

## A PATH FORWARD

## OUTRAGE AND SADNESS WITH ANOTHER LIFE LOST

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

Not again. This can't have happened again.

But, tragically, it did. On May 25, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, died in Minneapolis while in police custody. Floyd did not die of natural causes or a pre-existing condition. Two autopsies have confirmed that this was a homicide.

The only reason that Officer Derek Chauvin showed up at the Cup Foods market that day was because a clerk called police after suspecting that Floyd was trying to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill. Police claimed that Floyd resisted arrest.

Handcuffed and face down on the street, Floyd suffocated under the weight of Chauvin's knee, pressed into his neck for more than eight minutes.

The veteran officer has been charged with second-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. Three other officers who were also at the scene, and didn't intervene, were charged with aiding and abetting Chauvin.

Outrage and sadness have swept across the country. Protests erupted in all 50 states.

While thousands marched peacefully, a tiny faction turned to violence and mayhem.

Police officers responded with force — deploying batons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. Other officers responded with empathy, walking or kneeling in solidarity with protesters.

Close to home, in La Mesa, what began as a peaceful demonstration against a local police officer's actions toward a black man devolved into rioting and looting.

America is having a nervous breakdown. Our collective nerves are frayed. We want this to stop — not just the mayhem but also the police violence that sparked it.

But my experience as a longtime mediator tells me that we still have a long way to go before we're out of the woods.

When attempting to solve a crisis, inexperienced mediators make the same mistake: jumping to solutions without understanding the underlying causes and interests of both sides.

When we make that mistake, we ensure that history repeats itself. It's been nearly 30 years since Rodney King was violently beaten in March 1991 by four officers of the Los Angeles Police Department.

When the offending officers were acquitted a year later, rage ensued. Rioting lasted six days and killed 63 people. Thousands more were injured.

Today, the rage is magnified by COVID-19, which is disproportionately impacting individuals of color. In New York, and all across the country, black people are twice as likely as white people to die of COVID-19.

They are also overrepresented in pandemic-related job losses and more likely to be arrested for violating virus-related restrictions.

So, what can we do? Whenever we encounter the scourge of racism in America, it feels like we're trying to mend broken bones in a body that is riddled with cancer.

At the National Conflict Resolution Center, we bring together law enforcement officers and the communities they serve. The state of California hired us to deliver communication training that helps officers better understand their own identities and biases, and how these things can affect interactions with others.

We also facilitate restorative circles that give police and community members the chance to engage in dialogue, in order to build understanding. In circle after circle, the outcome is always the same: As partic-

ipants listen to and learn about each other — on a personal level — otherness gives way to a sense of shared humanity.

We need to confront the national disease of racism, once and for all. That means getting outside of our comfort zones and challenging the infrastructure that perpetuates racial injustice.

Dr. Taharee Jackson is a consultant who also works as a diversity, equity and inclusion program manager at the Department of Defense. A person of color, Dr. Jackson offers a series of starting points for white people interested in structural change.

1. Start with yourself: Look at your own life and think about instances when being white was an advantage. Then try to imagine what it's like to experience life as a person of color.

2. Start with a story: Be a listener and learner of race. Read works by authors of color. Spend time with people of color in your orbit and ask them to explain what it means not to be white.

3. Start at home: Speak about racism and anti-racism to the people in your immediate family. Stop excusing racist jokes or forgiving a family member for using racial stereotypes because they were raised in a different time.

We should follow Dr. Jackson's advice. Otherwise, in another 30 years, Americans will look back with a collective sense of regret and shame. Our children, and grandchildren, should never utter the words: "Not again."

Dinkin is president of the National Conflict Resolution Center, a San Diego-based organization working to create innovative solutions to challenging issues, including intolerance and incivility. NCRC is nationally recognized for its conflict management and communication strategies. To learn about NCRC's programming, visit [ncrcnline.com](http://ncrcnline.com)

## EX-DIRECTOR OF TIJUANA CITY POLICE IS ARRESTED

BY ALEXANDRA MENDOZA

## TIJUANA

The former director of the Tijuana city police, Gustavo Huerta, was arrested Friday after a warrant was issued against him for the crime of torture, confirmed the State Attorney General's Office.

The arrest took place "after the judge granted last June 1st the judicial order for the crime of torture against José Roberto N, and Miguel N," reads a statement by the agency.

The former official and retired military officer entered the Center for Social Reinsertion in Tijuana to await a hearing.

In the same investigation, former Public Security Secretary Julian Leyzaola was also issued an arrest warrant, according to the Punto Norte news website.

The crimes were allegedly committed in March 2010, when four municipal police officers were arrested and accused of extorting money from foreign sportsmen, the



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**Gustavo Huerta is being held on charges of torture. He was arrested Friday.**

media reported.

