

# A VOICE AT THE TABLE

## Open Survey Data

### ABOUT

This data was compiled as part of a research initiative to explore Black womxn's experiences around affirmative space in Roxbury, MA. Responses as were filtered for participants identifying as Black/African-American, or Indigenous; and inclusive of woman, female, genderqueer, and non-binary, and gender identities. The survey was open for three weeks in May 2019 and available both online and in-person at a booth pop-up at Black Market in Nubian Square. Participation was open to all respondents, for which we received to 128 total responses from all ethnicities and gender identities. This research was sponsored through an internal research grant by Sasaki. To learn more about the project, please visit the research website: [avoicethatthetable.us](http://avoicethatthetable.us)

### CONTACT

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SASAKI

### 1. Total Responses

109 responses

### 2. What is your age group?

Value	Percent	Count
17 or younger	1.80%	2
18 to 24	16.50%	18
25 to 34	34.90%	38
35 to 44	12.80%	14
45 to 54	19.30%	21
55 to 64	10.10%	11
65+	4.60%	5

### 3. With which gender do you identify?

Value	Percent	Count
Woman	96.30%	105
Non-binary	0.90%	1
Genderqueer or gender nonconforming	0.90%	1
An identity not listed	1.80%	2

### 4. With which race/ethnicity do you identify?

*\*respondents can choose multiple answers*

Value	Percent	Count
Black/African-American	96.30%	105
American Indian/Alaska Native	6.40%	7
Hispanic/Latino	9.20%	10
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.90%	1
White/Caucasian	1.80%	2
An identity not listed	5.50%	6

## 5. What is your home zip code?

Zip Code	Percent	Count
02119	17%	18
02124	12%	13
02121	9%	10
02126	6%	7
02118	5%	5
02130	5%	5
02122	4%	4
02115	3%	3
02125	3%	3
02131	3%	3
02136	3%	3
02302	3%	3
01904	2%	2
02169	2%	2
02199	2%	2
02215	2%	2
02351	2%	2
02368	2%	2
01604	1%	1
01701	1%	1
01742	1%	1
01841	1%	1
01970	1%	1
02072	1%	1
02120	1%	1
02129	1%	1
02134	1%	1
02143	1%	1
02150	1%	1
02180	1%	1
02186	1%	1
02188	1%	1
02301	1%	1
02445	1%	1
03060	1%	1
48505	1%	1
02114	1%	1
02494	1%	1

## 6. What is your relationship to the Roxbury community?

Value	Percent	Count
Currently live in Roxbury	26.40%	28
Used to live in Roxbury, but have since moved	25.50%	27
Work/have worked in Roxbury	26.40%	28
Organize events/programs in Roxbury	22.60%	24
Neighborhood visitor (i.e. attending businesses, public spaces, or events)	47.20%	50
Other	13.20%	14

## 7. If you used to live in Roxbury, why did you move out?

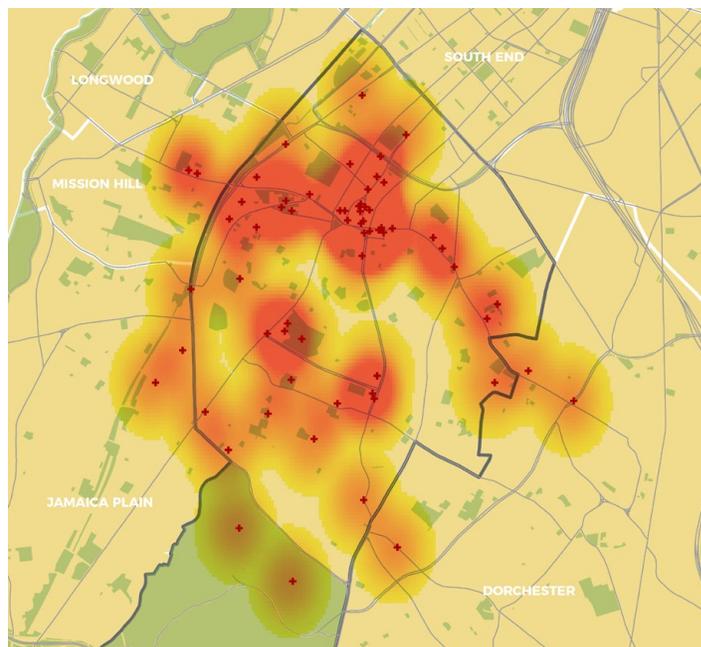
Response
The owner of my family's then home didn't renew the lease, and raised rent.
Rent was raised
I had went away to college and when I came back could only find affordable housing in mattapan.
For work
I was younger and therefore didn't have a choice. I would love to move back.
Change in household
My family lived in Roxbury before I could remember. My younger sister and I were displaced for personal reasons.
Parents moved
High rent
Because we sold our family house
I moved out of Roxbury in 2014 and have since lived in Jamaica Plain and Dorchester
My family purchased a house in Dorchester. Would have loved to stay in Roxbury but it's too expensive.
Cost less
Moved over 30 years ago to Randolph. More affordable housing at the time.
I used to live in Roxbury but moved because of the money issue. It is too expensive
I moved outside the USA
My family bought our first home in Dorchester.
I was young and living with my parents
Toxic home environment
I couldn't afford any apartments in the area. However it's where I feel most at home.
Parents
I went to college
gentrification
Got a new place and couldn't afford Roxbury
Could not afford to purchase a home here
Suitable living options

