

# Becoming a Force for Good

## Module 1

# Standing Up for Justice



# Becoming a Force for Good Mission & Objectives

## Mission

Building champions for social justice

## Objectives

1. Reinforce the importance of diversity
2. Identify actions that may lead to injustice
3. Challenge students to stand for justice
4. Encourage the adoption of habits that support social justice



# AGENDA

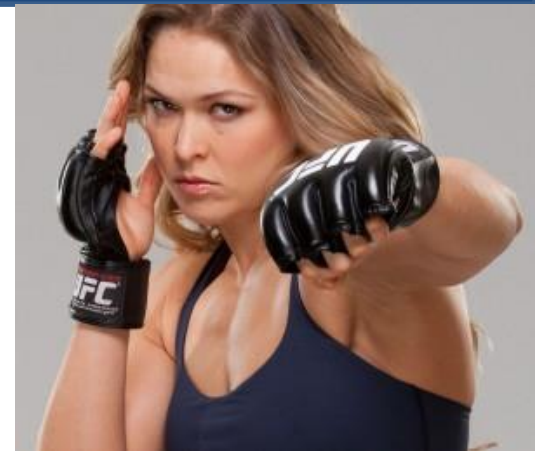
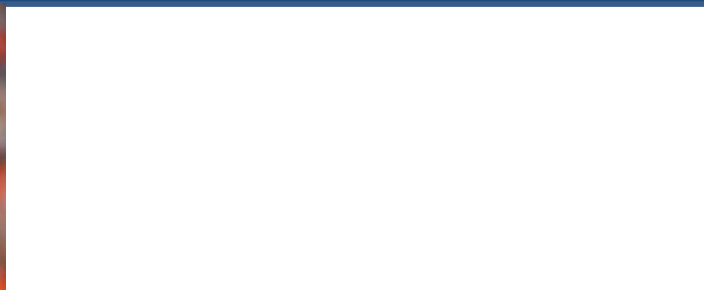
## Module 1

## Slides

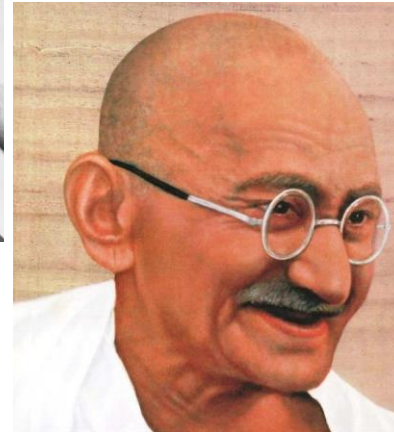
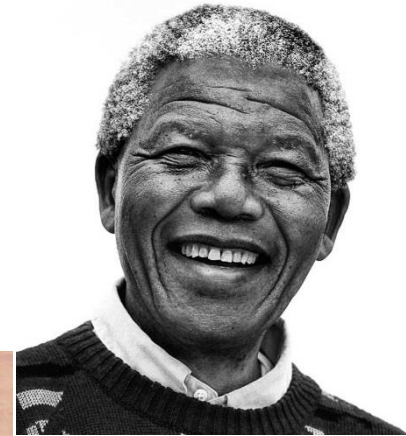
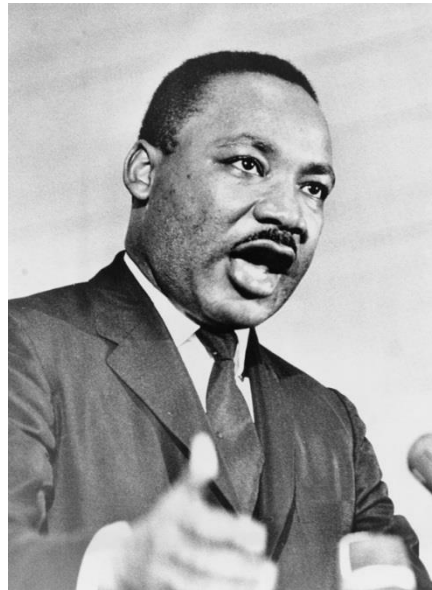
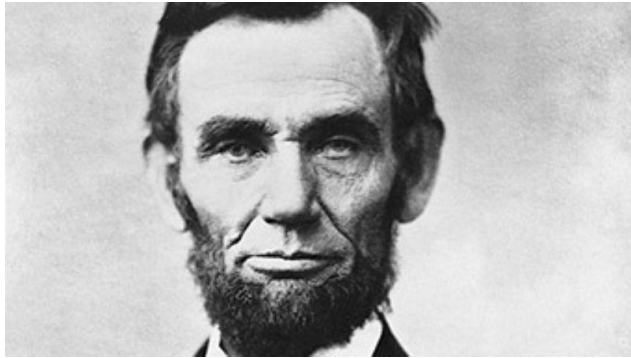
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| 1. Champions of Social Justice- Gandhi's example | 4 - 8  |
| 2. The Kelly Way Story                           | 7 - 22 |
| 3. Group Discussion                              | 23     |
| 4. Reflection                                    | 24     |



# Who are Your Favorite Champions



# Recognized Champions for Social Justice





# Gandhi - Mini Biography

Mahatma Gandhi was an international symbol for human rights whose personal dedication to nonviolent resistance inspired generations. Find out more about his life and work in this mini biography.

