

# Truth & Reconciliation

Developed to accompany

## Facing the Truth with Bill Moyers



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WITH BILL MOYERS  
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PHOTOS FROM FACING THE TRUTH WITH BILL MOYERS

What can **America** learn from South Africa?

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This guide can also be downloaded free of charge from the Web at [www.wnet.org/facingthetruth](http://www.wnet.org/facingthetruth).

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Dear Viewer,

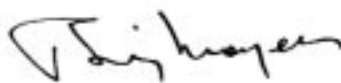
At first glance you might think *Facing the Truth* is just a horror story, another litany of the awful human rights violations of which there have been so many in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is hard to understand why people do to each other what we see in the film.

But *Facing the Truth* is not just about horror; it is also about healing. South Africa is attempting to show the world how a shattered nation can become whole again.

The basic story is familiar to you: South Africa's long history of officially sanctioned racial separation – apartheid – finally was overturned in 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected president in the country's first truly democratic election. Part of the negotiated settlement was the appointment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to get as complete a picture as possible of the cruelties that had occurred during apartheid. "We needed to acknowledge that we had a horrendous past," said Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu, who chaired the Commission. For two years, the Commission listened as people from all over South Africa poured out their wrenching stories. "Our capacity for evil is great," Archbishop Tutu said. "We were festering. It was necessary to open the wound to pour in a balm. It will be a long process, but it will be a true healing."

When I was there filming the documentary, I saw hope on the faces of people whose stories you will hear in the film. I saw courage, wisdom, and incredible magnanimity.

We have a lot to learn from South Africa, and while this study guide is intended to provide background information about *Facing the Truth*, my hope is that viewers and discussion groups will be encouraged to relate the South African experience to our own. During our filming I kept seeing a mirror image of America's past and our continuing struggle with the legacy of slavery, segregation, and discrimination. We can learn from South Africa that the past need not hold us hostage any longer. As you watch the documentary, please think about its implications for facing the truth in our own lives, communities, and country.



Bill Moyers



# INTRODUCTION

FACING THE TRUTH WITH BILL MOYERS tells the dramatic story of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC offers amnesty to people who committed human rights violations during the apartheid era and can show a political motive for doing so. In exchange, perpetrators must tell the truth publicly, testifying about their knowledge of state-sponsored torture, kidnappings, and assassinations.

The program reveals the powerful and disturbing stories of perpetrators, victims, and family members, and describes the complexities of life in South Africa today. It raises important questions about justice and reconciliation in South Africa, while offering hope for the future.

This Guide will provide viewers with background information on the program and help individuals and community groups examine questions of race and reconciliation in the United States. We have provided suggestions, including a four-part workshop, which community groups may use to conduct discussions about reaching toward racial reconciliation in the U.S.

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### Photocopying and Taping Rights

Educators are encouraged to photocopy and distribute this guide. They may tape the program and use it for one year after each broadcast.

FACING THE TRUTH WITH BILL MOYERS premieres on PBS stations March 30, 1999 (check local listings).

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guide includes the following:

- m **Essays** by two prominent journalists that examine questions about race, history, violence, and justice in the United States
- m **Profiles** of four people in the program whose stories serve as starting points for discussion in workshops
- m **Workshops** that provide ideas for organizing group discussions
- m **Notes for Facilitators** on how to conduct FACING THE TRUTH workshops (Please see Workshop Suggestions)
- m A **South Africa background page** with a timeline of historic events leading to the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a description of the TRC, and quotes from South African leaders on the meaning of reconciliation
- m **Resources**, including organizations and Web sites, that may be helpful for learning more about issues discussed in FACING THE TRUTH and that can offer guidance for facilitating workshops.

### Workshop Suggestions

- m The workshops outlined in the guide may be organized and planned for professional, religious, community, or study groups interested in exploring issues of personal growth, racism, and reconciliation. The goal is to bring a diverse group of participants together to share different perspectives and cultural experiences. Workshops may be held in organizations, offices, community centers, classrooms, or private homes.
- m A recommended format for each workshop is included. The duration and spacing of sessions may be modified to meet the needs of the participants.
- m Facilitators may draw upon their prior experiences of working with diverse groups on issues of race, multiculturalism, community building, or experiential learning.
- m Various organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and local Human Resource Commissions may offer workshops or resources to enhance or develop facilitation skills. Some of these are listed on the back cover.

