



Bringing Collective Impact Home to the People

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support from Margo Hittleman & the Natural
Leaders Initiative

Out Purpose: Engage more community members in CI work

- ❑ Introduce “CI” to people not yet adequately included
- ❑ Facilitate conversations about their views on community goals and aspirations
- ❑ Identify & address systemic barriers to engagement
- ❑ Help people empower themselves to work across sector, race, class, etc.
- ❑ Make progress toward aspiration of 50% involvement and “ownership” by those most impacted

Our Focus: Including those most directly impacted (“context experts”)

- ❑ Using an educational & organizing process (not “outreach” or “input”)
- ❑ Using informal, community-based structures -- on the street, in kitchens, at free meal sites, etc. (not meetings)
- ❑ Translating “CI” into everyday language (not jargon)
- ❑ Ongoing, repeated conversations (not one-time)
- ❑ Listening and learning as we go

What We Did: Jan – Sept. 2016

- ❑ Starting up; planning & strategizing (Jan-Feb)
- ❑ Being out in the community; conversations with >200 people on street, in gathering places, etc.
- ❑ Introducing ideas in 2 mini-workshops
- ❑ Going repeatedly to where people already are to build engagement over time
- ❑ Supporting other CI grantees to think about inclusion
- ❑ Initial organizing for Tompkins Co. Speakers Bureau
- ❑ Encouraging agency staff to communicate about CI with their members/clients.

What We Have Learned: Successes

- Trying different ways to reach out to people. Learning what will and won't work.
- Starting to generate familiarity, understanding, interest & connection to "CI."
- Returning to the same places repeatedly over time builds trust, ongoing relationships, and helps people see the value of their life experiences & stories.

What We Have Learned: Barriers

- ❑ Lack of child care, transportation and meetings times are not the real barriers to “showing up.”
- ❑ Real barriers: History of systemic exclusion & life-long conditioning. Being told what one needs, being excluded from decisions, & having ideas and experiences discounted → the belief that one’s contributions have no value or that nothing will change.
- ❑ People already have many ideas conversations about what’s wrong & what needs to change. We need to help overcome conditioning and help people move private conversations into more public spaces.

What We Have Learned: Challenges

- Initially, we were idealistic: thought “educating” people about CI → engagement.
- But finding many systemic barriers related to life-long exclusion & conditioning.
- This kind of transformation is slow, long-term process, not a 30-min. conversation. It is an accumulation of little conversations, education, relationship-building, trust-building & healing over time.
- Can't be just 2 (or even 10) people trying to do it. It has to be everyone.
- We all need to learn a lot more about how to address this kind of transformation at the individual & community levels.

Relationships with Collaborators

- Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI) providing administrative and project support “in kind.”
- CCE-Tompkins providing more than half of the program support costs “in-kind” because of their belief in grassroots-led initiatives.
- We’re working with other Building Bridges Steering Committee & CI grantees to share ideas about how to successfully include “context experts.”

Mutually Reinforcing Activities & Shared Measurement

- We hope all CI projects are working towards greater inclusion, and every CI gathering includes opportunities to share what is being learned about this.
- Our original goal: In 2 years, 25% of those engaged in CI initiatives & related community efforts will be “context experts” who feel a sense of “ownership.”
- Questions still to answer: How to measure “ownership”? Is this goal & measure shared by other CI projects?

Communication with Stakeholders & the Community

- We are focused on community members who haven't yet been engaged.
- Our communication with them is thru ongoing conversations – being out in community where they are, talking about the issues that affect them the most & their ideas.
- Our communication with other CI stakeholders is thru our participation in Building Bridges Steering Committee & other CI initiatives (e.g., URO, GSCP, etc.)

Plans for Next 15 Months

- ❑ Experiment more with ongoing, repeated contact.
- ❑ Launch a grassroots “Speakers Bureau.”
- ❑ Work with high school-age youth – help overcome conditioning early on.
- ❑ Lead 2-3 workshops for other CI grantees to help develop their ideas, skills & commitment for inclusion.
- ❑ Keep learning about how to organize, educate & motivate entire communities.