WHAT I USED TO BELIEVE...
WHAT I NOW BELIEVE..

BY BILL WEBSTER

This is my story about issues of race; yours is different.

But maybe something here will resonate with you.

This is a life-long journey. What I believe today is still evolving.

PICTURE SOURCE: KEVAN LEE AT STORIES.BUFFER.COM
I used to believe that Maine is exemplary in its history.

Now I believe that Maine is a great state but has its own share of racism.
I used to believe that

Racism is only taught.

Now I believe that

We are all wired to have biases against those who are physically different from us.
I used to believe that
I should be colorblind.

Now I believe that
I must be conscious of race.
I used to believe that
We should teach African-American history.

Now I believe that
Black history is an integral part of all our history.
I used to believe that
I am a good judge of what is offensive.

Now I believe that
The minority should be the judge.
I used to believe that 
some poor whites do not have white privilege.

Now I believe that 
All whites have white privilege (although the word “privilege” is too often misunderstood.)
I used to believe that

We need to focus on changing the minds of those who are racist.

Now I believe that

We need to weed out the systemic racism that is found in most all of our institutions and numerous laws, regulations and practices.
STEPS TO CHANGE

DATA by RACE

DIALOGUE and TRAINING

ACTION
BEGINNING STEPS IN LEWISTON

DATA

Tracking students by race to monitor disciplinary actions and educational supports

Tracking job applicants and employees by race to monitor hiring and other personnel data.

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DIALOGUE and TRAINING

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Beginning to implement full-staff training.

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ACTION

Implementing restorative justice practices in schools.

Working with USM on an urban teacher training program.

Developing a Teacher Diversity Initiative.
THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY

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