**Source: Biography.com**  
<http://thekellyway.org/gandhi/>



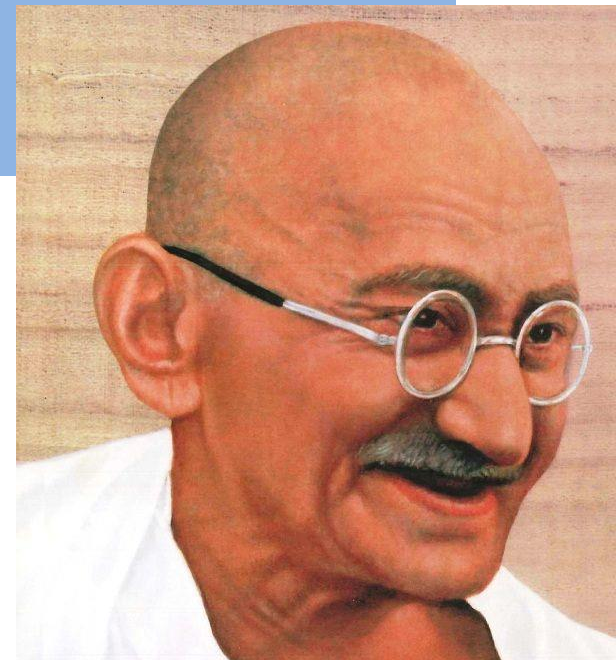
# Group Discussion

## Gandhi Video

Gandhi was known for peaceful acts of persistence, and used his words, body and the community to make a bigger impact.

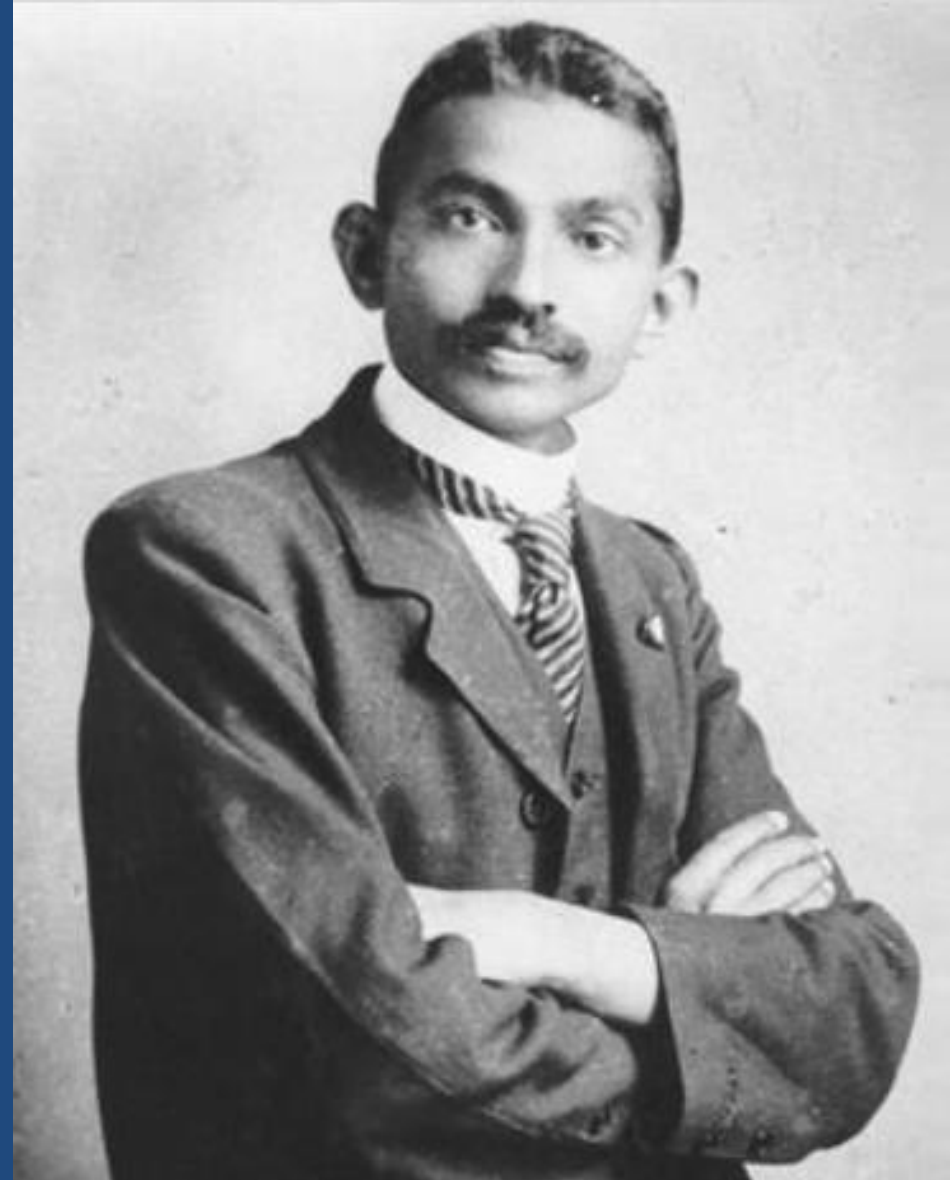
What incident did Gandhi experience that led him to turn his career toward civil rights and social justice?

