For the past two years I've been struggling with a way to address the topic of race in America, both individually and corporately. This week I had the opportunity to be with some people at a local organization to discuss the direct and indirect impact the recent events are having on peoples' lives. One of the participants said, I can't bring my whole self to work when I'm feeling frustrated / sad / frightened.

If we believe that inclusion means bringing our whole selves to the workplace, then many people are leaving a part of themselves at home or in a safer place. I made the following suggestions to the group:

- Do business "not as usual." We are in crisis now so act accordingly. Check in with one another; ask "how are you doing?" and then take time to listen to their response. Say "hello." Offer a smile.
- Don't engage with those who have differing opinions for at least thirty days. It is time to nurture self and care for those you love.
- Build and enrich friendships with people within your own ethnic group
- Find an ally outside your ethnic group. Allow for the possibility that deep friendships can form with an individual who is outside your normal sphere of contacts.
- Activate or create a diversity council with resource groups at your place of work. Consider sponsoring a forum where co-workers can learn through the experiences of others.

In order for employees to be more productive, they need to feel safe and right now many are scared. The problems we are experiencing will not go away any time soon so our places of business need to become communities of support. And that can only happen when we learn to operate differently and with more care.