

Family, I'm extremely humbled to be writing this letter as the kickoff to this amazing monthly journey we've curated for you. Doing the work of unlearning and unpacking can be uncomfortable and confusing, yet it is a journey that takes time, thoughtfulness, and intention. I want to stress that this work is for everyone! Even in writing this letter and being one of your guides I, too, am on a journey of unlearning so that I can make myself *whole* with things that are best for me. Most importantly, I hope this work brings you liberation and that, on the other side of the journey, you reach back and bring yours toward liberation too.

So I start by asking, What does it mean to be *whole*? When I look up the textbook definition of this word, one of its first definitions is 'being a complete amount or sum.' This definition makes me think of my work in the schoolhouse, where students are quick to be complete with their assignments. I've also heard it while talking with adults as they share how complete their lives are. I can't help but be reminded how fixed these examples of being *whole* are. For me, complete signals an end to something. However, I know life is constant, ever-flowing, eternal. After more research I discovered how being *whole* also has four main components including social, emotional, physiological, and mental. So, if we think of the word *whole* with this in mind, then we acknowledge the many experiences we live through; from deep within ourselves to how we experience the world. And it is in those blissful and most challenging moments, that we grow, we learn, and become *whole*. I also think about a colloquial use of the word in phrases like "they've got a whole bunch of candy" and "take a whole bag of em." In this instance, we are not focusing on the exact or complete amount, rather its abundance or excess and in life, we are afforded an abundance of experiences and information. Perhaps that doesn't quite capture the full essence of what it means to be *whole* either and rather *wholeness* if what we are striving for. *Wholeness* is defined as a state of forming complete and harmonious whole, unity. This adds to my understanding of the word *whole* in that our abundances can be plentiful, but they should also be harmonious. When things are in harmony all the pieces work together, seamlessly. Therefore, our *wholeness* can only be sustained when we are truly nurturing all aspects of ourselves.

One thing this pandemic has taught me is how important it is to discover what is right for your cup. It's so easy to distract yourself with the vices of the city and everyday life. For me, there was work and it once gave me a false sense of being *whole* because it simply took up most of my time. Without this, I was left with the most special, creative, brave spirit -- myself! Without much distraction, I learned how to sit with and move through my emotions. I learned I liked puzzles and gardening. I even worked at a summer camp, through the COVID outbreak. It was as if the shutdown was a long night and I learned to appreciate the small joys that fill me endless, like the stars in the clear, dark sky.

So then again, I ask what does it mean to be *whole*? Or what does it mean to be abundant? Or what might my *wholeness* look like? I know I'm abundant with knowledge, passion, perspective, which has positioned me as a leader among my community. I am *whole* because I use my magic to help others become *whole* too.

The Conscious Roots team and I are elated to share this month with you! My final push is as we continue to fill ourselves with these abundances, we must also ask, what must we let go of? What wisdom will be left for you in the new year?

-Jay

Whole- fulfilled in ambitions. In feelings, and intact emotionally and spiritually, kinda are

Hello, I am glad to be doing this kickoff.

What does it mean to be whole? When I look up the textbook definition of the word whole, it describes it as being a complete amount or sum. This rather formal definition makes me think about my work in the schoolhouse, where students are quick to complete their assignments. This idea of being complete on assignment isn't the only place I experienced this word, I often hear it through conversations with adults as they share how complete they are in life. I can't help but be reminded how fixed this idea of being complete is. To me, complete signals an end to something and I've been intentionally trying to move away from fixed mindsets in all areas of my life. I know life is constant, ever flowing, eternal. Thus, I conclude that the textbook version doesn't quite encompass what it means to be whole. Instead, I think about a colloquial use of the word in phrases like "he has a whole bunch of candy" and "Take a whole

bag of them.” In this instance we are not focusing on the exact or complete amount of something, rather its abundance or excess. If we think of the word whole like this, then we are acknowledging the many experiences we live through. It is in those blissful and most challenging moments, that we grow, we learn, we fill ourselves. I think of being whole as being full and what that does for us. I believe when we fill ourselves up with the things that are right for our soul, it provides nourishment as food does for our bodies. In life, we are never truly complete, but continuously learn and grow, filling and refilling our cups with such abundances. learning, etc.

One thing this pandemic has taught me that’s important: it is to nourish your soul and discover what is right for your cup. It’s so easy to distract yourself with the vices of the city and everyday life. COVID shutdown was like nothing I could ever imagine. I lived alone at that time and I can most adequately describe the feeling as being alone.

So the shutdown left me distractionless with my own thoughts, and as an Aquarius that can be.

So now I am here, without this “work” that once thought made me whole because it simply took up most of my time. I was left with the most special, creative, brave, spirit -- myself! I learned how to move through my emotions, I learned I liked puzzles, I learned that gardening and cooking could give me so much joy. I learned to appreciate the small joys that fill me endless, like the stars in a night sky.

So then again, I ask what does it mean to be whole? Or what does it mean to be abundant? Or what might my wholeness look like? I am abundant with knowledge, passion, perspective, which has positioned me as a leader among my community. I am whole because I am able to use these values to help myself learn and grow, but also to help others become whole. In addition when I think of this world whole, I think of being full and what that process does for us. It fills us up with the things we want to be true, providing nourishment to our souls as food does for our bodies.

Essential Question: How do I lead? How do I serve?

The power of relationships

Work with kids- scholars, JCC Handbook on how to work with Zombie children with pictures and illustrations

Galaxy portrait with different stars, planets, systems being quotes from children I've worked with.

