

ABCD

WITH YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



A Project of the
32nd Avenue
Jubilee Center

ABCD WITH YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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COVER PHOTO

“A View from North Denver” by John Putnam

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THIS PROJECT WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH A GRANT GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY:

Justice & Advocacy Ministries of The Episcopal Church

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A Project of the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center

July 2015

“There is no power for change like a community discovering what it cares about.”
Margaret Wheatley, *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore
Hope to the Future*

“Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask
or imagine.”
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ms. Lelanda Lee, Vice President of the Board of Directors of the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center (Jubilee Center), for the initial conception of this project and bringing Appreciative Inquiry and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to the Jubilee Center.

Justice and Advocacy Ministries of the Episcopal Church, which made the grant to implement this ABCD pilot project.

The Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson, Domestic Poverty Missioner for the Episcopal Church, who served as the grantor's representative, for his interest in the ABCD process and his belief that the Jubilee Center, Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church (OMS Church), and the Denver Northside neighborhood would be the right place for an ABCD pilot project.

The Rev. Deacon Linda Brown, General Manager of the Jubilee Center, who served as the project director for the ABCD pilot project, for her leadership, planning, and oversight of the ABCD team and its efforts.

Ms. Aspen Matthews, who served as the ABCD Coordinator and conducted the majority of the individual and group interviews, documented the ABCD process, and became the "face of ABCD" to the community.

The Colorado Episcopal Service Corps and its director, the Rev. Rebecca Crummey, for assigning two of its corps members, Mr. Joe Ellerbroek (2013-14) and Mr. John Putnam (2014-15), to serve at the Jubilee Center where they engaged the community through interviews and provided marketing, publishing, and other technical support as members of the ABCD leadership team.

Ms. Maria Casillas, who served as the Spanish language interpreter, interviewer, and translator for brochures and other documents.

The Board of Directors and staff of the Jubilee Center for their support and encouragement throughout this project, including suggesting people in the neighborhood to interview.

The Rev. Gerardo Brambila, former Vicar of OMS Church, Ms. Laurie Zant, Bishop's Warden (chair of the church's board), and the parishioners of OMS Church for their generous support of the project, including providing their facility for the large community meeting.

The people in the Northside community, who generously participated in interviews, small group conversations, and community meetings, and made referrals to other community members to interview.

Mr. Mike Green, who is a well known ABCD author and expert, as well as a Northside resident, for being a sounding board and sharing his advice and encouragement early for the ABCD pilot project.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The idea for this ABCD pilot project emerged in early 2013 when the board of directors and staff for the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center (Jubilee Center) and representatives from Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church (OMS Church) met for a “visioning” session.

The Jubilee Center, which grew out of the mission and ministry of OMS Church, has provided outreach to the marginalized and those living in poverty in Northwest Denver since 2001. However, in more recent years, the Jubilee Center was serving diminishing numbers of people, as well as facing significant challenges to its funding base. While some people squeezed by the lack of affordable housing had moved outside the neighborhood, families with children living in poverty remain a substantial neighborhood demographic.

OMS Church, built in 1890, has traditionally been a welcoming place for the neighborhood. Since 2000 it has hosted a bilingual English and Spanish-speaking community and held bilingual services from time to time. With the changing neighborhood, the church was also serving a diminishing, commuter congregation. Inadequate church finances contributed to part-time clergy, which constricted the hands-on pastoral relationships that could be developed with the community to build the congregation.

The neighborhood where these two entities reside is part of the Denver Northside community, which has been undergoing radical changes, *i.e.*, gentrification, since the late 1990s. The neighborhood, with once affordable housing and locally grown businesses that had been home to waves of Irish, Italian, and Latino immigrants, was being replaced with high-end, multi-story lofts and apartments, as well as trendy restaurants and bars to accommodate a younger, wealthier, and more transient group of people. Many owners of the newer businesses no longer reside in the neighborhood, but come from as far away as Berthoud, 45 miles northeast.

TERMINOLOGY

One of the markers of the diverging demographics in North Denver is the terminology used by different groups to refer to the neighborhood: North Denver, Northwest Denver, Northside, LoHi, and sub-categories for the many neighborhoods within this area such as the Highland (singular) and the Highlands (plural), West Highlands, Sunnyside, and Berkeley.

North Denver and Northwest Denver are geographical terms, while Northside is a term that has social and relational associations.



LoHi, referring to the Lower Highlands area, is North Denver's attempt to join the two-syllable neighborhood trend, of which there are at least six in the Denver area. This moniker is fashioned after LoDo for Lower Downtown, a neighborhood that underwent its own transformation and gentrification in the 1990s. The two-syllable terms for these redeveloped urban areas reflect the hipster coolness of their younger, White, urban subculture of residents and after-hours visitors who flock to their restaurants, bars, and clubs.

The sub-category names, such as the Highland or the Highlands and Berkeley, refer to Registered Neighborhood Organizations formed by residents and property owners and registered with the city of Denver.

Many long-term, local residents have strong feelings about the appropriate way to refer to their neighborhood. The newer residents tend to use the term LoHi, because that is what developers and Realtors use to market the new living spaces and restaurants. This is one example of how the language used in the ABCD process can help create or break down connections among community members.

In this manual, the terms North Denver, Northside, and Northwest Denver are used throughout the writing without giving preference to one term over the others.

THE ABCD IDEA EMERGES

All of the background factors were on people's minds during that early-2013 visioning meeting. The leadership began to explore possibilities of what the Jubilee Center and OMS Church could become in the midst of the changes in the neighborhood. Could the Jubilee Center become an immigration hospitality center? Could OMS Church become a community center in the neighborhood? How could both entities become a welcoming presence in the community for those they serve as well as for the Gen Xers and Millennials who have moved in? One thing missing from the conversation was the "voice of the neighborhood."

"We could come up with ideas of what we could do, but we had no sense whether our ideas had any relevance or held traction with those who lived and worked in our changing neighborhood," was the repeated commentary from the boards and staff of the Jubilee Center and OMS Church.

Ms. Lelanda Lee, the Jubilee Center board vice president, suggested that the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process could be a way to discover the voice of the neighborhood and to envision how the Jubilee Center and OMS Church could help to bring the neighborhood together. ABCD is a process built on the principles of Appreciative Inquiry that credits communities with already having the building blocks to solve their own problems and achieve their hopes and dreams.

With the assistance of Ms. Lee, the Jubilee Center prepared a proposal to the Justice and Advocacy Ministries Department of the Episcopal Church and received a grant to conduct an ABCD pilot project over a 12-month period beginning in early 2014.

Once begun, the work of ABCD never really ends, because the process of asking open-ended questions of community members, in order to identify their assets and build upon them, becomes a transformed way of approaching being community together. ***The process IS the work.***

This manual is the culmination of that year-long pilot project. It has been prepared to share the pilot project's process and lessons learned with the Episcopal Church and others. The very act of doing the ABCD process is transformative for all who participate in it.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MANUAL

The manual is organized to give the reader a brief overview of the ABCD process in Chapter 1 and how it was implemented by the Jubilee Center in Chapter 2. How the team was organized is discussed in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 describes the methodology for doing the ABCD work. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe the detailed work of three areas of ABCD work, namely, the one-on-one interviews, the asset mapping process, and the use of media as a two-way communication tool. Chapter 8 summarizes the Jubilee Center's experience in doing ABCD work in North Denver and its lessons learned. The Tool Kit at the end of this manual contains examples of the Jubilee Center's work and documents, followed by Appendices of the theology intrinsic to ABCD, brief biographies of the ABCD team, feedback to the sponsoring organizations, a select listing of ABCD books and online resources, a visual style discussion of the images in this manual, and a Postscript from the Jubilee Center's General Manager. An attempt was made to structure the chapters so that they could be read as stand-alone commentaries on their respective topics.



We hope you find ABCD as transformative for you as it has been for us!
Linda Brown, Lelanda Lee, & Aspen Matthews

Nathaniel Hawthorne, 19th century author, said “Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.”

The butterfly, or “la mariposa,” is a universal symbol of transformation. In Christianity, the butterfly refers to the transcendence of resurrection over death, and in numerous cultures around the world, it refers to the concept of transformation from vulnerability and extreme hunger to use of great energy to emergence as a changed self with new coloration, presence, and skills to show the world. Thus, the butterfly is an apt symbol for the transformative work of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD).

A community’s pursuit of ABCD is a “both-and” kind of process. The community follows a plan and its ABCD leaders in the process, and yet, much can be learned and discerned by the quiet nurturing of relationships as they blossom and grow. Both the ABCD process and the nurture of relationships are needed for the desired transformation to happen. This is particularly encouraging for those non-ABCD-hands-on members of organizations and boards, because their participation in the nurturance of relationships in their communities is an essential component of ABCD.



CHAPTER 1 - THE PROCESS: ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is a conversation-based process for identifying a community's assets, getting to know and cross-connecting community members, facilitating community conversations for neighbors to voice their hopes and dreams, and supporting neighbors to take next steps in actualizing their hopes and dreams.

WHAT IS ABCD?

In the most straightforward terms and fewest words, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is a process for community building. ABCD's foundational principle is that every community has assets on which to base community building activities. Assets can be thought of as the gifts of the people and other resources within the community.

BEFORE ABCD, THERE WAS APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a model for organizational development, arrived on the scene in 1980 through the work of graduate student David Cooperrider and his academic advisor Suresh Srivastva. Cooperrider completed his doctoral dissertation at Case Western Reserve University in 1986, titled "Appreciative Inquiry: Toward a Methodology for Understanding and Enhancing Organizational Innovation," and AI was born.

AI's premise is that in every organization, even ones that are not functioning well, something is working; therefore, why not discover the best of what is working, bring it into the present, and use it to build new ways of making things happen in the organization.

The AI methodology is to interview as many people in the organization as possible, ask them to identify the things that have worked and are worth saving and to dream about the future they want to create, and then to build on what has been shared and learned. In asking carefully crafted, open-ended questions that seek

aspirational answers, AI practitioners begin to change the landscape of the conversation from the moment the questions are asked.

THE ABCD STORY

ABCD grew out of the community research work by John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann, professors at Northwestern University, that culminated in their widely acclaimed 1993 book *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. Their research involved observations of urban communities, which caused them to refocus on the importance of the assets in communities and what community people had to say about their hopes, dreams, and passions.



Observable assets start with resources seen around the community, like parks, roads, buildings, etc. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The ABCD methodology begins with one-on-one interviews using carefully crafted open-ended questions, moves on to small group conversations, and finally larger community gatherings. By mining these conversations, ABCD practitioners develop lists of assets identified by community members. ABCD practitioners then "map" (group and categorize) identified assets to show the connections and assets people have, who uses them, and who could benefit from them.

Remember Hurricane Katrina? There was a mass exodus out of New Orleans. What did people take with them when they left? Probably not the toaster or the garden shovel. Definitely the quilt made by Granny Carla and the bookends carved by Uncle Henry. They took the best from their past, and their hopes and dreams, on which to build their futures in a new place.

Community members who could benefit from talking with one another are invited to group conversations, and the entire community is invited to the community meetings. Simply put, the ABCD process is “interview – map – connect – repeat.”

Both AI and ABCD build on the importance of talking directly with the members of the community, because they have first-hand knowledge of what is happening inside their communities and they have the assets — the gifts and resources — that can be used to improve their communities. AI and ABCD also are based on the concept that the communities themselves hold the seeds to their future growth and transformation, whether they are the best practices from the past (AI) or the assets currently within the community (ABCD).

These methodologies emphasize honoring members of the communities as prominent and valuable partners and leaders in building the bridges to their own future. AI and ABCD are focused on community empowerment, where community members claim their own power, initiative, and control of the process of organizational and community development.

PRO-TIP #1: Create a library. See the ABCD Resources at the back of this manual for useful books by authors such as John McKnight, Peter Block, and Mike Green. These resources will give you inspiration and tips to move to the next step of the ABCD process.

PRO-TIP #2: Use simple language. The Jubilee Center made an effort to steer away from technical and academic jargon in favor of simpler terms that people without formal ABCD training could easily understand.

THE GLASS HALF-FULL METAPHOR

A frequent metaphor to describe ABCD is the half-full glass. The question asked about that glass is, “Is the glass half-full or half-empty?”

In the typical Western worldview, one would assert that the glass is half-empty, followed by trying to figure out how to fill the glass all the way up. The half-empty glass is a metaphor for a philosophy of scarcity — “there’s not enough to go around” — and a problem-solving mindset, in which one identifies a problem and then embarks on finding solutions to fix the problem. This typical Western worldview leads to a dynamic of “we, the experts, have come to help you, the needy, fix your problems.” In community development terms, it is representative of paternalistic or colonizing “toxic charity.”



Gentrification brings challenges to neighborhoods. How might a glass half-full apply to gentrification? (Photo by John Putnam.)

The ABCD worldview asserts that the glass is half-full, and ABCD practitioners seek to discover the assets or gifts and resources that make up that fullness. The ABCD point of view is, “Look at the assets we have to work with. Let’s figure out how to leverage their use fully.” The philosophy of the half-full glass is one of abundance — “we have a lot to work with” — and a mindset of collaboration — “let’s work together since we’re in this adventure together.”

The dynamic is an honoring of the community members' claim to ownership and control of their community, including the right to figure out how to utilize their assets to build their community and achieve their hopes and dreams.

LESSON LEARNED: ABCD provided new insights about our agency. The majority of our board and staff commute into the neighborhood, which indicates the need for greater vigilance to listen and be accountable to the neighborhood. Just because we can do something doesn't mean we should do it without checking with the neighborhood.

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REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.” – Matthew 6:10 (NRSV)

“When strangers start acting like neighbors... communities are reinvigorated.” – Ralph Nader

» What practices are working best for your ministry or organization?
Why are they the best?

