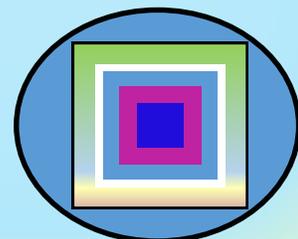




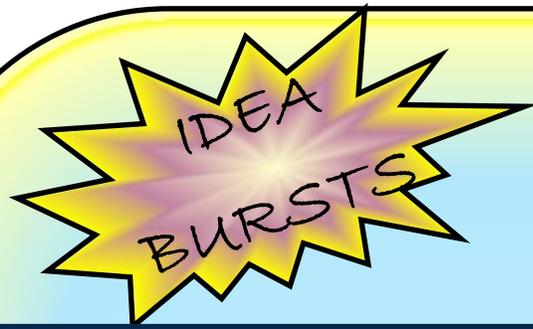
**A collection of activities, tools,
concepts, thoughts, and
resources to support
Older Adult peer based
organizing and partnership with
community entities.**

**Authored by Lesley Clarke and Darcie Davidson
and completed for
The Society for Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy.**



Canada 

This project is funded by the Government of
Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program.



About This Material...

Forming partnership around community change is a complex undertaking. Individuals and entities bring hidden values, assumptions and goals to the communal table. It is important to set this table together and not just send an invitation once the seating arrangements and menu have been decided on. In this way values, assumptions, and goals can be discussed from the beginning of partnerships. Leadership can be imagined as a shared opportunity and a perspective that recognizes the importance of concepts of power and processes of inclusion and exclusion can be integrated into your partnership process.

This collection of leadership, community change, and partnership supports are intended to serve your process. These components are an accumulation of lessons that we gained in the process of organizing with groups of older adults and community organizations across a several years. There were moments of profound learning and it was not always predictable nor did it follow a clear path. Our hope was that we could capture many of these lessons bourn of hard work and share them with others engaged in social change activities. We expect that your path will also be crooked at times therefore, we are not presenting this material as a linear “how to” model. This is a collection of lessons on partnership, leadership, and collective community change from the perspective of the older adults and entities that participated. We imagined this collection as a “idea bursts”, a bank of ideas that the user could make use of based on need or inclination at any given time.

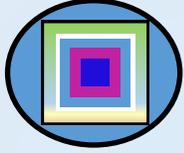
This process is complicated but, very rewarding. It requires every participant to reflect on their own perspectives and engage in a critical thinking process of “standing in another’s shoes”. Using creative community strategies can be level the playing field because the game is new for everyone. Project participants repeated the need to have fun and celebrate throughout our time together. Have fun, and celebrate your accomplishments together!

Seniors Connect and Partnerships

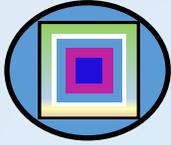
The production of this material was a part of a partnership project funded by the Federal Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors program. Seniors Connect was the umbrella group made up of several Nanaimo Agencies and Entities working in partnership.

Project partners were;

- ◇ The City of Nanaimo
- ◇ HealthWell Consulting
- ◇ Lifeline
- ◇ Nanaimo Family Life Association
- ◇ The Society for Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy



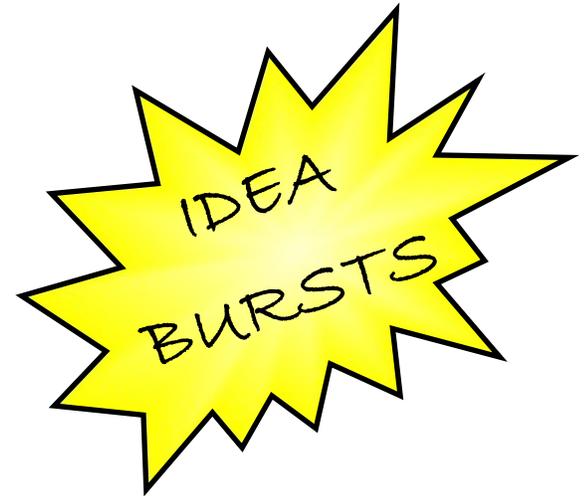
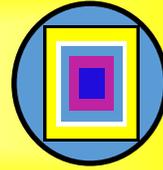
Idea Bursts Part 1



Part 1

Project Launch Idea Bursts

Introducing Idea Bursts



These IDEA BURSTS are helpful for anyone who is looking at grass roots community organizing, specifically working with diverse populations who may not have had opportunities to be considered in the context of community organizing and decision making.

Within these IDEA BURSTS we wanted to explore the following key organizing areas;

- ◇ Acknowledging individual experiences while focussing on group goals
- ◇ Creating group safety
- ◇ Supporting diverse opportunities for participation
- ◇ Creating focus/common goals
- ◇ Developing a vision and mission
- ◇ Planning activities, events and meetings
- ◇ Cultivating relationships with allies
- ◇ And other things that were identified as organizing priorities by project participants

In addition to this we wanted to provide simple organizing tools that would help groups along with developing their own IDEA BURSTS.

The reverse of this page is an overall tool that will help support the development of active group participation and help keep track of the who, what where, when, why, and how!

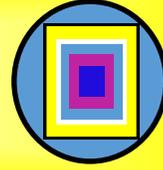
IDEA BURSTS

This is a collection of IDEA BURSTS meant to inspire community partnerships, peer organizing, and support the leadership of diverse older adults.

IDEA BURSTS are non linear tools and information sheets that peer organizers and community entities can take a random sampling from rather than following a specific format.

IDEA BURSTS supports the randomness of community organizing by providing some ideas for coordinating truly diverse populations for action.

Peer Planning



Planning



The table will help the group decide on key pieces for getting things organized. These are organizing activities, not decision-making activities. For example, the collective members might sign up to organize a visioning event, but everyone is welcome to attend. This way the collective maintains the shared leadership ideals. A small collective will find that many of the same people will sign up for several planning areas. There maybe some areas missing that can be added by the group.

Areas	Key Activities	Next Steps	Timeline	Resources Needed	People
Collective Building					
Vision					
Goals					
Fun Celebrations Planning					
Resource Acquisition					
Knowledge Seeking					



Foreword

Project Introduction

Since 2015 The Society for Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy has been involved with a variety of projects and programs based on the Creative Community Model.

This model draws on the experiences and interests of community members, and attempts to create space where “Community Entities” work in partnership with “Peers” to address issues and create programs and services that support their neighbours.

Background for Peers and Community Entities

- ◇ This information is based on learning developed through a peer-based leadership project that took place on Vancouver Island.
- ◇ Our findings support partnerships between community entities and peer-based populations in order to support a sustainable peer voice in the community.
- ◇ These IDEA BURSTS are designed to support Peer organizers and community entities with mapping out a partnership to support peer-based leadership and community organizing at the grass roots level.

Peers

For this manual peers are defined as persons who share personal characteristics that impact their participation in community and the economy. Our project focussed on working with vulnerable older adults (peers).

Community Entity?

For this manual Community Entities (CE) may be organizations or community services that have structure, staff, and resources to support organizing.



Safety and Respect

Guidelines for Safe Space Agreements

1. Peers should freely identify what they need for a safe space. In order to support this the number one premise to safe space is using respectful language, and listening respectfully to others when they are speaking.

Having a short conversation about what that means to participants can support the development of safe space agreements.

2. Create guidelines for interacting with one another based on the concerns Peers identify. Write down the guidelines and read them out at the beginning of each meeting/connection time.

Having someone who has facilitation experience guide conversation can support a productive discussion where everyone can be heard.

Respecting Diversity of Older Adult Peers

Acknowledge and respect the diversity reflected among peers.

When peers are getting to know one another it is great to find ways to promote conversation about the unique attributes of the peer participants.

Icebreaker Ideas

- ◇ *Have everyone in the groups share something that positively shaped who they are (it could be a childhood experience, something cultural, education related, family etc).*

- ◇ *Have a cultural/family heritage potluck, people can bring dishes from their culture, or things that they ate growing up. People can share stories about the significance of the dish.*



A word about food

Peer Based Organizing with Senior Peers

Older Adult Peers who participated in the development of this material were clear in their belief that offering food at meetings and events was important.

They reported that the sharing of food helped create group cohesion and reduce differences.

Senior Peers felt more at ease when sitting at a table readied for a meal together than they did one readied for a formal meeting.

The preparation and sharing of food also helped develop an informal organizational structure, and encouraged informal leadership and role sharing.



When Peer participants and CE's representatives prepare and share food together it solidifies the partner based relationship.

The sharing of a meal together supports the equitable relationship development among the partners.

The social and easy conversation that takes place while sharing a meal can be a great way to start peer organizing and peer leadership development.





Creating an Accessible Environment

To encourage diverse participation of peers consider the following;

Do locations for events and meetings support diverse participation? Do meetings happen in a central location? Are meetings on a bus route and are they timed to be convenient for transit users?

Are locations and meetings accessible to individuals with diverse-abilities? This includes accessible doorways, washrooms, ramps, elevators or level entry spaces, low lighting (non fluorescent) have seating and standing options available for people, take frequent breaks from meetings or speakers to allow people to move around or address personal needs.

Be mindful about asking peers to financially contribute– Senior Peers come from diverse socio-economic circumstances. Many will not have the ability to contribute financially. If you are asking for contributions stress that they are not mandatory for participation and that there are many important way to contribute to peer organizing beyond financial contributions.

Refer back to Safe Space Agreements– Safe Space agreements can support the accessibility of peer based projects. Refer back to them at all organized activities and meetings. Update them as needed to ensure they remain relevant to participants.

Accessible Language- Facilitators and Communicators should take the time to make sure all peers are following the flow of discussions and activities. Avoid academic language and words that are not in common every day dialogue. When discussing complicated ideas have a cheat sheet with definitions. Avoid acronyms, or, when using them write them out on a white board or flip chart. Ask for questions and feedback and offer people the opportunity to ask for clarity.



A Word About Language

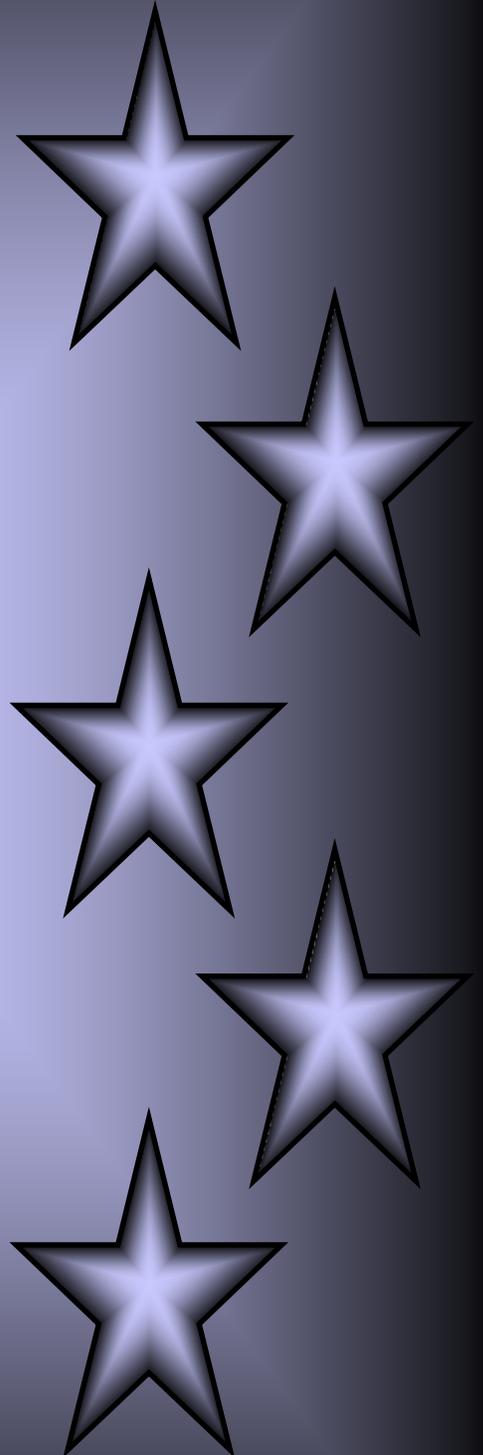
'A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.'

