

A Letter to the Places For Less Community

Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. By now, we've heard their names and we know their stories. We have decried their brutal and unjust murders at the hands of police officers and emboldened white supremacists. We have remarked how disgusted, shocked, and horrified we are that black people continue to be senselessly murdered, and have aptly declared "Black Lives Matter."

Now let's ask ourselves the following:

How will we move forward?

How will we cause immediate and lasting change?

How will we work to dismantle systemic racism?

These are the questions that we at Places For Less asked ourselves, and for us, the answer is simple: **direct action**.

Direct action is beyond hashtags, social media "blackouts", catchy signs at protests, and well-written PR statements. Direct action is listening. Direct action is giving. Direct action is continuous.

The team at Places For Less has committed ourselves to "doing the work" through direct action.

Listening

On June 3, 2020, we invited our black agents to a roundtable discussion where they could make their voices heard. They spoke to us about their thoughts on the nationwide protests, the microaggressions they experience within the workplace, and about their desire to see change.

Then, we asked them what they needed from us. They told us they need inclusivity, support, and respect.

We concluded our call by reaffirming our commitment to listening and keeping a safe space open for our black agents to share their thoughts, comments, and questions with us.

Giving

Community leaders, activists, and outreach workers have long been doing the work to advocate, uplift, and enrich Boston's disenfranchised communities. In order to continue their justice work, resources, specifically, money, must be put directly into the hands of the change-makers.

As such, Places For Less is holding a virtual fundraiser to support the efforts of those on the front-lines. The “Places For Less Fundraiser to End Anti-Black Violence & Police Brutality” will collect donations starting today, June 10th - Wednesday, June 17th.

The Places For Less team has pledged to make individual donations to support this worthy cause. We invite you, members of the Places For Less community, to make a contribution as well. Please also share within your networks and press upon your peers the importance of funding justice work.

With a fundraising goal of \$1,000, we are asking 200 people to donate a minimum of \$5. Proceeds will be split evenly among the following Boston-based non-profits:

Violence In Boston Inc. <https://www.violenceinboston.org/>

Louis D Brown Peace Institute <http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org/>

Both organizations are dedicated to supporting the victims of anti-black and intra-communal violence. Their work is essential and must be supported.

To donate, please click the following link: <https://paypal.me/pools/c/8pQeJwulWn>

Continuous

The fight for justice is more than a moment, it is a movement. We must keep the momentum high and continue to demand fundamental, lasting change. We must actively seek out ways to do more.

Places For Less will do more. We will look for those opportunities that allow us to further the conversation, highlight inequities, and provide resources. As we unearth these opportunities and develop plans of action, we pledge to keep you informed. We do this for support and accountability.

In closing, we hope to have accomplished two things:

- Made it unequivocally clear that racism has no place at Places For Less
- Demonstrated our commitment to taking action against injustice

We have drawn our line in the sand and will defend it without exception.

Sincerely,

The Places For Less team