

STORYTELLING WITH COMMUNITY™

Community Learning and Action Guide

Conocimiento • Trust • Participatory Inquiry •
Story Stewardship • Community Action



Moni Avila, Ed.D.



A NOTE TO THE COMMUNITY

This Guide Is My Gift to the Community

I created this guide because community knowledge has too often been collected, interpreted, and carried away without the people who hold that knowledge having the same power over how it is understood or used. Our stories are not raw material. They carry memory, survival, culture, relationships, responsibility, and the wisdom communities build over time.

This guide is my gift to the community and to everyone who wants to do this work with greater care. It grows from what communities have taught me, from my own lived experience, and from years of learning alongside residents, organizers, Community Health Workers, students, practitioners, and scholars. It is also grounded in a belief that has shaped my work: trust is infrastructure. When trust is treated as essential, we ask better questions, listen differently, share power more honestly, and remain accountable after the story has been told.

I hope these pages help you pause before entering a community, recognize what you bring to the work, honor the knowledge already present, and build the story with the people whose lives and places give it meaning. Use the worksheets to question assumptions, make decisions visible, protect dignity, and return knowledge in ways that are useful to the community.

Community stories should do more than describe what people have survived. They should make visible what people know, what they have built, what they are protecting, and what they imagine for the future. May this guide help us tell those stories with care, courage, and shared responsibility.

Con cariño y compromiso,

Moni Avila, Ed.D.

Founder, Nueva Era and the Institute for Community Knowledge & Practice



START HERE

How to Use This Book

A flexible workbook for reflection, group learning, project planning, and accountability

This book is designed to be used, written in, discussed, and revisited. You do not need to complete every page in order. Begin with the section that matches where you are in the work, then return to earlier activities whenever new relationships, information, risks, or decisions change your understanding.

Choose the Path That Fits Your Work

Use	How	Where to Begin
Individual reflection	Read the teaching pages and complete selected worksheets privately.	Start with Conocimiento, then use the sections connected to your role or project.
Community group or plática	Choose a few prompts, establish agreements, and make sharing voluntary.	Use Knowing the Community, Plática, Trust, and Story Stewardship.
Project or research team	Use the worksheets to make purpose, authority, interpretation, and decision rights visible.	Use CBPR, ARCC, the Community Question Lab, and participatory interpretation.
Facilitated workshop	Select a pathway based on available time and the result the group needs.	Use the suggested facilitation pathways near the end of the workbook.
Ongoing community action	Return to the guide as conditions change and commitments are tested.	Use TRHT, the Community Welfare System, RBF, RBA, and the action tools.

Use a Repeating Practice

1. Know the community and the history before collecting a story.
2. Understand what you and your organization bring to the work.
3. Listen relationally and clarify consent, ownership, and decision rights.
4. Interpret stories and information with the people represented.
5. Connect what is learned to community-defined action and accountability.
6. Return knowledge, report what happened, and revise the work together.

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About This Guide

For community practitioners, researchers, educators, organizers, institutions, and residents who tell community stories

Community stories can help people recognize one another, understand conditions, protect memory, influence decisions, and imagine change. They can also cause harm when people with greater access to funding, data, publication, or media decide which experiences count, remove stories from their context, or speak for communities without sharing authority.

This guide begins from a different position: the people who live a story are not raw material for someone else's message. They are knowledge holders, interpreters, decision makers, and partners. Telling a community story responsibly requires knowing the community, locating ourselves within the work, building relationships that can carry truth, and designing the process so community members share power from the beginning through action and stewardship.

The guide brings together a connected set of lenses, methodologies, and action tools. Storytelling with community, *conocimiento*, *plática*, the Architecture of Trust and its ARCC Framework, and community-based participatory research form the core. TRHT, the Community Welfare System, Results-Based Facilitation, and Results-Based Accountability are introduced as companion approaches that help groups connect truth, relationship, shared infrastructure, decisions, action, and community-defined results. They are related, but they are not interchangeable.

What You Will Be Able to Do

- Recognize the difference between telling a story about a community and telling it with community members.
- Identify community knowledge, history, assets, relationships, languages, and power before collecting stories.
- Use *conocimiento* to examine how identity, role, assumptions, and institutional position shape what you notice.
- Use *plática* as a relational methodology for listening, reciprocity, and shared meaning-making.
- Apply the ARCC Framework to a storytelling or research process.
- Use participatory practices to develop questions, interpret meaning, validate stories, and decide how to share findings.
- Connect community narratives to racial healing, shared community infrastructure, facilitated action, and measurable results.
- Create a story that protects dignity, reflects context, and supports a community-defined purpose.

Practice Agreements and Facilitation

Use these agreements whether you are working alone, preparing for a project, gathering with a community advisory group, supervising a team, or facilitating a workshop. The activities are designed to slow the process down before anyone requests an interview, collects a quote, launches a survey, or publishes a community narrative.

Practice Agreements

- ☐ Sharing is voluntary. Participants decide what they want to disclose and may pass at any time.
- ☐ Personal reflections are not collected, graded, ranked, totaled, or used to judge readiness.
- ☐ No one is asked to represent an entire neighborhood, identity, generation, or culture.
- ☐ Revisit informed consent whenever the purpose, audience, format, or risk changes.
- ☐ A true story may still be unsafe to publish. Protect safety, dignity, and community well-being.
- ☐ Reflection does not replace structural power analysis. Teams must examine who controls funding, access, interpretation, authorship, and final decisions.
- ☐ Disagreement is information. The goal is not forced consensus, but honest understanding and transparent decisions.
- ☐ The process ends with action, return of knowledge, and accountability, not only publication.

Facilitator Note

Do not collect completed workbooks unless participants have explicitly agreed to that use. Invite discussion without requiring personal disclosure. When a prompt surfaces harm, pause and offer choices. A participant may write privately, speak generally, step out, or return later. Build enough time for community members to review how their words and knowledge will be represented.

Guide Map

Part	Focus	What It Helps You Do
1	Storytelling With Community	Purpose, power, framing, and the difference between visibility and voice
2	Knowing the Community	History, people, place, assets, language, relationships, and current conditions
3	Conocimiento	Self-location, multiple ways of knowing, reflection, and changed practice
4	The Architecture of Trust	ARCC, consent, credibility, and shared authority
5	Community-Based Participatory Research	Shared questions, co-learning, interpretation, ownership, action, and sustainability
6	From Story to Community Action	Narrative change, community welfare, facilitation, results, and accountability
7	Building the Story Together	Story craft, validation, ethical review, dissemination, and community-defined action
Reference	Scholarly Foundations and Glossary	Definitions, distinctions, attribution, and sources for continued learning

A Repeating Practice

You may move back and forth across these sections. Responsible storytelling is rarely linear. New information may require a return to relationship building. Community review may change the central question. A safety concern may alter the audience or format. Reflection should change practice, not simply document it.