## 8. What is Roxbury's Greatest Strength?

Response	
Accessibility to the rest of the city and upcoming community businesses	If you are black and native to Boston you know in Roxbury you can find it all, food, hair stores, black owned businesses, malcom x's old stomping grounds, black history clothing stores and most importantly a sea of brown faces.
Amazing people, beautiful parks and educational institutions.	It's diversity, history, and representation, especially for black folks. It is a place where I feel seen and that I belong as compared to other predominantly white parts of the city. Also the parks/green spaces are nice.
Black (illegible)	It's families
Black owned businesses	It's history/legacy
Black people who can and should unite	It's incredibly rich cultural assets and it's history. There are so many untold stories in Roxbury. About diverse communities living together happily that no one ever talks about. It's greatest strength is its people.
Black people!	It's neighborhoods, transportation (Dudley Station), Old homes and buildings with beautiful design (very historic) Near Franklin Park Downtown
Blackness!	it's people and culture! Always a friendly face and feels like true community
Bring diversity together	It's people It's land It's rich history It's activist spirit The arts
Central location dead in the middle of the city of Boston--can get anywhere from the Bury	It's proximity to the city. It's the easiest place to commute to and from. I think it also is it's worse attribute.
Central location in the city and historic black community	Malcolm X and his legacy Black Market Black Business It's people and long term residents deterring to stay put. MasjidAlhamdulillah
Community	Many people that talk about diversity forget about the strengths that belong to homogenous communities of color. Roxbury still has spaces that are for, service, owned by, and are unapologetically Us.
Community Culture	my people
Community and retained cultures is an asset	Our people! But we can also be our weakness. So much culture and diversity.
Community bonding	People
Community events, awareness of self (i.e. Community)	people of color
Community pride	People Unity
Community, love	People who care and it's rich history of arts and activism.
Community. Lots of diversity and culture	Proximity to Boston
Cultural vitality and social capital; black-owned businesses; culturally relevant products i.e. food hair products	Resilience
Culture	Resources
Culture	Rich history, strong community, people potential
Culture	Roxbury's greatest strength is its rich diversity--present and past and the role it holds as a cultured compass to Boston's communities of color
Culture	Roxbury's strength is its history and community.
Culture and sense of community History	The ability to come together for great events like this (Black Market)
Culture, programming for POC, roots	The Black community in Roxbury is different from Any community in Boston. The history of Roxbury and the fight for better in your black community
Culture, strength, and talent	The black culture that fosters, celebrates, and elevates resilience through art education
Diverse community of color close to downtown	The Black people that live there.
Diversity History Location	The community is resilient.
Easy -- its Black roots, history and community	The community is strong with powerful voices that bring awareness
Everything is possible and strong no matter the consequence of it	The community really comes together and supports each other through everything!
Family	The culture
Food places	The culture and pride of black people and history! You gave us Bobby Brown!! Malcome X !!
Growing community	
History, ability to be diverse.	
History, legacy, and community resiliency	
How it really ties community and BIPOC together. It's cool because that's one of the more cultural spots of Boston. A lot of small businesses owned by BIPOC there!	
how we stick together and the deep reep rooted history	
I live on the border of Dorchester and Roxbury, I call both sections home.	
I love Roxbury for the community, even when you're not "from here" you feel like you belong.	
I love the history of the neighborhood. Walking around, you can feel the vibrancy in the people, the architecture of the buildings, the local restaurants and the street art.	

