

Creating or Enhancing Community Partnerships to
Address Social Determinants of Teen Pregnancy

Sayra Pinto, M.F.A.

Presentation for JSI, Inc.

Atlanta, GA

9/21/11

“The elimination of disparities in health has proven difficult, and to some may seem an impossible task; however, the reasons for this difficulty are not clear to many. Part of the difficulty may be a failure to examine the complex nature of the social determinants of health and health disparities. There has also been challenges to successfully targeting the *right determinants*. Finally, a major challenge has been to effectively implement, evaluate, and rapidly translate evidence-based research findings to practice.”

Barbara Wallace, *Toward Equity in Health: A New Global Approach to Health Disparities*

The Need for Difficult Dialogues

“Broadly defined, difficult dialogues on race represent potentially threatening conversations or interactions between members of different racial or ethnic groups when they (a) involve an unequal status relationship of power and privilege, (b) highlight major differences in worldviews, personalities, and perspectives, (c) are challenged publicly, (d) are found to be offensive to others, (e) may reveal biases and prejudices, and (f) trigger intense emotional responses (Sue & Constantine, 2007; Young, 2003). Any individual or group engaged in a difficult dialogue may feel at risk for potentially disclosing intimate thoughts, beliefs, or feelings related to the topic of race.”

“We live in a time of massive institutional failure, collectively creating results that nobody wants. Climate change. AIDS. Hunger. Poverty. Violence. Terrorism. Destruction of communities, nature, life- the foundation of our social, economic, ecological, and spiritual well-being. This time calls for a new consciousness and a new collective leadership capacity to meet challenges in a more conscious, intentional, and strategic way.”

Otto Scharmer

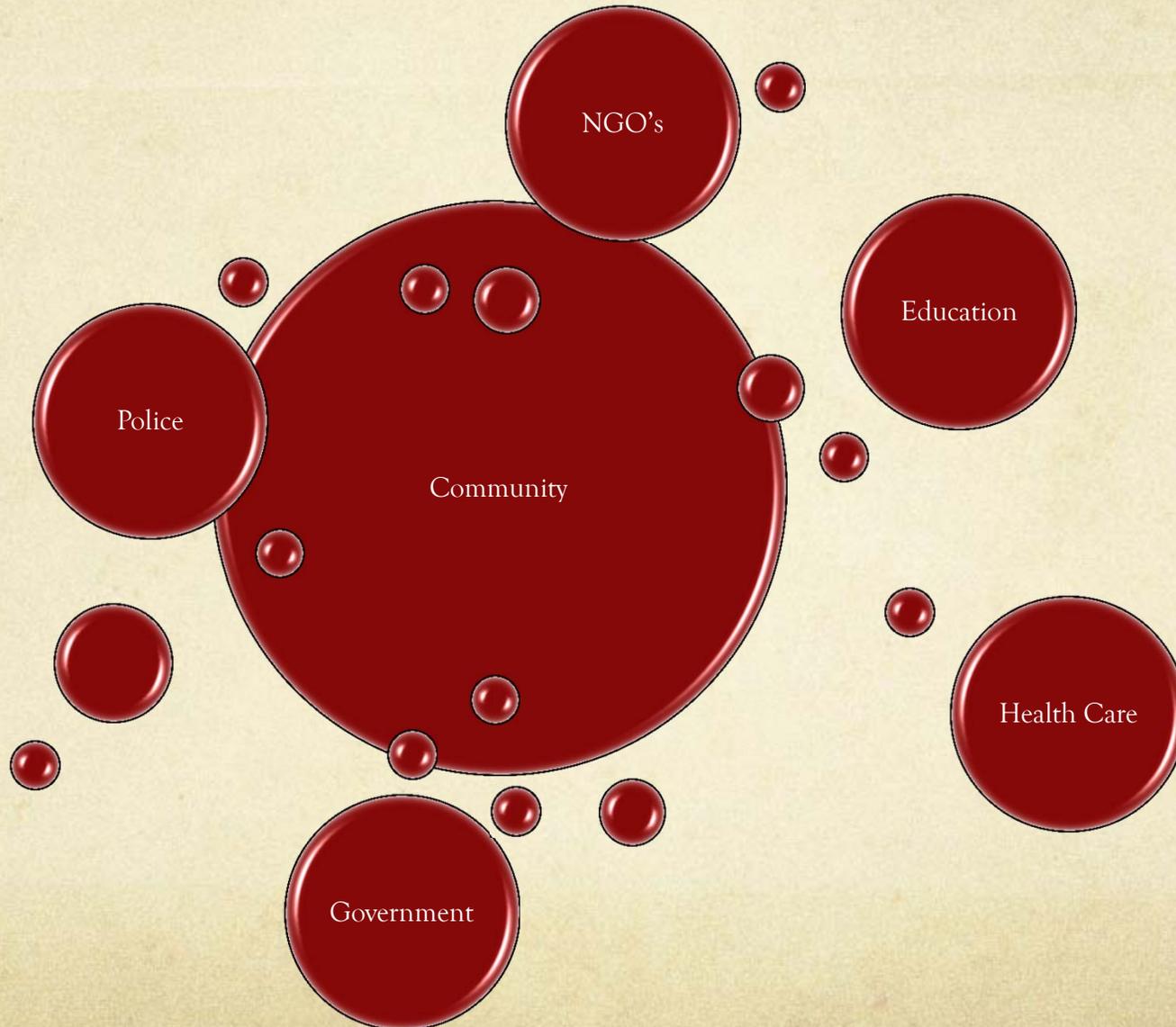
What We Know About Creating Long Term Change