The most important measure is not whether every page is completed. It is whether the people represented can recognize themselves, question the interpretation, influence decisions, and benefit from what the story sets in motion.

1

Storytelling With Community

Who has the right to tell, interpret, and use a community story?

A Story Is More Than Content

Stories carry identity, memory, explanation, emotion, and possibility. They influence what people believe caused a problem, who is responsible, which solutions seem reasonable, and whose knowledge is trusted. For that reason, storytelling is never only about communication. It is also about power.

A story told about a community can make people visible while leaving them without authority. A story told with a community treats residents as partners in defining the purpose, choosing the questions, interpreting what is heard, deciding what should remain private, and determining how the story will be used.

Approach	Role of Community	Decision Pattern
About community	People are primarily sources or subjects.	Outside timelines and messages drive the process.
For community	People may benefit, but others still make most decisions.	Community review may happen late.
With community	People share authority as knowledge holders and partners.	Purpose, interpretation, ownership, and action are negotiated.
By community	Community members lead the story and decide what support they want.	Outside partners contribute without taking control.

The Central Question

Before asking whether a story is powerful, ask whether the relationship and process are worthy of the story being shared.

Stories Shape What Becomes Possible

Every story makes choices. It emphasizes some details, places events in a sequence, assigns meaning, and leaves other information outside the frame. These choices may help an audience understand complexity, or they may flatten a community into a familiar script.

Patterns That Require Care

Pattern	What It Does	Question to Ask
Deficit framing	Describes only needs, failures, or suffering.	What strengths, strategies, history, and structural conditions are missing?
Savior framing	Centers the organization or professional as the rescuer.	How were residents already acting, adapting, caring, or organizing?
Single-story framing	Treats one experience as representative of everyone.	What differences, tensions, and additional perspectives must remain visible?
Trauma mining	Requests painful disclosure because it attracts attention or funding.	Is this disclosure necessary, freely chosen, supported, and safe?
Decontextualized success	Celebrates an outcome without showing conditions or tradeoffs.	What relationships, resources, policy, and community labor made it possible?

Activity One Story Three Frames

1. Choose a familiar community event or issue.
2. Write a one-sentence deficit frame, a one-sentence institutional frame, and a one-sentence community agency frame.
3. Circle what each frame makes visible and underline what it hides.
4. Discuss which people gain or lose authority under each frame.
5. Rewrite the opening so it names context, community action, and uncertainty without romanticizing hardship.

Worksheet Story Purpose and Impact

What story are we considering and why now?

Who identified the need for this story?

What should this story help the community understand, protect, change, or build?

Prompt	Working Notes
Primary community audience	
Other intended audiences	
Decision or action the story may influence	
Who could benefit	
Who could experience risk, stigma, exposure, or unintended consequences	

How will community members know whether the story accomplished its purpose?

2

Knowing the Community

What must we learn before we ask a community to share?

Community Knowledge Is an Ecology

Knowing a community is not the same as having demographic data, a list of organizations, or a map of service gaps. Community knowledge lives in people, relationships, memory, language, practice, place, institutions, informal networks, conflict, caregiving, celebration, survival, and imagination. Some knowledge is documented. Much of it is carried through experience.

Community members are not interchangeable. A neighborhood includes long-time residents and newcomers, youth and elders, renters and homeowners, workers and business owners, people who are highly visible and people who avoid institutions for good reasons. Knowing the community means learning how these experiences connect without pretending they are the same.

Dimension	What to Notice
People	Residents, youth, elders, cultural workers, organizers, caregivers, business owners, faith leaders, informal helpers
Place	Homes, gathering spaces, schools, routes, landmarks, boundaries, environmental conditions, places of memory
History	Migration, displacement, organizing, policy decisions, losses, victories, promises, institutional relationships
Practice	Language, care networks, mutual aid, traditions, work, art, celebration, problem-solving, everyday adaptation
Power	Who controls land, money, services, data, access, public narratives, agendas, and final decisions
Possibility	Community goals, existing plans, emerging leaders, unfinished ideas, and futures people are already building

Worksheet Community Knowledge Map

Write what you know, what you think you know, and what you need to learn. Use question marks freely. Uncertainty is more responsible than false confidence.

Dimension	What We Know	What We Need to Learn
People and trusted connectors		
Places and boundaries		
History and community memory		
Languages and communication practices		
Assets and ways people care for one another		
Institutions and past experiences with them		
Current pressures and community priorities		
Voices or experiences commonly missing		

Who should review and correct this map?

Activity The Community Knowledge Walk

This activity can be completed through a physical walk, a transit ride, a guided virtual tour, or a seated map conversation led by community members. The purpose is not to observe people as objects. It is to learn how place, history, relationships, and everyday systems shape the story.

Before

- Invite a community member or local partner to help choose the route, questions, and boundaries.
- Clarify what may be photographed, recorded, quoted, or left undocumented.
- Learn basic historical context and do not ask residents to repeatedly explain information already available.
- Compensate community guides when the activity relies on their expertise.

During

- Notice where people gather, travel, wait, work, celebrate, seek help, and care for one another.
- Ask what has changed, what has remained, what people protect, and what outsiders often misunderstand.
- Pay attention to absence: missing sidewalks, closed institutions, erased landmarks, inaccessible services, and people who cannot safely participate.
- Record questions separately from conclusions.

After

What did community members help us notice that we would have missed?

What assumption changed, and what must change in our project because of it?

Worksheet Community Portrait Before Story Collection

How does the community name and describe itself?

Which histories or conditions are necessary to understand the present?

What knowledge already exists, and who has carried it?

Which community strengths must remain visible without minimizing hardship?

Where are there differences or disagreements that should not be flattened?

What previous research, media, or institutional experiences shape trust now?

What will we do differently because we know this?

3

Conocimiento

How does who we are shape what we see, ask, hear, and believe?

Reflection That Changes Practice

Conocimiento (pronounced koh-noh-see-MYEN-toh) is an ongoing process of self-location and transformation. In Gloria E. Anzaldúa's work, conocimiento joins inner reflection with public action. It asks us to examine how identity, memory, culture, experience, relationships, and position within systems shape the way we understand the world.

Conocimiento is more than self-awareness. It asks what our lens permits us to notice, what it makes easier to overlook, and how reflection will alter our behavior. Before attempting to explain a community, we examine how we enter the relationship.

This guide also honors Dr. Josie Méndez-Negrete of The University of Texas at San Antonio. Her scholarship and memoir demonstrate how lived experience, family memory, silence, survival, and testimony can produce knowledge while demanding care for the people whose lives are carried in the telling (Méndez-Negrete, 2006).

