

Chapter 1 : Community Empowerment; Making Neighbourhoods Stronger

Community definition, a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage.

Gemeinschaft usually translated as "community" and Gesellschaft "society" or "association". No group is exclusively one or the other. Gemeinschaft stress personal social interactions , and the roles, values, and beliefs based on such interactions. Gesellschaft stress indirect interactions, impersonal roles, formal values, and beliefs based on such interactions. New social tools relieve some of those burdens, allowing for new kinds of group-forming, like using simple sharing to anchor the creation of new groups. Conversation creates more of a sense of community than sharing does. Collaborative production is a more involved form of cooperation, as it increases the tension between individual and group goals. The litmus test for collaborative production is simple: An online community builds weaker bonds if allows users to be anonymous. Organizational communication Effective communication practices in group and organizational settings are very important to the formation and maintenance of communities. The ways that ideas and values are communicated within communities are important to the induction of new members, the formulation of agendas, the selection of leaders and many other aspects. Organizational communication is the study of how people communicate within an organizational context and the influences and interactions within organizational structures. Group members depend on the flow of communication to establish their own identity within these structures and learn to function in the group setting. Although organizational communication, as a field of study, is usually geared toward companies and business groups, these may also be seen as communities. The principles of organizational communication can also be applied to other types of communities. Public administration[edit] Public administration is the province of local, state and federal governments, with local governments responsible for units in towns, cities, villages, and counties, among others. The most well known "community department" is housing and community development which has responsibility for both economic development initiatives, and as public housing and community infrastructure e. To what extent do participants in joint activities experience a sense of community? A "sense of community index SCI was developed by Chavis and colleagues, and revised and adapted by others. Although originally designed to assess sense of community in neighborhoods, the index has been adapted for use in schools, the workplace, and a variety of types of communities. Socialization Lewes Bonfire Night procession commemorating 17 Protestant martyrs burnt at the stake from to The process of learning to adopt the behavior patterns of the community is called socialization. The most fertile time of socialization is usually the early stages of life, during which individuals develop the skills and knowledge and learn the roles necessary to function within their culture and social environment. But socialization also includes adults moving into a significantly different environment, where they must learn a new set of behaviors. Other important influences include schools, peer groups, people, mass media, the workplace, and government. Community development Community development is often linked with community work or community planning, and may involve stakeholders, foundations, governments, or contracted entities including non-government organisations NGOs , universities or government agencies to progress the social well-being of local, regional and, sometimes, national communities. More grassroots efforts, called community building or community organizing , seek to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. Public administrators, in contrast, need to understand community development in the context of rural and urban development, housing and economic development, and community, organizational and business development. Formal accredited programs conducted by universities, as part of degree granting institutions, are often used to build a knowledge base to drive curricula in public administration , sociology and community studies. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University are examples of national community development in the United States. The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University in New York State offers core courses in community and economic development, and in areas ranging from non-profit development to US budgeting federal to local, community funds. In the United Kingdom, Oxford University

has led in providing extensive research in the field through its Community Development Journal, [14] used worldwide by sociologists and community development practitioners. At the intersection between community development and community building are a number of programs and organizations with community development tools. The institute makes available downloadable tools [15] to assess community assets and make connections between non-profit groups and other organizations that can help in community building. Community-Making and Peace Scott Peck argues that the almost accidental sense of community that exists at times of crisis can be consciously built. Peck believes that conscious community building is a process of deliberate design based on the knowledge and application of certain rules. When people first come together, they try to be "nice" and present what they feel are their most personable and friendly characteristics. People move beyond the inauthenticity of pseudo-community and feel safe enough to present their "shadow" selves. Moves beyond the attempts to fix, heal and convert of the chaos stage, when all people become capable of acknowledging their own woundedness and brokenness, common to human beings. Deep respect and true listening for the needs of the other people in this community. Community building that is geared toward citizen action is usually termed "community organizing. Where good-faith negotiations fail, these constituency-led organizations seek to pressure the decision-makers through a variety of means, including picketing, boycotting , sit-ins, petitioning, and electoral politics. Organizing often means building a widely accessible power structure, often with the end goal of distributing power equally throughout the community. Community organizers generally seek to build groups that are open and democratic in governance. Such groups facilitate and encourage consensus decision-making with a focus on the general health of the community rather than a specific interest group. If communities are developed based on something they share in common, whether location or values, then one challenge for developing communities is how to incorporate individuality and differences. Rebekah Nathan suggests[according to whom? Community currencies[edit] Some communities have developed their own local exchange trading systems LETS [24] and local currencies , such as the Ithaca Hours system, [25] to encourage economic growth and an enhanced sense of community. Community currencies have recently proven valuable in meeting the needs of people living in various South American nations, particularly Argentina, that recently suffered as a result of the collapse of the Argentinian national currency. Community service Community services are a wide range of community institutions, governmental and non-governmental services, voluntary, third sector organizations, and grassroots and neighborhood efforts in local communities, towns, cities, and suburban-exurban areas. In line with governmental and community thinking, volunteering and unpaid services are often preferred e. Non-profit organizations from youth services, to family and neighborhood centers, recreation facilities, civic clubs, and employment, housing and poverty agencies are often the foundation of community services programs, but it may also be undertaken under the auspices of government which funds all NGOs , one or more businesses, or by individuals or newly formed collaboratives. Community services is also the broad term given to health and the human services in local communities and was specifically used as the framework for deinstitutionalization and community integration to homes, families and local communities e. However, while many community services are voluntary, some may be part of alternative sentencing approaches in a justice system and it can be required by educational institutions as part of internships, employment training, and post-graduation plans. Community services may be paid for through different revenue streams which include targeted federal funds, taxpayer contributions, state and local grants and contracts, voluntary donations, Medicaid or health care funds, community development block grants, targeted education funds, and so forth. In the s, the business sector began to contract with government, and also consult on government policies, and has shifted the framework of community services to the for-profit domains. However, by the s, the call was to return to community and to go beyond community services to belonging, relationships, community building and welcoming new population groups and diversity in community life. Ecovillage A number of ways to categorize types of community have been proposed. One such breakdown is as follows: These are also called communities of place. They may be included as communities of need or identity, such as disabled persons , or frail aged people. The usual categorizations of community relations have a number of problems: This involves enduring attachment to particular places and particular people. It is the dominant form taken by customary and