- Generative Dialogue: Building Shared Language (Connection)
- Understanding the Complexity of the Problem (Connection)
- Inspiration (Commitment and Modeling)

What We Know about Creating Innovation

- Connecting to the Context We Want to Influence
- Generating a Vision
- Acting Decisively

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word?
(The need for Connection and Interdisciplinary Dialogue)



Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word?
(Steps toward developing connection and interdisciplinary dialogue)

- Building shared definitions of the current reality
- Building a shared vision for change
- Creating joint plans for collective efforts
- Coming back to reflect often

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word? (What We Need to Know to Manage Diversity)

- An understanding of the sociopolitical and historical realities of discrimination and oppression
- A knowledge of how organizations and systems work, and how they can change
- Competence and experience helping adults learn
- Personal understanding of oneself, and of one's self in relation to others, especially across differences of race, gender, sexual orientation and ability

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word? (Understanding How Prejudice Prevails and Gets in the Way of Success)

- **Micro-aggression:** Commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults
- **Micro-insult:** Behavioral/verbal remarks or comments that convey rudeness, insensitivity and demean a person's identity
- **Micro-assault:** Explicit derogations characterized by a violent verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name calling, avoidant behavior or purposeful discriminatory actions
- **Micro-invalidation:** Verbal comments or behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify a person's psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<p>Alien in own land When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born</p>	<p>“Where are you from?” “Where were you born?” “You speak good English.” A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language</p>	<p>You are not American. You are a foreigner.</p>
<p>Ascription of intelligence Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race</p>	<p>“You are a credit to your race.” “You are so articulate.” Asking an Asian person to help with a math or science problem</p>	<p>People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in math/sciences.</p>
<p>Color blindness Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race</p>	<p>“When I look at you, I don’t see color.” “America is a melting pot.” “There is only one race, the human race.”</p>	<p>Denying a person of color’s racial/ ethnic experiences. Assimilate/acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial/ cultural being.</p>
<p>Criminality/assumption of criminal status A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race</p>	<p>A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes A store owner following a customer of color around the store A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it</p>	<p>You are a criminal. You are going to steal/ You are poor/ You do not belong. You are dangerous.</p>
<p>Denial of individual racism A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases</p>	<p>“I’m not racist. I have several Black friends.” “As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority.”</p>	<p>I am immune to racism because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can’t be a racist. I’m like you.</p>
<p>Myth of meritocracy Statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes</p>	<p>“I believe the most qualified person should get the job.” “Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”</p>	<p>People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. People of color are lazy and/or incompetent and need to work harder.</p>
<p>Pathologizing cultural values/communication styles The notion that the values and communications styles of the dominant/White group are ideal</p>	<p>Asking a Black person: “Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down.” To an Asian or Latino person: “Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal.” “Speak up more.” Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting</p>	<p>Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside.</p>
<p>Second class citizen Occurs when a White person is given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color</p>	<p>Person of color mistaken for a service worker Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger</p>	<p>People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn’t possibly occupy high-status positions. You are likely to cause trouble and/ or travel to a dangerous neighborhood.</p>