# The Casualties of Denial

by Bob Herbert



FRED R. CONRAD

*Bob Herbert is a columnist for The New York Times.*

**Carlton Brown was 28** years old when he was picked up in Brooklyn for a minor traffic violation on a summer afternoon in 1992. He should never have been arrested at all. A summons would have sufficed. He mentioned that to the police officers. They roughed him up for mouthing off. He expressed his displeasure at that, too.

What happened next was the kind of atrocity you would more readily associate with South Africa under apartheid. Mr. Brown was thrown to the ground, and his hands were cuffed behind his back. He was dragged to a patrol car and driven to a local stationhouse. Along the way, he was slapped and cursed and humiliated.

At the stationhouse Mr. Brown was dragged from the car and hustled up the steps and into a foyer. Still handcuffed, he had difficulty keeping his feet. He asked the officers to ease up, to let him regain his balance. Their response as they approached the glass doors at the far end of the foyer was to yank up on Mr. Brown's handcuffed arms, which forced his head down. The officers then aimed Mr. Brown at the closed doors and shoved him violently forward. His head was driven into the bullet-proof, double-plated glass with the kind of force one would expect from a battering ram. The glass shattered.

## The Stories We Tell

by Alex Kotlowitz



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*Alex Kotlowitz is the author of The Other Side of the River and There Are No Children Here.*

**Not too long ago**, a colleague of mine, an African-American woman, stopped me in the hallway and, with an edge to her voice, challenged, "Why don't you write about your own people?" It took me aback, but what she was suggesting, I realized later, was that if I was to write about race, I needed to write as much about my own community as I did about the black community. She was right. Race, after all, is a social construct, all about who we are vis-à-vis each other, and yet most whites stroll







GARY PIERRE-PIERRE / NYT

Abner Louima, 1997

Rodney King, 1991



CORBIS

The result was catastrophic. Mr. Brown's cervical vertebrae were compressed and some were fractured, causing severe damage to his spinal cord. He was instantly and permanently paralyzed from the chest down.

The officers took Mr. Brown inside and tried to sit him in a chair. He could not remain upright. The officers found that amusing. They laughed. They refused to remove the handcuffs. It was only after emergency medical personnel arrived that the cuffs were removed and Mr. Brown was taken to a hospital.

Stories about atrocities by the police and others in the criminal justice system come across my desk not by the dozens but by the hundreds. And in virtually every instance there has been

the sidelines or, worse yet, walk away as if race doesn't matter.

I spent the better part of four years in and out of two small Michigan towns – one white, the other black – reporting on the mysterious death of a 16-year-old African-American boy. People often ask me – let me clarify that, white people often ask me – how I was received in Benton Harbor, the black community. How did they feel about me writing a book, about telling their stories? I chuckle to myself, for it was my own race, the people in St. Joseph, who gave me the harder time. Blacks were not only willing, they were eager, to share their experiences. But their white neighbors across the river usually wanted to know why I was writing such a

negative book. Or, more to the point, why was I making such an issue of race? For white Americans, race does not impose on our daily routines; it does not pose a sense of urgency. Subsequently, most white Americans sit up and take notice only in moments of crisis – as in the Rodney King beating or the O.J. Simpson trial or the death of this 16-year-old boy – and by then it's usually too late. Even the best of people have already chosen sides. Moreover, in those long pauses of silence, we build up myths about each other, myths often rooted in a combination of fact and fiction.

These myths often serve a purpose. When I asked people in

## The Casualties of Denial

(continued)

some effort by government officials to conceal the matter, to cover it up, in whole or in part. Nothing even close to the full measure of the horror ever reaches the public's consciousness. Without the stunning, nationally televised videotape, we would never have heard of Rodney King. Except for an extraordinary leak to the press, we would not have known about the freakish attack on Abner Louima, who almost died when police officers in Brooklyn shoved a wooden cylinder deep into his rectum. Last year I got a tip about two teenaged boys who were shot and wounded by the police on Broadway in upper Manhattan. The police department had tried to cover the shooting up. The officers at the scene said they thought the boys had a gun. No gun was found. Incredibly, the boys were arrested anyway.

