

BUILDING

BETTER COMMUNITIES





Building Better Communities Workbook © 2024 by Social Shift Institute & Community Praxis Cooperative is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>
Users may copy and distribute this material in any medium or format in unadapted form and for non-commercial purposes only.
Reusers must give credit to the creator.

HBNC: Social Shift Institute's: community-led support fund is funded by the
Department of Social Services

We respectfully acknowledge
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
peoples as the First Peoples of Australia
and pay our respects to Elders past and
present.



Welcome

Welcome to the Building Better Communities (BBC) Workbook! HBNC has partnered with Community Praxis Cooperative to develop this Workbook under the Social Shift: Community-led Support Initiative. Community Praxis has facilitated community development courses for over 25 years in many different communities.

This workbook aims to support you and your fellow community members to facilitate change in your street, neighbourhood or region using what we refer to as a community building and community development approach to collective action.

This workbook is self-paced and designed to be done together with others. You can form a weekly or monthly group to complete the activities, share ideas and work together to create a meaningful difference in your neighbourhood.

We hope you enjoy!

Contents

Module 1: How do you facilitate change through community building and community development approaches

Module 2: Exploring what is community, and the values and characteristics of a healthy community

Module 3: Exploring the things that prevent us from contributing; and how we deal with power and conflict

Module 4: Methods and skills for connecting with others and initiating community processes

Read

Experiment

Reflect

The 3 pillars of this workbook. To get the most out of this workbook we invite you to:

First **READ** the section overview and consider the invitations, readings and suggestions. As community building is a collective endeavour, we recommend completing this process with others.

Then, **EXPERIMENT**. See each invitation as an opportunity to experiment and discover. Stay open and curious about what emerges.

Then, **REFLECT**. Reflect on the process, on what happened, what you learned and what you would change next time.



Connect With Your Group

This workbook is designed to be done collectively with others as a group. So before you begin, we invite you to find a group of community members to journey with.

This could be a workplace team, friends, or neighbours.

To start, work through the exercises on the following pages, to get to know each other and share your experiences of community.



Read the following poem by Margaret Wheatley. Underline key words that resonate. Discuss - What does the poem mean for our aspirations in community?

Turning to One Another

by Margaret J. Wheatley

There is no greater power than a community discovering
what it cares about.

Ask "What is possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.

Notice what you care about.
Assume that many others share your dreams.

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.
Talk to people you know.
Talk to people you don't know.
Talk to people you never talk to.

Be intrigued by the differences you hear.
Expect to be surprised.
Treasure curiosity more than certainty.

Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible.
Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.
Know that creative solutions come from new connections.

Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know.
Real listening always brings people closer together.

Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.

Rely on human goodness. Stay together.



Module 1

What is Community Building and Community Development?

This workbook uses a community building or community development approach to creating change - together, with others. It can be contrasted to what is sometimes considered a charity or service approach.

Community building refers to nurturing, building and sustaining relationships in a street, neighbourhood or place. These relationships are characterised by reciprocity, mutuality and care.

Community development refers to working together with others to achieve collective goals or tackle collective problems.



Some examples include:

- developing a community garden
- co-designing projects with young people, refugees or other marginalised groups
- disaster recovery initiatives through community building
- community groups getting active to address isolation

Thus, community is central in this approach, which is different to working with individual needs or concerns. It is a way of working collectively based on shared ideas or challenges. The difference between individual (or charity) and collective (community) ways of working are highlighted on the next page.



"There is no power for
change greater than a
community discovering
what it cares about." –
Margaret J. Wheatley

Charity Vs Community Building

CHARITY (WORKING INDIVIDUALLY)



Do things for
people

Help people out

Based on one-way giving

Implement your ideas

Give is based on the
organisations plans

VS

COMMUNITY BUILDING (WORKING COLLECTIVELY)



Do things with people

Do things among
people

Try to be helpful

Based on relationships
and collaboration

Implement the shared
ideas of the group



Module 2



But Wait! What is Community?

It can be helpful to see community in 3 ways:

- **Community is made up of experiences and stories**
- **Community consists of social networks and relationships (sometimes called social capital)**
- **Community as space, place and base where people connect**

The following exercises will help you explore and reflect on these areas and what they mean in terms of healthy communities.

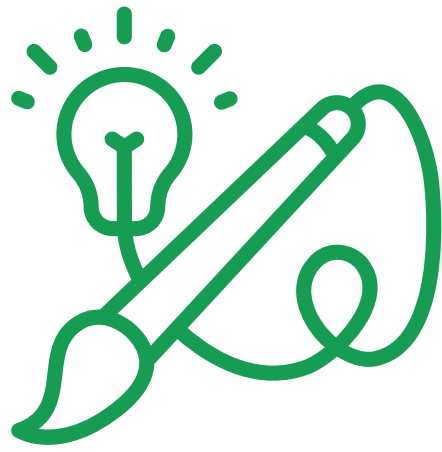
We start with your story of community and the way it matters to you. You will be invited to reflect on your values, memories and aspirations for a thriving, healthy community.

You will then be invited to reflect on the networks and relationships that are reciprocal and trustworthy that contribute to a thriving community.

Finally, we will explore the difference between seeing community as a space, place or base.

We invite you to first reflect on these questions within yourself and then share and discuss with your community-building group.

Take some time and enjoy the process; you might be surprised by what you discover!



Draw your idea of a healthy community

Without using words, draw what a healthy community looks like to you. Then share with your group. What do you notice? What is common, what is different?




Our top community values

Reflect on the previous activities.

What shared values are present?

Identify your top shared values in community and list them below.



**There is immense
power when a group of
people with similar
interests gets together
to work toward the
same goals**

– Idowu Koyenikan

A Healthy Community



SAFE

Nothing to be afraid of.

ACCEPTING

People are people, not just producers or consumers!

RESPECTFUL

Our differences AND similarities are valued.

INCLUSIVE

People are important regardless of position or power.

INVOLVING

We participate in decisions that affect us.

JUST

We work for justice with the disadvantaged, not just for us!



Social networks and relationships

Community is made up of people's stories but it is also made up of social networks and relationships. The strength of these networks is what makes communities strong. Sometimes this is called social capital.

Reciprocal Relationships

In your life, you probably (hopefully!) have reciprocal or non-transactional relationships (we call them friends or acquaintances). Note down some of these relationships below, and why they feel reciprocal.

Transactional Relationships

You probably also have transactional relationships (e.g. your doctor or the coffee shop owner). These relationships are also important, but we need to have a mix of both to be well connected in community. Note down some of your transactional relationships below. What are the risks of an over-emphasis on transactional relationships?



Strong networks within a community contribute to its health and well-being in many important ways. Reflect on the following areas in your community and share with the group.