Dialogue

How present and powerful are micro-aggressions in your life, your work and in the community?

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word? (The Catch 22 of Being the Object of Micro-aggressions)

- Determining validity of incident (recognizing patterns of types of incidents that may seem unrelated to others)
- Not responding due to inability to determine if it has happened, loss of knowing how to respond, fear of consequences, exhaustion, rationalization that it will do no good to respond, or simply denying it happened at all
- Responding out of rage makes the person feel better but has bad consequences in the long term

Dialogue

- What is the impact of micro-aggression in our lives, at work and in the community?
- How do micro-aggressions pose challenges to our efforts to build partnerships with youth, parents, faith communities and small grass roots organizations?
- What are the deep impulses that drive us to treat each other this way?
- How do we change these within ourselves, at work and in our communities?

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word? (Building a Foundation for Good Relationships)

- Micro-aggressions erode trust. Build trust.
- Micro-aggressions close doors for engagement. Open them.
- Micro-aggressions hurt people. Acknowledge the harm done.
- Micro-aggressions solicit resistance to connection. Engage.
- Micro-aggressions diminish people's dignity and humanity. Share food, laughter and good will.

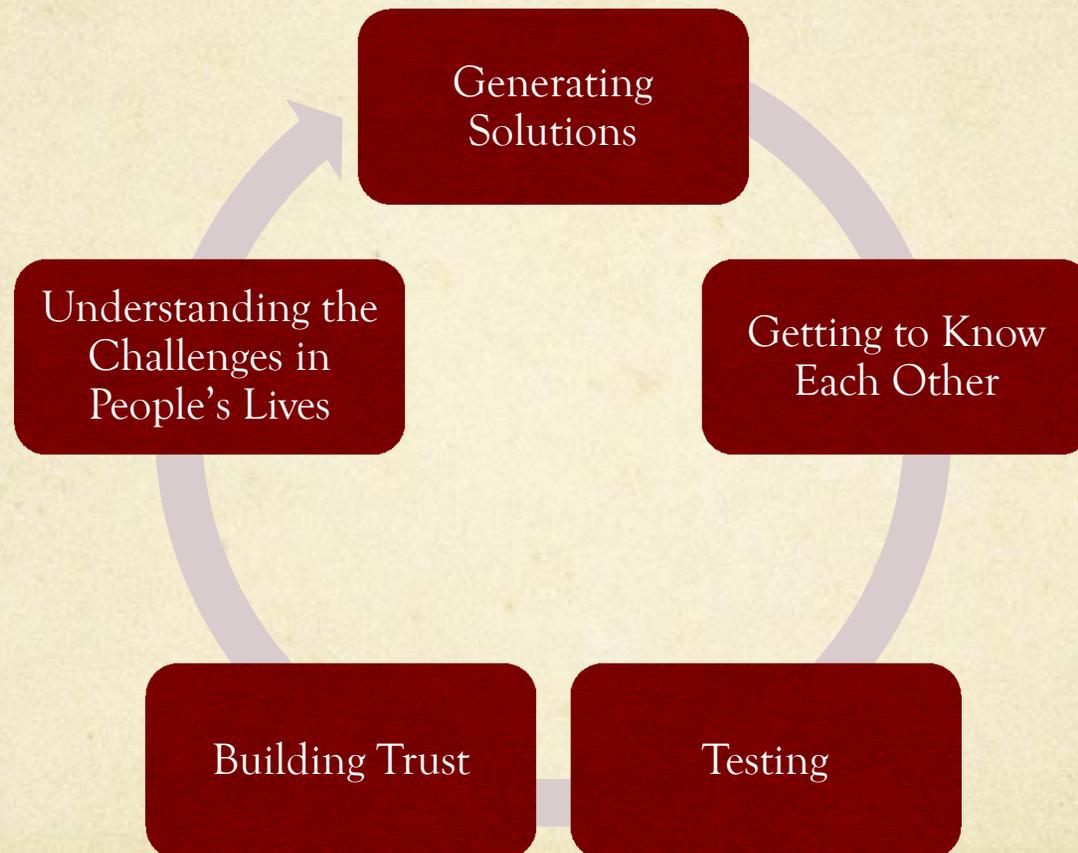
Thoughts on Building Solid Relationships