The police officers involved reportedly accused Leyzaola and Huerta of having tortured them to make them confess.

On May 7, the municipal government of Tijuana announced in a statement that Huerta had been hired as a spokesperson for the Secretary of Public Safety and Protection, a position from which

he was immediately removed.

At the time, Mayor Arturo Gonzalez Cruz argued it was because Huerta had some pending legal issues he needed to address, according to the newspaper Zeta.

The deposition hearing took place Friday in a Tijuana courtroom.

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## Coronavirus highlights need for simplified and safe home-selling program for seniors

**REGION** — As the world navigates this coronavirus pandemic, Senior Home Purchase Program may very well be the ideal solution for vulnerable seniors who need to sell their home. SHPP has inherent safety measures already in place including, very limited (or none if necessary) in person contacts and no open houses or showings. Seniors should be taking all necessary precautions and for those who, despite the circumstances, have no choice but to sell their home now, SHPP is a very safe option. Continue reading for additional details about the program and how they help alleviate many of your concerns.

Selling a home can be overwhelming for anyone, especially for seniors selling a home they have lived in for decades. Anyone who has sold a home can relate to the anxiety associated with a range of unknowns including, what repairs need to be made, how often will strangers be coming through their home and how long will it take to sell. Add in the emotional attachment to their home and the uncertainty about the timing or availability of their next home and the entire process



What differentiates SHPP from a traditional home sale is that there is no real estate agent required, no home preparation, no showings and no fees. Homes are sold "as is" — clutter and all. Courtesy photo

can be very stressful.

Rob Perkins and his sister Corinne Ross experienced this firsthand with both grandmothers. "They had lived in their homes for long periods of time and couldn't live by themselves any longer," Perkins said.

The siblings wanted to do something to help. "It was overwhelming for both of them," Perkins said. "It took an all hands-on deck effort from multiple family members to accomplish the task of selling their homes.

Knowing that we weren't the only family to deal with this, Corinne and I thought, "There has got to be a way to solve this problem."

After investing in residential real estate for a decade, Perkins and Ross created the Senior Home Purchase Program (SHPP) in 2015. They wanted to offer seniors a transparent and simple way to transition to senior living.

What differentiates SHPP from a traditional home sale is that there is no real estate agent required, no home

preparation, no showings and no fees. Homes are sold "as is" — clutter and all. There are no failed escrows, no commissions, no closing costs and no repair credits or seller concessions — it is a certain sale at a certain price. The SHPP team works with homeowners to give them the best price for their home on a flexible timeline that works for the seller. "Seniors are often in a position where they don't know when they are going to be able to move into a community," Ross said. "This can be very stressful. We provide them flexibility with the closing date and even offer a lease back option if they need extra time after they sell and before they move into their new home."

The process is staggeringly simple compared to selling on the open market. "The first step is to set up a home visit where we gather all the necessary data about their home," Perkins said.

After this first meeting, SHPP spends four to six hours doing their homework on the property and the market. "Then, we come back for a second meeting where we present our absolute best offer. We

encourage the homeowners to invite family members, friends and/or trusted advisors to this meeting," Perkins said.

Through a traditional market sale, a seller will need to come out of pocket to prepare the home for sale. "Getting the home ready to sell can cost thousands of dollars," Perkins stresses. "SHPP will purchase the home in its current condition and pays 100 percent of all costs associated with the sale. Not only that, but it saves them an incredible amount of time and reduces their stress."

Perkins explains, "When presenting our offer, we illustrate how it compares to the alternative — selling on the open market. Once the costs/fees are deducted from the alternative, our offer is very compelling."

In addition, if the homeowner accepts the offer, SHPP asks the homeowner to choose an independent appraiser to appraise the home. "We pay for the appraisal," Perkins said. "If the appraisal is higher than our internal valuation of their home, the seller can choose to cancel escrow at no cost to the seller."

Above all, SHPP aims to make sure the homeowner is completely informed and comfortable throughout the process. "The trust factor is big for us," Ross said. "Ninety-five percent of our customers come to us by referral. The people who refer them know us well and they trust us."

The program has been successful since its inception and the feedback has been very positive. "Their honesty, transparency and diligence made me feel completely comfortable with them," said Stella, a former client. "They made the process exceptionally easy and stress-free. I can't say enough good things about them."

"This is both an emotional and a significant financial decision that our customers are making," Ross said. "We encourage our customers to discuss our offer with family, friends and other trusted advisors. We don't want anyone to feel pressured."

For information about the Senior Home Purchase Program, call (858) 859-0107 or visit [westviewshpp.com](http://westviewshpp.com).