. Providing integrated services to largely mature food businesses owned by people of color and addressing acute barriers that hamper their growth. <https://foodlabchicago.com/>



FOOD DESERT

By Ayinde Cartman

**Food desert
Dune dooms day
Yo lunchroom
a monsoon of garbage
They figure you eat what you are**

**Fried hard
With a side of shard
lodged deep in a broken heart
Death rates beyond the stars
Lethal dart ain't missed a mark**

**Target neon red
Not a single one of us force fed
But what we critical think
Surround a horse wit poison
What else will it drink
Where ima get some kale
on 79th and anywhere
What I gotta do
to avoid baby cow food
Why i gotta drive
20 min for ground stuff
What if I had to walk
What if I don't have no money**

**My students told me they eat chips in the morning
Cardboard in the afternoon
That ain't just Chicago
thats a cross country
a far ass finish line
whole life a home stretch
Still shatter a track record
Its not about the resilience
of our children
its about how they shouldn't
have to be resilient**

**We cant forget
No matter how good it is
Soul food is foul fuel**

**Ate it cause we had to
Now we damaging
our crown jewel
At funerals with a mouth full
Medicine for sad moods
Toppling God's temple**

**We never asked for scraps
to calm thunder and swarm remembering its
fufu maiz injera cassava
Replaced with its
fried preserved fat fraudulent
Yo m.o. g.m.o.
and won't know till four score
what got real parts
and what don't**

**Chicken hella alien
Fangs drippin bring it on
Blood pressure diabetes
casket ready sing along
Tux tailor black widow
deccrescendo in a lawn
Anthem international
translate and trot a globe
starve everywhere and tear
and can't eat shit**

**So dine in sit and soak
Warehouse to go
or dine in sit and soak
Quote. Kids...
are having better behavior enhanced
school performance and improved con-
centration when they eat healthy
Close quote
Assume the opposite
When they don't**



Black Men Should Only Cry Sometimes

by Dr. Obari Cartman

In November 2017 singer and actor Tyrese couldn't see his 10-year old daughter for a few months because his co-parent issued a restraining order. Tyrese was so distraught he posted a video of himself crying. I had empathy watching him because three days is the longest amount of time I can go without seeing my son before I become uneasy. However, a few months prior, I was embarrassed by videos of two Black male journalists, Van Jones and Gianni Caldwell, who cried on television in response to some racist comments made by President Donald Trump. I viewed Jones and Caldwell as weak for crying.

If you read "weak" as "feminine," that's completely on you. I never said that. I don't think a crying man is more in touch with his feminine side. I see him more aligned with his human nature. My notion of the weak to strong spectrum has nothing to do with gender, and everything to do with power. I'm more likely to make an age comparison than a gender one. I'll never say, "man up, quit acting like a girl." But I will say, "you're a grown ass man, stop acting like a little boy."

Children are still leaning to experience and appropriately express their emotions. I will never tell a child to deny their true feelings, but I do feel it's my parental responsibility to shape my sons' emotional expression. I give them all the love and support they need when they fall and hurt themselves. But when one cries because he can't have another cookie I won't hesitate to say, "boy quit crying and go drink some water."

I think the reason we cry matters. To be disappointed Trump said something racist suggests a level of unhealthy delusion. I don't think he warrants that kind of power in our minds. Did Jones and Caldwell expect more from their President? I can't imagine them being upset if they were prepared for his buffoonery. Maybe they expected dignity and leadership from him? That actually would be sad.

In 4:44, Jay-Z's most gangsta rap album yet, he said, "I never wanted another woman to know/ Something about me that you didn't know/I promised, I cried /I couldn't hold." Did he cry because he got caught? Maybe that's harsh. I appreciate the vulnerability he expressed. Throughout his

album there was a theme of how much pain he would feel if he lost his daughter, which I think opened him up to also feel the loss of his wife. "Cry Jay Z, we know the pain is real/But you can't heal what you never reveal."

Neal Brennan, a white male artist noted for his edgy writing on the critically-acclaimed *Chappelle's Show*, in his beautifully insightful stand-up comedy special on Netflix said "I actually think Black dudes appreciated how openly sad I was because Black dudes aren't allowed to be openly sad in public. The only way a Black dude can openly express sadness in public is if he does it with a saxophone."

