

**CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE**  
A guide to action planning



## **CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE**

A guide to action planning

### Learning objectives:

1. To help students to know more about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. To encourage students to know more about how they can be involved in supporting Human Rights and the work of Robert F Kennedy Human Rights UK.
3. To provide guidance in planning a movement.

### Key vocabulary:

- Listening
- Planning
- Action
- Lobbying
- Petitioning
- Narrative
- Collective
- Campaigning
- Collaborating
- Negotiating
- Relationships
- Influence
- Unifying

### Key People:

- Eleanor Roosevelt
- Hansa Mehta
- Robert F Kennedy Senior
- Amika George
- Sir Nicholas Winton
- Bayard Rustin

## Session A – Objectives

1. To understand the context for the United Nations collaborating together to bring about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
2. To begin to understand the techniques used in unifying people around a common cause.

### Activities:

Students are asked to share their prior knowledge of human rights and of the **United Nations**.

Through the sharing of information (Slides 2-3) students learn about the formation of the **United Nations** and its initial work.

Students should be very clear after the initial introduction what the purpose was of the **United Nations** formation and the context that it was formed in. They should be clear that this was something that was formed with careful planning, negotiating and collaborating over years.

Slide 4 repeats the image of the **United Nations** flag. Students are given the opportunity to understand why the olive trees are used and the impact of this.

Q- *Was the development of the UN a positive change? What was the change they were wanting to achieve? Why would this be a positive?*

The short video is shown to students which explains how the declaration of human rights was drafted in 1948.

[https://cdnapisec.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner\\_id/2503451/uiconf\\_id/43914941/entry\\_id/1\\_jxforcupfa/embed/dynamic](https://cdnapisec.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/2503451/uiconf_id/43914941/entry_id/1_jxforcupfa/embed/dynamic)

### Guidance for Delivery:

As this is delivered, talk should draw out the importance of *listening, planning, negotiating* and *collaborating* that needed to take place. Make sure questioning is used *transactionally* to ask, answer, inform and discuss so that pupils know why the **United Nations** were formed and the context. Further guidance for teachers on the history of the UN can be found at <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un>

Teachers may choose to explore the history of the UN in more detail but the purpose of this scheme of learning is to provide guidance in planning a movement for positive change. The inclusion of the history is to scaffold some understanding.

It may be that this vocabulary should be pre-taught; it can also be used by the teacher to relate back to other schemes of learning within the Speak Truth to Power programme.

Before the video is shown it may be useful for teachers to ensure that pupils know what the **Magna Carta** is, the **Blitz** and who **Eleanor Roosevelt** is. Language that should be known before the video is: *ostracised, democratic, diplomacy, negotiation*. This is interrogatory talk – drawing out what pupils know with the teacher then providing *expository* talk – explaining, describing, expounding and expanding.

### Activities:

Talk for learning activity where students deliberate on the reasons why **Eleanor Roosevelt** might have been ostracised in the discussion originally. Students imagine a scene whereby **Eleanor Roosevelt** is confronting one of the men on the committee to imagine how she might have addressed the situation. Role play is used here between two students with the outcome being **Eleanor** persuading the committee to consider women more effectively in the **Declaration of Human Rights**.

The second clip reinforces the importance of women in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The video highlights the importance of **Eleanor Roosevelt** in unifying the group together.

Q – *Why do you think the leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt was important in drafting the declaration of Human Rights? What techniques did she use in leading the group?*

Students are then introduced to the final part of the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a recording of **Eleanor Roosevelt** is available to play as students read this (Slide 7).

Hinge question – *what do you think the purpose is of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? What will you expect to see in there?*

Exit ticket questions – *why did the leaders of the countries come together to form the United Nations? What was the context at the time that made it so important to come together?*

### Guidance for Delivery:

Role play is a useful technique for imagining what could have been. What is important in sharing the role plays that the teacher challenges the preconceptions of the students i.e. *‘would she have made a difference if she had shouted?’; ‘If she was rude to the committee members would it have had more or less impact in bringing about the changes?’*

Students may find it difficult to draw out the concepts of *listening, negotiating, collaborating and influencing* others. They may not notice the importance of collectives and diverse voices. That is okay at this point – it will be a point that is returned to later in the scheme.

Pre-teaching of words such as *progressive, territories and jurisdiction* may be appropriate depending on context.