- Building Trust is a Process: Native perspectives on relationship building
- Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word?

Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word?
(Building accountable community)



Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word?
(Building Trust is a Process: Native perspectives on relationship building)



Methodology

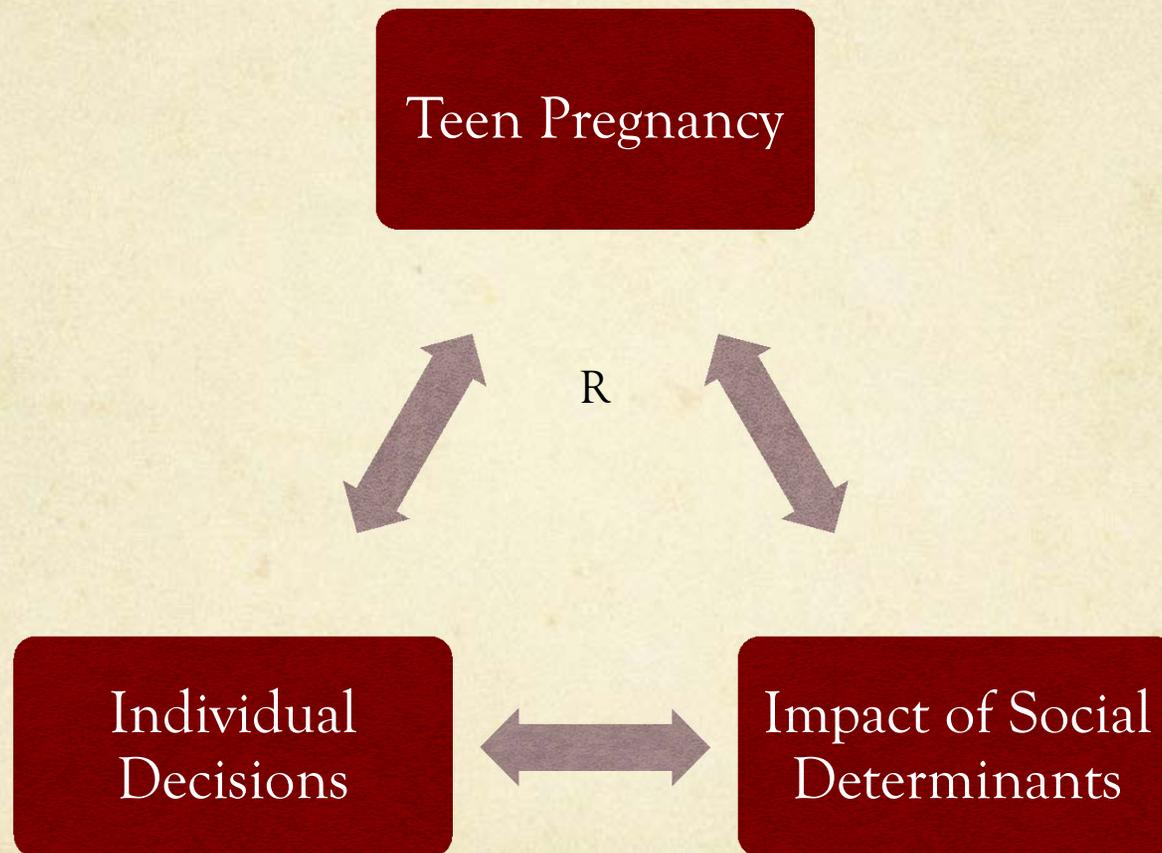
Uses of the Circles Process

- To explore issues (Education & Dialogue)
- To do art
- To plan
- To resolve conflict (Restorative Justice)
- To build accountability (M.O.S.A.I.C. example)
- To grieve
- To celebrate

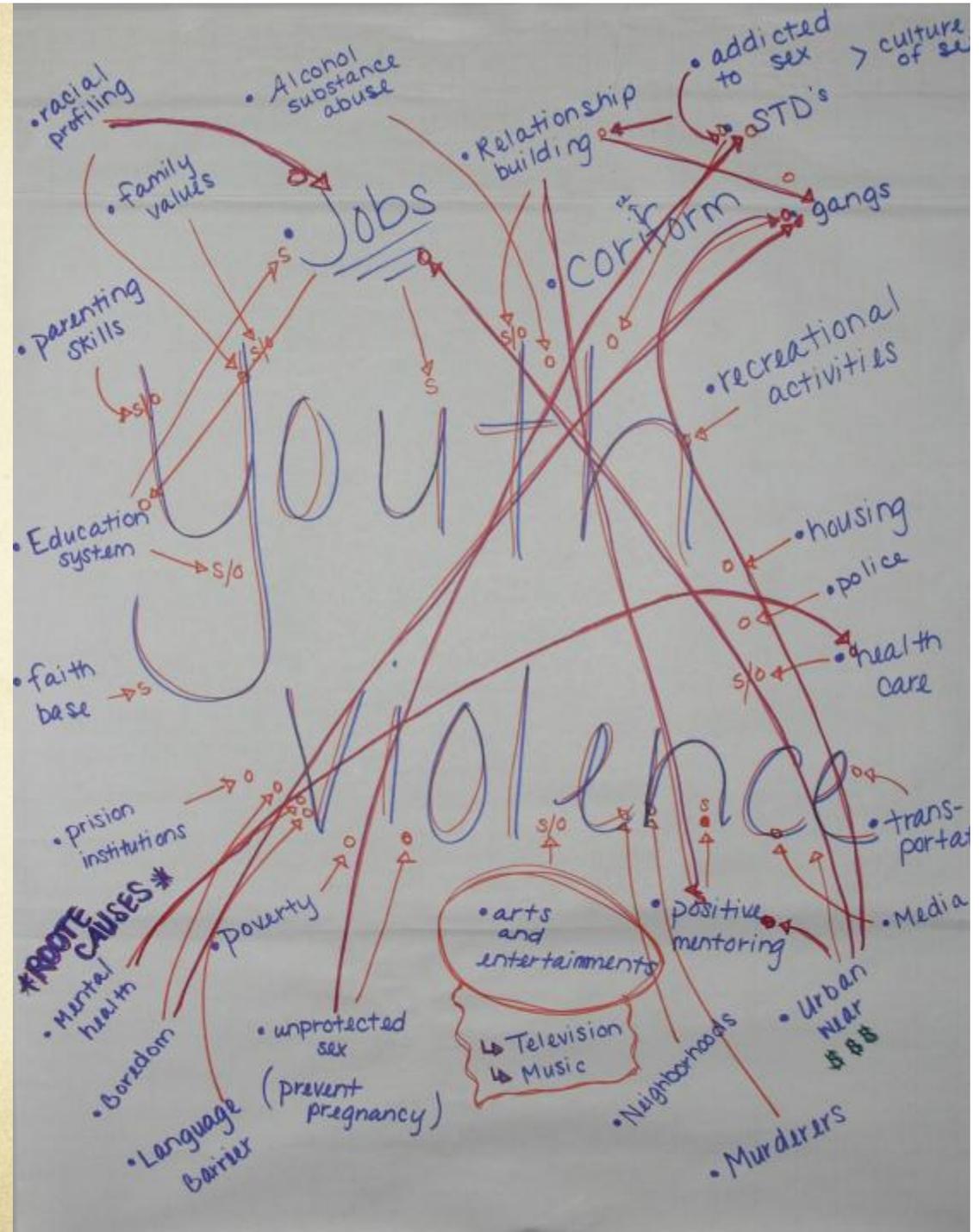
Building Shared Language and Values: What's in a word? (Other methods)