The question is definitely about expression. We know Black men feel, despite their best attempts to hide it. We know Black men mask sadness and fear as anger. We know Black men self-medicate to not feel. It seems, however, without more nuanced direction around emotional expression young Black men will continue to dismiss the prevailing plea of our time: to reassess the building blocks of our masculinity from the ground up.

I sell a t-shirt which says, "Men cry..." The t-shirt gets a lot of scoff from Black men. While the message serves as a reminder to Black men and our humanity - and emotions are not a woman thing - it only works if it's effective. I'm wondering if we need to also teach crying sometimes doesn't mean crying all the time. Perhaps Black men have been holding it in so long they fear opening a flood gate? Black men also still have to survive the harsh realities of their block or board room.

I don't want a Black man to start sobbing at work if his boss chastises him, but I also don't want him to pretend he wasn't hurt. I want him to recognize the shame in his body, to allow it to pierce him deeply, notice where it hits him in his abdomen, make a connection between that feeling and his fear of losing the security of a job, hold a straight face, keep eye contact, and get back to work - not drown his sorrows at a bar or strip club before he goes home.

I don't want a young Black man to think he has to try cry in the middle of the cafeteria when an upperclassman makes fun of his shoes. Instead he should feel his chest pounding, eyes watering, try not to blink, take deep breaths, ride the L, force a smirk, walk slowly to a bathroom stall where he can sneak a muffle cry in his sleeve, and go back to class

(Continued)

Black Men Should Only Cry Sometimes *(Continued)*

– not go to snapchat and tell his cousins to meet them after the last bell.

On the other hand, my younger brother has never seen me cry. I had no idea until he said it recently. It seems incredible to me because I cry all the time. There are songs, movies, and even some commercials which made me cry. I've cried so often because of our mother I can barely look her directly in the eye anymore. I can cry in an instant at the thought of my son getting hurt or dying.

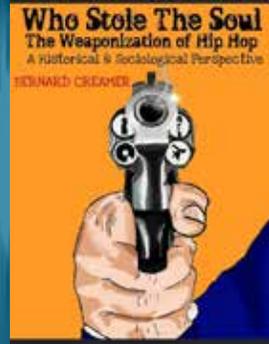
I love crying.

I feel so much lighter after a good cry. It's not because I hold it in when I'm around my brother; it doesn't even come up. My instinct or man training or perceived duty to protect him from the burden of my pain makes it so I don't know if I'm capable of feeling that intensely in his presence. Sounds like a man box when I describe it that way. What lessons do young Black men learn if I only cry in my car alone? How will they every know it's okay?

Some men kill instead of crying. Themselves and others. We not gone change the entire culture of manhood overnight, but we can work more urgently to create safe and trusting spaces for Black men to gather and cry. Or just share. And we can teach Black men as soon as they can speak how to attach language to emotional experiences they naturally have.

We can teach the cleansing power of tears, encourage Black men to AT LEAST cry alone, and how to use the emotional signals our bodies give us to interrogate their source. We can teach Black men how to include the power of emotions as a part of decision making and successfully navigating the world as a Black man. It a tough world for all of us. We are clear trials and tribulations come with the job of being a Black man in America.

Crying should also be taught as a natural part of life for Black men, too. Sometimes.



Propaganda

“The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda.”

Noam Chomsky

Propaganda is psychological conditioning. When we tune in to the nightly news with regularity and view the gratuitous images of Blacks being mistreated, beaten, and killed, we tend to become desensitized to the plight of the Black collective who are the subjects of a disproportionate amount of abuse from America's state-sanctioned authority.

After awhile the “shock value” diminishes and we come to view these occurrences as just the way things are. The nonsensical is normalized. Once we are completely desensitized to these events, we are less likely to mount a meaningful or effective response to curb them. Our collective inaction is unnatural, but we are primed to accept certain unfortunate realities. With the advent of cell phone videos, Black death has become akin to American porn, something to watch for a quick hit of delight. The thrill of the kill.

