

I have a dream that one day the greeting smell of latex and chemicals will give me the sweetest satisfaction of knowing it all belongs to me. Growing up I can recall several exciting hospital visits with my cousin. At the time, he was the Head of Pediatrics at Beth Israel hospital in Newark, NJ. It was something about entering those four walls that seemed to warm my heart. I was always ecstatic about doing rounds with him, but on this particular day, I was especially enthusiastic. Today was the day I would tell him my dream, and I was so nervous. As I expressed to him how he inspired me to one day become a Pediatrician, I recognized a mischievous look in his eyes. I went on to tell him, I wanted to own, "one of these," (referring to the pediatrics center in the hospital). I could have sworn I saw a look of jealousy on his face. I knew this because of his remark as he told me my dream was far-fetched and slightly delusional. The pure envy in his voice sparked a fire in me and pushed me to mold my dream on my own.

We all have a dream that at some point in time we thought was impossible. Fortunately, Martin Luther King Jr taught me not to let anyone deter me from my dreams and goals. In a time where a black man could not be so much as recognized in the presence of a white man, he stood up for his people because he had a dream. His vision was one of equality regardless of one's race. He was disrespected, belittled, and made to feel like his dream was just that, a dream.

One that would never be, and in the face of hatred he prevailed. He influenced so many in his promotion of love and equality. His actions pushed me to believe in myself, my dreams, and to claim my success regardless of who doubts me.

Growing up I could never understand why my cousin did not believe in me. As a young successful African-American man he knew how hard it was. He personally beat all odds by climbing the ladder of success and making it to the top. It always hurt me to know that someone who had what it takes to make it, did not believe in me. Why didn't he help me mold my dream? As my cousin, why didn't he push me? As I began to question myself I found peace in building my confidence and developing assertiveness. Now, I understand why he said my dream was far-fetched, after all, I could not own a section of a hospital. What I can do though is open my own Pediatric Facility. He inspired me, to independently mold my dream into a realistic goal in the face of all adversities. He taught me that self-assurance is all I truly need in this world of sin. No one will believe in my dreams the way that I do, and that's okay because only I can make these dreams come true. I now use others doubts as motivation for my dreams. It is because of him that I have the courage to say one day, I will independently own, run and expand on a Pediatric Facility.