International Plain Language Federation

Sometimes when people come together to work, they find that language can be a barrier to communication. People use many kinds of language. There is the official language(s) adopted by a country, for example French or English. English has become the international language of business and trade and therefore, people who speak English will sometimes have an advantage over others who do not. Another form of language refers to how people speak when they belong to a specific group. These groups might be called a knowledge culture, this is a group of people who share a specific knowledge and use a specialized language to speak about what they know. We have all had experiences with specialized language, for example when a doctor explains an illness in medical terms. It is not uncommon to find ourselves struggling to understand the language that comes from an unfamiliar knowledge culture.

When working in groups it is important to remember that the differences in our backgrounds and our life experiences, can make communication difficult. When members of the community are working with organizations, they are likely to experience language differences that can cause confusion. Members of organization are likely to use a specialized language associated with a knowledge culture such as social work.

Creating an inclusive environment by being aware of language will help the group work together effectively. Two principles can help guide this process. First, acknowledge that the language used in the group may not be everyone's first language and commit to learning about the other languages spoken by group members. Second, commit using inclusive language and taking the time to get advice from the group on communication.





Improving Group Communication

How to Be More Inclusive: Plain Language

Using plain language is not about “dumbing things down”, plain language is about being inclusive.

What is plain language?

It is language that is focused on clarity. It does not include jargon, legalese, acronyms, and insider or specialized language without explanation.

Why do we use plain language?

Using plain language

- ◇ Helps everyone communicate more effectively
- ◇ Causes fewer misunderstandings
- ◇ Reduces frustration
- ◇ Is more inclusive



How Does the Group Commit to Plain Language?

Include a commitment to plain language usage in the group’s values.

Have everyone learn some simple rules for plain language

How We Improve Communication?

Ask for help from a local literacy agency

Use simple online tools

Follow a Few Simple Rules:

- ◇ Make sure that everyone has the same information
- ◇ If you use an acronym/abbreviation make sure everyone knows what it stands for
- ◇ Explain any required technical terminology before using it
- ◇ Explain culturally specific words
- ◇ Check in with the group frequently



“Get to the point as directly as you can; never use a big word if a little word will do.” EMILY CARR

Resource:

http://en.copian.ca/library/learning/sln/pl_guide/pl_guide.pdf





Peer Based Organizing

Community Entities and Funding

Supporting the Development of Partnerships between
Peer Organizers and Community Entities

Community Entity and Peer Partnerships

Community Entities and Peers may have specific objectives for entering into a partnership. If there are funding objectives the community entity should be transparent about the funding, how long it will last, if any will be accessible for peer led activities, and what the community entity has agreed to achieve and report on.

Peer Priorities Woven with Funder Priorities

Community Entities need to ensure that the priorities of peers are woven into the priorities of funders. The relationship should be reciprocal. When creating peer based projects for funders work with peers to understand their needs for optimal participation and project success.

Equitable Practices for Seeking Peer Based Funding

- ◇ Involve peers in all aspects of development of the funding application and project design (surveys, focus groups, peer volunteers, peer council)
- ◇ Be clear about funding and funder objectives
- ◇ Build in funds for peer led projects and activities
- ◇ Build in funds for peer honorarium or appreciation for significant contributors of time and knowledge
- ◇ **Build in funds for resources to support participation!**



Peer Based Organizing

Understanding Funding

Funding Structure and Accountability

Community Entities receive funding from a variety of sources this includes-

- ◇ Grants
- ◇ Government Contracts
- ◇ Corporate Donors
- ◇ Community Members
- ◇ Fundraisers
- ◇ Social Enterprises

Most of the funding is designated, meaning it must be spent how the funder and the Community Entity agreed upon.

Project funding is always for one specific project, and must be spent and accounted for according to the project contract.

Most funding is handled through community entities because they have the structure to manage and account for funding.

Funders usually issue time based calls for proposals for project based funding. They usually have a theme or a target population that they want to see addressed with the funding they have *(for example seniors, poverty, social isolation, mental health, youth, disabilities, employment etc.)*.

Funding is usually issued based on the following;

- 1) A strong project concept (how does the proposed project relate to the funders objectives, is it interesting and creative)
- 2) Demonstrated community need (is there research to show need, do project peers support the concept)
- 3) Deliverables and outcomes that can be promised (what is the impact of the project and how will it be demonstrat-

Fundraising and Community donations are more flexible funds and can be used at the discretion of the Community Entity. Flexible funds are needed to cover a CE's core costs such as rent, utilities, and agency administration. CEs depend on a variety of funding to provide their core services and maintain operations.



Vision & Mission

"If you don't know where you're going, you will probably end up somewhere else."

Laurence J. Peter

Vision Statements

This is a very important step for groups of people who come together to accomplish things. This can be a fun and inspiring activity and it will help develop a focus for the collective's energy.

Beginnings

Start with your Vision Statement. There is a worksheet included to help with the steps. The Mission Statement will come next.

A VISION STATEMENT is about the BIG picture. Your vision statement is your unchanging guide and describes a better future.

What benefit do you aim to provide?

What change do you aim to make?

What will the new conditions be?

Example: Age Action

(<https://www.ageaction.ie/>)

Vision: 'Ireland becomes the best country in which to grow older'.





Vision & Mission

Articulating a Mission

MISSION STATEMENT

What is it?

A MISSION STATEMENT tells the world what you do to achieve your vision. The world changes and your mission may need to change as you learn new things.

It includes:

What you do.

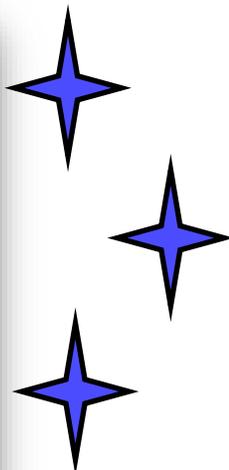
How you do it.

Why you do it.

Example: Age Action

(<https://www.ageaction.ie/>)

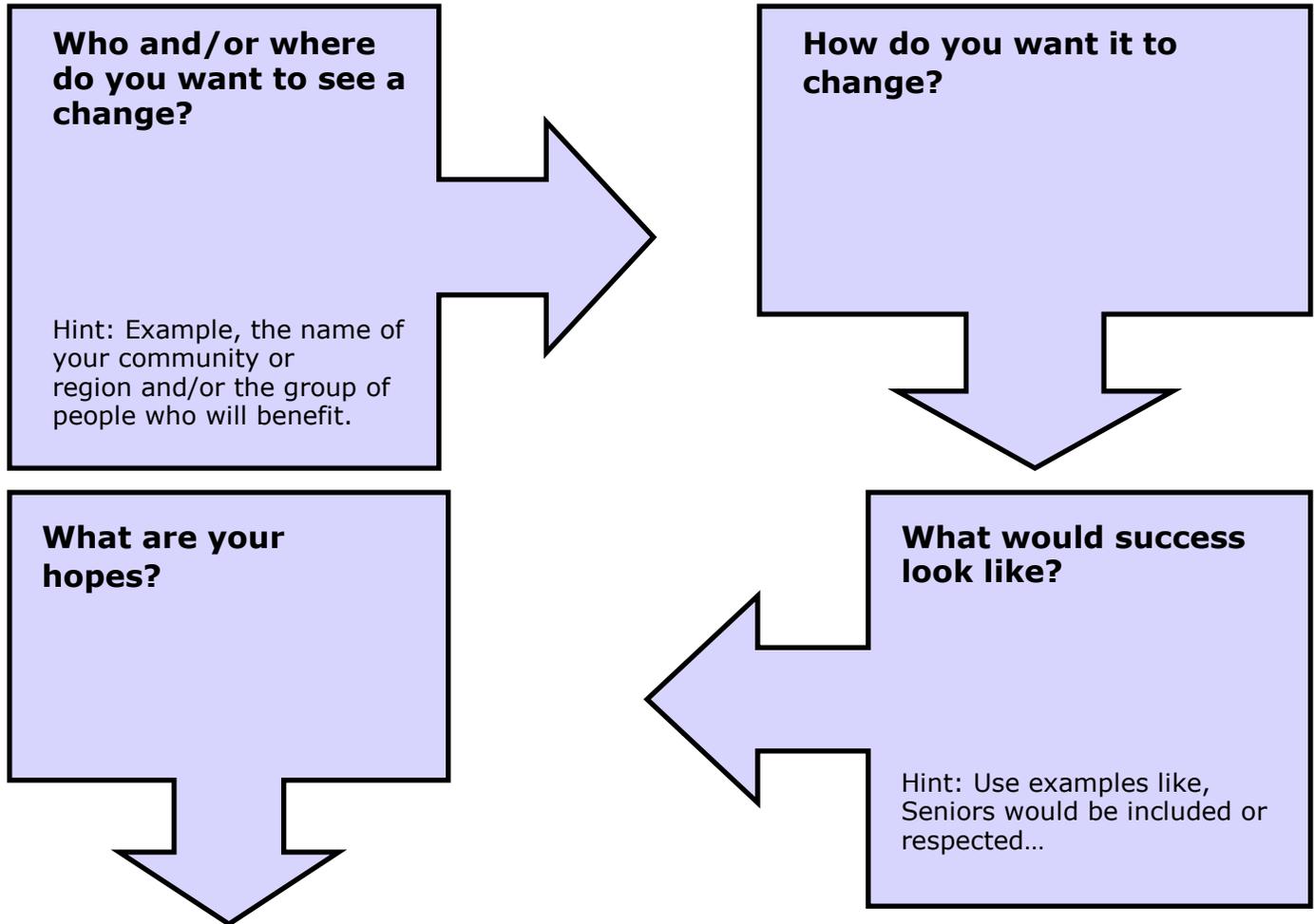
Mission Statement: *'To achieve fundamental change in the lives of all older people by empowering them to live full lives as actively engaged citizens and to secure their rights to comprehensive high quality services according to their changing needs'.*





Vision Statement

Draw large squares on flipchart or other paper and write down the group's ideas. When you feel that you have captured all the ideas ask each member of the group to circle their favorite words or phrases in each box.



Vision Statement

Ask yourselves ...

- ◇ Does it speak to the core of what we want?
- ◇ Is it uniquely yours?
- ◇ Is it broad enough to include diverse perspectives?
- ◇ Does it inspire?
- ◇ Is the message clear?
- ◇ Is it short (one sentence and plain language)?



