

“Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom”

Stan Davis- musician, storyteller, and antibullying speaker and researcher- presents an all-new show combining music, song, storytelling, and the voices of youth. This presentation is suitable for conferences, school assemblies, diversity day programs, training for student leadership groups, libraries, and community gatherings. It is designed for adults, youth, and teens—each presentation will be customized for the age and needs of the audience

In the 1840s few would have thought that slavery in the US would end. Now it is unthinkable that we would have legal slavery in the US. When Stan’s grandmother immigrated to the United States in the 1890s she came to a country where women could not vote. Many did not believe that women in the US would ever have the vote. Today any move to take the vote away from women would be met with disbelief.

Which injustices of today will our great-grandchildren have trouble believing?

As Langston Hughes wrote in his poem “Let America Be America Again”:

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed-- Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme--That any man be crushed by one above.

Stan learned the song “woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom” during the Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march of 1965, and uses the song as a recurring metaphor for our country’s progress toward liberty and justice for all- and for individuals’ progress away from biased thinking and toward justice. As Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote: “[A person’s mind], once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”

Stan brings to this presentation 40 years as a musician and a life’s experience working for social change and justice as an activist, child therapist, school counselor, and bullying prevention educator. With Dr. Charisse Nixon at Penn State Erie, he has completed a national research project about bullying that brings young peoples’ voices into the national debate about how to solve this serious problem. First results of that research can be found at <http://www.youthvoiceproject.com> - voices of the youth who participated in the study will be included in the program.

The program includes a wide range of songs from Peggy Lee to Gershwin to Yip Harburg to Willie Dixon - from freedom songs to folk songs to pop to blues.

Stan’s performances are participatory, in the style of Pete Seeger or Holly Near.

For more information, please email stan@stopbullyingnow.com or phone 207-685-9639