Of most cases, we know nothing, which suits us. We turn our backs and call upon the gift

of denial to shield ourselves from awareness of the atrocities – the savage beatings, the torture and the maiming, and the killings, sometimes of children. The most difficult crimes to accept are those committed by officers acting in the name of government and the law.

The bits and pieces of horror that force themselves on our attention are shunted off as quickly as possible to the dark corners of our civic unconscious. This is, after all, America. We move on in blessed, willful, shameful ignorance, betraying the ideals of fairness and justice and racial and ethnic tolerance of which we claim to be so proud. The result, of course, is that the atrocities continue, claiming their victims and eating away silently at our integrity and our humanity, like an untreated disease.

This awful problem won't go away until we summon the will to confront it, to haul it and all of its implications into the light of our aware-

## The Stories We Tell

(continued)

St. Joseph, the white town, "Why Benton Harbor's decline?", they would offer this explanation: Single moms with kids in tow moved from neighboring states because of Michigan's generous welfare benefits. It held a kernel of truth. Some single moms did move to small Michigan towns for the benefits, but, as I learned, there was more. Much more. In the 1930s and '40s, the industrialists in the area, all of whom were white, actively recruited blacks from the south to work the factories and the foundries – and when the population of blacks grew in the '60s, the whites crossed the river. And the institutions soon followed: the YMCA, the hospital, the local newspaper, even the FBI offices. By the mid-'80s, most of the factories and foundries had shut down, and Benton Harbor went the way of most communities where work has disappeared. So why the myth of the welfare

moms? It absolved the people of St. Joseph, the whites, of any responsibility in their neighbors' history. Such myths move people only further away from the truth and from reconciliation.

During my time in Michigan, old-timers in Benton Harbor would pull me aside and in hushed tones tell me of a lynching that had taken place in the county. No one could remember the details, let alone the year or place. And, in fact, I had trouble believing it. About a year after I'd heard the first of these stories, I came across the incident they'd been talking of: On a hot summer night in 1923, nearly a thousand white men and women gathered on the courthouse lawn demanding the sheriff turn over two young black men accused of raping a white woman. The sheriff held off the mob at gunpoint. It's a story that had been lost over time, a part of history shredded. Interestingly enough, after recounting the

ness. Real progress cannot be made until we are face to face with the truth, with the enormity of the evil we have concealed. First the truth. Only then can we engage the problem honestly and begin to understand the feelings of rage and resentment and mistrust and hurt that intensify the isolation of individuals and groups, and help fuel the bitter conflicts among us.

A sustained spotlight on the problem would show up the discrepancy between what is happening and who we think we are. With reality conflicting so radically with the values we claim to live by, it is impossible to imagine that, as the truth is brought to light, corrective steps would not be taken.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the ways in which relations among ethnic groups are damaged by police brutality and other forms of misconduct in the criminal justice system?
2. Who should take the lead in addressing the problem of misconduct in the justice system?
3. Discuss ways to determine the extent of police brutality and other forms of misconduct in the criminal justice system.
4. Is there sufficient civilian oversight of the police in your community? If not, why not?
5. Propose remedies for the problems of police brutality and other forms of misconduct in the criminal justice system.

#### RECOMMENDED READING

- Kluger, Richard. *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. the Board of Education*. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.
- Lelyveld, Joseph. *Move Your Shadow: South Africa, Black and White*. New York: Random House, 1985.
- Skolnick, Jerome H. and James J. Fyfe. *Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force*. New York: Free Press, 1994.

tale in my book – helped in large part by newspaper accounts at the time – I heard not just from the black community, which was grateful to have its history resurrected, but also from some in the white community who thanked me for helping them understand their neighbors' tentativeness and distrust just a little bit better.

There is such power in our narratives. Telling stories not only affirms our experiences and gives credence to our histories, but it can also help guide us, deconstruct our myths, and, if we're fortunate, build connections.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What racial myths do you think others have concerning you? Concerning your community?
2. What stories about other races have you heard from others that you think are myths? Why do you think that?
3. How did your neighborhood come to be all white or all black or mixed? Is it different from nearby communities? Why?