How did Gandhi respond to acts of oppression?



“Your beliefs become your thoughts,  
Your thoughts become your words,  
Your words become your actions,  
Your actions become your habits,  
Your **habits** become your values,  
Your values become your destiny.”

— Mahatma Gandhi





# Example: Students can be Champions for Justice

- Gandhi taught us that our actions become our **habits**, and then our **habits** ultimately lead us to our destiny, or future.
- The following story describes the life of a girl who made it her **habit** to be a force for good in the world.
- As you read the story, think about some ways that Kelly's life reflected her **habit** of finding ways to *be a force for good in the world*.



# An example of a young girl's life making a difference

eBOOK

*tkw*

## The Kelly Way Story





Kelly was a girl who, like a lot of other kids, loved to have fun with her friends. However, it bothered her when she noticed other kids being left out. When others were excluded she just did not enjoy being with her friends as much, because she could not help but empathize with how the other kids must have felt.

When a new student named Veronica emigrated from Ecuador (a South American country) and spoke no English, the teacher asked Kelly to help her become acclimated to the new school. It was a new school in a totally different environment where her skin, language, and culture all stood out. It was important that Kelly had this habit of empathizing with others. The two young girls did not appear to have much in common superficially but became fast friends. Kelly decided to help her with assignments, take her through the lunch line, and introduce her to others kids on the playground.





After a couple of days, Veronica was so grateful and comfortable with Kelly that she got up in the middle of class and sat down in Kelly's desk with her. Veronica was expressing how grateful she was for making her feel at home in a new school and country.



Kelly working voter registration with classmates



Kelly (left) and Veronica at recess

"Kelly and I met in fourth grade. I was a new student, a recent immigrant, and afraid. I hardly knew or spoke English and kept quiet most of the time. Kelly immediately approached me and made me feel welcomed. She offered me her friendship and helped me acclimate to my new school and life. We became the best of friends and she and her family showed me great kindness. Although life and time distanced us, I am thankful that she came into my life so many years ago, and that a bit of her life continued to enter mine through my newsfeed. She has amazed me - finishing her law degree, fighting cancer, and maintaining a positive spirit through it all! I will always remember you, my first American friend, and your kindness."  
Veronica







In middle school, Kelly moved to a new community, in a new state. She lacked confidence at times after she moved. Middle school can be an awkward phase for everybody and she sometimes doubted herself, becoming shy. But, even though Kelly lacked confidence, she still stood up for others that were bullied or excluded.

When the neighborhood girls excluded an overweight girl from hanging out at the pool, Kelly purposefully invited the girl to the pool.

When the 8th grade football players made fun of a fellow student with autism during PE class, Kelly stood up to the bullies and told them off for treating the boy wrong. They knew she was right and felt bad. They began to include him in games, and those boys even thanked Kelly years later.







Sticking to her habits helped Kelly grow and believe in herself, just as she helped others. Then as Kelly transitioned into high school, she was still self-conscious with her appearance, especially her “skinny” frame.

At the beginning of her sophomore year she made a simple decision, to say “Hello” and be friendly to everyone she met in the hallway. As a result, Kelly’s friends multiplied that year, and the next, and the next too. Her confidence soared. It helped her excel in academics as well as in music and performing arts. It fed her ambition, and she strove to be front and center on the stage.