The question here is related to what students will undertake in the next session. Teachers should move towards more *exploratory* talk – encouraging students to hypothesise, probe, clarify.

## Session B – Objectives

1. To begin to understand the importance of the articles within the **UDHR**.
2. To begin to understand the importance of human rights alongside responsibilities.
3. To explore in detail Article 26 and Article 29 which encapsulate the importance of rights alongside responsibilities.

### Activities:

Retrieval practice on the previous session – who came together to form the **United Nations**; why did they come together; who was responsible for drafting the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**; when was the **UDHR** first shared.

Students ensure their knowledge is secure through the instruction of Slide 9 which summarises the purpose of the **UDHR**.

Students are divided into two groups – one will study Article 26 on Slide 10 and the other Article 29. Within the groups they are divided into smaller groups and presented with Appendix B1 and B2 to study.

Students should work through their article and be prepared to share the following:

1. In your own words, what is this article trying to say.
2. Look at the imagined scenario. Discussion around the questions that are framed for each scenario.
3. Students share their thoughts on each scenario as a class and are prompted to explore in detail what is happening.

Students are introduced to the quote by **Eleanor Roosevelt**, *'In small places.'* Students are encouraged to explain what **Eleanor Roosevelt** meant by this and what it might mean for them.

### Guidance for Delivery:

It is important that the teacher is sure that the knowledge of what the UDHR is secure in all students. There may be misunderstanding that Slide 9 seeks to address.

The two slides with Articles on contain vocabulary or contextual information students may be unfamiliar with. Teachers should utilise their appropriate reading strategies to ensure students have the information to be able to understand the texts. There will be strategies schools will have that can help the teachers to make the best decisions about how to make these articles accessible. It is important that students fully understand the words in order to begin to explore the rights and responsibilities.

The scenarios are designed to bring everyday scenarios to the students and to encourage the focus around other people standing up for what is right. This will lead to the concept of Speaking Truth to Power.

Teacher invites students to explore who can make a difference; what role they can have in making a difference for positive change. This is *exploratory* talk.

## Session C – Objectives

1. To understand the importance of small actions that create Ripples of Hope.
2. To understand what we mean when we say Speak Truth to Power.
3. To learn how ordinary people can make a difference.

### Activities:

Students are given the opportunity to look again at the **Eleanor Roosevelt** quote *'In Small Places.'*

Students are reminded that the way **Eleanor Roosevelt** brought about the **UDHR** through perseverance and coming together under a unifying cause. They are taught that many of the people who sat on the committee did not get on. Not all countries did sign but didn't vote against it.

Students are reminded that whilst **Eleanor Roosevelt** had influence due to her status, there were many other people, lesser well known who also worked alongside her. They are reminded of collective, unifying and negotiating.

Students are shared the quote from **Robert F Kennedy Senior** *'Ripples of Hope'* and encouraged to think about what this means for them as individuals.

Students are then introduced to **Amika George**. The Guardian article (Appendix C1) tells her story. Using the resources (C2) students and identify the actions she took to raise awareness of her campaign and the barriers. A resource sheet is available to support this work.

Q – *what techniques did Amika George use to get sanitary products in classrooms in England? How does this embody what Eleanor Roosevelt said 'In Small Places'? How does this reflect the teachings of Robert F Kennedy Sr?*

### Guidance for Delivery:

Some key guidance for teachers in sharing the difficulties of the drafting of the **UDHR** is in the different cultures of the countries: for example, USSR was critical of the USA because of the way black people were still segregated in the South; USA felt that aspects of communism were not compatible with **UDHR**. The vote was 48 in favour with 8 members abstaining and 2 states absent.

The **Robert F Kennedy** speech was made in South Africa during apartheid. The quote is scribed on his headstone. There is an interesting short video here which describes the importance of this speech. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIzLf\\_cGtQE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIzLf_cGtQE)

The video link that is shared here is made by the Robert F Kennedy Human Rights USA. It places the ripples of hope speech against a background of people fighting for human rights. It does contain some distressing images.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnBqACIPrKc>

In introducing **Amika George** the teacher may choose to build it up by asking if they know her, if they have heard of her movement, if they know that sanitary products did not used to be available freely in schools. This is deliberative – justifying, defending their position.

## Session D – Objectives

1. To understand the importance of small actions that create Ripples of Hope.
2. To understand what we mean when we say Speak Truth to Power.
3. To identify how they can make a change.