Mission Statement

Draw large squares on flipchart or other paper and write down the group's ideas. When you feel that you have captured all the ideas ask each member of the group to circle their favorite words or phrases in each box.

Why did we form this group (think vision)?

Example: To reduce social isolation among older adults...

What do we do that supports our vision?

Example: strengthening communities, eliminating barriers, advocating...

How do we do what we do?

Example: by increasing leadership and community engagement opportunities among older adults ...

Who benefits?

Hint: Think of inclusive words...all older adults or older adults of all genders, or all older adults who identify as female... depending on your focus.

What value do we bring?

Example: dedication, diverse voices ...

List other positive attributes of your group

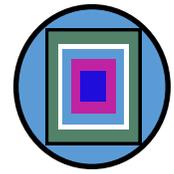
Connect these ideas... our mission is to By/through...so that...can....

Mission Statement:

Ask yourselves ...

- ◇ Does it explain what we do (using action words)?
- ◇ Does it explain why we do this?
- ◇ Does it clearly explain in plain language what you're working to achieve?
- ◇ Is it inclusive and not too limiting?

Peers and Partners, Making a New Community



Kickstart Community Organizing

Identify and build relationship with your audience

Plan events and programs that appeal to the population, provide early adopters (Peers that engage with the project early on) a chance to showcase their own interests in peer mobilization and leadership. These can be simple:

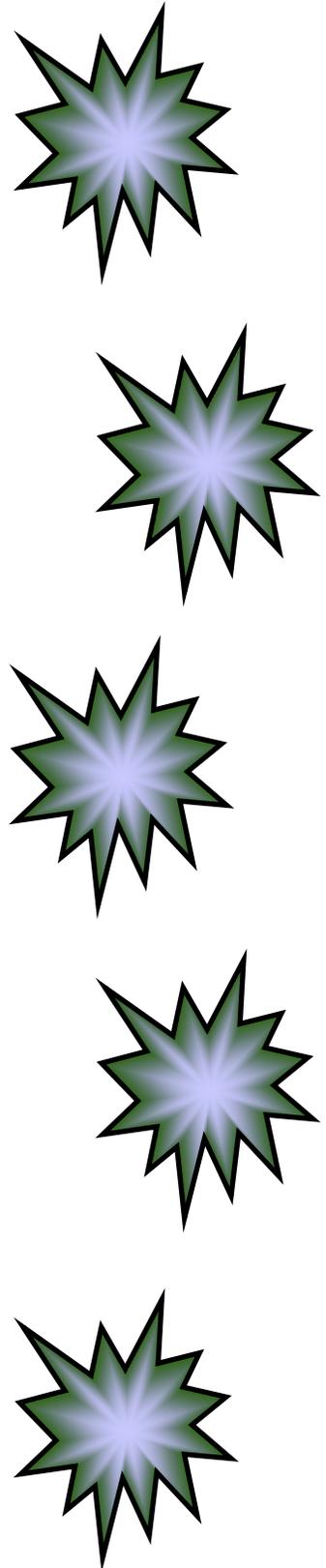
- ◇ Neighborhood/Block Party Events
- ◇ Community Picnics
- ◇ Community Café/World Café
- ◇ Service Fairs
- ◇ Community Forums
- ◇ Activities take place in environments where peers (target audience can be found)

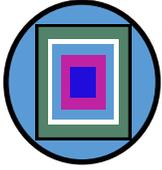
Engagement Activity Examples

- ◇ Dot-o-crazy's
- ◇ Community Engagement questionnaires
- ◇ Community Organization/services info fair
- ◇ Connection to local decision makers and representatives
- ◇ Meeting an identified community need

Connect with people in informal ways that allow for participation at all levels of experience, education, time, and skill levels

- ◇ Activities that engage children and families
- ◇ Activities that honour people with diverse-abilities
- ◇ Activities that are specific to isolated seniors





Peers and Partners, Making a New Community

This project guide is designed to work with groups of people who will have somethings in common, and yet we expect that they will also be very different. The group of peers may currently live in a broadly defined geographical location (e.g. Vancouver Island). They may live in smaller geographic areas; a neighborhood, a housing project or development, or a distinctive rural area. These may have ties that bind their identity such as, ethnicity, professional or economic ties, religion, culture, or shared background or interest. Older Adult Peers may also have very little in common beyond their experiences with ageing. Even these experiences can be expected to be diverse and unique to the individual. Whichever community group has gathered to work together, you will want to get to know it well.

Why Make the Effort to Understand and Describe Your Community?

Many of us have communities that we are already familiar with. These are communities that we have come to understand and we usually know what is expected of us as a member. When we create a new community of people working together, we need to find a way to understand each other. Not having an understanding of the make up of this new community can lead to unintentionally participating in divisive behaviour, or opening up painful issues without knowing about complex histories and personal connections.

Who is our community?

- o **Diverse- Varying ages, abilities, social experiences and personal capacity**
- o **Various individual and collective social concerns**
- o **Our community includes the most vulnerable, even those that struggle with anti social behaviours**



Peers and Partners, Making a New Community

Activity: Knowing each other: “seeing” your group

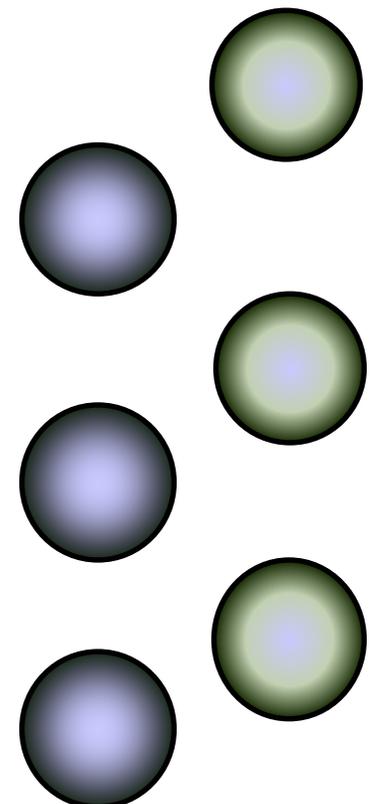
Understanding the community entails understanding it in a number of ways.

Purpose:

- ◇ Learning about each other before starting work on an initiative.
- ◇ Exploring unspoken values, rules and norms.
- ◇ Understanding and respecting differences
- ◇ Creating a positive and safe working environment that can tolerate difference
- ◇ Enhance life-long learning
- ◇ Enhance the benefit to the broader community by sharing a strong working model of positive collaborate.
- ◇ Creating a solid understanding of collaborative planning that enhances an informed justification for grant proposals
- ◇ Understanding each other so that you can tailor our activities to include all of the perspectives of the group

Simple circles of different colours should be drawn and cut out (2 per 8.5x11 page). These will be filled with the diverse responses of the make up of the group. Topics to explore include:

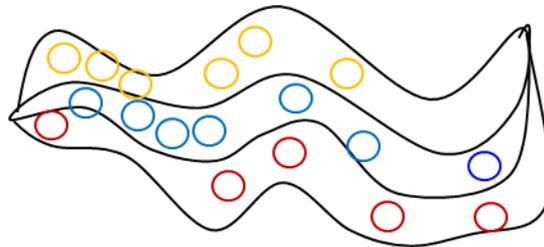
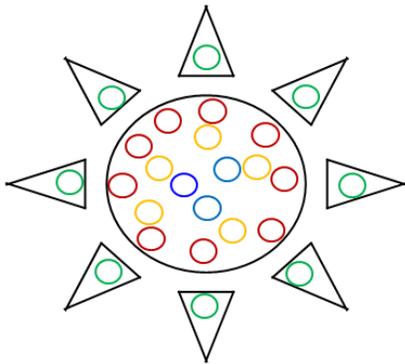
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ◇ Where am I from | ◇ Trust Looks Like |
| ◇ Where do I live | ◇ Courage Looks Like |
| ◇ Traditions Important to Me Are | ◇ Love Looks Like |
| ◇ I am Proud Of | ◇ Belonging Looks Like |
| ◇ Challenges | ◇ Power Looks Like |
| ◇ Culture | ◇ What I want to change |
| ◇ Concerns | ◇ My Skills |
| ◇ Important People | ◇ Blank – to add your own topic |
| ◇ Dreams | |
| ◇ Play | |





Peers and Partners, Making a New Community

Copies are made of the topic sheets, there should be a circle for each person for every topic. Each set of topic circles is printed on a single side of paper. These circles will be glued to a larger sheet of paper. The group can decide on a design for their circle mosaic, which can be drawn on the large paper, or they may group them organically.



Preparation

Lay out materials

Hang large paper on a wall to contain all of the group circles.

Give clear instructions to the group and be prepared to answer questions that come up.

Materials:

Scissors

Glue sticks

Large roll of paper

Collage images

Felt pens

Instructions to the Group

We are going to create a picture of our group; this will help us honour our differences and explore what we have in common.

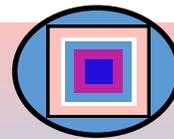
There are circles on the table that represent different things about you and the community you come from. You do not need to put your name on these, we want to get a broad idea of the unique qualities of the group without identifying any one person.

If the circles are not already cut out please cut around each of them leaving the line, it does not need to be perfect! Pick the circle topics that are the most important to you first and please complete as many as you can.

You can respond to the topic on the circle by drawing a picture, writing single words or sentences, or finding an image in the photos given that communicates your ideas and glue it to the circle. Don't worry about covering over the topic word on the circle, that is just a prompt for you.

When we have gotten all that we can do in an hour we will add them to the large paper in a mosaic.

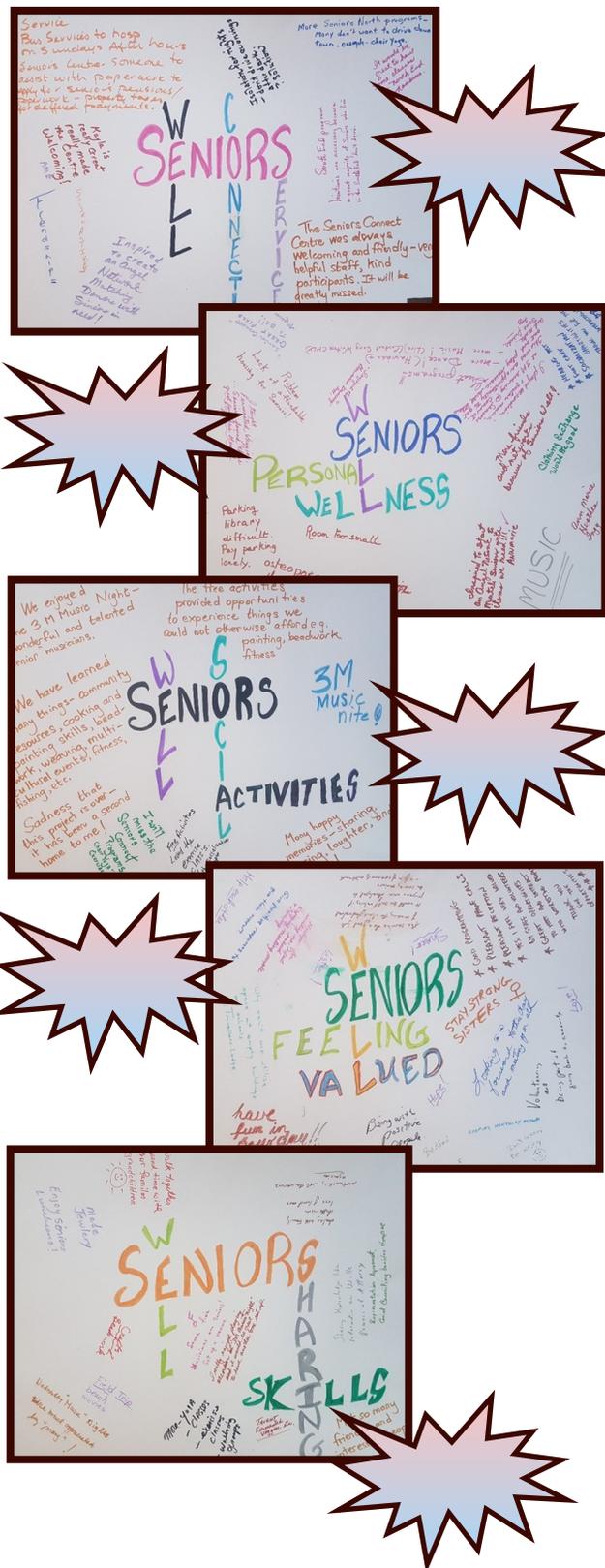
Creative Community Engagement



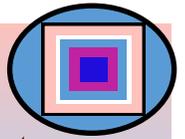
Peer Based Organizing

What is Creative Community Engagement?