#### RECOMMENDED READING

- Williams, Gregory Howard. *Life on the Color Line: The True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He Was Black*. New York: NAL-Dutton, 1996.
- Greene, Melissa Fay. *Praying for Sheetrock*. New York: Fawcett, 1992.
- Lukas, J. Anthony. *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families*. New York: Knopf, 1985.
- Gates, Jr., Henry Louis. *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Man*. New York: Random House, 1998.
- Love, Spencie. *One Blood: The Death and Resurrection of Charles R. Drew*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

# PROFILES

The following stories are from FACING THE TRUTH WITH BILL MOYERS.

by Michael Cronin

## Tandy Shezi



Sometimes the hardest person to forgive is yourself – even when you didn't do anything wrong.

Tandy Shezi was detained without trial in 1988. Four policemen tortured her with electric shocks. They beat her, tore her clothes, threw her on the floor, and left. Then they came back and raped her.

"They said I [was] going to hate myself after they [were] finished with me," said Tandy. "I asked myself so many questions. Why, in the first place, did I involve myself in politics? The mother of two kids; what was I doing?"

She couldn't tell anybody what happened to her in jail. After eight years, on the verge of having a nervous breakdown, Tandy began working with a group called Khulumani, which means "Speak Out" in Zulu. She also joined a theater group in 1996 that dramatized the stories people brought to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Tandy credits both with helping her to find her voice again.

"All the victims of apartheid come together, and we talk about our past experiences," said Tandy. "For we understand that talking is healing. The more you talk about your pain, the more you get relieved."

Once Tandy couldn't speak about what happened to her in prison; now she wants to go back there and reclaim the spirit she left behind in that room.

"At the Truth Commission, I told them that I wish to go back [to that prison] to collect my soul, for the real Tandy is still there."

## Joyce Mtimkulu



Joyce Mtimkulu sees no conflict between her Christian faith and her desire to avenge her son's death. She wants justice. "They made me suffer for fifteen years. I would like to see them being punished."

Security police abducted and murdered Joyce's son, 20-year-old Sipiwo, in 1982. Joyce had no idea what happened to Sipiwo until 1990, when a

newspaper interview with a former policeman revealed that he had been assassinated. Even then, she had to wait seven more years for the perpetrators to recount his murder and reveal where they had disposed of his remains. At a 1997 hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Joyce listened to her son's killers describe how they drugged and shot Sipiwo, burned his body on a campfire, and dumped his ashes into a river.

"If it were not for the Truth Commission, even today I should not have known what happened to my son," Joyce said.

Sipiwo had been a leading anti-apartheid student activist in Port Elizabeth. Fearing his growing influence, the police detained him without trial and tortured him for six months. Upon his release, Sipiwo became seriously ill. Doctors diagnosed him as having been poisoned with thallium – rat poison. When released, Sipiwo sued the government for torturing and poisoning him. He was murdered by government agents for this action.

"I won't just forgive if you don't come to me and ask forgiveness," Joyce Mtimkulu said of her desire for justice. "They should come to me and ask forgiveness. To me, and then to God."



## Mcusta Jack



**W**hen Mcusta Jack does something, he goes all the way.

In 1985, Jack organized a black consumer boycott in Port Elizabeth that crippled and infuriated white-owned businesses. The apartheid state tried to silence him. Jack was routinely arrested, detained without trial, beaten up, and tortured. His home was firebombed and he spent more than five years in prison during the 1980s.

Today, Mcusta Jack is a well-known businessman, and he has hired one of his former enemies, Colonel Laurence du Plessis, as a manager. Jack's capacity to forgive is remarkable.

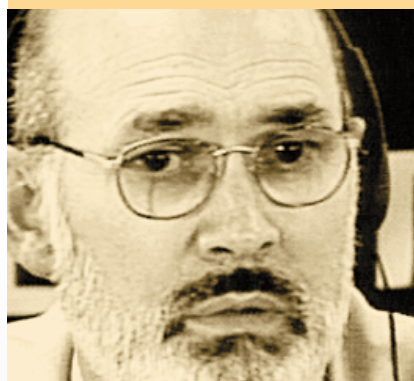
"I was against the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," said Jack. "I believed there should be blanket amnesty for everyone. Everybody is contaminated in some way or another. I still don't believe in punishment of culprits on any side. I satisfied my political goals; now I'm in business."

