



Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership



The Corps Network

What is it? Introduction to Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership:

[Kelsey Ogbewe](#), a Haitian-Nigerian essayist, poet and activist made this statement, **“Liberation cannot exist without self-examination.”**

- But, what do we really know about ourselves?
- When we meet someone new, we like to get to know them. We talk, ask questions, inquire about various aspects of their lives, but when have we really had a chance to get to know ourselves.

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership (CLL) understands that no one can change a condition in their life that they cannot see or understand. CLL is about **making the invisible, visible.**

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership wants these trailblazers (the Corpsmembers and Corps staff) to be able to identify patterns of disempowerment and learn how to interrupt and replace them with new life-giving patterns.

The concept of **“somebodiness”** presented by MLK guides this work. He said, **“What is your life’s blueprint? Whenever a building is constructed, you usually have an architect who draws a blueprint, and that blueprint serves as the pattern, as the guide.”**

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership looks to assist the Corpsmember in this journey in one’s blueprint, which is a deep belief in one’s own dignity, worth, and “somebodiness.”

“... Always feel that you have worth, and always feel that your life has ultimate significance.”

This is the center of the work – for Corpsmembers to understand the intrinsic worth and significance of their life and all life.

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership looks at the development of the “whole person.”

The Corps Model itself is a comprehensive youth development model that engages youth and young adults in conservation-related community service and service learning; many Corps also provide training, education, and for many Corps a full scope of supportive services; which

set young people on a defined pathway leading to post-secondary education, sustainable employment, and a lifetime of civic engagement.

The whole person approach also allows for the recognition of trauma and the need for healing. This approach is not all together new since it is one that has been adopted by other organizations. Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership looks at the development of a “mindfulness” approach for the Corpsmember.

During the Corpsmember’s term of service, the journey begins with the “Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership” workshop that looks to explore one’s sense of self. The Corpsmember will then engage in a series of self-guided modules where they can continue this journey at their own pace.

Corpsmembers will also be encouraged to “Have Their Say.” This focuses on the value of one’s voice and the importance of “being heard.”

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership and its corresponding activities will sit under the umbrella of “Corpsmember Engagement and Experience,” where The Corps Network, in supporting the Corps, will identify activities/conversations/webinars/modules that will serve as the vehicle for individual and community development, where the “Power of One’s Voice” is nurtured and developed. This “Place,” which is in the process of development, will be a space for Corpsmembers on a platform that will be established. Margaret Mead once stated, **“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.”**

Photos on front (L to R): PowerCorpsBOS (MA), Montana Conservation Corps (MT), Civicorps (CA)