### Activities:

Recall the importance of small actions making a difference, the language of Ripples of Hope.

Students are given the opportunity to watch the clip of **Nicholas Winton** meeting children he saved on the Kindertransport.

Students are given the opportunity to discuss and explore what this means in the light of **Eleanor Roosevelt's** *'In small places'* and **Robert F Kennedy's** *'Ripples of Hope'* speech. What impact did he have?

Hinge question – *do you have to be in power to make a change? What evidence do you have to prove your hypothesis?*

Two videos are shared to inspire the students to think about making a difference.

### The campaign:

Students work in groups together to identify something they believe in that they want to be able to make a difference in within their own area. It could be an injustice they see locally or something that needs improving i.e. a park, facilities for young people, housing.

Looking at the **UDHR** how does this fit into the articles of human rights.

### Guidance for Delivery:

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/nicholas\\_winton\\_on\\_thats\\_life/zbmxbhk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/nicholas_winton_on_thats_life/zbmxbhk)

The video to use here is on the front page of RFK Human Rights UK. It shows a Human Rights Festival held in Manchester in 2021.

<https://www.rfkhumanrights.uk/>

The next video shows schools coming together to look at human rights.

<https://rfkhro.org/3OWBVIX>

## Session E – Objectives

1. Planning to make a change.
2. Creating the conditions for the change to take place.
3. Committing to action.

The process of campaigning and making a positive change can be adapted based on the context teachers are working in and the experience pupils already have. As a guide this is a useful approach.

Note: Citizens UK has a number of case studies on its website of people bringing about positive change.

1. Encourage the pupils to find something they are passionate about – start small initially.
2. Encourage the pupils to explain why it is important to them and to keep telling their story.
3. Make sure the pupils have the opportunity to justify why it is an issue.
4. Encourage the pupils to listen to others – what do they think of their idea, what can they do to support them, are there bits that they do not know.
5. Encourage the pupils to work in groups and to be able to identify roles – Resource (E1) helps pupils in this.
6. Encourage the pupils to plan very carefully who they need to engage with to bring the change about.
7. Encourage the pupils to identify what actions they are going to take that does not take away the dignity and security of others. The resource sheet used previously at Appendix C2 does not include militant action.
8. Encourage the pupils to bring awareness through other means other than protest or demonstration. Encourage pupils to be prepared to negotiate to achieve their aim.
9. Let them go.

## **CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE**

### Bibliography and Research

#### Books

A Dialogic Teaching Companion Robin Alexander, Routledge 2020

How to Resist: Turn Protest to Power Matthew Bolton, Bloomsbury 2017

Trivium 21C: Preparing Young People for the Future with Lessons from the Past Martin Robinson, Independent Thinking Press 2013

#### Web Links

##### **UN**

1. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
2. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/history-of-the-un>

##### **RFK Human Rights**

1. <https://www.rfkhumanrights.uk/>
2. <https://rfkhumanrights.org/>

##### **Other**

1. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/speaking-truth-to-power-quakers-and-the-lobbying-act>
2. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/bayard-rustin>
3. [https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/nicholas\\_winton\\_on\\_thats\\_life/zbmshbk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/nicholas_winton_on_thats_life/zbmshbk)
4. <https://www.citizensuk.org/>

## **CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE**

### Scope of Work

#### Scope of Content

This scheme of learning is designed to be used as a tool to:

1. To help students to know more about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. To encourage students to know more about how they can be involved in supporting Human Rights and the work of Robert F Kennedy Human Rights UK.
3. To provide guidance in planning a movement for positive change.

#### Scheme of Learning

The Scheme of Learning explores the development of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** encouraging students to understand the context of how they were developed and the difficulties that had to be overcome in the declaration. It draws down on small actions that can be taken by individuals, drawing in the '*Ripples of Hope*' speech by **Robert F Kennedy Senior**.

It focuses on the importance of balancing human rights with our responsibilities to others and provides scenarios that students can use to discuss where people may abuse the terminology of human rights.

It draws attention to two people who made a difference and did not have power or influence at the time, **Amika George** and **Sir Nicholas Winton**.

It uses a variety of video resources to engage students including those from **RFK Human Rights UK** work in Manchester in 2021.

It draws students towards creating their own campaign through highlighting throughout the methods and techniques that can be utilised. The final session(s) is campaigning. It does link to other Schemes of Learning and resources to create a campaign can be used elsewhere across our programmes.