Social Support

--

Health and Wellbeing Activities

--

Sense of Belonging

--

Information Sharing

--

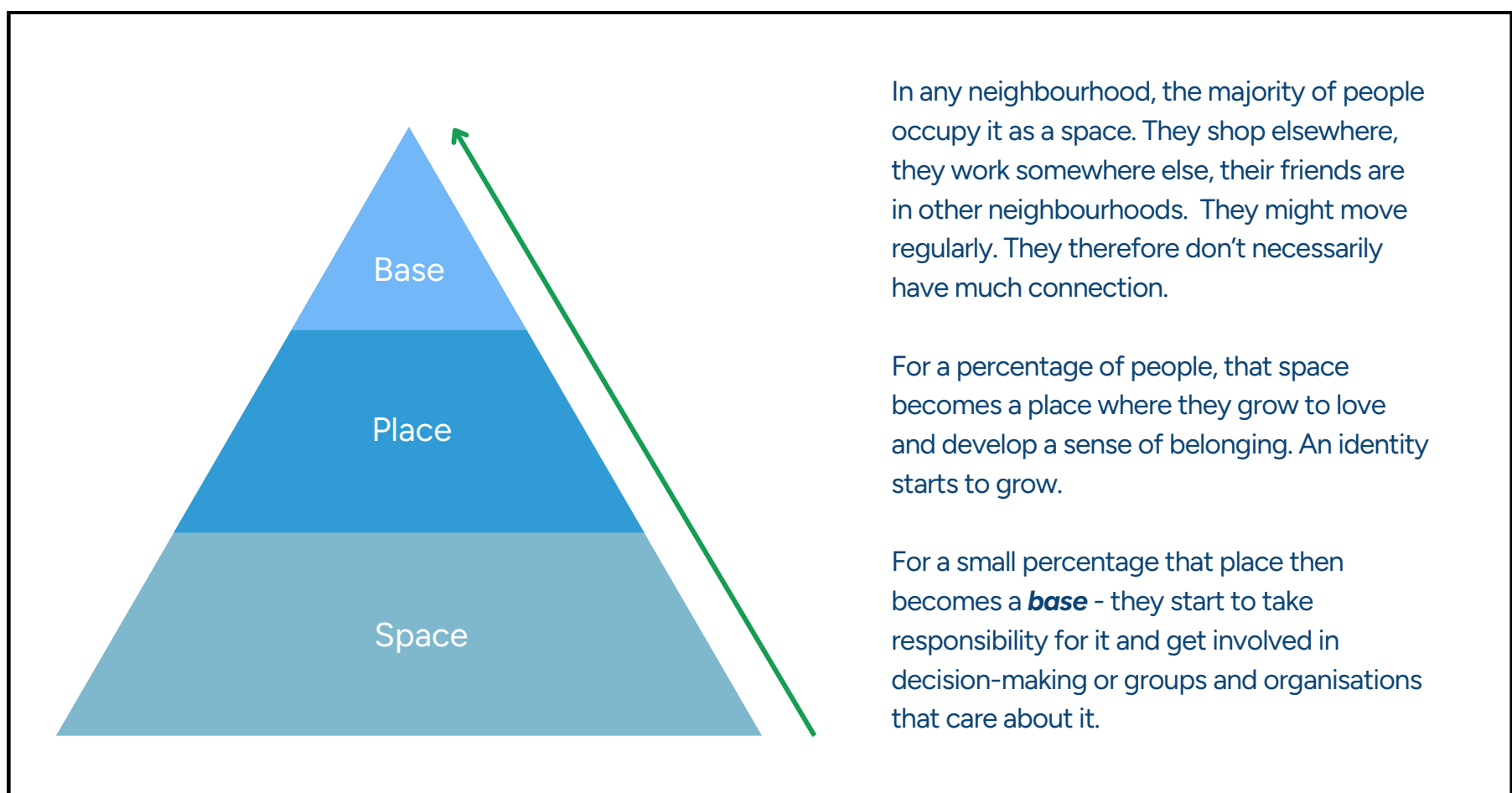
Collective Action

--

Resilience

--

A Third Way of Thinking About Community: Space, Place and Base



Evidence suggests that the tipping point for a community to become creative and active is when about 13% of occupants move to a sense of base. That is they get involved. The culture of a place then becomes participatory.

Thus, if we want to bring change in a neighbourhood, the people in the place and base are the key people to connect with. We don't have to link with everyone, just the people that are already active and involved.



Collectively (in your group) map your community connections that are in the place or base areas.

How can you connect with these people (if you haven't already)?



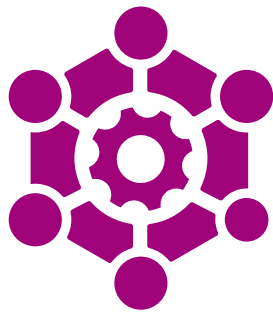
Module 3



Challenges to Building Community

In this section we take a deep dive into the reality of community building and what can get in the way.

While involvement in community can be very rewarding, for many it is difficult. This module explores what makes it difficult, and some ways to overcome these barriers.



A framework for understanding powerlessness

There are 3 key ways of thinking about powerlessness. **Personal, Relational** and **Structural**. Read and reflect on these areas below. What are some ways you have felt these areas of powerlessness?

1

Personal Powerlessness - we feel our power within is limited. This affects our confidence, energy and belief in ourselves, which can prevent us from getting involved. Sometimes this is called our 'internal critic'.

2

Relational Powerlessness - the communities we live in seem disconnected and not with us. Or we have great ideas, but we don't have relationships to share our ideas with, or test our ideas.... If we feel people don't care our capacity to create change is minimal.

3

Structural Powerlessness - if the powers over us are not responding to our needs and the systems stop working for us we feel alienated. We become cynical, sceptical and hope grows dim.

Feeling a sense of powerlessness from time to time is very normal. This course is designed to help you overcome some of these types of powerlessness and grow your confidence and skills in these areas.

Circle of Concern vs Circle of Influence

Think about all the things you're concerned about in the world. This is what we call your circle of concern.

What does it feel like to have a large circle of concern?

If you have a large circle of concern and a small circle of influence things can feel overwhelming. This often produces a sense of disempowerment and despair, which can prevent action. It drains us of any energy to get involved.

In contrast, our circle of influence is about issues that we can do something about. Perhaps we know someone, or are part of a group, or know of an organisation linked to a concern.

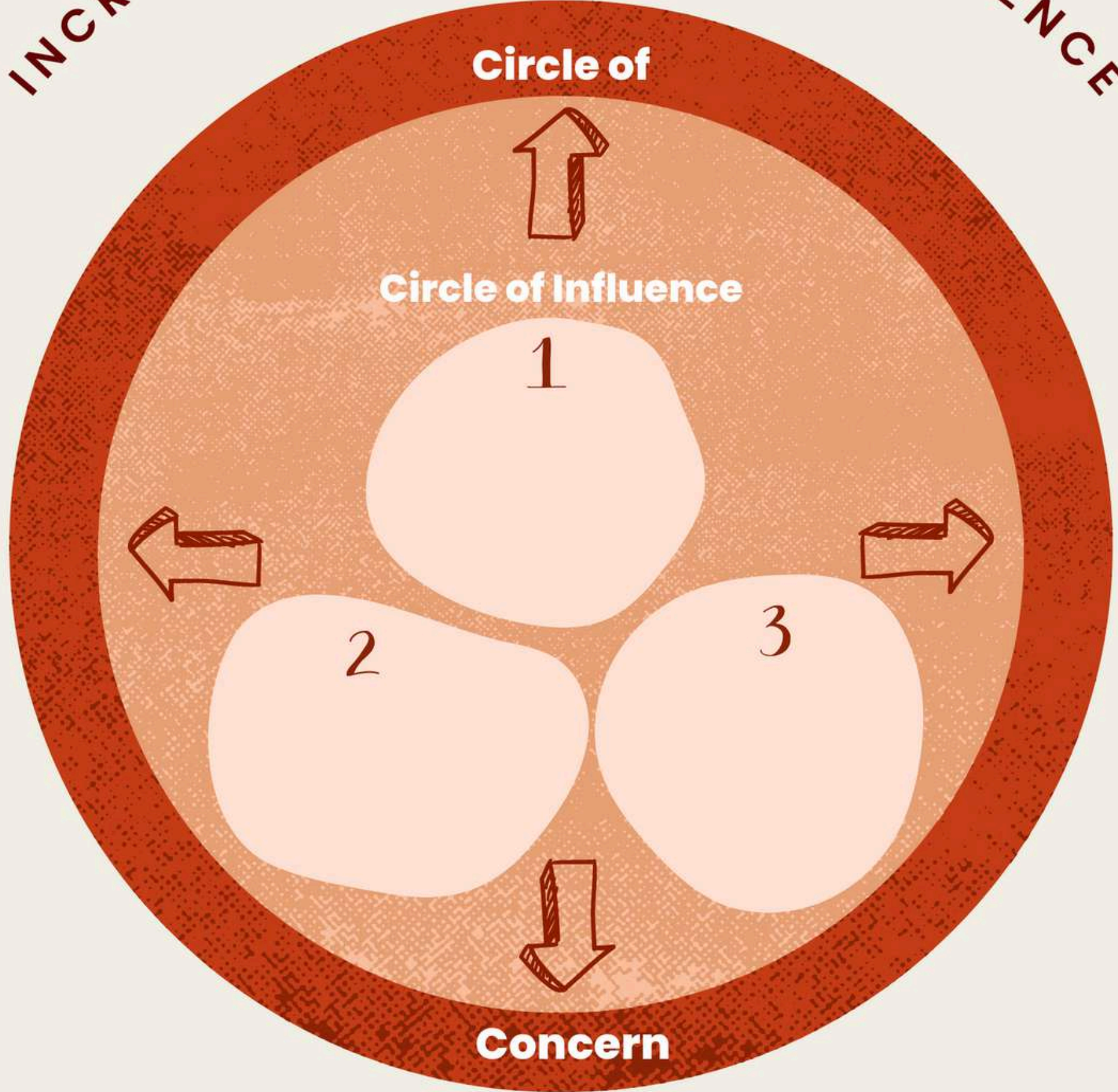
The trick to feeling more empowered and energised is to reduce the circle of concern and increase the circle of influence. For example, we've heard people say, 'pick one issue and focus on it in your life, then you can make real change'. We're not suggesting you do that, but we're sure you get the point. Don't scatter your concerns to the point that you don't have much influence.