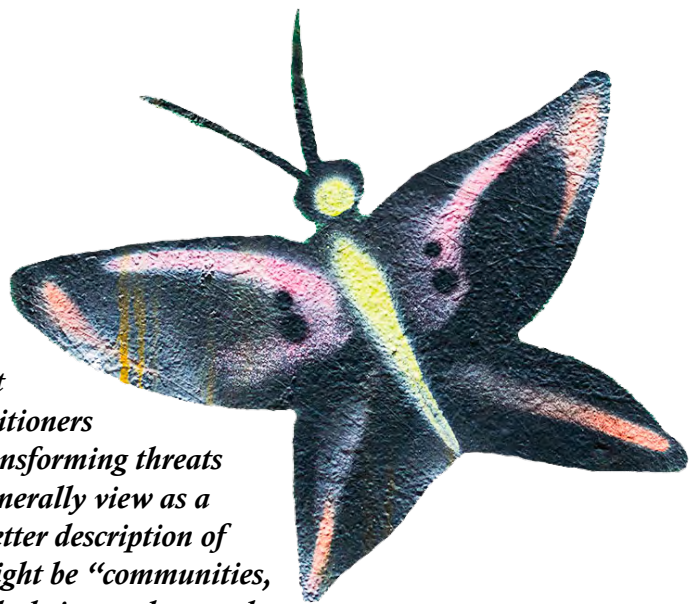
» What are your best assets or resources? How can they be used to make your neighborhood better?

» Who are the neighborhood people who have stories to tell and something to say about the neighborhood? How can you invite them into a conversation?

» What are the assets or gifts that immediately bubble up when you reflect on your neighborhood? Who has those assets or gifts?

» What is the future you want to build for your neighborhood?

Community transformation is often stated as the goal of engaging in the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process. Sometimes ABCD practitioners have described the transformation as “transforming threats into opportunities,” which most people generally view as a desirable outcome. Perhaps, however, a better description of the desired community transformation might be “communities, in constant and ongoing conversation with their members and affinity groups, striving to become the communities that they dream of becoming — creative, vitalized, and sustainable with room for growth and incorporation of newcomers.”



CHAPTER 2 - THE CONTEXT: ABCD IN NORTHWEST DENVER



This chapter provides context and sense of “place” for the Asset Based Community Development work in this pilot project. Every ABCD project is different based on the environment, history, culture, institutions, social practices, and people involved.

THE JUBILEE CENTER

The 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center (Jubilee Center) was formed as a collaborative effort involving the then vicar (priest) of Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church (OMS Church) and a group of business and community leaders in Northwest Denver who saw a need for outreach, advocacy, and basic services for those in the neighborhood living in poverty. Today, the Jubilee Center is a small, 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization located in Northwest Denver, about 2 miles from downtown Denver, Colorado.



The Jubilee Center resides in the old rectory just east of Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church. (Photo by John Putnam.)

It was established in 2001 to address the need for language appropriate and culturally sensitive educational assistance for immigrant children and to provide support to low-income residents in Northwest Denver. The Jubilee Center is located on W. 32nd Avenue, one of the main east-west streets through the Northside of Denver. (See Introduction for a discussion on how different groups refer to the neighborhood.)

The name “32nd Avenue Jubilee Center” is the registered name of the corporation, which conducts business as an entity separate and apart from OMS Church, its primary neighborhood partner with whom it shares some space, such as the church basement, for community usages. The Jubilee Center is governed by a board of directors

consisting of church, business, and community representatives.

Even though the center is organizationally separate and distinct, the Jubilee Center’s identity is tied to the Episcopal Church, and it is a Diocesan Institution under the authority of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. The Jubilee Center relies on donations, grants, and fundraising to support its programs. The center does not proselytize or discriminate, and religious and documented status are not required for guests to receive assistance or services.

The mission of the Jubilee Center is to break the cycle of poverty for the low-income residents of North Denver. To achieve its mission, the Jubilee Center has four primary programs for serving those in need:

- » **Youth educational enrichment for at-risk children**, which includes an after-school program during the academic year and a 9-week summer program. Most of the children served come from low-income immigrant and non-English speaking families.
- » **Emergency assistance and referral services** consisting of rent, utility, and emergency food assistance for low and no-income residents.
- » **Community healthcare services** for medically indigent residents. Services include health education and screening, vision care assistance, co-pay assistance, and bus passes for medical and mental health appointments.
- » **Immigration advocacy support** primarily for youth and young adults who qualify under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The Jubilee Center raises funds to help qualified applicants pay for legal fees and Department of Homeland Security application fees.

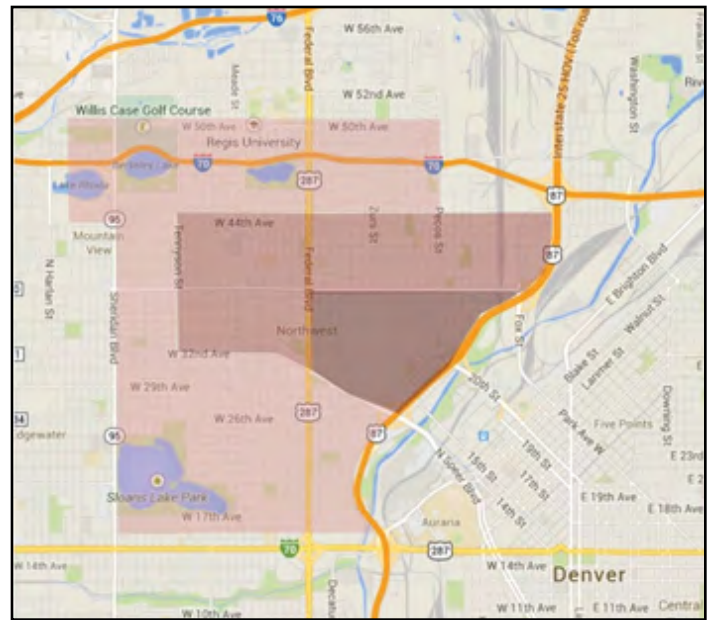
The Jubilee Center relies upon part-time employees, board members, and volunteers to carry out its mission. It has a volunteer general manager who is a Deacon of the Episcopal Church, a volunteer bookkeeper, and several part-time employees who manage and implement its programs. For the past two years, the Jubilee Center has had two Episcopal Service Corps interns onsite, working in rotation on its various programs. The Jubilee Center has also been a learning site for community service workers and interns from Regis University, the Iliff School of Theology, Metropolitan State University, and North High School.

NORTHWEST DENVER

The Denver Northside is located west of I-25, north of Colfax Avenue, west of Sheridan Avenue, and south of 50th Avenue near Regis University. The Northside incorporates a number of different neighborhoods including the Highlands, West Highlands, Sloans Lake, and Berkeley. It has a long and varied history, and excellent descriptions can be found in the writings by local historians Phil Goodstein and Rebecca Hunt (see references at the end of this chapter). The following information draws primarily from these two sources.

Original settlers to the Denver area were Native Americans, and in the mid-1800s miners and settlers came to Denver for prospecting and commerce. In the late 1860s, people moved to the area now called the Northside to escape flooding by the Platte River, which flows near downtown Denver. Initially, residents were mostly Protestant and Republican; in the ensuing years, the Northside experienced waves of immigrants who came to the area seeking affordable housing and work.

By 1900, the Northside had a vibrant Italian community that centered around a six-block section of Navajo Street running from 32nd to 38th Avenues with Mount Carmel Catholic Church, located at 36th and Navajo, at the community's heart. Germans also came to North Denver where they worked at the Zang Brewery near the banks of the South Platte River, as well as at the Denver City Brewery on 17th Avenue. The Irish immigrants also settled in the area and built St. Patrick's Church at West 32nd and Osage.



This map shows the boundaries (the shaded areas) used by the Jubilee Center to describe the Northside of Denver. The Jubilee Center's work is primarily located in the darkest shade of red. (Image taken from Google Maps.)

Beginning in the 1920s, North Denver became home to both Mexican-American migrants and Mexican and Central and South American immigrants. The first to arrive were New Mexican villagers whose families had lived there since the 1600s. In the 1940s, many North Denver Mexican-Americans and Mexicans attended Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at West 34th and Lipan. West 32nd Avenue between Tejon and Clay became the commercial center of North Denver's Latino, Mexican, and Central American community; the Jubilee Center and OMS Church are located on West 32nd Avenue in this central corridor.

Since 2000 this business strip has been undergoing transformation as the neighborhood has evolved from a working class Latino neighborhood into an upwardly mobile, middle-class, increasingly Anglo-American neighborhood. Older buildings are being replaced by modern architecture and single-family homes by lofts valued in the upper six figures.

The Northside of Denver today is a place with many contrasts as reflected in the 2010 census data according to city-data.com. There are 31,798 residents in the 80211 zip code where the Jubilee Center is located. Data illustrate the presence of a diverse, changing population. Over 50% of the population is White with 43% identified as Hispanic or Latino. Mexico is the most common place of origin for foreign-born residents.



The architecture on the North Side of Denver shows the stark contrast between old and new styles. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The median household income in 2011 was \$48,522 compared with \$55,387 for the state. From 2009 to 2014, the median price of homes in the area rose from less than \$250,000 to \$400,000, a 160% increase over five years. Almost 42% of the residents have never married. Over 18% of the residents have income below the poverty level in 2011, compared with 13.5% for the state. The unemployment rate is close to 9%.

North High School is considered the Northside's defining institution (Goodstein, 2011). Enrollment is about 900 students with 85% 20 ABCD WITH YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



North High School is a racially diverse school near downtown Denver in the Northside. (Photo by John Putnam.)

Hispanic, 7% White, and 4% African-American. Almost 86% of North High's students are on free and reduced lunch. While the school seems to struggle academically, ranking 14th out of 22 schools in District 1, it is working hard to have a student-teacher ratio that is among the best in District 1 and improve its metrics for graduation (*Denver Post*, Sunday, March 22, 2015).

WHY DO ABCD HERE?

In 2013, the Denver Northside neighborhood appeared to be an ideal place to conduct an ABCD project. Rapid changes were occurring in the neighborhood, including the influx of upwardly mobile, high-earning individuals (the "new gentry") newly interspersed amidst staunchly loyal residents from past waves of immigrants. The time was ripe for finding ways to help connect new neighbors with long-time residents, all of whom now represent disparate wealth, education, and cultural demographics.

LESSON LEARNED: We thought we knew our context. It was only by listening deeply to our conversation partners that we learned how different groups in the community refer to our neighborhood and how emotionally loaded the names assigned to the neighborhood are. This new knowledge increases our cultural sensitivity to our neighbors.

ABCD is an appropriate model to bridge perceived and actual differences among neighborhood constituents.

The original vision was a 12-month ABCD project of getting to know the Jubilee Center's neighbors, the recent and long-time residents and businesspeople, and learning about them — their interests, passions, and desires for the neighborhood. (In actuality, the project extended slightly beyond a 12-month timeframe.) The hope was to bring those with common interests together to make new connections, spur conversation, and generate new ideas, to make positive impacts on the neighborhood. Through a process of inviting and gathering neighbors into conversation, the Jubilee Center expected to help the neighborhood identify its assets and to refine the center's programs and services to respond to what it would

learn from listening to its neighbors. In other words, the Jubilee Center's goal for its ABCD project was “to become a non-profit that is relevant to its community by learning from its neighbors.”

PRO-TIP #1: Get to know the backstory (background and history) of your organization and neighborhood. This knowledge will provide a guide of where to look for additional helpful connections to people and ideas. It will also help you avoid stepping into historical potholes.

PRO-TIP #2: Have an initial vision for your ABCD project. Then, be flexible. It's important to have a clear vision for your ABCD project as you begin. It is equally important to maintain flexibility and open-mindedness for new exploration. Respect the fact that you cannot know the outcome in advance.

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REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.” – Romans 15:2 (NRSV)

“All of us grow up in particular realities – a home, family, a clan, a small town, a neighborhood. Depending upon how we’re brought up, we are either deeply aware of the particular reading of reality into which we are born, or we are peripherally aware of it.” – Chaim Potok

- » What is the backstory of your ministry and/or neighborhood?
- » How might that backstory inform your ABCD work going forward?
- » What different names are there for your ministry and/or neighborhood?
- » What impact has your ministry had on your neighborhood?
- » How has your neighborhood changed since your ministry moved in?

CHAPTER 3 - GETTING STARTED: IDENTIFYING THE ABCD LEADERSHIP TEAM



ABCD is best implemented with a team approach, supported by a wider community, such as the leadership committee or the board of directors of a sponsoring organization.

In any Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) project, ownership and investment from the sponsoring organization are imperative to give the ABCD project legitimacy and primacy in the organization's current work. ABCD project leaders must communicate the project's purpose, principles, and proposed activities; intended participants; interim activities and results; course corrections; and outcomes to both internal and external stakeholders all along the way.

An important first step in implementing an ABCD project is appointing a team to take on the roles and responsibilities of the project. The team members identified by the Jubilee Center included: Project Director, ABCD Coordinator, Interviewers, Bilingual Interviewer, ABCD Advisor and/or Mentor, Group Meeting Facilitators, and Media Communicators. Some individuals may assume more than one role, and some team members may be replaced (such as when interns leave) during the course of the project.

PROJECT DIRECTOR

This leader oversees the project through its various stages from beginning to end. The Jubilee Center's general manager assumed this role. Duties include, but are not limited to:

- » **Establish a project schedule and milestones** with team input, and make adjustments, as needed.
- » **Hold regularly scheduled planning and progress meetings** with team members.
- » **Solicit ideas and offer feedback**, among team members, the board of directors of the sponsoring organization, and the wider community, when and as appropriate.
- » **Coordinate the project's activities**, and make assignments, as needed.

- » **Mentor and encourage team members**, always pointing back to the 30,000-foot view of the ABCD project.
- » **Monitor the project budget**, including make approvals for any paid time and expenses.
- » **Interface with the granting organization**, if any, and relevant boards and organizations to report on the project's progress and to promote ongoing support.

PRO-TIP #1: Conduct upfront training. See the ABCD Resources in the Appendices of this manual for Websites with downloadable resources for training your team. Your team must be able to articulate what ABCD is and explain how it works to the community in order to be credible.

PRO-TIP #2: Hold weekly review meetings. Invite team members to share what has happened in the past week, including celebrations and challenges, and what is planned for next week. Review milestones, progress, and next steps.

