

National Day of Racial Healing – A Call to Action **January 17, 2017**

What is Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation? The W.K. Kellogg Foundation-led Truth, Racial Healing and 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. The TRHT is an adaptation of the widely recognized Truth and Reconciliation models instrumental in resolving deeply rooted conflicts around the world.

What is the National Day of Racial Healing? It is the call to action to help mobilize communities, organizations and individuals across the United States in support of Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation. Overall, communities, organizations and individuals are being asked to 1) proclaim a new narrative that refutes the ideology of a hierarchy of human value and replaces it with the scientifically proven assertion that we are all descendants of one human ancestry endowed by our creator with the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; 2) acknowledge that there are still deep racial divisions in America that must be overcome and healed and 3) commit to engaging representatives from all racial, ethnic, religious and identity groups in genuine efforts to increase understanding, communication, caring and respect for one another and the perceived other.

What is racial healing? Racial healing is the process of engaging communities, organizations and individuals to uproot and jettison the antiquated belief in the hierarchy of human value and its consequences. The healing comes through building authentic relationships and increasing the capacity for trust, honesty and collective action within and across diverse groups in order to create policies and practices that foster a more equitable society.

What does racial healing look like and why is it important? Racial healing is above all else an experience. It is an experience that can happen at individual, community and organizational levels. It requires creating a safe and sacred space for sharing and listening to relevant stories – stories that relate to the experiences of resilience or harms associated with the belief in a hierarchy of human value. The racial healing process is supported when that safe space involves the following:

- Diverse people representing many racial, ethnic, gender, professional and social groups
- A circle process or formation, which temporarily suspends the notions of hierarchy, and
- Facilitators who are grounded in an intention to honor, respect and extend love and compassion to all who are engaged, without judgement

The experience of racial healing establishes greater levels of trust that is needed for developing authentic relationships and creating opportunities for sharing deeper levels of truth.