

RABBLE ROUSERS!



Dream up a community project to improve youth mental health

Connect with peers and make it happen

Facilitator Handbook

Developed by Shantel Ivits
for Coast Mental Health



RABBLE ROUSERS: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Description

Rabble Rousers is a community capacity building program designed for youth who are passionate about creating positive community change in the area of mental health. Participants will strengthen their essential skills and knowledge about community organizing while working with a cohort of other youth to choose, design, implement and evaluate a community project. Examples of community projects include organizing a public awareness campaign; putting on a social, recreational or educational event; lobbying government for a change; or making a film, book, podcast, or zine. The program places an emphasis on experiential and authentic learning opportunities. The goal of the program is for youth living with mental illness to feel empowered to make a difference in the mental health of their communities.

Session 1: Mental Wellness & Community Organizing

Guiding Questions:

- What is Rabble Rousers all about?
- What's community organizing?
- What are the steps for organizing a community project?
- What's our vision for youth with mental health concerns?

Session 2: Building on Strengths

Guiding Questions:

- What's working well in the mental health system?
- What mental health services exist for youth in the Lower Mainland?
- What are the strengths of people in our group?

Session 3: Gaps, Barriers, and Our Vision

Guiding Questions:

- What are some of our needs that aren't getting met?
- What prevents us from accessing supports we need?
- What is our vision for change?

Session 4: Community Organizing Strategies

Guiding Questions:

- What strategies have past activists used to organize for change?
- What ideas do we have for our own community project?

Session 5: Choosing a Community Project

Guiding Questions:

- What community project ideas can be achieved in our timeframe and with the resources we have? Which ones fit with our passions and interests? Which ones would be most fun? Which ones would have a real-life impact?
- What project do we want to commit to?

Session 6: Making an Action Plan

Guiding Questions:

- What action steps do we need to take?
- What order do we need to take the steps in?
- When do we need to complete each step to complete the project within our timeframe?
- Who wants to work on what action items?

Flex Sessions: Putting Plans into Action

Guiding Questions:

- What new skills and knowledge do we need to put our idea into action?
- How can we make sure our whole team feels included in the project?
- How can we make sure our community project is accessible and inclusive of diversity?
- How can we practice self-care and stay resilient as community organizers?

Final Session: Celebration, Reflection, & Closing

Guiding Questions:

- What have we learned about ourselves and our ability to make change?
- How has this project impacted our mental health?
- How can we keep making change in our communities when this program is over?

SESSION ONE:

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & MENTAL HEALTH



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What is Rabble Rousers all about?
- What is community organizing?
- How have people in BC organized around mental health?
- What is the process for planning a community project?

OPENING ROUND

- Welcome everyone to the group. Acknowledge whose land you are gathering on. Introduce yourself and invite participants to say their names, pronouns, and perhaps an answer to an icebreaker question.

WHAT IS RABBLE ROUSERS?

SPEAKING NOTES

- Rabble Rousers is a group for youth who are interested in creating positive community change in the area of mental health.
- We will learn about community organizing by planning and carrying out a community project.
- Examples of community projects include organizing a public awareness campaign; putting on a social, recreational or educational event; lobbying government for a change; or making a film, book, podcast, or zine.
- The goal of the program is for us to feel empowered to make a difference in the mental health of our communities.
- This group is co-created by all of you, what you bring to it and what you want to get out of it.



DISCUSSION

- What do you hope to get out of Rabble Rousers? (If no one responds, possible prompts include: Do you want to: meet new people, learn new skills, have fun, make change?)
- What agreements do we need in place to share space together? (You can use the group agreement in the following pages for inspiration).
- What supports do you need to help you attend regularly? (Eg. Bus tickets? Food? Drinks? Breaks?)

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

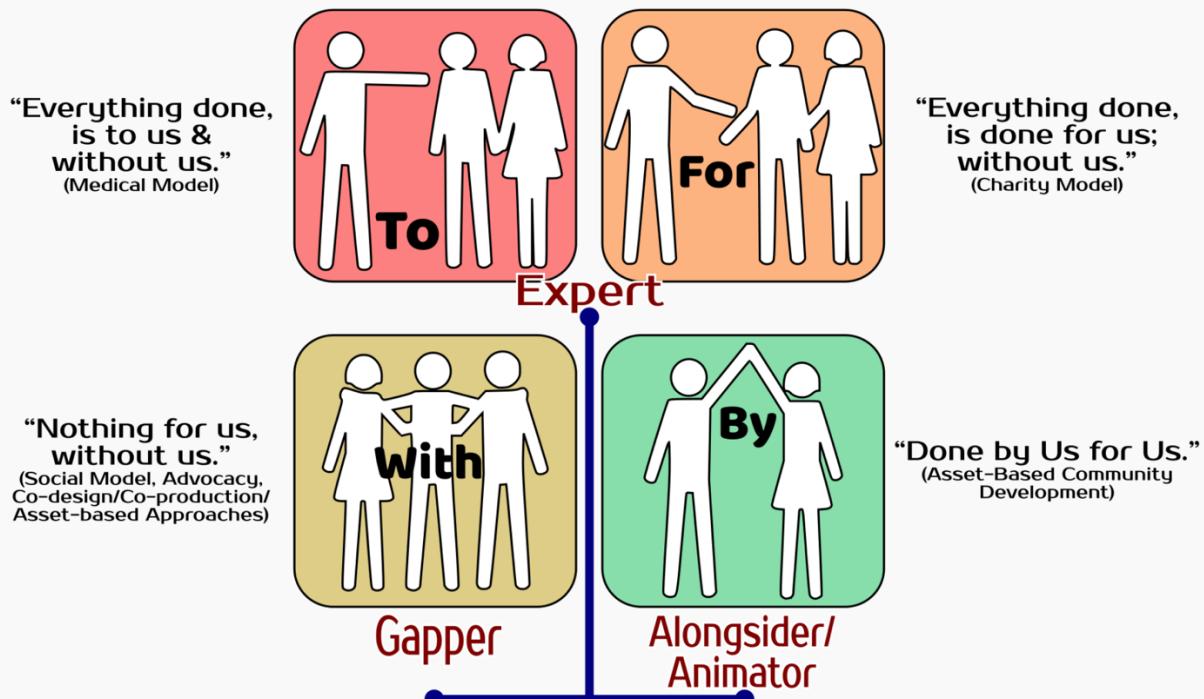
SPEAKING NOTES

- A community is any group of people with something in common.
- A community might be a group of people who share a space such as a neighbourhood (like East Van), a city (like Vancouver), a workplace (like a supermarket), or a community organization (like the Clubhouse or the Young Adult Program).
- A community could be a club or league, like Girl Guides or a softball league.
- A community could be a group of people that share a cultural or social identity, like the queer community or Black community or First Nations community.
- Invite people to share examples of communities that have been important to them.



READ & REFLECT

- Share the graphic below, found at https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ToForWithBy_Narrative.png
- This graphic is about four ways of doing things in a community space. Give participants some time to look at it quietly to figure out what this graphic is trying describe.
- Elicit a description of each of the four ways of doing in community. Can participants describe any examples of each type?
- Ask participants: Which type is closest to your experience of the mental health system? How does that type feel?
- Which type is Rabble Rousers all about? How might it feel different?