The Scheme of Learning does include role play within this which forms part of the talk for learning strategies.

## CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE

### Guidance for developing accountable talk

#### From EEF improving literacy in secondary schools

Effective ways of promoting high quality talk might include:

- Teachers modelling what effective talk sounds like in their subjects. This includes using subject specific language and vocabulary, explicitly introducing the ways of reasoning that matter within their discipline, and the ways in which experts use meta-cognitive talk.
  - Deliberately sequencing talk activities alongside reading and writing tasks to give students opportunities to practise using new vocabulary, develop ideas before writing, or discuss ways to overcome common challenges (*‘tell your partner what to do if they get stuck’*).
  - Using sentence starters and prompts to help students to structure and extend their responses. For example, starters such as *‘my claim is based on the fact that...’* can help students link to evidence, while a shorthand like ABCQ (Agree, Build, Challenge, Question) sets out different ways to contribute to a discussion. Teachers can prompt students to extend their answers with questions, e.g. *‘Can you use ‘moreover’ to link to a second piece of evidence?’*
  - Selecting questions that are open-ended, well-suited to discussion and allow opportunity for authentic student response rather than direct replication of teaching: for example, where there are several plausible answers and where students’ own views might develop.
- Setting goals and roles, particularly for small group discussions. By ensuring students have a clear goal—for example, a question to answer—it is more likely that talk will be focused and that students fully participate. It can also be beneficial to assign roles, such as summariser or questioner, though as students become more used to routines, it may not be necessary to make roles explicit.
  - Using wait time to develop students’ responses, by leaving a pause after they have first given an answer, which gives them a chance to re-frame, extend, or justify their reasoning.
  - Giving precise feedback relating to different elements of accountability. For example, in addition to praising a student’s use of evidence, teachers might praise the way in which students follow the norms of discussion, for example, by naming classmates or linking new contributions explicitly to previous points. Students can also be trained to provide peer feedback during talk activities, for example, related to the use of new vocabulary.

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### Appendix

#### APPENDIX B2

##### Article 26 - Example 1

Ben does not like school. He believes that it is a waste of his time. He is constantly disrupting the class when the teacher is trying to teach. He feels that he is picked on and will create a scene so that some people join in with him. A teacher decides that Ben will have to stay behind after the school day. Ben shouts out, “*That’s an abuse of my human rights and I’m not going to do it.*” Amna, who is sat next to him mutters, “*What about my human right to learn?*”

*Are any human rights being abused here?*

*What are the responsibilities to others under Article 26?*

*What, if anything, could have been done differently?*

*What could other people have done?*

##### Article 26 - Example 2

Reihana has got involved in issues outside of school. She knows that after school that evening there will be people coming to get her. She arranges with her friends that they have to go in the park with her to protect her and there will be a big fight. Dinner time is unsettled because everyone is gossiping about it. One of the girls in her class is worried and pretends to be sick so she is sent home; one of the girls in her class decides to tell a teacher. Reihana is asked to stay behind after school. She gets very angry with the teacher and pushes them away. She is in the park with lots of her class mates. There is a big fight and one of the teachers on duty tries to intervene. They are hurt and it is filmed and put on social media. The following day

Reihana is suspended; some parents keep their children off school; the teacher who is hurt is off sick and cannot teach the Maths GCSE class. Reihana’s Mum is very angry and accuses the Headteacher of abusing Reihana’s human rights by suspending her.

*Are any human rights being abused here?*

*What are the responsibilities to others under Article 26?*

*What, if anything, could have been done differently?*

*What could other people have done?*



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#### APPENDIX B2

##### Article 29 - Example 1

A group of teenagers play football every night in a park. Recently, there has been a group of older teenagers coming round. They smoke weed and keep taking the football off the teenagers. One of the group who plays football gets cross and goes up to the older teenagers. They don't like the fact that someone younger has challenged them and they beat them up. The following day, the child who has been beat up brings their Dad and a group of other people to the park. There is a big fight. In the park is a Mum and her two young children. They have been playing on the park when the fight happens. The two children are really upset and the Mum puts them into her car. That night one of the children has nightmares. They keep talking about what they have seen and cannot sleep for the next couple of nights.