tribal communities. In these kinds of communities, the land is fundamental to identity. This involves giving primacy to communities coming together around particular chosen ways of life, such as morally charged or interest-based relations or just living or working in the same location. Hence the following sub-forms: This is where a community is self-consciously treated as an entity to be projected and re-created. It can be projected as through thin advertising slogan, for example gated community , or can take the form of ongoing associations of people who seek political integration, communities of practice [34] based on professional projects, associative communities which seek to enhance and support individual creativity, autonomy and mutuality. A nation is one of the largest forms of projected or imagined community. Community of place Possibly the most common usage of the word "community" indicates a large group living in close proximity. Examples of local community include: A municipality is an administrative local area generally composed of a clearly defined territory and commonly referring to a town or village. Wakefield, Massachusetts is an example of a small town which constitutes a local community. Although large cities are also municipalities, they are often thought of as a collection of communities, due to their diversity. A neighborhood is a geographically localized community, often within a larger city or suburb. A planned community is one that was designed from scratch and expanded more or less following the plan. It was also common during the European colonization of the Americas to build according to a plan either on fresh ground or on the ruins of earlier Amerindian cities. Community service is a free service. Community of interest In some contexts, "community" indicates a group of people with a common identity other than location. Members often interact regularly. Common examples in everyday usage include: A "professional community" is a group of people with the same or related occupations. Some of those members may join a professional society , making a more defined and formalized group. These are also sometimes known as communities of practice. A virtual community is a group of people primarily or initially communicating or interacting with each other by means of information technologies, typically over the Internet , rather than in person. These may be either communities of interest, practice or communion. Research interest is evolving in the motivations for contributing to online communities. These communities are key to our modern day society, because we have the ability to share information with millions in a matter of seconds. Intentional community Some communities share both location and other attributes. Members choose to live near each other because of one or more common interests. A retirement community is designated and at least usually designed for retirees and seniorsâ€”often restricted to those over a certain age, such as It differs from a retirement home , which is a single building or small complex, by having a number of autonomous households. An intentional community is a deliberate residential community with a much higher degree of social communication than other communities. The members of an intentional community typically hold a common social, political or spiritual vision and share responsibilities and resources. Intentional communities include Amish villages, ashrams , cohousing , communes , ecovillages , housing cooperatives , kibbutzim , and land trusts. Special nature of human community[edit] Definitions of community as "organisms inhabiting a common environment and interacting with one another," [36] while scientifically accurate, do not convey the richness, diversity and complexity of human communities. Their classification, likewise is almost never precise. Untidy as it may be, community is vital for humans. Scott Peck expresses this in the following way:

Chapter 2 : What is Social Responsibility?

A community does not talk, does not think, can not feel, and does not act like a human being. It is a superorganic entity, and therefore moves, responds, grows and behaves through different principles, forces and mechanisms than a human being does.

The reasoning behind this methodology Why Empower Communities? When we use words, we often convey meanings that we do not intend, or meanings that we do not know we convey. There are emotions and assumptions associated with the words we use. Take the word "poverty" for example. In the assistance industry helpers of development , we often see ourselves as soldiers in the so-called war against poverty. Poverty is what we want to defeat. But what is the opposite of poverty? Somehow we do not like to admit we are "soldiers in the war in favour of wealth. Because while poverty and wealth are technically opposite, there are many assumptions, emotions and hidden values that are attached to both those words, and those are conveyed along with their overt meanings. Somehow it is morally OK to help poor people, but we do not always like to keep in our conscious thoughts that we are helping them to obtain wealth. The module on income generation is more acceptable when it is named as "income generation" than as "wealth generation" even though "wealth" is a more accurate economic term. Where the objective is to generate wealth rather than merely transfer money. The term "wealth" comes with hidden emotional baggage that implies it means huge richness. Poverty is a problem because there are disparities in wealth; some have more than others. If genuine equality were possible and it is not, you may be happy to learn , then poverty would not be a problem. Closely associated with "wealth" are "power" and "capacity. So when we want to improve the conditions of people in low income communities, poor communities, marginalized communities, we want them to have more wealth, power, and capacity. But not too much. It is nice we think to help the poor, but in our hidden desires we do not want them to become rich, or at least we do not want them to become as rich as us. We do not want to admit that. Another of the emotionally laden words we use today is "democracy. When we look carefully at the meaning of democracy, it turns out that we are not always in favour of it, especially if it means having to give up some of our own relative power or wealth, or capacity. Many who say they are in favour of democracy are really in favour of a set of institutions that allow people to vote for candidates, putting into power those with the most votes, allowing them to represent the people. This is "representational democracy. The process of voting for representatives takes power away from people and gives it to the vote winners. When we say we want to empower a community, we mean that we want to democratize it. That does not necessarily mean we want them to have votes to choose their representative as in the British or American political model. It means we want the people not just individuals as a whole collectively to have power. We want to find ways for the community to have more power, wealth and capacity. The communities most deserving of our assistance, then, are those with the least amount of power, wealth and capacity. And we must be aware of our hidden desires to keep them poor, powerless and incapable just so that we can keep giving them our charity. If we genuinely want to empower them, we must do it in such a way that they become independent of our charity, that they become self reliant, that they can sustain their own development without our help. Our own desires for wealth and power are normal and natural. We need not be ashamed of them. The training documents on this web site are aimed primarily at the community mobilizer, and emphasize methods and techniques rather than theory or ideology. To effectively use those methods, however, we must be aware of what reasoning lies behind them, what principles apply, and what long term effects they have. Importantly, we must also constantly examine our own motives and purpose behind what we do. Getting Stronger through Exercise: Many times throughout this web site, you are advised to take approaches that can be seen as empowering, rather than those which promote dependency. We sometimes use the term " charity approach " to name dependency producing methods of giving help. Charity in itself is not bad, in so much as it is based upon generosity, a value that we strongly support. What we mean by the "charity approach," however, is a way of helping poor and powerless people that does not help them to become self reliant. Gifts that make the receivers more dependent upon the givers, are not truly generous. They keep the givers in a position of giving. If you

give something to a person or group in need, you temporarily alleviate their need. You can be quite sure that when they are in need again, they will come back to where they received their first assistance. This is not bad; it is human nature, or the nature of survival for any organism. If you want that person or group to become self-reliant, you need to be sure they want something in the first place. Then you must find ways for them to work or to struggle for it, so that when they need it again they will not come begging for it. If they get something for free, they will know that it was worth to them every penny they spent on it. Several times on this web site, you will see a sports analogy to explain the empowerment method. A coach does not do push ups for the athlete, nor does a coach practice putting the basketball into the hoop for the basketball player. The person who is to get stronger and more competent has to do the work. Another analogy is found in physiotherapy. If you hurt yourself and lose the use of your arm, you go to a physiotherapist for help. The physiotherapist may move your arm in the manner you need to move it, but only to show you where it must be exercised. You need to practice moving it yourself, and that is a painful and uncomfortable process. You need to want to get better. The result is that you get your strength back, and no longer need the services of the physiotherapist. If the coach does the push ups for the athlete, the athlete does not become stronger. If the physiotherapist does the exercises for the patient, the patient does not become stronger. If the community worker does the work for the community, the community remains dependent, and poverty is sustained. The empowerment approach to community development is one where first you determine that the community wants something as discovered in a brainstorming session and then shows the community members how to get it. The process of their getting it is the exercise struggle that strengthens them.