DISCUSSION

- Have you ever done something you'd consider to be activism/community organizing?
- How would you define activism or community organizing? If the group is stuck, offer these definitions and ask which one they like best.
- Community organizing is...

Building power
By connecting people
With common concerns
And mobilizing them
To find solutions
To their problems

The idea that
People affected by an issue
Have more power to create change
By coming together
Than by acting alone

Community members
Coming together
To take action
On common problems

MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZING IN BC



WATCH

- We're building a community here as we co-create this Rabble Rousers group. We're also becoming part of a community of people who organize to improve mental health.
- Watch *This is a Civil Rights Movement* on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bA_D5Qd1mg8
- Invite people to share reactions to the clip.



READ

- Distribute the Stuff You Should Know handout.
- Ask participants to read it independently and see how many words they can unscramble.
- Read the text out loud together and invite people to unscramble the jumbled words when you come to them.
- Invite participants to share something new they learned or questions the text sparked.



WATCH

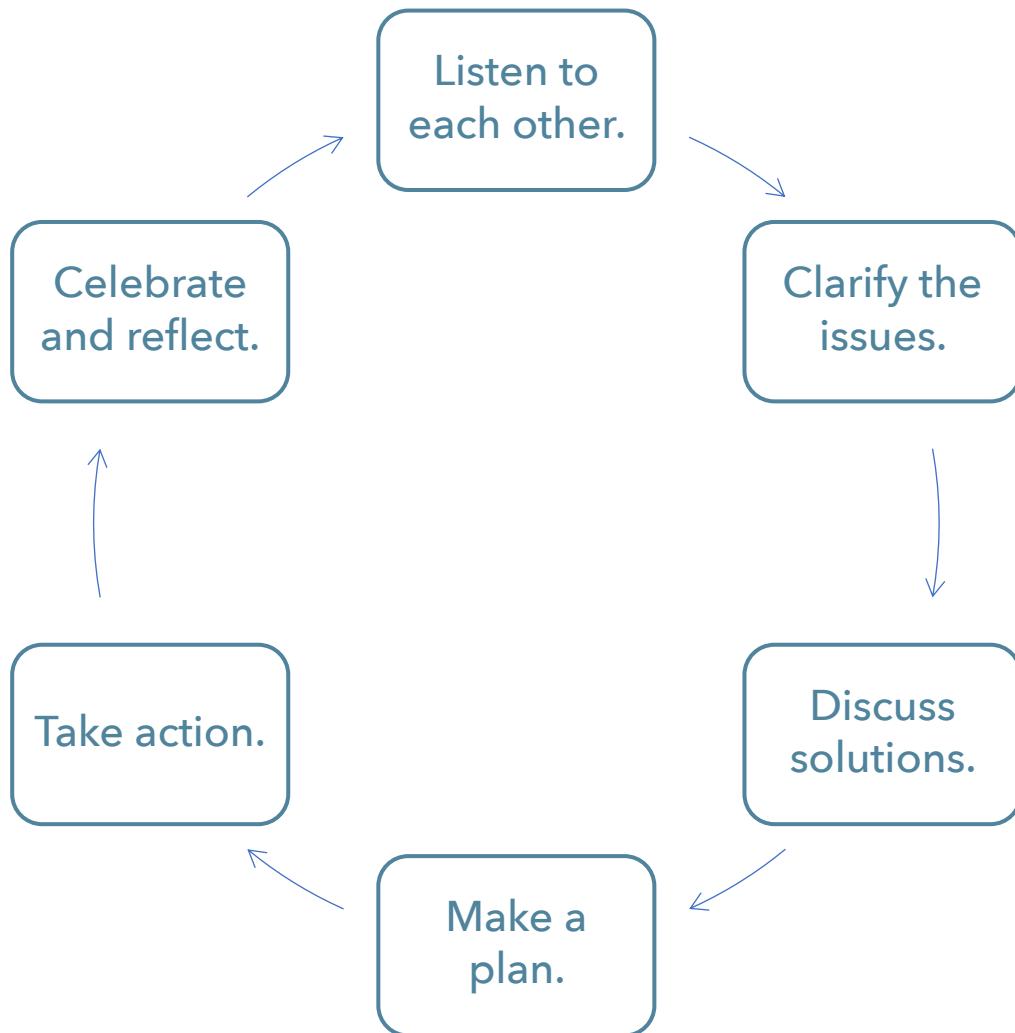
- Coast Clubhouse is the result of community organizing, and so is a group called MPA (check if anyone knows MPA and what it stands for: Mental Patients Association.)
- Next, we'll watch a clip of a short documentary about how this organization came to be. It's called *The Inmates are Running the Asylum*. (Content warning: suicide)
- Access the documentary here and just watch the first 15 mins or so: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwyaRU1svrA>
- Discuss what stood out for people.

THE LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT

SPEAKING NOTES

- People have been working together in groups to solve problems for probably as long as humans have existed. Over time, people have found strategies that work well for planning a community project.
- Draw a circle diagram to explain the process we'll follow to make a community project. Write down the key words and orally explain the rest:
 - 1. Listen to each other.** Find out what our common concerns are when it comes to the mental health programs and services.
 - 2. Clarify the issues.** What do we want to fight for and against? What change do we want to see?
 - 3. Discuss solutions.** Compare strategies for making this change. Choose one that is realistic and that the group is excited about.
 - 4. Make a plan.** What action steps need to be taken to make your project a reality?
 - 5. Take action.** Carry out your plan.
 - 6. Celebrate and reflect.** Take time to celebrate your successes! Maybe have a party or go out for a nice meal. Reflect on high points, why it went well, and what you learned.
- Invite people to start thinking about what supports exist and what problems they see when it comes to mental health. We'll talk about these more next week.

LIFE CYCLE OF OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT



SESSION TWO:

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What's working well in the mental health system?
- What are the strengths of the people in our group?
- What mental health services exist for youth in the Lower Mainland?

OPENING ROUND

- Welcome everyone, do a round of names and pronouns and a check-in question. Quickly review the group agreements made last week. Share the plan for the session. It would be helpful to briefly review the *Life of Our Community Project* circle from last session before you begin. Point out that we are working on Step 1 today.

WHAT'S A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH?

SPEAKING NOTES

- In pretty much any community or situation, even when things are crummy, there's always something that's working well.
- The things we focus on become our reality. If we just focus on problems, we can lose motivation and hope, and things will probably just get worse.
- Rather than focusing on problems, a strengths-based approach is a way of recognizing and affirming what's working well and how these strengths can be built upon.
- Today we will look at some of the strengths of the mental health system, as well as what strengths we have as individuals.

INTERVIEW A PARTNER



DISCUSSION

- Let's share our experiences to discover some of what is working well in the mental health system. You'll interview a partner using the following questions. (Read them and write them on the board):
- Tell a story about a high point you experienced accessing mental health services.
- What about this moment made it a high point?
- What qualities do you value in people who work in the field of mental health, like doctors, nurses, counsellors, support workers, and so on?
- What qualities do you especially value in yourself?
- What strategies do you find most helpful in managing your mental health?
- What's going well for you in your life right now?