Creative community engagement uses innovative ways of structuring civic participation. Participants are equipped with new ways of engaging such as visual, theatrical, musical or other creative tools and methods. Introducing these different methods and tools into community-based conversations about development, problem solving and solutions encourages the formation of different ways of seeing things. Usually the kind of writing used is creative and non academic. The idea is to provide a more inclusive environment that is less controlled by thinking that privileges certain kinds of academic or bureaucratic text and written works. Visual content is an important strategy for a more inclusive conversation. The co-creation of the creative peer group usually continues to exist in some form of documentation, video, photos, drawings, and graphic works. This documentation will be available for the collective to refer back to as they continue to build on the process. The collective can also share their work with the greater community and broaden the conversation.



Creative Community Engagement



Peer Based Organizing



Why would we use Creative Community Engagement?



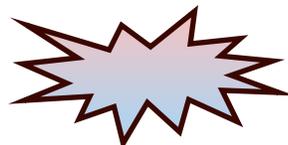
A creative community approach can shift the community conversation from a primary focus on economic well being to quality of life discussions. Many social groups such as older adults are not viewed as high level consumers in a complex consumer society. This can reduce the sense of personal power over the conditions of life and belonging experienced by older adults. Collective reimagining on a more inclusive society can help to renew a sense of participating in decision making and belonging. These are essential elements of authentic citizenship supported by creative community engagement.



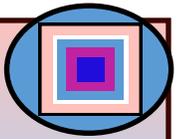
How Do We Use Creative Community Engagement?



Creative community engagement is a disruptive process. By engaging in activities that are new to all the participants involved the potential exists to equalize power during co-creation sessions. Participating in unique and novel activities and brainstorming sessions disrupts pre-existing leadership structures and gives all the participants an opportunity to explore and create meaning.



Creative Community Engagement



Peer Based Organizing

Things to Consider about Creative Community Engagement

Creative community engagement is an effective strategy for encouraging diverse groups to express their views, ideas, preferences, and concerns. This form of engagement is useful in the early stages of group forming as it is less threatening, can be fun and provide an opportunity for a greater degree of direct participation.

Positive Potential	Things to Watch Out For
Suitable and engaging for people of different ages and intergenerational groups.	Sometimes there is a misconception that a specific set of artistic skills are needed to participate in creative engagement. It is important that projects have different levels of involvement and that specific skills, knowledge, or training are not a requirement of participation. Keep engagement opportunities direct, inclusive, and simple.
Interactive engagement combats boring and disengaging processes found in typical meetings.	Sometimes it can be difficult to accurately interpret the meaning of some participants ideas. Be sure to leave time to discuss the meaning behind the creative process and document these conversations.
Supporting creativity opens the possibility of unique ideas.	Some engagement projects require large spaces. Work with partners and try to secure accessible and inexpensive or free community spaces.
Creates a fun co-creative environment that helps forge relationships .	Some people may have an aversion to some methods or materials. Be sure to “change things up” providing more opportunities to capture the imagination of participants. Let participants know that they have choice, this process is designed to provide more opportunity not less.
Co-creation of a artifact or object helps develop a common vision .	
The products of the creative process can be shared to broaden the reach of the conversation	

Creative Community Engagement

Peer Based Organizing

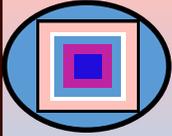


Community engagement is most effective when imagination is used freely and people are having fun. Fun is subjective, so choice is important and letting people participate at a level that is comfortable is key.



Engagement Activities

- Documentary
- Graphic novel
- Mini festival
- Videos
- Murals
- Music events
- Drawing
- Photography
- Theatre
- Book making
- Music Events
- Social media content
- Dot-o-crazy vote on activities with stickers
- Song lyrics
- Models
- Poetry
- Mandalas
- Construction
- Collage
- Graphic mapping
- Interviews
- Local radio
- Other ideas?

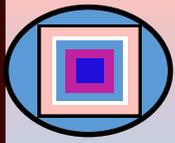


Creative Community Engagement

Peer Based Organizing

Tips for Keeping things Fun

- ◇ Go through the process of creating a safe space for participants. Knowing what to expect in terms of a group agreement on how to interact with one another will help people relax and have fun.
- ◇ Set some ground rules such as refraining from commenting on other peoples work. Let the individual creator control what they say about their own work.
- ◇ A facilitator should explain the process clearly up front. Remind the group that artistic skill is not important is about communicating ideas.
- ◇ Strike a balance between the amount of time talking and the amount of time doing.
- ◇ Give the participants lots of choice around materials. For example, do not for example just rely on drawing for images offer collage pictures cut from magazines.
- ◇ Keep most activities under 40-50 minutes or allow them to be ongoing so that people can contribute in shorter periods across a longer time frame.
- ◇ Invite feedback and be responsive to the group.
- ◇ Work with participants to find ways for everyone to participate at some level.
- ◇ Give people the time and space to find the comfort level to participate. Not everyone will join in immediately however, everyone should feel that they are part of the process.
- ◇ **Do not over facilitate, let the group dynamic form.**



Creative Community Engagement

Peer Based Organizing

Creative Community Engagement: Collective Belonging

Some creative community activities do not need to obviously solve problems or generate solutions. Some creative events can help develop the collective sense of belonging just by the act of co-creation. Creating an event, image, or object together can foster meaningful community connection.

Many activities can draw upon cultural diversity in a group by using universal symbols to anchor projects.

Examples:

Cultural connections to the concept of “light” can be used to start a lantern festival. Cultural connections to the concept of “peace” can be used to initiate a community wide peace flag making project.

Cultural connections to drums and drumming could be used to initiate a cross cultural drumming event.

These events do not need to be large scale or expensive. Grassroots initiatives are wonderful for getting everyone involved in a direct and impactful way.

Resources

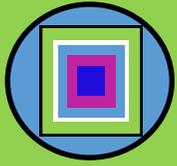
Borrupt, Tom, 1954, McKnight Foundation, and Partners for Livable Communities. *The Creative Community Builder's Handbook: How to Transform Communities using Local Assets, Art, and Culture*. Saint Paul, Minn: Fieldstone Alliance, 2006.

Goldbard, Arlene and Don Adams. *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development*. Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2006.

<https://charterforcompassion.org/mandala-earth-story-project>

<https://www.coastreporter.net/community/features/mandala-marks-17-years-in-the-creek-1.1269911>





What is the problem here?

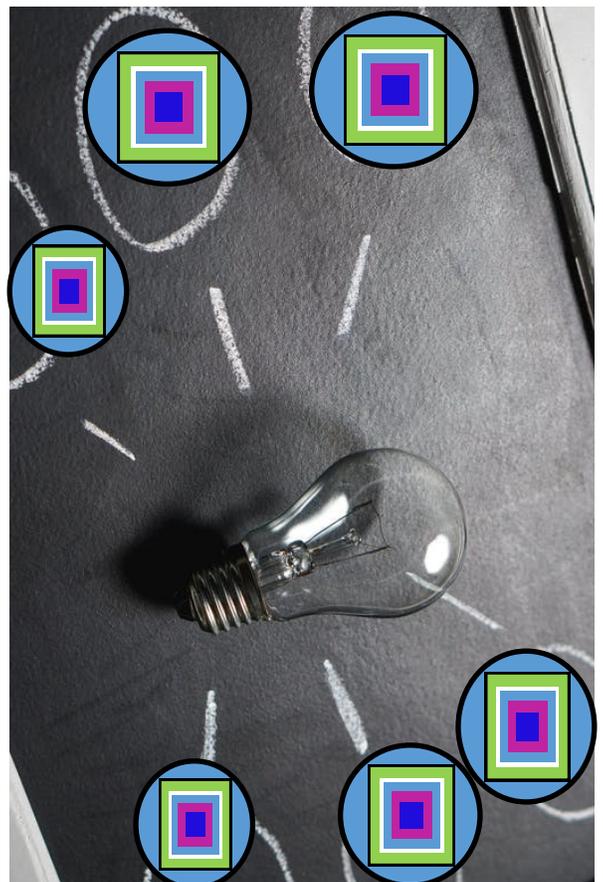
Defining the issues that need addressing

Pre-Goal Forming: Problem Identification

Most goals are set in response to a problem that needs to be solved. Before setting a goal, it is important to understand the problem fully. Collective brainstorming is a dynamic and effective way to come to a deeper understanding of problems. This is a learning opportunity for the group to understand how problems impact people differently. The group can come with unique solutions based on diverse voices.

The collective may also gain a better understanding of why a problem has not been solved in the past. This may give them opportunities to try new strategies and solutions. Alternatively, the collective may decide based on a fuller identification of a problem that they are not the right group to set goals to solve the problem. This is very important, all people have limited time and energy and using resources wisely will keep the group from feeling discouraged and “burnt out”.

Choose what problems you wish to address carefully based on a good fit for the group.





Problem identification worksheet

Defining the Problem			
What is the problem?	Who has the problem?	How big a problem is it?	How long has this problem existed?
What are the pieces of the problem and how does it impact people? Social Emotional Financial Physical Other			
Why hasn't this problem been solved? It is a new problem It is too hard to solve It is a low priority People don't know about it The right people are not involved Other Other			
Now that we have looked more closely at the problem can we describe it differently? Try to write a problem statement that includes; what the problem is, who does it impact, how big is it, how long has this problem existed, why hasn't it been solved?			
Problem Solving Goal			
How can this group act on this problem? Describe actions:			
Who will we do this for? Describe who you want to help:			
Who else should this solution impact? Describe other people to be considered:			
What we would like things to look like after the problem is solved? Describe things as better:			



Group Goal Setting with Older Adult Peers

To support older adult peers with goal setting we suggest **SMART** Goal Setting Exercises. **SMART** Goal Setting is an impactful way to measure the potential success of a goal.



