

# AN INTRODUCTION TO TRUTH, RACIAL HEALING AND TRANSFORMATION

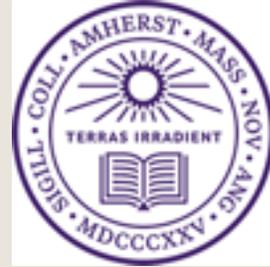
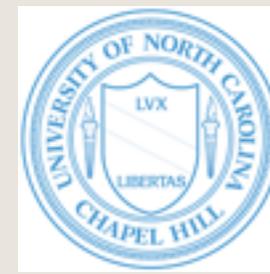
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Millsaps College | Jackson, MS

# SOME THINGS ABOUT DEMI



# OUTLINE

What is  
TRHT?



Transformati  
on vs  
Reconciliatio  
n



The TRHT  
Framework  
and  
Principles



Implementati  
on



AAC&U  
Campus  
Centers

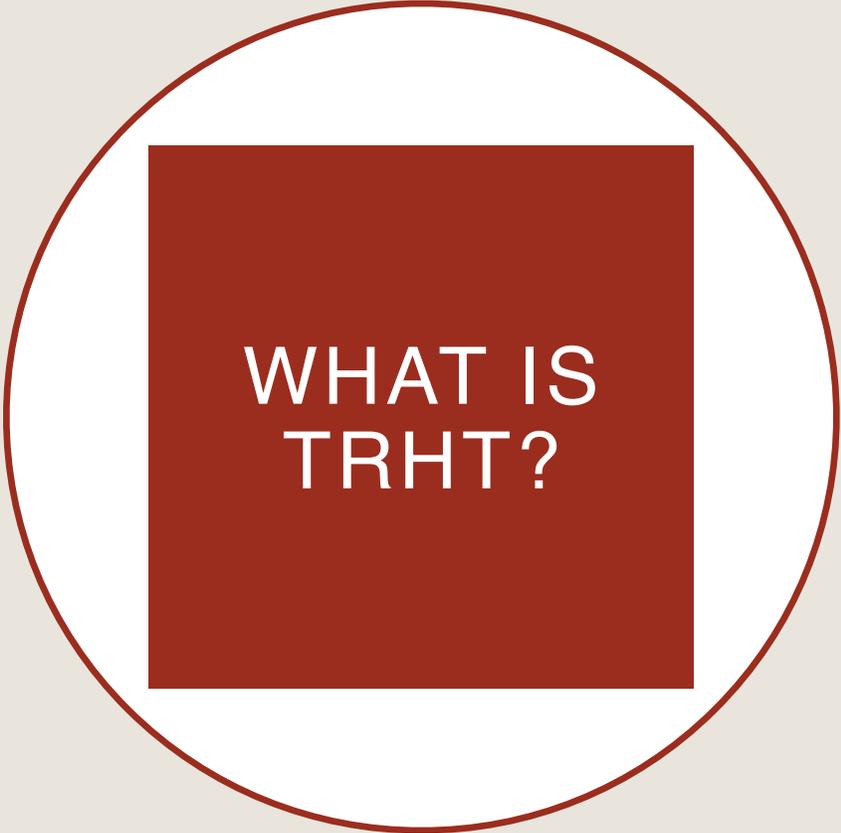
*“... to unearth and jettison the deeply embedded belief in a hierarchy of human value that sustains racism, to recognize the history and continued trauma resulting from that belief, and to create policy solutions that will sustain healing and structural change ...”*



THE TRHT  
GOAL

## WHAT IS TRHT?

The **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**-led Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise is a multi-year, national and community-based effort to engage communities, organizations and individuals from multiple sectors across the United States in **racial healing** and addressing present-day inequities linked to historic and contemporary beliefs in a hierarchy of human value. This absurd belief, which has fueled racism and conscious and unconscious bias throughout American culture, is the perception of inferiority or superiority based on race, physical characteristics or place of origin.



## WHAT IS TRHT?

TRHT seeks to unearth and jettison the deeply held, and often unconscious, beliefs created by racism – the main one being the belief in a “hierarchy of human value.”