In summary - reduce your circle of concern to be aligned with your circle of influence.

Reflect on your Circle of Concern and Circle of Influence.

How can you increase your circle of influence? Note down 3 areas on the following page.

INCREASING OUR CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE



Proactive Focus

Positive energy enlarges Circle of Influence

Proactive people work on the things they can do something about. The nature of their energy is positive, enlarging and magnifying, causing their Circle of Influence to increase.



Difficulty of cooperating: Dealing with conflict

Historically human beings have had to cooperate to survive, thrive and meet their needs. But since industrialisation, we have lost many of these skills.

Most community experiments fail, not because the idea wasn't great, but because people struggle to cooperate or people don't do conflict very well.

Think about that statement. What do you think?

In terms of cooperation, in your group reflect on the following questions:

What has led to the decline of cooperation skills and what are the consequences?

What are the key attitudes and skills that enable better cooperation? (think back to Module one about values etc.)

Think of one skill or attitude you could use to cooperate with others and be prepared to share.

Finally, as a hint to better cooperation, consider: 'we have two ears and one mouth.' How can this reminder help us?



**"The greatness of a
community is most
accurately measured by
the compassionate
actions of its members."
– Coretta Scott King**



Dealing With Conflict

Many people find managing conflict difficult, yet it is an inevitable part of working with people and in communities. Conflict can be healthy if dealt with skillfully and can even provide opportunities for personal or collective transformation.

It is important to remember that not all conflicts can be (or should be) resolved, and there are different ways of approaching conflict depending on the situation and goals. Here are 3 ways:

- **Conflict Management**
- **Conflict Resolution**
- **Conflict Transformation**

Read the following page for a breakdown of how to identify and what strategy to implement when dealing with conflict.

Conflict Management:

The primary aim is to control or contain the conflict so that it does not escalate further and disrupt the functioning of the individuals or group. This may be useful if someone is displaying difficult or harmful behaviour. Strategies may include negotiation, compromise or avoidance.

Conflict resolution:

Aims to address the underlying issues causing the conflict and find mutually acceptable solutions that satisfy the interests of all parties involved. Strategies could include mediation, problem solving and dialogue.

Conflict transformation:

Goes beyond resolving the immediate conflict to fundamentally change the relationships, structures, and dynamics that give rise to conflict in the first place. A transformational approach only works when there is an openness from all parties to change their perspectives, be willing to learn, and challenge any power dynamics that may be present. This long-term holistic approach can bring about empowerment, justice or reconciliation.



Consider the challenge of youth crime in a neighbourhood. A group of young people might be 'causing trouble'. How might the 3 approaches to conflict address this trouble/youth crime issue differently?



Module 4



How to do Community Building

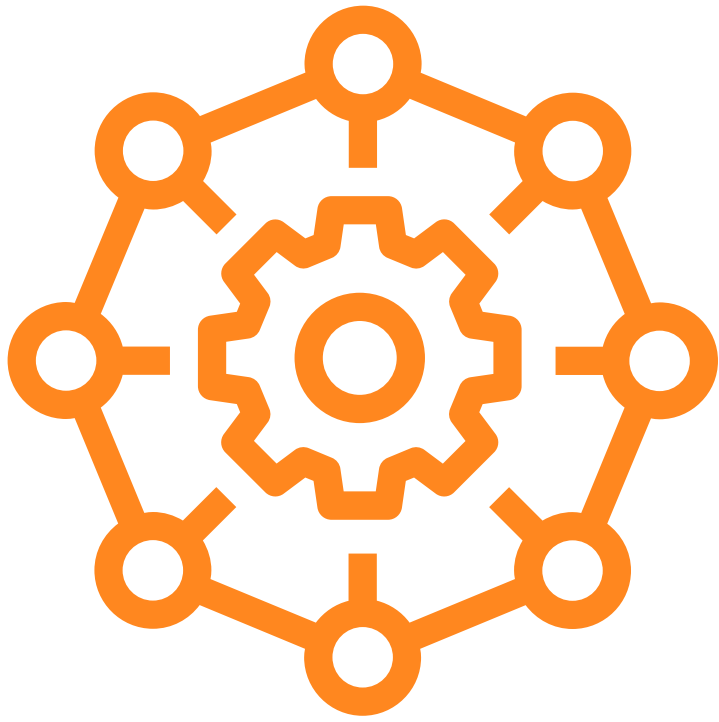
This fourth module is designed to help you think about the how-to of community building.

At the beginning of this workbook, we said this approach is about doing 'with' others, not 'for' others. That is, we are not using a charity or service approach when we work in community.

At the heart of this community-building approach are relationships and at the heart of building relationships is listening. Remember that saying 'we have 2 ears and 1 mouth'.

Why is this important? Because to truly work with others, you need to connect with them and understand their ideas, concerns and thoughts.

Turn over the page and consider a framework that takes this work from building relationship with ourselves to building relationship with others, in groups and in organisations.



How to do Community Building

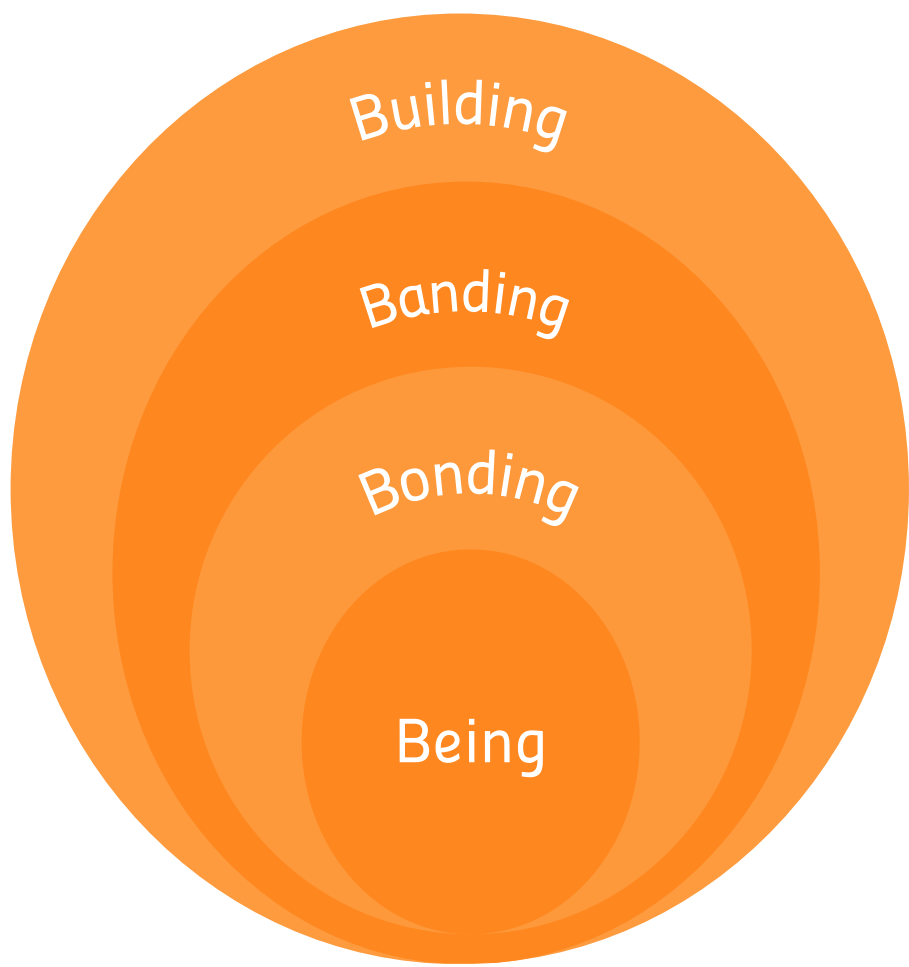
A framework is a set of good ideas that guide us in the 'how'.

When we feel lost and unsure what we're doing, we can return to the framework to guide us.

This framework has what we call four elements, portrayed in a nest.

We explain each element in the following pages.

Each of the four elements invites questions and principles.



A Framework for Community Building

Being: Self	Knowing who you are and why you do what you do. Being conscious of what values inform your way of working and the communities and histories you are linked to
Bonding: Relationships	Building relationships through deep listening and hearing common themes
Banding: Groups	Taking collective action together which could include forming or strengthening local action groups
Building: Organisations	Establishing organisations that structure the work

Source: Jason MacLeod, Pasifika



Being: Self

This first element of the framework BEING explores your relationship to yourself. It's about being clear about your values, what matters to you in community and invites reflection on issues such as:

Why are you getting involved in community building? (not with any sense of judgment, but to be honest with yourself).

