

Walking Our Talk

*Putting the
Building Bridges Principles
into Action*

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BUILDING BRIDGES



Working Agreements

- Participate fully
- Listen for understanding
- Speak for yourself (use I statements)
- Share the air-time
- Encourage others' participation

- Ask questions
- Take risks and support risk-takers
- Honor privacy and confidentiality
- Take care of yourself
- Start and end on time



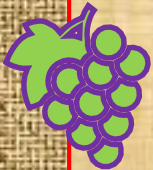
Building Bridges Vision



A socially just, ecologically sound local economy that works for everyone



- This means that a region where all of us have social and economic justice, fairness and full human rights, has to become a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all, meeting our green energy goals for our mutual survival.
- Social justice has no meaning without a healthy place where life can thrive.
- We are inextricably bound together in the web of life and are working for right relationship to *people, planet, partnership, prosperity, and peace.*



The Five Ps



thanks to the UN: sustainabledevelopment.un.org

**Reflect, write, then
Pair up & Share:**

- **What does it cost me personally to live in a society with systems and norms that are creating greater division and inequality?**
- **What does it cost me personally to live in society with policies and habits that are heating the planet?**



Four Principles

- 1. Put equity and environment at the center of all we do.**
- 2. Respect human rights and human dignity.**
- 3. Build stronger, healthier relationships across race, class, place, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, etc.**
- 4. Ensure broad inclusion and access to decisions about available resources.**

Put Equity and Environment at the Center of All We Do

- **Equity** assures all people the access and ability to meet their basic needs, taking into account historic and current power imbalances.
- **Sustainability** is designing for systemic, organizational, and community wellbeing, so all can thrive, both in the short and long term.

Equity and Environmental Sustainability: Two domains, deeply intertwined

- Equity and sustainability are often focused on differently by different groups, yet
- Equity and sustainability are integrally related to each other, are necessary partners.
- A sustainably running organization and community protects its home place while reducing costs and stress for **everyone**.
- Poverty and racism are huge barriers that must be overcome for people to afford and support healthier and more locally sourced options.

Equity and Environmental Sustainability

- **With an equity-conscious lens, planning for energy, food, and transportation needs and systems includes and prioritizes access and justice concerns**
- **With an ecologically-conscious lens, a healthful environment, workplace and home are seen as essential human rights**

Equity and Environmental Sustainability QUESTIONS

- **How can reducing waste of energy and materials go together with connection across race, class and place ?**
- **How would green initiatives shift if more marginalized people were in key leadership roles? How might that shift come about?**
- **What roles can relationships play in healing the equity and environment divide?**
- **What would an economic system look like that doesn't pit different groups against each other?**

Human Rights are:

- **The basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity.**
- **Generally accepted principles of fairness and justice.**
- **Those freedoms and entitlements a person is due simply because he or she is a human being.**

Categories of Human Rights

Governments *must not interfere with* people's

- Civil Rights
- Political Rights

Governments *must provide for & protect* people's

- Economic Rights
- Social Rights
- Cultural Rights

Human Rights Principles

- **Equality**
- **Human Dignity**
- **Non-Discrimination**
- **Universality**
- **Inalienability**
- **Indivisibility**
- **Interdependency**
- **Accountability/Responsibility**

New York State Human Rights Law

(Executive Law, Article 15)

Prohibits discrimination

- ✓ in employment, housing, credit, places of public accommodations, and non-sectarian educational institutions,
- ✓ based on age, race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, military status, and other specified classes

New York State Human Rights Law (...continued)

The state has the responsibility to act to assure that every individual within this state is afforded an equal opportunity to enjoy a full and productive life.

New York State Human Rights Law (continued)

Failure to provide equal opportunity (because of discrimination, prejudice, intolerance or inadequate education, training, housing or health care):

