

# Time for reflection and connection

Take a few moments during this busy season to look at yourself

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*You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.*

The preceding words come from one of my favorite poems, “Still I Rise,” by the late Maya Angelou. The poem is primarily about confidence, self-respect, resiliency, and the ability to overcome and rise to the occasion by not letting anything hold you back — not your skin color, your ethnicity, your sex — or anything else. All of which speak very personally to all that I once was and all that I am now.

Ms. Angelou’s words continue to speak to me today because at Local 1000 we always rise to the occasion to meet challenges and opportunities alike. And because we do, and because we do it so well, we build leaders at Local 1000.

Leaders help themselves — and others — do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Leaders do this neither because it’s easy nor because they have to, and certainly not because there are no barriers to surmount. Quite the contrary. Leaders persevere in the face of adversity and draw inspiration from their own resiliency. And that resiliency in turn makes us not only better leaders, but better people.

It’s easy if you’re wealthy and have all the tools to succeed handed to you. But there are many people

who are struggling just to get by and don’t have that same access to resources and opportunities. In order for that to change, we — the leaders and those who strive to lead — need to rewrite our destiny and become the change we want to see in this world.

**“Learn to be quiet enough to hear the genuine within yourself, so that you can hear it in others.”**

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

Among the four habits of leadership we practice, the first is reflection. Another is building relationships, both of which seem very appropriate during the holidays, the perfect time of year to connect with others and yourself.

Thinking back on the past 12 months, I ask myself: Is there anyone I have wronged throughout the year? If so, how can I get into the right space with that person for the coming year? In maintaining our connections, we can do what we can to make amends and strengthen relationships. And realize not

all relationships will last. Some people are in your life for only a season or brief time. Friends, partners, groups — we align with some for a moment, others for a lifetime.

And that’s perfectly natural. After all, this isn’t a competition to see who can accumulate the most friends. It’s about how we make the most of the time with those we spend our time with.

As we reflect, also remember that our primary relationship is with ourselves. As such, practice compassion and empathy for yourself as you would others. Can you make amends to yourself? Can you forgive yourself? Work to do so.

I invite you to celebrate all that we accomplished in 2019 and to use this time to prepare ourselves for 2020. There’s so much still to be done.

Merry Christmas! Happy holidays!



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