For example, do you do it because it makes you feel good about yourself? Are you doing it to get good feelings, or 'thank you's' from people? As such, what happens if people don't give you a 'thank you'?

Are you being present to people and their concerns or are you filled with your ideas and thinking?

Consider how your state of being influences how others experience you.

As a group reflect on Lilla Watson's quote:

"If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

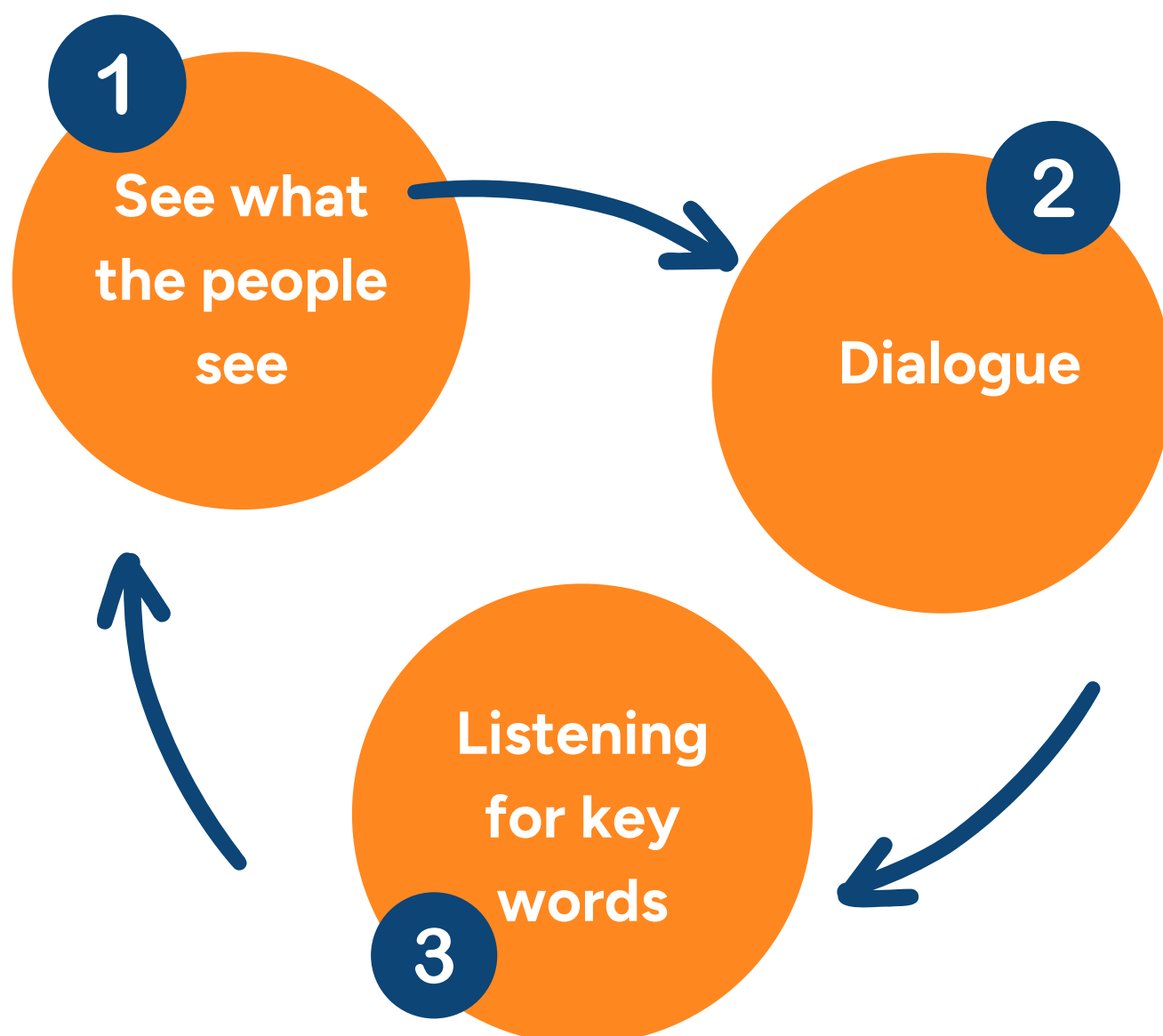


Bonding: Relationships

The second element of the framework is called Bonding. This is about building relationships with another person. Bonding describes a trusting and purposeful relationship in the context of community building or community development.

The purpose of this connection is to help us move from "I" to "We" as we create a shared purpose together as 2 people. This is different to simply being in relationship with another person. It is a connection to do something together.

There are 3 key principles to building purposeful relationships:



1

See what the people see

Rabindranath Tagore teaches us that the very first principle in building a purposeful connection is to see the world through the eyes of the other person. This needs us to put aside our knowledge, experience (and expertise), biases, feelings, and the need to help so that we can be present with the other person. It is to 'hold our own ideas lightly' so we can be open to 'the other' person.

WHAT STOPS US SEEING?

Discuss with your group the difficulties faced when trying to see through the eye's of another. What are some of the things that prevent us from seeing?

WHAT HELPS US TO SEE?

What are the things that help us to see through the eyes of another? Discuss with your group and write your reflections below.



Experiment

Connect with someone in your neighbourhood and try to find out how they experience the place: what are their issues or concerns; or if you already have a shared concern (such as a polluted creek), ask about their understanding.

Try to see what they see. Let go of your idea.

Reflect on your experiment, how did it go? Was it difficult to see through the eyes of another? Share with your group.

A Story of Seeing What the People See

Only recently in a course when people were exploring this material one person shared the following story.

I had joined this meditation group that met at a local hall. Over the first few weeks I kept hearing people say things like, 'be careful of the lady across the road. She gets really angry and is a bit crazy'. Like everyone, I started avoiding her. Then in the course, we discussed 'seeing what the people see' and I decided to try and have an open conversation with this woman.

The next time I arrived at the meditation hall I saw her over the fence. I walked over and said to her, 'Hi, I'm Jane and I come to this meditation group that meets in the hall. How are you going?'

She replied gruffly and mumbled something under her breath.

I then asked her, 'How is it for you that we come here and park on the street; what's that like for you?'

She looked at me and replied, 'It's been hard as people often park across some of my driveway and I can't get out. I get angry as no one seems to listen'.

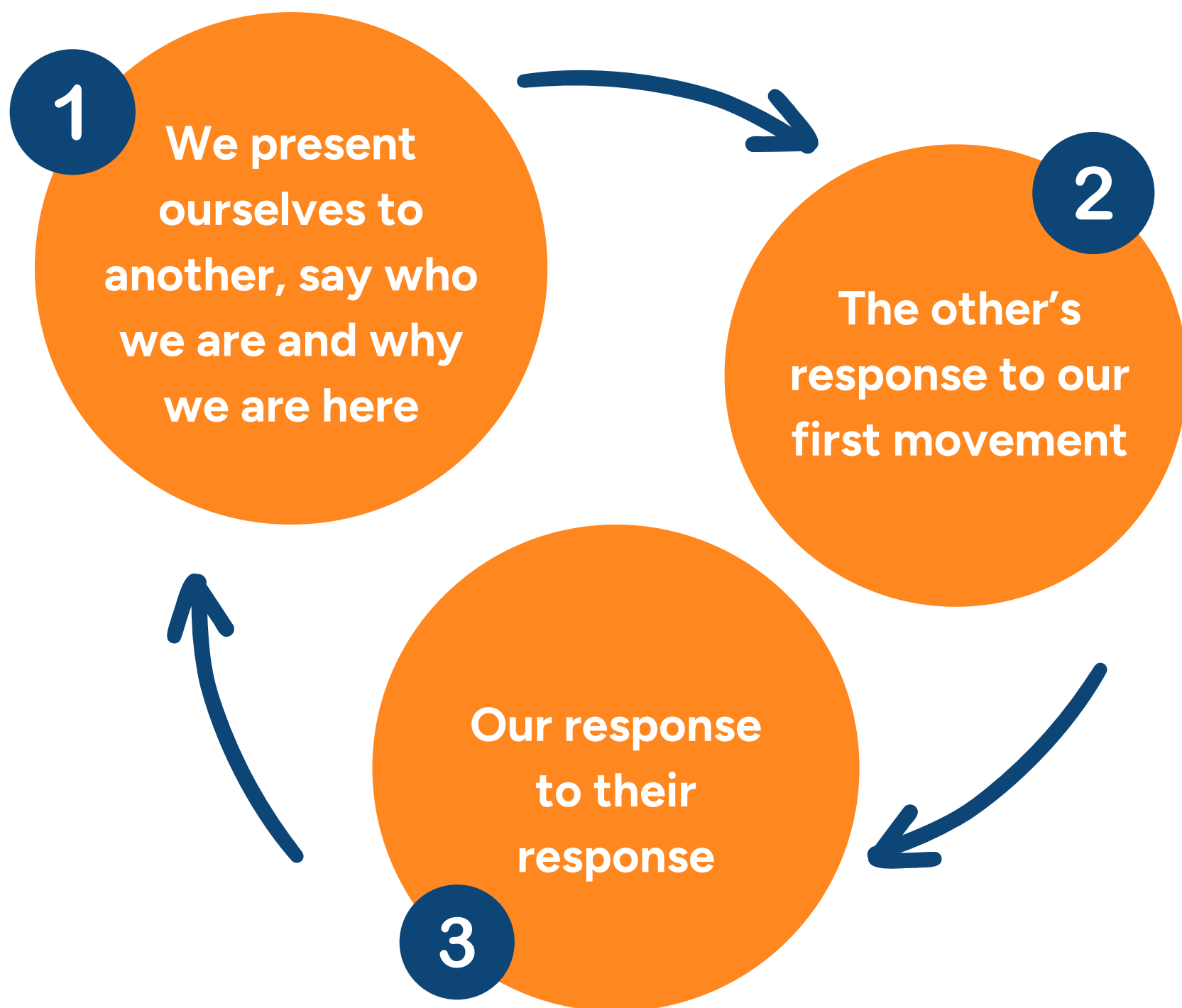
Jane walked away aware that her experiment of 'see what the people see' had shifted her understanding. It opened space for connection with the woman.