As Jack's nemesis during the apartheid years, du Plessis

monitored Jack's every move and provided intelligence on his activities for the South African Defense Force. But after du Plessis became one of the first officers to admit that the government ordered the deaths of certain activists, he was shunned by his colleagues. Jack gave him a job.

"I understood the dilemma of being ostracized," said Jack. "I thought he was on the right track and I wanted to encourage him, if only to show that you can have new friends."

## Dawie Ackerman



**J**esus told Peter that we must be willing to forgive "seven times seventy," and that's what Dawie Ackerman tried to do when three youths shot his wife to death during the St. James Church Massacre in 1993.

"I sought out the camera crews immediately, knowing it was very important to defuse any angst that might be going out," Ackerman said. "In other words, getting the correct Christian message out. No bitterness. Not seeking revenge."

Ten others died and 58 were wounded during the attack on the predominantly white church by the armed wing of the Pan African Congress. At their amnesty hearings, the guerillas defended their action as an effort to get whites to "open their eyes" to the oppression of blacks in South Africa. One of the guerillas, Ilaya Makoma, had been found guilty of the crime and sent to jail. His getting amnesty at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission would mean his immediate release.

One of the most poignant moments at the TRC hearings occurred when Ackerman asked the perpetrators to face him as they apologized, asked for forgiveness, and expressed their desire to be personally reconciled. Ackerman discovered, however, that offering forgiveness does not guarantee reconciliation. The perpetrators answered their interrogators at the Commission defiantly. Yes, they killed people, but they were following orders. They were doing what they believed was right. Ackerman requested that the questioning stop after witnessing their angry responses. Sobbing, he asked, "How on earth are we going to be reconciled?"

That question remains South Africa's challenge.

# Workshop

## Experiences for Deepening the Dialogue

Developed by  
Sheila T. Haji and Patricia Moore Harbour, Ed.D.  
Based on the *Healing the Heart of Diversity Series*.  
A Fetzer Institute Initiative

The following workshops are intended to provide participants with a constructive framework for discussing potentially sensitive themes in a safe and non-judgmental experiential learning environment. Notes for Facilitators are included on page 10.

### Overview

Facilitator-led workshops are designed to offer participants the opportunity to draw personal lessons from the South African Truth and Reconciliation experience. Participants may choose to convene for one session only, or they may continue the learning experience with three additional sessions that may be held over three consecutive weeks.

### Format-Session One

#### Introduction & video set-up:

The facilitator introduces self and uses the Viewer's Guide to give a brief overview of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the four workshops prior to showing the video. Participants are asked to watch the entire video or segments that have been pre-selected and ask themselves, *"What thoughts and feelings are being triggered in me about the oppression of people based on race and skin color?"*

#### Large group:

Participants are asked to introduce themselves and to describe their thoughts and feelings about the video with a phrase, word, gesture, or movement.

#### Small group dialogue:

In small groups (4-5 members), participants take turns sharing their personal stories, with a focus on the following:

**"What was awakened in me, as I watched the video, that relates to my skin color, my race, and oppression and racism in America?"**

(Participants are encouraged to listen and understand without responding.)

#### Large group debriefing:

Participants re-convene in the circle to discuss the following:

**"How do I feel about telling my story and having it heard by others?"**

#### Closing:

Participants close the session with the following verbal acknowledgment:

"I have heard your stories, and I take away with me \_\_\_\_\_."  
(a lesson/insight/feeling)

#### Assignment:

Participants are asked to read the Herbert and Kotlowitz essays for the next session.

### Format-Session Two

#### Introduction:

The essays will be used as a backdrop for the group's dialogue about experiences with race in America. Facilitator gives a brief review of each essay.