Four Movements of Conocimiento

Movement	Practice
Locate	Name your identities, relationships, roles, commitments, and institutional position.
Question	Examine assumptions, habits, emotions, loyalties, and what you have been taught to treat as expertise.
Listen	Make room for knowledge that may challenge your framing or preferred solution.
Change	Alter the question, process, decision, relationship, or use of resources based on what you learn.

Practice principle Reflection becomes meaningful when it changes what happens next.

Worksheet Understanding What We Bring to the Work

What communities, places, and experiences have shaped how I understand this issue?

What is my relationship to this community: resident, relative, neighbor, practitioner, funder, researcher, employee, advocate, newcomer, or something else?

What authority, access, credentials, resources, or institutional protection do I carry?

What experiences or risks do community members carry that I do not?

What do I feel certain about, and what is the basis for that certainty?

What might I be avoiding because it complicates the story or challenges my role?

What must change in my practice because of this reflection?

Activity Plática for Shared Understanding

Plática (pronounced PLAH-tee-kah) is a culturally grounded relational methodology through which knowledge develops in conversation, relationship, memory, and lived experience. It is not an informal focus group, an unstructured interview, or a shortcut for extracting stories. A plática asks the facilitator to be present, reciprocal, self-reflective, and accountable for how meaning is interpreted and used. This guide draws particularly on Fierros and Delgado Bernal’s articulation of pláticas as Chicana and Latina feminist methodology (2016).

Set the Conditions

- Use pairs or groups of three. Allow each person to pass or answer in a general way.
- Do not record. Each speaker retains control of what they later choose to share.
- Listen to understand, not to diagnose, correct, recruit, or collect a quote.
- After each person speaks, the listener reflects what they heard and asks whether they understood correctly.

Conversation Prompts

1. What experience shaped how you understand this community or issue?
2. When have you felt that an institution understood the community? What made that visible?
3. When has a story about the community felt incomplete or harmful?
4. What should people doing this work learn before they ask anyone to share?
5. What commitment would make this process more trustworthy?

What did I hear that should change our process, not simply our language?

Worksheet Planning a Trustworthy Plática

Element	Planning Question	Our Practice
Relationship	What relationship already exists? What needs to be built before this conversation?	
Purpose	Why are we inviting this plática, and who helped define the purpose?	
Reciprocity	What are we prepared to share, contribute, return, or change?	
Choice	How will participants pass, pause, redirect, withdraw, or limit what is used?	
Language and place	Which language, setting, rhythm, and cultural practices support participation?	
Power	Who convenes, records, interprets, approves, and benefits?	
Meaning	How will participants review what we understood and correct our interpretation?	
Return	How and when will the knowledge, decisions, or benefits return?	

Relational Commitments

- ☐ We will not treat warmth, familiarity, or shared identity as automatic consent.
- ☐ We will not pressure participants to disclose trauma or represent an entire community.
- ☐ We will distinguish what was shared for understanding from what may be quoted or published.
- ☐ We will document our interpretation without erasing disagreement or uncertainty.
- ☐ We will return with what we heard, what changed, and what remains unresolved.

4

The Architecture of Trust

Is the process designed to be worthy of the story?

Trust Is Infrastructure

The Architecture of Trust begins with the premise that trust is not decoration and not merely a feeling. It is infrastructure. Like a foundation, it carries the weight of communication, disagreement, accountability, uncertainty, and action. Storytelling places weight on relationships. A strong process must be designed to carry it.

The ARCC Framework is a lens for organizational trustworthiness and an ongoing practice, not a checklist that produces a score. Its four dimensions are interconnected.

Dimension	Question	Storytelling Application
A Architecture	How is the process intentionally designed?	Roles, resources, timelines, safety, access, consent, decisions, ownership
R Relational Credibility	How is the process experienced?	Presence, consistency, humility, fairness, dignity, transparency, follow-through
C Conocimiento	How do reflection and self-location change practice?	History, assumptions, identity, power, learning, willingness to be changed
C Capacity	What becomes possible because trust is cultivated?	Shared learning, stronger relationships, local skill, action, adaptation, sustained partnership

Trustworthiness in practice Every interaction either strengthens the structure or adds a stress point. Credibility is experienced, not proclaimed.

Worksheet Apply the ARCC Lens

ARCC	Questions	Evidence or Next Action
Architecture	Who helped design the purpose, questions, consent process, timeline, budget, roles, review, and use?	
Relational Credibility	What have we promised? How will people experience fairness, dignity, honesty, and follow-through?	
Conocimiento	What have we learned about our lens and institutional history? What will we change?	
Capacity	What knowledge, resources, relationships, skills, or authority will remain with the community?	

Stress Test

What pressure could this process place on participants or relationships?

Where is the structure currently weakest?

What must be strengthened before story collection begins?

Story Stewardship and Consent

Consent is not a signature collected once. It is a relationship and a continuing decision. A person may agree to speak privately but not be quoted, agree to an internal report but not social media, or approve words but not an image. New audiences and formats create new risks and require renewed consent.

A Trustworthy Consent Conversation Covers

- ☐ The purpose of the project and who initiated it.
- ☐ Who will listen, record, transcribe, translate, edit, interpret, store, and publish.
- ☐ What participation involves and what is optional.
- ☐ Where the story may appear, how long it may remain available, and whether it may be reused.
- ☐ Whether a name, image, voice, location, employer, or other identifying detail will be included.
- ☐ What risks are known and what protections are available.
- ☐ How the storyteller can review, correct, limit, pause, or withdraw material before the agreed point of release.
- ☐ Compensation, credit, authorship, ownership, and community benefit.
- ☐ Who will receive the final work and what action or accountability will follow.

Story Stewardship Principle

Access to a story does not create unlimited permission to use it. Stewardship means honoring the conditions under which knowledge was entrusted.

Worksheet Consent and Decision Rights

Decision	Who Has Authority	How the Decision Will Be Made
Define the purpose and central question		
Choose who participates		
Approve interview or discussion prompts		
Decide what is recorded and stored		
Interpret themes and disagreements		
Approve quotes, images, audio, and identifying details		
Choose title, framing, and recommendations		
Decide audiences, formats, timing, and reuse		
Respond if harm or misrepresentation occurs		

Which decisions are currently controlled by the institution, funder, researcher, or communicator, and why?

What authority can be shared or transferred before the work proceeds?

5

Community-Based Participatory Research

How can inquiry produce shared knowledge and community-defined action?

Research With Rather Than On Community

Community-based participatory research, or CBPR, is a partnership approach that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers across the research process. Partners contribute different forms of expertise, share responsibility and ownership, build knowledge together, and connect learning to action.