What do you think of the story?
Do you have any similar stories?

2 Dialogue - building shared understanding

Principle 2 is about connecting through dialogue. In the story shared earlier we saw glimpses of it. Jane opened up a dialogue.

Martin Buber proposes there are 3 key 'movements' in effective dialogue.



This requires us to be attentive, to listen for and connect with the ideas the other person is communicating. Genuine dialogue has all 3 movements, folding one into another, back and forth in a reciprocal way. Genuine dialogue helps build shared understanding.



LEARN MORE



An Example of Dialogue

Consider the Jane story.

What were Jane's first movements?

What was the second movement from the woman?

(one was a mumble, but then there was a real second movement).

Once the woman in her second movement shared that 'it's been hard, and ... angry', what might be a really good third movement from Jane?

Remember a good third movement is a response to what the person has said.

Perhaps role play it as a small group.

Note, it's the third movement that's key to getting into dialogue.

If Jane doesn't do a good third movement, for example, by being defensive, what might that sound like?

Again, role play that.

Now again, try to reach for a helpful third movement that enables dialogue and connection.

One example of a third movement would be, 'That does sound hard and I certainly understand how that would make you angry'.

What might then happen?



Experiment

Consider the following dialogue:

Peter: Hi, my name is Peter and I've seen you passing my front door most days. It's nice to finally meet you. How do you find living here on the street?

Neighbour: Oh yes, I've lived here a while but people aren't so friendly.

Peter: Oh, I've had this idea to start a weekly cuppa on my back deck. Would you like to come?

Reflect on this and see where Peter hasn't done a third movement. Do you see why? How could he have responded as a third movement?

In shifting to a third movement (dialogue) and holding his idea lightly ('see what the people see') what could have happened differently? What might he have said?

This week look out for an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with someone in your street or neighbourhood (or even your family!). See if you can get to third movement and share with this group next time.

3

Key words - building action together

During dialogue we hear many words. When joining with others through dialogue, we are listening for key words. These key words are the words that join us (we basically know what each other means) but they have particular meaning and stories for each person (ie. we don't know exactly what each other means)

In the story of Jane, what's the key word?

In the story of Peter, what's the key word?

Example

What do you think the key words for change are in the following example? Discuss with your group

Returning to the dialogue example - re-read it:

Peter: Hi, my name is Peter and I've seen you passing my front door most days. It's nice to finally meet you. How do you find living here on the street?

Neighbour: Oh yes, I've lived here a while but people aren't so friendly.

The key word is 'friendly'. So the pathway forward could be a third movement that goes something like:

"That sounds hard. Can you share how it's not been so friendly?"

From this we are learning about what the neighbour thinks and feels about their experience of friendliness. We see what they see. We connect with their experience.

Here's the magic of this approach: the person feels heard. Peter can then shift his thinking from 'I have a solution; I want to host a weekly coffee on the back deck' to 'What can WE do about this issue of lack of friendliness?'

Banding: Working in Groups

Once we have established strong trustful relationships through dialogue and identifying keywords, the next step in community building is joining with others (more than one) and creating small groups. We imagine the small group as a 'band' of people, hence 'banding'. In the previous story it would be about Peter and the neighbour working together to get a group going.

We call this a participatory action group, as it involves everyone working together to identify issues, develop solutions and implement strategies for change.

There are 2 key principles to keep in mind when establishing a participatory action group.




SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL



SHARED CONCERNS



0-1-3 METHOD



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead

Principle 1: Small is beautiful

This is a phrase from the famous book on community economics, by E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*. We apply this principle when thinking about group size.

We have learned that the best group is 5 to 7 seven people and no more than 12. As we will explore in the next few pages, we require a minimum of 3 people to make it a 'community' building process.

Small means relationships remain the focus not roles.

It means everyone can have a say.

Consider it a good size if everyone can sit around the table.

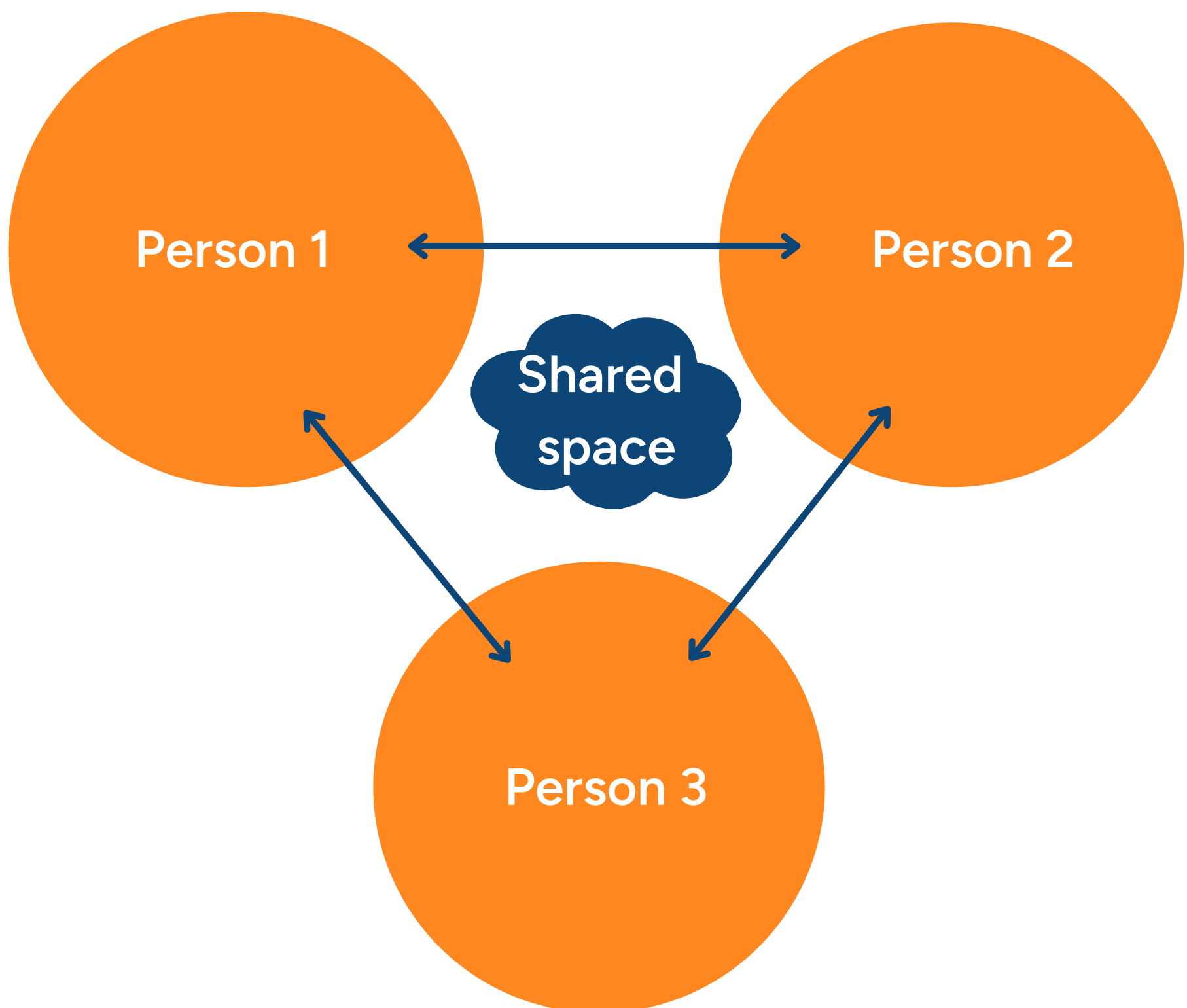
Discussion

What are the advantages of a small rather than large group size?

