

CHAPTER TWO **INNER Q.P.S.**

"A TREE WITHOUT ROOTS WILL WITHER AND DIE."
Ernie Panicoli (Hip-hop Photographer and historian)

**"THEY TRY TO BOX ME IN,
BUT I GOT KNOWLEDGE OF
SELF, WHICH IS STRONGER
THAN ANY CAGE THAT
YOU CAN LOCK ME IN."**

~ TALIB KWELI

DO THE KNOWLEDGE:

JAZZ IMPULSE—SAMPLING CONSCIOUSNESS

Hip-hop culture has roots in various forms of music from gospel and blues, to salsa and jazz. With each musical influence also comes knowledge about life and philosophy of survival. In jazz comes the knowledge that our lives are best understood in context between what was and what will be. Jazz teaches us that we are a link in the chain of tradition. This connection to the jazz knowledge, also informs us on the ability we have to learn from the past, redefine our present, and change our futures. Jazz from the beginning is a music that redefines tradition and tells a new story, one of freedom.

The work of John Coltrane, for example, completely revolutionized how people thought the saxophone could be used. His voice expressed through the sax tells the story of the civil rights struggle for freedom and equality. You hear some Malcolm, Martin, and Huey in his music. The Jazz Impulse represents a constant process of redefinition: as an individual, a member in a community, and what the future could look like. This jazz way of life as it applies to Hip-hop culture is best seen by looking at the DJ.

A great DJ is someone who can read the crowd so well that he or she can not only play music that communicates where the crowd is from and meet them where they are at, but also sees the possibility of where the crowd could go. DJ Kool Herc (Hip-hop's first DJ) was one such DJ. Connected with his own roots and history while growing up in Jamaica, Herc saw the power music had to bring people together and move them in a positive direction.

While Herc was growing up in Jamaica, the radio stations were controlled by the government and since the government wanted to control the people, they controlled the music that came over the airwaves. Jamaican DJs would bring their huge sound systems out to the park and play revolutionary reggae music, which would gather huge crowds of people together and help them dream of new possibilities. Herc witnessed the power music had to bring people together, and how it could also be used as a tool to shift consciousness. When Herc's family moved to New York when he was thirteen, he brought this knowledge of music as a revolutionary tool with him.

The Bronx neighborhood that he lived in at the time was experiencing some racist threats from the government. They built a highway that displaced thousands of families, they cut the art and music programs in the schools, and the banks would not give the black and Hispanic populations loans to start businesses or buy property. Many of the youth reacted to this oppression using violent means and many of them joined gangs. After many years of death and destruction, a peace treaty was called that gave Herc his big chance to bring the community together the best way he knew how... through music.

Herc sampled from what he had seen in Jamaica and threw a party where he added his own "spin", making it unique and authentic to folks in his community. Herc and his sister threw a back-to-school party, where he would borrow his dad's sounds system and play records for the youth who attended. He knew how to play the music that would keep the white, black, Asian, and Latin youth all interested. At one party, Herc realized that he could get all these youth to dance with the most passion when he played the "break beat" or instrumental break of the songs. He decided to experiment and see what could happen if he could extend this part of the record.

Herc bought two copies of the same record and set up two turntables. At the opportune time, Herc played the break beat and right when that was getting ready to end on one record, he cued up the other at the beginning of the break beat and created a loop. This loop or endless break allowed for so many more options for all in attendance. No one knew what to do to this super hype music, so learning from each other the Asian, Latin, black, and white youth began to exchange moves that would evolve into the break dance. This instrumental break also allowed folks to rhyme over the beat, which would evolve into MCing or rap. Herc had sampled from the past in what he saw happening in Jamaica, added his own flavor, and with the help of his community began to give birth to a new sound and culture that would be known as Hip-hop.



INNER Q.P.S. CHECK ONE TWO (QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS)

1. Does someone need to be famous to be a hero? Explain.

2. Name some of the folks you would consider your heroes?

3. What are some of these people's qualities?
(Example: brave, honest, loving, etc.)

4. List a time when you saw one of your heroes face a challenge.
What qualities stood out?

5. What are some qualities from your heroes that you want to add or
sample to your life? What could it look like?

GETTING CRITICAL

...CONT'D

6. What was Herc's legacy?

7. What did the "break" begin to do to people who had been separated?

8. What challenges does your community face?

9. How have they been addressed in the past?

10. How can you address them with your own spin or style?

DROPPING SCIENCE

(CRITICAL INFO)

"WHEN MY HEART CAN BEAT NO MORE I HOPE I DIE FOR A PRINCIPLE OR BELIEF THAT I HAVE LIVED FOR."

—Tupac Shakur

LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS

According the third law of thermodynamics: energy that is created will never cease to exist but will continue on forever. Constructed of millions of atoms our bodies are vessels that create huge amounts of energy. Consequently, the thoughts we have, the words we speak, and the actions we take put out energy to the world and universe that we live in. Since Einstein's theory of relativity proves energy is a form of mass, we know that who we are extends beyond just physical realms to include metaphysics. Plainly put, the energy we put out will affect the rest of the world. The question then is, what kind of energy will you put out? Take a look at your life. What do you want your legacy to be?

1. Let's say you knew you were going to live to be 85 years old. What would you want people to say was your legacy at your funeral?