ABCD COORDINATOR

This key person handles the day-to-day coordination of the ABCD project's work. With its grant from the Episcopal Church's Justice and Advocacy Ministries Department, the Jubilee Center was able to hire a part-time intern, who became the ABCD Coordinator for the pilot project. Duties include, but are not limited to:

- » **Identify people in the community** to interview in one-on-one conversations and subsequent small group conversations, and make appointments for the interviews.
- » **Conduct interviews and facilitate group conversations**, collecting information about the community. Ask permission to take notes or record conversations, and transcribe

conversations to be shared with the project team.

- » **Take photographs of persons and groups** interviewed, and obtain photo releases so that photos can be used in newsletters, brochures, and other printed materials.
- » **Participate in community events** (such as holiday celebrations, fairs, and parades) to promote the ABCD project and recruit interviewees for one-on-one conversations.
- » **Take photographs of places and events** within the neighborhood for use in newsletters, brochures, and other printed materials.
- » **Lead the asset mapping process** of people and themes that emerge from the various interviews, conversations, and group meetings, working with the ABCD team.
- » **Use media of all types** to broadcast the project's purpose and status to external and internal stakeholders, such as the neighborhood, the granting organization, and other affiliated organizations. Online social media — Facebook, Twitter, blogs, dedicated Websites, email newsletters, etc. — provide opportunities for far-reaching communication at low to no cost. (The Jubilee Center's affiliated organizations included Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, and the Episcopal Church.)
- » **Organize community conversations** that bring the community-at-large together. These occur later in the project's timeline and involve gathering larger segments of the community



The ABCD team should be a reflection of both the ministry and the neighborhood. (Photo by John Putnam.)

to hear the project's findings, to listen to one another, and to deepen the conversation about the community's passions.

The Jubilee Center's ABCD Coordinator also presented an ABCD Workshop at the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado's Annual Convention in October 2014.

INTERVIEWERS

These persons conduct the one-on-one conversations with community members that are the foundation of ABCD data gathering. Duties include, but are not limited to:

- » **Make appointments and conduct one-on-one interviews** in an open and friendly manner, exhibiting good listening skills and using a template of open-ended questions developed by the ABCD project team.
- » **Transcribe conversations** to be shared with the project team. Ask permission to take notes or record conversations.
- » **Take photographs of persons interviewed**, and obtain photo releases so that photos can be used in online and printed materials.

Sample interview questions and transcripts are provided in the ABCD Tool Kit, at the end of this manual.

LESSON LEARNED: Realign the team when new personnel join. Train new members on the ABCD process, orientate them to the team's norms and work style, and update them on what has been accomplished.

BILINGUAL INTERVIEWER

The Denver Northside community is home to some people who are Spanish-speaking only. About mid-way through the ABCD project it was determined that a Spanish-speaking interviewer was needed to conduct one-on-one conversations with an important segment of the neighborhood that had been left out of the English-only interviews. The Spanish-speaking interviewer also created Spanish language versions of the ABCD project handouts, such as brochures and newsletters.

ABCD ADVISOR AND/OR MENTOR

Embarking on ABCD can be daunting, because the ABCD process is an organic one. There are numerous forks in the road, decision points where choices must be made in fairly short order. The Jubilee Center was fortunate to have a vice president who is an experienced ABCD trainer and facilitator, who also served on the project team as a member and an advisor.

Additionally, an experienced ABCD author, trainer, and facilitator, who lives in North Denver, volunteered his services as a sounding board and mentor. Finding an experienced ABCD mentor to provide periodic feedback and advice is a worthwhile step that would alleviate discouragement and derailment of the process.

GROUP MEETINGS FACILITATOR

The ABCD process brings community people together for conversations about their passions for their neighborhood. For large group meetings a skillful facilitator who understands the ABCD process can readily identify connections among attendees and help the group maneuver through difficult conversations and contentious

issues. The Jubilee Center had such expertise in both its Project Director and Project Advisor, who facilitated the large community meeting. If such facilitation expertise does not exist within the ABCD project team, engaging an outside facilitator teamed with the Project Director or ABCD Coordinator would be a good alternative.

MEDIA COMMUNICATORS

It became evident quickly that multiple forms of communication and electronic media skills were required to maintain the high-visibility necessary to keep all stakeholders informed of the ABCD process as it was happening. Ideally, some of the team members would have some of these skills in addition to other gifts; there may also be such skills in the sponsoring organization(s). Such communication expertise would be in: visual media such as photography and videography; writing and editing of announcements, brochures, handouts, articles, and manuals; creating and maintaining Websites and blogs; and connecting with newspapers and posting to social media.

The chart below illustrates how the Jubilee Center's ABCD project team serendipitously embodied the various roles so that a separate Communication Coordinator was not necessary.

	Interviewers	ABCD Coordinator	ABCD Advisor	Project Director
Photographer	X	X	X	X
Videographer	X			
Blogger	X	X	X	
Facebook Admin	X	X	X	X
Twitter Admin	X	X		
Website Admin	X		X	
Writer	X	X	X	X
Editorial Team	X	X	X	X
Lead Editor	X		X	

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.”
– Psalm 127:1 (NRSV)

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” – John Quincy Adams

- » Who in your church or ministry comes to mind as you think about the various roles for your ABCD project?
- » What gifts does each member bring? What specific gifts are needed to round out the gifts in your proposed team?
- » What actions or activities will help your group build and function as a team?

Transformation can be easily seen in an individual in the individual's changes of attitude and approaches to people, projects, and problems. But systemic transformation is tougher both to achieve and to notice when it is happening. Watching a process unfold, especially when one is in the midst of it, is difficult.



How can one remain an objective observer while also participating in the interviews, conversations, and analyses that are integral to doing the work of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)? This is when relying on one's ABCD team, talking about the team members' observations, and recording this data and analyses are important. Reporting back to an organization's board is also a helpful opportunity to receive feedback from people who are stakeholders in the community and in the ABCD process.

CHAPTER 4 - DOING THE WORK: ABCD STEP BY STEP



This chapter provides a step-by-step outline of the ABCD process utilized by the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center from initial conception and grant application to the final documentation that resulted in the compilation of this manual.

Undertaking Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is a commitment that involves internal and external stakeholders in a long-term process of ongoing community engagement, conversation, reflection, and re-engagement. The process is dynamic and multi-faceted; and when done well, it is organic, self-renewing, and energizing. It is transformative for all involved.

ABCD Mentor Mike Green advised the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center (Jubilee Center) to “follow the energy” and to “go where the passion is.” Following Mr. Green’s advice meant abandoning the linear progression of going from A to B to C or checking off boxes on a prepared checklist. The advantage of following the energy is that dead ends don’t stop the progress, because there are always other people and places with energy to re-engage.

CORE ASPECTS OF ABCD

At the end of this chapter are a list of ABCD steps and a chart of the ABCD flow. The Core Aspects of ABCD — Community Life, Analysis and Asset Mapping, and Communication — represent work that has become the foundational and ongoing work of the organization even after the completion of the ABCD pilot project. These three core aspects of ABCD have served to codify the values that underlie how the Jubilee Center works in community with its neighbors.

Encourage each internal stakeholder, whether board, staff, or volunteer, to engage with the community to generate new relationships and enhance existing ones. Each community has many events, such as holiday fairs and parades, merchant groups’ meet-and-greets, school open houses, and neighborhood association board meetings.

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Attending such events affords opportunities to get to know community members and also to identify potential one-on-one interview candidates.

As data is gathered through one-on-one and small group conversations, periodic analysis of the data provides the ABCD team with a picture of the assets in the community, who has them, and ways to connect people in the community with those community assets. Frequent communication using various media (see Chapter 7) keep community members interested and invested in the ABCD work.

CONCEPTION, INITIATION, AND INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

In the conception phase of the ABCD process, the Jubilee Center leadership knew that they wanted the Jubilee Center to become a more relevant neighborhood resource in a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood. The facts were that the Jubilee Center was not engaging the new neighborhood gentry and the number of clients served by the Jubilee Center was declining.



ABCD raised our staff’s awareness of neighbors like this “paletero man,” who sells ice cream on the street. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The Jubilee Center leadership also knew that they couldn’t decide how to become a more relevant community-based nonprofit agency without getting input from the community, and they needed a method for gathering that input. The

combination of these two ideas became the basis for the goal of the Jubilee Center's ABCD project: *to become a nonprofit that is relevant to its community by learning from its neighbors.*

The projected outcome was broadly defined as having more neighborhood input to influence shaping the Jubilee Center's programs going forward. A year-long project seemed appropriate — long enough to do some significant work in the community and short enough to hold the board, staff, and neighborhood's attention. A budget of \$22,000 was identified for a part-time ABCD project that would meld into the Jubilee Center's portfolio of programs and became the subject of a grant request.

The Jubilee Center's vice president, Ms. Lelanda Lee, had been working with parts of the Episcopal Church in developing ABCD in their communities. She provided an initial ABCD overview via PowerPoint to the Board and worked to build confidence among Board members that they could undertake an ABCD process as they considered writing the grant request and beginning the process. (The PowerPoint slides are included in the ABCD Tool Kit's Sample Presentation Materials at the end of this manual.)

The Jubilee Center internal stakeholders who would become part of the ABCD leadership team gathered books and online articles on ABCD to educate themselves. (See ABCD Resources in the Appendices for helpful books and Websites.) They also reached out to Mr. Mike Green, a well known ABCD author and practitioner who lives in the neighborhood, to hear his suggestions on how to begin the process.

The grant request, which was approved and funded in the amount of \$22,000, allowed the Jubilee Center to begin its ABCD work in March

2014. The grant enabled the hiring of a part-time ABCD intern who quickly grew into the role of ABCD coordinator. The funds also covered expenses such as buying a portable recorder, digital camera, and video recorder, and coffee and meals when meeting with interview candidates, and hosting both the small group conversations and large community meeting later in the process.

The Jubilee Center's grant was conceived as a pilot project and teaching model for the Episcopal Church's Justice and Advocacy Ministries initiatives. Close conversation and supervision were maintained throughout the pilot project with the Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson from Justice and Advocacy Ministries. This manual is part of the Jubilee Center's grant commitment to share what it has experienced and learned with the wider church.

Forming the ABCD leadership team, as described in Chapter 3, was one of the first steps of initiating the ABCD process, at the same time that the Jubilee Center's board was being educated on ABCD. Initiating ABCD became viable once our Episcopal Service Corps intern, Mr. Joe Ellerbroek, came on board. He began the process of meeting community members through referrals from board and staff and making appointments for one-to-one interviews. An ABCD coordinator, Ms. Aspen Matthews, was then added to complete the team. A brochure and flyer were developed to introduce the ABCD process and invite community members to be interviewees.

PRO-TIP #1: Look for diversity within your community context. Interview people representing diverse groups and viewpoints from the community's core and outliers. Diversity within your local area may look different than diversity within your entire geographical area. Context is important.

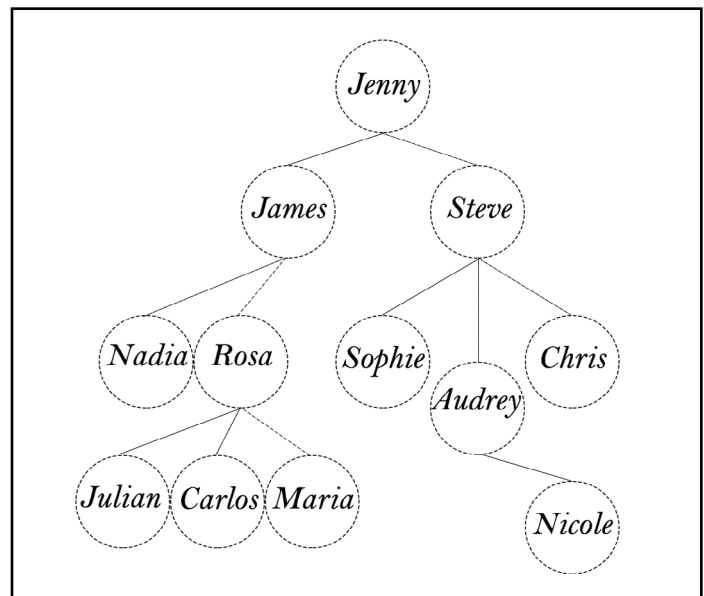
ENGAGEMENT: INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS

The ABCD process is based on developing relationships through one-on-one interviews. The ABCD leadership team identified an initial set of open-ended questions to use in the interviews. Then the ABCD coordinator and Colorado Episcopal Service Corps intern conducted practice interviews with internal stakeholders to refine the questions. They determined early in the process that they would audio record the interviews and transcribe them afterwards to share with the rest of the leadership team.

The population in Northwest Denver is over 32,000 — the size of the primary zip code studied, based on the 2010 census. That is an overwhelming number on which to consider interviewing even a significant sample size. Therefore, the “snowball” method of sampling was selected, through which the ABCD team interviewed close to 100 residents and business owners. The snowball method is based on the idea of following a cascade where one interview leads to another by referral. While approximately 100 interviews is not significant from a statistical perspective, since the ABCD process is based on relationships and not a scientific methodology, the data gathered had value when asset mapping and interpretive analysis were applied.

In addition to the snowball method of finding people to interview, the ABCD coordinator also intentionally interrupted the chain to seek out key neighborhood voices. For instance, an interview with an Italian business owner led to a referral to an Italian-Catholic priest, allowing the interviewer to connect with both the Italian and Catholic communities in the neighborhood in the next referral round of interviews. Simultaneously, the interviewer also intentionally pursued an

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Jenny, the first interviewee, refers James and Steve. If James suggests two people and Steve another three, there are now eight potential interviewees. This snowball process can continue as long as desired.

interview with the pastor of an evangelical non-denominational church as a counterbalancing voice.

Limited time and the small number of interviewers prevented a larger number of interviews. However, using the snowball method of sampling did lead the Jubilee Center to key neighborhood leaders and people who are the voices for specific groups and issues in the community. For example, a restaurant owner interviewee hosted a city council candidate’s election announcement and helped to set up an interview with the candidate. The candidate provided insight into the history of the zoning laws in the Northside, which have been a major catalyst for many neighborhood concerns.