*Are any human rights being abused here?  
What are the responsibilities to others under Article 29?  
What, if anything, could have been done differently?  
What could other people have done?*

##### Article 29 - Example 2

Sally vapes everywhere. She does not see that there is any reason why she shouldn't. She is on a tram and is vaping. A member of the public asks her to stop. Sally and her friends start screaming at the member of the public and tells them it is her human right to vape wherever she wants. She shouts in the face at the member of the public. It is filmed and is all over social media. Sally gets named and there is lots of abuse directed at her.

*Are any human rights being abused here?  
What are the responsibilities to others under Article 29?  
What, if anything, could have been done differently?  
What could other people have done?*



## CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE Appendix

### APPENDIX C1

**At just 17, the schoolgirl began a campaign to ensure every school offered free sanitary products. Now 22, she talks about tackling stigma, her new book and her fears about the UK's new police bill**

@zoesqwilliams  
Thu 13 Jan 2022 10.31 GMT

**A**mika George, 22, didn't set out to be an activist. "None of my immediate family were involved in formal politics in any way," she says. And yet, while still a teenager, she ran the successful Free Periods campaign that led to free sanitary products being placed in schools and now she has a book, *Make It Happen*, about how to get involved in politics from the grassroots.

Featuring prominent voices from **Arundhati Roy** to the Egyptian writer and radical **Wael Ghomri**, its worldview is that there is an infinite possibility for change, situated in the hands of every one of us. In other words, it is a remix of **Hannah Arendt** with a sunnier chorus. So I am surprised when I speak to her, not just by her hinterland but by her manner. I was expecting a punchy, studs-first Marxist; instead I find a quietly spoken, very thoughtful committed Christian, who is constantly challenging, often playful but always with serious intent.

**George** was just 17 when she read a headline on the BBC website: "*Girls Too Poor to Buy Sanitary Products Missing School*". She had read an article about period poverty in India, and what now caught her eye was that one charity was diverting products that it had intended to send to Kenya to the UK. Students in the UK, it seemed, were facing the same problems as those

in the developing world. That was 14 March, 2017; by April, she had set up Free Periods, to campaign against period poverty. She promoted her cause diligently: from the obvious (a petition on change.org) to the festive (a demonstration in Parliament Square just before Christmas 2017. "*Even though everyone was protesting period poverty – something so horrendous – it was also a celebration of periods*", she says).

A collaboration with the Red Box Project, founded around the same time with similar aims, led to a legal campaign against the UK government, urging it to comply with its obligations to "*ensure equal access to education for all children, irrespective of their sex*". Two months after that, in January 2020, the Department for Education committed funding for free period products in all English schools (similar commitments had already been made in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). "*Free Periods was successful*," she concludes simply. "*That took two and a half years. I started my campaign before I could even vote, and I think that's a testament to the fact that, actually, you can achieve change as somebody who is not represented in politics.*"

Were her parents (her mother works in financial services and her father is a project manager) surprised by her campaign? Only moderately; she had always been fiercely independent. Her school friends must, surely, have thought her single-mindedness extreme? "*I don't think so. Not unless they were saying that behind my back!*"

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APPENDIX C1 Continued...

Amika George speaks at a period poverty protest in Whitehall. Photograph: Tinite Photography/Alamy

Just because the battle was won in such a short time, however, it doesn't mean it was easy. The levers of democratic change started off remote and unresponsive. George recalls being at school, learning about the **Houses of Parliament**, then going off to a meeting in the Commons the same day, and *"having a meeting with an MP who was quite resistant to listening"*. It is an arduous life lesson, that parliamentary representatives don't start paying attention until they absolutely have to. Then, there were flat, uneventful times when nothing seemed to work, and only social media was keeping her ambitions afloat (*"floods of DMs and emails and tweets from people who were incredibly supportive"*).

George initially fell foul of other campaigners, too, changing the language she used after *"I had conversations with trans men or nonbinary people who felt excluded."* But switching to "students" or "children" led to criticism from some feminists who insist the words "girl" and "woman" should not be discarded. On this, though, she is relaxed. *"I didn't have to re-evaluate the aims of my campaign or*

*what I was asking the government to do,"* she says. *"It just meant that I was making people feel included. What I find upsetting is that the people who were already included see that as an affront."*

At the start of her campaign, she was shocked at just how horrible keyboard warriors could be. *"I went to an all girls' school: everybody was quite open in talking about periods, I hadn't been touched by the stigma. It never occurred to me that people might not like any mention of periods. That there was this disgusting blame culture, either denying the existence of period poverty or saying: 'The parents are clearly just spending all their money on cigarettes or alcohol.'"*

She says she turned that *"dismissive attitude"* into *"campaigning energy"*. which is an incredible, yet somehow believable, skill: she is aware of prejudice or bigotry, yet never sounds like she is taking it seriously.

