

Think Tank Series #2: Effective Organizing with Community Assets
5/13/16
5:30-7:30PM
Hollywood Community Center

Individuals Present: 20

New Organizations Represented: VECA, Sistagirl!, 3V Leaders

TOPICS: Community Assets and Effective Organizing

Agenda Minutes and Summary

- I. **North Memphis Spotlight-** Douglass Bungalow Crump Redevelopment
 - A. Population of Douglass- almost 99% renters! The question is always centered around how can we organize individuals that may be migrants in and out of the area?
 - B. Initial start of the resurgence of the redevelopment in Douglass
 1. NAMES MATTER! When people hear the name of a once corrupt and defunct organization, the ghosts of that name may haunt all positive efforts!
 2. Efforts have to be made to choose team and business partners carefully! Everyone needs to be committed.
 - C. Lessons Learned
 1. Getting the maximum usage out of the community center will draw more funding towards the center.
 2. Talk and attempt to cooperate with other groups and efforts
 3. There are many city resources that can be tapped into!

- II. **The Importance of Community Assets with Pastor Charlie Caswell**
 - A. 3V Leader- Visible, Vocal, and Valuable leadership
 1. Find Your 7Ps- Pastors, Politicians, Police Officers, Principals, Parents, Proprietors, and Partners
 - B. “We Meet Enough, Where are the Solutions?”
 1. Using asset based community development will strengthen communities.
 2. 3 Steps: Assess community and stakeholders; Support the needs of the community and reach out to stakeholders to form committees; Determine how citizens to act together to achieve goals
 3. We have to put our differences within the community aside in order to get the attention with the appropriate funds from city government

C. TIPS

1. Everyone needs a voice! Don't close any opinions just to get your opinion across!
2. Volunteer Hours need to have a monetary value. When communicating investment and worth of your efforts, consider volunteer hours.
3. Document learning and showcase strides towards your goals.

III. Effective Organizing with Brad Watkins, MidSouth Peace and Justice Center

A. Use of *MidWest Academy Strategy Chart* that outlined a guide towards resolving/fighting an issue using clear goals, organizational considerations, listing constituents, allies, and opponents, considering targets, and implementing tactics.

1. GOALS- List long-term and short term objectives. Look at goals as small steps towards your big victory.
2. ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS- Build team and groups off of self-interest and sense of your own collective power. Plan where people now their role. Everyone should be invested and cognizant of goals and implementations. Everyone has skill or talent, and we must build off of that. "We don't empower people, people already have the power."
3. CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, and OPPONENTS- constituents directly gain or lose. Allies may gain or lose, so you must find those who support your cause. Opponents are going to lose due to your action; what will it cost them? Are your opponents willing to go against you; what are they willing to do?
4. TARGETS- Who has the ability to give you what you want? Go after the person who has the ability, or the person who has authority over that individual (target and secondary target). Everyone has a pressure point, and sometimes targets need to be pressured.
5. TACTICS- Tactics are actions that move your objective forward. The 1st punch should not be your best punch; save it for last! Always be in control of your own narrative, and don't let the media or your oppressor tell it for you!

B. Kingian Non-Violence Philosophy

1. Gather Info- collect data and publish reports. Know your stuff!
2. Educate your target- explain to city council. Have Teach Ins.
3. Internal Commitment- Everyone needs to be engaged and on board.
4. Negotiation- assess whether it succeeds, and then move on to the next step.
5. Direct Action- This cannot be ignored or delayed by the target. Action must pressure society.
6. Reconciliation- Did your tactics change the power dynamic? Are you on a different playing field with your target? Is there open communication?

C. TIPS from Brad

1. Each one teach one. Everyone should articulate.

2. When conducting a press conference, schedule it around 1pm or 3pm. This gives your target NO TIME to respond that same day, and it gives you constant coverage on the evening news.
3. Send press releases the day before and the day of the event or action. Then call to acknowledge receipt by the media outlets.
4. Politeness within tactics does not always work. Is your oppressor polite?
5. Don't drain resources within your group. Stagger resources and available support.
6. Those living with and within the issue are the experts. REMEMBER THIS.

OGOR Call to Action

- Find the 7Ps in your Community! Contact them and see if there is a coalition to join or to initiate. (Suggestion: use the 5 organizations recently contacted from the last Think tank.)
- With those 7Ps, identify goals and structure of your organization that will combat these efforts.
- Plan one effort or initiative that utilizes your local community center. (Use it or lose it!)