SMART means asking yourself is my goal:

- S**PECIFIC
- M**EASURABLE
- A**CHIEVABLE
- R**ELEVANT
- T**IMELY

Group Activity:

- Have the group brainstorm about collective goals, ask for a volunteer scribe to write the goals down.
- Ask everyone to mark first, second, and third choice goals using a different coloured sticker for each choice.
- Review the goals, talk about ones with few or no votes and determine if they need to stay on the board.
- Rearrange remaining goals prioritizing those with the highest number of first choice votes.
- Group similar goal ideas together. Example: The group suggests the following; “We should have doctors come and give talks on senior’s health at the hospital.” “We should have community health-based courses at the local recreation centre.” The group decides on, “The groups would like to coordinate health sessions for older adults delivered by nurses at the local recreation centre”.
- Run final goals through the SMART test. The group can now see which goals make the most sense because they are, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
- When these steps are completed the group chooses one to three as the primary goals. Goals that are perhaps not as achievable now, can be kept as longer-term goals.



S Be specific:

In creating the wording for this step, the following should be included;

Why is this goal important? Who is involved? Where is it located? Which resources are involved?

Example: The groups would like to start health sessions for seniors.

Goal: The senior's group will create a partnership with community nurses to hold health classes at the recreation centre to improve the health of seniors.

M Make it measurable

It is important to have measurable goals, so that you can track your progress and stay motivated.

The goal should include;

How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Example: The groups would like to start health sessions for seniors.

Goal: The senior's group will have created a created a formal partnership with two groups of nurses at two different recreation centres and will be offering six health classes per year.

A Figure out if it is achievable

Your goal needs to be realistic and attainable to be achievable. Figuring out if a goal is achievable often requires an open and lengthy conversation with the group. The group must accurately assess their time, energy, skills, and resources.

How much time is needed? Do we have the people to make it happen? Do we have the resources to make it happen? Can we get the knowledge and skills we need?

Example: The groups would like to start health sessions for seniors.

Goal: The senior's group has 10 peer volunteers who will to guide this project. Each peer volunteer is willing to commit 8 hours per week. Some of the senior peers have backgrounds in the health field or experience in coordinating community groups. The senior peers will work in partnership with a non-profit that has a small grant to pay for supplies and space and has connections to nursing groups.

R Figure out if it is Relevant

This step is about ensuring that your goal matters to the group.

Is there a need? Are we the right group for this? Is this in line with the overall mission of the group?

Is this the right time for this goal?

Example: The groups would like to start health sessions for seniors.

Goal: The senior's group has asked 60 other seniors what they need and health sessions were a high priority. Currently, the community lacks an accessible senior focused health clinic. The group has created partnerships with community groups that have the resources needed to be successful. The senior's group has a mission statement that includes the well-being and health of seniors.

T Set a Timeline

Every goal needs a timeline. Without specific dates the group will struggle to achieve tasks in a timely way that allows for the completion of the goal. The group will have to consider their own schedule as well as the schedules for their partners.

When can we complete this task?

Example: The groups would like to start health sessions for seniors.

Goal: The nurses have committed to having classes ready to go in 3 months. The non-profit partner will have money for supplies in 1 month. The peer volunteers will be able to advertise and create a participant list in 2 months. The target goal is 4 months from the start date.



Break it
down again

Group Goal Setting

Once your group has settled on a few goals it is time to break them into manageable tasks. Goals are broken down into steps or "objectives". The smaller goals or objectives help the group monitor success and celebrate achievements. This helps with motivation.

What are the goal components?

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Celebrate!!!!

Step 1– Break the step down like a goal, make it SMART

S

M

A

R

T

Step 2– Break the step down like a goal, make it SMART

S

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Break it
down again

Group Goal Setting

Step 3- Break the step
down like a goal, make it
SMART

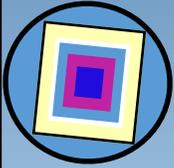
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Step 3- Break the step
down like a goal, make it
SMART

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Don't forget!

The Celebration



Evaluation

Evaluation is a very important component of organizing and community change activism.

Evaluating our work helps collective groups make decisions about how to be more effective, inclusive, and what to do in the future. An evaluation plan should be created at the beginning of any kind of project. Starting early helps the collective to gather “baseline” or beginning information. If you know where things are at in the beginning then change can be measured as you move through a project. It is important to measure change and receive feedback all the way through a project. Projects that wait until the end to measure how effective and inclusive they are will probably cause feelings of frustration among those they engage with.

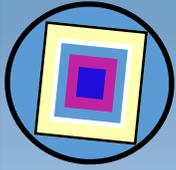
Evaluation strategies do not need to be complicated. They do need to be part of planning from the beginning. Some tools and tips are included with this information. Additionally, we have supplied a resource provided by Imagine Canada. The Project Evaluation Guide for Non-profit Organizations: Fundamental Methods and Steps for Conducting Project Evaluation is a valuable tool kit and provides many options. The Copyright for the guide has been waived for charitable and non-profit organizations for non-commercial use and these entities are encouraged to copy and distribute the tools. Another excellent resource is Approaches to Measuring: Community Change Indicators, supplied by the Tamarack – An Institute for Community Engagement.



Resources:

http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide_final.pdf

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Publications/Approaches%20to%20Measuring%20Community%20Change%20Indicators.pdf>



Evaluation

Activities Journey: Feedback	
Person/Committee:	
Goal:	
Activities to accomplish goal	
Questions	
Wins	
Pains	
Opportunities	
Insights	
Needs	



Evaluation

Evaluation Tips

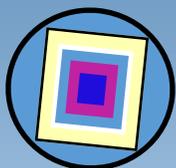
Tip: Be sure that a committee is formed for evaluation early on and responsibility and tasks are clearly determined. This group or committee will engage with the entire group however, assigning responsibility will ensure the evaluation stays on track and important feedback impacts the progress.

Tip: remember to use the SMART guide to decide on goals and performance measurements – Frustration and struggles can be avoided by making sure that goals and activities are realistic, specific, measurable, and appropriate to the size, resources, and abilities of the group.

Tip: When goals are first formed the group should also decide what “indicators” or proof would help the group to determine if they were on the path to success.

Example:

Goal: To increase social inclusion of marginalized and excluded older adults living in our community		
Indicators/proof	Proof was met: Discussion notes	Proof was not met: Discussion notes
Indicator/Proof: 15 older adults will participate in activities		
Indicator/Proof: In surveys 80% of older adults will be able to identify 3 positive changes in their social activities		



Evaluation

More Evaluation Tips

Tip: Qualitative and Quantitative Measures

Qualitative information is based on characteristics and not on numbers. Usually this information is gathered through stories, interviews, notes on what people are seeing, and summaries of events. For example, people might state in an interview that they feel better about participating in social events since connecting with your group.

Quantitative information is based on numbers. By collecting the number of people who participate in a program groups may be able to determine some amount of success.

Tip: There are simple ways to collect evaluation information. It is helpful; to use more than one approach.

Focus groups

Interviews

Survey/Questionnaires

Number count of participants

Creative Information Collection Activities

Twitter Blurb-

Participants respond to a prompt in 140 characters or less. Just like twitter!

Doodle sheets-

Participants draw or doodle their feedback or comments.

Facebook Wall-

Have evaluation discussions on a private wall space.

Paper table cloth-

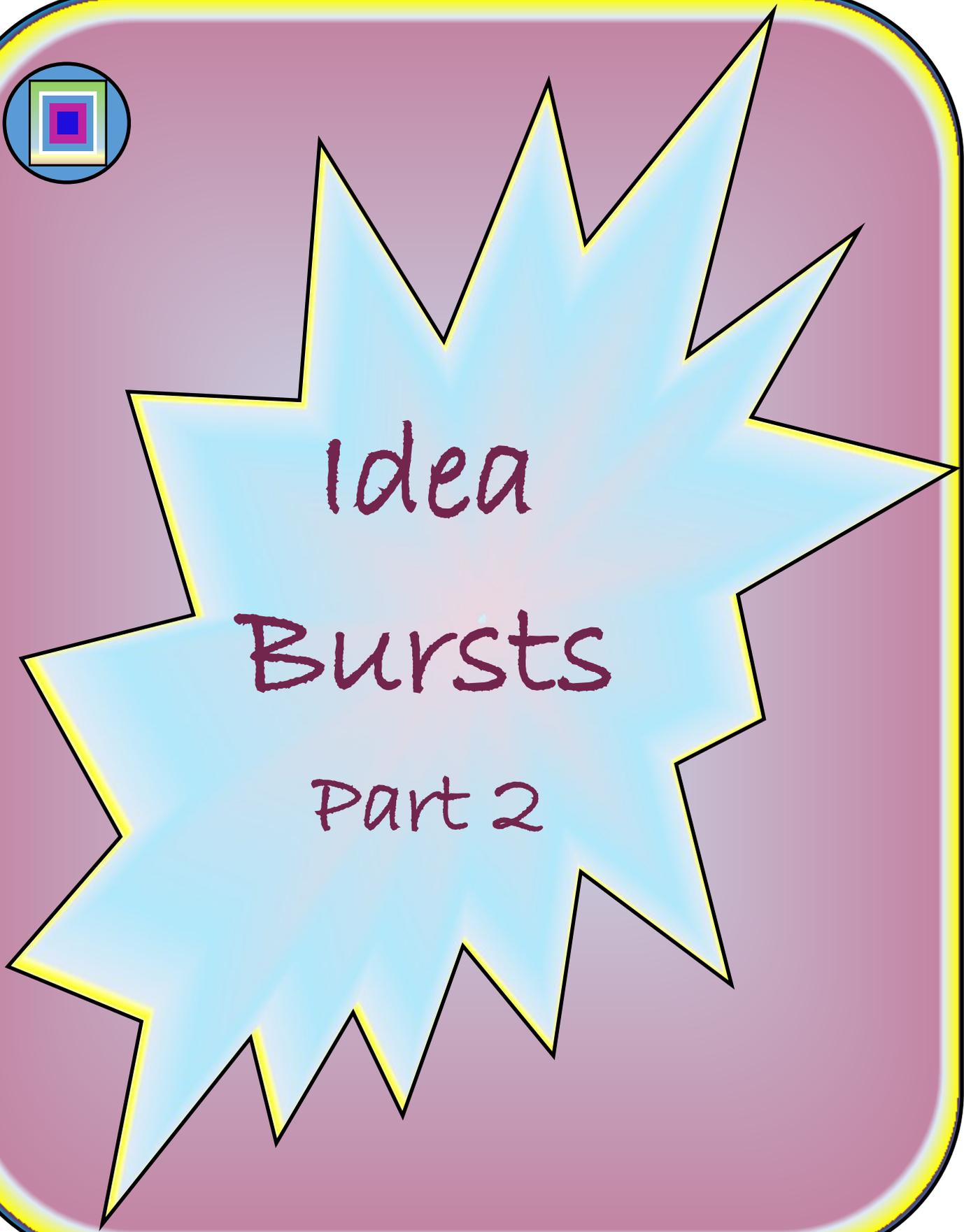
Host an evaluation night event and have participants leave their comments on their paper table cloth.

Post Cards-

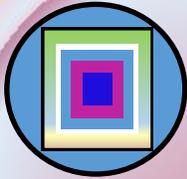
Participants can mail or drop their feedback off.

Group Mind Mapping-

Use illustrated mind mapping techniques to describe and evaluate the groups progress.



Idea
Bursts
Part 2



Leadership

and

Partnership

Idea Bursts



How do Peers want to Participate?

