



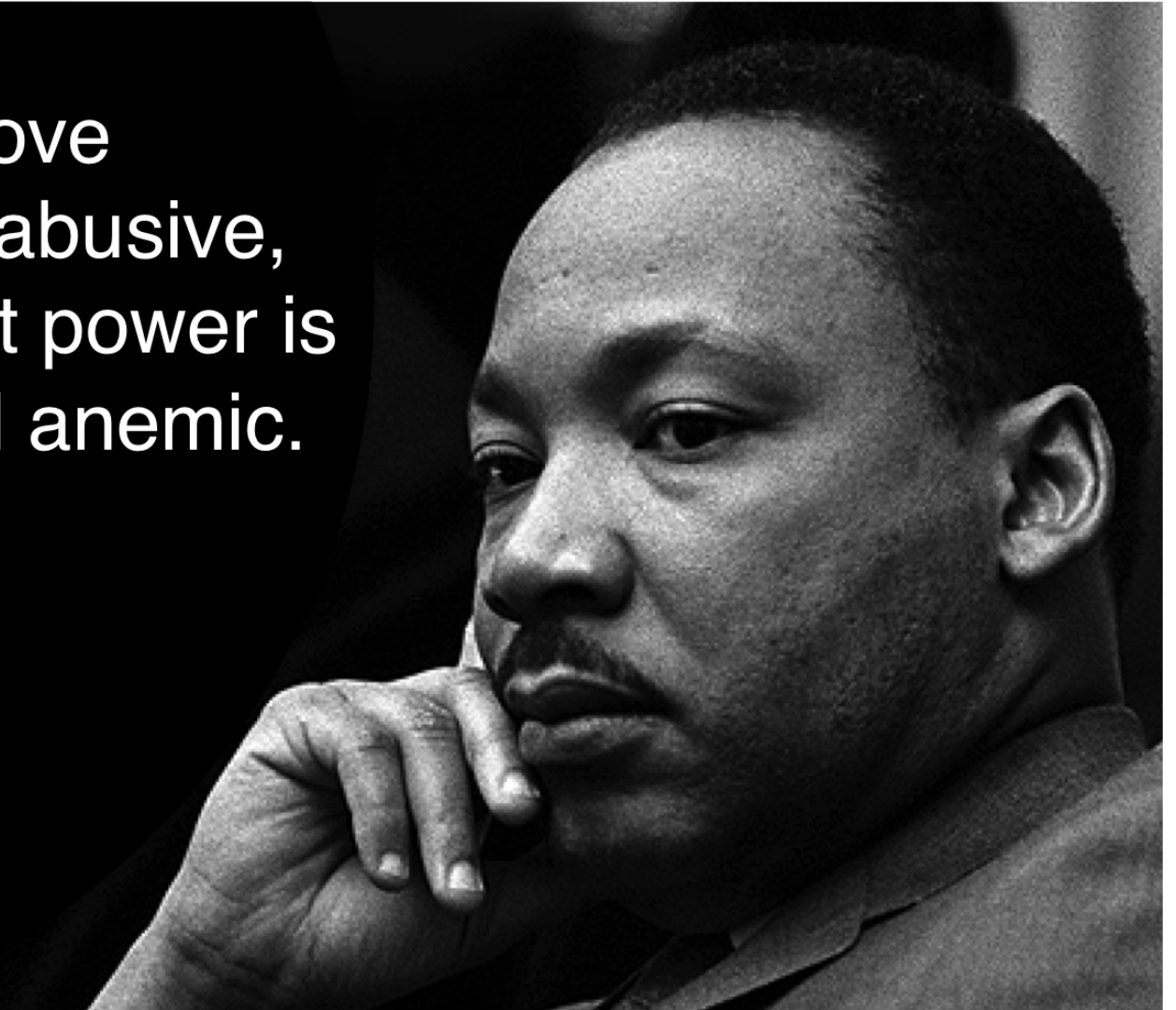
# Exploring the Roles of Love In Community Development