Propaganda is subconscious programming. The subconscious mind has more control over our conscious actions than the conscious mind. It is the subconscious mind that processes what we take in as stimulus every moment we're awake. It's what we've processed via our five senses. The subconscious also processes the messages we take in subliminally and oftentimes, these are the most potent.

Product advertisers spend millions of dollars infusing their commercials and advertisements with hidden messages, messages only hidden from our eyes. The finished products of our subconscious minds' consumption are our guiding thoughts. Our actions and behaviors are dictated by the thoughts manifested from our subconscious. We can think of the subconscious mind as the operating system of a computer. It is how we're hardwired. Within our subconscious mind are housed our personalities, behaviors, and habits, the things that drive

The Propaganda and Conditioning of Corporatized Music

by Bernard Creamer

Excerpts from new book
“Who Stole the Soul —
The Weaponization of Hip Hop”
(available at statusKNO.com)

us. Many of the things we do involuntarily or without realizing we're doing them are the manifestations of our subconscious programming. Often, we perceive these actions as conscious choices, not understanding the work that our subconscious programming played in our preferences.

The subconscious can be programmed for positive behavior such as the consumption of media that encourages healthy eating. Alternatively, the subconscious can be rendered toxic. For example, young people consume gratuitous amounts of negative propaganda, veiled as music, which suggests to them that all peer conflict is to be settled with some sort of violent or deadly reaction.

Conditioning

“You can't listen to all that language and filth without it affecting you”

C. Delores Tucker

There is absolutely no way a Black person can consume years, months, weeks, or days worth of negative media portraying and promoting Black men and women as immoral, ignorant, savage, vulgar, and barbaric and not in some way internalize these images. The person who believes this is possible does not totally grasp how propaganda and subliminal messaging works. While we're conscious we don't realize the impact of the gratuitous consumption of toxic messages. We are not supposed to, but the subconscious absorbs these images and narratives like a sponge. Eventually, the behavior desired by the purveyors of the messages are manifested.

Most of the propaganda we ingest is cleverly cloaked as entertainment. I call it the propaganda “trojan horse.” On the outside, it's a gift to be embraced, but in reality, it's waged war in disguise. First, attack how Blacks view themselves and one another. Secondly, dehumanize and demonize Blacks in the eyes of others. These attacks devalue Black people and render them deserving of whatever strife they are targeted with. The only people actively combating Black genocide are Black people. Relatively few of us understand the need to do so. The army defending the minds of Black youth from these sonic attacks is a small one.

In 2020, a lot of us in America and around the globe proudly

refer to ourselves and one another as “niggas.” This is the most potent and obvious example of psychological conditioning. For context, consider what would happen if White children or White adult audiences were provided with ample amounts of music, movies, and television programming where they got to hear Whites refer to other Whites as “honkeys” or “crackers” 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? After some time, there's no doubt we'd hear those words tossed between White people in public spaces at an alarming clip. Unfortunately, this situation has only held true for Black people.

