

# My Kwanzaa Prayer

I give thanks to the Creator for all the blessings of this earth. I ask that the Spirit of Kwanzaa be infused into every aspect of my daily life. May the light of the seven candles illuminate my daily affairs and guide me into fulfillment of my true potential. May I always remember my Ancestors with reverence and love. May I benefit from their wisdom and strength as I seek to preserve and continue the heritage they left me

May the Nguzo Saba become beacons for me to live my life in service, humility, grace and strength.

## Umoja

*Unity – Loyalty*

I will strive to grow closer to my true self, my family, my friends, my community, and the brotherhood of all mankind while I widen my circle of loyalty and love.

## Kujichagalia

*Self-determination – Realization*

Empower me to realize my dreams of being and becoming the best for myself and my people. I will base my dreams on who I am and what I can be. I will work my body, my mind and my spirit to make my dreams come true.

## Ujima

*Collective Work and Responsibility – Community*

In all ways, I will strive to recognize and fulfill my responsibility to myself and to those around me. May I find strength in the performance of my duty.

## Ujamaa

*Cooperative Economics – Sharing*

May I give generously of all that I have to those who can benefit from it the most. May I be receptive to, and utilize, the resources and opportunities which will come to me in return.

## Kuumba

*Creativity – Resourcefulness*

May I keep an open mind to new ideas and ways of living. Let me bring to each possibility my own unique creativity. May what I produce be something which expresses the essence of what, and who, I am.

## Imani

*Faith – Spirituality*

I will always reach out to a higher source. That will be the groundwork for all that I think and all that I do in this physical plane. May I grow in the knowledge that I exist as part of the universe.

## Nia

*Purpose – Commitment*

May I have an increased understanding of my purpose in life, and may all of my energies be constantly directed to that end. May I take full advantage of every opportunity to develop my human potential for love, service and fulfillment.

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# KWANZAA

"Meaning First"

December 26 — January 1

## AN AFRICAN CELEBRATION

Kwanza is a word meaning "First" or in this case it signifies the First Fruits. Celebration of harvesting the first crops or first fruits is traditional in Africa.

On each day of the week of Kwanza, when asked, "Habari gani", the answer will not be "Njema", but one of the first, second, onto the 7th day, i.e. on the fifth day if someone asks "Habari gani", the answer would be Nia, which is the fifth principle.

The Mkeka is a straw mat on which all other items are placed.

The Kinara is a candle-holder which holds seven candles, and presents the original stalk from which we all sprang.

The seven candles represent the Seven Principles

The ear of corn represents the offspring or produce (the Children) of the stalk (the father of the house).

## THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES (Nguzo Saba)

1. **UMOJA (UNITY)** To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.
2. **KUJICHAGULIA (SELF-DETERMINATION)** To define ourselves, name ourselves, and speak for ourselves, instead of being defined and spoken for by others.
3. **UJIMA (COLLECTIVE WORK AND RESPONSIBILITY)** To build and maintain our community together and to make our brothers and sisters problems our problems and to solve them together.
4. **UJAMAA (CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMICS)** To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit together from them.
5. **NIA (PURPOSE)** To make as our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. **KUUMBA (CREATIVITY)** To do always as much as we can, in the way we can in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than when we inherited it.
7. **IMANI (FAITH)** To believe with all our heart in our parents, our teachers, our leaders, our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.