CBPR is not defined by holding one listening session, recruiting community members, or asking for feedback after major decisions have already been made. The quality of participation is visible in who defines the issue, controls resources, develops questions, gathers and interprets information, decides what conclusions are justified, and determines how knowledge will be used.

Principles for Story and Research Partnerships

- Recognize community as a unit of identity while honoring differences within it.
- Build on community strengths, resources, relationships, and existing knowledge.
- Share power across all phases, including interpretation, ownership, and dissemination.
- Create co-learning and capacity for all partners.
- Balance knowledge generation with community-defined benefit and action.
- Keep the work locally relevant and attentive to history and structural conditions.
- Use an iterative process that can change when partners learn something new.
- Return findings to all partners and include them in wider dissemination.
- Invest in long-term relationships and sustainability beyond one project.

A Participatory Story and Research Cycle

Phase	Participatory Practice	Visible Evidence
1 Enter and listen	Learn history, relationships, prior experiences, community priorities, and reasons for trust or caution.	Community entry and relationship plan
2 Define together	Agree on purpose, central question, benefit, values, and limits.	Shared purpose statement
3 Design together	Set roles, budget, methods, consent, compensation, ownership, safety, and decisions.	Written partnership agreement
4 Gather with care	Use accessible, culturally and linguistically responsive methods. Track who is missing.	Field notes and participation review
5 Interpret together	Examine patterns, differences, context, uncertainty, and competing explanations.	Community interpretation record
6 Validate and revise	Return drafts, themes, quotes, visuals, and recommendations for correction and approval.	Validation decisions
7 Share and act	Use community-selected audiences, messengers, formats, timing, and action pathways.	Dissemination and action plan
8 Return and sustain	Return knowledge, report commitments, address harm, preserve access, and maintain relationships.	Stewardship and follow-through plan

A useful distinction If the community enters only after the question is set or leaves before interpretation and action, the process may be community-based without being participatory.

Worksheet Partnership Readiness

- ☐ Community partners helped identify the issue or have affirmed that it matters now.
- ☐ We understand relevant history, including prior research, broken promises, and existing community work.
- ☐ Community expertise is budgeted and compensated.
- ☐ Partners can change the question, method, timeline, and dissemination plan.
- ☐ Language access, disability access, transportation, childcare, technology, and scheduling needs are addressed.
- ☐ Decision rules, data stewardship, authorship, credit, and conflict processes are written and understood.
- ☐ The project has a plan for safety, confidentiality, distress, and unintended consequences.
- ☐ Findings will be returned in useful formats before or alongside outside dissemination.
- ☐ There is a realistic path from learning to community-defined action.
- ☐ We know what will remain after funding, publication, or formal data collection ends.

What evidence supports our strongest readiness claim?

What gap could cause the most harm if we ignore it?

Who must help decide whether we are ready to proceed?

Activity The Community Question Lab

A strong participatory question is understandable, locally relevant, answerable through ethical methods, and connected to decisions the community cares about. This activity shifts the project from an institution's question to a shared question.

1. Write the question currently driving the project.
2. Ask who chose it, whose language it uses, and what solution it quietly assumes.
3. Invite community partners to name what the question misses or gets wrong.
4. Generate three alternatives: one centered on community assets, one on structural conditions, and one on community-defined possibility.
5. Choose or combine questions using shared criteria: relevance, dignity, usefulness, feasibility, and action potential.
6. Document why the final question changed and who participated in that decision.

Original question

What it assumes or leaves out

Revised shared question

How the revised question could change action

Worksheet Community Interpretation Session

Use this worksheet after interviews, conversations, surveys, observations, or story collection. Do not present themes as settled conclusions. Bring enough context for community partners to question the interpretation.

Interpretation Prompt	Community Discussion	Decision or Revision
What pattern do we think we see?		
What evidence supports it?		
What complicates or contradicts it?		
Whose experience may be missing?		
What history or condition changes its meaning?		
What language would community members use?		
What conclusion is justified and what remains uncertain?		
What action, if any, follows from this interpretation?		

Who must review the revised interpretation before it is shared?

6

From Story to Community Action

How will shared knowledge shape decisions, resources, action, and accountability?

Frameworks Working Together

A strong community process needs more than one kind of tool. Some approaches help people understand themselves and one another. Others guide research partnerships, organizational trustworthiness, narrative change, community infrastructure, meetings, or accountability. This section uses only the parts of each companion framework that strengthen the movement from community story to community-defined action.

Approach	Contribution	Guiding Question
Conocimiento	Locate ourselves and allow reflection to change practice.	What do we bring, assume, hold, or need to change?
Plática	Develop knowledge through reciprocal, culturally grounded conversation.	How will we listen, relate, interpret, and return?
TRHT	Connect truth, narrative, relationship, healing, and systems change.	What history and narrative shaped the present, and what must be transformed?
Architecture of Trust and ARCC	Design and practice organizational trustworthiness.	Is the process structured to carry truth, disagreement, and accountability?
CBPR	Share authority across inquiry, interpretation, ownership, and action.	Who defines the question, produces knowledge, and decides how it is used?
Community Welfare System	Build community-governed care, participation, resources, and programs.	What community infrastructure can carry the response over time?
RBF	Design meetings that move people from discussion to commitments.	What result must this meeting produce, and who owns the next steps?
RBA	Connect desired conditions, evidence, explanation, partners, and action.	What result matters, how will we know, and what will we do next?

These approaches should not be collapsed into one framework. Their value comes from using each for the work it is designed to support and making the connections visible.

TRHT Truth Narrative and Healing

Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation, or TRHT, is a community-led approach developed by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. It begins with an honest examination of historical and contemporary racism and asks communities to build a shared vision grounded in the inherent value of all people. Its foundational areas are truth-telling, racial healing, relationship-building, and narrative change. Communities then pursue transformation through the issue areas of Separation, Law, and Economy.

TRHT Area	Application to Community Story
Truth-telling	Name histories, present conditions, harms, resistance, and community knowledge that dominant accounts have obscured.
Narrative change	Examine the beliefs and stories that make inequity appear natural, inevitable, deserved, or invisible.
Racial healing and relationship-building	Create conditions for people to listen across difference, acknowledge harm, recognize shared humanity, and build relationships for collective action.
Separation	Examine segregation, colonization, displacement, exclusion, concentrated poverty, and the physical or social boundaries that divide people.
Law	Examine policies, rules, enforcement, rights, and public systems that distribute protection, punishment, access, and authority.
Economy	Examine structured inequality in income, wealth, ownership, opportunity, investment, work, and access to resources.

TRHT strengthens this guide by asking what a community story must reveal, repair, and transform, not only what it must describe.