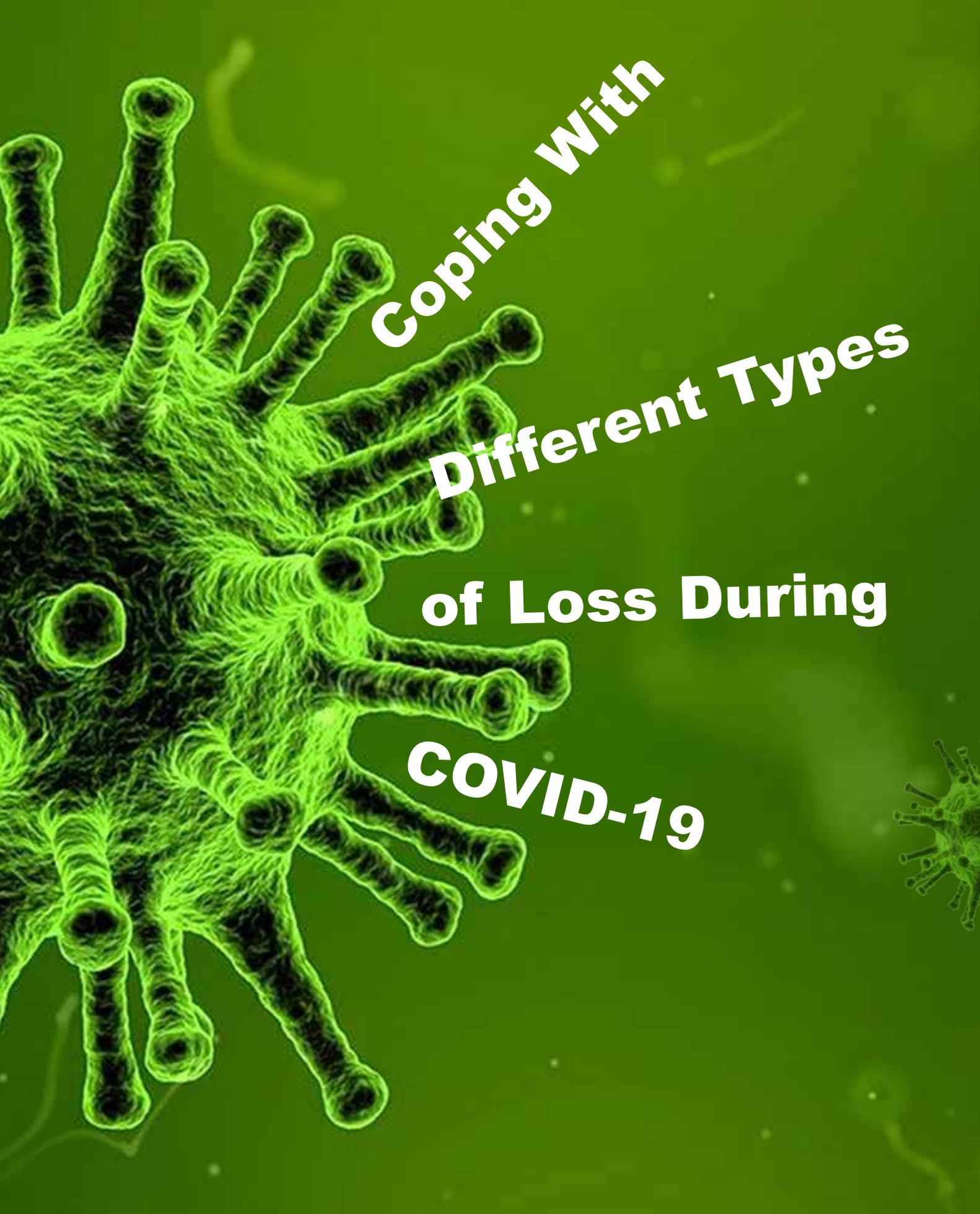
Not only have we come to identify ourselves as niggas, or the hyper-masculine, “real niggas” but Black men have grown extremely comfortable referring to Black women as “bitches” cued by European-owned Black entertainment. Black female artists have “empowered” Black women to refer to themselves as bitches, bad and bossy. The Black community has become one saturated with self-professed niggas and bitches. How'd we go from being subjugated, debased, and disrespected by the most detestable word in the English language to embracing it and wearing it as a badge of honor?

How did so many sisters go from slapping the taste out of a brother's mouth for directing the word “bitch” at her to proudly placing it on t-shirts and owning it? “If you can make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to go to the back door. . .he will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one.” (paraphrased from Carter G. Woodson). Through systemic miseducation, we've been well-tooled to build our own back doors. At this juncture, far too many of us are mistaking the back door for a front entrance.

Frequently, I hear the cliché employed, “speak it into existence!” This is an acknowledgement of the power words possess. Words possess tremendous power, especially those we use to define ourselves. We'd have to be completely naive to believe that the television, movie and recording industries aren't aware of this fact.

“Words cannot change reality, but they can change how people perceive reality. Words create filters through which people view the world around them. A single word can make the difference between liking a person and disliking that person.”

Jack Schafer Ph.D.



Coping With Different Types of Loss During COVID-19



by Addie W. Anderson, LCPC, NCC

Grief under normal conditions can be hard. Add a pandemic to the equation and there's another layer of grief to contend with. Grief is the normal reaction to loss. According to The Grief Recovery Method, in addition to death, there are, "40 other life events that can create feelings of grief." The pandemic has brought many of these losses to the forefront. Unfortunately, we've lost people we love during this difficult time. In addition, secondary to the pandemic, most of us are faced with non-death losses as well. Both can include feelings of anger, loneliness, despair, sadness, hopelessness, and depression.

