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*Ontario Leaders Collaborating for Student Achievement, Equity and Well-being
La collaboration des leaders en Ontario assure la réussite, l'équité et le bien-être des élèves.*

Why Every Principal Should Write a Racial Autobiography **By Mark Anthony Gooden**

In this article, Gooden talks about examining racial history for the purposes of empowerment and antiracist leadership as principals. Gooden talks about how racial autobiographies inspire principals to take this lens. He describes the concept as “a narrative written to explore how race has manifested in one’s life” (Gooden, 2021, p. 33). Leaders who are serious become aware of biases and prejudices. In *From Reflection to Action*, the author interviews several principals, many of whom are exploring their racial identities in a way that puts them in touch with inequalities. Participants in the group include a white female principal, an African American male and Brenda, a Black female principal, among others. Gooden (2021) mentions that white principals have a more difficult time accessing experiences of race than principals of color. The author mentions critical consciousness, which involves challenging one’s assumptions. Brenda suggested she allows for her students to celebrate their identities. Through a racial autobiography, principals get to express themselves in a meaningful way (Gooden, 2021).

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. In this article, there is a wide-ranging set of identities mentioned by the author. Are there certain identities that are more acceptable to talk about than others? Explain.

2. What are the objective ways in which we can discuss realms or parameters of acceptability?

3. What do you think are concrete concerns racialized principals might have when approaching the sensitive topic of race, and what (if any) backlash do you think they might perceive from both racialized and white colleagues?

4. Gooden (2021) talks about how increasing racial awareness for principals can help them tackle issues of inequity. What are strategies they can use to help talk about race, particularly if there might be sensitivities around the topic?