Activity Truth Narrative and Transformation Map

What current community story, condition, or decision are we examining?

Lens	Question	Community Notes
Truth	What history, harm, resistance, policy, or community knowledge must be named?	
Dominant narrative	What familiar explanation shapes public understanding now?	
Missing or counter-story	Whose knowledge complicates or challenges that explanation?	
Relationship and healing	What relationships must be strengthened, repaired, or created?	
Separation	What boundaries, exclusions, or patterns of displacement shape the story?	
Law	What policy, rule, enforcement practice, or institutional decision matters?	
Economy	What resources, ownership patterns, labor, or investments shape the condition?	
Transformation	What community-defined future should the story help make possible?	

What must change in the story, relationship, or system because of what we learned?

Community Welfare System

The Community Welfare System is a community-governed framework developed by Seeds Worth Sowing for building reliable care and resource infrastructure beyond a single crisis, program, leader, or funding cycle. It is included here because stories often reveal needs that require an organized community response. A story should not end by making need visible while leaving communities without the structure or resources to act.

CWS Pillar	What It Makes Possible
Shared Leadership	Distributes leadership, decision-making, stewardship, and accountability so responsibility does not depend on one person or institution.
Mutual Aid Resource Pool	Organizes money, goods, skills, relationships, space, information, and emergency resources that community members can mobilize.
Operational Programs	Turns values and community knowledge into reliable services, routines, roles, partnerships, and pathways of support.
Organized Community Participation	Creates ongoing ways for residents to shape priorities, contribute, lead, question decisions, and evaluate what the system is doing.

Use With Care

The Community Welfare System is not a replacement for public responsibility. Community capacity should not become an excuse for institutions to withdraw resources or transfer unpaid labor to residents. Use the framework to strengthen community governance while continuing to name and pursue institutional obligations.

Worksheet From Story to Community Infrastructure

What need, strength, or possibility did the community story make visible?

Pillar	Planning Question	Next Step
Shared Leadership	Who should help govern the response? How will authority and accountability be shared?	
Mutual Aid Resource Pool	What resources already exist? What is missing? Who controls access?	
Operational Programs	What repeatable support, service, referral, training, or response could be built?	
Organized Participation	How will residents shape priorities, contribute, review progress, and change the response?	

What must public institutions, funders, or partner organizations remain responsible for?

What can the community own or govern without absorbing unfair risk or unpaid burden?

What is the smallest useful structure we can begin and sustain?

Results Based Facilitation

Results-Based Facilitation, or RBF, is a competency-based practice associated with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Results Count approach. It helps people design, lead, and participate in meetings that move from conversation to action while holding participants accountable for commitments. In this guide, RBF is used after relationships and shared understanding have been developed. It should focus a conversation without silencing complexity, rushing a plática, or treating community participation as a meeting-management problem.

Essential RBF Practices for This Guide

Practice	Community-Centered Application
Name the meeting result	State what participants should understand, decide, create, or commit to by the end.
Invite the right knowledge	Include people affected by the decision, people with authority, and people whose knowledge is usually missing.
Use focused questions	Ask questions that surface evidence, assumptions, disagreement, options, authority, and next steps.
Listen for meaning and movement	Reflect what was heard, test understanding, name unresolved tensions, and identify where the group is ready to act.
Make decisions visible	Clarify what was decided, by whom, under what authority, and what remains open.
Close with accountability	Name the commitment, owner, support needed, due date, return point, and process for reporting barriers or changes.

Worksheet Results Focused Community Meeting

Planning Element	Notes
Meeting result	By the end, what will participants understand, decide, create, or commit to?
Community authority	Which decisions can participants make today? Which remain elsewhere and why?
People and knowledge	Who must be present? Whose knowledge is missing? What access support is needed?
Evidence and stories	What community stories, data, history, and prior commitments should inform the discussion?
Opening question	What question will ground purpose, relationship, and shared understanding?
Decision question	What question will help the group examine options, tradeoffs, and authority?
Action question	What will each partner do, by when, with what support, and for whose benefit?
Return point	When and how will the group review progress, barriers, and community experience?

Commitment Record

Commitment	Owner	Due Date	Return or Support

Results Based Accountability

Results-Based Accountability, or RBA, is a disciplined approach associated with Mark Friedman and Clear Impact for improving community well-being and program performance. It begins with the desired condition of well-being and works backward toward evidence, explanation, partners, and action. RBA distinguishes population accountability, which belongs to a community and its partners, from performance accountability, which concerns the people served by a particular program or organization.

RBA Element	Meaning in This Guide
Result	A plain-language condition of well-being for a whole population or community.
Indicator	A measure that helps a community recognize whether the population-level result is improving.
Story behind the data	The history, systems, community experience, assets, pressures, and explanations that help people understand the pattern.
Partners	People and organizations with knowledge, authority, relationships, resources, or responsibility connected to the result.
What works	Strategies supported by community knowledge, evidence, experience, values, and practical feasibility.
Performance measures	Measures of program effort, quality, and effect: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

Numbers do not explain themselves. Community stories help interpret why a pattern exists, how it is experienced, which assets are already present, and what a responsible response requires. Data should be disaggregated where appropriate and interpreted with the people represented.

Worksheet Community Result and Story Behind the Data

Community-defined result What condition of well-being do we want?

Element	Community Question	Working Notes
Indicator	How might we recognize progress without reducing the community to a number?	
Current pattern	What do available data, stories, observation, and community experience show?	
Story behind the pattern	What history, systems, assets, pressures, and relationships help explain it?	
Differences and equity	Who experiences the condition differently? What does disaggregated information reveal?	
Partners	Who has knowledge, responsibility, influence, resources, or lived expertise?	
What could work	What does the community recommend? What evidence or experience supports it?	
First action	What specific step can begin now without losing sight of structural change?	
Accountability	Who will report back, to whom, by when, and in what accessible form?	

Worksheet Program Performance With Community

Use this page when reviewing a program, service, training, or community initiative. Community members should help define what quality and being better off mean. Measures should support learning and accountability, not punish participants or erase experience.

Question	Community-Centered Prompt	Measure or Evidence
How much did we do?	Who participated or was reached? What activities, supports, products, or resources were provided?	
How well did we do it?	Was the work timely, accessible, culturally and linguistically responsive, trustworthy, and useful?	
Is anyone better off?	What changed in knowledge, skill, confidence, relationships, access, behavior, conditions, or decision-making power?	
What does the story add?	What do participants say the measures miss, misinterpret, or need to explain?	
What should change next?	What should continue, stop, improve, or be community-led?	

What would community members consider meaningful evidence of benefit?

How will findings and decisions be returned to participants?