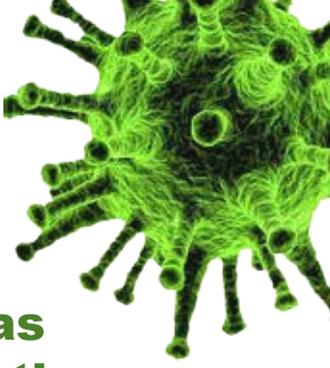
Death Losses

Because of COVID-19, many people are dying apart from their loved-ones. The thought of someone we love "dying alone" is heartbreaking. As hard as it is, we want to be there to provide love and comfort as they make their transition. It can be argued that this experience is more important for those left behind than for the person who died. Understandingly so, many of my clients express strong feelings of regret and guilt for not being able to participate in this life-altering moment. Even though you weren't allowed to be there, there is the sense that you should have been there.

The homegoing celebration is our way of honoring the life of the dead. Because of the requirement to socially distance, funeral services were drastically altered and some even eliminated. Although this was necessary, it doesn't stop people from feeling helpless, hurt, and disappointed. The opportunity to partake in this one last traditional ritual in the way expected is gone forever.

Non-Death Losses

There is an interesting parallel between how we feel after losing a loved one and how we experience the secondary or non-death losses that came as a result of the pandemic. For instance, both create a sense uncertainty. Our assumptions about what we thought was certain, i.e., going to work every day, schools always open, freedom to move around, etc., shattered our belief system. Even more, both challenges how we see the world as well as how we see ourselves in the world after a major loss. No matter the type of loss, grief impacts us emotionally, physically, and spiritually.



The pandemic has brought many of these losses to the forefront.

How to Cope

Grief, by its own nature, can be unpredictable and overwhelming. In many ways, coping with non-death losses is similar to how you cope with the death of a loved one. Even though no two people grieve alike, and not everybody heal in the same way, there are some things that can be helpful to all grievers. They are:

- 1) Don't stuff your feelings and pretend they don't exist. Acknowledge what they are and recognize they're there for a reason.
- 2) Stay connected to your support system. Obviously, this will look different during a pandemic but it can still be helpful and nurturing in whatever form it takes.
- 3) Be patient. Too often we try to push through and move on with our lives as if nothing has happened. A major loss changes who you are so allow yourself time to adjust and adapt to the change.
- 4) Practice self-care. Don't underestimate the benefit of sleep, a healthy diet, and exercise, even if modified because of grief.
- 5) Seek professional help if you find that the level your grief reactions are persistent and debilitating.

Finally, you may not be able to control what's happening around you, but you can choose to control how you respond. Remind yourself that, "This too shall pass." Nothing lasts forever. Think back to a time when you were able to overcome a difficult situation in your life and use this as evidence of your resiliency and to remind you of what's possible.

Addie is a licensed counselor and certified grief counselor with a private practice in Oak Park, IL

Impact of the Black Male Vote



by Rael Jackson

The 2020 Presidential election

exposed the apathy, disenfranchisement, and civics education of Black men. For many, the “lesser of two evils” was no longer an option.

Black people have a longer history in America than the majority of the American people. Our blood, sweat, and tears built America. We provided the moral compass of America. We created the culture that America sold to become the most powerful economy in the world.

Every four years, Blacks are called to save America from herself, in spite of the fact that Black people consistently seem under attack by America...Heroin, HIV/AIDS, Crack Cocaine, Gun Violence, Unequal Policing, Mass Incarceration, Inadequate Education, Systematic Racism... and much more. But in between the four years, it feels that we are forgotten.

Rights, Foreign Aid...? We're left wondering in a phrase Maze Jackson has made popular “What's In It For Black People?”

Trump took advantage of the apathy of Black men and our well-deserved mistrust for the media, and turned it into an effective propaganda strategy, doubling the support of Romney from Black men in 2012, from 8% to 18%.