If a community has significant numbers of people whose first language is not English, then it would be appropriate to hire a speaker of that language to conduct interviews. Some speakers of English as a second language may be more comfortable being interviewed in their native language. The Jubilee Center encountered many Latino residents in Northside who do not speak

English. Ms. Maria Casillas, our Spanish language interviewer was an essential presence in the ABCD project; she built relationships with Spanish speakers and transcribed Spanish interviews in English for the rest of the team.

Periodically, as groups of interviews were transcribed, they were shared with the ABCD leadership team, which met weekly to update one another and discuss themes emerging out of the interviews. As themes arose, such as the emphasis on youth and their needs, new restaurants and bars, new coffee shops, new trendy businesses, and the residential real estate gentrification, the team was able to identify additional strategic voices that had not yet been heard, and to invite people in the neighborhood representing those missing voices to one-on-ones.

Next, small group conversations, similar to focus groups, were held to connect community members with shared or complementary gifts (assets), interests, and backgrounds. These groups ranged in size from four to eight attendees. The individuals had common interests and frequently didn't know one another. For example, small group conversations were hosted with five people focused on the local high school and its students and with owners of businesses in the neighborhood. Care was taken to maintain diversity among the small group participants so that the data gathered would be more balanced and less skewed to only one strongly held point of view.

LESSON LEARNED: Articulate values as they emerge. As the leadership team reflected on the ABCD work, they identified emerging values. Conversing about these values regularly helped embed them into the ethos of the Jubilee Center and transform the way the board and staff think about the Jubilee Center's ministry.

The purpose of the small group meetings was first, to build relationships by connecting community members, and second, to spark deeper conversation that would lead to more information about the community. Sometimes, these small group conversations actually sparked interest among the participants to collaborate on a project to improve the neighborhood. For example, out of the education small group meeting came the recognition of North High School students' need to have internship opportunities in the neighborhood.



This digital flyer publicized the community meeting. It contains meeting details and describes ABCD. (Image by John Putnam.)

COMMUNITY MEETING

In the ninth month of the ABCD project, the Jubilee Center hosted a community meeting open to everyone in the neighborhood. The meeting was planned about six weeks in advance to be held in the Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church's (OMS Church) large basement meeting hall. The meeting was publicized through newsletters, flyers, mailed and emailed invitations, and word of mouth. A hosted dinner catered by four neighborhood restaurants and food shops

was served. The meeting featured a slide show of photographs of the neighborhood, a presentation by the ABCD coordinator on the ABCD project, and facilitated conversation on the topics of interest among the community participants.

Although questions aimed at generating conversation had been prepared, they were quickly set aside when the Northside attendees proved that they had a lot to talk about without any prompting. Approximately 50 community members slogged through a blustery winter storm to attend the meeting scheduled for 2½ hours with about a dozen people staying afterwards to talk to one another and the Jubilee Center organizers.

Community members asked insightful questions about the ABCD process — how the pilot project was conducted, how the interview participants were selected, what the Jubilee Center was going to do with the data gathered, and how to continue to be engaged with one another now that the community conversation had begun. The ABCD team pointed out to the community members present that focusing on community assets does not mean ignoring community needs. Instead, the ABCD process emphasizes that the resources already exist within the community to address the issues that the community cares about. At the end of the evening, the community members expressed a desire to have other similar community meetings to continue the conversation.

The ABCD team observed in its after-meeting debrief that community members want to be empowered, but are sometimes unclear as to how to claim their own empowerment. The ABCD principle that states a community already has the assets it needs to provide its own answers is countercultural to the problem-solving orientation found in most community interactions. The

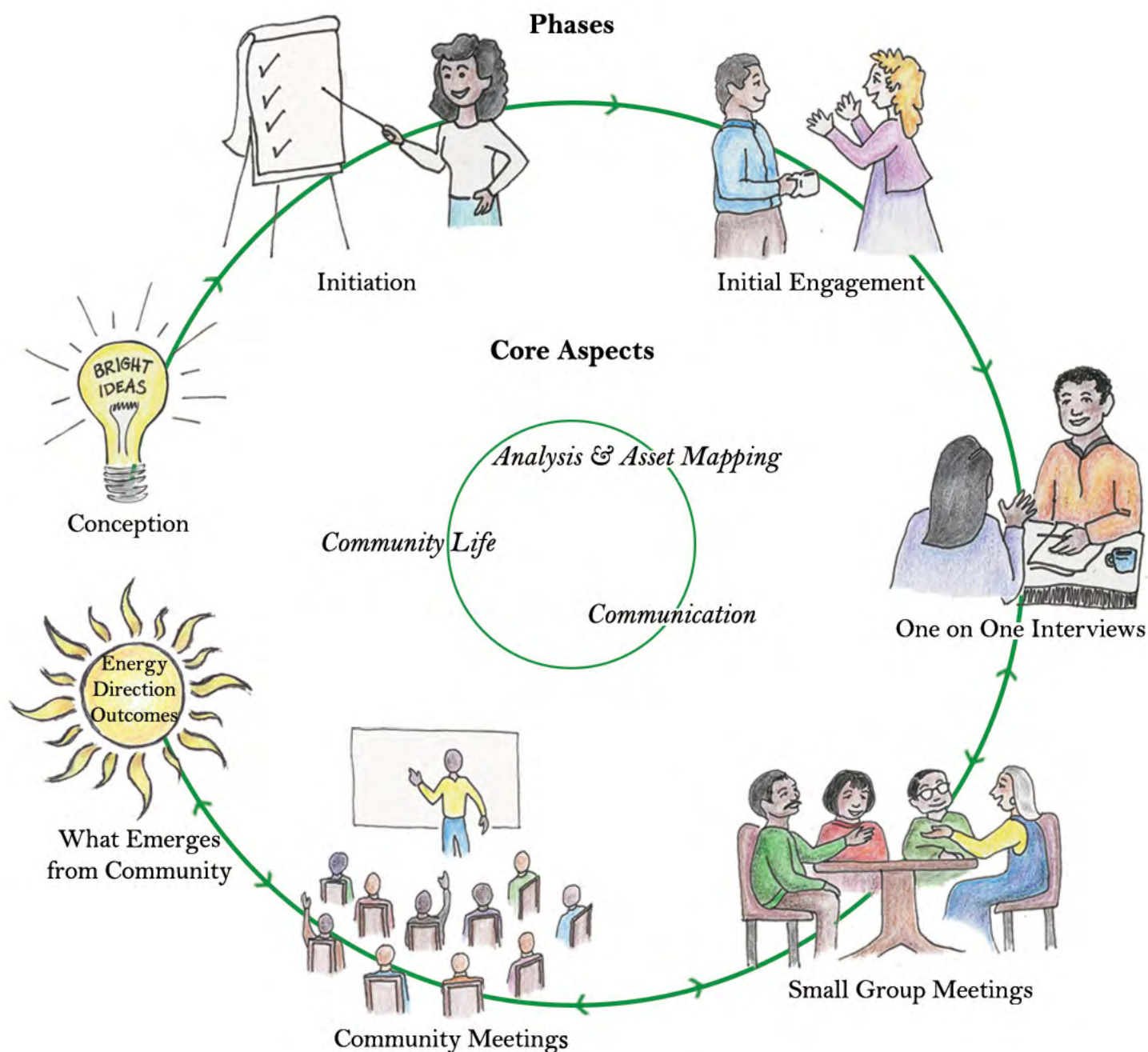
comfort zone for most people is to take familiar approaches when seeking answers. Thus, one of the key elements of ABCD work is to help transform community people's thinking to viewing themselves and their neighbors as the source of their own answers to questions about their collective future. As Einstein said, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."



Giving time for introductions at the community meeting encouraged networking between neighbors. (Screenshot by John Putnam.)

PRO-TIP #2: Look for what is missing. As you learn about the community and map assets, you will inevitably discover groups of people and associations who are missing from your ABCD conversations. Be aware of this, and endeavor to include them.

Phases and Core Aspects of the ABCD Process



ABCD PROCESS STEP-BY-STEP

Once the Jubilee Center made the decision to embark on an ABCD process, it identified the steps shown below. Although the list is linear, the process is anything but linear. There are many feedback loops in the process with some branchings that may truncate or repeat as progress is made. In the list below, “Phase” refers to a step in the process, which could be repeated, and “Core Aspect” refers to an overarching stance or practice that informs the ABCD process in every step. A graphical representation of the process is also provided, on the previous page.

1. CONCEPTION PHASE:

- » Develop the ABCD project goals.
- » Identify possible outcomes without being overly specific or rigid.
- » Determine a potential timeframe for the project from start to finish.
- » Determine a budget.

2. INITIATION PHASE:

- » Identify the team leader.
- » Identify initial team member roles.
- » Recruit and assemble the team.
- » Prepare informational materials such as brochures and flyers about the ABCD process, your organization or church, and the one-on-one interview process.
- » Develop a set of initial one-on-one questions for use in priming the one-on-one conversations.

3. INITIAL ENGAGEMENT PHASE:

- » Begin engaging internal stakeholders, such as your agency or church’s leadership committee or board and staff members.
- » Begin engaging external stakeholders such as community members and leaders.
- » Educate about the ABCD process, look for interest, and find some beginning energy among all stakeholders.

4. ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS PHASE:

- » Approach internal stakeholders and external stakeholders with whom relationships already exist to identify an initial list of interview prospects.
- » Contact interview prospects to invite them to one-on-one conversations.
- » Engage community members in one-on-one activities in order to begin one-on-one interviews. Suggested activities are coffee dates, visiting community members at home, and sharing a meal. Breakfasts are often easy to schedule, affordable, and time efficient.
- » Ask permission, obtain photo releases, and take photographs, as appropriate, for later reporting and communication purposes.
- » Transcribe and document one-on-one interviews for the team’s review, analysis, and discussion.

5. COMMUNITY LIFE CORE ASPECT:

- » Participate in community life as your organization’s or church’s posture in the community. Attend group meetings, gatherings, and local events. Examples include neighborhood organizations’ board meetings, business groups’ “meet and greets,” back-to-school events, and holiday fairs.
- » Demonstrate both visibility and genuine interest in the community by asking internal stakeholders to participate in community life with the ABCD project team.

6. ANALYSIS AND ASSET MAPPING CORE ASPECT:

- » Report, discuss, and review the one-on-one interviews among the ABCD project team.
- » Identify common themes in what people are saying. Which people in the community are passionate about what things?
- » Identify “connectors” in the community. How can those people be brought together?
- » Make asset “maps” of the themes, people, and roles identified in the analysis process. Maps may be lists, brief narratives, diagrams, or a combination.

7. SMALL GROUP COMMUNITY MEETINGS PHASE:

- » Host small group community discussions and social opportunities to build on learning from one-on-one interviews and to meet more community members. These could be formal meetings or invitations to participate in activities such as working on a community garden with an opportunity to socialize.
- » Document such conversations and meetings for the team’s review, analysis, and discussion. Encourage community members to develop further ideas that are generated from the meetings.

8. LARGE COMMUNITY MEETINGS PHASE:

- » Host larger community meetings with clearly articulated purposes so that community members can gather to participate in facilitated conversations to share the ABCD project’s findings to date and generate community feedback.
- » Plan large community meetings carefully, paying attention to scheduling, invitation mechanisms, conversation facilitator(s), and hospitality.
- » Follow up on next steps developed in the large community meetings.

9. COMMUNICATION CORE ASPECT:

- » Keep internal and external stakeholders informed about the ABCD process as it progresses on a regular and frequent basis.
- » Use multiple forms of print, electronic, and visual media to get information broadcast widely. [See Chapter 7 on Using Media in the *ABCD with Your Neighborhood* manual.]
- » Choose some communication vehicles that allow for community feedback through comment sections, such as blogs and Facebook.
- » Engage in environmental scanning to stay abreast of neighborhood news. [See Chapter 7.]

10. COMMUNITY OUTCOMES PHASE

- » Notice, acknowledge, and document instances where the community’s energy and passion are indicating a possible direction for next steps.
- » Provide feedback to and, as appropriate, collaboration with community members and leaders who are driving possible next steps.
- » Determine how your organization or church will be involved in possible next steps in terms of participation and resources.

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” – Isaiah 43:18-19 (NRSV)

“The art of conversation is the art of hearing as well as of being heard.”
– William Hazlitt

- » In what ways does your organization have a long-term focus, and in what ways are its activities geared towards the short-term?
- » How does your church or agency provide ongoing education and formation for its members and its community?
- » What kinds of opportunities are there in your church or community for members to engage in free-flowing conversations about topics of importance to them?
- » How does your organization ensure that its members are listened to and heard?

CHAPTER 5 - THE INTERVIEWS: FOLLOW THE ENERGY



Conducting the interviews is the priority. ABCD is getting to know your community and not a scientific investigation. The principle, “follow the energy,” relies on referrals to subsequent interviewees. Interview those who are eager to share their stories. Let your prior interviews lead you to your next interviews.

THE HEART OF ABCD

One-on-one interviews are the heart of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process. It is through the data gathering and relationship building of one-on-one conversations that the community's assets (gifts) and passions emerge. Fundamentally, this emphasis on one-on-one conversations reflects a deep respect for the dignity and value of every human being. Such one-on-ones affirm the right of each person to form and hold an opinion and the wisdom of a community to listen to and hear all its members speak their passion and commitment in their own words and voices.

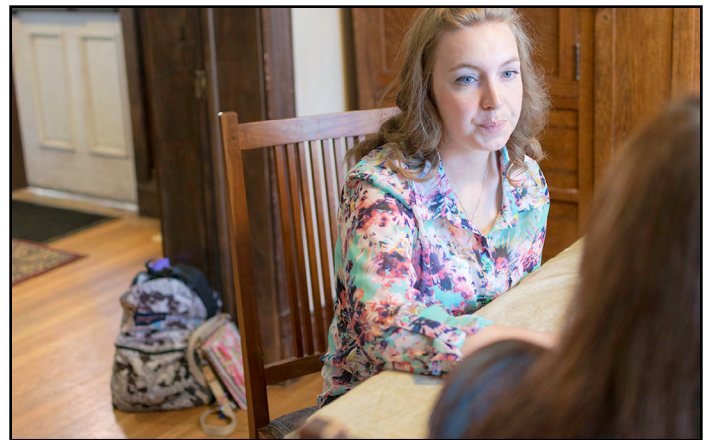
The direction to “follow the energy” is about both methodology and emphasis — how to find the next interview participants and how to follow up on the subjects that community members care most passionately about. Another way to say “follow the energy” is “go where the passion leads.” While one-on-one interviews are both the heart and the starting place of doing ABCD work, they naturally lead to other types of conversations and interactions with the community.