FROM  
THE  
TRHT  
SUMMIT  
(12-2016)



# THE TRHT APPROACH

- Examines how belief systems became embedded in our society, both its culture and structures, and then works with communities to design and implement effective actions that will permanently uproot it.
- Marshals individual, local, public and private resources to dismantle systemic, structurally-based patterns of discrimination at the [community], municipal, county, state and federal levels.

## MOVE BEYOND RACIAL HIERARCHY

- Since the first European settlers arrived on our shores centuries ago, American culture has placed the relative worth of whites above all others, and at times violently enforced this through annihilation, enslavement, colonization and cultural genocide.
- The adopted and embedded mindset and belief has restricted the quality of life for people of color, while limiting opportunities for success and limiting the realization of the full potential of our democracy.
- TRHT will move the country beyond racial hierarchy and its effects. The TRHT is a coordinated, multi-sector effort that centers on authentically exploring current and past racial realities and **implementing practices, policies and principles** resulting in a respect for all humanity that will be evidenced in our patterns of behavior and societal structure.

## DIFFERENT FROM TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

- The TRHT is an adaptation of the internationally recognized Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) models instrumental in resolving deeply rooted conflicts around the world.
- The TRC process is usually implemented by countries in leadership transition. Each process has varied, but typically involves public and private activities designed to uncover and deepen the understanding of tragedies and/or human rights violations.
- The approach has also been used to address historic wrongs in Australia, Canada and a few communities in the United States.
- TRCs were fundamentally focused on **restitution**, the TRHT is focused on **healing and truth telling** to jettison the belief in racial hierarchy.
- *Unless the central belief system that fuels racial, ethnic, and place of origin inequities is challenged and changed, societal progress cannot be sustained over time.*

# TRC EXAMPLE

## MAINE WABANAKI-STATE CHILD WELFARE AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (JUNE 2012)

- The commission was charged with determining what had happened, what is happening and what needs to happen in regards to Maine child welfare practices affecting Wabanaki people.
- It was an historic agreement to uncover and acknowledge the truth, while creating opportunities to heal and learn from the truth. The mandate also sought to determine how to best operate a child welfare system that would benefit Wabanaki children.
- It was the first truth and reconciliation effort within U.S. territory collaboratively developed between First nations and a state government.
- Wabanaki and State representatives collaborated for more than a decade on improving the child welfare system for Wabanaki children, but problems continued. The parties realized that they needed to unearth the story of Wabanaki people's experiences in order to fully uphold the spirit, letter and intent of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in a way that is consistent with the law and promotes healing.

# TRC EXAMPLE

## MAINE WABANAKI-STATE CHILD WELFARE AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (JUNE 2012)

- The TRC spent more than a year collecting stories about the experience of Wabanaki children and families in the child welfare system in an effort to support the healing process by documenting the truth.
- Confirmed that the Wabanaki people – Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet and Micmac – experienced trauma across generations, beginning with the taking of their land, lives, children, language and spiritual practices.
- In 2015, the commission final report determined that Wabanaki children entered foster care at an average of five times the rate of non-Native children.
- The report concluded that to improve Native child welfare, the state and the tribes must continue to confront:
  - Underlying racism still embedded in state institutions and the public.
  - Ongoing impact of historical trauma, also known as intergenerational trauma, on Wabanaki people that influences the well-being of individuals and communities.
  - Differing interpretations of tribal sovereignty and jurisdiction that make encounters between the tribes and the state contentious

# TRANSFORMATION BEYOND RECONCILIATION

Reconciling connotes restoration of friendly relations – “reuniting” or “bringing together again after conflict.”