All the while, she was becoming a poster girl for youth activism, being named on the Time Most Influential Teens of 2018 list, the **Big Issue** Top 100 Changemakers and **Teen Vogue's** 21 under 21 list. But, rather than basking in this celebration of her work, she questioned it. *"On the news, you always see one face. On climate change, it's always Greta Thunberg. I think she's incredible, but I think it's very indicative of how the media approaches young people and politics. They don't see those two things as a natural fit, they have to pin it on one person. Suddenly it's: 'There's this one teenager that actually understands politics.' You're heralded. As great as that can feel, it's also really dangerous. If you have no experience in politics or activism, you think you have to be at that level of confidence or resource or privilege before you can be involved in the conversation."*

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APPENDIX C1 Continued...

Yet the plaudits kept coming. **George** was awarded the Goalkeepers Campaigners award from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, and made connections and inroads at the **UN**. Then, last year, she became the youngest person to receive an **MBE**, while she was still at Cambridge. This, however, was a double-edged sword – since it was only when she started her history degree that she got to grips with the details of empire. Then she wasn't sure she wanted to be a Member of its Order. (**George** was born in London; her grandparents moved to the UK from Kerala in the 1970s.) *“Literally, I got to university before I even understood the true atrocities of what the British did in India, which is where a lot of my extended family still lives. Something like the Amritsar massacre, it should be British history, but I heard nothing about it. I was taught Henry VIII’s wives about six or seven times.”*

She accepted the **MBE** all the same, on pragmatic grounds; her campaign comes first, and the award opens doors. She had served enough time hitting brick walls. For her dissertation, **George** focused not on empire but on *“British Asian teenagers in London in the 90s – how they wove their political identities into music and TV and clubbing; also how music was a really important tool in building up the anti-apartheid movement”*.

It is a bit bracing, to discover that people can now study the 90s as part of a history degree. But it is also quite typical of **George’s** approach: studious but always relevant, practical. She is taking a gap year, then wants to do a masters on Kerala, *“the only democratically elected Marxist government in the world. I’m really interested in how that’s been sustained, particularly given that India’s*

*national government is, obviously, so rightwing.”* She is also keen that the university doesn't rest on its laurels when it comes to diversity. *“There’s a big conversation happening at universities like Cambridge around access, around the private and state school divide. But I don’t think people are differentiating between grammar and comprehensive schools. Grammar schools, Schools like mine, are over-represented, which is still replicating privilege. But to a person from a private school, they don’t differentiate. They just think: ‘They’re all free.’”*



In political terms, she is clear about where she doesn't want to go next: formal politics. And she doesn't want to start another, different campaign. Instead she wants to slot into something that already exists. Climate change is one focus, and part of her reason for writing *Make It Happen* was the strong sense of anxiety in her generation. *“It feels like a completely insurmountable thing for one teenager to tackle. That’s why I talk about breaking it down to a community level, fitting it into a larger framework of issues, connecting with people who are working on similar things.”*

One criticism that vexes her is that is the claim that even the act of breaking poverty down into types – period poverty, fuel poverty, food

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### APPENDIX C1 Continued...

poverty, child poverty – enables the discourse to step around poverty itself. *“I find that dismissive, ridiculous,”* she says. *“When you have these micro campaigns, which are often asking for quite tangible actions, you get a lot of energy.”* Personally, I’m a bit sceptical of things like this, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which always seem to be extremely good at diagnosing effects – a lack of clean water or education – but deliberately bad at diagnosing causes, which usually track back to exploitation. **George** gives that pretty short shrift as well: *“I met so many activists through the global goals, and got a huge amount of support from people within the UN, people within the campaigning worlds, who were tying up all these threads into a bigger blueprint for change. Period poverty sits at the intersection of gender, of education and of health.”*