One-on-one interviews follow a simple step-by-step process: identify the interviewee; make contact to request an interview appointment; go to the appointment and have a conversation, using open-ended questions as prompts, if necessary; record the conversation or take notes, as appropriate; and transcribe or write-up the interview to be shared with the ABCD team.

Even though the term “interview” is used, ultimately, the hope is that the interview becomes a mutually involving conversation that focuses on what gives life in the neighborhood, the passions and cares of the community, and how the conversation partner would like to engage more

deeply in the neighborhood. When interviewers ask questions and talk about things that genuinely interest them, their authentic interest shines through and can strike an empathetic chord in their conversation partners.

The Jubilee Center interviewers frequented two local coffee shops to hold most of their one-on-ones. The ABCD hospitality budget provided the coffee and pastries for the conversationalists. The easy-going atmosphere and local flair of these shops set the perfect stage to get positive responses and good audio recordings of the interviews.



Using eye contact and head nods during an interview tells the interviewee that they are being heard. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The best ABCD interviews occur when the interviewee feels comfortable sharing stories that are alive with nuance and details rather than simply responding to questions. Stories connect people as human beings so that they can glimpse similarities in their backgrounds and attitudes, allowing them to develop the trust necessary to build relationships. Storytelling is integral to ABCD, just as it is to Appreciative Inquiry (discussed in Chapter 1). It is much easier to build on congruence than to build on difference. The hope is that building bridges on congruence will allow some of those bridges to span the differences.

People typically do not get asked to reflect specifically or to think positively about their

experiences in their neighborhood, community, or congregation. Responding to a positively-focused, open-ended question allows community members to go where their own positive energy is. Participants are encouraged to reflect on their most significant achievements, ways in which they have made a difference, and times when they have felt most alive and engaged in their communities.

Thinking about positive experiences from their own past also invites people to dream about their hopes for their own future. Participants can be highly imaginative in unleashing new ways of doing things in their neighborhood. This helps develop ideas for communities to achieve their true potential based on initiatives that have worked well in the past and channels energy for the future.

LESSON LEARNED: Sometimes two-on-ones work better. Some interview participants are more comfortable talking to more than just one person, which feels too intimate to them. An interviewing partner helps with keeping the conversation going from a different perspective, asking questions differently and listening through a different filter.

BEGINNING THE INTERVIEWS

The Jubilee Center began its interview process with internal stakeholders like members of the board, staff, and volunteers, and then expanded outward to the community. A small number of these internal stakeholders also are residents of the neighborhood, and their interviews provided some preliminary glimpses into the community's people and issues. The initial internal interviewees provided referrals to community people as interview candidates, and the snowball (cascade) method of identifying interview candidates, as described in Chapter 4, took off.

The ABCD interviewers kept the one-on-

ones informal with initial contacts made by email and telephone. Potential interviewees were given an introduction to the ABCD project and told how the Jubilee Center had received their names. At times, people didn't respond to initial contacts or were hesitant to participate.

Whenever an interviewer determined someone was uncomfortable about being engaged with the project, the person was thanked for his or her time, and the interviewer moved on. Interviewers carefully affirmed to interviewees that their time would be used productively and ensured that conversation partners were comfortable talking about what are often sensitive and personal thoughts and feelings.

In order to gather similar responses to compare and contrast between each of the participants interviewed, the interviewers created a set of strengths-based questions in order to guide consistently one-on-one interactions. (See the ABCD Tool Kit in the back of this manual for sample questions). Open-ended questions were formulated to help guide participants to frame responses with positivity. Participants sometimes needed time to think of responses, because the questions tended to be framed in ways that community members seldom think about their neighborhood. In many cases, interviewees thanked the interviewer for the opportunity to reflect more deeply than usual about their community.

Conversations sometimes moved “off-topic” when there was something the interviewee was passionate about or wanted to elaborate on. Tangents are often more helpful than sticking to the prepared questions, because they prompt real conversations and connections, rather than merely following a script. Tangents frequently provided the most informative one-on-ones. As

the interviewers became more familiar with the prepared questions, they were able to ask the questions using alternative words and phrasings to suit the persons with whom they were talking.

An example of a unique set of conversations occurred when the interviewers visited a group home in the neighborhood for male veterans suffering from mental disorders. From preliminary research, the interviewers realized the gentlemen enjoyed sitting on the front porch, and they anticipated the interview conversations would likely be conducted on the front porch. The interviewers arrived with a box of donuts, which were a big hit with the veterans. They quickly realized that even the use of adapted questions, much less the recording of the conversations, was not going to work.

The interviewers ended up just being friendly with the residents, hearing about their lives, and receiving tours of their living spaces. In their adjusted mode of interaction, the interviewers still found an opportunity to learn the interests of these neighborhood residents and their daily routines, which the interviewers were able to capture to reflect upon later.

PRO-TIP #1: Follow the energy. Keep your eye on the overall purpose of your ABCD project. Notice when you're over-expending resources on specific activities, especially if they appear to be stuck. Being stuck may indicate a fork in the road. Move on, and keep moving forward.

PRO-TIP #2: Participate actively in community events. Getting to know community members, organizations, and businesses helps break down formal barriers and builds camaraderie and trust between the people of the community and its organizations and businesses. Opportunities to participate are golden.

THE PROCESS IS THE WORK

During one-on-ones, it is important to maintain eye contact and use active listening skills. An audio recorder can be helpful to tape a conversation. This strategy works well when there is a clear recording that facilitates transcription. The recorder enables the interviewer to remember small details and specific quotes people use to describe their passions and experiences.

Transcribe conversations shortly after the interview so that they remain fresh in the interviewer's mind. Identify themes that arise, create bulleted lists of main points, and capture specific quotes from the interviewee. This approach proved to be a time-efficient, organized way to prepare transcripts to support future asset mapping. (See the ABCD Tool Kit in the back of the manual for sample interview transcripts.)

ABCD is an organic and dynamic process. Additional interviews can be scheduled as new residents and developing relationships come to the attention of the organization's board and staff. In ABCD, the process *is* the work. After completing approximately 40 one-on-one interviews, the Jubilee Center interviewers determined there were sufficient information and commonalities in the interviews to begin asset mapping. The interviewers were able to use their own experiences after being in the community for 3-6 months to inform the asset mapping.

One-on-ones can also continue and new information can be added as the asset mapping process occurs. According to city-data.com, 43% of the population in the Jubilee Center 80211 zip code identifies as Hispanic/Latino and speak Spanish. Also, Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church (OMS Church) has a Spanish-speaking congregation. Recognizing the importance of

hearing voices from everyone in the neighborhood, the Jubilee Center determined that it would need to interview Spanish-speakers, and a bilingual interviewer was hired. These interviews were typically more informal and often not recorded due to privacy concerns expressed by the participants.

The Spanish speakers, sharing from their demographic's context, provided information about socio-economic difficulties that would not have surfaced otherwise. The Spanish speakers, many of whom are immigrants from low income families, were often aware of and utilized additional resources in the community not identified by other interview participants.

The interviewers employed other strategies to help meet neighbors besides relying on references from one-on-ones. One of the more successful activities was setting up a lemonade stand. Two interviewers set up a table on the corner outside the Jubilee Center and OMS Church to meet anyone walking along the street. The table was set up on a day the food bank, which operated out of the church's basement, was open. The food bank created significant foot traffic, providing more interview opportunities.



Joe and Aspen set up a lemonade stand to converse with passers-by about the neighborhood. (Photo by Robert Stegman.)

The lemonade stand approach served multiple functions: it enabled the interviewers to meet people they would not have met otherwise,

e.g., the neighbor who created and marketed “Latin Life Denver” magazine; it served as a meeting place for community members (e.g., two veterans who both struggled with alcoholism had a long conversation with each other about their service and life after the military); and the interviewers shared neighborly hospitality by serving lemonade to passers-by.



Staff and board members participated in the neighborhood July 4th parade by handing out water bottles. (Photo by Ed Briscoe.)

Another effective way to connect with people in the community has been to create awareness about what the Jubilee Center is and does. Think of it as learning to tell one's own story in a way that is compelling to other people. Previously there were many community people who had not heard of the Jubilee Center.

The 4th of July annual parade route passes right in front of the Jubilee Center on West 32nd Avenue, which is a main thoroughfare. Board members, staff, and interviewers decorated the front porch with flags and other red, white, and blue embellishments. During the parade on a warm, sunny day, the Jubilee Center folks passed out water bottles with its logo. People were genuinely pleased to receive the water and learn who occupies the Jubilee Center building in the neighborhood. Participating helped to raise awareness of the Jubilee Center and is an integral part of the ABCD core aspect of community life.

CONVERSATIONAL REALITIES

In a changing neighborhood, there will undoubtedly be voices of despair as community conversations are engaged. In many cases, people voicing despair may never have had the opportunity to express their thoughts and experiences about the community and may find it difficult to see the good things that are happening. The information gleaned from such voices identifies unmet challenges, allowing acknowledgement of the community's issues. However, to honor the ABCD process where identification of assets is paramount, it is important to help community members identify the community's assets that can be utilized to address the community's desires on how to meet its needs.

Help conversation partners stay focused on assets and passions. It is easier to talk about problems than about assets and passions. Yet, assets and passions can represent a community's self-empowerment. Focusing on the assets is an attitudinal paradigm shift away from a problem-solving mindset to a community-development approach. It is important for the community to gain an understanding and a belief in its own capacity to address its self-identified desires on how to meet its needs.

PRO-TIP #3: Look for a person's connections to people, places, and things. Most people belong to multiple segments of the community. People have professional, community, and personal gifts and passions. Listen for clues of how people spend their time, and follow where their energy leads. Ask follow-up questions.

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.” - Matthew 7:7-8 (NRSV)

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” - Pablo Picasso

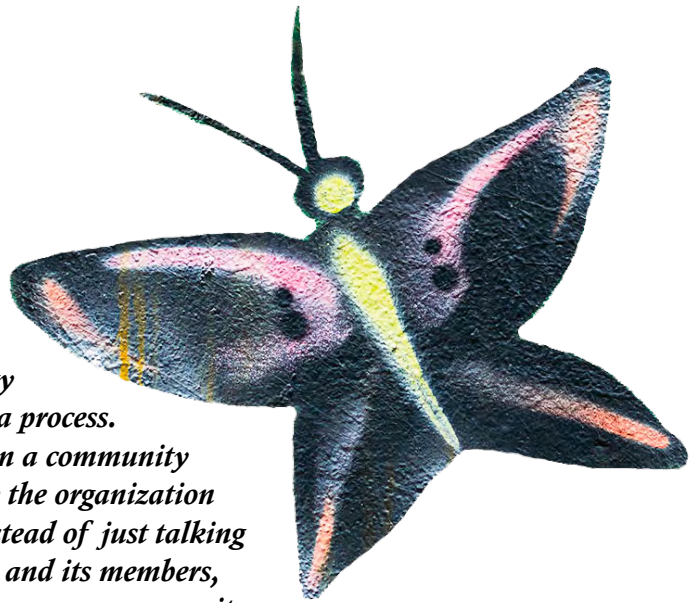
» What are common community events that you could attend? Who else could you invite to those local events?

» Who do the people in your neighborhood feel comfortable connecting with? What characteristics do they have in common?

» Do you already know acknowledged leaders? How can you get to know them? How can you include them in your community development process?

» What do you want to learn about your neighbors and community? How would you frame open-ended questions in order to prompt conversation?

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is more than a process, although that is how a community organization first encounters ABCD – as a process. The goal of ABCD being well embedded in a community organization is that it transforms the way the organization approaches its work and its programs. Instead of just talking about seeking the input of the community and its members, an ABCD-oriented organization actually engages community members in conversation about its work and programs and actively seeks to learn what community members are passionate about and what they have to offer in the form of resources, be they economic, skills, or volunteer effort.



It is easy to be outwardly focused on the transformation possibilities for the community, but it is equally important for an ABCD-oriented organization to be inwardly focused on transforming its philosophy, profile, and performance based on what it learns from the ABCD process. Another way to say this is to ask the question, “How can our organization become a better neighbor, in alignment with our neighborhood’s passions and gifts (assets)?” The bias in ABCD is towards “The community knows best and will tell us if we listen carefully.”

CHAPTER 6 - ASSET MAPPING: IDENTIFYING & CONNECTING ASSETS IN THE COMMUNITY



Through interviews and group conversations the community's assets and who has them will begin to emerge. Asset mapping is a set of organizing principles that help identify and connect those assets and the people who have them.

OVERVIEW

Asset mapping arises out of the analysis aspect of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process. Conversation among ABCD team members about the interviews and group meetings that they have conducted generates a great deal of data. Organizing that data into useful concepts for further community conversation leads to asset mapping. The “asset map” is an evolving concept and not a final product. It will change and grow as new information is gathered.

Asset mapping is a community centered process and should be completed in a way that fits your community and the comfort level (or sophistication) of the ABCD team. The ABCD team must feel confident when talking about its asset map(s) and be able to articulate the assets that they have identified and the community members who represent those assets. When beginning the asset mapping process, the glass is already half-full, and people are the answer. The asset map points the way to meeting community challenges with community assets.

As discussed in Chapter 2, North Denver has been in the process of becoming a trending hotspot for over a decade, with new restaurants, bars, and cafes pushing out older businesses due to rising rents and new building owners. Changes in race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status have created challenges for the changing neighborhood. Yet, both new and old residents and organizations in North Denver have assets to offer that can benefit the neighborhood.

The first step in asset mapping is the identification (naming) of the people, places, businesses, services, and other resources in the neighborhood and the gifts (assets) that they

possess or represent. Next is grouping and organizing those assets into “maps.” The purpose of an asset map is to find creative and new ways of connecting the gifts and ideas of the people in the neighborhood to help increase the value and possible uses of those assets within the community. These maps highlight the good things that are happening in the neighborhood and the potential for more good things to be realized.