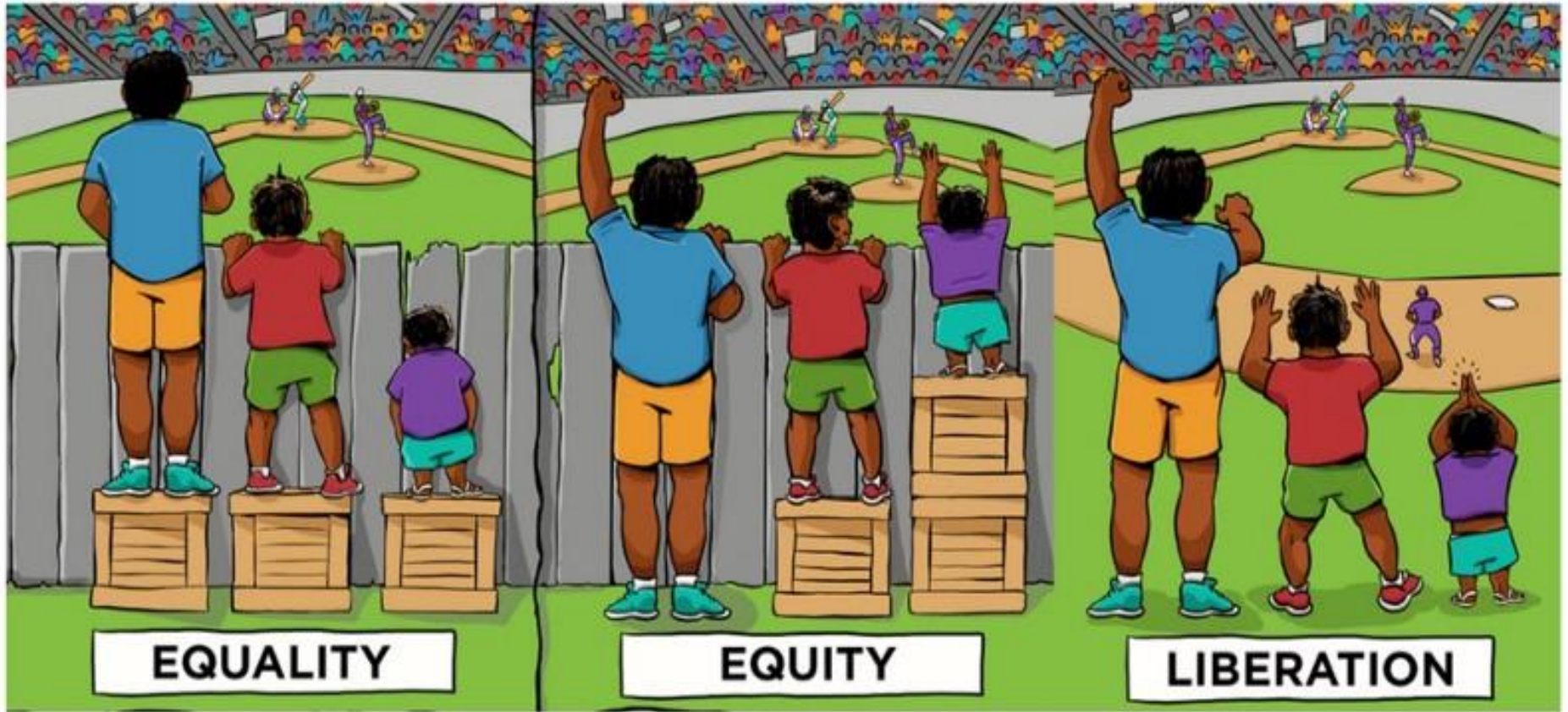
- ✓ **threatens the rights and proper privileges of its inhabitants**
- ✓ **menaces the institutions and foundation of a free democratic state**
- ✓ **threatens the peace, order, health, safety and general welfare of the state and its inhabitants.**

Build Stronger Relationships Across Race, Class, Place, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Age, etc.

- Building a socially just and ecologically sound local economy **requires the engagement, voices, and cooperative actions of all people. None of us is expendable. None of us is disposable.**
- Economic disparities in income, household wealth, ownership; cultural stereotypes, bigotry, histories of systemic discrimination, exploitation, disenfranchisement, social separation and exclusion **are barriers to trust, optimism, solidarity and mutual thriving.**
- We may be surprised by how many of us share the same needs and desires. We may also be surprised by how little we know about other's interests and experiences of living here. **We have much to teach each other.**
- We need to find and use ways to meet, connect to one another, develop real relationships, and **expand our notions of community and what belonging here means.**

Build Stronger Relationships Across Race, Class, Place, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Age, etc.

- **Who's joining whom, and how? Whose place is this? Should I wait to be invited, or just show up?**
- **Do I have to go to your town, your place/meeting?**
- **Will I be welcomed, ignored, rejected or excluded?**
- **Do I have to give up my goals and interests if the needs of others are more urgent?**
- **Does “centering the voices of marginalized people” mean my voice and perspectives count, or don't count?**
- **If “equity” is not “equality”, is it still fair?**



Build Stronger Relationships across Race, Class, Place, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Age, etc.

- **Who is missing?** -- from our board, leadership, staff, members, volunteers, neighborhood, customers, visitors, vendors, suppliers, etc.
- **How would greater diversity enhance what we can do? Which kinds of diversity are we seeking?**
- **What's a respectful, welcoming culture look like?**
- **Are we all listening, speaking, shaping our work together? Do we respect people who are already here? Do they have influence? Do they have power?**

Build Stronger Relationships across Race, Class, Place, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Age, etc.

