

# SIGMA KAPPA

## TRUTH ACRONYM

### T-Take a moment.

#### This can look like:

- Taking a step away from the situation
  - Close your computer or put away your phone for a certain amount of time in order to get some space
  - Tell the person you are conversing with that you need some time to process the conversation in order to determine how you want to respond and if continuing the conversation is a good idea
- Distract your mind
  - Yoga, take a walk, exercise, etc.
  - Bake or cook
  - Get outside (gardening, fresh air, sunlight, etc.)
  - Sleep on it...rest your mind
  - Listen to music or podcasts
  - Puzzles or games
  - Read/listen to a good book
  - Use whatever coping strategies work for you

#### Identifying your emotions and thoughts

- What [label](#) would I give my emotions rights now?
- Do I feel safe starting/continuing a dialogue here?
- Do a journal/reflection activity
  - Reflect on the current situation and the bigger picture of what is going on in your life right now. Zero in on the emotions you are actually feeling - use the [Wheel of Emotions](#)
  - Now let your emotions guide you to your truth by dialoguing with them. What are your emotions telling you about this situation?

What other areas of your life bring about similar emotions? Notice what you see, taste, smell, etc. right now. Connect your emotions to your thoughts - what you feel directly impacts what you think.

### **Identifying your next steps**

- Will you continue engaging with this person/conversation?
  - It is ok to decide that you are not coming back to this situation.
  - Protect your own energy. Do you have the space to engage now? Later? Ever?
- If you do decide you want to continue to engage, continue on with the rest of the TRUTH acronym.
- Do I need to reach out to someone for support?

## **R - Respond with the intent to understand.**

- Use [active listening](#)
  - Paying attention
  - Withholding judgment
  - Reflecting
  - Clarifying
  - Summarizing
  - Sharing

## **U - Understand by asking questions.**

- Ask questions that will help the other person provide context to bring more understanding to the situation.
- Don't ask questions just so you can then respond to the person.
- Don't start questions with "Why...". Beginning questions with the word why puts individuals on the defense and may move away from your intended goal of the conversation.
- Try to steer away from yes/no questions so people have to think more about their response.
- Examples of good questions:

- Can you tell me more about what you mean by XYZ?
- What in your experiences influences your thoughts about XYZ?
- Have you ever thought about XYZ in this way or through this lens?
- Someone says: "I don't see color" or "I don't see race"
  - You may respond: "Can you tell me more? I think the purpose/intention of that statement is to let people of color know that you see them and want them to be included. But I think a better way that we can do that is to recognize and embrace a person's differences and their different experiences--which includes the color of their skin. Doing that means you really see and accept them for who they are." (Then hear them out as they respond to you.)

## T – Tell your truth.

- If you are willing and feel safe, express your honest feelings, thoughts and perceptions.
- Telling your truth provides someone else the opportunity to learn from you.
- Recognize that your truth is just that...yours. No one else's is like yours.
- Work out [your own truth](#) if you need to.

## H – Harmful language is not welcome in Sigma Kappa.

- We aren't expecting people to know everything, but also be mindful that you don't know everything. Being open to others' lived experiences is important.
- Don't try to equate an experience you are aware of to all experiences.
- Your proximity to oppression or marginalization does not absolve you of the potential harm you can cause.
  - Example: "I have a black friend and this has not happened to her."