

Colleagues,

I'm writing this now, but to be honest, I really don't want to be bothered. I don't want to write, I don't want to talk, I don't want to work, I don't want to socialize.

Many of you have reached out to me personally, and I appreciate it. I do. I just feel like shit right now. I find myself crying often, and I haven't cried outside of a funeral in many years.

Because I am a community activist, I am receiving numerous requests to speak to our community and our youth in Oakland on what we should do next or how we should move forward. But I'm at a loss. I have no fucking idea on where we go from here. Voting seems like the most productive choice, but we've voted for a long time, and this problem has never subsided. And me casting a ballot in November does not make my son any safer today (or in November for that matter). Within the last week, even Black politicians have been [assaulted](#) and arrested while PEACEFULLY protesting...

There's social unrest happening in our country. And whatever side you are on regarding looting and/or protests, what's happening is that people are fed up, disgusted, tired, hurt, afraid, angry, and in mourning.

If you read no further, understand this. **Black Lives Matter = if anyone kills a Black person, their punishment should be the same as if they killed someone from any other race.**

No matter if they are White, Black, or Blue. If anyone kills a Black person, they should be arrested, tried and convicted of murder. We don't hold the false belief that murders amongst

humans will stop. If you read the bible, when there were only 4 people on earth (Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel), a murder occurred. We live in a cruel world. The request is that when someone Black is killed, the murderer gets treated the same no matter their job, race, gender or nationality.

This is what people are protesting. This is what people are upset about. A quarterback attempted to peacefully protest this by taking a knee, and he was black listed (it's unfortunate that so many negative connotations are associated with the word "black), called an SOB by the president, and called disrespectful to our flag/nation by many of our fellow Americans. People... Black people are at our wits end because we have no idea what to do to fix this.

There was a time when I was afraid for my life as a Black man. But that fear subsided when I became a father. Because now, for the rest of my life, I live with the fear of my children being murdered by someone from an over-represented group, without consequence. I live with this burden daily. Daily.

The true problem with the recent videos of Black people being slayed is that there are thousands of others who experience the same fate, but because they aren't recorded, you'll hear nothing about it. Even George Floyd's ["official" report](#) from the police says that heart disease and "potential intoxicants" in his system played a part in his death. So many people who look like me are dying REGULARLY by those who are sworn to serve and protect us, and it goes unnoticed except by the fatherless children and broken families left behind.

I don't have faith that we will see a change in my lifetime. I was alive to see Rodney King viciously beaten and have the officers deemed not guilty. That was almost 30 years ago and we are still watching Black men and women be assaulted and killed on camera by the people meant to protect them.

I am sending this to you because I think of you as a friend, but feel free to share (if you didn't receive this directly from me, please charge it to my mind and not my heart, as I am not

remembering or thinking straight much these days). But many times it's easier to deal with these tragedies because the Black man killed is a stranger. But you know me. As hard as it may be to do, imagine me on the ground, handcuffed, begging for my mother (her name is Dorothy Louise) while an officer has his knee on my neck until I stopped breathing. Until I was dead. I need this to hit home because it not hitting home for so many people is the reason it continues. I need you to think of me lying there dead. Because when I saw this video (like too many others), I see my sons. I see my sons...

In my current state, I won't and can't ask much of you. But I do have simple requests.

Talk to your children about anti-Blackness. As a father I know that we want to keep them innocent and naive for as long as we can. But unfortunately they are bombarded with anti-blackness in cartoons, the media, at school, at the park, while shopping and online. Whether you notice it or not, it is embedded in our society. This is why so often you will hear of someone who committed heinous acts, and their parent's saying that they didn't raise them like that, or that they don't know where they got that from. The world is teaching our children lessons that we may not condone. And You have the power to combat this but you have to be intentional. Because while I have very little hope that a change will come in my lifetime, I do pray that future generations get it right. But it starts with us doing something now.

My second request is that if you see a Black person being treated unjustly, speak up. Whether it is by a store clerk, a fellow citizen, a peace officer, or any public official, please say something. Your silence is your approval of negative actions. I get it. Not everyone is an extrovert, and many times we want to just mind our business. But we all would want someone to speak up on our behalf (or our family's behalf) if we were on the receiving end of mistreatment. Be that someone.

Lastly, I'll say get involved. I can't dictate to you what that looks like, but it can be anything from writing an email to public officials, sharing a social media post, learning more about anti-Blackness, being an active ally at a rally, donating, or just sharing this message. But do

something. Please don't sit idly by while I am being murdered. Make no mistake about it. I am dying.

Marco

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Marco Lindsey (he, him, his)

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