The asset mapping process thrives on creativity generated from collaboration done in community. (Photo by John Putnam.)

For example, Miguel owns a coffee shop that can be used by community groups for meetings after hours; so, Miguel has or represents the asset of a community meeting space. Patricia leads a merchants group dedicated to promoting local neighborhood businesses; thus, Patricia has or represents the asset of a local business communication network. Connecting Miguel and Patricia, if they are not already connected, could lead to use of Miguel’s coffee shop to host the merchants group committee meetings to plan events that promote local businesses and build community spirit. Miguel’s coffee shop also benefits from an increased community awareness of his business and his space-sharing generosity.

Asset maps may or may not look like traditional maps. A large scale, well-funded, and well-resourced asset map might be a digital map with interactive features, such as, for example,

schools and churches that are highlighted when a cursor scrolls over a specific location. In the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center's (Jubilee Center) case, given its small scale ABCD project with limited funding and resourcing, the asset maps were depicted as both a graphic of hubs with relationships and assets that were categorized.

Another type of asset map can be depicted as a list showing activities in the neighborhood grouped by themes. The mapping feature of such graphic or list types of asset maps allows the viewer of the map to see the named assets and to see the possible connections between the people or groups that have or represent those assets.

PRO-TIP #1: Find a connector when trying to access a group of people with whom you don't already have a connection. A connector's influence will introduce you to the group with the connector's stated support of the ABCD one-on-one interviews and community conversations.

GETTING STARTED

Identifying people to interview is the first step in asset mapping. The Jubilee Center, in its preparation for and execution of one-on-one interviews, identified some categories of people whom it would be important to talk with and listen to. This process happens at the beginning of ABCD and continues throughout as interviews help identify other groups of people in the neighborhood. Below is a list of some of the categories the Jubilee Center identified.

» **Multi-generational residents** – These are residents who have lived through many changes in the community. They provide historical perspectives and institutional memory of some of the best aspects of the community. They generally can make interview referrals to others.

» **Business owners** – Business owners are instrumental in the commercial flows in the community, from providing employment to helping create a sense of place. Some, but not all, live in the community, and bring readily-identified gifts to the community. They are often helpful in providing in-kind donations, securing event space, and establishing relationships with other local businesses.

» **Young people** – High schoolers and young adults bring energy into the community. They have their own opinions and ideas about what is working and how to make it better. They often are very good with technology, ambitious for their future, constantly learning, and tapped into the latest social media and trends. The voices of this group should not be underestimated.

» **Newcomers** – Recent arrivals into the neighborhood bring their own experiences, perspectives, and hopes about the neighborhood. They can share their interests, how they feel included, and why they chose to move into this community. Some newcomers have strong desires to be more involved in community life.

» **Local clergy** – Clergy members may offer a more intimate look into the community because of their close relationships with congregants. They frequently can provide an inside look at the challenges facing the community, and offer specific ideas on how to mobilize local assets.

» **Law enforcement** – Law enforcement community relations officers circulate widely throughout the community and frequently can share a global perspective of the people, businesses, and other assets in the community.

» **Ethnic groups** – Often, there are specific festivals and gatherings based on ethnic holidays and celebrations that help foster beneficial relationships. Many neighborhood associations are also formed for and by ethnic groups.

» **Seniors and elders** – Older people may have a longer experience in the neighborhood and perspectives that link the historical events of the community. They may also know the “movers and shakers” of the neighborhood for interview referrals.

» **People with disabilities** – These people are active in the community in other ways and may see things that people without disabilities don’t see.

» **Local school leaders** – School leaders, including principals, counselors, and teachers, are well connected to students and families in the community. They also can be helpful in implementing new community strategies because of their considerable outreach to students and parents.

» **Connectors** – These are people who are well connected to diverse groups in the community by virtue of their personalities as well as their community positions. They know people in many different circles and are trusted leaders.

» **Elected Officials** – These officials are some of the key proponents of change in the community. They have talked with many residents and have insights to share, and they are also eager to hear what community members are thinking and saying.



Rebecca Hunt, seen with her husband Geoffery, was an important “connector” for our ABCD interviewers. (Photo by Linda Brown.)

Once the Jubilee Center had identified people to interview, the ABCD team began the

process of interviewing and using the snowball method to identify other potential interviews. Because many people are members of multiple relationship groups, they became resources to provide an entrée into other groups for the ABCD team. Deepening neighborhood relationships also helped the ABCD team become aware of the hidden rules for interacting with different segments of the community and earning the trust of community members. Conducting interviews and using the snowball method are discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

LESSON LEARNED: Hidden social rules exist everywhere. The local high school seniors talked about the neighborhood newcomers. The students who identified as Latino were uncomfortable saying “gentrification.” However, a White friend used that word. The Latino students said, “you can use that word, because you’re White.” Be aware of such nuances to facilitate better conversations.

IDENTIFYING THEMES AND ASSETS

The ABCD team reviewed the interview transcripts at its weekly team meetings to identify themes and assets, looking closely at the resources and skills that each interviewee had to offer. Approaching the review and analysis of the interview transcripts as a team allowed team members to recognize commonalities among the interviewees. Below are examples of assets and themes that were identified through individual interviews.

Example 1: The ABCD team met and interviewed a multi-generational resident, who is a local business owner and an avid bicyclist. He was linked to numerous newcomers and old-timers in the neighborhood. He is confident in

his business management skills and wants to share his knowledge with others, recognizing that when all local, small businesses are strengthened and thriving, it is good for the neighborhood. His bicycling enthusiasm links him to the cycling community beyond the immediate neighborhood. This man was identified as a key neighborhood connector hub, someone who has multiple relationships that connect him to diverse segments of the neighborhood and beyond.

Example 2: One of the ABCD interviewers developed a relationship with a woman who operates a counseling and mental health consulting business out of her home. This business owner is also an activist in race relations and promotion of ethnic cultural awareness and highly present on social media. This woman was also identified as a key neighborhood connector hub, linking a different set of neighborhood people than the man in Example 1 above.

Example 3: An acknowledged and oft-quoted neighborhood Latino leader came to the attention of the ABCD team, who reached out to meet this man and his wife and partner in community activism. He is clearly an opinion maker and someone with a global and historical perspective of the community. This man's and his wife's bilingual connections crossed many segments of the neighborhood, following primarily the linkages to Latino, multi-generational residents, and citizens concerned about the effects of gentrification on long-term residents, but also reaching beyond the boundaries of North Denver.

The three examples cited above illustrate how people in the community identify both relationships (connections) and individual passions and gifts (such as business savvy, race relations, and bilingual communication). Relationships and

individual passions and gifts are important assets that are best identified through interviews. The Jubilee Center's ABCD Coordinator also focused her activities on finding these prominent people-connectors in the neighborhood, interviewing them, and identifying their linkages and individual gifts.



Alan Dominguez, a passionate and award winning filmmaker, is an important asset in North Denver. (Photo by John Putnam.)

COMPILING ASSETS INTO A MAP

Asset mapping works best when done with a group of people who can expand the ideas represented in the map(s). It is a creative process in which there are no wrong answers. Over the course of a year, the Jubilee Center held two formal asset mapping sessions.

The first asset mapping session occurred after approximately 40 one-on-one interviews had been completed in a three-month period, providing a general sense of what people were talking about in the community. In addition, staff and board members contributed input from time spent participating in community life through work and social activities in the neighborhood. This session produced two preliminary lists depicting what people in the community were talking about, which the ABCD team divided into themes and gifts, calling the maps that came from this session “themes boards” and “gifts boards.”

The second session was held after the completion of all the interviews, small group meetings, and large community meeting hosted over the year. The ABCD team called the asset map from this second mapping session a “conceptual map,” which depicted current or potential relationships between some of the most talked about institutions or largest associations.

THEMES BOARDS

One way to begin asset mapping is to start with a “themes board.” The goal of building a themes board is to recognize and name what people are talking about, their passions, and their interactions. These themes reflect what people value in their community.

Begin by reviewing interview transcripts, which will remind the ABCD team of the specific conversation topics each person was knowledgeable and passionate about. Such specific topics are likely to be that individual’s theme. Overall themes will start to emerge as all the interview transcripts are reviewed. The ABCD team can then generate a word or phrase to describe and encompass those emergent themes.

After going through 40 interviews, the Jubilee Center had a map of seven different themes, which are described below:

- » **Gentrification** – People spoke about economic and exclusivity changes in the neighborhood.
- » **Entrepreneurial** – People in the neighborhood with an entrepreneurial spirit and experience starting a local business.
- » **Language** – People discussed the language barrier when speaking to neighbors, expressed a desire to learn another language, or acknowledged different languages as important to neighborhood communication.

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Denver Bookbinding Company’s story has themes of gentrification, entrepreneurial spirit, and identity. (Photo by John Putnam.)

- » **Neighborhood Identity, History, and Diversity** – A broad category that includes people expressing an interest in the neighborhood’s history, its cultural importance to long-time and newer residents, and how the neighborhood is changing its identity.
- » **City Government** – Neighborhood people employed in local government or who are working with local government on community issues, such as zoning and infrastructure.
- » **Education/Youth** – Neighborhood people employed by local schools or who mentioned children and youth as important elements of the neighborhood.
- » **Leisure** – People mentioned participating in neighborhood activities, such as attendance at parades and events, and frequenting local restaurants, cafes, parks, and shops.

Additionally, the ABCD team created a themes board of “connectors,” who are active networkers and often leaders in the community. A connector is someone who is well connected to many people in the neighborhood who are making things happen and who stays up-to-date on current neighborhood events. In interviews, these people mention many different people they know, are involved in an above average number of associations or activities, are in positions of power such as city government, or own successful local businesses.

GIFTS BOARDS

Creating a “gifts board” happens in the same way as creating a “themes board.” After recognizing what people are passionate about by reviewing their interview transcripts, their gifts and talents also emerge. Gifts mapping broadens the asset mapping process from a focus on individuals to a focus on groups. Gifts mapping for a community can be organized by individuals, associations, and institutions.

While individuals are easy to identify, associations and institutions are harder to distinguish. Mapping the gifts of individuals is aided by the transcribed interviews. The ABCD interviewers also will be able to identify the gifts of individuals by reflecting on the people in the neighborhood whom they’ve met and remembering what those people are good at doing, whether it’s gardening or working on zoning issues.

Associations consist of unpaid individuals voluntarily gathered for a common purpose, such as a book club or parent-teacher organization. Mapping associations requires mining the transcribed interviews for mentions of associations. Associations can be as informal as a group of friends who grab happy hour after work each day to more formal associations like Bible studies or neighborhood associations. Also, associations typically do not have a permanent physical presence in the neighborhood like a vehicle or a building, making them more difficult to recognize and name.

Institutions consist of business and public organizations with formal, often hierarchical, structures, where there are paid individuals working within them, such as the Jubilee Center and North High School. Gifts mapping

by institutions is aided by gleaning from the transcribed interviews those institutions where people work, do business, and otherwise frequent. People often indicate their feelings about institutions in their communities in passionate terms, allowing the ABCD team to note emphases on specific institutions and their relative importance or centrality to the community.

If a gift or talent does not fit into one of these three categories, group it with other gifts that do not fit. This encompasses the other elements in the community. The Jubilee Center titled this category “environmental assets,” and it encompassed the local economic trends, physical assets such as sidewalks or alleys, and community interests. According to Kretzmann and McKnight (See ABCD Resources in the Tool Kit), this category captures the physical and economic assets found in the community.

Gifts boards are organic and always expanding and changing. In some ways, a gifts board is a working document to be edited as more is learned about the community. There are new assets added to the neighborhood every day, especially as interview one-on-ones continue, and more is learned.

PRO-TIP #2: There is no one right way to do asset mapping. These methods are simply what worked for us. They helped us determine the next steps for our project. Experiment, try some different methods, and do what works for you!

CONCEPTUAL ASSET MAPPING

The map produced at the ABCD team’s second session depicted more of the connections and interactions in the community that were found after being intentional community participants over the previous twelve months. The ABCD

team began by determining key institutions in the community, such as the Jubilee Center and community gathering places Little Man Ice Cream and North High School, which is a source of pride for both long-term and new residents alike. Associations with a strong sense of presence in the neighborhood for many people were also added to this map, such as the Lo-Hi Merchants Association and HUNI (Highland United Neighbors, Inc.).



Linger restaurant and Little Man Ice Cream are part of a popular community gathering spot. (Photo by John Putnam.)

With the various asset maps developed and discussed, the Jubilee Center was able to identify connections based on things that were already happening in the neighborhood and also on suggestions made at community meetings. Sharing these learnings with the neighborhood's members, leaders, associations, and institutions is an ongoing part of being an active community member for the Jubilee Center.

USING ASSET MAPS

The asset maps reflect in a summary fashion the different parts of the ABCD journey the Jubilee Center team experienced. The themes and gifts boards were created to begin connecting people and to help uncover next steps. They were developed to address the following questions:

- » Are we missing anything?
 - » Are there gaps in categories of people we've talked to, such as young people, seniors, non-native
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English speakers, etc.?

» What are people interested in that is not being talked about on a formal level? How can we begin to start those conversations?

» What gifts are present in this area? Are we missing key areas in community life (such as child care experience, knowledge of agriculture, technical skills, etc.)?

These boards helped identify connections to be encouraged between neighbors who did not previously know each other. The themes board also helped the Jubilee Center determine that the next step was to host small community meetings based on an important theme of interest to some of the people interviewed. These small community meetings allowed the Jubilee Center to introduce connectors to each other to facilitate even more links, especially in instances where people were unlikely to meet otherwise. Examples include small group meetings centered on youth and students and on community identity as understood by community members.

The Jubilee Center's ABCD coordinator found that even when people identify with or belong to different segments of the community, their conversations often revealed similar themes that were articulated using different vocabulary. As she and the other ABCD interviewers conducted successive interviews, they honed their skill in identifying themes while conducting the interviews and in their weekly team briefings when they reviewed the interview transcripts together.

The conceptual asset map was more comprehensive because of the small community meetings that came out of the themes boards. The newer map provides higher levels of distinct collaboration between assets and highlights creative ways to improve community connections.