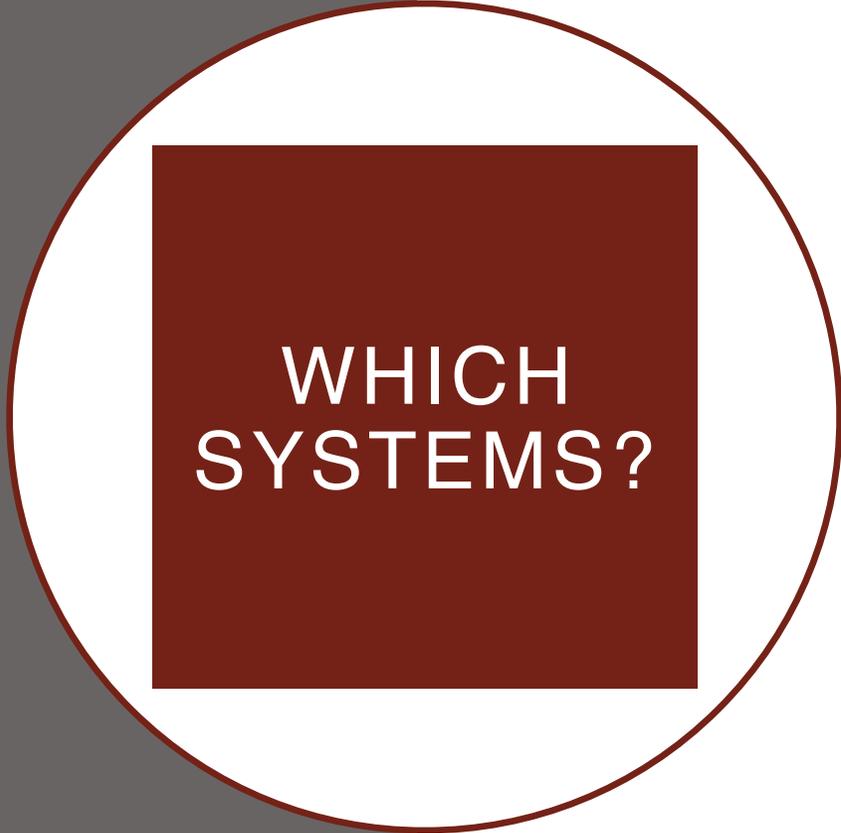
## **WE NEED TRANSFORMATION**

- The U.S. was conceived in the Constitution and built on this belief in racial hierarchy, a collective national consciousness that has dominated the educational, economic, social and legal discourse for centuries.
- Resistance and episodic movements through history have contributed to measurable progress.
- TRHT will provide needed, collective commitment and long-term determination to embrace a new narrative for the country, a belief in equal humanity for all Americans.

# WHAT WILL BE TRANSFORME D?

The transformation includes:

- A new narrative about who we are as a country and as interconnected individuals. We must learn to love and care for one another as equal in value and have a new story expressing our common and shared humanity.
- Healing practices to accelerate human capacity for truly embracing one another as part of our sacred interrelated and interconnected humanity; increased individual and collective capacity for building authentic relationships across and within perceived racial groups are grounded in appreciation, respect, trust and reverence.
- A redesign of the primary systems or avenues and methodologies through which the belief in racial hierarchy has been perpetuated and sustained.



# WHICH SYSTEMS?

- Separation
  - Residential segregation, colonization, isolation and resulting concentrated poverty due to lack of access the basics needed to thrive (health care, education, safety, etc.).
- Law
  - Legal systems and public policies, both criminal and civil, through which the belief in hierarchy has been and continues to be enforced at local and national levels.
- Economy
  - Practices and policies created to sustain hierarchy.

# TRHT NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

## TRHT NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

### NARRATIVE CHANGE

Entertainment Industry

Journalism & News Media

Digital Media

Publishing

School Curricula

Cultural Institutions

Monuments, Parks

### RACIAL HEALING AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

#### SEPARATION

*Segregation, Colonization & Concentrated Poverty*

- Decolonization
- Housing
- Health
- Arts & Culture
- Immigration & Migration
- Education & Development

#### LAW

*Civil, Criminal & Public Policies*

- Law Enforcement
- Safety
- Criminal Justice
- Juvenile Justice
- Civil Justice
- Mass Incarceration
- Immigration & Migration
- Education & Development

#### ECONOMY

*Structured Inequality & Barriers to Opportunity*

- Employment
- Labor
- Workforce
- Wealth
- Immigration & Migration
- Education & Development