Why Choose a Community to Empower? If the purpose of community mobilization is to increase its power, wealth and capacity, why would you choose to mobilize one community and not another? The world is not a fair place. There is inhumanity towards mankind, by humans. Life is not fair. We need some purpose in life. Trying to set right the wrongs of the world; trying to help poor people to become independent and escape from their poverty, are among such purposes. Simply trying to become rich ourselves is the main purpose of some people, but it is a very shallow and unfulfilling purpose the richer that people get, the more wealth they want; there is no satisfaction. There is no evidence, or even hope, that the world will become fair, that poverty will be eliminated. Yet the striving for it is a purpose that has its own rewards. So we could spend our energy in trying to mobilize and empower a rich or relatively wealthy community, but that has less purpose than trying to help a poor community become stronger. The methods that are explained in this web site can be applied to rich or poor communities. Choosing to work with a poor community can be a way of putting more purpose in your life. Choosing a community simply because it is the one you were born in is perhaps equally valid, but less purposeful. The documents on this web site are designed mainly to be applied to low income, poor capacity, poorly empowered communities. Writing them has purpose; no money is earned in putting them here on the internet. It is an element regiment? Some people like to quote: Unfortunately, such people often believe that it should not only start at home; it should also end there. What a short sighted and selfish notion. The whole world has human beings in it. We are all related. We are one big human family. The people far way in isolated poor communities are our brothers and sisters. If we can help them, we have purpose in life. If we help them, we should concentrate on helping them to become independent of our charity, able to help themselves in the future. If we have a choice in which community to apply our skills as mobilizers, it is more meaningful and has greater global effect to choose the lowest income communities, those with less power and capacity.

Empowerment as a Social Process: In several places on this site, we point out that poverty is a social problem, and is contrasted with the individual problem of lack of cash or other resources. We must distinguish between the social level and the individual level, in our analysis, in our observations, and in our interventions. A community is a social organization, and is not an individual. It is far more than a mere collection of individuals. It is an entity, sometimes described as "superorganic," that transcends the individuals that compose it at any one time. It is easy to see and interact with an individual. A "community," in contrast, is a scientific model, like an atom or a solar system, which can be seen at most only partly at any one time, but cannot be seen as a whole.

Chapter 3 : Community | Define Community at racedaydvl.com

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community wellbeing (economic, social, environmental and cultural) often evolves from this type of collective action being taken at a grassroots level.

Each of these dimensions of culture are transmitted by symbols not genes and consist of systems of learned ideas and behaviour. They are not "aspects" of culture; they are dimensions. Cultural dimensions may vary in size but, by definition, permeate the whole. All of these are systems within every social or cultural system. They are based on learned behaviour, which transcends the individuals who each learned parts of them. If any one dimension of culture is missing, by definition, all are missing. You can not "see" a dimension of culture or society, as you can see an individual person. Every individual manifests each of the six dimensions of culture.

The Technological Dimension of Community: The technological dimension of community is its capital, its tools and skills, and ways of dealing with the physical environment. It is the interface between humanity and nature. Remember, it is not the physical tools themselves which make up the technological dimension of culture, but it is the learned ideas and behaviour which allow humans to invent, use, and teach others about tools. Technology is much a cultural dimension as beliefs and patterns of interaction; it is symbolic. This cultural dimension is what the economist may call "real capital" in contrast to financial capital. It is something valuable that is not produced for direct consumption, but to be used to increase production therefore more wealth in the future; investment. In capacity development, it is one of the sixteen elements of strength that changes increases as an organization or a community becomes stronger. In the war against poverty, technology provides an important set of weapons. For an individual or a family, technology includes their house, furniture and household facilities, including kitchen appliances and utensils, doors, windows, beds and lamps. Language, which is one of the important features of being human, belongs to the technological dimension it is a tool. This goes along with communication aids such as radio, telephones, TV, books and typewriters now computers. In an organization, technology includes desks, computers, paper, chairs, pens, office space, telephones, washrooms and lunch rooms. Some organizations have specific technology: In a community, communal technology includes its facilities such as public latrines and water points, roads, markets, clinics, schools, road signs, parks, community centres, libraries, sports fields. Privately owned community technology may include shops, factories, houses and restaurants. When a facilitator encourages a community build a latrine or well, new technology is introduced. A well or latrine is as much a tool and an investment as is a hammer or computer. In general ie there are exceptions technology is perhaps the easiest of the six dimensions for introducing cultural and social change. It is easier to introduce a transistor radio than to introduce a new religious belief, new set of values or a new form of family. Paradoxically, however, introduction of new technology by invention or borrowing will lead to changes in all the other five dimensions of the culture. Remember there are always exceptions; in Amish society, for example, there is a conscious communal decision to resist the introduction of new technology. They rely on the preservation of older technology no tractors, no automobiles, no radios such as horse drawn carts and plows, to reinforce their sense of cultural identity. Those changes are not easily predicted, nor are they always in desired directions. After they happen, they may appear to be logical, even though they are not predicted earlier. Through human history, technology has changed generally by becoming more complex, more sophisticated, and with a greater control over energy. One form does not immediately replace another although horse whips have now gone out of fashion after the automobile replaced the horse over a century of change. Usually changes are accumulative, with older tools and technologies dying out if they become relatively less useful, less efficient and more expensive. In the broad sweep of history, gathering and hunting gave way to agriculture except in a few small pockets of residual groups. Likewise, agriculture has been giving way to industry. People still practising older less efficient technologies often find themselves marginalized and facing poverty. Where technology is highly advanced eg in information technology, computers, the internet it is practised by a very small proportion of the world population. Technology that might be introduced by mobilizers may belong to medicine clinics and

medicine and health clean water , hygiene , school buildings or covered markets in rural areas. There the residents are not usually unaware of them; they simply did not have them, before mobilizing to obtain them. The facilitator must be prepared to understand the effects on other dimensions of culture by the introduction of a change in the technological dimension.