- **Who are my associates? Who might introduce me to people with whom I want to connect?**
- **We invited new people—so, why didn't they come? They came—so, why didn't they stay? What support might they need in order to participate? What are their misgivings?**
- **How will this new relationship be mutually beneficial?**
- **Do I know what they care about? Will I pay attention to injustices they suffer?**
- **Are there beneficial opportunities for influence, advancement and leadership?**

Inclusion

- **Ensure broad inclusion and access to decisions about available resources.**

Ensure Broad Inclusion and Access to Shared Decision-making over How Resources are Distributed

At your workplace / In your work :

- *Who is in the room / at the table?*
- *Whose voices / ideas are heard?*
- *What kinds of decisions are made?*
- *What resources are created / distributed?*

SMART Goals

- **Strategic**-reflects an important dimension of what your organization seeks to accomplish (programmatic or capacity-building priorities)
- **Measurable** includes standards by which reasonable people can agree on whether the goal has been met (by numbers or defined qualities)
- **Ambitious** challenging enough that achievement would mean significant progress: a “stretch” for the organization
- **Realistic** not so challenging as indicate lack of thought about resources or execution; possible to track and worth the time and energy to do so
- **Time bound** includes a clear deadline

SMARTIES Goals

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- **Time bound** includes a clear deadline
- **Inclusive** –Authentically engages the groups that are historically marginalized, reflecting the social identities we hire or serve, as well as the established players
- **Equitable** – Assures that all are treated fairly and have full access to resources and opportunities that meet the varying needs of different stakeholders
- **Sustainable** - Ecologically sound, place based, and aligned with natural systems principles

Examples

From SMART GOALS

- **Build a volunteer team of 100 door to-door canvassers**
- **Get at least 70% “very satisfied” on all trainings**
- **Respond to emails within 24 hours**
- **Make sure everyone’s IT needs are met with a customer service approach**

To SMARTIES GOALS

- **Recruit 10 people of color onto the volunteer leadership team first, to help shape the way we run the canvasses**
- **With no gaps across race + gender**
- **Prioritize those with the least access to help from our team**
- **With no gaps along lines of identity in who we serve, how we serve them – and we’ll survey folks at the end of each quarter.**

Examples

From SMART GOALS

We will increase people's base pay.

We will ensure that our hiring is non-discriminatory.

To SMARTIES GOALS

We will ensure that all employees make at least a living wage and increase base pay as COLA changes.

-We will establish advisory groups in under-represented communities to identify the most effective strategies for getting people from those communities into our hiring pool.

-We will implement those strategies and avoid hiring for new positions unless the hiring pool includes candidates that represent the diversity we are seeking.

Examples

From SMART GOALS

- 1. In 2020, at least 50% of our steering committee (5-6) will be residents of rural towns villages**
- 2. 3 new members 16-20 years old will be added to our program committee**
- 3. By 2019, we will 2 LGBTQ people onto the hiring committee**
- 4. We will increase diversity by 6 well-qualified people of under-represented identities.**

To SMARTIES GOALS

1b. On alternate months, meetings will be held in a rural library or hall that is most convenient for all members to travel to. On alternate months we will meet at CCE..

1c. We will organize carpools to facilitate transit from homes furthest out.

2b. We will offer rides and stipends of \$15-20 for young people to attend meetings.

2c. Committee will meet after 3 pm on mutually-convenient weekday afternoons or early evenings.

2d. Before transitioning off the Steering Committee, we will ask juniors and seniors to recommend and invite two sophomores to visit a committee meeting with them.

3b. We will institute the use of gender-affirming pronouns at training workshops and community focus groups and planning retreats.

3c. Job postings will be edited for inclusive language encouraging to a diverse range of applicants.

4b. By June of 2020, Board officers and committee chairs will include three or more women, two POC, one young person, and one LGBTQ person in leadership roles

4c. We will conduct an organizational climate survey and institute exit interviews for all staff or board who leave.

Examples

From SMART GOALS

Increase attendance and participation at monthly focus group sessions

To SMARTIES GOALS

- **By holding sessions at local community centers, offering rides, food, and childcare, paying participants for their time, and not using any single use items or bottled water.**
- **Establish relationships with minority food producers and vendors leading to catered events that better distribute community wealth**

Reflect, Write and Discuss

- 1) In which areas of your work is this principle being put into practice and guiding people, and in which areas is this principle not guiding the work?
- 2) What are some specific strategies or actions that could move your organization further toward expressing and practicing this principle, (i.e., *Walking Your Talk*)?
- 3) Choose 1 - 2 things that you think might be most effective to begin to bring this principle more effectively into practice at your organization/in your work.
- 4) How will you bring this back to your organization or work and what steps will you take to make it happen?
- 5) What challenges, if any, do you anticipate? What ideas do you have about how these might be overcome?

Cross that bridge!

A wooden bridge with a lattice railing spans a small stream in a forest. The trees are bare and have yellow and orange autumn foliage. The ground is covered in fallen leaves. The bridge is made of light-colored wood and has a curved railing. The stream is dark and reflects the surrounding trees.

Wonder what's on the other side?