The culture and pride!
The culture, small businesses, mom and pop stores Location, history, and people!
The diversity and strong community involvement
The greater community
The history and African American community leaders in and out of Boston
The history and the people
The history of struggle
The long standing history and power of the Black community. It is geographically the heart of Boston and the strength and resilience of the Black community is inspirational.
The love and unity, along with the compassion
The name, community, people
The natives are passionate, community-focused and know the essence of Roxbury
The people
The people
The people
The people
The people and strong community. There are always people there for you.
The people have seen and experienced a great deal and would be perfect to provide insight to community leaders and officials on projects impacting their space
The people of color
The people, so much potential, just need the resources to tao into the energy
The residents
The sense of community and the togetherness. Also how it keeps true to its root.
The sense of pride
the strength in the bonds of the people who live there
The strong sense of community, strong diverse black community and I am so happy to be a part of it. My neighbors are amazing and wonderful reprieve from the rest of segregated Boston.
The support of community community iinvestment
Unity
Unity of black people
When people come together united in the spirit of one, we are strong!
Youth policing programs

## 9. What is one space you enjoy in Roxbury?



### Response

Ashur Restaurant
Black Market
Bruce Bolling Building
Church on Dudley Street
Daily Table
Department of Transitional Assistance
Dewitt Community Center
Dudley Café
Dudley Library
Dudley Square Area
Egleston Square Library
Essential Body Herbs
Family Homes
Fasika Café
Fort Hill Park
Franklin Park
Franklin Park Zoo
Frugal Bookstore
Grove Hall Senior Building
Haley House
Hibernian Hall
Ideals Children Services of Roxbury
Inner Sanctum
Joe Steak and Cheese
Kroc Center
Lgbt center Boston glass
Malcom X Park

Michael Biven's Park
Muesum of NCAAA, "Big Head Museum"
Northeastern University
Paige Academy
Parker Hill Branch Library
Reggie Lewis Center
Roxbury Community College, Media Center
Roxbury YMCA
Silver Slipper
Slades
Soleil
Southwest Corridor
Suya Joint
The Freedom House
Tropical Foods
Washington Park Mall
First Church In Roxbury
Africa is the Beginning Mural
St Mark Congregational Church
Horatio Harris Park
First Christian Union Church
Boston Youth Fund (BCYF Youth Engagement & Employment)
Heritage State Park
Melnea A. Cass Recreational Complex
John Eliot Square
AAMARP
Folsom Street Community Garden
Maxine's On Saint James
Shirley Eustis House
Kaba African Market
Madison Park Community Center
Roxbury Boys & Girls Club
Ugi's Subs
Grove Hall Community Center
Shelburne Community Center
826 Boston
Fairmount Innovation Lab
Fort Hill Bar & Grill
Mad Music Mill
Z Gallery
Faith's Naturals (Out of Neighborhood)

## 10. What are barriers to you attending events or community spaces?

Value	Percent	Count
I am too busy/have no free time.	39.80%	37
It is too expensive for me to attend.	12.90%	12
It is hard to find information about events/spaces.	53.80%	50
There is a lack of diversity/representation in the space.	24.70%	23
It is physically accessible (i.e. no places to sit or ramps to enter buildings).	2.20%	2
It is too far away for convenient travel.	19.40%	18
It is lacking childcare or child-friendly activities.	10.80%	10
Other	3.20%	3

## 11. Imagine your ideal vision for the Roxbury community. What exists in this vision that is currently not present?

Response
Clean streets, open grass areas to relax (outdoor community spaces), emergency cares, stores with fresh produce... all of these thing show investment in the community and it's people which we do not have. It's disheartening to see the amount of trash and abandoned lots in the city. There is so much potential but not enough monetary investment and effort.
Minority-run shops lining Dudley Square. - More micro-businesses and opportunities for entrepreneurs to grow from the ground up - Opportunities for property ownership and economic empowerment for residents - More afrocentric public art in the neighborhood - Leveraging art as community engagement
The wellness center I want to use - Social clubs without ethanol - Evening dining/ fine dining - women's clothing limited
A 3-level lounge to host a jazz club, dance lounge, and hookah bar
A Children's Museum, Skyzone and roller skating rink. It's terrible these spaces do not exist in Roxbury
A community in which everyone contributes to changing their community for the better and encourages each other to grow
A community space that is open 24/7 or close to it for people to eat, hang out, and network, etc
A green space with innovative areas that would allow for local talent to mix with imported talents. A place that has it's own art district that shows Boston is home to brown people and always has been. I would hope it's a place people would proudly say they are from and knowing the history of how this space became known as Roxbury. Bring back the Mecca!
A safe and cultural environment that celebrates black culture and identity. A space just for us
A socialist, anti-racist economy and social structure that prioritizes and gives power to the working class nationally oppressed people who live here
accessible community art spaces and more black businesses thriving
Active shopping centers, increased homeownership instead of displacement, more public art displays, increased art spaces
Advertised

