

Lift Every Voice

How can we lift our voices to advocate for a more compassionate, just, and democratic country and world?

Book 1: Democratic Values:

Overview





Voices Institute

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Give me your tired,
your poor, your
huddled masses
yearning to breathe
free.

—Emma Lazarus, *Wrote inscription
for the Statue of Liberty*

Lift Every Voice

How can we create a more compassionate,
just, and democratic country and world?



8. Democracy



1. Love



2. Freedom



7. Peace



**Book 1:
Democratic
Values**



3. Equality



6. Care for Nature



5. Truth



4. Justice



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**Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled
masses yearning to breathe free.**

—Emma Lazarus

Emma Lazarus (July 22, 1849 – November 19, 1887) was an American author of poetry, prose, and translations, as well as an activist for Jewish and Georgist causes. She is remembered for writing the sonnet "The New Colossus", which was inspired by the Statue of Liberty, in 1883. Its lines appear inscribed on a bronze plaque, installed in 1903, on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. — Wikipedia

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Introduction to *Lift Every Voice*



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We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the **better angels of our nature**.

—*Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address*



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...restore the soul of America.

I've long talked about the battle for the soul of America. We must restore the soul of America. Our nation is shaped by the constant battle between our **better angels** and our darkest impulses. It is time for our better angels to prevail.

—*Election Eve Speech by President-Elect Joe Biden (Nov. 7, 2020)*

The United States today is very divided and polarized. *Lift Every Voice* seeks to help overcome this division by providing a resource center of democratic competencies (democratic values, skills, and knowledge) that can help heal and unite our country, that can help restore the soul of our country, and that can help guide our country in the future.

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The better angels of our nature are the democratic values that we can embrace, and which can unite and guide us as a country!

Overview of Five Democratic Competencies

Lift Every Voice promotes and teaches five Democratic Competencies. These competencies include the values, skills, and knowledge we need to create a more democratic society and country.

Competency #1: Democratic Values includes the democratic values that can guide the growth of democracy in our country. We argue that two of the most important values are love and freedom.

Competency #2: Social and Emotional Skills includes the skills that can help bring more love and freedom into our society such as social perspective taking and social problem solving.

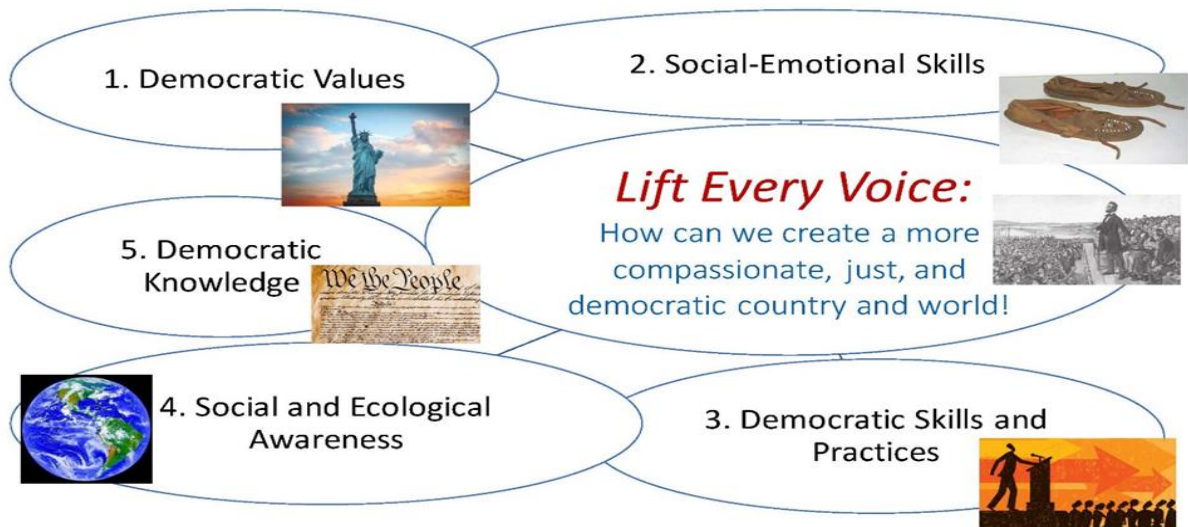
Competency #3: Democratic Skills and Practices includes the skills we need to participate in the civic life of our communities and our society such as learning to advocate, discuss, and debate ways to solve major social and ecological problems.

Competency #4: Social and Ecological Awareness helps us to explore the social, economic, and political features of our country so that we can more effectively advocate ways to improve them.

And in **Competency #5: Democratic Knowledge** explores the major features of our democratic government: U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, Constitutional Principles, the Amendments, the Branches of Government, major court cases, and the responsibilities of state and local governments.

With these Democratic Competencies, we will be able to use them to advocate ways to solve major social and ecological problems in our country, such as how to prevent gun violence, how to stop the pandemic, how to stop police violence, and how to stop global warming.

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Overview of Democratic Values

The first *Lift Every Voice* Democratic Competency is Democratic Values. In *Lift Every Voice*, we focus on eight Democratic Values that we believe are important for creating and sustaining a compassionate and free democratic culture and government.

In *Lift Every Voice*, we define values as important guideposts or beliefs that can guide our decisions as individuals and as a society.

We have selected eight Democratic Values that we believe, based on scientific research into human nature, historical evidence, and contemporary trends, are important for establishing and sustaining a more peaceful and democratic society and world.