Integrated Practice From Story to Action

Use this planning page to connect the guide's approaches without treating them as one framework. Begin with relationship and community knowledge, then identify what the story asks partners to understand, decide, build, measure, and return.

Connection	Guiding Question	Decision or Commitment
Community knowledge	What do residents already know, carry, practice, or protect?	
Conocimiento and plática	What changed in our understanding, relationship, or practice?	
Truth and narrative	What history or dominant narrative must be challenged or expanded?	
Trust and shared power	What architecture, consent, or decision authority must be strengthened?	
Community infrastructure	What leadership, participation, resources, or operations are needed?	
Meeting result	What must partners decide or commit to together?	
Community result	What condition of well-being are we working toward, and how will we recognize progress?	
Action and accountability	Who will do what, by when, with what support, and when will we return?	

What will remain with the community after the project or publication ends?

7

Building the Story Together

Can the community recognize itself and influence what the story does?

A Community Story Needs Context and Agency

Story craft matters because structure shapes meaning. A responsible story does not need to include every fact, but it must not distort the conditions that make the facts understandable. It should show people as more than a problem, preserve meaningful differences, and connect personal experience to community and systems without turning a person into a symbol.

Story Element	Questions to Build It With Community
Grounding	Where are we, whose community is this, and what context must the audience understand?
People and relationships	Who carries the story, how are they connected, and how do they name themselves?
Pressure or question	What condition, decision, contradiction, or possibility brings the story into focus?
History and structure	What policies, institutions, resources, patterns, or past events shape what is happening?
Community knowledge and action	What do people know, do, protect, build, resist, or imagine?
Meaning	What interpretation has the community helped establish? What remains contested or uncertain?
Invitation	What should the audience understand, decide, support, change, or continue?
Return	How will the story and any benefit return to the people who made it possible?

Worksheet Shared Story Canvas

Working title in community language

Purpose and primary audience

Grounding place, people, history, and current context

Central pressure, question, or possibility

Community knowledge, agency, relationships, and action

What complexity or disagreement must remain visible?

What should the audience understand or do?

Who must review and approve the next draft?

Activity Fact Voice Context Review

Review the draft in three passes with community partners. Separate the passes so style does not distract from accuracy or safety.

Pass	Review Standard	Questions
Fact	Names, dates, locations, numbers, quotations, sequence, and claims are accurate. Uncertainty is named.	What is incorrect, unsupported, overstated, or missing?
Voice	People are named as they wish. Quotations retain meaning. Translation preserves intent. No one is made to speak for everyone.	Whose language dominates? Who needs direct voice or the right not to be included?
Context	History, systems, assets, relationships, and community action make the experience understandable.	Does the story individualize a structural issue or erase community knowledge?
Safety	Identifying details, timing, audience, and platform have been reviewed for possible harm.	Could publication create retaliation, stigma, exposure, or loss of services?
Use	The final format and action pathway match the agreed purpose.	Who benefits, who receives the story, and what happens after release?

Revision Record

Date	Change Requested	Decision and Reason	Confirmed By

Worksheet Dissemination and Action Plan

Audience	Useful Format	Trusted Messenger	Purpose or Action
Community members represented			
Residents and local networks			
Partner organizations			
Decision makers or funders			
Media or public audiences			

Access and Stewardship

- ☐ Plain-language and translated versions are included where needed.
- ☐ Digital, print, audio, visual, and in-person options reflect community access preferences.
- ☐ Community partners receive the final materials and know where they will remain available.
- ☐ Reuse, archiving, data retention, and future requests follow the consent agreement.
- ☐ A named person or group will receive corrections and concerns after release.
- ☐ Partners have a way to track commitments and report what changed.

What community-defined action will this story support?

How and when will we return to report progress?

Practice Commitments

Choose commitments that are specific enough to be observed. A commitment such as “listen more” becomes stronger when it names who, when, how, and what decision may change as a result.

Before I ask for a story, I will

To know the community more responsibly, I will

To practice *conocimiento*, I will

To strengthen the Architecture of Trust, I will

To share power in research and interpretation, I will

To connect community story with action and accountability, I will

After the story is shared, I will return by this date and report

The person or group who will help hold this commitment with me is

Suggested Facilitation Pathways

Format	Suggested Focus	Guide Sections
60 minutes	Purpose and impact; About versus With; one conocimiento prompt; one commitment	Parts 1, 3, and closing
2 hours	Story power; community knowledge map; conocimiento; ARCC stress test; commitment	Parts 1 through 4
Half day	All above plus consent and decision rights; CBPR cycle; shared question lab	Parts 1 through 5
Full day	Core learning sequence plus selected action and accountability tools	Parts 1 through 7
Two days	Complete guide with práctica practice, companion frameworks, worksheets, and story development	All sections
Project series	One section per meeting with community partners leading review and adaptation	Seven sessions plus follow-through

Closing Reflection

A community story is not complete when it is published. It is complete when the people whose knowledge made it possible can see how they shaped it, access what was created, challenge what is wrong, and recognize what happened next. Trust grows when people experience consistency between what a process promised and what it ultimately did.

Know the community. Build the relationship. Tell the story together. Return with accountability.

Facilitator Planning Notes

Scholarly Foundations

The ideas in this guide come from several scholarly traditions that share a commitment to knowledge, reflection, relationship, and action. They are connected, but they are not interchangeable. Understanding what kind of tool each one provides helps practitioners use it with greater care.

Type of Tool	What It Provides	Example in This Guide
Conceptual lens	A way of seeing and interpreting a system or experience.	The Architecture of Trust
Applied framework	An organized set of dimensions or questions used to guide analysis and practice.	The ARCC Framework
Research approach	A set of principles governing how knowledge is produced, who participates, and how findings are used.	Community-based participatory research
Reflective praxis	Reflection that changes how a person understands, acts, and relates to others.	Conocimiento
Communication practice	A relational process for creating and sharing meaning with people rather than merely representing them.	Storytelling with community
Relational method	A structured way of learning through conversation, reciprocity, and lived experience.	Plática
Community transformation approach	A process connecting truth, relationship, narrative, healing, and systems change.	TRHT
Community infrastructure framework	A structure for community governance, resources, programs, and organized participation.	Community Welfare System
Facilitation practice	A way to design meetings that produce decisions, commitments, and accountable next steps.	Results-Based Facilitation
Accountability approach	A disciplined way to connect desired conditions, measures, explanation, partners, and action.	Results-Based Accountability
Ethical responsibility	An ongoing duty to protect consent, context, access, ownership, and appropriate use.	Story stewardship

Knowledge Becomes Practice

These traditions challenge the assumption that professional or academic knowledge should automatically control the story. Anzaldúa's *conocimiento* connects inner work with public acts. CBPR treats community members and researchers as partners who contribute distinct expertise and share responsibility. Cultural humility emphasizes lifelong self-evaluation and attention to power imbalances. Critical race scholarship demonstrates how stories and counter-stories can expose realities that dominant narratives obscure. Oral history ethics emphasizes informed agreement, accurate representation, narrator rights, and careful stewardship across the life of a recorded story.

