



Living the Guiding Philosophies

GrassROOTS Community Foundation aims to create a world where **all** girls grow up to be healthy women. We partner with girls, parents, families, community leaders, scholars, and thought leaders to create leadership and wellness programs for girls and women of African descent and for people from vulnerable populations.

Maat, an ancient African philosophy and strategy, guides our programming and organizational practices, as well as our interactions with those with whom we work and serve.

Based on Maat, we use a refined formula for achieving harmony in ourselves, our families, and our communities.

Truth + Order + Balance + Reciprocity = Harmony

Maat offers a powerful foundation for all of us to thrive so that we may live our lives in harmony.

Below is a brief overview of these guiding principles.

- **TRUTH** means that we honor the good, talents and abilities that all human beings bring to the world. In our work, we use poetry, cultural studies, creative expression, & education to support girls' full expression of their gifts, talents and abilities. We also make it a practice to speak truth and do the right thing even when no one is watching.
 - Here are a few examples of **TRUTH** in action:
 - *We greet each member of the community each day and seek to connect with them.*
 - *We share our ideas, resources and information with each other and honestly consider each other's perspective.*
 - *We develop authentic relationship with each other and give each other the benefit of the doubt.*
 - *We respectfully acknowledge community members' gifts and talents.*
- **ORDER** reminds us to be strategic—that there are methods and approaches to problem solving and timing activities. We make every effort to provide clear behavioral and procedural guidelines to those we serve and those with whom we work. We read, learn about and practice the importance of routines as well as flexibility in planning and implementing goals. Each of us sets a goal and develops an affirmation to support our development and growth.
 - Here are a few examples of **ORDER** in action:
 - *We are punctual to activities and events.*
 - *We organize and put away our things before and after an activity.*
 - *We assist our elders, for they came before us.*
 - *We wash our hands before eating.*
 - *We wait and listen to others speak and pay attention while they are sharing information.*



- **BALANCE** fosters our ability to use our resources wisely. Resources include our emotions, cars, thoughts, money, abilities, exercise, spirituality, housing, breath, strength, family, yoga, etc. Balance helps us make the most of our resources at any given moment. We learn about and use our emotions and thoughts for our individual and collective growth and development. We encourage girls, parents and those with whom we work to share and participate in the self-enrichment practices as a foundation for working together.
 - Here are a few examples of **BALANCE** in action:
 - *We speak calmly to each other.*
 - *We offer critique to in kind, respectful and compassionate ways.*
 - *We eat balanced meals.*
 - *We move daily.*
 - *We organize our activities including our time to complete our task.*
 - *We make time to transition as well as time to rest so that we do not overextend and exhaust ourselves.*
 - *We ask for help when needed.*

- **RECIPROCITY** is both the practice of sharing good with others and being grateful. This principle reminds us that a better world happens because we make it so. We enter a partnership with girls, parents, families and organizations. These agencies and individuals bring talents, commitment and resources. Similarly, parents, girls and families bring their talents and commitment as well as concrete resources such as healthy lunches and snacks, financial investments, and supplies. As a group, each person brings an open heart to the process. Our partnerships and authentic giving are among our greatest assets in this work.
 - Here are some examples of **RECIPROCITY in action**:
 - *We say thank you to all those who give of themselves to us.*
 - *We recognize hoarding or withholding information damage community relationship.*
 - *We openly share what we have and what we know.*
 - *If we see gaps in information and resources, we offer to help.*
 - *We inform and share our activities and accomplishments with the community.*
 - *We engage in activities that build our communities and improve members' access to resources.*
 - *We collaborate.*
 - *We actively practice gratitude each day.*

- **HARMONY** is the result of practicing these four core principles of Maat. Truth, Order, Balance, and Reciprocity. This practice cultivates flow and a sense of rhythm among the various aspects of our programming and work together. Harmony supports our efforts to work through challenges and develop strategies that keep us inspired and moving toward our goal of creating a world where all girls grow up to be healthy women.