Are there Barriers to Participation?

Older Adult Peers we worked with identified the following considerations-

Not all peers want to take on a major organizing role, have opportunities for those that want to lead and those that want to participate.

Leadership looks different for everyone-

Create the space for anyone to take on a leadership role. Provide the support Senior Peers need to successfully lead activities, projects, groups, meetings, events or other interventions.

There is a cost to participation, transportation, meals, time-

Not every senior peer can absorb the costs of participation. If there are ways to address this have that conversation as a group to support diverse participation.

The Peers will decide how formal or informal the groups will be-

Some peers will want to be involved in action based initiatives, and others will want to come together and inform and support on another. Allow for these organic developments.

Not every Peer will have the capacity to participate in groups-

Ask these peers if there are other ways they want to participate. Keep them updated where possible and find ways to get their feedback.

Have information about resources available for vulnerable peers-

When someone needs personal supports beyond what the group can offer have brochures and cards available to provide possible connections.



Community Entity and Peer Partnerships

Tips for starting/supporting peer leadership groups in community

Capacity Mapping

Peers come together because they share a common experience and want a place where they can be heard, and organize.

In order to organize it is important to understand what the group assets are, and what the capacity is for taking on projects.

Understanding capacity can help to identify what types of projects a group may achieve success with.

What Are the Assets?

Before committing to activities map out the assets that peers have to support organizing and advocacy projects, look at things like-

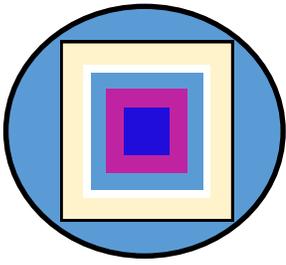
- ◇ Research and writing skills
- ◇ Cultural knowledge
- ◇ Social Media or Web Skills
- ◇ Personal experience and knowledge
- ◇ Cooking skills
- ◇ Activity Development skills
- ◇ Arts skills
- ◇ Construction skills
- ◇ Other talents and skills peers identify

Everyone has something to add!

What Resources are Accessible?

What is available to the peers through partnerships with community entities and other community resources-

- ◇ Are there funding resources available through partnerships with community entities?
- ◇ Meeting rooms?
- ◇ Event space?
- ◇ Access to neighborhood space or community park space?
- ◇ Community Kitchen Facilities?
- ◇ Food resources?
- ◇ Technology laptops, projectors, screens?
- ◇ Workshop materials?
- ◇ Other Resources?



Creating Space for Vulnerable Older Adult Peers to Act as Leaders

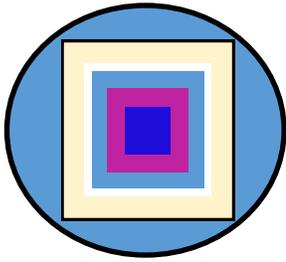
Leadership is hard to define because it is a fluid concept, often leadership is seen in the following ways;

- ◇ The action of leading a group of people or an organization.
- ◇ To hold a position of authority (in government or in an organization)
- ◇ Leadership can also be linked with ideas such as power and control
- ◇ Leadership is almost always about influence



Problems with traditional ideas of leadership

- ◇ Traditional notions of leadership have evolved from systems that have not always embraced the concepts of diversity and inclusion
- ◇ These ideas are associated with qualities that are predominant among members of a dominant culture, and do not recognize the richness and talents among members of the community who may have been marginalized by the dominant culture
- ◇ This concept can willfully exclude members of the older population because they are not looked at by the media and social influencers as movers and shakers
- ◇ This is specific to a culture and time that has been influenced to see leadership embodied in strong, youthful, beautiful figures
- ◇ Indigenous cultures have often emphasised the wisdom of Elders and ancestors. Traditional concepts of leadership ignore the Indigenous perspective of valuing the teaching of Elders to pass down traditions, story, and history. As a result of the devaluing of wisdom of older populations many traditional skills (in Indigenous and Non-Indigenous cultures) are being lost.



Creating Space for Vulnerable Older Adult Peers to Act as Leaders

Mainstream ideas of leadership are reflective of traditional Western centric values. This ignores the voices of the most vulnerable as they may not reflect the qualities of leadership that are valued by Western culture. This also ignores Indigenous values that believe in the wisdom of Elders, and rely on Elders to be knowledge keepers, teachers, and leaders for the next generation.

We looked for ways vulnerable seniors naturally demonstrated leadership skills and sometimes it looked like this;

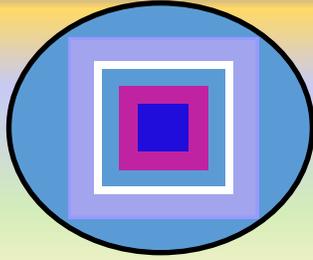
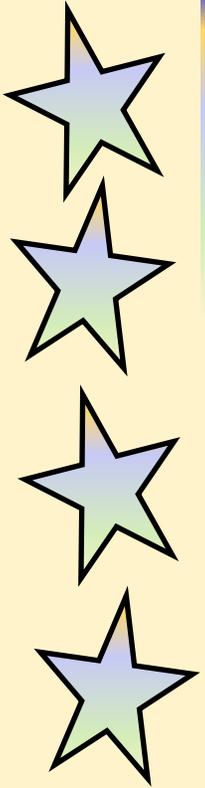
- ◇ Preparing and sharing meals with peers
- ◇ Supporting on another, offering information and guidance regarding social systems and common experiences
- ◇ Teaching and sharing skills in informal or formal ways
- ◇ Planning small events and information sessions

Key learning- Vulnerable populations may not want to coordinate a major social movement, this requires significant time, energy, and resources.

We were largely unsuccessful when we tried to encourage vulnerable peers in taking on organizing efforts.

Peers enjoy sharing ideas for community projects, and will let organizations know what they will contribute.





Leadership and Older Adult Peers

Leadership

Things That Older Adults Have Taught Us About Leadership

When the Senior's WELL program facilitated workshops on leadership several key points emerged with the peers who participated. Many peers did not feel aligned with "heroic" leadership. Through facilitated discussions they landed on a shared model of leadership that the group called "shared facilitation". The core group of senior organizers expressed an interest in participating in various organizing, facilitating, and activism tasks. The group expressed less interest in taking on traditional leadership roles that placed decision making with a limited number of representatives. Older Adults involved in these workshops felt that they preferred to bring their specific talents to the group, control their input of time and energy, and make decisions together. The peers who participated represented some degree of diversity and cultural and gender differences were noted to impact divergent relationships to leadership and leadership models.

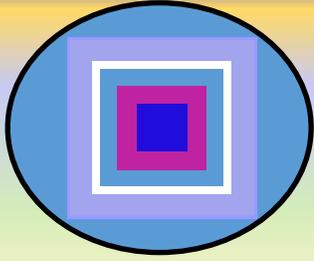
The role of Adult Education and Critical Leadership

Adult education is a distinct philosophy of education that acknowledges that mature human being learn differently than children. Adults take ownership of their own education and decide what is being served by learning new things. Adults also engage in education for many different reasons and many ways beyond formal or traditional school settings. Much adult education is dedicated to community change and social justice movements. Critical thinking is a primary component of contemporary adult education theories. Most of us understand that thinking is a personal reflective process. "Critical" thinking refers to a different process through which the individual thinker takes responsibility to be open to new learning, to take in different perspectives and information. The thinker does not take for granted that their previous knowledge or beliefs are enough to draw conclusions about things. They test their knowledge and beliefs to see if they hold up according to how others perceive things. In this way people are exposed to more experiences, arguments, premises, and evidence than their experience alone can provide them.

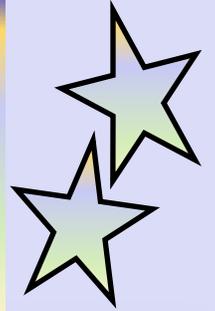
Critical theory in adult education has influenced ideas about leadership. Leadership practices in social justice settings use critical thinking to develop rational approaches to inclusive leadership. This is important information for adult educators, peers, and others practicing in social justice and community development venues such as non-profits. Developing an analytical and inclusive ways of understanding diverse needs is essential if we are to meet the challenges of creating new ways of addressing power structures, and support critical literacy and community-oriented leadership. This is important for community entities that seek to work with diverse groups and to engage in community development with individuals with significantly different worldviews and lived experience. Creating a collective discourse that is inclusive of feminism, decolonizing process, and critical theory, serves a deeper understanding of practice and gives us a map to explore other worldviews.

Resource: Preskill and Brookfield's 2009 book, *Learning as a Way of Leading*, provides a guide to imagine a form of leadership that is relational, communal, and grounded in learning.

Preskill, S., & Brookfield, S. D. (2009). *Learning as a way of leading: Lessons from the struggle for social justice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.



Leadership and Older Adult Peers



Indigenous Leadership

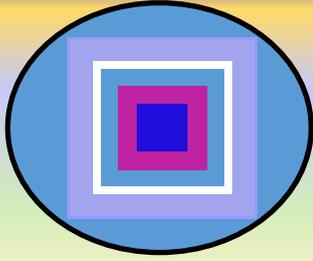
It is important to acknowledge that there are differences related to distinctions in the worldviews of Indigenous and non-Indigenous older adults. How and why older adults experience marginalization are significantly different therefore their expressions of leadership, activism, and resistance take distinctive forms. With older Indigenous adults, the connections to activist leadership were often embedded in broader issues of colonization, racism, and the resulting trauma. It has been reported that 47% of First Nations seniors attended residential schools (Assembly of First Nations, 2007). It is important to clarify that the term “Elder” is used with a meaning specific to Indigenous culture and language. The term does not always refer to an older person, as there are younger Elders who are at times referred to as “young Elders” or “Elders in training.” Elders are most often community members who are recognized as having advanced knowledge of traditional teaching and who commit to living according to traditional Indigenous knowledge. They are also considered keepers of knowledge, leaders, and teachers. It is also important to acknowledge that “Indigenous” is a broad term that accounts for many unique communities and cultures among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. It is critical to reach out to the people of the territory on which the group gathers and invite members to share perspectives and to learn about the cultural differences of Indigenous group members.



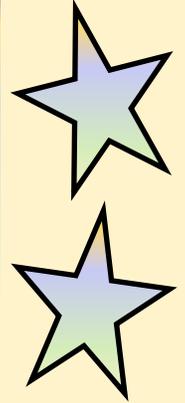
Case Study: Indigenous Leadership

Klabona Keepers were formed in response to an imbalance of power and the repression of community voices. Klabona refers to the headwaters of the Tl'abāne, the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Nass and Skeena Rivers, under threat from mining companies with the support of some elected leaders. The Keepers, comprised of Elders and families of the Tahltan Nation, who reclaimed their traditional positions and voices to address issues of water management. This group developed very effective collective strategies for activism. They created strategic alliances, using the mainstream media, reaching out to and raising the consciousness of non-Indigenous communities, and taking advantage of vulnerabilities within political systems. The Klabona Keepers were very successful in soliciting alliances with non-Indigenous organizations and appropriating environmentalist discourses while still conforming to Tahltan cultural values. More information about the Klabona Keepers can be found on their website,

<https://www.facebook.com/klabonakeepers/>



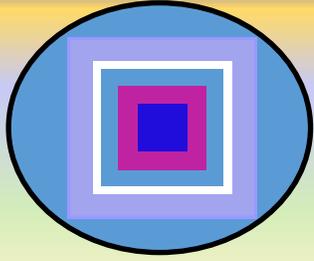
Leadership and Older Adult Peers



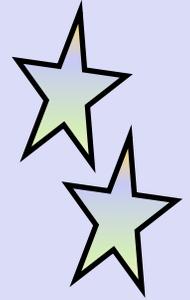
Gender and Leadership

Some women who have worked in co-ed community organizations found that there were significant differences between themselves and their male counterparts, noting that the men maintained the status they enjoyed in pre-retirement employment by transitioning into similar work in voluntary positions. Women have reported feeling that they were more likely to participate in activities that required them to be more open, flexible, and accepting of challenge. They also reported feeling marginalized at times by some of the male peers. "Activism among Older Women in Quebec, Canada: Changing the World After Age 65." *Journal of Women & Aging* 20, no. 3-4 (2008): 343-360.