#### Affinity groups:

Participants are asked to move to small (5-6 people) racial affinity groups (e.g., African Americans/people of color and whites). The groupings are intended to create a safe space to discuss common experiences from a shared cultural perspective. (Another option would be for participants to self-select into small groups.)

Participants are asked to spend time sharing the personal stories that have shaped how they live and relate to others, from their racial or ethnic perspective.

#### Large group discussion

Participants re-convene to discuss their responses to the following:

**"What were the common threads in our stories?"**

**"What connects me to others? What separates me?"**

#### Closing:

Participants are asked to use a phrase, word, gesture, or movement to describe what they are taking away from this session.

friendship or harmony; the settlement or resolution of differences.

#### Assignment:

For the next session, participants are asked to read the Shezi and Jack profiles and to write or be prepared to tell a personal story describing a time when they felt victimized or affected by racism. Participants are encouraged to select another person to get to know, support, and talk to before the next session.

### Format-Session Three

#### Introduction:

Participants are asked to make a brief statement about what has been awakened in them since the last session.

#### Profiles:

Participants are asked to reflect aloud on what, if anything, deeply moved them about the Shezi and Jack profiles.

#### Fishbowl set-up:

Participants are convened in a large outer circle with 4-6 empty chairs placed in a smaller circle in the center. The facilitator spotlights one profile at a time. People enter the center circle to share their responses to the following question:

**“In what ways does this profile mirror my experiences with racism and how racism has affected me and my community?”**

(The outer circle remains silent. After people share their responses in the small, inner circle, they may return to the outer circle to make space for others in the inner circle.)

#### Debriefing:

In one large circle, participants discuss the following:

**“What new insights am I gaining about myself in relationship to acts of racism and oppression in my community?”**

#### Closing:

Participants close the session with a phrase, word, gesture, or movement that describes what they are taking away from the session.

#### Assignment:

Participants are asked to read the Ackerman and Mtimkulu profiles to remember a time when they were perceived to be a perpetrator of and/or colluded in a racial incident. For Session Four, participants are asked to consider their person-

al learning goals related to forgiveness and reconciliation. Participants are also asked to bring an object that for them symbolizes reconciliation and that may be chosen and kept by someone else at the end of the last session. It is important that all participants bring an object, so that everyone will receive an object.

### Format-Session Four

#### Introduction:

Participants are invited to state their personal learning goals for this experience.

#### Profiles:

Facilitator presents profiles two individuals (Ackerman and Mtimkulu) that appear in the Viewer's Guide and asks each person to consider how the individuals chose to deal with their feelings about perpetrators.

#### Fishbowl:

Facilitator reviews and highlights the quotes from these profiles that focus on forgiveness (pgs. 6-7). Participants are asked to enter the inner circle to share their experience of the following:

**“What am I doing to move closer toward reconciling relationships that have been affected by my actions and/or lack of actions? What more can I do to move closer to reconciling these relationships?”**

#### Debriefing:

In one large circle, participants discuss the following:

**“What do I see as my responsibility for initiating forgiveness and reconciliation in my life and in my community?”**

#### Closing:

Participants are asked to tell the story about their “reconciliation objects” and place them in the center of the room. Participants select an object to keep and close with a phrase or word that describes what they are taking away from these sessions.

# Notes for Facilitators

## PREPARATION:

Preview materials and be prepared to answer questions from participants; walk through each activity and consider how you will respond to discussion questions and workshop activities.

Have video, audio-visual equipment, and participant handouts available and ready for use. Photocopies of Viewer's Guide materials may be made as needed.

Plan ample time for discussion and processing of each activity.

## SET-UP:

Arrange chairs in a circle so participants are facing each other.

Prepare and discuss a list of potential ground rules to be used during each session, and hand out to participants to add, delete, or change as needed.

Sample ground rules may include: speak and listen authentically; be open to other's viewpoints; set aside judgment; be respectful; stay focused; respect confidentiality; check out assumptions.

## FACILITATION:

Establish a framework for this experience as a four-week journey experienced together to gain a deeper understanding and respect for each other. Acknowledge that at times it may be uncomfortable, but the process is designed to help us move beyond that discomfort.

Encourage participants to speak from their personal experiences, telling stories and sharing memories.