The Economic Dimension of Community: The economic dimension of community is its various ways and means of production and allocation of scarce and useful goods and services wealth , whether that is through gift giving, obligations, barter, market trade, or state allocations. It is not the physical items like cash which make up the economic dimension of culture, but the ideas and behaviour which give value to cash and other items by humans who have created the economic systems they use. Wealth is not merely money , just as poverty is not merely the absence of money. Wealth is among the sixteen elements of community strength or organizational capacity. When the organization or community has more wealth that it can control as an organization or community then it has more power and more ability to achieve the things it wants to achieve. Over the broad course of human history, the general trend in economic change has been from simple to more complex. One system did not immediately replace another, but new systems were added, and less useful ones slowly died out. In simple small groups, wealth anything that was scarce and useful was distributed by simple family obligations. When someone came home with some food or clothing, it was allocated to the other members of the family with no expectations of immediate returns. As society become more complex, and different groups came into contact with each other, simple trade through various forms of barter were acquired. Distribution within each family group remained more or less the same. As barter became more complex and extensive, new institutions were added to simplify the accounting: This did not immediately remove earlier forms, but gift giving and family distribution eventually became relatively smaller among the wide range of distribution systems, and barter became less important. Remember that currency cash, money itself has no intrinsic value. A hundred euro bill, for example, may be used to start a fire or to wrap tobacco into a cigarette, but its face value is worth much more than for those. In any community, you will find various forms of wealth distribution. It is important for you to learn what they are, and what things can be given, what exchanged and what bought and sold. In many societies some kinds of wealth may not be allocated by purchase, such as sexual favours, spouses, hospitality, children, entertainment. Learning how they are distributed and under what conditions and between whom because these differ is part of the research you need to do. When a community decides to allocate water on the basis of a flat rate for all residences, or to allocate it on the basis of a payment for each container of water when it is collected, then a choice is being made between two very different systems of economic distribution. The animator should encourage the community to choose what it wants so as to be more consistent with prevailing values and attitudes. A good mobilizer will not try to impose her or his notion of what would be the best system of distribution; the community members, all of them, must come to a consensus decision.

The Political Dimension of Community: The political dimension of community is its various ways and means of allocating power, influence and decision making. It is not the same as ideology, which belongs to the values dimension. It includes, but is not limited to, types of governments and management systems. It also includes how people in small bands or informal groups make decisions when they do not have a recognized leader. Political power is among the sixteen elements of community power or organizational capacity. The more political power and influence it has, the more it can do the things it desires. An animator must be able to identify the different types of leaders in a community. Some may have traditional or bureaucratic authority; others may have charismatic personal qualities. When working with a community, the animator must be able to help develop the existing power and decision making system to promote community unity and group decision making that benefits the whole community, not just vested interests. In the broad sweep of human history, leadership power and influence at first was diffuse, temporary and minimal. In a small band of gatherers and hunters, a leader might be anyone who suggested and organized a hunt. In small bands, there were no chiefs, elders or kings, and these groups are named by anthropologists as "acephalous" headless. As history progresses, political systems become more complex, and power and influence increased and affected larger numbers of people. Levels of political sophistication, and hierarchy, ranged from acephalous, band, tribe, through kingdom to nation state. In the simplest band, there is very little difference between the amount of power and

influence of the leader and the lowest member of the band. Compare that with the difference in amount of power and influence of the President of the USA and some janitor cleaning toilets in a Washington slum hotel. Communities, including the ones where you work, all have some political system, and some distance between the most and least levels of power between individuals and groups. It is your first task to understand how it works, how power and influence are distributed not always the same way and what changes are occurring. You will have some influence on that power arrangement as you stimulate the formation of a development committee. And you will be responsible for encouraging an increase of political complexity if that is the first such committee in that community.

The Institutional Dimension of Community: The social or institutional dimension of community is composed of the ways people act, interact between each other, react, and expect each other to act and interact. It includes such institutions as marriage or friendship, roles such as mother or police officer, status or class, and other patterns of human behaviour. The institutional dimension of society is what many non sociologists first think about when they hear "sociology. The dimension has to do with how people act in relation to each other, their expectations, their assumptions, their judgements, their predictions, their responses and their reactions. It looks at patterns of relationships sometimes identified as roles and status, and the formation of groups and institutions that derive from those patterns. A "mother-in-law," for example, is both a role with a status and an institution. In a community, the social organization of the community is the sum total of all those interrelationships and patterns. The level of organization or organizational complexity , the degree of division of labour, the extent of division of roles and functions, is another of the sixteen elements of community strength or organizational capacity. The more organized, and the more effectively organized, it is and you can help it to become more so , the more capacity it has to achieve its communal or organizational objectives. As with the other dimensions, over history, the general movement has been from simple to complex. In early simple societies, the family was the community, and was the society.

Chapter 4 : What do we mean by "Community Wellness" ? |

We provide consultation, collaborative program development, and support for community efforts to apply the methods and wisdom of Focusing practices to the specific needs of their local situation.

Properties[edit] A sketch of a small network displaying community structure, with three groups of nodes with dense internal connections and sparser connections between groups. In the study of networks , such as computer and information networks, social networks and biological networks, a number of different characteristics have been found to occur commonly, including the small-world property , heavy-tailed degree distributions , and clustering , among others. Another common characteristic is community structure. This inhomogeneity of connections suggests that the network has certain natural divisions within it. Communities are often defined in terms of the partition of the set of vertices, that is each node is put into one and only one community, just as in the figure. This is a useful simplification and most community detection methods find this type of community structure. However, in some cases a better representation could be one where vertices are in more than one community. This might happen in a social network where each vertex represents a person, and the communities represent the different groups of friends: The use of cliques for community detection discussed below is just one example of how such overlapping community structure can be found. Some networks may not have any meaningful community structure. Importance[edit] Community structures are quite common in real networks. Social networks include community groups the origin of the term, in fact based on common location, interests, occupation, etc. Communities allow us to create a large scale map of a network since individual communities act like meta-nodes in the network which makes its study easier. In metabolic networks, such functional groups correspond to cycles or pathways whereas in the protein interaction network , communities correspond to proteins with similar functionality inside a biological cell. Similarly, citation networks form communities by research topic. Such insight can be useful in improving some algorithms on graphs such as spectral clustering. Thus, only concentrating on the average properties usually misses many important and interesting features inside the networks. For example, in a given social network, both gregarious and reticent groups might exist simultaneously. Hence to properly understand such processes, it is important to detect communities and also to study how they affect the spreading processes in various settings. Finally, an important application that community detection has found in network science is the prediction of missing links and the identification of false links in the network. During the measurement process, some links may not get observed for a number of reasons. Similarly, some links could falsely enter into the data because of the errors in the measurement. Both these cases are well handled by community detection algorithm since it allows one to assign the probability of existence of an edge between a given pair of nodes. Despite these difficulties, however, several methods for community finding have been developed and employed with varying levels of success. This method sees use, for example, in load balancing for parallel computing in order to minimize communication between processor nodes. In the minimum-cut method, the network is divided into a predetermined number of parts, usually of approximately the same size, chosen such that the number of edges between groups is minimized. The method works well in many of the applications for which it was originally intended but is less than ideal for finding community structure in general networks since it will find communities regardless of whether they are implicit in the structure, and it will find only a fixed number of them. In this method one defines a similarity measure quantifying some usually topological type of similarity between node pairs. Commonly used measures include the cosine similarity , the Jaccard index , and the Hamming distance between rows of the adjacency matrix. Then one groups similar nodes into communities according to this measure. There are several common schemes for performing the grouping, the two simplest being single-linkage clustering , in which two groups are considered separate communities if and only if all pairs of nodes in different groups have similarity lower than a given threshold, and complete linkage clustering , in which all nodes within every group have similarity greater than a threshold. A novel approach in this direction is the use of various similarity or dissimilarity measures, combined through convex sums , [11] which has greatly improved the performance of this kind of methodology. Girvan&Newman algorithm[edit]

