



**REMEMBERING AND RAISING DR. JULIA HARE:
HER HONORED LIFE AND UNFORGETTABLE LOVE**

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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

AS AN AFRICAN PEOPLE, A CARING AND committed people, we can never get used to the passing of those we love, respect and honor. We imagine them always with us, laughing and lifting us up, bringing the dawn and opening the way for us to see and assert ourselves in dignity-affirming, life-enhancing and flourishing-directed ways and we are duly disoriented if not undone when they leave us. So, it is with the passing and rising in radiance of Dr. Julia Ann Reed Hare (November 7, 1939 to February 25, 2019), author, educator, motivational lecturer, social commentator, radio talk host, educational psychologist, righteous and relentless servant of her people, and beloved wife, co-worker and co-author with the renowned educator, sociologist and clinical psychologist, Dr. Nathan Hare, whose sense of loss we share as best we can.

And of all her credits, she would tell you herself, none is more important than or desirably possible without her beloved husband, Nathan. Thus, we think of her as Dr. Julia (loves Nathan) Hare, for the way we know, love, respect, honor and remember her is inseparable from the loving, beautiful and symbiotic relationship they built and shared, modeled and mirrored. Early in their relationship before their marriage, he bought her Nat King Cole's *Unforgettable*, not only as a signature song of their love, but also as a signifier of equal commitment in their life.

It is, above all, then, the legacy of togetherness that she leaves us; the model, mirror and message of togetherness in life, love and struggle, as both foundational principle and fundamental practice. It is, as I read her work, the way we will recover, build and develop our lives, strengthen and sustain our love and wage the victorious struggle that will enable us, as Black men and women, to be ourselves and free ourselves as persons and a people.

For Julia, love of Nathan is at the heart and soul of her life. It is in meeting, loving, marrying him that she begins the beautiful journey on which she cooperatively broadened, deepened and developed her knowledge, nurtured and cul-

tivated her love, enriched and expanded her life, and became the highly achieved, loved and respected woman we admire, respect and raise up in remembrance, reflection and reaffirmation. She defined and honored Nathan as "one of my master teachers who got me very involved in fighting for the oppressed" and knew she would, as he said, stand by her as she stood by him in all the ups and downs of life and struggle.

We of the African American Cultural Center (Us) family, where Julia and Nathan lectured many times, always appreciated their lively and loving exchange on a wide and ever-widening range of subjects about love, life and struggle. Nor could you miss how they sometimes interrupted each other with no sense of surprise from the other, periodically talked at the same time and made the same point from two interrelated and eventually merging perspectives. It was not that they did not sometimes differ, but it was a differing that did not divide them, did not matter more than they did to each other and did not change or challenge the foundational understandings they held in common.

Again, it is the legacy of togetherness that she, with Nathan, leaves us. She tells us that "We must communicate gently and lovingly" especially "when challenges arise." For "this builds intimacy and will help two people get through anything together." She teaches us a togetherness that allows each to "remain an individual and have your own life," but come together and be together in conceiving and building a shared life. Moreover, she counsels us to learn and practice the art of compromise. "It's important to compromise," she says, "learn to disagree constructively and resist with all your might being confrontational or trying to get back at your mate." We must, she tells us, validate each other, for one of our greatest mistakes in our relationships is "not validating each other." Thus, we must affirm the dignity, beauty, goodness, potentiality and agency of each other and self-consciously contribute to the well-being and flourishing of each other. Dr. Hare also lists as

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harmful to our shared love and life “being competitive,” saying, “Often we are combative because we haven’t examined the societal forces that have pushed us toward mistrust” with its class, color and consumerist emphases.

Julia also asked us to realize that the racist and sexist system we live in does not want us to be together in love and struggle. “We have a system that would not like to see Black males and females coming together,” she tells us. For oppressors understand the power of our coming together, the power of both Black men and women and our capacity to break their hold on our lives. In a word, she says, “They understand that if our relationships are together, they lose,” we win and the world benefits. But if we aren’t together, we can’t build and sustain good lives, resist our oppression and will succumb to promises of social integration which she defines as “the illusion of inclusion,” far different than shared wealth, power and status.

Because our children are our future or our fate, Dr. Julia Hare, educational psychologist and community mother, tells us we must “reclaim the minds of our children.” They must be rescued from the special educational placements whose classroom she criticizes as “holding cells” before they are sent to prison. She is concerned about both the education of girls and boys, but she stresses the urgency of rescuing the endangered, targeted and hunted Black male, and the Black male killed under the camouflage and color of law with the racist social sanction of society. We must, she counsels, teach our children time-tested and value-grounded ways to be African boys and girls in the world, to be disciplined, loving, mutually respectful and productive.

Here she again calls for the togetherness in life, love and struggle of Black women and Black men in building family, raising children, strengthening community and waging struggle. She will not simply be for women isolated and

unrelated but calls for a shared liberation as both a principle and practice, for our lives and futures and those of our children, male and female, are inseparably linked. Thus, she states, “I am an advocate for brothers and sisters because I believe that whatever sisters are, brothers got to be that with us, and whatever brothers are, sisters got to be that with them.” Indeed, she states, “In that way we raise strong warrior males and females to take our places and to continue the legacy we have,” the legacy of not only of her and our efforts, but also that inscribed in the ancient and honored sacred narrative we know as African history.

And she stresses that in this reclaiming of the minds of our children and maintaining and advancing this legacy, it is important that we are clear about our own *identity*, for in that is the key to our *purpose* and *direction*. “What matters is where we are in our minds,” she counsels. And “As long as we know we are Africans, as long as we know we are Black people living here in America, we know exactly who we are.”

AS JULIA’S HEALTH CONTINUED TO decline and Nathan brought her home to loving care, he reflected much on their love for each other, their life, work and struggle together and all the good they did and shared. And he said he thought about “little things I should have said and done but didn’t take the time. So, I just try to fill her life with whatever joy I can and always love her all the time.” He knew that Alzheimer’s would eventually take Julia’s memory, but he is committed to continue to remember for them both. And thus, he shares again, the model, mirror and message of Julia’s and his legacy of an *enduring togetherness* saying, “So even when it comes to the point that she no longer remembers me, I will remember her, and I will recall that she was *unforgettable* and thought I was *unforgettable* too.” And they are inseparably so. *Hotep. Ase. Heri. ♣*

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