Affordable housing
Affordable Housing
Affordable housing! Community center closer to Dudley station.
African centered pedagogy
All owned and operated by people with Melanin. People taking care of the space they occupy. Better food options. More opportunities for the community (employment and creativity)
All the amenities that are located in the South End, eating, shopping, drinking (lounges)
All the black people All the black business All black love! Healthy relationships!!!
All the vacant stores fronts are filled by diverse entrepreneurs who have ownership in the property and are dedicated well-being of the community as it is now.
An art center, visual and performing Art studio for local artists
Beautiful, diverse, strong, vibrant community w/ businesses owned by POC, excellent schools, housing we can afford with opportunities to build community wealth
Better access/transportation Frequency of the 42 bus Extend silver line, connect 1-3 4/5
Better housing
Better store shopping along with the mom and pop stores. Make sure the stores in this area don't leave.
Black ownership! I want to see more of it. People working together and more unity
Black people being able to stay in their community
Black people can afford to live and do business in the community
Black-owned business and more housing, better rents
Black-owned community and helping to heal the community with our culture
Block parties, annual art shows, more outdoor events
Boston as a whole has a history of segregation even within communities of people. As a transplant to Boston (I moved from Detroit 10 years ago), it can take time to feel like you've integrated into a community because of this. Also, there isn't any uniform platform that exists yet to bring people and information together due to a number of things: one being access to technology that takes into barriers such as age or language. I'm currently working on a website with friends that aims to do such that and find ways to overcome these obstacles and bring people together.
Choice of places: - have breakfast/coffee - a nice meal - listen to music - art/performance space
Clean community center, green spaces, decent housing for homeless, poor people, and elders. Public bath and restrooms for everyone
Dinner venues, speakeasy, shopping. Affordable housing. Land that is green, flowers, waterfalls, sculptures, etc.
Every black-owned business coming together as one
Expanding on the QPOC spaces that already exist. A Roxbury that values the prior contributions of Black folk and recognizes that this was ours first. Doesn't try to change the essence of the community. And affordable housing!
Hm, maybe more ownership of property. More venue spaces.
I vision a museum of Black people
I want the area to be like Black Wall Street--Black excellence in full
I want the violence to decrease and the community to get closer.
I'd love to see more housing opportunities, at the age of 21 I'm not sure how likely it will be for me to live here when I start my career

ideally, spaces in Roxbury would engage the community in conversations and connections with each other. To hear each others stories and to celebrate the history of this important place. Discover Roxbury is now closed and it was an important organization for telling Roxbury's History. The libraries could hold History days where the seniors and others in the area could come share stories so they don't get lost.
Improvement of physical green spaces and buy in of abandoned properties. I wish these abandoned, empty buildings would be owned by business owners that live in Roxbury! This would allow for opportunities for the community to grow and gain property value and income
Investment for our people by our people without the government
It could be a great arts and business district for POC, like Harlem for instance, but there are many abandoned businesses and homes. Those businesses and homes could be used to house people or house business people.
Less drug use. Current challenges are people on drugs. You cannot come out of your house without seeing someone on drugs
Less gentrification More black spaces
Less gun violence, more awareness to young children and most importantly less gentrification.
Less violence
Making events affordable to people that live in the community.
More art spaces, Beautiful public spaces, Open markets, Clean sidewalks, Murals and sculptures
More black businesses and affordable housing;livable wages.
More black-owned and female-led businesses
More black-owned businesses, lower cost of housing as well as buildings for leasing
more community gardens, youth cultural/arts center, summer dance festival with outdoor dance performances
More diverse opportunities for residents and homewonership
More foot traffic, diverse businesses, Juice bar, Ice cream shop Restaurants, dry cleaners
More green space, pools, more businesses, resources for homeless people with less opportunity than others
More green space! More consistent and well-publicized events
More homeowners and renters meeting on a regular basis to discuss community issues Current meetings should be more widely publicized to boost attendance
more housing and cleaner streets more jobs and training in the community
More Lgbt safe spaces. More grocery stores
More open spaces for community members to lead programs
More spaces for black folks specifically queer women of color
More teen clubs, specifically for teen outings/parties
More unity Safe spaces daily