BIO POEMS



WRITE

- We're going to reflect on our strengths by making something called a bio poem.
- Share an example of a bio poem you have written in advance, so they understand the idea. Note that it doesn't rhyme.
- Share the frame below so people can make their own. Clarify that adjectives are description words like brave, strong, or funny.
- Ask participants to write a draft and then make a good copy. Some may want to type and print theirs, others may want to just write theirs by hand. Invite people to share theirs with the group. They can be displayed on the wall if they'd like.

Name _____

Adjectives _____

Who loves _____

Who is able to _____

Who feels _____

Who needs _____

Who gives _____

Who learned _____

Who would like to see _____

Who wishes _____

Who dreams _____

Last Name _____

WHAT IS ASSET MAPPING?



READ AND REFLECT

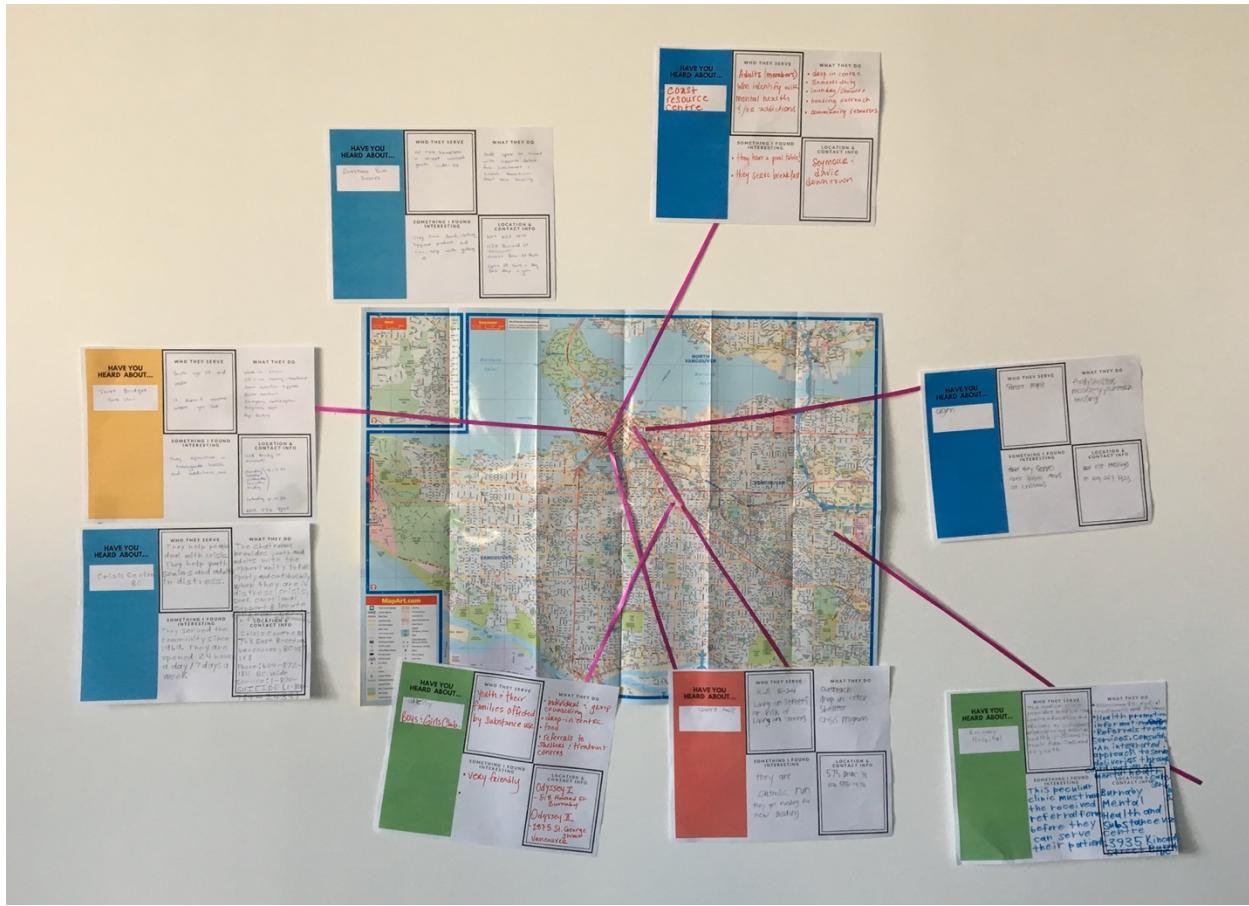
- Look at the Asset Map brochure together.
- Invite people to individually fill in the 'Identifying assets' section of the brochure. Then invite participants to share their responses for each section. If participants are shy, you can have them share in partners instead.
- You (the facilitator) may want to find some asset maps on the web in advance and share them with the group.

MAKE A MENTAL HEALTH ASSET MAP



CREATE

- Brainstorm a list of organizations that support youth with mental health challenges.
- Check that the following are included: Inner City Youth, Coast Clubhouse, MPA, Thrive, BYRC, Willow Pavilion, WATARI, SAFER, Youth Beat, Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, Crisis Centre, EPI, Dan's Legacy.
- Give everyone a 'Have You Heard About' sheet. Everyone will pick a different organization from the list, research it on the web, and fill in the sheet.
- Give everyone another 'Have You Heard About' sheet. Ask them to fill it in with a place in the city that supports their mental health, even though it's not a mental health service. For example, they might choose a park, a museum, an art gallery, a library, a coffee shop, etc.
- Put a map of Vancouver up on the wall. Ask people to tape a piece of string to their sheet. Then pin the string to the location of their places on the map and tape the sheet to the wall. You've now created an asset map of mental health organizations in Vancouver.
- This asset map helps us identify what exists, and it can also assist anyone who accesses the Young Adult space with navigating services in the city.



Mental Health Asset Map

THIS IS THE STORY OF A CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The doors to public education were closed to our children. We raised money, set up our own schools and hired teachers. We believed in the right of our children to go to school. Eventually so did the government. We then fought for all kids to learn and grow together in our neighbourhoods.

Our family members belonged in community. Others said they belonged locked up in institutions. We fought for their freedom.

We fought for their right to marry. To vote. To work. Rights that everyone should be born with, but that they never had until 1969 when they were recognized by the UN.

We lobbied not so that our voices would be heard, but so that people would listen to theirs.

People began studying the issues, values and practice were changing and the acceptance of human rights violations was fading quickly.

We started to close institutions.

Our sons and daughters became advocates for themselves.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms finally recognized full citizenship status to people with developmental disabilities.

The People First Movement called on us all to move beyond labels.

We watched with excitement when the first Canadian with a disability, a woman from BC, addressed the UN general assembly.

We celebrated, as BC became the first province to finally close the last of its institutions and when it became the only jurisdiction in the world to safeguard decision-making rights for people with disabilities.

We stood together as the walls of Woodlands came tumbling down, acknowledging the brutal truths of institutions.

Our movement was started by a group of parents who worked tirelessly, fearlessly, to create a better BC.