A Jubilee Center Themes Board

North Denver 'Themes' as discovered through ABCD

This is one version of an asset map created to show the interests of people interviewed. When these themes are identified, the map may be used to bring people with different gifts together to find ways to mobilize their talents. Below are the themes we discovered in North Denver. On our map we wrote down specific names of community members. This map lists characteristics of each theme where names would go.



NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY.
People in this category discuss how the neighborhood is perceived by newcomers and others, the history, and what makes this place unique.



EDUCATION AND YOUTH.
People in this category might be parents or educators, they may mention what they see youth doing around town or the condition of the school system. They may share their own experience of how schooling influenced their personal development.



LEISURE.
Often leisure may play a big role in social settings. This may be more visual in seeing and participating in what the community does for fun. These people might mention good gathering places.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT.
In this category people might know someone serving in an elected position, discuss political history or ways policies have influenced the community. They may be in office themselves.

GENTRIFICATION.
References to gentrification might include recognition of new affluence, new construction, and difference in neighborhood between day and night.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP.
These are people that are small business owners, talk of starting a business, or have experience in the business industry.



LANGUAGE.
These people might refer to the place in a certain way. They may use slang or other terms when describing their work. They may be bilingual.



CONNECTORS.
This is an added category in which people were placed that seemed to know a little of what was going on everywhere. They mentioned lots of people and activities.



This graphic was created using <http://www.Piktochart.com>.

A Jubilee Center Gifts Board

Individual Gifts

Newspaper access
Tech savvy
Social workers, connectors to low income groups
Counselor to RTD
Bilingual - culturally
Appreciation for arts, food
Kinds of therapy
Yoga
Pastoral
Entrepreneurial
Working with youth

Associational Gifts

Coffee groups: Highland Hunters, Kyle's Café
North High Alumni
Realtors: financial interest in regenerating neighborhood
Italian-American
Sloan's Lake citizens group
Highland Mommies
Informal parent groups around schools (ex. 7th grade Skinner)
NW Family to Family
Nextdoor.com

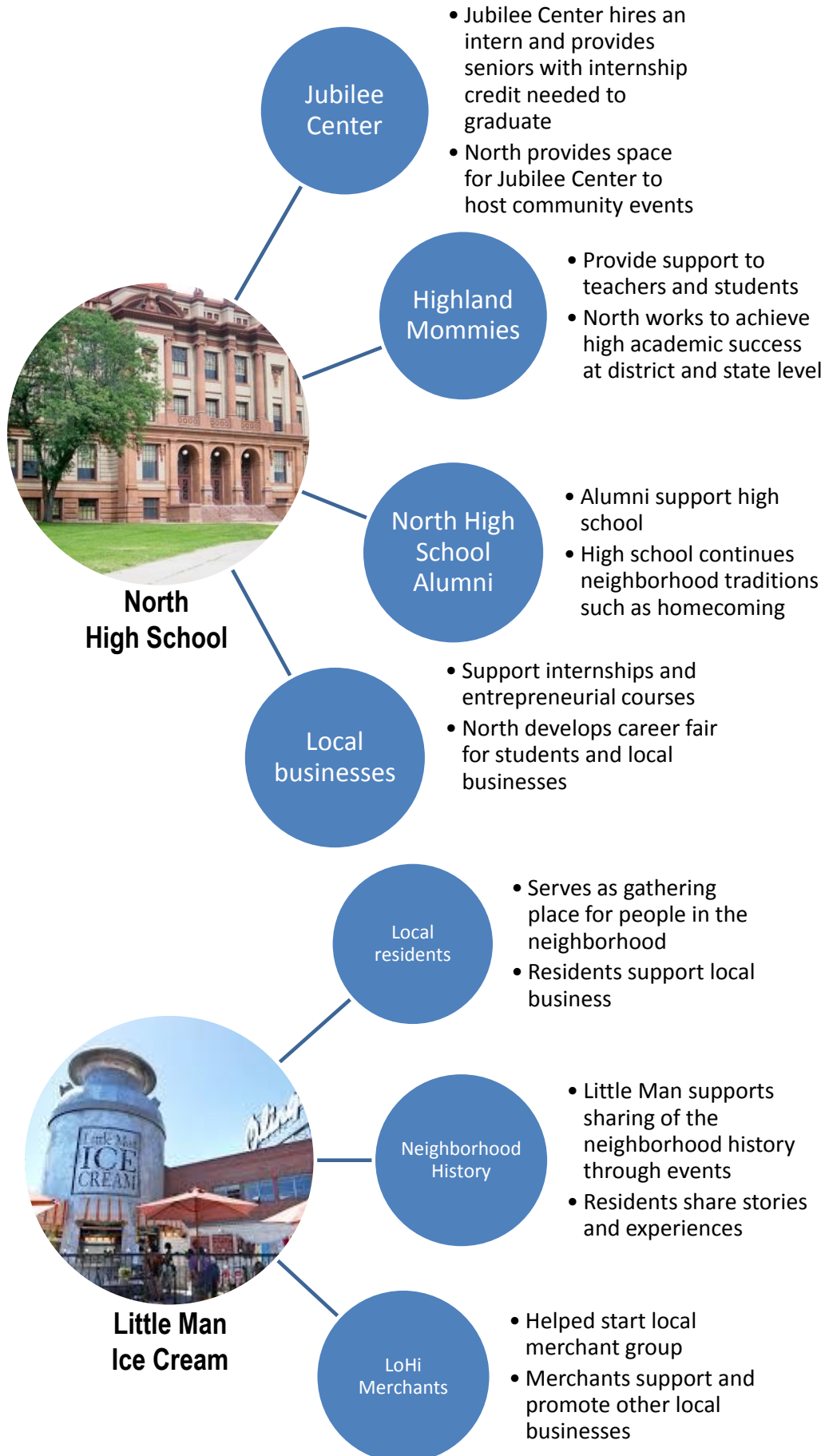
Institutional Gifts

Quigg Newton: recruiting HS students
Rosa Linda's: Thanksgiving
North Denver Tribune
Churches (Mt. Carmel, OMS, Highlands, St. Dom's, NW Spiritual Leaders)
Clare Gardens: recruiting
Businesses: cafes, coffee shops, boutiques.
RTD (public transportation)
City government
Regis University: social justice passion
Jubilee Center: after school programs
North High, Skinner Middle School
Denver Health (La Casa Clínica)
Bienvenidos Food Bank
Denver Northwest News
District 1 (Denver PD)
Rudi Rec Center
Library
Denver Foundation
Tennyson Center for Children

Environmental Gifts

Northwest pride - social capital
Wealthy metropolitans - disposable income
Politically progressive
Near downtown, walkability
Land: Columbus Park, alleys, horse carriage lots, Hershall Park, gardens
Historical landmarks

A Jubilee Center Conceptual Asset Map



REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.” – Philippians 2:3-4 (NRSV)

“A person is a person through other persons.” – Archbishop Desmond Tutu (describing African *Ubuntu* philosophy)

- » What are your top five assets (gifts) and the top five assets (gifts) of your community or organization?
- » Who are three people you know whom you would like to know better? Who are three people you don't know whom you would like to know better?
- » What important connections do you see in your community? Who makes those connections happen?
- » How can you spark curiosity with your neighbors to think creatively about solving community challenges by connecting assets?
- » What in your community has never been tried before?

CHAPTER 7 - USING MEDIA: Two-Way Communication



Keeping up-to-date with the community is as important as keeping the community updated on the ABCD process. Community members want to know how their one-on-one interviews and small group conversations are helping to build networks and generate ideas. Learn what is happening in the community via social media.

How Do People Know?

“How do people know?” is a question that every organization engaged in community development work must ask continually. The answer is likely to be, “Because we told them.” Telling is communication to an agency’s community, and communication must be part of every ABCD team meeting, because there are board members and community members who want to know what is happening. What, when, and how you tell what you are doing are crucial decisions that require input from the entire team and that must be made known to the sponsoring organization’s board members so that no awkward surprises creep up on anyone. Communication is essential to building and nurturing strong relationships inside and outside the ABCD sponsoring organization.

Mass communication today exists in traditional forms such as newspapers, magazines, newsletters, flyers, brochures, posters, and radio and TV programming, and in online forms such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. In a diverse community the intentional use of multiple forms of traditional and online media is required to reach as many people as possible. The Jubilee Center also used Spanish language as well as English versions of communication vehicles such as newsletters, flyers, and blogs to reach the Northside’s community members.

The community communication purposes for the ABCD project were to:

- » introduce the project,
- » garner participation in interviews and community meetings,
- » keep the community updated on the ABCD process as it was happening
- » express solidarity with the community and

support for community events, and

- » form and strengthen relationships within the community.

A tri-fold brochure was used to introduce the project and to recruit interviewees, followed by a one-page flyer to highlight and invite storytelling as part of the interview process. (See ABCD Tool Kit at the end of this manual for examples of printed communication media.) Online media such as blogs, Facebook, and Twitter were used to share observations and stories from the neighborhood and to promote ABCD and community events. The online sharing could be a spontaneous Facebook or Twitter post such as a “Congratulations” or “Thank You” message on a community success or a planned blog reporting on the organization’s participation in a community event.

PRO-TIP #1: Communicate, communicate, communicate! Weekly review meetings keep ABCD team members updated. Use newsletters, blogs, and social media to keep the community up-to-date about the ABCD project and your organization. Community members want to know what is happening. With good communications ABCD can be inspiring and transformational for the whole community.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

“Environmental scanning” is the important element of staying tuned in to the community around an organization. Scanning is done to identify threats and opportunities that have the potential to impact an agency’s ability to provide its services and programs. For example, the Jubilee Center followed a Facebook page from the group called “We Are North Denver” and read the *North Denver Tribune*, available both online and in print, throughout the ABCD process. Taking a walk through the neighborhood, talking to a local bartender, patronizing a popular restaurant,

or sitting in on a local business meeting are effective ways to learn about what is happening in the neighborhood. Getting out of the agency's building and into the neighborhood provides the organization with a sense of what is happening in the neighborhood and serves to highlight the organization's involvement in the community.



Environmental scanning on social media, like Twitter and Facebook, can help an organization learn about community events.

TYPES OF MEDIA

Traditional media can be an important tool for environmental scanning of and outreach to the community. Denver has a wide range of community and special interest newspapers and newsletters, including some that publicize and list community events. Networking with reporters can generate articles and publicity for the ABCD project's interviewee recruitment and community

meetings. With a larger budget, paid advertising on either traditional or social media may be appropriate, as well. Discovering traditional media outlets in your community is not only useful; it is also part of the asset mapping of the community.

As the Internet has become a larger part of American life every day, many traditional forms of community communication are moving to online vehicles where individuals can opt in to the news that interests them and be connected 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Opting in happens through social media, either a Web page or application — on a phone, computer, notebook, gaming console, television, or other Internet enabled device — and allows people to interact at a time of their choosing. In the past social media were dominated by single sites like MySpace.com and FaceBook.com that catered to general audiences and had a variety of foci such as posting, blogging, videos, images, etc. Newer social media now exist in a splintered market with new sites and applications being created constantly.

Because social media are an increasingly valuable part of the communication tool kit for any activity that requires promotion and publicity, the rest of this chapter is devoted to exploring several popular forms of social media and how they might be used in an ABCD project.

BLOGS

In the ABCD process it is helpful to have an online outlet for sharing reflections and events in the neighborhood or to address different emerging situations such as community rallies and marches. A blog is a dedicated online site controlled by the blog owner on which to post writings, photos, and videos of the blog owner's choosing. A blog is also an easy way to lead people to more content supported by the blog owner through other media,

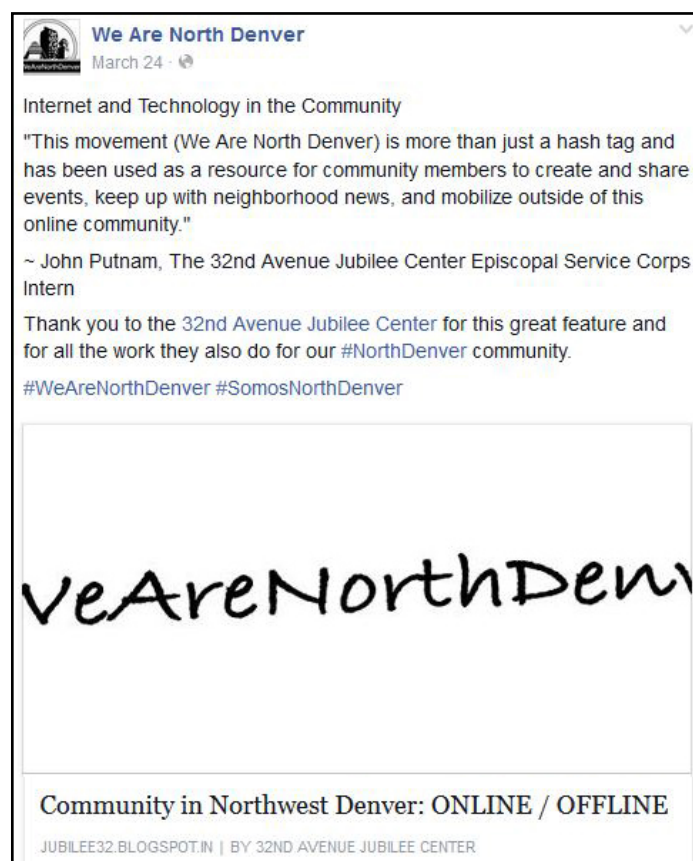
such as signing up for e-newsletters.

The Jubilee Center used its blog to keep followers updated and to link to its e-newsletter (a newsletter forwarded by an email newsletter service such as Mail Chimp or Constant Contact). Members of the ABCD team also followed other blogs to see what others are doing in the community as part of its ongoing environmental scan.

Blogs can be started a couple of different ways. If the sponsoring organization has an established Website and has someone with technical expertise running that Website, blog posts can be posted directly to the organization's Website. It can also be helpful to choose blogging sites where templates are already created or where the hosting site makes Twitter and Facebook seamlessly synced into the blog. The Jubilee Center chose a route that does not require a Web administrator's assistance and used the site "Blogger.com" for its ABCD blog titled "Community in Northwest Denver," which is located at "jubilee32.blogspot.com." (See ABCD Tool Kit at the end of this manual for examples of full blogs.)