Principle 2: Moving with a shared concern or dream

We need to identify a shared concern or dream to work together for action in a participatory group.

That is, it's not yours, it's not mine, but it's ours. Think of the diagram below. What's the power of the triangle in terms of a minimum of 3 people?



0-1-3

The diagram on the previous page is based on what we call the 0-1-3 principle, and is defined by the number of relationships.

Person one on their own has "0" relationships

Person 1 and person 2 together have "1" relationship

When person 1 and person 2 both connect with person 3 there are now "3" relationships.

The idea behind the 0-1-3 is that if you have an idea or concern and haven't talked to others (that is, 0 relationships) then you cannot be sure it's a shared concern or shared dream. You can then only progress in a heroic mode of doing something yourself. This is fine, but it's not a community approach.

If you however find 1 other person, that is, now 2 of you have connected, dialogued, let go of your own idea and developed a shared idea, now there's a 0-1, that is there's 1 relationship. A dyad. This is more powerful than a solo-heroic effort. But we suggest it's still not strong enough to be a community effort.

Obviously, for us, the community method needs the 3 people. 3 relationships. It's the minimum triad for moving forward.

It's the 0-1-3.



Building: Organisations

Small groups are the heartbeat of community building.

By remaining as a small informal group, members can put all their energy and time into their vision or mission without getting bogged down into administrative tasks.

But sometimes, you need the fourth element of the framework - to build a people's organisation to formalise the work.

In the community sector there are 2 main models of formal organisation:

- **Community Associations**
- **Cooperatives**

Small groups may be able to partner through auspices with other organisations in order to access grants or funding opportunities without needing to formalise.

Discussion

Why might a group become an organisation? (consider, group numbers, membership, finance, insurance etc).

Why would you become an organisation and not remain a group?
Importantly, discuss, what are the risks of becoming an organisation?

Small Group vs Organisation

SMALL GROUP



ADVANTAGES

- Flexible
- Relational
- Innovation
- Rapid Communication

DISADVANTAGES

- Lack of Structure
- Limited Accountability
- Limited Resources

ORGANISATION



ADVANTAGES

- Clear Structure
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Resource Access

DISADVANTAGES

- Bureaucracy
- Rigidity
- Roles not Relationships

VS



A community building framework summary

Bonding. Banding. Building. Bridging.

1

Being - what values matter to you?

2

Bonding - how do you build purposeful relationships to bring change?

3

Banding - how can you bring people together with a shared concern into small groups to take action?

4

Building - do you need to move from an informal small group to form an organisation?

Thank You!

This workbook has hopefully given you opportunities for **Reading, Experimenting** and **Reflecting** on community building.

We hope you're feeling inspired and more informed.

Remember you're not alone either as an individual or small group. The world of change can be imagined more like a bunch of grapes (lots of small activities joined up) rather than a big watermelon (one big activity). The trick is not to go alone or try to be too big.

Reach out, connect with others. There are many showcases to read in the next pages, or contact us at Community Praxis Co-op or the Social Shift Institute.



www.communitypraxis.org
info@communitypraxis.org
www.socialshift.com.au



Social Shift: Community-Led Projects Showcase

The Social Shift: Community-Led Ideas

The Social Shift Institute offers an exciting place-based community development initiative as a Brokerage Organisation for the Department of Social Services: Community-Led Support Fund (CLSF).

The CLSF has produced significant investment in the Hinkler region and provides opportunities for local individuals, groups and organisations to partner with the Social Shift Institute for funding to address local issues and create deep, lasting change in the region.

The CLSF has stemmed from the Department of Social Services Local Services Plan for former Cashless Debit Card regions. In Hinkler, the Local Services Plan targets 5 key identified community issues:



Over the 12 months, 29 projects have been funded across the Hinkler region.



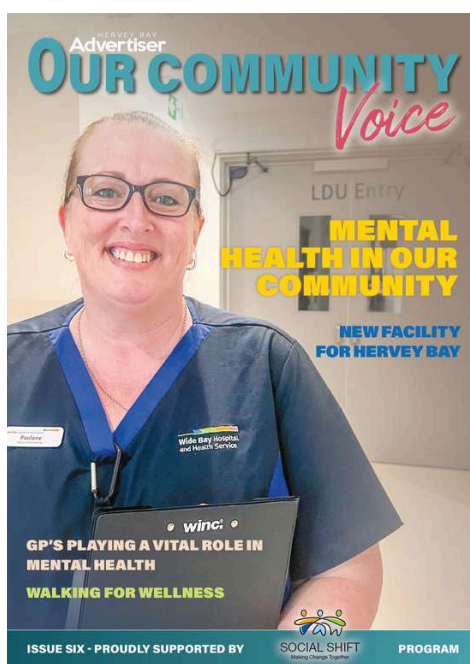
Our Community Voice

By Hervey Bay Advertiser

The Hervey Bay Advertiser produced a monthly 4 page magazine style section within the weekly free Hervey Bay Advertiser Newspaper titled 'Our Community Voice'. The special section also included a second edition each month with a full-page Community Diary.

'Our Community Voice' covered the available services that provide support for social issues within our community, in particular the priority groups within scope of the social shift. It provided a vital link to directly impacted individuals as well as raising awareness to the general community.

'Our Community Voice' was supported by a full-page Community Diary in the fortnightly edition of the Hervey Bay Advertiser each month. With distribution of 20,000+ printed versions delivered to local homes each week.





Financial Counselling

By Regional Housing Limited

The Financial Counselling Service had been a vital resource for residents in the Hervey Bay and Bundaberg region, offering tailored support to those who faced financial crises. By providing comprehensive guidance, the service empowered community members to tackle immediate financial challenges while fostering long-term financial well-being. Counsellors worked closely with clients to enhance their financial literacy, teaching essential skills like budgeting and money management. Additionally, the service advocated on behalf of clients, negotiating with creditors and facilitating access to vital resources. This holistic approach not only alleviated immediate stress but also equipped individuals with the tools needed to build resilience and secure their financial futures.

This project assisted 90 clients in Hervey Bay and 38 in Bundaberg. A total of 502 sessions of support were provided to clients in Hervey Bay, while 306 sessions of support were provided in Bundaberg. The project reported that 98% of clients achieved goals related to independence, participation, and well-being, with clients stating that their knowledge and skills in financial decision-making had improved.



Sunshine Van

By We Care Two Inc.

Sunshine Van Pilot Project has delivered a completely new service for the Hervey Bay region through the free mobile hot shower and clothes washing facilities for the disadvantaged and homeless. The service is delivered through a purpose-built caravan which has been fitted out with washing machines, driers, and a hot water shower cubicle. The Sunshine Van is located temporarily at Apex Park on the Hervey Bay Esplanade three mornings per week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and is delivered in conjunction with We Care Two's free Community Breakfast program which is currently delivered at this location from 6.00am to 9.00am on the same days.

The Sunshine Van was built by the Red Tape Shredders in partnership with the HBNC who hosted the Bay's Biggest Sleep Out to raise funds to purchase and fit-out the van. The van was then given to We Care 2.

The Sunshine Van shower services have been used by approximately 10 clients per week and 100 toiletry packs have been handed out. The clothes washing and drying service has seen approximately 12 clients per week with over 250 loads of washing and drying completed. Since it's inception, up to 3 clients per month have accessed further emergency relief services.



Queer Comic Writing

By Wide Bay Kids Community Inc.