Together, these traditions support the central commitment of this guide: community members should be able to influence the question, the interpretation, the representation, and what happens after their knowledge is shared.

Core Frameworks and Practices

The Architecture of Trust

The Architecture of Trust is Moni Avila's conceptual lens for understanding trust as organizational and community infrastructure. It asks whether the design and daily experience of a system can carry communication, accountability, disagreement, uncertainty, and change without weakening relationships. Trust is not treated as a slogan or an individual personality trait. It is built or damaged through structures, decisions, relationships, and repeated experience.

The ARCC Framework

ARCC is the applied framework within the Architecture of Trust. Architecture examines how a process is designed. Relational Credibility examines how people experience that design through consistency, humility, fairness, dignity, transparency, and follow-through. Conocimiento asks how history, identity, assumptions, and position shape understanding and how reflection changes practice. Capacity examines what people and organizations can learn, carry, adapt, and accomplish when trust is intentionally cultivated. ARCC is a practice of trustworthiness, not a scored checklist.

Community Based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research, or CBPR, is a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves community members, organizational partners, and researchers throughout the process. Its principles include recognizing community identity, building on community strengths, sharing power, co-learning, balancing knowledge with action, returning findings, and sustaining relationships. A project is not participatory simply because it occurs in a community or asks residents for feedback. Participation is reflected in who defines the issue, controls resources, interprets findings, shares ownership, and decides how knowledge will be used. This definition draws on Israel and colleagues and the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center.

Companion Frameworks for Community Transformation

Truth Racial Healing and Transformation

Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation, or TRHT, is a community-led approach of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. It combines truth-telling, racial healing, relationship-building, and narrative change with action addressing Separation, Law, and Economy. In this guide, TRHT helps communities connect personal and collective stories to history, racialized systems, relationships, and a shared vision for transformation. It should not be reduced to storytelling alone; narrative change is connected to healing, power, and structural action.

Community Welfare System

The Community Welfare System is a community-governed framework developed by Seeds Worth Sowing. Its four pillars are Shared Leadership, a Mutual Aid Resource Pool, Operational Programs, and Organized Community Participation. In this guide, it helps partners ask what lasting infrastructure is needed when stories make community needs, assets, and possibilities visible. The framework does not transfer ownership of this guide to Seeds Worth Sowing, and this guide does not claim ownership of the Community Welfare System.

Using Companion Frameworks Responsibly

A companion framework should be attributed, used for its intended purpose, and adapted without reproducing another organization's proprietary curriculum. The original explanations, activities, and worksheets in this guide connect established ideas to community storytelling while preserving the identity of each approach.

Companion Practices for Action and Accountability

Results Based Facilitation

Results-Based Facilitation, or RBF, is associated with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Results Count approach. It develops the capacity to design and participate in meetings that move groups from talk to action and hold participants accountable for commitments. In this guide, the essential practices are naming the meeting result, inviting the knowledge and authority needed, asking focused questions, listening actively, making decisions visible, and closing with owned commitments and return dates.

Results Based Accountability

Results-Based Accountability, or RBA, is associated with Mark Friedman and Clear Impact. It distinguishes responsibility for population well-being from responsibility for program performance. Population work begins with a plain-language result, indicators, the story behind the data, partners, what works, and action. Program performance asks how much was done, how well it was done, and whether anyone is better off. In this guide, community narrative is part of interpreting evidence and deciding what action is justified; it is not decoration added after the measures are selected.

A Community Accountability Safeguard

Results language can become extractive when institutions define success without the people most affected, select measures only because data are convenient, or treat community stories as proof for decisions already made. Community partners should help define the result, interpret patterns, select meaningful evidence, examine inequities, and decide what happens next.

Conocimiento, Storytelling, and Story Stewardship

Conocimiento

Conocimiento (pronounced koh-noh-see-MYEN-toh) is an ongoing process of awareness, self-location, reflection, and transformation developed in Gloria E. Anzaldúa's scholarship. It connects inner work with public acts. In this guide, conocimiento asks practitioners to examine how their identities, experiences, emotions, relationships, histories, assumptions, and institutional positions shape what they notice and believe. Reflection becomes conocimiento when it changes the question, relationship, decision, or practice. The guide also draws from Dr. Josie Méndez-Negrete's UTSA scholarship and memoir as an example of lived experience, family memory, and testimony functioning as knowledge while remaining accountable to the lives held within the story (Méndez-Negrete, 2006).

Storytelling With Community

Storytelling with community is the participatory practice of creating meaning from lived experience, community history, relationships, and structural context while sharing authority over how that meaning is represented and used. It is different from collecting quotations to support a message that has already been decided. The people whose lives are represented help shape the purpose, questions, interpretation, framing, consent, audience, and action connected to the story.

Plática

Plática (pronounced PLAH-tee-kah) is a culturally grounded relational methodology based in presence, reciprocity, cultural ways of knowing, and lived experience. Fierros and Delgado Bernal describe pláticas as Chicana and Latina feminist methodology that makes room for knowledge to emerge through relationship rather than a rigid question-and-answer exchange. Plática is not automatically participatory. Its use remains accountable to consent, power, interpretation, reciprocity, and the purpose for which the conversation is held.

Story Stewardship

Story stewardship is the Institute's term for the continuing responsibility to honor the conditions under which a story was entrusted. It includes consent, context, safety, ownership, access, translation, storage, review, reuse, and return. Stewardship continues after an interview or publication because stories may circulate, be archived, reach new audiences, or create consequences that were not visible at the beginning.

Expanded Glossary Community and Knowledge

Term	Definition
Capacity building	A reciprocal process that strengthens the knowledge, skills, relationships, resources, and decision-making ability of people and organizations. In CBPR, capacity should grow among community and institutional partners rather than flow in only one direction.
Co-learning	A process through which partners teach and learn from one another. It rejects the assumption that academic or professional partners are the sole experts and community partners are only recipients of knowledge.
Community	A group of people connected through place, identity, relationships, shared conditions, culture, history, interest, or collective action. People may belong to multiple communities, and no community should be treated as internally identical.
Community-defined action	A response, decision, investment, policy, program, or next step that community partners identify as meaningful. It keeps research and storytelling accountable to purposes beyond publication or institutional visibility.
Community engagement	The process of building sustained relationships through trust, collaboration, shared learning, and participation in decisions that affect community well-being. Attendance or outreach alone does not establish meaningful engagement.
Community knowledge	Knowledge carried through lived experience, memory, culture, language, observation, caregiving, organizing, survival, professional practice, and study. It includes what communities know about both problems and possibilities.
Community of identity	A CBPR principle recognizing that community is more than a geographic site. Shared identity, relationships, history, experience, and action can also define the community that a partnership is accountable to.
Counter-story	A narrative that challenges assumptions embedded in dominant accounts and makes visible experiences, explanations, or possibilities that power has minimized or excluded. Counter-storytelling is associated with critical race scholarship, including Richard Delgado's work.