More variety of thriving local businesses. Initiatives that support businesses within the Dudley area specifically. Dudley is the economic center of the community and it seems like businesses struggle to be successful here.
More ways for locals to get together and support each other
More. Lack owned business
Multi-dimensional space
My ideal of a better us new and improved is owning our own, growing our own food, and having our own wealth and homes
My vision is that we support small businesses and close the wealth gap
No one leaves that wants to stay (anti-displacement). Thriving businesses; supportive spaces that promote cultured expression Affordable and stable housing commercial space
Open garden space, outdoor events, strong community events, investment in public recreational spaces- food pop ups etc
Parks. Green open spaces without "purpose."
Poetry, radical tender black femme healing spaces and art all the time!
Programs that encourage and foster home ownership and culturally significant business building
Public and private spaces that are community owned and operated for business and culture that keeps people out in real life connecting and creating with others, and off of their cell phones
Really revamping Dudley Square. Honestly, I would push white people out of the " Egelston Square/almost JP area" because they are really coming from both sides and I hate it. This might sound segregated but Boston NEEDS an all black community. Only. We should be able to strive without other people.
Spread of wealth Black Wall Street
Studio spaces for artists! More public art! It would also be great to see a Roxbury Festival featuring the local businesses and nonprofits in the area.
That it remains a Black space. I would like to see upwardly mobile Black graduates moving, buying homes, creating businesses, etc.
The Black Wall street takes over a strip in Roxbury
The community having access to new developments and affordable rent
The support and concern for issues that only we can fix
Thriving businesses owned and operated by black people; Affordable housing; Welcoming and safe space for families; Fun and exciting spaces for entertainment
To be able to collectively use the resources in the community to take economic ownership
To stay black
Unity
Unity No Violence Patience Acceptance Understanding
Unity of people and community
We need more unity and harmony. The same offers as the suburbs have--such as schools, community activities, better housing options

## 12. What is one question you would pose to the community in Roxbury?

Response
Are you comfortable in your own space?
for us by us!!
How are we as a community going to buy back this area and make it grow?
How can I help?
How can outsiders help? Specifically "black gentifiers"
How can we become self-sustaining?
How can we combat the violence?
How can we come together and make this a safe space?
How can we come together more and begin to build collectively?
How can we connect rather than build in isolation?
How can we do better?
How can we fix the streets and take care of the spaces we have so we can keep them?
How can we get more people who are older and not benefiting from the developments involved?
How can we grow and build together?
How can we help you keep your spaces?
How can we leverage existing resources and build partnerships between stakeholders instead of operating in silos?
How can we reclaim our space in the Bury (A peace of the Rock)?
How can we unite to save the roots and heritage of this neighborhood?
How can you want someone else to change something that you can't change for yourself?
How do we address the need for a broader range of economic diversity to sustain the business community?
How do we create more community learning and healing spaces?
How do we embed ownership, education, and cultural spaces in the community?
How do we keep rents affordable so we don't run residents out of the neighborhood?
How do we not lose our culture and voice?
How do we stay united?
How do we stop gentrification?
How do we strategize and organize to create/build our collective vision for our community?
How do we survive and maintain our culture in the face of gentrification?
How much of your income do you spend on small businesses purchases?
I can't say right now
I would like us to always show support for one another any way that we can.
I'd want to hear from the elders about what they'd like to see restored from the community's past. If we don't recognize our past, we cannot build a strong future.
I'm not sure if I even want to ask anything. Who will answer me except myself?
If you wouldn't raise your children here, doesn't it mean it's time for change?