# TRHT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- There must be an accurate recounting of history, both local and national.
  - An atmosphere of forgiveness must be cultivated, and all people must be encouraged to tell their stories without fear of recrimination and with a sense that they will be heard.
- A clear and compelling vision, accompanied by a set of ambitious but achievable goals, both long-term and short-term, must be developed, and progress must be regularly assessed.
- The process must be expansive and inclusive in all respects, and there must be a deep and unyielding commitment to:
  - Understanding the different cultures, experiences and perspectives that coexist in a community;
  - Recognizing and acknowledging the interdependence of the variety of approaches to seeking enduring racial equity;
  - Reaching out to nontraditional allies in order to broaden support for meaningful change and
  - Giving every participant an opportunity to tell his or her story in a respectful and supportive setting.

# TRHT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The process of healing requires the building of trust and must be viewed as a “win-win” process.
  - In the process everyone feels acknowledged, is to give everyone, both the oppressed and the oppressors, an opportunity to tell their stories and share the various emotions – anger, rage, pain, fear, frustration – that have animated their behavior. The only requirement is that everyone must tell his or her story with deep integrity and listen with respect to the stories of others.
- There will be a commitment to some form of reparative or restorative justice and to policies that can effectively foster systemic change.
  - Empty rhetoric without action, of course, does not work.
  - Be prepared to explore options, enact policies and adequately fund activities that will help bridge racial divisions and narrow disparities.

# TRHT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- A thoughtful and comprehensive communications strategy will be designed to keep the entire community informed, even those who are neither involved in, nor supportive of, the process.
- Openness and transparency are essential to give people confidence that they are receiving an accurate picture of the process.
- There will be a broadly understood way of dealing with the tensions that inevitably arise.

# APPLYING THE TRHT FRAMEWORK

- The community will start by reaching an understanding of the predominant factors and conditions supporting the racial hierarchy and blocking progress.
- Through a series of TRHT Framework questions, participants begin to:
  - Examine the problems plaguing the community,
  - What progress may already be underway and
  - Identify potential allies who can engage in the TRHT process.



## FRAMEWORK QUESTIONS

- What is the vision of your community after racial hierarchy is jettisoned?
- What are the current realities of your community, and how did you get here?
  - History + current realities
- What are the key leverage points for change in your community?
  - Who has the power to bring about change? Who will benefit from the change?
- Who are the key stakeholders and beneficiaries not at the table?
- What specific actions can be taken to achieve your vision of a community without racism?

# TRUTH → NARRATIVE CHANGE → TRANSFORMATION

- Understanding the Dominant Narrative and Community
  - Each community has a unique racial history. Before implementing the TRHT, the unique racial history of your community must be understood. You should research and write a **TRHT Community Assessment**, which will document the community's racial history and be a valuable document for shaping and implementing your local TRHT.
- Beliefs won't change if people continue to get the same messages that reinforce the hierarchy.

# RACIAL HEALING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Healing sessions:
  - Play a significant role in the transformation of communities,
  - Help TRHT participants build relationships through honest dialogue,
  - Build trust based on shared experiences and
  - Generate the energy, will and creativity to heal hearts and find lasting, creative solutions for racial injustice.

# EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY HEALING

In 2004, the **William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation** (Jackson, MS) helped form the Philadelphia Coalition, a multi-racial group in Philadelphia, MS, that organized a 40th anniversary commemoration of three civil rights workers (Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner) murdered in Neshoba County, Mississippi, by Ku Klux Klan members. Among the coalition's concrete results was passage of a bill mandating civil rights education be included in the state's public schools. Today, their Welcome Table program brings together diverse groups with storytelling and relationship building as a prerequisite for addressing structural change and realizing racial healing.



# CHANGE, EVALUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Develop a Theory of Change
  - Sharing what change is sought by the TRHT process, and how that change will be achieved.
  - Confront the truth of how belief in a hierarchy of human value has shaped us as individuals, our communities and institutions, and through racial healing, will transform legal, economic and social systems to create a society absent racial hierarchy.
- Develop an Evaluation Plan
- Develop a Sustainability Plan

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## ANATOMY OF A TRUTH STATEMENT

- What can be observed as a challenge that needs to be addressed in the areas of racial segregation, economy and the law?
- How did this issue arise, or what does it stem from?
- How should the issue be addressed?
- Who/what will be engaging in the work?
- What will the community, organization, individual or tribal nation look like when the effort is successful?