The Willie Lynch Theory is the concept that described the separation of slaves based on traits to create division

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male/female, light/dark, house/field would keep Black people divided for generations. The Willie Lynch Theory has always been able to predict divisions in the Black community every since the Emancipation Washington/DuBois, King/X, and Prosperity Gospel/Liberation Theology. Notably, Ice Cube's last minute attempt to influence the election, immediately created a separation in the Black social media conversations, some supporting and others condemning his actions.

Trump's outwardly racist overtures during the debate calling out “Stand Back and Stand By” to the Proud Boys were discounted by many Black men because of Biden's leadership on the 1994 Crime Bill. The Progressives spent the last 10 years highlighting the unequal way the bill was applied to devastate the Black community, without the context of the murders that plagued urban communities across the nation from New York to Little Rock, with the number of New York and Chicago murders being five times and two times higher than they are today.

It's almost alarming that some Black men would look to a morally corrupt White man, as a better choice than Barack Obama's (the upstanding family man who saved America from the brink of economic destruction; provided health care to millions of families; and grew more jobs than Trump) Vice President. In spite of his bungling of Covid19 and his mishandling of the murder of George Floyd, not stepping forward to address the valid concerns of Black youth, leading to protests across the country, Trump was able to slightly broaden his appeal among the Black community.

However, Black people once again saved America from herself. Georgia led by Stacey Abrams showed up and showed out. Black people still provided the highest percentage of support for Biden than any other group, with 82% of Black men and 91% of Black women. We now have our first Black woman Vice President-Elect.

Georgia led by Stacey Abrams showed up and showed out. Black people still provided the highest percentage of support for Biden than any other group, with 82% of Black men and 91% of Black women.

As soon as the celebration is over, it's time to get to work. It's time to look towards the midterms and educate the Black community about the importance of the midterms, or we will face the consequences of more apathy. It's time for Black celebrities who want to have an influence on the future of Black people in America to step forward and not wait until the last minute. It's time to put the Congressional Black Caucus on notice that we need to see progress for Black communities. Those sitting in office for 20 years should be voted out during the midterm Primaries for new blood (let somebody else get some of that pension money).

Last but not least, the Democratic Party spent over \$1 Billion on the Presidential election. It's time for Black people to demand an equitable share of the money for Black media. That's at least \$300 Million, and it must start in 2022. Show us the MONEY!



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By Emma Young

The Anatomy of An Election

On the evening of November 3, for those of us who didn't know that the mail-in ballots would be counted last, depression was beginning to take place in many parts of the country. It looked like America was in for four more years of Trump. Donald Trump made a speech that night, declaring himself the winner.

But joy came in the morning of November 4! Donald Trump had previously led Joe Biden by 600,000 votes in Pennsylvania. That number dwindled down to 19,000 then 1,400 – and then it was all Biden, who ended up some 60,000 votes ahead of Trump, as of this writing. Similar ballot counting was taking place in Georgia. In Arizona, as the votes from Maricopa County came in, Trump was beginning to erode Biden's lead, causing Trump to call for "stop the counting" in Pennsylvania and Georgia, and "keep counting" in Arizona.

The country remained on pins and needles, waiting to exhale, waiting for former Vice President Joseph Biden to be declared the 46th President of the United States. It didn't happen until Saturday, Nov 7th. Senator Kamala Harris was out jogging with her husband when she got the news. She immediately called Biden. "Joe, you won,

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you're the next President," she said.

Then the strangest thing happened.

When Donald Trump told Fox News' Chris Wallace, back in October, that he didn't know if he would accept a loss, we thought "well, he's just being Donald, but surely he's not that crazy." Well, it turns out he is.

The news said he sent out 22 angry tweets that day saying he had won. He couldn't believe that 71 million people voted for him and he did not win. Perhaps he didn't notice that 75 million people voted for Joe Biden. Or perhaps, in his mind, he had determined that any vote that wasn't for him was illegal, fraudulent, even criminal.