- World Café
- Study Circles
- Panels
- Discussions
- Presentations
- Popular theater (*Theater of the Oppressed*)
- *Facebooking and Tweeting*
- Podcasts

Understanding the Complexity of the Problem

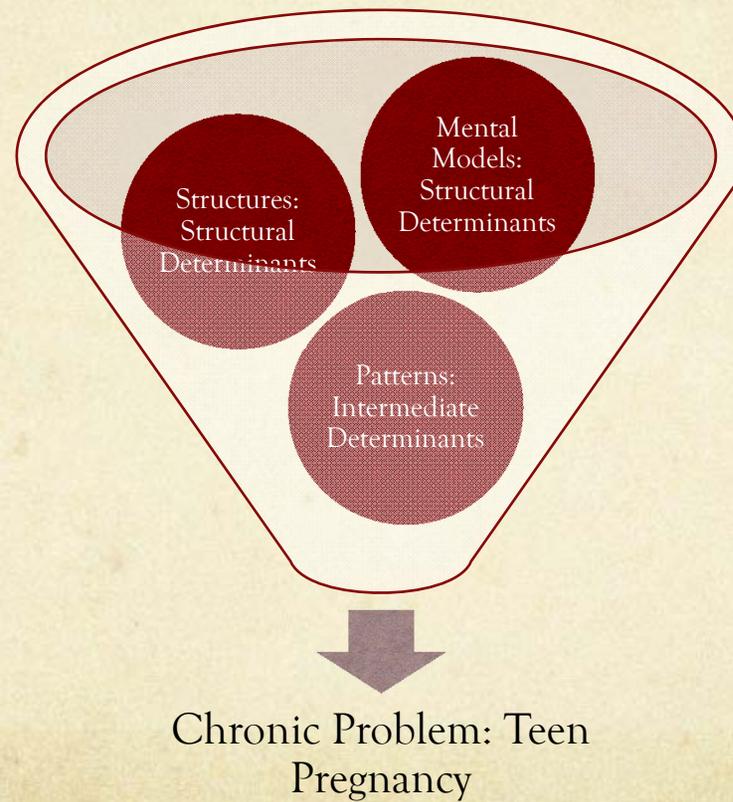