Another commonly used algorithm for finding communities is the Girvan–Newman algorithm. The identification is performed by employing the graph-theoretic measure betweenness centrality, which assigns a number to each edge which is large if the edge lies "between" many pairs of nodes. The Girvan–Newman algorithm returns results of reasonable quality and is popular because it has been implemented in a number of standard software packages. But it also runs slowly, taking time $O(m^2n)$ on a network of n vertices and m edges, making it impractical for networks of more than a few thousand nodes. The modularity maximization method detects communities by searching over possible divisions of a network for one or more that have particularly high modularity. Since exhaustive search over all possible divisions is usually intractable, practical algorithms are based on approximate optimization methods such as greedy algorithms, simulated annealing, or spectral optimization, with different approaches offering different balances between speed and accuracy. The overall advantage of this approach compared to the alternatives is its more principled nature, and the capacity to inherently address issues of statistical significance. Most methods in the literature are based on the stochastic block model [20] as well as variants including mixed membership, [21] [22] degree-correction, [23] and hierarchical structures. As nodes can not be more tightly connected than this, it is not surprising that there are many approaches to community detection in networks based on the detection of cliques in a graph and the analysis of how these overlap. Note that as a node can be a member of more than one clique, a node can be a member of more than one community in these methods giving an overlapping community structure. One approach is to find the maximal cliques, that is find the cliques which are not the subgraph of any other clique. The classic algorithm to find these is the Bron–Kerbosch algorithm. The overlap of these can be used to define communities in several ways. The simplest is to consider only maximal cliques bigger than a minimum size number of nodes. The union of these cliques then defines a subgraph whose components disconnected parts then define communities. The alternative approach is to use cliques of fixed size, k . Applying any of the previous community detection methods which assign each node to a community to the clique graph then assigns each clique to a community. This can then be used to determine community membership of nodes in the cliques. Again as a node may be in several cliques, it can be a member of several communities. For instance the clique percolation method [36] defines communities as percolation clusters of.

Chapter 5 : Community - Wikipedia

Contributed by Hal Chapel, CEO and Co-Founder of Lotsa Helping Hands. Community.. A word that evokes many different images. Not only are we social creatures, requiring interaction with other people, but historically our species has ultimately survived and thrived by banding together into social groups we call 'community'.

Freedom, autonomy, and resilience are all values we hold and goals toward which we aim. Community Self Defense is our method. By focusing on the methods by which we intend to achieve our goals, we place the emphasis on our our need to act, and the power we hold when we act together. An emphasis on lofty goals, without a focus on how to achieve them, can paradoxically make us feel less powerful. In contrast, defense is clearly a set of practices and actions that we must take to reach our goals. Defense indicates that we are under attack. Who is attacking us? This is a supposedly fair exchange for hours of our lives, sweat, risk, and aggravation. Because capitalism is legal and enforced, many others attack us as well, assuming that what is legal is always right. The state, lawyers, police, and even quite often other workers attack us, in order to force us to accept our supposed lot in life. The ground of our work is our anticapitalist and working class orientation. We organize to destroy capitalism, and know that in order to so, we must unify the working class which is currently divided against itself by the bosses, who use hierarchy and authoritarian social relations like racism and sexism to continue this division. Oppressions are not all reducible to class, but almost all of them are used by the bosses to divide us. Capitalism is not the only oppression. Racism has organized genocidal violence and unequal status in the Americas since White Supremacy attacks People of Color in a way that it does not attack white workers. White workers will only rarely understand the experience of living under such an assault. But an assault on Black workers or other workers who are People of Color, is an attack on an inherent part of ourselves. And so the duty of white workers to join in antiracist work is obvious. Sexism and patriarchy organize mass violence against women, and against all who refuse to conform to narrow notions of gender. Men of the working class of whatever race will rarely comprehend the full weight of these patriarchal attacks. Any misogynistic assault is an assault on the working class. And so the duty of male workers to act against patriarchy becomes clear. Disdain and prejudice against disabled people structures the daily life of many, in ways that temporarily non-disabled people will not be able to understand. Any ableist assault is an attack on the working class. The duty of non-disabled people to join in the fight against ableism is transparent. We could go on. Our approach focuses on the fact that we are oppressed by many oppressions based on difference. We know that our exploiters thrive when we are alienated and isolated from each other, when we know little of each other, and are unwilling or scared to learn. All of us will fail to fully understand or appreciate the different experiences of others. This is one of the core challenges we face as a class, and is one of the core challenges we attempt to address within the General Defense Committee. The way we overcome our mutual ignorance of each other and build solidarity is done in two basic parts. First, it is the responsibility of each and every member to struggle with themselves to learn about other members of the working class, as individuals and as members whose experiences differ from our own. Patiently and careful learning and listening, insisting on respect for ourselves and each other: Secondly, it is our collective responsibility to create an environment where we can all learn from each other. The practice of judging each person by their worst current views is a practice of hopelessness that reinforces ignorance. Expressing a hopeless judgment of another person in this way is not a strategy for successfully transforming our society. It reinforces ignorance by creating an environment in which each of us becomes increasingly defensive and worried about speaking about our differences, for fear we will be shamed and called out. Since each of us is exploited and oppressed in different ways, no one person is all oppressor or oppressed. All of us fear appearing ignorant, and our exploiters rely on this. It is our collective responsibility to create a community in which we can do this. We will continue to do this in the General Defense Committee, welcoming all members and supporters of the working class. We collectively struggle to educate and inspire more members of our class into situations we were can highlight the interconnectedness of our diverse oppressions, and the possibility of working across these in order to combat them together. For instance, political parties win by receiving a plurality of electoral