We have chosen these values to provide guidance in the world we live in today. These are values that we hope will help us to address and overcome the hunger, poverty, violence, terrorism, tyranny, and ethnic hatred that are festering in our country and around the globe.

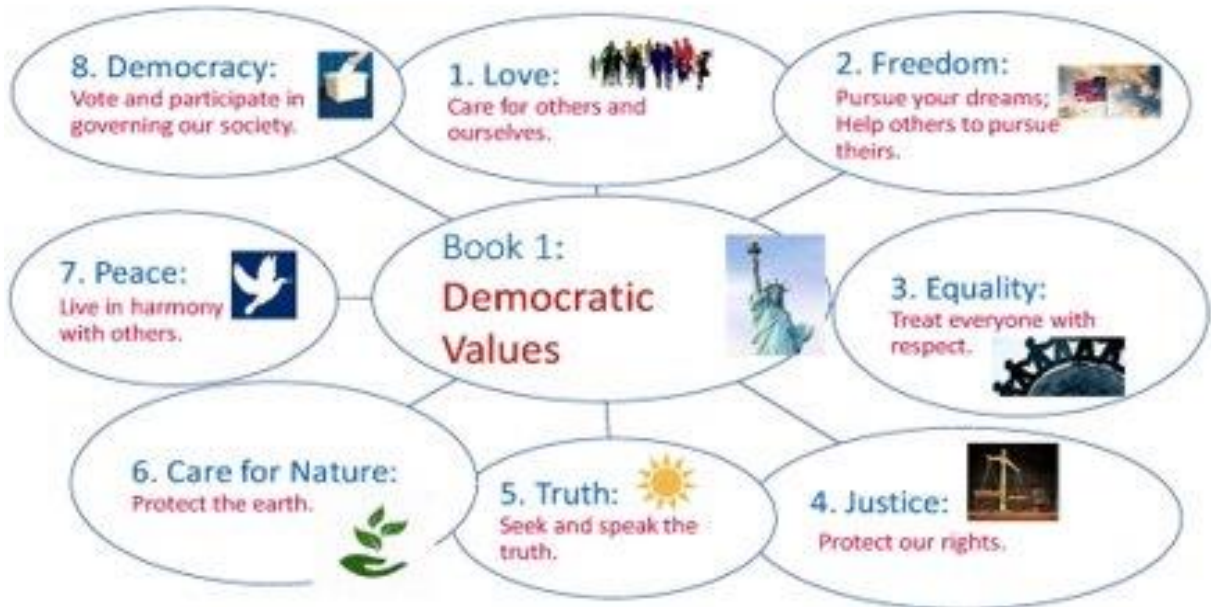
We believe these values will help to promote the best in human nature and to provide both goals and means for overcoming the social evils of our day. These Democratic Values are supported in turn by important Social and Emotional Skills, Democratic Skills and Practices, Social and Ecological Awareness, and Democratic Knowledge.

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Our goal here is to focus on a core set of values that we can support and share as a society. Hopefully, they can be part of an “overlapping consensus” of values and principles that most members of our society can embrace.

We view these values as distinct and mutually supportive for creating a more peaceful and democratic society and world.

Other important social and democratic values can, of course, be added to this overlapping consensus as well.



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Here is a brief summary of the eight democratic values advocated for in *Lift Every Voice*.

1. **Love:** Care for Others and Ourselves



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Love is the most durable power
in the world.

—*Reverend Martin Luther King*

2. Freedom: Pursue Your Dreams, Help Others to Pursue Theirs



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Prior to my election, young Cherokee girls never thought that they might grow up and be chief. The secret of our success is that **we never, never give up.**

—*Wilma Mankiller, Former Chief of the Cherokee Nation, Sweet Briar College (1993)*

3. Equality: Treat Everyone with Respect



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I have seen what America can do, and so have you. After all, you're looking at someone who, as a young man growing up, wondered if something deep inside of him meant that he would forever be an outsider, would never wear the uniform, never be accepted, never know love, and now you are looking at that same young man, a veteran, a mayor, happily married, asking for you to vote for president of United States.

—*Presidential Candidate Pete Buttigieg*

4. Justice: Protect the Rights of Everyone



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When I'm sometimes asked 'When will there be enough (women on the Supreme Court)?' and my answer is: 'When there are nine.' People are shocked. But there'd been nine men, and nobody's ever raised a question about that."

—*Former Supreme Court Justice Ruth B. Ginsburg*

5. Truth: Seek and Speak the Truth



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Our Declaration of Independence declares each and every one of us has a divine legacy that nothing and no one can take away....Once we push the haze of myth away, we will see the truth of ourselves in each other. When we see ourselves in each other, then injustice and oppression are not so easily perpetrated.

—*John Lewis on the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (2016)*

6. Care for Nature: Protect the Earth



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The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and human development, for we know that things can change. . . Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.

—*From Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home, Pope Francis*

7. Peace: Live in Harmony with Others



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Farm workers everywhere are angry and worried that we cannot win without violence. We have proved it before through persistence, hard work, faith and willingness to sacrifice. We can win and keep our own self-respect and build a great union that will secure the spirit of all people if we do it through a re-dedication and re-commitment to the **struggle for justice through non-violence**.

—*Cesar Chavez*

8. Democracy: Vote and Participate in Governing Our Society



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Our ability to participate in government, to elect our leaders and to improve our lives is contingent upon our ability to access the ballot. We know in our heart of hearts that voting is a sacred right - the fount from which all other rights flow.

—*Stacy Abrams, Gubernatorial Candidate in Georgia, Founder of Fair Fight*