

I am here today to say, I have made mistakes. I'd like to apologize for the pain I've caused to the residents of Clark, my family, friends and all those that were offended by my comments. They had a right to expect more from me. My words should not reflect on any of them.

I deeply apologize for my hurtful and insensitive language, it was wrong, and I'm embarrassed and ashamed to have spoken that way about an entire race of people. I have learned and changed, and it will not happen again.

However, a true measure of a man is whether he can admit an error and then learn from it. Let me tell you what I mean.

Back in 2020 when the BLM marches came through Clark, I thought I understood why people were drawn to the streets to participate.

After interacting with people of all generations and races at several rallies and hearing their moving stories, I started to see a much bigger picture of how discrimination played into a complex history. These experiences challenged my assumptions.

I have never discriminated against anyone based on race, gender or any other grouping. I always treated people respectfully and fairly. I also learned after my interactions at these local rallies that people didn't see me or my beloved town that way. I never forgot that.

It's been about two years since my experiences at the marches revealed my blind spots. Since that time, I have made a shift mentally. I went to those marches in 2020 thinking I was going to hear people out, instead I heard much more inside my own head.

I now realize that not sharing my insights and lessons from those rallies with this community was a missed opportunity. That day... started a journey of awareness, and I should have shared my personal discoveries with all of you.

Regarding the insensitive nature of my comments about female Clark Police officers. They were hurtful and I am sorry. They were also part of a larger, difficult conversation we were having about the performance of several officers employed by Clark PD.

The truth is, I do not have memory of every conversation I've ever had, and these are over four years old.

I can say that I am a very different person in 2022, than I was in 2020 and from when those tapes were made four years ago..... because the world is a teacher and I've had the good fortune to learn from it. A person's age doesn't determine growth, it is ongoing.

I was blessed through a mutual friend to meet a gentleman by the name of Mark Bullock, a Rahway resident, community leader and CEO of the non-profit group New Life CDC.

After a long, heartfelt and truthful conversation with him, I have decided it is time to continue my learning with action. Starting immediately, I'll be working with Mark and members of his organization to contribute to communities and to bring people together.

I would like to thank him for meeting with me and I look forward to working in partnership to help others. I will invite members of the community to join me as well.

I look forward to working to change the perception of myself and of Clark for those that don't live here, so they will come to understand that Clark is a loving, caring community that accepts everyone.