Older women in Canada have a long and diverse history in Canada. Although not all forms of women's community activism have received equal attention in the media and academic work there are many examples to be drawn on. The Albertan women, Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, and Irene Parlby, known as the Famous Five were tireless champions of the rights of women of European origin in turn of the century Canada. These women did much to change the lives of women and challenged the notion that women were not legally acknowledged as "persons" under Canadian and British law. From a decolonizing lens it is important to acknowledge that Indigenous women were not included in the debates on personhood. There are many Older Indigenous women who have committed to social and political change in Canada. Mary Two-Axe Earley, from the Kahnawake Mohawk territory, embarked on her role as activist at the age of fifty-five. Having lost her own Aboriginal status after marrying a non-Indigenous man, she fought for more than 20 years to have this discriminatory and misogynist law stricken. Mary Two-Axe Earley changed the life of countless Indigenous women and children when she successfully changed the law in 1985.



Leadership and Older Adult Peers



Older Women and Activism Today

Today many older women are actively changing their communities and the world through groups like the Raging Grannies and the Klabona Keepers. The Raging Grannies are an activists' group that subvert the image of older women as frail and irrelevant in order to deliver hard hitting messages about eco-justice and anti-violence. Klabona refers to the headwaters of the Tl'abāne, the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Nass and Skeena Rivers, under threat from mining companies. The Keepers, comprised of mostly older women members of the Tahltan Nation, reclaimed their traditional positions and voices to address issues of water management. It is important to explore all the diverse ways that older adults are engaging in community change and activism. Many of these groups have worked through issues of leadership and can provide relevant stories of challenges and success.

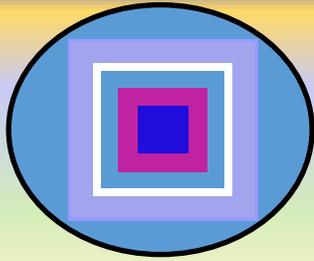


Case Study: The Raging Grannies

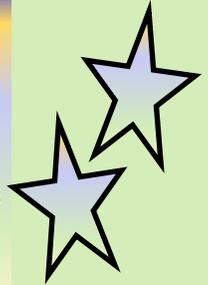
A new term was developed to capture an innovative and creative means of social change, it is called granny activism. The Raging Grannies are an example of self-organizing group(s) of older women who use forms of resistance to change socially formed ideas about aging and gender, and address issues of power.

The Raging Grannies are primarily recognized for their costumes, songs, and creative activities. These are the tools of their unique form of performance activism, dressing up as stereotypical Grannies, with aprons, hats, and shawls they challenge military bases and war ships. The Grannies have a decentralized shared leadership model. No one is expected to contribute more than they are comfortable with and there are no formal leadership roles. Even their yearly gathering is called an "Un-Convention". They get together to write songs and co-create humorous actions in pursuit of social justice. Recently, the Grannies have come to recognize that they have a responsibility as primarily Settler women to address the enduring impacts of colonization, develop a solidarity with Indigenous women and learn more about supporting their activism. They have committed to an approach of decolonizing practices rooted in openness and curiosity.

There are several articles and books written about the Raging Grannies and they have a website for more information. <https://raginggrannies.org/>



Leadership and Older Adult Peers



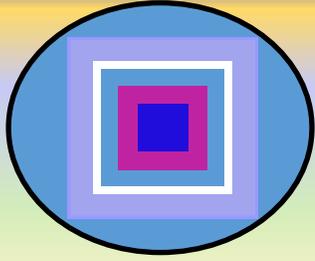
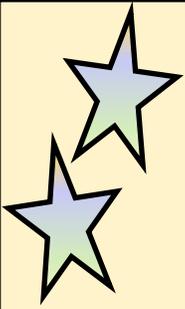
Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership is an approach that relies on empowering all involved to achieve individual and collective goals. Transformational Leadership is change focused. The change team determines the change that is needed and sets goals. It is important that the group develops a vision of what they wish to accomplish to guide the process. Transformational Leadership works well for community change peer groups working with non-profits as participation is encouraged through the development of a collective identity, opportunities to inspire one another, and the group takes ownership of projects. This is different from the more commonly followed Transactional Leadership model which compensates the production of followers with more external rewards, such as money or other forms of remuneration.

Transformational Leadership is consistently working toward the group goals and values adaptation, collaboration, and diverse abilities, skills and knowledge. There are four I's related to Transformational Leadership theory; Inspirational motivation, Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, and Individualized consideration. Tools such as the goal setting worksheet included in this package and impact plans are good support materials for initiating a Transformative Leadership model.

Transformational Leadership is also thought of as led by a appointed team leader, with seniors peer groups it is advisable to consider a hybrid model between Transformational Leadership and Shared Leadership.





Leadership and Older Adult Peers



Shared Leadership

Much of the world’s leadership models have developed a focus on economics, and industrial-era capitalism with a clear distinction between leaders and followers. These models depend on what is termed “heroic” or “charismatic” leaders to implement various leadership theories. Each of these theories has been developed to increase the effectiveness of unidirectional and top-down systems. In contrast Shared Leadership is a system that supports change as co-creation rather than a formally appointed leader. In simplest terms this means that two or more members of a group work together in leadership roles. In Shared Leadership members share tasks, responsibility, and have an open multi-directional framework that encourages the exchange of ideas and influence on one another. The core components of Shared Leadership are; a shared vision or purpose, the availability of supports to allow all to participate and the inclusion of all voices.

Shared Leadership	
Component	Approach
Leadership	A participant council is developed and a coordinating structure guides the process
Decision making	Big picture decisions are made by the group through a predetermined process and operational decisions can be made in smaller working groups or sub-committees.
Communication	All communication is open and transparent a communication plan supports the process.
Accountability	Committees and working groups are responsible for the tasks they agree to oversee.
Inclusion	The group uses awareness raising techniques to acknowledge and address barriers to inclusion.



Supporting Peer Council's

Some of the more vulnerable peers may not be equipped to organize, but may have valuable input to share with the community;

If you are a member of a peer population and have an issue that you feel needs addressing, look for organized allies in the community who maybe able to support your peer work (women's centres, seniors centres, health services, community organizations, mental wellness services, etc.)

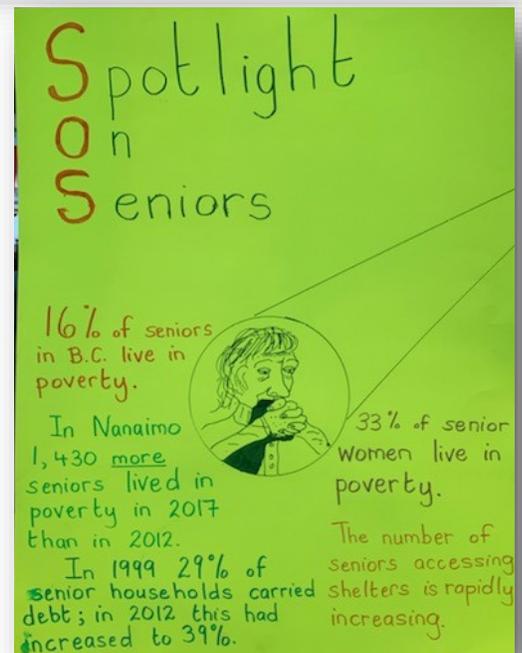
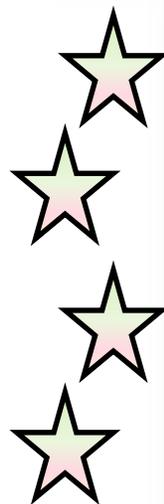
For community groups, if a peer approaches you with a concern consider grass roots ways to support peer mobilizations and offer support with the resources currently available within the agency, this may mean offering space for meetings, putting up posters, connecting peers with others who share their concerns, contacting partners who may be able to support peer organization, or whatever is realistic within the capacity of the organization.

Developing Peer Councils

Can be a great way to start organizing. Peer Councils are made up of self defined peers who all wish to meet and discuss issues that pertain to them.

Peer Councils also provide valuable feedback to community organizations, government institutions, health programs, and recreation services about their needs and wishes for the community.

Peer Councils should have full authority to set their own direction and participate in the projects that they feel meet their aims. Community Entities should find ways to support Peer Councils that fit within their own mandate.





Shared Leadership Worksheet

IN YOUR TEAM:

Indicators

Expected Changes

How will we know?

How will our collective be different?

Example: We will observe our Collective... Seeking Feedback, Reflecting on our work, The Collective will have decided on some initial resources to use.

Example: Our Collective will ... review the resources in this kit and decide what pieces are relevant for us.

Outcome #1: Our Collective will ...

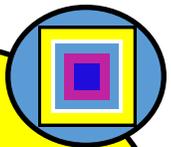
We will observe our Collective...

Outcome #2: Our Collective will ...

We will observe our Collective...

Outcome #3: Our Collective will ...

We will observe our Collective...



Empowering and Organizing



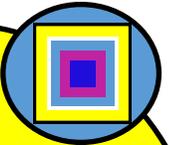
Community Entities have specific knowledge about systems and processes.

Support Peer Organizers through sharing information about government/public services, funding processes, cultural protocols, and organizing best practices.

Older Adult Peers we worked with identified the following as organizing interests

- ◇ **Projects that expose participants to processes and political systems**
- ◇ **Projects that teach community members how these systems work**
- ◇ **Projects that encourage other people to share their skills with peers and other members of the community**
- ◇ **Projects that also expose community decision makers to how to become more connected with vulnerable community members**

Peers in this project set the direction and the Community Entity tried to find information and resources to support their identified goals.



Government Basics for Peer Organizers and Advocates



Federal Government

Represented locally by a Member of Parliament (MP)

Some Responsibilities include;

- ◇ Taxation
- ◇ GIS/EI/Child tax benefit/GST
- ◇ Status Cards
- ◇ Immigration/passports/borders
- ◇ CPPD/PPP/Military pensions

Provincial Government

Represented locally by a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)

Some Responsibilities include;

- ◇ MSP/ Driver's Licencing
- ◇ Social housing/Daycare Subsidy
- ◇ Income Assistance and Disability Benefits
- ◇ BC Hydro

First Nations and Metis Chartered Communities

First Nations and Metis communities have both elected and hereditary leadership systems.