Expanded Glossary

Relationship and Power

Term	Definition
Cultural humility	A lifelong practice of self-evaluation, learning, and attention to power imbalances in relationships and institutions. Tervalon and Murray-García distinguished it from the idea that another person’s culture can be fully mastered as a professional competence.
Extractive storytelling	A process that takes experiences, quotations, images, or community knowledge for an outside purpose while returning little authority, benefit, access, credit, or accountability to the people who shared them.
Lived expertise	Knowledge developed through direct experience of a condition, place, identity, system, or community. The term emphasizes that experience can produce analysis, judgment, strategy, and skill, not only personal testimony.
Positionality	The social, cultural, professional, and institutional position from which a person enters the work. Positionality shapes access, risk, authority, interpretation, and what a person is likely to notice or overlook.
Power sharing	The intentional distribution of authority over questions, money, methods, information, interpretation, ownership, authorship, dissemination, and action. Consultation without influence over decisions is not the same as power sharing.
Reciprocity	A relationship in which learning, responsibility, resources, and benefit move in more than one direction. Reciprocity does not require identical contributions; it requires that partners recognize and respond to what each person or group gives and needs.
Relational credibility	The ARCC dimension concerned with how people experience an organization or process. Credibility grows through presence, consistency, integrity, humility, fairness, dignity, transparency, and follow-through.
Self-location	The practice of naming one’s relationship to the community and the identities, experiences, commitments, authority, and assumptions one brings. In this guide it is expressed through the more accessible phrase Understanding What We Bring to the Work.

Expanded Glossary Story and Interpretation

Term	Definition
Autohistoria teoría	An Anzaldúan form of knowledge-making that brings personal story, collective history, theory, imagination, and social analysis into relationship. It resists separating lived experience from intellectual work.
Data stewardship	The responsibility to govern how information is collected, named, accessed, stored, protected, interpreted, shared, reused, and eventually returned or destroyed. In participatory work, stewardship decisions should include the people represented by the data.
Narrative framing	The choices that shape how a story is understood, including where it begins, what context is included, who acts, who is blamed or credited, what is omitted, and which solutions become imaginable.
Participatory interpretation	A process in which community partners examine information, identify patterns and differences, question explanations, name missing perspectives, revise language, and help decide what conclusions are justified.
Rolling consent	An approach that revisits consent as a project develops and as the purpose, audience, format, risk, access, or proposed use changes. It recognizes that one early agreement cannot anticipate every later decision.
Testimonio	A first-person account that bears witness to lived experience while connecting an individual voice to collective, historical, or structural conditions. Testimonio is not simply disclosure; it can be a form of knowledge, memory, resistance, and accountability.
Trauma-informed practice	An approach that recognizes the possible effects of trauma and emphasizes safety, transparency, choice, collaboration, peer or community support, and attention to cultural and historical conditions. It does not require people to disclose trauma.
Trauma mining	Seeking painful disclosure primarily for attention, persuasion, fundraising, research, or institutional benefit without sufficient necessity, choice, support, safety, shared authority, or benefit to the storyteller.

Expanded Glossary

Translation and Action

Term	Definition
Dissemination	The planned sharing of knowledge with selected audiences through formats they can access and use. Participatory dissemination includes community partners in decisions about message, language, messenger, timing, platform, credit, and response.
Knowledge return	The responsibility to bring findings, recordings, products, decisions, and benefits back to the people who contributed. Return should occur in useful and accessible forms, not only through a link to an academic publication.
Narrator	The person who shares an oral account. Oral history practice uses narrator rather than subject to recognize the person's active role in creating the interview and the meaning it carries.
Nepantla	An in-between space of transition, tension, uncertainty, and possibility in Anzaldúa's scholarship. It can describe the experience of moving between identities, communities, languages, institutions, or ways of knowing.
Nepantlera	A person who works within and across nepantla, making connections, translating meaning, challenging separation, and helping create new understanding. The term informs Avila's scholarship on Community Health Workers who cross invisible institutional and community borders.
Praxis	The continuing relationship between reflection and action. Praxis requires people to study conditions, act, learn from what happens, and revise their understanding and practice.
Story validation	A collaborative review of accuracy, meaning, context, quotation, safety, and representation before release. Validation does not require everyone to agree; it documents differences and prevents one interpretation from silently becoming the only truth.
Storytelling in this context	A relational, ethical, and participatory process through which people make meaning from community experience and decide together how that meaning will be represented, shared, and connected to action.

Expanded Glossary Systems and Accountability

Term	Definition
Community Welfare System	A community-governed framework developed by Seeds Worth Sowing for creating sustainable care and resource infrastructure through Shared Leadership, a Mutual Aid Resource Pool, Operational Programs, and Organized Community Participation.
Indicator	In Results-Based Accountability, a measure that helps quantify whether a condition of well-being for a whole population or community is improving. Indicators require interpretation and do not explain the causes of a pattern by themselves.
Narrative change	The process of examining and transforming the stories, assumptions, values, and explanations that shape public understanding, institutional behavior, and what futures appear possible. It is a foundational area of TRHT.
Population accountability	Shared accountability among a community and its public, private, and civic partners for conditions of well-being affecting a whole population. No single program can be solely responsible for a population result.
Performance accountability	Accountability for how well a program, agency, or service system performs for the people it serves. It considers effort, quality, and whether participants are better off.
Result	A plain-language condition of well-being that a community wants for children, adults, families, residents, or the environment. Results state the desired condition rather than naming a program or activity.
Results-Based Accountability	A disciplined approach associated with Mark Friedman and Clear Impact that connects results, indicators or performance measures, the story behind the data, partners, strategies, action, and continuous learning.
Results-Based Facilitation	A practice associated with the Annie E. Casey Foundation that helps groups design and conduct meetings focused on clear results, effective questions, active listening, decisions, commitments, and accountability.
TRHT	Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation is a community-led approach of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation connecting truth-telling, racial healing, relationship-building, narrative change, and action addressing Separation, Law, and Economy.

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MY GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY

This guide was created to support communities in telling their own stories, building trust, learning together, and moving knowledge into action.



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Storytelling With Community™



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