Complexity is Messy

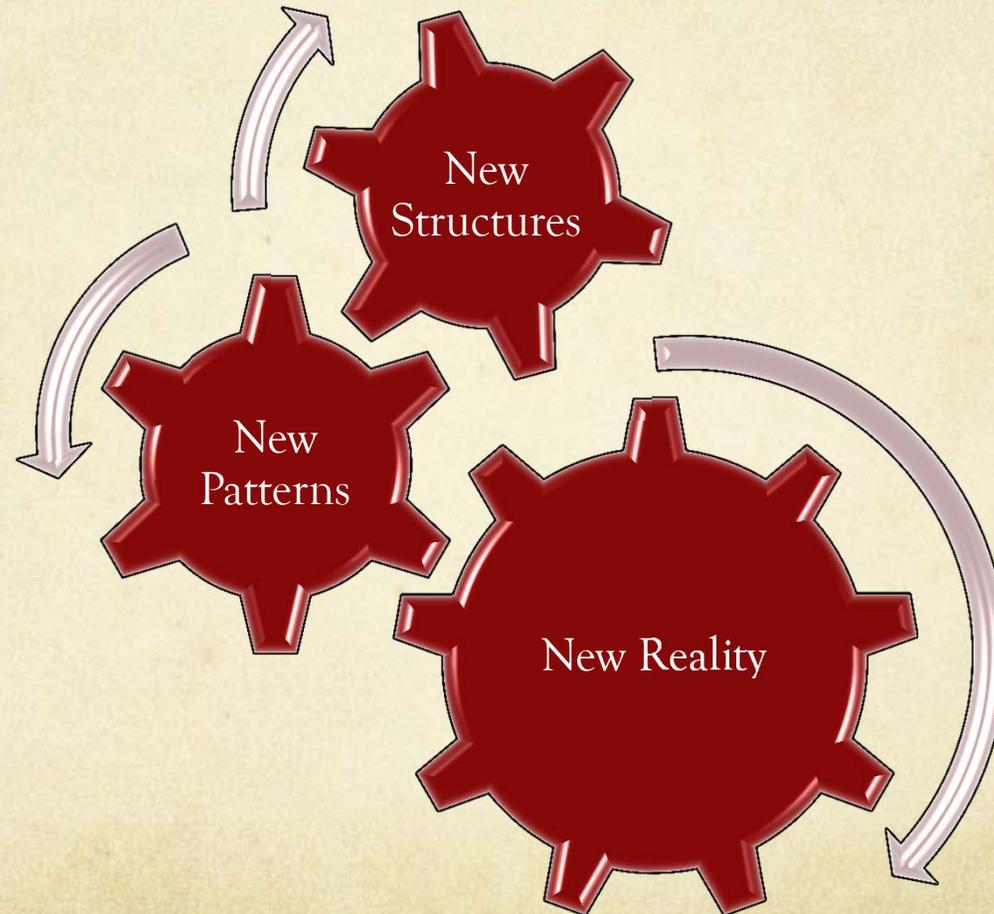


Build a Shared Understanding of the Impact of Social Determinants

The Root Cause Analysis

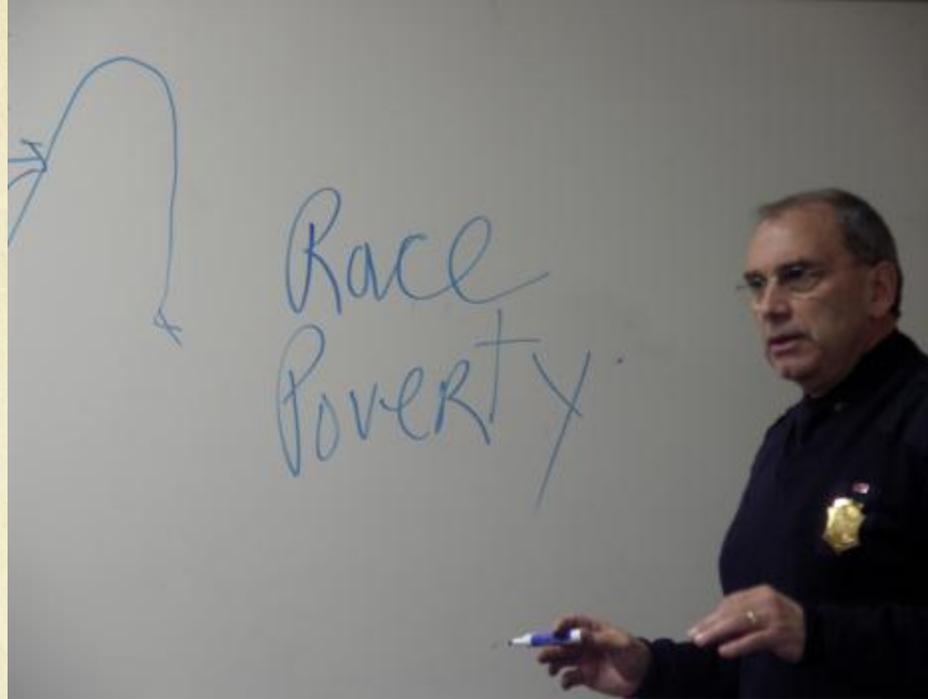


Inspiration (Building a Vision for Change)