Yet, he thought he had prepared for this situation by rushing the Supreme Court nomination of Amy Coney Barrett. After all, when there was a discrepancy between George W. Bush and Al Gore in 2000, didn't Bush win via the Supreme Court? Trump probably figured that these were his justices and they owed him their allegiance. Of course, in *Bush v. Gore*, neither candidate had reached the 270 Electorates needed to win. Gore had 267 and Bush had 242, and Florida seemed to have gone to Bush. But because of the hanging chads, 61,000 ballots had been skipped. The Florida Supreme Court ordered a recount. The more they counted, the more Gore seemed to have been gaining on Bush. So, Bush went to the United States Supreme Court and asked for an order to stop the counting – after all the count had been going on for nearly two weeks. The court agreed with Bush, and he received Florida's 29 electoral votes, giving him a total of 271 making him the President.

But Trump didn't seem to take into account that he was 5 million votes behind Biden, as opposed to the 500 votes that Bush was ahead of Gore. He didn't seem to take into account that Biden had 306 electoral votes, well over the 270 he needed to win.

As of this writing, Trump has filed 21 lawsuits, 20 were dismissed. One in Georgia asking for ballots with voter I.D. problems to be discarded was granted. But those votes had never been counted anyway, they were being held aside, waiting for the verdict.

Many of Trump's lawyers resigned. I guess they didn't want to keep litigating cases with no credible evidence, making them look as ill-informed as their client. So Trump appointed Rudy Giuliani to file subsequent law-

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suits. It was only fitting that he chose Rudy Giuliani, because if anyone can offer comic relief Rudy can. I'm not talking about when he was in the Borat film being interviewed by a girl he thought was a teenager while lying on the bed and "tucking in his shirt" into his pants. That was a long shirt, Rudy! No, I'm speaking of the press conference he arranged for the President at the Four Seasons. It turned out to be in the parking lot of the Four Seasons Total Landscaping Company, positioned between a crematorium and a sex shop, in Philadelphia.

Seriously, President Trump's unprecedented denial of his loss and his refusal to concede is, well, unprecedented. Former Vice President Biden is valiantly and patiently trying to get on with his transition, even though there are funds he is supposed to have access to for his transition, which the Trump administration is denying him. He is also being denied access to medical experts in order to begin his plan to stop the Covid pandemic, which Trump's chief of staff, Mark Meadows had stated before the election, they were no longer trying to control.

Donald Trump fired all of the heads of the Department of Defense, putting his inexperienced loyalists in their places. But that's nothing new, Trump thrives on putting unqualified loyalists in key positions. In this case, it should give us pause. He also fired the head person in the Department of Homeland Security and then had his replacement sign new laws, limiting DACA, which the court refused to acknowledge because "the person who signed the document was not legally in a position to do so." Trump also fired the Cybersecurity chief in the Department of Homeland Security because he said that the election was the most secure in American history.

Michigan certified Joe Biden, and Trump stated that the Republican electorates were "viciously pressured" to do so.

And as we ponder the craziness of all that Trump is doing, there are some other folks in America – possibly close

to 71 million, who are convinced that Donald Trump won the election – because Donald Trump told them he did. They are still chanting "four more years" and stating matter-of-factly that news organizations do not determine the outcome of elections. They are still waiting for the election to be overturned. And if it isn't, then what?

The Proud Boys (whom Trump told on national TV to "stand by") and the Oath Keepers (who publicly declared they will never recognize or adhere to any law that comes from Biden), were out in full force at the Million Maga March, in Washington, D.C., which turned out to be about 250,000. So they used a photo of the 1995 Million Man March to depict the great crowd.

So what happens next? Will Trump face reality and leave the White House peacefully? Will the New York Attorney General proceed with charges once he is no longer President? Will his supporters wage the civil war he has suggested?

This is truly a bitter-sweet time. Half of America is embarrassed by the childish antics of the 45th President, and the other half is angry that an election was "stolen" from their President. This should be a time to celebrate that finally, we will have a normal President who doesn't rule by tweets, who doesn't engage in name-calling, who respects the office of the Presidency. We should be ecstatic that finally there is a female in the office of Vice President, and she is Black, and she is an AKA, and she is a co-sponsor of the Senate Reparations Bill. We are happy about those things, but at the same time we are holding our collective breath, wondering what the toddler and his "cult-45" are going to do next.

And as we ponder the craziness of all that Trump is doing, there are some other folks in America – possibly close to 71 million, who are convinced that Donald Trump won the election – because Donald Trump told them he did. They are still chanting "four more years"



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