

I rise

FOR EMPOWERING OTHERS



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When I was asked what “I Rise For” the first thing I thought of is empowering others. Empowerment has many meanings for me because it can be used with entire populations but also everyday interactions with others. Some people have the tendency to fix other people’s “problems”. A lot of well intentioned people end up hurting the ones they try to help by doing things for them because they are not practicing empowerment.

Empowering others means to listen to those you are assisting first. It doesn’t matter what intentions you have because it is not about you or what you think, it’s about them. Especially with a marginalized population, who have quite often experienced

someone else making the rules for them, it is important to understand that what they want comes first. The next steps will be what they think is right for them. We have to assume they have the capacity to make decisions for themselves because they know their situation best. Empowering others means that you give others the opportunity to choose what happens to them because they already know what they want to but aren’t necessarily given the chance.

Empowering others means not doing things FOR others, but WITH them. Empowering others means reserving your opinions on what someone needs to do and support what they think they need to do. The bottom line is, they know their situation better than you do. Empowering neighborhoods means governments and organizations should talk to community members before making decisions that will affect the neighborhood. Empowering others means helping someone in crisis by giving them options and resources why letting them make the decision about what their next steps look like.