Watch the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bA_D5Qd1mg8.

STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW!

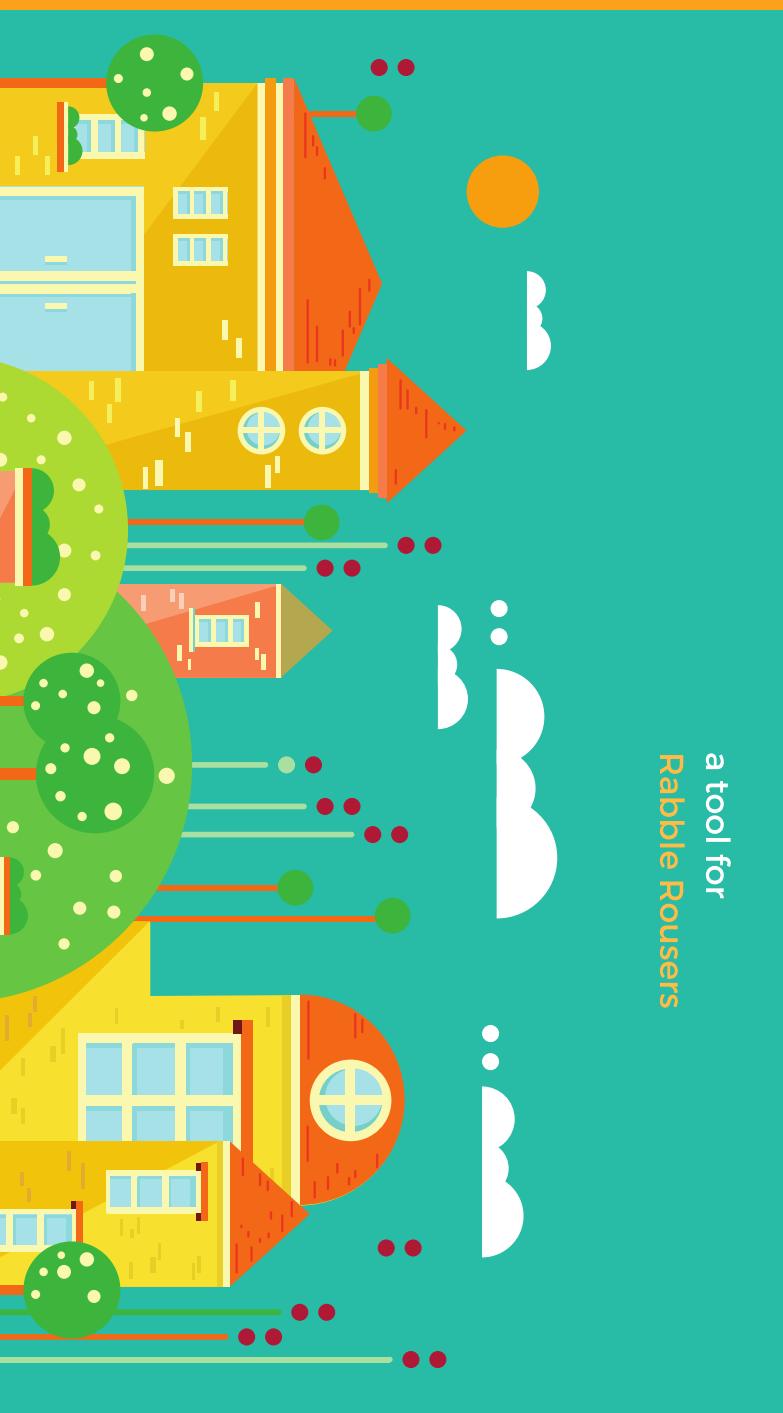
In the 1800s, people with mental health issues were called **TICNALUNS**. They were not allowed to go to school. They were not allowed to get married. They were not allowed to have children. They were not allowed to **TOVE**. They were forced to live in **LYSAMUS**. An asylum called **DNLASOOWD** was built in New Westminster in 1878. Another asylum called **WIEVVIERR** was built in Coquitlam in 1913. Many patients spent the rest of their lives in these asylums, away from their families and communities. The asylums were very crowded. The staff were abusive to the residents. Food was limited.

In the 1960s and 1970s, many communities began organizing to fight for their rights. Women, LGBTQ people, Indigenous people, Black people, people with disabilities, and people with mental health issues all began to demand to be treated with dignity and respect. Finally, **GENCAH** started to happen.

People with mental health issues started to be moved away from asylums and back into their communities. They organized to form community groups like **ACTOS**, Community Living BC, the Self Advocacy Foundation, and the Mental Patients Association. They won the right to go to **OOLCHS**. They won the right to get married. They won the right to have children. They won the right to vote.

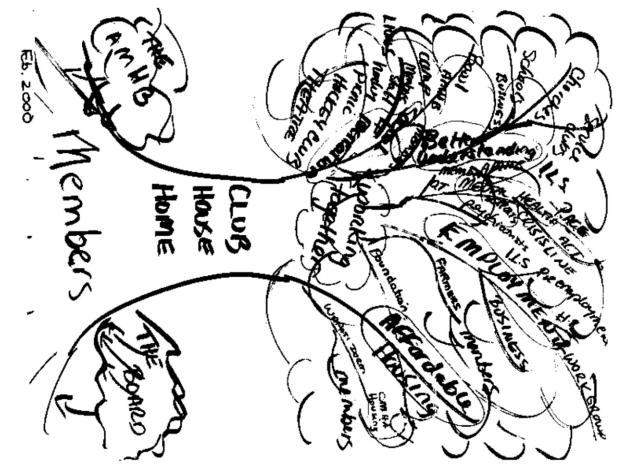
But equity and justice have not been fully achieved for people with mental health issues. There is not enough affordable and safe **NGIUOHS**. There are not enough community supports. People with addictions are treated like criminals instead of being treated as people needing healthcare. There is **GTSIAM** around mental illness. We face barriers to employment. The fight for our rights isn't over yet. But history has shown us that when we stick **GERTHOT** and speak up, we can make big waves in the world of mental health.

Examples of asset maps



Asset Mapping

Rabble Rousers



What is an asset?

asset map?



An asset map is a tool community organizers can use before they plan a new project. It is a visual way to show the strengths of a community. It is a way to find out what already exists in a community and what is working well.

What assets in yourself and in the community have supported your mental wellbeing?

Identifying assets

People

Community members' skills, knowledge, and values



Organizations

Non-profits, clubs, schools, hospitals, churches, government agencies, businesses, community events



What organizations have been assets to your mental wellbeing?

What natural resources have been assets to your mental wellbeing?

Natural Resources
Parks, forests, beaches, wildlife, gardens



Other?



WHAT THEY DO

WHO THEY SERVE

**HAVE YOU
HEARD ABOUT...**

SOMETHING I FOUND
INTERESTING

LOCATION &
CONTACT INFO

SESSION THREE:

GAPS, BARRIERS AND OUR VISION



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are some of our needs that aren't getting met?
- What prevents us from accessing supports we need?
- What's our vision for youth with mental health concerns?