- ◇ Charged with protecting both reserve land and traditional territory including environmental and cultural stewardship
- ◇ Providing housing, social, education, and medical service to community members

Municipal Governments

Formed by Mayor and Council

Some Responsibilities include;

- ◇ Property Taxation
- ◇ Local security and infrastructure
- ◇ City social planning
- ◇ Parks and Recreation Services
- ◇ City run services and facilities
- ◇ Neighborhood planning
- ◇ Building Permits and By-Laws



Peer and Community Entity Partnerships

Partner Discussions

Connections to Existing groups.

Some people will belong to existing groups that may provide resources and assets. Possible group affiliation could include; faith groups, service clubs, sports and game clubs, shared interests' groups, community-wide organizations (the United Way, major arts organizations), as well as self-help, advocacy, and activism groups. The affiliations can be very important to people and they may wish to establish a partnership with the community change project. This should be a group decision; some group members may have a difficult history with other established community groups. Discussions regarding the affiliations of individual members should be discussed early in the group forming. This will help the group understand the importance of these affiliations with individuals and the potential for greater understanding of the opposition.

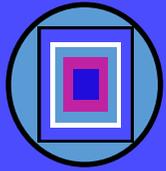
Connections to Existing Agencies and Institutions.

Every community has agencies and institutions that are established and recognized. Every group will have members with diverse relationships to these agencies and institutions. It is important for the peer group and the community entity to discuss who they work with and the history of this relationship. The peer group should understand the scope of partnerships and what influence they wield.



Government, Politics and Power.

Understanding the Community entity's relationship to Government and other political structures is an important element of relationship building with the Peer Group. Individuals who have felt powerless in their lives will want to understand the kind of power relationships the Community Entity has developed. Understanding these relationships can help avert frustration based on assumptions regarding the level of access to power.



Peer and Community Entity Partnerships

Partner Discussions

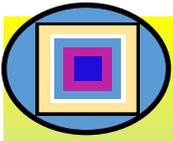
Social and Cultural Structures.

While individuals have notions of what makes up a physical community, the fact that multiple communities of people coexist within a geographic area is not always recognized (communities of culture, common interests and socio-economic commonalities for example). Community change projects cannot truly be successful in creating a more equitable “community” without recognizing multiple perspectives. Community can be defined as a group of people living in the same place; or a group of people having common characteristics; however, individuals may share some common interests and still have significant differences. Older Adults may have some shared interests, challenges, and goals, yet have different cultural affiliations and social and economic backgrounds. Acknowledging these differences and making room for different perspectives will help reduce the frustration of deepening marginalization for some.

Perspectives, Attitudes and Values.

This is a more detailed discussion of the differences already considered. What does the Community Entity care about? What do the members of the Peer group care about? The purpose of exploring these subjects is to dispel assumptions and to work together with a deeper understanding of commonality and differences. The working environment must tolerate different opinions, different backgrounds and different ideas about the proper way to interact, communicate and organize.





Creating Partnerships

Working in and leading coalitions,
working groups, and committees

Community organizing means working in partnership with other groups to be able to accomplish goals.

Working in partnership stretches resources and adds additional people power.

When planning events and activities thinking about who it may be appropriate to partner with; some examples may be:

- ◇ **Other Community Entities (not for profit social and community service providers)**
- ◇ **First Nations or Indigenous groups**
- ◇ **Local Government**
- ◇ **Health Authorities/Services**
- ◇ **RCMP/Police**
- ◇ **Neighborhood Associations**
- ◇ **Local Businesses**
- ◇ **Other Peer Groups**

Think about the partners in the community, make a list of those that could help your collective achieve their goals. Find someone in the partnership that will be a consistent contact and note their contact information. Some partners may be chosen in the process of group goal and necessary resource brainstorming. Connect the partner to their impact on goals and how the collective hopes the partner will contribute. Sometimes partners cannot contribute in the way that was hoped for. Stay open and positive as other contributions may be very valuable to success in unexpected ways. Remember that all partnerships require ongoing connection, include the partner in events, updates, and other activities.





Creating Partnerships

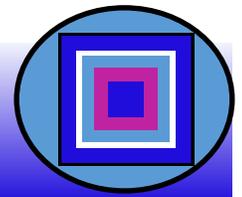
Working in and leading coalitions,, working groups, and committees

Partner Name	Contact person and Contact	What Goal do they impact?	What is our ask?	What have they committed?	Date committed	How will they be further engaged?

AGEISM is a

Socially Accepted PREJUDICE

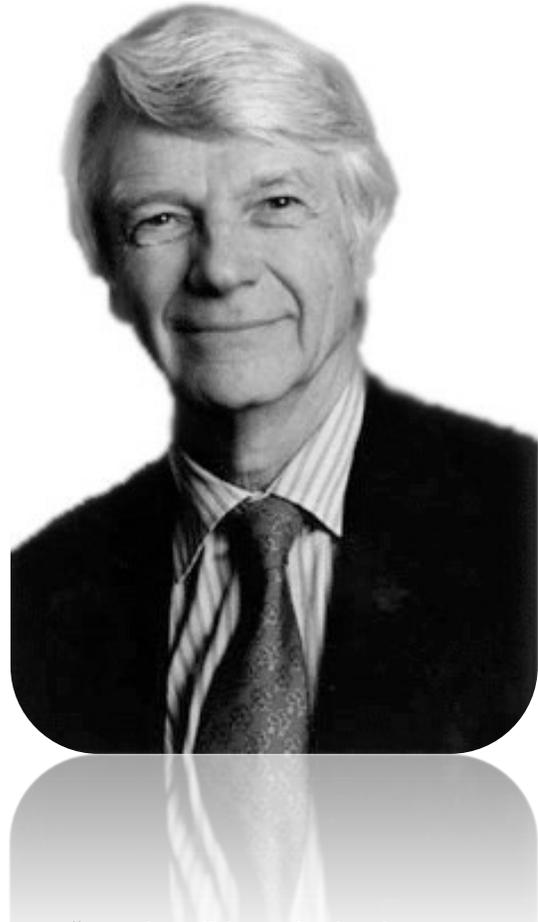
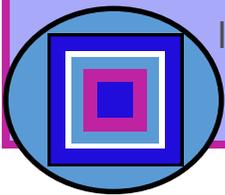
Supporting the Voices of Older Adult Peer Organizers



Ageist stereotypes and widespread acts of discrimination go largely unchallenged.

Ageism is a far-reaching trend that has become ingrained at both the social and institutional levels. Canada is a country comprised of many cultures and not all participate in ageism. Unfortunately, the dominant culture controls most of the messaging. Expressions of ageism are found as, stereotypes, othering, distain, mockery and ostracising. Acts of discrimination against older adults are found in almost all service outlets and numerous resources related to basic human needs including; health care, housing, and employment.

Ageism is often recognized as a social issue expressed at an individual level however, the impact on person's lives is broad and influences our society as a whole through, policies and legislation.



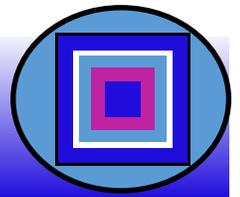
The term “ageism” is relatively young. It was first coined by Robert Butler, who defined it as “[a] process of systematic stereotyping or discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish with skin colour and gender. Ageism allows the younger generations to see older people as different than themselves; thus they subtly cease to identify with their elders as human beings.” (as cited in Butler, 1975)

Robert N. Butler. *Why survive? Being old in America*. New York: Harper & Row. (1975)

AGEISM is a

Socially Accepted PREJUDICE

Supporting the Voices of Older Adult Peer Organizers



Ending Ageism

Ageism is a stark reality that negatively impacts older adults and the future selves of all people.

What can be done? In the fight against ageism we can look to the strategies currently being used to combat the ongoing issues such as, racism, homophobia, and sexism. There is also a great deal of information on anti-ageism activities online. There are excellent educational materials listed in the resources included. There are creative videos that help explain the impact of ageism. This is an important component as ageist ideas are wide spread and largely acceptable in many cultures that dominate our economic and social reality.

Resources

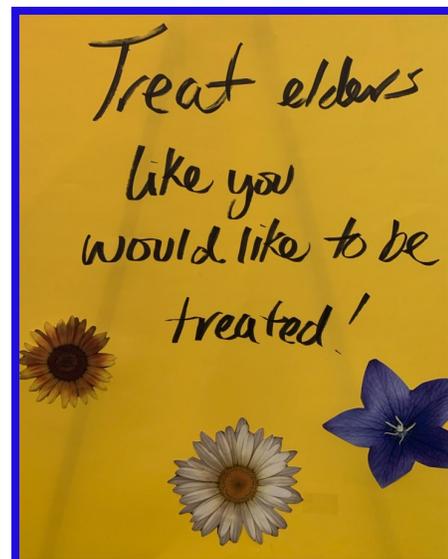
<https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/blog/6-ways-connect-older-person-and-prevent-ageism>

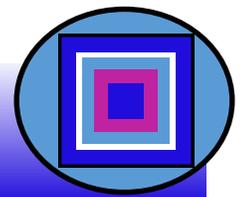
<https://www.australianageingagenda.com.au/clinical/social-wellbeing/grassroots-movement-to-end-ageism-launched/>

<https://www.tikkun.org/anti-ageism-the-next-big-social-movement>

<https://longevitycolorado.com/newsletter3/>

<https://www.who.int/ageing/ageism/en/>





Standing up to Ageism....

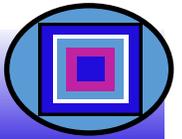
Supporting the Voices of Older Adult Peer Organizers

Here are some ideas on combating ageism:

- ◇ Use social media to share information on ageism and start a community discussion.
- ◇ Provide educational materials and sessions on ageism to schools, local government and businesses.
- ◇ Ask schools, local government and businesses to perform an audit on ageism in their institutions.
- ◇ Start a poster campaign on ageism.
- ◇ Partner with other community stakeholders to raise the profile of the impacts of ageism.



*celebrate ageing!
The experiences,
understanding the past,
the richness of the future,
the wisdom that only
comes from being older!*



AGEISM and other social issues....

Supporting the Voices of Older Adult Peer Organizers

Elder Abuse

The prevalence of ageism leads to a general devaluing of older adults. This puts older adults at risk of abuse and violence within their personal relationships and by a number of systems. These abuses often take place out of sight, behind closed doors in private homes and care facilities. Older adults often lose the support to advocate for themselves and are seen as having diminished autonomy. This impacts many older adults' ability to make decisions about and gain access to finances, housing, meaningful activities, relationships, and health care.

Resources

https://www.ted.com/talks/ashton_applewhite_let_s_end_ageism?language=en

<http://seniorsfirstbc.ca/resources/education-training-material/elder-abuse-prevention-series/>

<https://www.justiceeducation.ca/legal-help/family-violence/elder-abuse/elder-abuse>

<https://www.bcli.org/project/practical-guide-elder-abuse-and-neglect-law-canada>

<https://bccrns.ca/>

Intersectional Ageism

In addition to age older people are discriminated against based on their ethnicity, gender expression, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, or socioeconomic status. Intersection discrimination, based on age and other factors in a person's life deepens the impact of ageism.

Women and Ageing

The experiences of older women with ageism is an important conversation. As women grow older, the challenges they face are worsened by the double conditions of gender inequality and age discrimination. The cultural perspectives that view women as obsolete as they grow older puts women at high risk of individual and systemic abuse or violence. The abuse women suffer can be physical, emotional, verbal, or financial.