Inspiration (Commitment and Modeling)

- Set timelines
- Build your plan
- Follow through
- Reflect on progress every three months
- Rework your plan every six months
- Conduct an annual qualitative evaluation of your process outcomes



"My experience using applied Systems Thinking in the area of my work, community law enforcement, was essential to "discovering" the underlying racism that permeates actions and decision making within a community's system.

For example, systems thinking was able to raise the awareness of many within the community to identify and address systemic racism with a system that held back minorities without the people in power being aware that the continuous responses to crime within the community only deepened the problems. It was only when the process was looked at from a systemic point of view could people understand fully their actions and the unintended consequences that it brought about.

I am not saying that this was an easy accepting process but it did bring the discussion on solving our community problems to a different level of acceptance and for the first time in our community give the minority constituency a legitimate platform to express their views." Ed Cronin

On Being



Thank You

Sayra Pinto

sayra@matrizgroup.com

www.matrizgroup.com

References

Boyes-Watson, Carolyn. *Peacemaking Circles and Urban Youth: Bringing Justice Home*. Living Justice Press, 2008

“Community is Not a Place but a Relationship: Lessons for Organizational Development.” *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, Vol. 5, 2005, pp. 359-372

“Heart of Hope: A Guide for Using Peacemaking Circles to Develop Emotional Literacy, Promote Healing and Build Health Relationships.” Suffolk, University, Center for Restorative Justice, 2010

Capodilupo, Christina M.; Annie I. Lin; Kevin L. Nadal; David P. Rivera; Derald Wing Sue; Gina C. Torino. “Racial Microaggressions against Black Americans: Implications for Counseling.” *Journal of Counseling and Development*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (Summer 2008), p. 330

Cronin, Edward F. “Law Enforcement through Community Engagement: From Productivity to Purpose.” *Reflections*, Vol. 10 (No. 1), 2010, pp. 21-27

Cross, Elsie Y. *Managing Diversity- The Courage to Lead*. Greenwood Press, 2000

Gebo, Erika; Carolyn Boyes-Watson; Sayra Pinto-Wilson. “Reconceptualizing Organizational Change in the Comprehensive Gang Model.” *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol. 38, 2010, pp. 166-173

Pinto, Sayra. “Fanning the Flame of Hope.” *Reflections*, Vol. 5(No. 5), 2004, pp. 1-6. Pinto-Wilson, Kristin E. “Circle: a relationship-based dialogic approach to growing out of racism: a project based upon an investigation with the Partnership for Latino Success, Leominster, Massachusetts.” Thesis (M.S.W.) Smith College School for Social Work, Northampton, Mass., 2009

Senge, Peter. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. Currency, 1994

The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. Currency, 2006

Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future. Crown Business, 2008

Sue, Derald W.; Christina M. Capodilupo; Gina C. Torino; Jennifer M. Bucceri, Aisha M. B. Holder; Kevin L. Nadal; Marta Esquilin. “Racial Microaggressions in Every Day Life: Implication for Clinical Practice.” *American Psychologist*, May-June 2007

Sue, Derald W.; Annie I. Lin; Gina C. Torino; Christina M. Capodilupo; David P. Rivera. “Racial Microaggressions and Difficult Dialogues on Race in the Classroom.” *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2009, pp. 183-190

Wallace, Barbara. *Toward Equity in Health: A New Global Approach to Health Disparities*. Springer Publishing Company, 2007