OPENING ROUND

Welcome everyone, do a round of names and pronouns and a check-in question. Briefly review the group agreements. Share the plan for the session. It would be helpful to briefly review the *Life of Our Community Project* circle from last session before you begin. Point out that we are finishing up Step 1 and Step 2 today.

WHAT AFFECTS OUR WELLNESS?



READ AND REFLECT

- Give out the *What Affects Our Wellness* handout.
- Explain that it has three different ways of thinking about wellness.
- The first image was created by a group of local First Nations people during a gathering. The second image was made by some professors. The third one is a list made by Marshall Rosenberg, who wrote a book called Non-Violent Communication.
- Look at the handout with a partner.
- In your opinion, which of the three images best captures what people need to be well?
- Which factors stand out as really important to you?

IDENTIFY UNMET NEEDS



WRITE & REFLECT

Now we want to find out what needs are unmet for young adults with mental health concerns.

Put up giant post-it note paper on the walls. On each note, include one of these headings:

- Education
- Housing
- Food
- Environment
- Healthcare
- Arts & Culture
- Sports and Recreation
- Income & Employment
- Culture & Language
- Religion & Spirituality
- Family and Community Support

Invite participants to go around the room and put up their thoughts about issues young adults with mental illness deal with related to each topic. If they see an idea that resonates with them, they can put a checkmark next to it.

Once everyone has had a chance to visit each paper, bring all the papers together on one wall so you can see them all at once. Read through the ideas together. Ask a different person to share the ideas from each paper.

Ask “what stands out to you?” Which ideas have several checkmarks? Which ideas are you most interested in finding solutions for?

ACTIVIST PROFILE: THE BLACK PANTHERS



WATCH & DISCUSS

- What comes to mind when you think of the Black Panthers?
- Watch the first 10 min of Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution on Netflix
- What issues facing the Black community were mentioned in the film?
- What are some examples of community projects organized by the Black Panthers?
- Look at the Black Panthers 10-point platform (see next page). A platform is a statement of beliefs and values.
- Invite participants to choose one of the 10 points. Consider: Is it still relevant today? How? Have gains been made?

MAKE A RABBLE ROUSERS PLATFORM



CREATE

- Think back on the gaps and barriers we identified. What would improve these situations? It might be that something needs to be added (a service or a different way of doing things). It might be that something needs to be taken away (like a barrier).
- Describe one thing you would want to see on a platform for young adults with mental health concerns.
- Write down into our own Rabble Rousers Platform. Use these sentence beginners as prompts. Give a few examples so people understand the activity and then invite participants to add their sentences. Write them down on a whiteboard or chart paper.

We are the Rabble Rousers.
We want...
We believe...

We know...
We will...
We are committed to...
We demand...
We love...

- Read the manifesto out loud together when it's all done. You can invite people to copy it into their notebooks, too.

OPTIONAL: MAKE A SURVEY TO IDENTIFY COMMUNITY NEEDS



CREATE

- Make a survey for young adults who identify as working towards mental wellness
- Brainstorm questions you might ask your peers in a survey. Here are some possible question beginners:
 - -what makes it hard to access...
 - -what would make it easier to access...
 - -what challenges do young adults face when...
 - -what do you wish was different about...
 - -how could ____ be improved...
 - -what kind of _____ would you like?
- Decide what types of questions you want in your survey: select all the apply, ranking, short answer
- Decide whether you will do your survey on paper or online.
- Decide who will create the final copy of the survey for next week.
- Next week, make multiple copies of the survey. Participants can take a few and find peers who can fill it in. They should bring back the completed surveys the following week.
- Look for patterns in the survey responses. What responses resonate with you?

The Black Panthers' 10-Point Program

On October 15, 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale drafted the 10-Point Program, also known as the 10-Point Party Platform, in response to the social and economic disparities they saw in their community. The 10-Point Program defined the philosophy and goals of the Black Panther Party and served as a model for other activists, such as the Young Lords and Students for a Democratic Society.

The Black Panthers' 10-Point Program, October 1966: What We Want. What We Believe.

1. WE WANT freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. WE WANT full employment for our people.
3. WE WANT an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our Black Community.
4. WE WANT decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
5. WE WANT education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
6. WE WANT all black men to be exempt from military service.
7. WE WANT an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.
8. WE WANT freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county, and city prisons and jails.
9. WE WANT all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. WE WANT land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

"Through the breakfast program, through the other programs that we had, the health clinics, people would come in and talk about how they can't pay their bills or they need childcare. That teardrop symbolizes that pain that I observed. Even through their pain there was a strength and determination and conviction to still battle on."

— Emory Douglas, Black Panther Party

Sources:

- » web.stanford.edu/group/blackpanthers/history.shtml, accessed October 2015
- » pbs.org/hueypnewton/actions/actions_platform.html, accessed October 2015

Project Idea



In a couple of words, what is a tactic you could use?

Purpose



How will this project help improve mental wellness for young adults?

"If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it." - Albert Einstein

rabble rousers

SESSION FOUR:

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING STRATEGIES



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What strategies have past activists used to organize for change?
- What ideas do we have for our own community project?

OPENING ROUND

Welcome everyone, do a round of names and pronouns and a check-in question. Briefly review the group agreements. Share the plan for the session. It would be helpful to briefly review the *Life of Our Community Project* circle from last session before you begin. Point out that we are working on Step 3 today.

ACTIVIST TACTICS

SPEAKING NOTES

- Look at the Rabble Rousers Platform from the previous session. It represents gaps and needs not being met.
- Today we will brainstorm ideas for community projects that will address some of these issues. First, we'll learn about some activist tactics others have used.



READ AND REFLECT

- Ask: Can you think of some people who've made social change? How did they do it?
- Divide into pairs. Give each pair a news article about a community project to read together (see the resources in the following pages). People can work alone if they prefer. These are the topics:
 - Digital stories
 - Craftivism
 - Lobbying government
 - Rally
 - Podcast
- Their task is to describe the activist tactic used in their article and how it created change. They can record their notes on the Activist Tactics sheets in the following pages. After, they can be combined into a book.
- After, each group should share the tactic with the whole group. Invite them to share any thoughts they have about that tactic. Would something similar be an effective community project for promoting mental health?