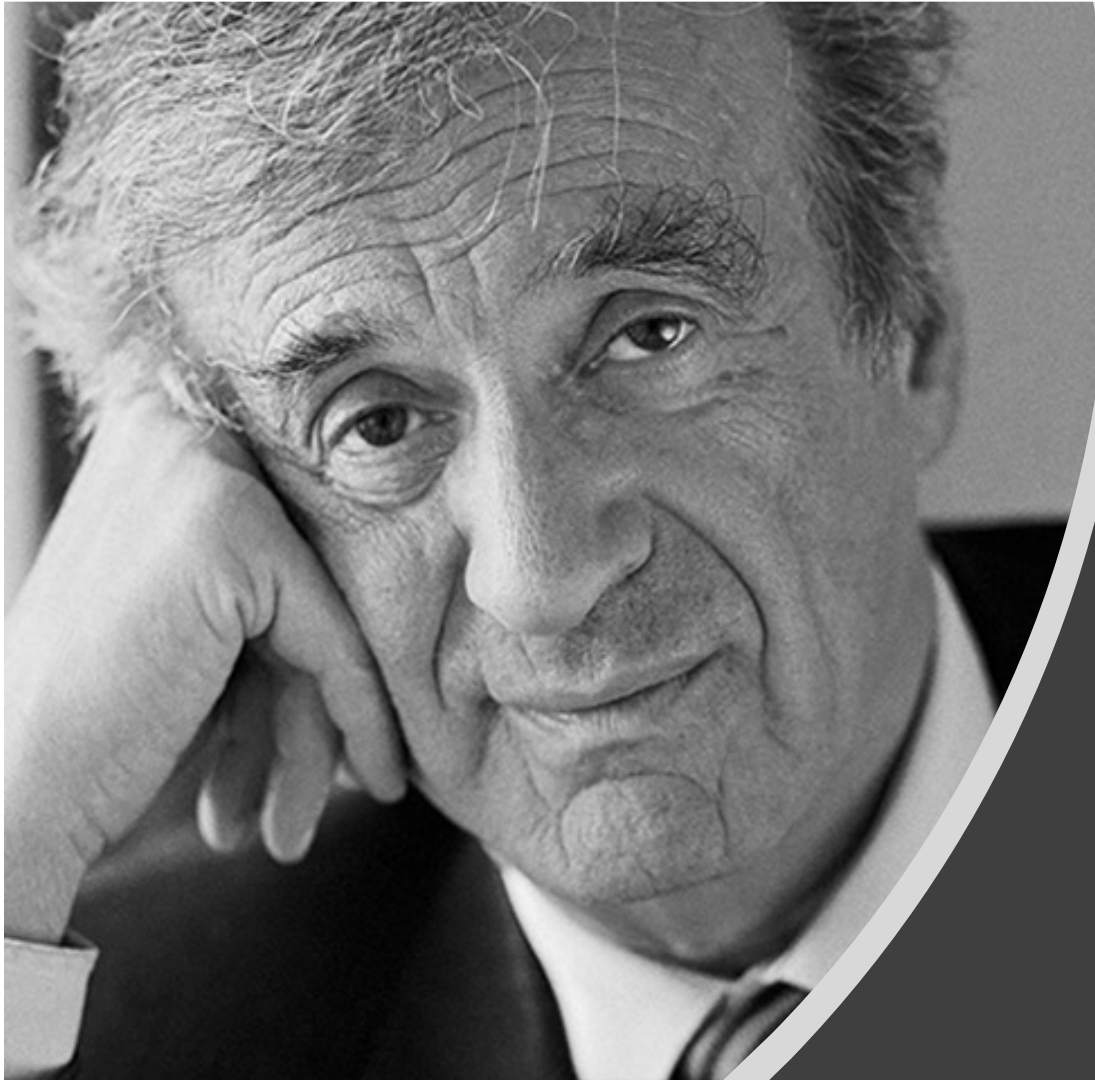
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Power without love  
is reckless and abusive,  
and love without power is  
sentimental and anemic.

Martin Luther King Jr





“The opposite of  
love is not hate,  
it’s indifference.”  
~ Elie Wiesel

Theory of Love Ethic by bell hooks  
*All About Love (2000)*

- Love is a verb and an act that involves care and compassion
- It involves collective nonviolent action for social change for justice and equality
- It can transform inequitable structures such as racism, patriarchy and excesses of capitalism.
- It involves critical consciousness (Paulo Freire) about loveless structures
- Love is fundamental for lasting social change
- But love is not included in community development code of ethics or mission statements



# Love in Community Development

- About Trust and Relationships
- Critical situational analysis (community mapping, focus groups, historical trend lines)
- Solidarity – through dialogue we build solidarity through process of building mutual understanding. “Unity within diversity” – Paulo Freire

## Three Dimensions of Love In CD:

- Gratitude
- Listening
- Imagination



Gratitude: Quality of Being Thankful and readiness to show appreciation and kindness

Gratitude enlivens positive emotions and has many dimensions:

- Welcoming ambiance
- Show appreciation
- Value participation
- Fosters respect during tense times
- Stimulates structures for gratitude

# Listening To Communities

Some dimensions of listening:

- Understanding cultural context
- Acknowledging struggles in community goals and strategies
- Create structure for compassionate and comprehensive listening
- Less emphasis on judgmental listening
- Create space for authentic relationships and relearn assumptions
- Create access for participation for those with limited resources
- Demonstrate transparency



# Social & Civic Imagination as Forms of Love

- Reframing what 'good' looks like
- Thinking 'slow' to explore new possibilities
- Greater focus on thriving vs. surviving
- Imagination by doing --- trial and error
- Involving those most marginalized to envision new horizons
- Means dancing with pain and joy

# Some Resources on Love and Community Development

- Naomi Joy Godden, (January 2018) Love in community work in Rural Timor-Leste: a Co-operative inquiry for a participatory framework of practice, *Community Development Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 78-98
- Patrick Barnosky, (2016), "Towards Embracing a Critical Love Ethic in Community Development: A Case Study from Nicaragua, *International Development, Community & Environment* (IDCE), Paper 34.
- bell hooks, (2000) *All About Love*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Gerard Dowling and Peter Westoby, (2013) *Theory and Practice of Dialogical Community Development: International Perspectives*, Routledge.

## Some Research Questions

- How does community (community developers) define love?
- What are the limitations/possibilities of infusing the 'love ethic' into CD?
- How can we measure the various dimensions of love?
- What are the research questions about love that you think should be explored further?