

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

IS IT NECESSARY?

Written by Jeremy Grant 01/10/2021

History is important full stop and more importantly so is the human ability to remember and reflect so that the negativity of our history does not repeat itself.

In addition to this, when considering the struggles, the suffering and the pain of the past as relating to Black History in particular, there are a number of reasons why I believe taking time aside to research and ponder is necessary, of which I will give four.

1. Awareness of culture

Black History month gives everyone an opportunity to engage with and understand the experiences of black culture and its origins. It gives those who would not usually say or do anything outside of their own 'societal bubble' to not only consider some of what life was like as a black person years ago, but gain an understanding of how certain aspects of modern life today came into existence in the first place.

2. Acknowledgement of identity

The concept of identity can sometimes feel somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand it can be said that we as humans are one people, one race who share the same oxygen, depend on the same source of sunlight to provide vegetation and rely on the same moon to prevent the ocean tides from covering the highest mountains on the same planet we live on. Yet equally, on the other hand, we do not all look the same, have the same life journeys or philosophies and live lives that are very individualistic. Black History month is a chance to acknowledge an identity of people who are ethnically diverse but have many survival stories to share about their lineage, lifestyles and challenges.

3. Ancestral show of respect

There is a lot that we would not know if the knowledge was not passed and handed down from generation to generation. From customs and phrases used in everyday language, to songs, proverbs and secret family recipes, all of which we would not have if it was not for the preserving of great traditions from our respected ancestors. In my view, Black History is not a time of remembering the vicissitudes of black anguish to unearth or stir up anger and contempt (although we will obviously never dismiss how awful and evil life was) but it is a time to show respect for our ancestors who despite affliction, because of their endurance through suffering, birthed countless descendants of black survivors who are now living around the world.

4. Attitude of gratitude

Ultimately Black History month is a short time but nonetheless is the right time to celebrate the achievements of a people who against all odds are still here. For me, this only adds to the fuel of the fire to achieve my goals as an ambitious black professional and social entrepreneur. I am grateful for the ability to stand up and be counted as someone who lives the dream of Dr. King and continues the legacy of a people who one day will no longer be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character – character created by an attitude of gratitude.



Jeremy Grant
Skills Development Officer
Social Business Team