DISCUSS

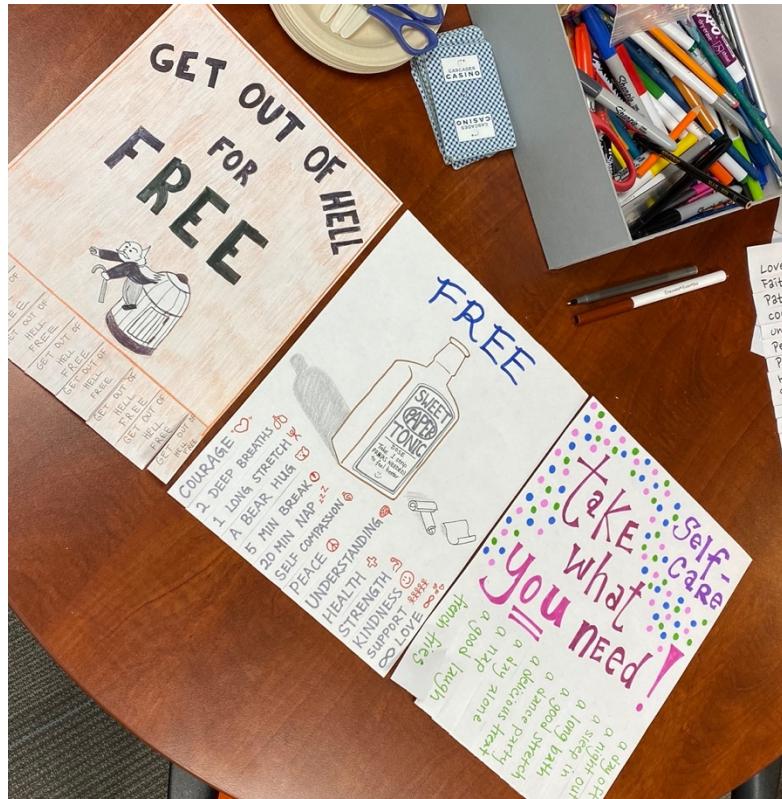
- Look at the Rabble Rousers Platform again. It represents problems that need solutions. Let's brainstorm projects that could help improve things for young adults with mental illness.
- Break into pairs. Brainstorm ideas for community projects that could address one of those gaps. In a brainstorm, no idea is a bad idea. Ideas that are unrealistic or silly can act as compost for good ideas to grow, so don't hold back.
- Choose your favourite ideas. Fill in a 'Just an Idea' sheet for each one.
- Gather back together as a group. Ask each group to share their ideas. Elicit feedback from the other participants.
- Think about which ideas you feel most drawn to so we can make a decision next week.

MAKE 'TAKE WHAT YOU NEED' POSTERS



CREATE

- Community projects come in all shapes and sizes. Not all of them have to be big!
- We're going to do a mini-community project today. We'll make public art that will help make someone smile or give them strength.
- Show an example of a Take What You Need poster. You can find lots of examples on the web.
- Provide paper, markers, scissors, etc and invite participants to make their own Take What You Need poster.
- Discuss ideas for where to put them up.



RABBLE ROUSERS'

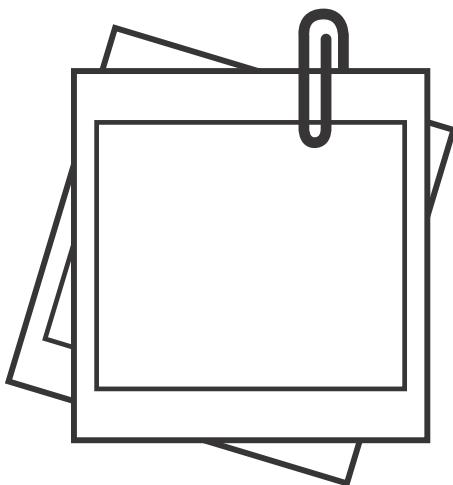
ACTIVIST TACTICS



A book on
strategies for making change

TACTIC: -----

what is it?



**how can this
create change?**

TRUMP HAS AWAKENED AN AMERICAN "CRAFTIVISM" MOVEMENT THAT'S BEEN QUIET SINCE THE 1980S AIDS QUILT

BY ANNE QUITO

Thirty years ago, a giant quilt was first unfurled in Washington, DC. Made of thousands of lovingly hand-sewn panels in honour of the lives lost to AIDS, the massive Memorial Quilt was an example of hobby craft used for political protest, called "craftivism."

Today, hobby crafts such as needle-point, crochet, knitting, lettering, and quilting are making a comeback. Activists—armed with glue guns, sewing needles, and X-ACTO knives—are making one-of-a-kind protest gear. Examples can be often be spotted in the many rallies and marches protesting president Donald Trump. Today, many subversive embroiderers, yarn bombers, rage knitters, and crusader calligraphers deliver punchy messages through traditional arts and crafts.

Among the most visible anti-Trump craftivist actions is the Pussyhat Project that debuted during the Women's March in January. Spurred by Trump's leaked "locker room talk," thousands channeled their outrage into knitting pink hats with pussy cat-like ears.

Craftivism is appealing to some introverts who are put off by traditional activism. Crafting can foster non-threatening dialogue across party lines. It helps change up the idea some people have that protest is always aggressive, which, while valuable, tends to shut down conversations.



B.C. YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE CALL FOR SERIOUS CHILD WELFARE REFORM

SAANICHNEWS.COM

BY KERI COLES

More than 40 B.C. youth who have experienced living in government care descended on the legislature Wednesday, calling for changes to the child welfare system.

The group met with multiple cabinet ministers and youth transition organizations as part of Fostering Change, an advocacy campaign, to push for more comprehensive supports for youth who are set to leave care.

“No one should fear their 19th birthday,” said Dylan Cohen, youth organizer for Fostering Change who formerly lived in government care.

“When I see my siblings age out, we shudder for them, knowing that 19 is like being pushed off a cliff,” he explained. “We lose our social worker, our funding, our foster home, all because of an arbitrary age that is defined in legislation.”

Adil Walker-Chagani, another youth formerly in government care, hoped Wednesday’s actions would bring about the much needed changes.

“What they really forget is that everyone that goes to the ministry for help has barriers, has struggles,” said Walker-Chagani. “As much as getting housing and budgeting helps us, without helping our mental health it can screw everything up.”



THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS IN U.S. WALK OUT OF CLASSES TO PROTEST GUN VIOLENCE

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida walked out of their classrooms Wednesday, gathered on the campus football field, and embraced each other. As the school chorus played inspirational music over a loudspeaker, the students chanted in unison: "MSD! MSD!"

It was a month to the day after a former student wielding an AR-15 assault-style rifle walked into one of the school buildings and opened fire, killing 14 students and three staff members.

The Parkland protest was echoed in schools across the nation as students staged 17-minute walkouts — one minute for each of the shooting victims — aimed at pressuring federal lawmakers to enact gun control laws. The Parkland students argue such laws will protect others from having to face the kind of trauma they experienced.

More than 3,000 walkouts were planned around the world, organizers said.

Historians said the demonstrations were shaping up to be one of the largest youth protests in decades. With social media, it's easier than ever for youth to mobilize.



YOUTHS TO SHARE EXPERIENCES WITH JUSTICE SYSTEM THROUGH VIDEOS

BY SUSAN PARKER

On Saturday, Apr. 21, Salisbury-area residents have an opportunity to hear from seven young people who have encountered the prison system in a variety of ways. These youths, ages 15-24, will share their stories in brief but thought-provoking video presentations, and will be on hand to discuss their work.

"BARS: Stories of the System, a Youth Perspective" is a digital storytelling project presented by the Fenix Youth Project, which empowers youths to use their creative powers to bring about social change.

The three-hour event will take place at the Wicomico Public Library beginning at 2 p.m., followed by a "Town Hall Remix" - a discussion involving the storytellers who produced the videos, assisted by professors at local universities.

"It's designed to create an experience for the public to really hear and understand the perspectives of young adult storytellers as they share their personal stories," said Fenix founder Amber Green, "and reflect on how their stories have impacted them, how their experience can help bring about change in areas like mental health, family engagement and definitely in juvenile justice and the justice system."

