

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN ERADICATING RACISM

ONLY TOGETHER CAN WE PUT AN END TO INJUSTICE AND DISCRIMINATION, WRITES TED ARNOTT



TED ARNOTT
Column

"I have a dream that little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character." — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King did not live to see his dream realized. And to our collective shame, 57 years after he expressed those immortal words at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, the scourge of racism and injustice continues to stubbornly persist.

There is racism in Canada, in Ontario and in our communities.

It is based on ignorance and fear.

It has been pernicious. It has been systemic. It has been dehumanizing.

However, we know that no one is born racist. Racism is an acquired belief system, passed on like a virus from one person to another.

But just as a virus is contagious, so too is virtue.

That is why we can all play a role in the eradication of racism. Not in some distant future, but now, in our time.

It starts with leadership in government.

"But just as a virus is contagious, so too is virtue."

All of us in elected public office have a responsibility to speak out against racism in all its forms, wherever we encounter it. We must work together to confront it, seeking to eliminate discrimination wherever it exists.

Government programs and policies must be reviewed to support and promote inclusion. You can help.

We all need to listen carefully to the voices of those who have lived experience of intolerance and prejudice.

We all need to recognize and acknowledge that enormous privilege has been denied to many people, based not on the content of their character, but on the colour of their skin.

We all need to call out racist jokes and stereotypes, even when it's hard to do so.

We all need to seek greater understanding and empathy, by reading books and consuming media that open our minds to new ideas and fresh perspectives.

We all need to reflect on what "community" really means.

And, we all need to look beyond a person's appearance, and into their heart.

Ted Arnett is the MPP for Wellington-Halton Hills. He can be reached at ted.arnott@pc.ola.org.

TO LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OWN CONTENT VISIT THEIFP.CA

SNAPSHOT



Darlene Degrace photo

A deer roams through an area in Stewarttown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

MANAGING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH ONGOING PANDEMIC

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO REPLENISH YOUR WELL-BEING AND STAY RESILIENT AS COVID-19 DRAGS ON, WRITES MELANIE MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR
Column

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to keep us guessing and wondering, and this uncertainty can take a toll on our mental health and make coping skills even more key day to day.

So, I asked my co-workers at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region branch what they've been doing to build resilience and manage the ongoing challenges of this situation.

Here are some of their ideas:

- We can think of our resilience as a gas tank that needs constantly to be replenished. Without gas, the car would halt — just like our bodies would cave in. Good sleep, hygiene, a healthy diet and regular activity go a long way.

- Remember this is temporary — long yes, but temporary. Ponder what positive information or trait you've learned about yourself since the beginning of this pandemic, such as your ability to stay calm during a crisis.

- Understand that this pandemic is a traumatic event to most of us and we will all deal with it in our own unique way. I may be on the go as a way of coping,

but if my partner wants to do nothing all day, that is OK too. This approach has helped me regulate my emotions and minimize conflict.

- Mindfulness has been a cornerstone for me — being fully aware of the present with kindness and non-judgment. When a feeling arises, don't push it down but rather acknowledge the feeling, such as, "Ah, anger is here." You don't have to like it to accept it.

- During stressful times, we have less tolerance and may act without thinking. So, planning, thinking, curiosity and slowing ourselves down through mindfulness and grounding activities can help us regulate our emotions, stay within our window of tolerance, and build resilience.

Melanie McGregor is the communications and advancement specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch, which provides mental health/addiction community support and education. Visit www.halton.cmha.ca for more information and follow @cmhahalton on Twitter.

ABOUT US

This newspaper, published every Thursday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. The Metroland family of newspapers is comprised of more than 80 community publications across Ontario.

This newspaper is a member of the National NewsMedia Council. Complainants are urged to bring their concerns to the attention of the newspaper and, if not satisfied, write The National NewsMedia Council, Suite 200, 890 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4W 2H2. Phone: 416-340-1981

Web: www.mediacouncil.ca



newsroom@theifp.ca
IndependentAndFreePress
@IFP_11

WHO WE ARE

Publisher
Kelly Montague
Regional Managing Editor
Catherine O'Hara
Managing Editor
Karen Miceli
Distribution Representative
Ioulia Polar
Real Estate
Kristie Pells
Regional Production Manager
Manuel Garcia
Halton Media General Manager
Jason Pehora

CONTACT US

The Independent & Free Press
280 Guelph Street, Unit 77
Georgetown, ON L7G 4B1
Phone: 905-873-0301
Classifieds: 1-800-263-6480
Fax: 905-873-0398

Letters to the editor
All letters must be fewer than 320 words and include your name and telephone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters. Published letters will appear in print and/or online at theifp.ca

Delivery
For all delivery inquiries, please e-mail lpolar@mittoncanadianchampion.com or call 905-234-1019.

