

We Have a Dream Testimony

I feel so blessed to have joined this initiative. The regular monthly meetings that have happened for at least a year and a half have been so well developed and thought provoking. I have long recognized that I am a racist, because of the culture of the time in which I was raised. I like to think, though, that I am not biased. Being part of this group has been life changing in terms of education and insight. The books we have read and discussed were mind blowing for me. In particular, what we learned about redlining was something I had never really understood. When I tried to put myself in the place of the African Americans who experienced that and even those who implemented it, it was hard to conceive. I remembered conversations in our household when I was growing up about the “blockbusting” going on in our neighborhood. My parents were good people, but thought that their views of Black people were well founded. I remember vague thoughts of “Can that be right?”, but I trusted them. More recently, I recognize times when I have been irritated by African American attitudes that I thought indicated that they felt a certain entitlement. Now I realize that they are, in fact, entitled. I hope that I can remember that and treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve, but have not been given. It is hard for me to imagine living with the kind of attitudes they have encountered and still rising above them. Thank you for the wake up call from this group.

Pat Ball