Earlier Saturday, a private VIP screening of three videos will be held for invited community leaders, local politicians and law enforcement leaders at The Daily Times building on Division Street, with a discussion period to follow the videos. Their hope is that by sharing these stories, a conversation can be created about how to best support youth in Salisbury.



WELCOME TO MY WORLD



Welcome to My World is a podcast created by Louis. Louis is a Métis youth with high-functioning Autism-Asperger's Syndrome, as well as other invisible disabilities. His podcast provides an authentic glimpse of life from the point of view of a person living with developmental disabilities - including his personal experiences and tips. New podcasts will be uploaded regularly. Stay tuned for more of Louis's unique perspective!

Episode 1: Introduction
Episode 2: Making Friends
Episode 3: Dealing with CLBC
Episode 4: National Aboriginal Day
Episode 5: Dealing with Bad Days

podcast

SESSION FIVE:

CHOOSING A COMMUNITY PROJECT



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What community project ideas can be achieved in our timeframe and with the resources we have?
- Which projects fit with our passions and interests?
- Which projects would be most fun?
- Which projects would have a real-life impact?

OPENING ROUND

- Welcome everyone and make a land acknowledgment. Do a round of names and pronouns and a check-in question. Quickly review the group agreements made last week. Share the plan for the session. It would be helpful to briefly review the *Life of Our Community Project* circle from last session before you begin. Point out that we are finishing up Step 3 today.

WHAT ARE SMART GOALS?



READ

- Today we'll choose a community project to commit to. To help us make a good decision, we can consider something called SMART Goals. It's a framework for setting goals that are achievable.
- Distribute a copy of the handout on the following page to each participant.
- Read the handout aloud together.

USE SMART GOALS TO COMPARE PROJECT IDEAS

'SMART Goalsetting' is a framework for setting goals that are achievable. Each letter in the word SMART stands for something to consider when you are setting a goal. The original "SMART Goals" framework has been adapted below to apply to our community project.



PICK A PROJECT



DISCUSSION

- Look at our project ideas from last session. You may want to post all the Just An Idea sheets on the wall. Did any other ideas come to mind over the past week? Add them to the wall.
- Ask: Which ideas excite you most? Do a round so everyone gets to answer. Put a check for each idea that someone mentions.
- Identify the ideas with the most checkmarks. Use your judgement to decide how many to select. Take the rest off the wall. It doesn't mean they are bad ideas, they just aren't the best fit for this group this time around.
- Discuss each remaining idea in terms of SMART goals. Go through each idea one at a time and discuss it in relation to each criterion. Can projects that don't fit the criteria be changed so that they do?
- Overall, which ideas best meet the SMART goal criteria? How would you like to decide between these options - vote by secret ballot, vote by show of hands, or discussion / consensus building?
- Make a decision! Choose the community project you will take on.

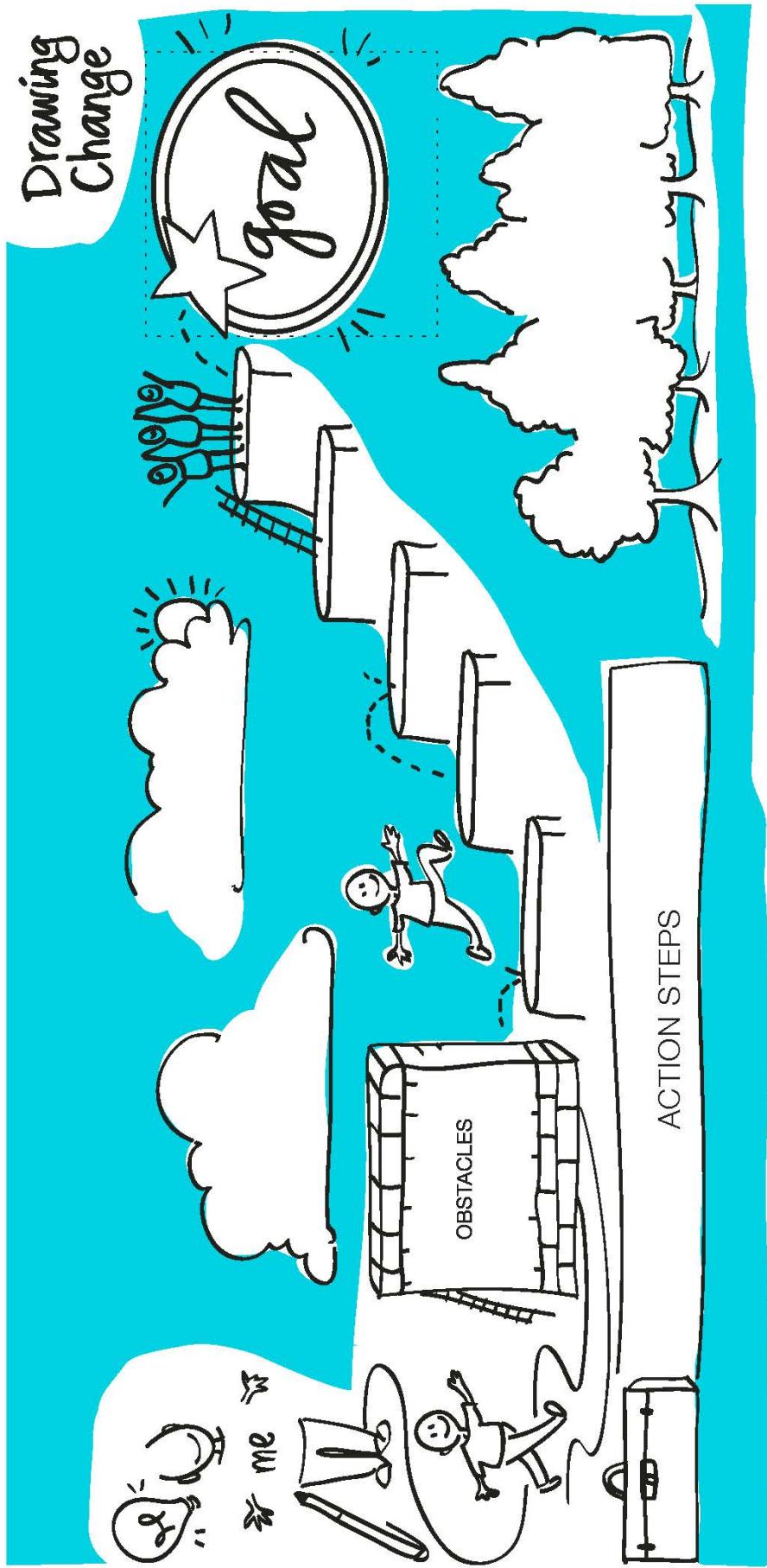
ENVISION THE PROJECT



CREATE

- Distribute a Goal Planner Sheet to each participant. These were drawn by Sam Bradd, a graphic illustrator who lives in East Van.
- Use this tool to think about some of the details of the project. Spend a decent amount of time discussing each of the following aspects. Don't rush through this process.
- What is our specific project (the thing we'll make or do)? Put it in the goal circle.
- What is our vision for the impact of our project? (Connection? Knowledge? Empowerment?) Put these in the clouds.
- What skills, knowledge, and attitudes will we need to successfully complete our project? Put them in the toolbox.
- What are some challenges we might face? Put them on the wall. How can we overcome them?
- Who could we connect with? Who might support us? Put them in the trees.
- There are also some steps in the middle of the page. We'll talk about what specific steps we'll need to take when we make our action plan in our next session.

