

Finding and Using Your Voice

With so many unsettling things that have been happening, a common statement from people is “I want to do something”. It is heartening to see so many people wanting to take action, and as noted by nonviolent researcher Erica Chenoweth, if in our area we can get 3.5% actively and consistently involved, we are part of reaching the tipping point nationally to successfully resist this administration.

One of Michelle Obama’s most celebrated phrases on the 2024 campaign trail was “Do something”. And if doing something is calling to you, here are some thoughts for your consideration that helped me and might be helpful for you.

In seeking out what to do, I knew there were many choices. However, figuring out what was best for me to do was challenging. I considered some options, and I decided to set the following priorities as I made my decisions.

1. I needed to do something that not only made a difference but was also something that required the skills I had to offer or was an area where I had the potential to develop new skills. I also wanted to be able to utilize the relationships within the community that I had developed over a period of years.
2. I wanted to do something that would bring me together with others. My heart is about being part of and creating a community that cares for each other.
3. I also was looking for something that “fed me”. I knew that being nourished by the work would assist me in continuing the work for the long run and would help in not allowing a failure or mistake stop me from being involved.
4. Finally, and maybe most importantly, I needed to take care of myself and have time to show care to those in my family. Not doing so would likely mean that I’d be less successful in making a positive impact.

Each of us has talents, and each of us is moved in different ways to be involved. Having people with a variety of skills and interests engaging in social justice work is a real advantage. As each person brings their unique skills to the community, enhanced creativity and problem solving can be the result. And because there is a diversity of ways to take action, each person will be able to find a niche that fits their skill set and interests.

So, if you’re not sure what you want to do or where your skill set might fit within all the options that are available, feel free to reach out to me or to others, such as friends who know you well. Connecting with others and talking through the variety of opportunities might help you find your niche and your voice as you explore the work that is yours to do.