Remember that the workshops are not intended to "fix" people but rather to support people in the process of personal learning.

Remind participants that experiences with racism vary. Encourage people to view each person's experiences with respect and dignity. Offer examples from your own experiences, and stay personally engaged with the process.

Participants may want to have more time to deepen the dialogue or to expand on their personal stories. Be prepared to assist people with their emotional responses.

Encourage the formation of learning pairs at the end of each session for mutual support and to continue the dialogue between sessions.

Offer participants guidance on how to prepare assignments, such as focal points for personal stories or ideas for bringing in "reconciliation objects." For example, objects may include a picture of a dove, an actual olive branch, a drawing, a poem, song lyrics, or an object representative of a personal experience.

Monitor individual and group dynamics during the workshops. Offer support as needed while respecting the needs of the participant.

Encourage the continuation of experiential activities to process the racial discrimination that exists in participants' hearts and/or in their community.



# South Africa: Background

by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, South Africa

*There is no future without forgiveness.*

– Desmond Tutu

*Our country has been through a long dark night of anguish, which we must now put behind us. I believe joining hands in that task is a central aim of reconciliation.*

– Nelson Mandela

## Timeline

**1652** Europeans first settled in South Africa. Over the next two centuries, Dutch and British settlers expanded the colonized territory to include the whole of South Africa. After the Anglo-Boer War, at the turn of the 20th century, South Africa became a unified territory under white rule.

**1912** African National Congress (ANC) founded.

**1948** Discriminatory laws that were put in place from the inception of white rule are worsened when the National Party (NP), supported mainly by white Afrikaners, comes to power. Its members are elected on the platform of apartheid.

**1960** Sharpeville Massacre: 69 blacks are killed and 180 wounded during a peaceful march to protest against the pass laws that restrict the movement of blacks around the country. Most of them are shot in the back.

The Sharpeville Massacre leads to an intensification of conflict between the liberation movement and the government. The government responds by banning the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress.

**1961** ANC leaders launch Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military arm of the organization. Initially, they target exclusively strategic installations and try to avoid the loss of life.

Albert Luthuli, president of the ANC, awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

**1964** Rivonia Trial: Nelson Mandela and nine other ANC leaders are sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of treason and sabotage.

**1973** The international community declares apartheid a crime against humanity in the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

**1976** Soweto Uprising: Schoolchildren across the country engage in protests against apartheid, particularly the conditions in black schools. The state again responds with severe force, and hundreds of protesting children are killed and thousands detained.

**1982** Archbishop Desmond Tutu awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

**1983** A Tricameral Parliament is established, with representation for whites, "coloureds," and Indians and excluding the black majority. This enrages the liberation movement, and the banned ANC forms the United Democratic Front as its surrogate to unify opposition to the sham reforms of Parliament and to continue the campaign against repressive measures.

**1990** Mandela released after 27 years in prison, and political parties unbanned. After becoming president in 1989, F.W. de Klerk lifts the ban on the ANC, PAC, and other political organizations.

**1990-1993** Negotiations around the transition to democracy: The government, the ANC, and other parties engage in negotiations to establish a new constitution. A judicial investigation into violence establishes that senior members of the State's Security Forces have committed criminal human rights abuses. In December 1993, an interim constitution is accepted which guarantees a mechanism to allow for amnesty for those involved in past conflicts. This becomes the legal justification for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

**1994** In April, the first democratic election is held in South Africa. The ANC wins the election and Nelson Mandela is elected president of South Africa.

**1995** TRC Act passed by Parliament: After extensive negotiations with all the interested parties, Parliament enacts the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill, which creates the TRC. The TRC officially comes into existence in December 1995.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In 1995, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established by the South African Parliament to inquire into and investigate the serious human rights abuses of apartheid and of the liberation movement and to make reparations to the victims. The perpetrators could apply for amnesty in exchange for revealing their involvement in these abuses. Over its two-and-a-half-year lifetime, the TRC heard stories of killings, torture, and disappearances from over 20,000 victims and their families, through statements and at public hearings. The TRC's Amnesty Committee received over 7,000 applications and has thus far granted amnesty to 125 perpetrators from all political parties. It is anticipated that some form of reparations will be made to as many of the victims as possible. Some cash payments have already been made. The TRC process hopefully will restore rights to victims, entrench a culture of human rights, promote reconciliation among former enemies, and prevent these abuses from ever happening again.