Drawing Change



GOAL SETTER
SEE THE FUTURE YOU WANT

Based on a template by
Sam Bradd drawingchange.com

SESSION SIX:

MAKING AN ACTION PLAN



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What action steps do we need to take?
- What order do we need to take the steps in?
- When do we need to complete each step in order to complete the project within our timeframe?
- Who wants to work on what action items?

OPENING ROUND

- Welcome everyone, do a round of names and pronouns and a check-in question. Quickly review the group agreements made last week. Share the plan for the session. It would be helpful to briefly review the *Life of Our Community Project* cycle from last session before you begin. Point out that we are working on Step 4 today. Look back at your Goal Planner Sheets to jog everyone's memory of where we left off.

CHART A PATH



SPEAKING NOTES

Share these words by Spanish poet Antonio Machado:

“Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace camino ...”

“Pathmaker, there is no path,
You make the path by walking.
By walking, you make the path ...”



CREATE

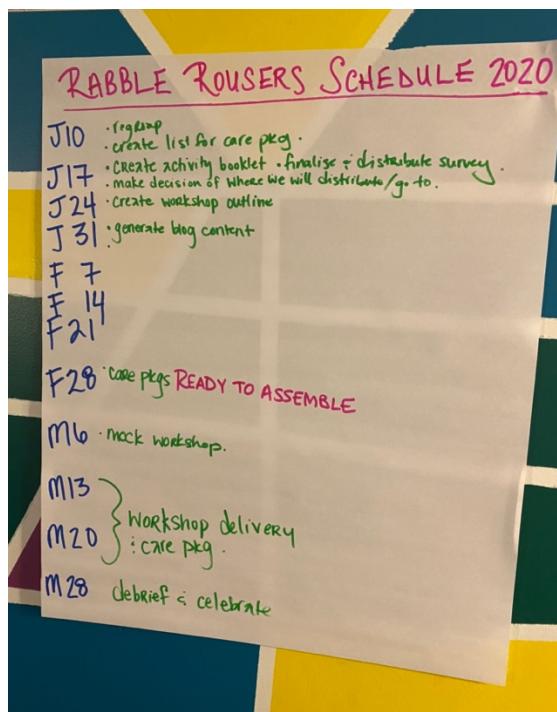
- Tape together several large pieces of chart paper to make a banner.
- Draw a mountain with a gradual slope. The mountain represents the journey we will take together as we create our community project. Today we will begin to map out our path.
- Invite people to add whatever they want to the mountain: trees, streams, animals, cliffs, etc. These doodles can represent helpers and obstacles or just be decorative.
- Now you'll need a bunch of sticky notes. Talk about what steps you'll need to take to implement your community project. When people share an idea, invite them to write it on a sticky note and put it on the mountain. Each sticky note is a step on the path to get over the mountain.
- Sticky notes are helpful because you can rearrange them to show the order the steps should happen in. Some steps may happen simultaneously. You can start to move them around when it makes sense to do so.
- If it helps, participants can continue to doodle on the sheet while they think and discuss.
- When you're all done, check in around how people are feeling.

MAKE A TIMELINE



WRITE

- On chart paper, make a vertical list of all the dates of your remaining sessions together.
- Decide on a date(s) (or at least the general week) for your community project to take place. Don't forget to leave a session for celebration! Add these to your timeline.
- Working backwards, and referring to your mountain, write the key steps down on your timeline in a way that will allow you to get everything done on time and in a way that is realistic.
- Invite each participant to share which steps of the project they are most interested in helping with. Write their names next to those tasks. If anyone is hesitant to commit, this can be tentative, it's not written in stone.
- Hang on to this timeline, as it will guide your future work together. You may want to post this on a wall for reference in future sessions.



FLEX SESSIONS: PUTTING PLANS INTO ACTION



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What new skills and knowledge do we need to put our idea into action?
- How can we make sure our whole team feels included in the project?
- How can we make sure our community project is accessible and inclusive of diversity?
- How can we practice self-care and stay resilient as community organizers?

WHAT'S NEXT?

- The sessions that follow are described as 'flex sessions' because they need to be flexible in a few ways. First, the number of sessions you run depends on how you decide to structure your program. Second, the content you cover and activities you do depend heavily on the community project your group decides to carry out. Third, the content will be influenced by who is in your group, what knowledge and experiences they bring, and what they want to learn and do. The facilitator will need to tailor sessions that take these factors into consideration. This section provides some guidance and ideas for planning these sessions.



FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

- Think, Pair, Share
- Gallery Walk
- Graffiti Wall
- Partner Interview
- Storytelling
- Case studies
- Concentric Circles



ACTIVITIES

- Invite guest speakers, such as community organizers, government representatives, and people who are knowledgeable on a topic of relevance
- Watch relevant films
- Read relevant poetry, short stories, news articles, and personal essays
- Listen to relevant songs
- Learn about community projects related to mental health from around the globe
- Do team-building activities
- Make art
- Meditate
- Journal on relevant themes
- Button making
- Skill sharing
- Drama exercises
- Fieldtrips



MOVEMENTS TO LEARN ABOUT

- Black Lives Matter
- Idle No More
- MMIWG
- Occupy
- Third-wave feminism
- Stonewall Riots
- AIDS Movement
- Prison Abolition
- Arab Spring
- #MeToo
- Trans Rights
- Mad Pride
- Neurodiversity
- Sex Workers' Rights
- Disability Rights
- When you're all done, check in around how people are feeling.



RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

- Still I Rise by Maya Angelou (poem)
- Thank You, Ma'am by Langston Hughes (short story)
- Stay Solid edited by Matt Hern (anthology of essays)
- Turning to One Another by Margaret Wheatley (poem)



COMMUNITY ORGANIZER SKILLS TO PRACTICE

- Doing meaningful land acknowledgments
- Making a budget
- Active listening
- Non-violent communication
- Setting boundaries
- Mindfulness
- Public speaking
- Leadership skills
- Writing press releases
- Writing government officials
- Letters to the Editor
- Making a petition
- Social media
- Blogging
- Meeting facilitation
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Self-care



RECOMMENDED WEB RESOURCES

- Madness - History in Practice: <https://historyinpractice.ca>
- Brene Brown Downloads and Guides: <https://brenebrown.com/downloads/>
- Fireweed Collective: <https://fireweedcollective.org>
- Madness & Oppression: <https://fireweedcollective.org/publication/madness-oppression-paths-to-personal-transformation-and-collective-liberation/>
- Surviving the Apocalypse Together: <https://drive.protonmail.com/urls/GS5XBJRNC4#Zv2IAKHMN3Um>
- Navigating Crisis: <https://fireweedcollective.org/publication/navigating-crisis/>