MIG CHECK

...CONT'D

4. To you, what does it mean to represent our family name or this community?

5. Where would you like to see things in ten years for our family / this community?

6. In your opinion, what needs to happen to make this dream a reality?



REDEFINITION

(CREATIVE REFLECTION)

Write in the box below all of the names that society tries to use to box you in. Write around the box who you are really.

WHO I AM REALLY



GETTING UP (GRAFF WALL)

Draw a picture of you
leaving a **legacy**.

RADIO RETALIATION

FIRE IN THE SOUL

After listening to track 3 on the program CD, answer the following questions:

1. What does the rapper in the 1st verse say he wants said of him when “the curtains are drawn at the end of my days?”

2. What are the external things that are holding him back from realizing this dream?

3. The rapper in verse 2 talks about some of the negative things going on in his head in the first six bars of his verse, what are they?

4. What do you want to be said of you at the end of your days?

5. What are some of the external things trying to hold you back from living out this purpose?

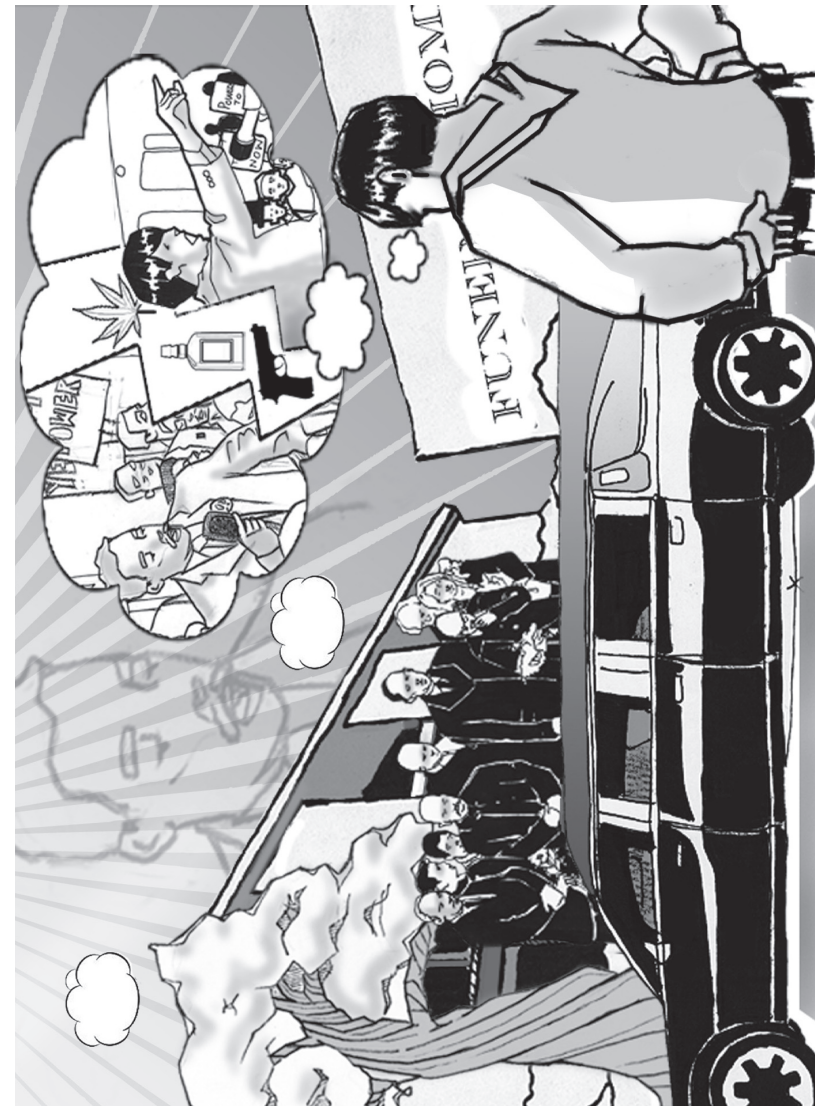
6. One acronym for F.E.A.R is: False-Evidence-Against-Reality. By exposing the false realities or fantasies in our heads, fear loses its power. What are some of the fantasies that come up in your head that try to hold you back?

7. The rapper in the second verse says: "its not the people around me or my environment only/ its l'm surrounded by people but deep down still feelin' lonely." Can you relate to this? Name a time where you felt surrounded by people but still felt lonely.

8. The rapper in the second verse says: " and I ain't soft little boss, l'm just the first to admit it/ it takes a confident, competent man to actually spit it/. Who do you think has more power; someone how can face his or her struggles or someone who can't? Why?

9. The rapper in second verse says: " I want to march through the margins until my spirit is whole, burn up the fear that I am filled with with all the fire in my soul." How could this relate to teens during Civil Rights sitting at white lunch counters to demand that people of color be served?

10. How can you sample from this example do something positive with the Fire in Your Soul?



PIC PERSPECTIVE

NOTES

1. What is happening in this picture?

2. Carlos is asking himself three questions: 1. What is my grandfather's legacy? 2. If I were to die tomorrow, what would they remember me by? 3. What would I want to my legacy to be? How do you see these questions being represented visually in the picture?

3. How is Carlos sampling from his grandfather's example in the picture? How is he remixing it and adding his own style?

4. Find the image of the tree. Why do you think the artists incorporated this into the picture? What does a tree have to do with the theme of Inner G.P.S?

5. An epiphany is a moment of clarity, where you see or realize something in a new way. When have you experienced an epiphany in your life?
