



**AND THE VISION CAUGHT ON...**



I have to do a report for school on  
The Transformational Agenda Movement?  
Were you a part of it?

Of course I was CJ; your grandpa was a full participant. In fact, I was the 456th person to attend The Transformational Agenda Retreat, so I was involved when it was only a vision. They call early Time Tithers, like your Pappy, Heroes of the Transformation because we were the first to respond to the call to “BE a Hero!”

### My Pappy is a Hero?

Our people didn't believe that we could improve our situation, so we didn't try; we just kept complaining while things just got worse. CJ, in 2013 when the movement started, black men murdered 6500 other black men! And there were 1,000,000 black men in jail! Most of the babies being born didn't have a Daddy who would raise them, and most young people were not doing well in school.

It was bad, but the worst part was that we weren't doing anything to help ourselves. The Transformational Agenda Retreat allowed us to realize that we had the power to reconstruct our culture. Most folk said it was just silly to think we could, but me and the other early Retreat alumni just cleaned up our lives and our community.

We were the first to Time Tithe, meaning to volunteer consistently. We were the very first believers, the first to actually engage in voluntary service directed at healing our community and the first to put the concepts of The Retreat into action. So after we rolled up our sleeves and got to work, they called us Heroes of the Transformation.

Why was it so bad?

Slavery was horrible both physically and mentally. The ancestors did what they had to do to survive so that we could know today, but it meant that their culture was ugly. They were full of self-hate and rage, for they had seen black life being abused all the time. Slavery existed for hundreds of years, and it negatively affected every aspect of life. But after the end of slavery and the brutal decades that followed, we thought it was best to just forget and to never speak of it again. We didn't want our children to know, and we didn't want to remember the pain.

This was a big mistake because it meant that we never understood the impact of slavery on our thoughts and behaviors. We just continued to hate ourselves and to rage on each other. And many were depressed and continued to feel like they had no control over their lives. So, we never healed. Eventually we lost the memory of the horror of slavery, yet the negative thoughts and behaviors, what we now call the negative mental legacies of slavery, continued.

And we didn't even know why we did the wacky self-destructive things that we did, so we were not even trying to do our best. We were just kind of mad that no one seemed to care about our condition.

### So what changed?

We finally realized what we didn't know that we didn't know. See, God allowed the ancestors to explain it all to one of us in a short story called "Listen to the Ancestors: They Deserve to be Heard." In it, we learned that our negative actions were because we had not healed from slavery. The Transformational Agenda Retreat, which taught this message, became the catalyst for our transformation. It convinced us that we could heal our community, and it explained the power of Margaret Mead Groups.









### What is that?

Oh, Margaret Mead said that it didn't take thousands of people to create positive change. It just takes a few people, who share the same passion, coming together and forging a single vision that they then bring to fruition. So we got busy, and we volunteered. We created Margaret Mead groups, and everything immediately started to change.

We realized that we could heal our community—and that is exactly what we did. It was time for us to overcome our past. It was time for us to thrive, and we did. We defined empowerment as high character, virtue, values, and life skills, and empowerment became our single objective, agenda, and focus for the African American community.

We did what Grandfather, at the end of our beloved short story, “Listen to the Ancestor,” asked us to do. I know it by heart. Do you want to hear it?

Sure.

“Your time is now! Live lives of joy, and love, and positive accomplishment, of high character, the highest virtue, and exceptional values. It's in your genes; it's the essence of who you are. Empower yourselves with love. Create a healing community of love, and you will thrive beyond your wildest dreams.”

I love you. Thanks for being a hero!