## SAMPLE TRUTH STATEMENT

- Most employers in our community have not hired ethnic minority candidates for any executive leadership positions in more than 20 years.
- A recent study has shown that hiring decisions are based on race.
- In order to foster more equitable opportunities for professionals of color, the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations will be establishing a workshop series and incentives for local employers to hire executive-level racial/ethnic candidates.

## FOUR KEY EVALUATION DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Identify the purpose or use of the evaluation results.
- Build buy-in to the evaluation process and anticipation of the results with key stakeholders.
- Foster trust in the data and information used but ask for feedback early in the process on the approach to collecting data.
- Be very conscious and aware at every step in the process of the implicit biases at play in the interpretation of any information or data.

## AAC&U AND TRHT

- AAC&U is partnering with higher education institutions to develop Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) Campus Centers to prepare the next generation of strategic leaders and thinkers to break down racial hierarchies and dismantle the belief in the hierarchy of human value.
- The TRHT Campus Centers have developed and are implementing visionary action plans with the aim of moving the needle on the transformative goal of erasing structural barriers to equal treatment and opportunity on campuses, in our communities, and for our nation around the pillars of the TRHT Framework: narrative change, racial healing and relationship building, separation, law, and economy.
- The goal of this effort is the development of at least 150 self-sustaining, community-integrated TRHT Campus Centers

AAC&U  
TRHT  
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# FIRST TEN TRHT CAMPUS CENTERS



Austin Community College (TX)



Brown University (RI)



Duke University (NC)



Hamline University (MN)



Millsaps College (MS)



Rutgers University – Newark (NJ)



Spelman College (GA)



The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina (SC)



University of Hawai'i at Manoa (HI)



University of Maryland Baltimore County (MD)

## 15 ADDITIONAL CAMPUS CENTERS

- Adelphi University (NY)
- Agnes Scott College (GA)
- Andrews University (MI)
- Big Sandy Community and Technical College (KY)
- Dominican University (IL)
- George Mason University (VA)
- Marywood University (PA)
- Otterbein University (OH)
- Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville (IL)
- University of Arkansas – Fayetteville (AR)
- University of California – Irvine (CA)
- The Charlotte Racial Justice Consortium (University of North Carolina Charlotte, Johnson C. Smith University, and Queens University of Charlotte) (NC)
- University of Cincinnati (OH)

# MILLSAPS COLLEGE VISION SUMMARY

We envision a campus where students, faculty, and staff are aware of and thoughtful about our shared history, where this knowledge of the struggle for racial equality translates into a commitment to eradicate vestiges of racism in the status quo and prevent regressions toward racism in the future, and where members of our campus community and the broader local community lead the work in dismantling racial hierarchies and transforming existing racial narratives to reflect truth and promote healing.

# GETTING STARTED

- It is strongly recommended that each TRHT process begin with narrative change.
  - What is your baseline community narrative?
  - How do you know that is your narrative?
  - What makes it true or untrue?
  - How do you plan to collect individual narratives?
  - Who are the constituent groups who need to be part of the narrative development process?

## SEGMENT OF A SAMPLE NARRATIVE

Like the communities that surround it, Millsaps College, a private college in Jackson, Mississippi, has had a long and complicated history regarding race. Millsaps once moved its main entrance away from the predominantly black community that surrounds it towards a more visible thoroughfare, but it also played a role in the Civil Rights Movement during the Jim Crow era, when Black and white students were prohibited from interacting with each other. To get around these restrictions, white students from Millsaps met in secret with black students from nearby Tougaloo College.

## MAPPING THE THEORY SUPPORTING A TRHT PROCESS



# POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Narrative  
Collection  
and Mapping



Experience a  
Healing  
Circle



Trained to  
Facilitate a  
Healing  
Circle



# DIALOGUE AND QUESTIONS

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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