Inspired by the popular webcomic Heartstopper, Beyond Boundaries aimed to provide a platform for young people to express their unique stories and perspectives. Programs guided participants in bringing their creative visions to life, ensuring that their voices were heard and celebrated.

Beyond Boundaries - Queer Comic Writing provided opportunities for individuals aged 18 to 35 to participate in a series of workshops where they wrote and designed a comic based on their own lives and stories. The workshops aimed to empower LGBTQIA+ individuals, increasing their confidence and self-esteem, fostering positive social connections with peers, and raising greater awareness in the wider community through their stories. The project supported preventive mental health for LGBTQIA+ individuals.



Auto Skills Project

By Regional Training Services Queensland

The automotive training workshop is now fully operational, delivering essential entry-level training to jobseekers in the Hervey Bay region. This innovative program specifically targeted identified skill shortage areas within the automotive sector, providing participants with hands-on experience and foundational skills.

Trainees learned vital techniques such as underbody suspension component installation, tyre fitting, and wheel balancing. Each session combined theoretical knowledge with practical exercises, ensuring that jobseekers gained a comprehensive understanding of the automotive trade. Skilled instructors, who brought years of industry experience, guided participants through every aspect of the curriculum, fostering a supportive learning atmosphere. The program saw 10 participants, with 5 going on to complete further training or secure employment.

Local businesses eagerly participated in the program, recognising the value of a well-trained workforce. They collaborated with the workshop, offering insights and opportunities for hands-on training, thus ensuring that the curriculum aligned with current industry standards.



Cultural Healing Camps

By Wide Bay Women's Health Centre Inc.

The Indigenous Women's Cultural Healing Camps are a newly developed service that has been provided for Indigenous women that have experienced Domestic and Family Violence and other life traumas. The camps have been delivered in the Fraser Coast (Hervey Bay) area.

Each Indigenous Women's Healing Camp has been delivered over three days and was facilitated by specialists from DFV services, AOD services, education and employment and mental health services.

Activities include sharing cultural history and evidence-based, best practice programs to build strong, empowering, healthy relationships such as Shark Cage and Love Bites.

The overall aim of the healing camps is to improve Indigenous Women's connection to culture, improve self-confidence and resilience, and to upskill Indigenous Women so they are equipped to make healthy choices for a bright future.



FAB Network Project

By Wide Bay Kids Community Inc.

The Families and Baby (FAB) Services Network-Planning for our Future project has undertaken succession planning and transitional arrangements to support the continuation of the Bundaberg Family and Baby Network (FAB).

This has been conducted through:

- Facilitating FAB Network as lead organisation including hosting monthly meetings.
- Engaging FAB network members to participate in strategic planning sessions to build a 5 year plan. 5 strategic planning sessions were held with key participation from 86 members focusing on defining the future vision of the FAB network.
- Engaging FAB network members to develop a sustainability plan for the network post June 2024. 2 sustainability planning sessions were held and a formal plan was developed.



Wirntiki Wellness

By Indigenous Cultural Diversity Consultancy (ICDC)

Providing traditional full body trench smoke healing sessions by a culturally informed practitioner at Women's Healing Camps. The healing sessions were aimed at Indigenous participants who have experienced family and domestic violence and wider Indigenous community with outcomes including strengthened cultural identity and connection, and emotional well-being whilst empowering women in families to voice for a change.

Local Female Elders were present to lead this collaboration and be present to experience the change in focus after a full body trench smoking and spread the need for traditional healing from a holistic perspective.

The program saw participation from 143 women with 20 women who returned for a second session. Of these participants, 90% of participants recommended the service to friends and family to experience the Traditional Full Body Trench Smoking Healing.



Livewell Hervey Bay

By Prime Agents Australasia Pty Ltd.

Livewell Hervey Bay was a 10-episode video series filmed in high definition, aimed at improving community education and support in Hervey Bay. The series featured experts in their fields covering topics such as ageing, mental health, youth, families, prevention, support services, homelessness, mentoring, health and well-being, and breaking the cycle, with each episode lasting 45 minutes.

Livewell Hervey Bay aimed to empower residents of Hervey Bay with immediate access to support services, improved community inclusion and belonging, enhanced health and well-being, and better self-development skills.

Audience feedback revealed high satisfaction rates, with 90% of respondents stating that the series provided valuable information and resources. Many reported that the series helped them access services they had previously been unaware of. The series garnered over 15,000 views across multiple platforms, including YouTube, Spotify, and SoundCloud.



Wellness Warriors

By Allied Fitness Studio

The delivery of Wellness Warriors included weekly, free group fitness sessions over a six-month period. The sessions aimed to improve participants' physical, mental, and emotional health, nutrition and hygiene, positive social connections, and self-confidence. Wellness Warriors also featured the development of a long-term Fitness Library resource with 24 available videos.

The delivery of Wellness Warriors included five large group fitness sessions run by qualified instructors, with 150 participants. These sessions focused on enhancing participants' physical, mental, and emotional health, nutrition and hygiene, positive social connections, and self-confidence.

Wellness Warriors also produced a fitness library with a base of 24 videos. Online registrations generated a membership base of 3,500 members. The online workout videos and programming received over 4,530 views during the project.



Shine Bright

By Shine Bright Mental Health Supports, Intervention and Coordination

The Shine Bright for the Better project involved the delivery of clinician support through two primary activities: mental health individual support and domestic violence group support.

The mental health activity was delivered over a five-month period to five clients with chronic and enduring mental illness. The aim was to support them in accessing safe and stable community resources.

The domestic violence activity provided a fortnightly group for 10 to 15 women, lasting two hours per session, with the aim of increasing education and knowledge around VPU, Centacare, DV Connect, and Small Steps 4 Hannah. It also included the delivery of a domestic violence DBT Therapy Group, which offered two-hour face-to-face sessions for 12 weeks in Hervey Bay to 10 to 12 women.

The support group initially engaged 21 participants, but as the program progressed, it became evident that the complex and varied needs of each participant required more personalised support. As a result, the decision was made to transition the support group sessions into one-on-one support to provide more tailored and intensive care to help address the unique challenges faced by each participant.



Frontline Worker Development

By Assistance Industry Resourcing Pty Ltd.

The Frontline Worker Development Networks project directly engages community support workers and created channels for information exchange, collaboration, professional development and capacity building in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. This included:

- In person quarterly meetings held in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay
- 14+ Professional development workshops and training (e.g. trauma informed practice skills)
- Monthly online learning lounges with guest speakers exploring topics of key relevance including AOD, mental health, DFV, suicide prevention, emergency accommodation and family trauma and breakdown. Currently one has been featured in Social Prescribing in Hervey Bay.
- Networking events were held and had 100+ attendees.



Blurred Minds

By Bridges Health and Community Care Ltd.

The Blurred Minds - Vaping Education project involved Bridges partnering with local schools to deliver parent and carer workshops, as well as teacher and school leader workshops in local Bundaberg and Hervey Bay schools throughout Terms 1 and 2 of 2024.

Blurred Minds workshops lasted 1 to 2 hours each and covered topics including:

- Vaping and health
- Vaping deception
- Empowering change
- Vaping and the environment
- Virtual reality house party

The student workshops saw attendance from 5,425 students, with 457 survey responses indicating that 83% of participants reported increased knowledge about the impacts of vaping, alcohol, and cannabis.

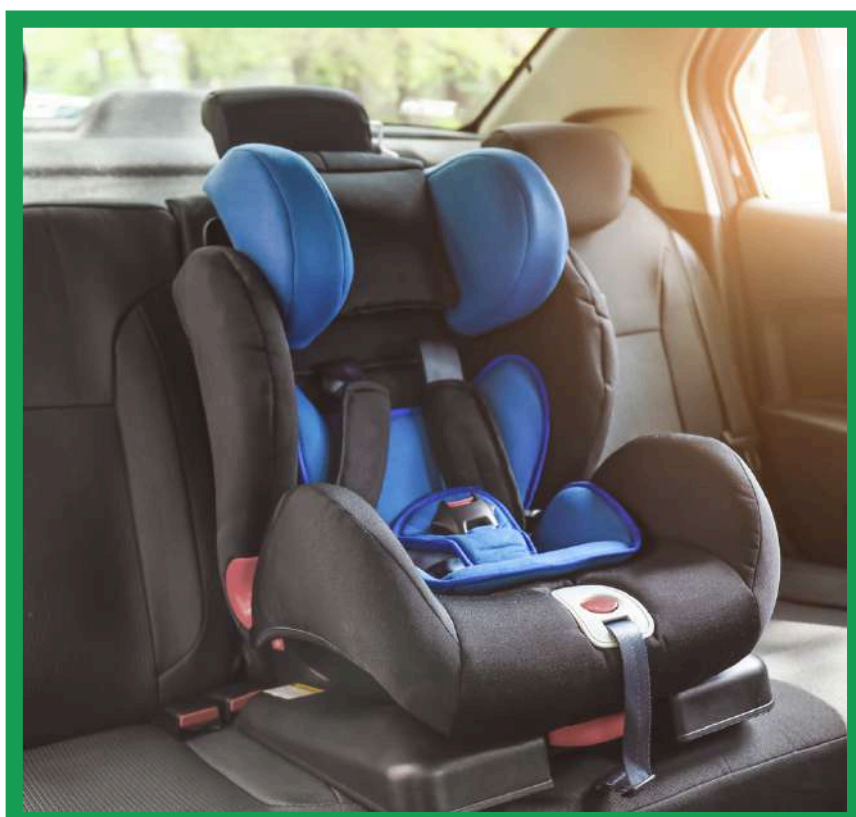


Community Centred Solutions

By Bundaberg and District Neighbourhood Centre Inc.

