

In this 400th year of Africans being brutally kidnapped and forcefully brought to this country, the National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc., remains committed to the task of healing, reclamation and restoring Black people to the African-centered principles of the Ma'at and Nguzo Saba. Black African people in America have been so dispossessed of their dignity that many have lost any hope for achieving a positive reason for living. As a profound and cultural people, for 400 years, African people in America have been denied the dignity of being perceived as human or possessing any culture. They have been forced to live under the spiritual systems of others, experienced deliberate destruction of family systems, and deprived of a means to possess positive organized social constructs derived from being a free and self-determining people. Our ancestral systems of Rites-of-Passage, which was the cornerstone of family and community development, of educational/socializing practices of our children, adults, and elders, set benchmarks applicable to every developmental phase of life. The loss of our cultural ways, which have largely been forgotten, has had a negative effect on the African personality, family, and community.

In 1968, the National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc., took a stance to enhance a thriving and fruitful Black life in this country and throughout the world. There was and continues to be a major mission to restore, reclaim and heal Black men, Black women, Black children, Black elders, the Black community, and Black spiritual systems which are important to a healthy and thriving people. Since 1968, we have engaged in community practices and policy advocacy reflective of our Principles of Ma'at, that are manifested in truth, justice, order, righteousness, harmony, reciprocity, propriety, and balance.

Since its beginnings NABSW has stood with and advocated for the families of those murdered and harmed by state violence and police brutality. We have stood with the families who have been denied appropriate mental, spiritual, and physical health, services; economic, housing, and educational opportunities. We continue to stand with our brothers and sisters in our roles as social workers on the frontline. We invoke the healing and reclamation properties and principles of the Nguzo Saba: Umoja, Kujichagulia, Ujima, Ujamaa, Nia, Kuumba, and Imani, that synthesize Africa principles with African American needs.

Although there are many parts to these and other philosophies of African and African American origin, we feel Nguzo Saba and the Principles of Ma'at are the foundations to the development of Black People. We desire to uplift our people, rather than accepting negative definitions of them. We see utility in knowing who we are, why we are here and defining the means of developing health, positive living and overcoming life's obstacles.

It is incumbent that each chapter of the NABSW, develop a plan of action that speaks to the needs of their community. By localizing our plans and remembering to apply our social constructs of Maat and Nguzo Saba we will succeed. By doing African and African American principles we demonstrate to our people that we can achieve, thrive, and prosper in their lifetimes. It is the duty and responsibility of NABSW and its members to live up to our ideals and pledges to our people.