*Reconciliation is not about shaking hands and making up. It is a fight for equal humanity and status, something we have not yet reached.*

– TRC staff member

# Resources

## Organizations

The following organizations conduct cultural diversity workshops or offer facilitator training.

**American Friends Service Committee (Mid-Atlantic Region)**  
4806 York Road  
Baltimore, MD 21212  
Tel: (410) 323-7200; Fax: (410) 323-7292  
Contact: Gary Gillespie, [ggillespie@afsc.org](mailto:ggillespie@afsc.org)

A social justice organization founded by Quakers. Offers Help Increase the Peace training, Anti-Bias/ Prejudice Reduction Workshops, and Listening Project Training. Through educational and organizing efforts, the AFSC's offices in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Lancaster, Pa., work to offer a voice to the voiceless in the U.S.

**Anti-Defamation League, A World of Difference® Institute**  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 885-7700  
[www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org)  
Contact: Caryl Stern-LaRosa

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE is an international Institute utilized by schools, universities, corporations, and community and law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad. Programs provide practical, experiential, hands-on training with skills to challenge prejudice and discrimination, to foster intergroup understanding, and to equip participants to live and work successfully and civilly in a diverse environment.

**Healing the Heart of Diversity**  
The John E. Fetzer Institute  
974 Burnt Chimney Road  
Wirtz, VA 24184  
(540) 343-5192  
Contact: Patricia Moore Harbour, Ed.D.,  
[hthd@mindspring.com](mailto:hthd@mindspring.com)

A one-year series of four professional development and leadership retreats for practitioners, scholars, trainers, community leaders, educators, change agents, and human resource executives who are professionally engaged in cultural diversity and organizational change practices in the workplace.

**National Conference for Community and Justice (National Office)**  
475 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10016  
(212) 545-1300  
Contact: Wayne Winborne

A human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. Supports community dialogue about diversity, provides interfaith programs, and facilitates multicultural/diversity workshops and training. NCCJ (Greater NY Region), 70 W. 36th Street, Suite 1004, New York, NY 10018, (212) 206-0006.  
Contact: Sheldon Friedberg.

**National Council of Churches, Racial Justice Working Group**  
475 Riverside Drive, Room 812  
New York, NY 10115  
(212) 870-2387  
Contact: Sammy Toineeta

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) is the nation's leading ecumenical organization, with 35 member Protestant and Orthodox church bodies embracing 52 million congregants. The Council has long maintained programs dealing with domestic social issues, worldwide relief and development, and many other areas. Resisting racism and building racial reconciliation is one of the priorities guiding the work of the Council at this time.

**National Issues Forums Research and Information**  
100 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459-2799  
(800) 433-7834  
Contact: Robert H. McKenzie

A voluntary, nonpartisan, nationwide network of forums and study circles rooted in the simple notion that citizens need to come together to deliberate about common problems in order to act on them. Each year, more than 20 Public Policy Institutes (PPI) are held at institutions all across the country to train NIF moderators and convenors.

**Study Circles Resource Center**  
P.O. Box 203  
Pomfret, CT 06258  
Tel: (860) 928-2616; fax: (860) 928-3713  
Contact: Molly Barrett, [scrc@neca.com](mailto:scrc@neca.com).

Helps communities use study circles – small-group, democratic, highly participatory discussions – to involve large numbers of citizens in public dialogue and problem solving on critical issues such as race, immigration and American diversity. Provides assistance to community leaders at every stage of creating community-wide study circle programs.

## Web sites

**Bibliography on Transitional Justice**  
<http://www.userpage.fu-berlin.de/~theissen/biblio/>

**Centre for the Study of Violence & Reconciliation**  
<http://www.wits.ac.za/wits/csvr>

**South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
<http://www.truth.org.za>



Television Race Initiative

**Thirteen·wnet**



Thirteen/WNET  
450 West 33rd  
New York NY 10001



*These posters were used by the South African government to encourage people to testify before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.*