The Community Centred Solutions project delivered forums to community organisations with the view to breakdown silos and service barriers in the Bundaberg area. The aim was to increase more timely and appropriate services to people needing support. The Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre partnered with Wide Bay Kids to lead the project which included:

- Identifying all relevant support services in the Bundaberg area that collectively support clients to provide more timely and appropriate service
- Engaged in discussion forums with support services to understand how existing silos can be broken down to service community needs
- Mapped existing service gaps and identify areas where wait lists exist
- Designed a model for sharing professional staff and a strategy for attracting more allied health practitioners to the Bundaberg area.



Safe Seats

By Wide Bay Kids Community Inc.

The Safe Seats project provided nationally accredited safety seat trained staff to install child safety seats in vehicles of individuals and families in the Bundaberg area. Safe Seats also provided access to child safety seats for short-term hire.

This program achieved enhancing child safety through car seat installation and community support. Over the duration of the program, 89 customers were served, 134 car seats were installed and 14 were hired. This was completed over 17 weeks (2 days per week) in Bundaberg and Childers. From this service, 21 families were able to access emergency funding.



Partner Up

By Wide Bay Kids Community Inc.

The Partner Up podcast hosted interviews that explored alternative ways to approach how service providers and community work together to improve the accessibility and efficiency of service provision to people needing support. The podcast interviewed stakeholders (service providers and professionals) to discuss service provision and gain a deeper understanding of programs offered, referral pathways and waitlists. The podcasts were recorded with local staff in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay.

The program saw 9 podcasts recorded and uploaded to Spotify as well as produced into a web series and published on YouTube. On Spotify there was 40 plays whilst on the Web series saw 288 views (20.6 hours of viewing time).



Brave Places Safe Spaces

By Brave Brothers Ltd.

Provision of a new service to Bundaberg of the Brave Places Safe Spaces initiative created safe and inclusive spaces for individuals and communities, especially vulnerable people with mental health concerns, suicide concerns, DFV and homeless. This was established through partnerships with local businesses that were easily accessible, diverse and welcoming to people including First Nations community.

3 Brave places were created within the Bundaberg community and involved training a total of 18 staff. The development of 2 public suicide prevention workshops were held with 24 participants, whilst also showcasing a Employer Tool Box Intervention Sessions with 14 workers.

As part of the Brave Places Safe Spaces initiative, 2 DV workshops were presented with additional “pop up” information sessions and discussed the issues presented with 20 male staff. Demand for the Pop Ups was high with Brave Brothers facilitating 42 events that had direct impacts on 689 people.



Healthy Relationships Workshops

By Bridges Health and Community Care Ltd.

The Healthy Relationships Workshops were an interactive series aimed at educating and empowering young women aged 13 to 25, as well as the wider community, about healthy relationships, recognising red flags of domestic violence and coercive control, and resources for seeking help. The workshops were designed to be engaging, informative, and conducive to open discussions. The workshop format included two sessions: Building Healthy Foundations and Breaking the Cycle.

During the development of the workshops, it was identified that the delivery approach needed to be reconsidered due to concerns about anonymity. As a result, the program redirected its focus to being delivered in schools and organisations. To date, two workshops have been conducted within the Bundaberg region, with more workshops scheduled to be held at schools in Hervey Bay. Survey results indicated that of the 21 surveys collected, 89% of participants reported increased knowledge, and 83% expressed intentions to share the knowledge they had gained.



JT You Got This Program

By JT Academy Pty Ltd.

JT “You Got This” is a program that supports low to moderate at risk youth in school and community settings. The program assists young people (11-17 years old) to build resilience and hope while preventing future contact with the justice system. The program was tailored and delivered as both an intensive 4 day workshops and a 10 week (1.5 hours per week) program that provides a safe and positive environment. Key program topics that were covered were self-belief, leadership, teamwork, supporting each other, being bold, shining the light on others, brilliance, confidence, personal and goal setting and planning.

The program engaged 110 participants across both structures. Upon completion, 90% of students demonstrated increased engagement in school. Eighteen participants accessed employment services, including resume writing, and several students expressed interest in further education and training. Additionally, two cohorts of students registered to attend the Careers Expo.



COACH & STREETWORKS Training

By Kindness Works Ltd.

The COACH and STREETWORKS - Training Volunteers project developed online training and information resources with the aim of increasing the number of volunteers trained as well as increase the awareness of the programs in the wider community. This includes the development of a website platform from which case studies, training resources, information resources, research and evaluations became available.

The project saw the development of 6 video interviews with participants and volunteers demonstrating the impacts of Coach and Streetworks. 6 Videos were developed as presentations with the focus on the training of staff and volunteers. 2 video inductions were created for program volunteers and 3 video presentations of the work of Kindness works were created.

To date, 120 people have been trained as coaches using the coach training materials presented by the Coach Coordinator.



BEATS Program

By C.Y. Entertainment

B.E.A.T.S = Business, Entrepreneurial and Technical Skills for the music industry is a standalone program to be trialed in the Fraser Coast targeting hard to reach' young people aged 10-17 years as well as working aged recipients who receive a Social Security payment/s. The focus of the program is on increasing confidence, self-esteem and improving social skills by way of building capacity, technical and entrepreneurial skills around the music industry. This includes production, podcasts, radio and business management. The program will be non-formal participation where youth workers will demonstrate positive interactions and prosocial behaviour as role models and mentors. BEATS uses music making as a means to engaged groups of disadvantaged and disengaged youth within a safe space where they can express a range of social and emotional difficulties they are experiencing using musical genres that feature a strong lyrical focus, such as rap or hip-hop, and the production of their creative project.

The program has been delivered 3 days per week to 50 participants with a 70% completion rate during the school term. 60% of participants have reported an overall improvement across life domains such as physical health, mental health, safety and employment.



Mindfulness Workshops

By Linda Gillespie (Sole Trader)

Delivery of 8 x 4 week introductory course in mindfulness and meditation with the aim of empowering participants with the skills and tools to better manage mental health conditions including anxiety and depression. The course will be held at various locations over the 4 week period with workshops held twice weekly and aimed at working aged recipients of social security payment/s and their children 14 years and older and the wider community.

The course had 118 participants and helped participants develop a sense of belonging and social connectedness. Over the 118 participants, 80% of attendees experienced improved self-confidence which is vital in encouraging participants to reach out for support from mental health intervention services through participation and community engagement. Overall the workshops directly supported LSP Priority 3 by providing early intervention tools and enhancing the participants self-efficacy through the promotion of well-being.



Creating Your Daisy Chain of Support

By One Daisy Partnership

Delivery of a series of 12 workshops including 4 focusing on child sexual abuse (recognising, responding and recovering for parent and educators), 4 focusing on selling self: awareness (safety and awareness for young people, parents and educators around platforms such as Only Fans and the realities of the industry), and 4 focusing on child sexploitation and sextortion (for young people, parents and educators). These workshops were delivered in Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Childers and Bundaberg.

The workshops were delivered from a motivational and lived experience perspective and also include written and online resources. Individualised support was delivered as required to assist workshop attendees and other community members around the topics as required. The aim of the workshops was to reduce stigma and taboos relating to child sexual abuse and child sexploitation/sextortion to encourage greater conversation and better support recovery with the vision that through reporting rates and promoting the voice of survivors, child sexual abuse can be eliminated.



SOCIAL
SHIFT
INSTITUTE



HBNC
Creating Connected Communities



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Community Practice
Co-op