

ASPIRATIONS TO ACTIONS MOMENTS



Storms. Failure. Progress.

Recently, The Patterson Foundation joined forces with Manatee Community Foundation to facilitate virtual community conversations in Manatee County, Florida. In a world where uncertainty can be overwhelming, TPF is utilizing five core tenets to focus our work: caring, connecting, collaborating, creating, and strengthening. Through the use of the Harwood Institute's "Community Conversation" model ([see example toolkit here](#)), we seek input from our neighbors in a constructive, civil forum. The recent changes we've all experienced due to COVID-19 provide opportunities to move to a future more connected and focused. COVID-19 has spotlighted inequities in access and opportunity across the county that recent unrest has only focused more sharply.

In one of the conversations, this quote was shared as a helpful way to consider when we are struggling to be empathetic: *We are not all in the same boat, but we are all in the same storm.*

The storm's impact affects people in different ways, and it's our responsibility to acknowledge that what we're experiencing is not the same.

I know that the current events in the U.S. are making people uncomfortable. The easy response to discomfort is denial, blame, or distance. But consider Kanter's Law: *Change in the middle often looks like failure.*

Our systems have failed too many to remain the same. This response is not spur of the moment. It is the result of a cry for change long in the making. We have failed, and now is the opportunity and the necessary moment for change.

It's not up to any one individual to determine what progress will move us from failure to true change. But, it's up to us to be a part of the change in any way we can.

Not everyone was built to protest in the streets, and that's not the only option. First, we can listen to understand, rather than to respond.

We can put our resources and talents to supporting change-makers in communities affected. We can be intentional about how we use the power we have through voting, advocating, donating, and educating ourselves and our children on what it means to be a good human.

Beth Duda, director of the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, was sharing just last week about an activity to engage children in conversation about race. When you crack a white egg and a brown egg, they look the same on the inside.

Lessons don't need to be complex to be meaningful. We should all strive for a community where systems consider humans — humans and equity is the forefront of every effort. Whatever action you can take, now is the time.



Continue the Conversation

A2A Moments is a weekly update of photos, moments of possibilities, feedback, and stories that book circles share with The Patterson Foundation.

Don't forget to send in your tidbits to hsaegerkarnei@thepattersonfoundation.org to be featured in an upcoming A2A Moments!

Help The Patterson Foundation see where people in the four-county area are stepping forward! Add your zip code to this [PollEverywhere](#) — we'll share the results in upcoming newsletters.



[@ThePattersonFdn](#)
[@HarwoodInst](#)
[#Aspire2Action](#)
[#SteppingForward](#)

Click on the link below for a social media compilation on A2A book circles!
<https://wke.lt/w/s/N-lfo->