Is there a plan to ensure families that have lived and helped build the community can afford to stay and have a say in what businesses come in?
Let's keep our community clean
The world is changing do you think that we can?
Unity
What are some of the educational opportunities here for future teachers?
What are ways to get to know our neighbors and build a friendlier atmosphere?
What are your dreams? How can we help?
What can other communities learn from the way Roxbury residents have preserved and lost history and relevance?
What can we do to attract more minority businesses?
What can we do to create more unity?
What do you want for your children?
What does unity mean?
What future would you want for your children? How could you do your part to build it?
What happened?
What is your history and why don't you tell it's story.
What more do you have to lose? The community is shifting and the more people that come to the table, the more influence we'll have
What needs to change in Roxbury?
What prevents you from investing, pooling resources, and buying the community in which you live?
What will it take for you to contribute to the gentrification and policies that do not serve us and change them?
What would you do if you did not have to appease anyone out side of your self?
What's next?
When are we going to buy it up?
When are we going to get more affordable housing?
When are we going to offer more affordable housing?
Who have we inspired and who have we encouraged?
Who should invest in your communities? (When it comes to housing, urban renewal of spaces, and development of youth programs)
Who/what is standing in the way of what is needed to own your space? How do we move it/them so that inclusive and proud community can be created? But if the question is to be asked, let there be people to put real and permanent action behind the answers/solutions.
Why are African American folks aged 30-55 being pushed out of Roxbury?
Why are we allowing gentrification to happen without actively struggling against it?
Why are we treating our earth as if it is a trash can?
Why aren't the Black churches doing anything about helping their congregation members to keep their homes? I feel they would be instrumental in this fight against gentrification.
Why aren't there more black-owned businesses?
Why aren't we taking care of our public spaces? There are so many beautiful parks how do we get the local government or leaders to invest in the restoration of these areas? Can we have running places ? And community yoga programs?
Why can't we work together to build each other?
Why do we fight and bicker with each other?
Why do we not invest in our community, our home?

Why don't we have more indoor spaces for children to play, exercise and learn.
Why is it alright for us to allow gentrification?
Why isn't there more funding available specifically for women-owned and black business
Why not cast a big net and think big?
Why yall food so good?
Why you so far away?

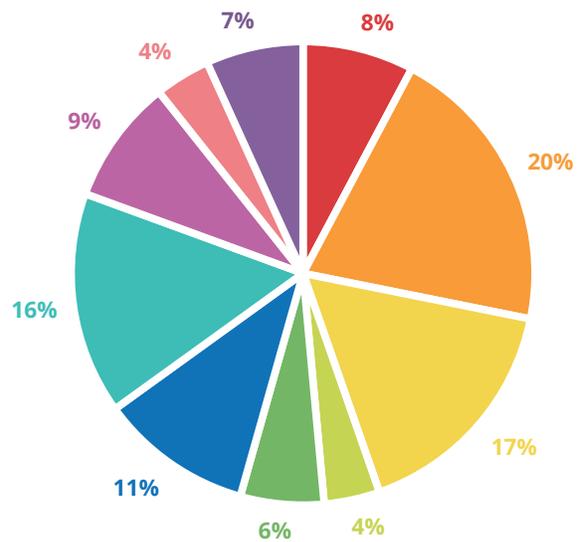
### 13. What is your superpower?

Response
Ability to connect with others
Ability to listen and engage
Able to distill big complicated terms so that everyone can understand.
Affirming friend
AM
Ambition
Artistic vision
Assessing others' needs and helping them connect to the resources they need and their sense of self
Being a black woman
Being able to connect with others.
Being myself
bing me
blackness
Boldness with love
Bounce back magic
Brain
Brainstorming
Caring
church
communication
compassion
Compassion
compassion
compassion
Connecting
Connection
Creating opportunities to learn
Creative
Creativity
Culture/Heritage
Emotional intelligence
Empathetic
Empathy
Empathy
Empathy

Empathy
energy fixer
Exploration
Forgiveness
Friendly
Good judge of character
graciousness
Hard worker
healer
healing
Helping others
Humility
I get things done and can ride any wave
I have them all I am a goddess
Intensity
Intuition
Intuition
Kindness
Knowledge
laughter
Leadership
Listening
Love
Love
Love, Divine
Loving our people and getting along with them
Magic
Make everyone feel like they're at home
melanin
My heart!
my personality
My shine! Love for the people
My smile
My voice
My voice
organization
Organization and event planning
passion
Patience
Patience
Personable
Player
Power to bring people together
Powerful
Recuperation
Resilience
Resilience
Resilience

Resourceful, connecting with others
Smile and my ability to connect with all people
strength
Strength, resilience
Stubbornness and passion
Super vision
supporting and networking
synthesizing ideas
Talking
Tenacity
The ability to create
To tap the pulse of the people
vigilance
Visionary
Voice
vulnerability
Wisdom

**Choose a color comes to mind when you hear the word "home"?**



Value	Percent	Count
Red	8%	8
Orange	20%	21
Yellow	17%	17
Lime Green	4%	4
Green	6%	6
Blue	11%	11
Turquoise	16%	16
Violet	9%	9
Pink	4%	4
Purple	7%	7