votes. This domestication comes from a system founded on the denial or homogenization of difference. Instead, we take these differences as the basis of our solidarity, our practice, and our struggle. They give us hope. Many of the differences among the working class are a sign of the resilience of our cultures, our peoples, our traditions, and our families. Despite centuries of murder and exploitation, we survive. The diversity of our people is proof that we do it well. The General Defense Committee bases its struggle on the differences among the working class. We demand the liberation of all. But we do not assume that all members of the working class will already understand the struggles of other groups. Our work relies on mutual education. We call each other into the revolution and the construction of a better world. This is our first reflex to members who exhibit oppressive ideas or behaviors supported by larger society, but who may transform. Mutual education means all of us. At the same time, we do not tolerate oppressive behavior or speech in our spaces or our groups. We engage members acting in such ways. We try to bring them to a more panoramic view of society, and the way multiple oppressions interlock, and divide us from each other. True liberation will be total. We do not accept that progress requires the oppression of one oppressed group by another. We want a world in which we are free to enjoy our differences; we will create this world by defending each other. We must treat attacks on any one of us as an attack on us all. We must respond to every attack on any of us as if it were an attack our own safety. Defense is sometimes violent. For instance, if a group defends a neighborhood from white supremacist attacks, the physical force necessary might reasonably be considered violent. We would defend our own selves and families if attacked, and we would do so for others as well. Community Self Defense means any effort that encourages the solidarity, resilience, physical security, and solidarity of the working class. We intend to prove that we can create our community by defending it. This is why the first project of the Twin Cities GDC was a picket training intended to increase labor picket effectiveness, while reducing the physical violence that was almost always directed against us by police and strikebreakers. It is why we have a working group that supports survivors of rape and other forms of sexual assault. This group aims to empower people, without subjecting them to revictimization by the legal process, and to achieve genuinely positive results. These are all forms of Community Self Defense. Any project which directly overcomes social divisions in the working class, increasing our autonomy, resilience, solidarity, fighting spirit, organization, and self-determination, is Community Self Defense. For some of us, every day feels a tightrope walk, alone and unaided while much of the world hurls insults, and the majority of the rest ignore us. Community Self Defense aims to put a net under all of us tightrope walkers, and to get us down off the tightrope entirely, and onto the broad firm ground of a genuine working class community.

If we aren't willing to open up our lives to others we will never experience true community. This is why mutual confession builds community. We come to the table with our strengths and our weaknesses and we lay ourselves bare, exposed to the scrutiny and more importantly the love, acceptance and forgiveness of others.

Created with Wordle There is no widely accepted definition of community engagement and the meaning can vary in different contexts. The following are some definitions of community engagement mainly in the context of vertical community engagement, particularly in relation to planning and decision making. Although Moore et al. A process whereby a service system: These actions range from providing simple information signs on plantation boundaries to establishing multi-stakeholder dialogues that lead to joint action on issues such as game management or road funding p. Many local councils also define community engagement in the context of planning and decision making. Take for instance Latrobe City Community engagement is a broad term that covers the interactions between Council, Latrobe City communities which could be towns or other locations or groups of people with a common interest or identity and other stakeholders. Community engagement allows community members to actively contribute to Council decisions and actions by creating an inclusive environment in which community feedback is embraced, considered and acted upon. It serves as a response to increasing community concern about low levels of trust and confidence in government and addresses the escalating expectation that all levels of government be responsive to the community, accountable for levels of service and spending. Community engagement is also about engaging with our community to provide access to a greater range of solutions " The collective wisdom of the community can help Council to achieve the vision and aspirations of our community. What interests me as a researcher, a consultant, an advocate and a teacher is community engagement that is not tokenistic. It is not simply about sharing information, or listening to opinions via a survey or focus group, it is about partnership with communities to engage them in joint decision making. Inevitably this leads to empowerment which is not something that can be given to a community but something that can emerge when conditions are conducive to its emergence p. Recently there has been an increasing interest in community engagement by universities involving partnerships and two-way engagement. Holland and Ramaley, quoting Carnegie suggest: Note the emphasis on mutual benefits, knowledge exchange, and an expectation of partnerships that create reciprocity among participants p. WA Health emphasises the role of community engagement in decision making by suggesting that community engagement is: The process by which the aspirations, concerns, needs and values of citizens and communities are incorporated in government, non-government and private sector decision making, planning service delivery and evaluation. This partnership process aims to make better decisions that are supported by the community and result in better outcomes for both the community and the agencies p. Chappell warns, however, of the danger of building unrealistic expectations about community engagement, particularly in relation to consultation. Consultation has been used as a general term to describe how local councils approach communities about decisions that affect them. This general use has the potential to create unrealistic expectations and confusion. Most commonly, communities become disengaged when they are asked to provide input on a decision that has already been determined. If a decision has been made, the community needs to be informed about how and why it was made and not have raised expectations that they are being consulted for their input on a final decision. There will always be times when councils must make decisions without input from communities as part of their governance role. There will be other times when it will be relevant to increase the public impact on a decision by working at the more participatory levels of involve, collaborate or empower p. The Department of Primary Industries in Victoria also emphasises the importance of ensuring that community engagement is more than public relations meeting predetermined outcomes. Community engagement involves interactions between identified groups of people and involves processes that are linked to problem solving or decision making where community input is used to make better decisions. Communities, therefore, should not be engaged to obtain consensus or agreement about a predetermined position. In such instances it is not engagement that is occurring but, rather, a public relations exercise where