Still, she remembered to stand up for those who needed friends and never wanted anyone to feel left out. In fact one student wrote several years later that Kelly was a friend to him when he had been depressed and most in need of a smile.





It was later in high school that she identified how empathizing with outsiders was her passion. She pursued ways to develop her interest in different ways: starting a social justice club in high school to raise awareness about human rights issues in Darfur; and continuing the theme in college by becoming president of a student group focused on human rights.

*Kelly, I'll never forget you as one of the few people in high school kind enough to give me the time of day during a very dark, introverted time of my life. Thanks for being one of the few people who saw past my weird hobbies and interests, and took time to acknowledge me as a person when hardly anyone else could. Omar*



Kelly working with members of her university's Amnesty International Chapter.

*"It is a goal I strive towards, to show compassion for the struggles of others. I am going to have to work at it each day.... start paying attention and caring more deeply for the people around me." -Micah*





While Kelly was busy striving to make a difference in the world, her biggest impact may have been with her friendships. One of her college roommates commented that Kelly was never too busy to take the time to be a friend—listening to their concerns and creating positivity. She said that nothing brought Kelly more joy than connecting her friends to forge new relationships.



Kelly served as a mentor in the US Women's Leadership Institute hosted by her university

"Appreciating life is more than stopping to smell the roses. It's building a web of connectedness; it's showing the people that you see every day that they are appreciated and worthwhile and loved. It's seizing opportunities in your own life, but it's also celebrating those opportunities as they come to the ones you love." Anna







Next, Kelly went to Law School. She picked a big school in New York City, which she had always loved for its theater, music, and fashion. But, it was a big move, a long way from her home in Kansas. She struggled with missing home and family.

She again turned to one of her passions, this time music. She joined the school musical and it in turn her confidence grew. That helped her meet more people, just as she had in high school, and Kelly developed close friendships with her classmates – alleviating her homesickness.



She also stuck to another passion – human rights. She worked as an intern during the summer at a social justice organization. While there she and friends wrote and recorded a rap video tribute to her personal social justice hero, a Supreme Court Justice. The video was fun and a bit silly, and became part of an Internet sensation, which eventually reached the Supreme Court Justice herself.







Just after graduating from Law School, Kelly was diagnosed with stage four melanoma and started treatment. Even this did not stop her from taking the bar exam. Only one week after receiving brain radiation she took and passed the test through sheer grit and determination.

She began a career as a lawyer at a big office in New York City and still worked to help an organization with the mission of empowering young women who were victims of human trafficking and abuse.



Kelly pictured at GEMS (Girls Educational and Mentoring Service) Gala event along with fellow law associates.





Kelly passed away from cancer within six months of graduating Law School. Shortly before, she received a personal handwritten note from her hero, a Supreme Court Justice.

Kelly succeeded in living according to her personal mission statement:

***“Always do everything with love. Be compassionate, give to others, and live with integrity. Be a force for good in the world. Keep promises to myself and others. Appreciate life and be in the moment. Spread love to everyone.”***

*Kelly*

# New York Law Journal

3 34.00 WWW.NYLJ.COM MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2010 SERVING THE BAR AND THE PUBLIC SINCE 1848 An ALM Publication

## Lawyer Who Died at 25 Receives Posthumous Bar Admission



*"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."*

Robert F. Kennedy

The end...





# Example: Positive Habits in Action

- Kelly's personal mission statement consists of the 10 Be the Light Habits listed on the card
- What opportunities did Kelly pursue to be a force for good in the world?
- Identify other examples of the Be the Light habits in Kelly's story.

## Be The Light

1. Do everything with love
2. Be compassionate
3. Give to others
4. Live with integrity
5. Create positivity
6. Be a force for good in the world
7. Keep promises to myself and others
8. Appreciate life
9. Be in the moment
10. Spread love to everyone

TheKellyWay.org *tkw*



## Group Discussion

- Does this story bring to mind opportunities for you to stand against social injustice?
- Describe situations in which students in your school might experience social injustice.
- Are times when acting to prevent injustice is difficult?
- Discuss the importance of avoiding violence when standing up for justice.
- Brainstorm actions that a student or group of students might take to help students facing possible injustices.

*“Somebody has to **stand** when other people are sitting.  
Somebody has to **speak** when other people are quiet.”*  
— Bryan Stevenson





# REFLECTION

- Stand up for social justice by sharing *Be the Light* cards to encourage friends or family members
- Think about some new habits that you could adopt that would be helpful in standing up for justice



A blue-tinted image of Earth from space, showing city lights and a bright sun flare on the left side. The text "Becoming a Force for Good" is overlaid at the bottom.

**Becoming a Force for Good**