She may orientate towards the possible, but that doesn’t mean she is not radical, or angry, or that she’s always optimistic. *“Activism is important because you need to see success and when you look for success, it’s people doing things. You find your hope in people. But I hate to think that activism requires constant optimism.”* She is pessimistic about the UK government, particularly the police bill moving through parliament. *“I think it’s one of the most urgent issues in the country today. I don’t know if there’s the right level of awareness of just how damaging it is. Even going back to the Free Periods protest, that was the first time I got my head around just how many people wanted to give their support. Loads of MPs turned up as well. I realised I wasn’t alone, that it was actually a community effort. My mum wouldn’t have let me go if she thought I’d be arrested.”*

It is ironic, too, she says, that many recent protests have been against structural racism, and the legislation this government is trying to pass

hands more powers to the police, an institution accused of so much structural racism (*“People of colour, particularly black people, are so over-represented in stop-and-search”*).

She considers quite carefully what kind of activist she is: certainly leftwing, definitely not trying to overthrow capitalism, or at least, not out loud. *“I would say my views on gender, particularly, and by this she means believing in gender equality, and LGBTQ+ inclusion, “would be considered extreme or radical, which is unfortunate. I don’t think they should be.”* But, anyway, the shape of politics has changed, she says: *activism doesn’t have to be all-consuming, you don’t have to identify as extreme.* *“Maybe it’s a generational difference,”* she says, tactfully.

She brings these entirely unfamiliar traits to the world of direct politics: tact and respectability. From a distance, it seems a little too polite to make change, up close it is admirable, a bit humbling. I wouldn’t say it was key to her success, though; I think she would have succeeded anyway.

Make It Happen by Amika George is publishing in paperback with HQ, HarperCollins on 20th Jan 2022

## **CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE**

### Appendix

#### **APPENDIX C2**

**ORGANISING** – Building a team or alliance. Finding people who believe in your cause or might be persuaded.

**LISTENING** – Listening to issues that make people feel powerless. Find out what they want to achieve.

**PLANNING** – Deciding who you can have influence over. Who do you need to get on your side. Identifying those people and getting them on your side.

**PLANNING** – Building a team of people who can support you.

**NARRATIVE** – Bring your ideas to life, telling a powerful story as to why your cause is important to you.

**ACTION** – Demonstration – bringing people together in a large meeting that draws public notice.

**PETITIONING** – presenting a petition to people in power in respect of a particular cause.

**PICKETING** – a person or group of people who stand outside a work place or venue as a protest to persuade others not to go in or to raise awareness.

**BOYCOTTING** – refusing to buy or handle goods in protest; withdrawing co-operation from a policy or event.

**RAISING AWARENESS** – through speeches, media, letter writing.

**CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE** – refusing to obey the demands or commands of a government without resorting to violence.

**ADVOCACY** – getting support from another person to help express your views and wishes and helping you to stand up for your rights.

**LOBBYING** – Trying to make the case for a particular policy, cause or group directly to a government minister or a member of the House with the aim of influencing their decision.

**NEGOTIATION** – Working with those in power to find a compromise.

**PATIENCE and RESILIENCE** – Sometimes you will make a quick gain, sometimes the movement will be slower, you will need people around you who help you not to give up.

## CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE

### Appendix

#### APPENDIX E1

**LEADER** - A person that guides or acts as a head of a movement, organisation or group. They are often the public face for the movement.

**SUPPORTER** - An advocate, someone who speaks or writes in support or defence of a person, group or cause. This may or may not be their main job.

**ORGANISER** - A person that brings people together, who can form or organise people into a group. This may be for a one-off occasion or long term enlisting people into a group.

**COMMUNICATOR** - Someone who is interested in the power of words and ideas. They are able to communicate (verbal, written) in ways that are engaging and accessible to the public.

**PROTESTER** - Among the first to publicly Speak Truth to Power. They are able to use a number of ways to draw attention publicly to the cause.

**CREATIVE THINKER** - A person who can come up with innovative ideas and can build and develop them until it becomes a reality.

**STRATEGIST** - A deep thinker with a plan of action. They decide what happens, with who and why for the best result possible. They are central to a project and work closely with leaders, but are often behind the scenes.

**NETWORKER** - A matchmaker who is very often sociable and may know many different types of people. They are able to identify and connect people that could work well together, putting them somewhere between a strategist and organiser.

**ARTIST** - A natural storyteller. They look to use their creativity to help bring emotion and feeling to a situation.

**RESEARCHER** - Their work is the foundation that others use to build on. They provide information, facts and data to support the cause.