information is distributed. Community engagement involves a decision that is yet to be made over which the community can have some influence. Effective community engagement depends on mutual trust, respect and effective communication between industry and the community. Sarkissian et al argues that community engagement can be: The term community participation, rather than consultation, indicates an active role for the community, leading to significant control over decisions. In considering the extent of participation in community engagement the spectrum of public participation by the International Association for Public Participation IAP2 is a useful tool. It identifies increasing levels of public participation: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower. For each level they identify a public participation goal and a promise to the public. It is not enough in its own right. Processes where the community are passive recipients of information, e. Community engagement needs to be a two way process. The United Nations Brisbane Declaration International Conference on Engaging Communities, not only emphasises a two way process, but also includes some helpful principles: We, representatives of countries and communities, including indigenous peoples, international institutions, national, state and local governments, academic institutions, and business and civil society organisations from across the world, participating in the International Conference on Engaging Communities, held in Brisbane, Australia, from August. Recognise that community engagement is a two way process: Endorse the core principles of integrity, inclusion, deliberation and influence in community engagement: Integrity when there is openness and honesty about the scope and purpose of engagement; Inclusion when there is an opportunity for a diverse range of values and perspectives to be freely and fairly expressed and heard; Deliberation when there is sufficient and credible information for dialogue, choice and decisions, and when there is space to weigh options, develop common understandings and to appreciate respective roles and responsibilities; Influence when people have input in designing how they participate, when policies and services reflect their involvement and when their impact is apparent. In the context of health, South and Phillips and Attree et al. A delivery mechanism whereby community members deliver a standardised intervention or components for example, communication of healthy eating messages; A direct intervention where lay knowledge, skills and social networks are used to improve individual health for example, provision of peer support; Collective action on social or environmental determinants of health, often a feature of empowerment approaches; A means to achieve greater community influence in the health system, as part of equitable and democratic governance. A planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest or affiliation, to address issues affecting their well-being. If you liked this post please follow my blog , and you might like to look at: Posts in the What is?

Chapter 7 : Community empowerment | Changes

In the WordPress world, we hear the term "community" thrown around a lot. So what does community mean? How do you become an active part of a community? As a child of the 70's, I was raised on Sesame Street. I can still hear the song in my mind: "Who are the people in your neighborhood."

What is a community church? What are community churches, where do they come from, and what do they have in common? That question has no simple answer, but this article will attempt to give a suitable one. As pioneers spread across the North American continent, they brought along their personal religious beliefs. In some cases, it was their beliefs that directed them to move, like the pilgrims who settled at Plymouth and the Mormons who settled in Utah. In most cases, individuals and families were looking for a new start, whether they were driven by the gold rush, the land rush, or some other factor. These hardy people established communities, and those communities became the home for new churches. It was not uncommon for a relatively small town to have a Methodist church, a Baptist church, a Catholic church, a Lutheran church, and a Presbyterian church, among others, each one with a congregation of 30 to 50. Over the years, as the towns grew or shrunk, so did the churches. Sometimes two or three churches would merge together when they became too small to support themselves independently. When these mergers happened, there was inevitably a question over what to call the new body. In a quest for unity, each group would compromise on some doctrinal or practical point that caused contention with the other group. As a result, many community churches had very loosely defined beliefs and allowed wide variations of belief among their members. These churches typically focused on the essentials like personal faith in Christ and avoided the potential division that came with detailed doctrinal beliefs. Sometimes the new church would retain ties with a denominational organization for the supply of pastors and other administrative needs, but often they became totally independent congregations, supported solely by the communities they served. Another way community churches were formed is through changes in denominations and the local churches. The majority of pioneer churches were formed with the assistance of various denominations, as they sent out circuit-riding preachers or missionary pastors to start churches. Over the course of time, some of these denominations changed their beliefs as they merged with other denominations or were influenced by new theological trends in seminaries. The country churches were usually less attuned to current trends, but spent more time in personal and group Bible studies. As a result, the country churches were often more conservative in their doctrine than the denominations which they represented. When these differences began impacting the local churches, many withdrew from the denomination and became independent community churches, believing that they were obeying the command of 2 Thessalonians 2: There were a large number of churches that followed this pattern during the rise of the fundamentalist movement in the s. Along with individual churches, there were associations formed for the newly independent churches to find fellowship and support. These independent churches are as varied as the denominations they seek to avoid. They may be charismatic or traditional, ecumenical or isolationist, contemporary or old-fashioned. Some have ties to denominations but have replaced the denominational name. This mindset is based on 1 Corinthians 9: Anyone considering a community church should personally examine the beliefs and practices of the church to determine where they stand. Most churches make their doctrinal statements available, either on their website or through their offices. Whatever the name over the door, every church has a set of beliefs and practices that defines them. As individual believers, we should follow the example in 2 Corinthians 2:

Chapter 8 : What is Community? A Sociological Perspective

A community is a small or large social unit (a group of living things) that has something in common, such as norms, religion, values, or race. Communities often share a sense of place that is situated in a given geographical area (e.g. a country, village, town, or neighborhood) or in virtual space through communication platforms.

At the mere mention of the word community, people often eye you as if you had dropped in from another world, smile tolerantly, and hope you change the subject. Good, sensible, Christian people. Or that they have to abandon their fertilized lawns and move to the inner city. The idea of community is, in a sense, from another world, a world very unlike our own. But it is neither from the world of communes in Vermont nor from the placid world of cookies and tea Christians share before they rush back to their isolated lives. Community is from the world as God wants it to be. It is the gift of a rich and challenging life together, one that we need and can receive with joy. Christian community is simply sharing a common life in Christ. It moves us beyond the self-interested isolation of private lives and beyond the superficial social contacts that pass for "Christian fellowship. We know all too well that maturity takes time. We know less well that it also takes our sisters and brothers in Christ. Love one another, forgive each other, regard each other more highly than yourselves. Be friends with one another, kind, compassionate, and generous in hospitality. Serve one another and submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. This list just scratches the surface, but it is enough to remind us that we need the community of faith to grow up in Christ. Christian community is the place of our continuing conversion. Its goal is that, individually and together, we should become mature, no longer knocked around by clever religious hucksters, but able to stand tall and straight, embodying the very "fullness of Christ" Eph. When I confess my sin and they forgive me, I know that God forgives me, too. When they pray for my brokenness, I know that they are sharing in the healing work of Jesus. In our dog-eat-dog, enemies-with-their-teeth-bared world, when we feel the crush of hostility and of our own failures, to have our Christian community surround us with compassion and encouragement lightens our loads, strengthens us, and gives us the courage to keep on trying. A Source Of Accountability and Guidance The community also furthers our continuing conversion by being a place where we teach each other and hold ourselves accountable to each other. When I hear what God is teaching others, it teaches me, too. When I submit to the guidance and scrutiny of my brothers and sisters, it forces me to grow and to be accountable to the commitments I make. Ignoring this powerful element is one of the main reasons many small groups never really experience Christian community. They prefer to remain superficial. Inadvertently, perhaps, they enter into a pact of mediocrity in which they tacitly agree to let all the members "mind their own business" and not to hold people accountable either to each other or to the teachings of Christ. I tend to overfill my calendar with activities, projects, and meetings, a flaw that, for me, has spiritual roots. When I began work on my first book, I took the idea to a group of trusted Christian friends who knew about my weakness. We had a wonderful and terrible meeting. After listening to me for a while, they said they thought God wanted me to write the book. They also asked to see my appointment calendar. I took their counsel, although giving up some of those plans made me heartsick. I also sent each of them a schedule of my "writing days" as a further step toward accountability. It is clear now though I knew it then that they were right. If I had failed to submit to their wisdom under God, that book would still be merely a few notes in a manila folder. It works, instead, to encourage us and help us in our growth and commitments. We may ask for guidance about how to handle a difficult relationship on the job or about how to put together a family budget that reflects our commitments about lifestyle and giving. The community gives us a place to air our growth and our struggles, our successes and failures. It simply gives us a way of guiding each other ever more fully in the ways of Christ. Both by instruction and by example, the New Testament teaches us to pray and to pray for one another Eph. We are called as well to a life of worship and praise. Yet, frankly, our experiences of prayer and worship in the church often shunt us toward merely watching others pray and take active roles in worship. We need a lab. We ourselves need to pray for each other. Each of us needs to be prayed for personally. And the small community is precisely the place where we can experiment and learn the life of prayer. When I am not involved in a Christian community, it is the times

of prayer and worship that I miss the most. Many of us are never really prayed for beyond a brief mention in one of those quick-and-dirty list prayers. I once privately offered a simple prayer of blessing for a friend who had been in public ministry for many years. I was overwhelmed when he said to me afterward, "No one has ever prayed for me like that before. Similarly, as we learn the ways of worship in the small community, we not only deepen our own lives but also enrich the life of public worship. In my experience, community is at its best when it becomes a workshop for prayer and worship. A Place To Serve The community is also where we learn to strip away our self-interest in order to serve others. It is here that we learn to share what God has given us, whether it be goods or spiritual gifts. It is also here that we learn to be served, though we are sometimes prideful and reluctant like Peter, who balked at Jesus washing his feet Jn. Sometimes we are the washers and sometimes the washees, but in many ordinary ways we can learn what submission and service mean. One community I know gave time and money so a mother worn down by the demands of young children could take a spiritual retreat. Others have found practical ways to swap mowers and ladders and child care; some have explored group buying to help each other grow in stewardship. In whatever ways, community means watching over one another for good, knowing that as we serve, all of us are growing stronger in Christ. Such communities, by their character and their action, witness to the power and presence of God in the world. They are models of what God wants for all of humankind. Too often, unfortunately, this beacon of witness has fallen far short in candlepower, especially where Christians have accommodated darkness rather than penetrating it. In these clusters of Christians, people should be able to see what they hope for but hardly expect: People of widely different social statuses and professions honoring each other rather than putting each other down Gal. People who tell each other and everyone else the truth, rather than lying out of convenience or cussedness Eph. They can see a people who are no longer captive to the spirit of the times. They will see love and acceptance, compassion and kindness, commodities that are in short supply in any age. And where they see this, the stark contrast of these communities compared with the world around them is itself a very compelling witness. They carry "the ministry of reconciliation" 2 Cor. That work goes forward visibly in many ways. One Christian community spends enormous energy trying to meet the plight of the homeless. Another works to rehabilitate homes of the poor and the elderly. Yet another quietly yet actively pursues a ministry of prayer and healing. And still others focus directly on evangelism, on feeding the hungry, on getting justice for the oppressed, and on much more. Function Over Form Some Christians feel that they must follow the call to community in rigorous, perhaps even radical, ways. We can thank God for the example of our brothers and sisters in communities such as Koinonia in Americus, Georgia, and Sojourners and the Church of the Savior in Washington, D. They help teach us principles that God wants for the whole Christian fellowship. Structure is not the point; relationships are. The good news is that community is a gift God offers to pour love out on us all. Getting Small Even though forms may not matter much, size does. For community to be specific and personal enough to reach its potential, we need groups small enough for everyone to be directly involved. The practice of the earliest Christians suggests a small scale. And it is clear that when Paul advised the Corinthians that "everyone" should be ready with a psalm, some instruction, or a revelation, he expected the meeting to be small enough for everyone to participate 1 Cor. The lived reality of communityâ€”in whatever form it takesâ€”holds great promise both for the Christian fellowship itself and for the world at large. For Christians it provides a place where together we can change and grow strong in following Jesus. A Call to Community The practice of Christian community, quite simply, makes the gospel a lived reality. It embodies a specific, personal way of life together in Christ. And it is necessary. When we imagine that we, as Christians and humans, can live in total independence and self-sufficiency, we are deluding ourselves. God, from the beginning, never intended that we should go through the world "alone. Without experiencing such life together, we will not discover how wonderful the news about Jesus really is. Community is not to be feared, but welcomed. The reward is to enter into life as God intended it to be lived from the beginning. How can we balk at an offer like that?

Chapter 9 : Definitions of community engagement | Sustaining Community

*What do we mean by "Community Self Defense?" Are we talking about [] From Twin Cities General Defense Committee
This is a discussion document written by a member of the Twin Cities GDC on the topic of #CommunitySelfDefense.*

But what is it, really? We have relationships all around us. The best friendships are the ones that help each other take a step closer to Jesus. Every one of us should be known and valued for who we are because we are each known by God and valuable to Him Psalm You can help your friends grow more comfortable and share more of yourselves with each other. Your willingness to share your heart, struggles, victories, and honest thoughts will encourage them to follow your example. The more transparent you are, the more potential that relationship has to grow. You trust and are trusted. Trust is like oxygen to the life of your relationships. An atmosphere lacking trust will choke your momentum and can cause friendships to fizzle out. On the other hand, an atmosphere thick with trust helps foster amazing experiences and conversations that help you and your friends take your next steps in your walks with Jesus. Because Jesus is trustworthy to us, we strive to be trustworthy to others Psalm We can instill confidence in our friends by helping them focus their trust in God Proverbs 3: Trust paves the way for more next steps together. We learn how to love by looking at Jesus. He gave up something His life so we can be given something eternal life. God sent Jesus to pay for our sins, not because of our great love for God, but because of His great love for us 1 John 4: You invest in each other. Relationships grow stronger as two or more people walk together through more experiences. Next steps are a conversation, not a one-time event. Jesus helped His friends take their next steps. They were fishermen when He found them, but through their time and relationship with Jesus, they were changed forever. Jesus saw their potential to be leaders of the church someday Luke 5: Sometimes our friends will lovingly correct us, and other times we will lovingly correct them. Like what you just read? Download the NewSpring App for an even better reading experience. You can read, share, and bookmark your favorites quickly and easily from your phone.