With a Google account, anyone can create free blog sites with custom URLs (online Web addresses) like "blogname.blogspot.com" using Blogger. Blogger and other blog sites available on the Internet provide layout tools; picture and video embedding on posts; blog archives; places to embed Facebook and Twitter feeds; and important analytic tools that allow an organization to track traffic coming to a blog. Depending on the organization's and neighborhood's profiles, the ability to post comments to the blog can be set to allow immediate posting by the commenters or to be delayed pending editorial approval by the blog administrator(s).

Start a new blog site with a post about the organization, the ABCD project, and how the organization will use its blog. Shorter blogs of around 300-500 words using simple vocabulary and one or two images will look friendly and be accessible to a wide audience. Be inspired by the ABCD process as it unfolds to come up with topics for future posts. The ABCD team could also develop an editorial list of suggested topics on which to blog and make assignments of proposed writers, including inviting guest bloggers to write a post. Set a goal to post weekly or twice weekly, depending on the number of followers, which can be viewed on the blog's analytic tools.



"We Are North Denver" posted one of the Jubilee Center's blogs on their Facebook page because of its relevance to them.

Post spontaneously if a new issue arises in the neighborhood on which your organization wishes to voice an opinion. Let the community and the ABCD process be your guide. The most challenging aspect of a blog is maintaining

consistency in the frequency of posts, because other activities often intervene.

PRO-TIP #2: Choose the communication media that work best for your organization and community. Find an easy way to engage community members and provide updates with positive content. Also, find ways to do environmental scans on an ongoing basis to gather information about the neighborhood and its people. With good communications ABCD can be inspiring and transformational for the whole community.

FACEBOOK

Facebook is a social media Website that allows individuals to set up free accounts to post their thoughts and experiences online through writing, photos, video, and sharing of the writings, photos, and videos of others, including online news content. Like most social media sites, Facebook can be viewed and posted to using any Internet enabled electronic device, including computers, notebooks, and cell phones. Other examples of social media sites include two sites of photos and images, Instagram and Pinterest, and the popular site, LinkedIn, where people share their career history and aspirations and network for new job opportunities.

Facebook was the most used social media site among American adults in both 2013 and 2014 according to Pew Research. While it is popular among all racial groups, it is particularly popular among Hispanics, with 73% of Hispanic adults using the site. Facebook users also tend to be older, although many 18-30 year olds do use the site. These numbers are significant since other social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn altogether have less than one-third of Internet users in all age categories.

Facebook is popular because of its simplicity and variety of features, which include posting, photo and video sharing, private messaging, gaming, blogging (in the form of “notes”), and networking with larger groups in the form of “Facebook groups” and “Facebook pages.” These features make Facebook useful for a variety of functions, but not every feature offered by Facebook is appropriate for use by a nonprofit organization, and some features, such as blogging through the “notes” function, are better handled by other social media platforms. As with all content either posted to the Internet or printed on paper, careful attention must be paid to curating and editing the content to reflect positively on the organization and its mission.

The poster is for Colorado Gives Day 2014, held on September 12, 2014. It features the Colorado Gives Day logo with the date 12.09.14. The event is hosted by the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center, with 1STBANK as the corporate partner. The poster lists various prizes: \$10 One Book of Discounted Bus Passes, \$20 One Book of Local Bus Passes, \$70 One Eye Exam & Two Pairs of Single Vision Glasses, \$100 One Student's SEEK* Tuition for Entire Summer, \$115 One Eye Exam & Pair of Lined Bifocals, \$500 One Summer of SEEK Field Trips & Educational Materials, \$750 One Summer of SEEK Bus Transportation Fees, and \$1,000 Application Expense for a DACA** Dreamer. It also includes icons for a school bus, glasses, and a scale of justice. The text 'Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Northwest Denver' is at the bottom, along with the partner website URL: <http://www.coloradogives.org/32ndavenuejubileecenter/>.

32nd Avenue Jubilee Center
COLORADO GIVES DAY
12.09.14
1STBANK
Corporate Partner

What would your giving look like?

- \$10 One Book of Discounted Bus Passes
- \$20 One Book of Local Bus Passes
- \$70 One Eye Exam & Two Pairs of Single Vision Glasses
- \$100 One Student's SEEK* Tuition for Entire Summer
- \$115 One Eye Exam & Pair of Lined Bifocals
- \$500 One Summer of SEEK Field Trips & Educational Materials
- \$750 One Summer of SEEK Bus Transportation Fees
- \$1,000 Application Expense for a DACA** Dreamer

*SEEK stands for Summer Youth Educational Enrichment Kamp
**DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Northwest Denver
Partner with us at <http://www.coloradogives.org/32ndavenuejubileecenter/>

The Jubilee Center used a .png image file on its Facebook page to publicize an annual fundraising event, Colorado Gives Day.

Since Facebook groups and Facebook pages are two very useful tools for organizations on Facebook, it is important to know when to use a group or page depending on the size of your organization and audience. A group is best used for smaller organizations with a fixed number of “approved members” who can interact by sharing posts and events. Groups can be open to the public

or closed for group members only. Pages are better suited for an organization with a larger audience. A Facebook page is open to anyone to see and “like,” which means that the likers may follow the posts made to the page.

The Jubilee Center’s ABCD team initiated a Facebook page to share events and photos of the Jubilee Center’s staff, board members, and volunteers participating in local community life. The Jubilee Center team also shared posts of content from other sources on its Facebook page, such as, for example, news articles and images about gentrification or poverty statistics, which can also be used to shape the public image of the organization, its character, and its philosophy.

PRO-TIP #3: Save #hashtags for Twitter and Instagram. Boost Facebook post views by using compelling, high quality photos. Photos of people doing something interesting generate responses. Use .png files over the more common .jpg files to keep photos looking crisp on your online pages.

TWITTER

Twitter is a unique online social media tool where following other people and organizations that Tweet (make a Twitter post) is equally as important and informational as posting one’s own Tweets. Twitter accounts are free, and Tweets are limited to 140 characters each. The Jubilee Center followed community members who shared information about local events and posted to Twitter to show followers what the Jubilee Center’s ABCD team was doing in the community. The Jubilee Center used the hashtag “#ABCD” for its ABCD news. A major success was when followers in Europe found the Jubilee Center’s profile and Tweeted a response, which was validation from across the globe for work done in North Denver.



An exciting moment for the Jubilee Center was when the Director of ABCD Europe in Ireland replied to a tweet promoting our blog.

Twitter has fewer total users and a smaller percentage of the American adult population as users than Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Twitter, like Instagram, also tends to attract a more urban population compared to Facebook, which attracts a similar percentage of urban and rural adults, and Pinterest, which is more rural than urban. Twitter users tend to be young and educated in addition to being urban.

So who should use Twitter? Any organization in a city, suburb, or college town can be on Twitter. How an organization uses Twitter will reflect the demographics of both its users and audience. Recent examples of effective Twitter usage are police forces and sheriff’s departments Tweeting updates on emergency situations to inform the public of safety and traffic issues. A church, ministry, or nonprofit with many young people actively engaged in the community would benefit from having an active Twitter account, because Twitter reaches the youth and young adult cohort particularly well.

An organization can also use Twitter for environmental scanning, which is a process of scanning Tweets from community resources to learn what is happening around the neighborhood to determine possible opportunities or threats for the organization. Twitter is effective for

environmental scanning because of its more engaged, educated group of users; its popularity among celebrities, journalists, news outlets, and reporters; and the speed at which information can be distributed. Choosing how to use Twitter will depend on the organization's needs and its capacity to keep up with Twitter and its audience.

In North Denver, a movement began in the spring of 2014 called “We are North Denver” or “Somos North Denver” in Spanish to address some racist posters stapled to telephone poles in the neighborhood. That movement used the Twitter hashtags “#WeAreNorthDenver” and “#SomosNorthDenver” to do consciousness-raising in the community over the unacceptability of racist sentiments targeting Latinos and recent immigrants from the U.S. southern border.

Many people, including members of the Jubilee Center's ABCD team, Tweeted photos of themselves holding signs with the hashtag to show solidarity with those targeted by the racist flyers. The Twitter posts were immediate, spontaneous, and widespread responses voicing community support and denouncing racist flyers and attitudes. The community response to this incident and the attention the Jubilee Center received from Europe for ABCD work highlights the power, scope, and reach of Twitter.



A Tweet from a Jubilee Center board member and ABCD team member using the hashtag #WeAreNorthDenver.

NEXTDOOR.COM

NextDoor.com is a site designed especially for neighbors in neighborhoods to share what is happening in the neighborhood at any moment and is also an environmental scanning tool that provides in-depth information on specific issues. NextDoor.com requires address verification of the users who sign up. Posts range from lost dogs to free moving boxes to topics like race and gentrification. The Jubilee Center preferred not to respond to the comments on the site to avoid taking sides or alienating anyone reading the comments. Instead, the Jubilee Center used NextDoor.com as an environmental scanning tool to monitor what people are talking about and where the neighborhood's energy is and posted invitations to become an interviewee or attend a community meeting.

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

New social media platforms are constantly being introduced. Social media can be tricky, and some platforms may not be helpful to an organization involved in ABCD. Some are specialty sites catering to a niche audience, while others have restricted memberships. The Jubilee Center avoided specialized sites like Instagram and Pinterest for these reasons, and because their audiences didn't fit our neighborhood demographics.

If an organization has a small number of videos, then those can be shared easily through Facebook and Twitter. However, if an organization has many high quality videos, then a video specific social media platform such as YouTube.com or Vimeo.com may be useful. Researching each site can help determine which site is best for an organization to use.

REFERENCES

Duggan, M., Ellison, N., Lampe, C., Lenhart, A., & Madden, M. (2015, January 9). Social Media Update 2014.

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.” – Proverbs 25:11 (NRSV)

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” – George Bernard Shaw

- » How are you letting the community know that you are listening deeply and hearing accurately what they are telling you in one-on-one interviews and community conversations?
- » How can you promote the “glass half-full” philosophy to your organization’s followers and the community at large? In what ways might their expertise be helpful?
- » Are there social media expert users within your organization who might be recruited to serve on your communication team?
- » Are you building a mailing and email database as you meet community members?

CHAPTER 8 - OBSERVATIONS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ABCD PROCESS



Working through an ABCD process is like learning to see through a new lens. Instead of relying on prior assumptions about the community, you develop new insights based on what neighborhood people actually say as well as new insights about your organization. You learn to follow people's passions and identify unnamed assets.

OVERVIEW

Throughout the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center's (Jubilee Center) Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process, the interviewers and conversation facilitators often heard the statements, "I never thought about this before," or "No one ever asked me how I felt about this." ABCD's approach to community engagement by its design invites community members to reflect on their community and their sense of ownership and hope for what their community could become.

The principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) on which ABCD is based state that the very act of asking a question begins a process of change. In the Jubilee Center's ABCD project the initial interview questions were designed to elicit responses that reflect the community members' passions about the neighborhood, its assets, its challenges, and their hopes for it. The process of change that the Jubilee Center was seeking was the development of a sense of excitement and possibility about the neighborhood's assets and how they could be connected to enhance opportunities for neighbors to connect with one another over shared hopes and passions.

This final chapter of the manual is devoted to the ABCD team's observations of how its ABCD project unfolded and the team's insights into possible implications for the neighborhood and for the Jubilee Center as a Northwest Denver nonprofit agency. Thus, we will write as "we" and "us" in this chapter and address you, the reader, directly as "you." We will also include quotes from various interviewees (with their names removed to maintain their privacy) to illustrate some of our points. Your organization's experience with ABCD may be different from ours at the Jubilee Center, because your ABCD team and your neighborhood context will differ from ours.

LESSON LEARNED: Take time to be reflective within the ABCD process. Share honest feedback often with the ABCD team and leadership of the sponsoring organization. Such feedback could lead to internal organizational visioning sessions to identify next steps and changes in the direction of existing programs.

RECOGNITION OF CHANGING CONTEXT

An immediate challenge for the ABCD team was the recognition that since the Jubilee Center's arrival in Northwest Denver in 2001, there has been a relentless increase in gentrification activities in the neighborhood, and thus, fewer current residents and business people are acquainted with the Jubilee Center, Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church (OMS Church), and our programs and shared ministries. After more than a decade of presence in the neighborhood, both the Jubilee Center and OMS Church, next door neighbors to each other on a busy corner of 32nd Avenue, had become unknowns to the Northside community at large and familiar primarily to those near our location on 32nd Avenue and those who use our services and facilities.

The most visible feature of both the Jubilee Center and the church was the food bank that was operated by our mutual community partner, the Bienvenidos Food Bank, a Northwest Denver 501(c)(3) with its own organizational structure and board of directors. The food bank distributed food on Thursdays from the basement in OMS Church's all-purpose ministry space, which provided a kitchen, restrooms, and built-in spaces for refrigeration units and dry food storage.

The food bank's white truck and volunteers' vehicles arrived on Wednesdays to deliver the

gathered food, and the guests of the food bank arrived on Thursdays to receive the food. The bustle of the food bank's activities was apparent to all on 32nd Avenue on those two days of the week. However, in March 2015 the food bank moved its operations to a more suitable warehouse location about a mile away that it shares with other similar small food bank operations.



The Bienvenidos Food Bank at its new warehouse location on Pecos St. and 38th Ave. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The rest of the Jubilee Center's programs were much less visible than the food bank. While the Jubilee Center's youth educational enrichment programs — after school during the school year and as a 9-week summer camp — are highly regarded and well attended, their visibility is limited to those families served by the programs and the teachers who refer children and families to the programs.

The Jubilee Center's immigration initiative also has had a limited audience of those young people who qualified for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The late-2014 court challenge to the expansion of the DACA program slowed DACA applications. The Jubilee Center's emergency assistance and referral, vision care, and healthcare programs all operate with limited scope and resources and tend to be known only to those guests using the services and referring and referral agencies.

The Jubilee Center's board and staff had noticed a decline in the numbers of guests served from prior years to 2013 when the idea of engaging an ABCD project was first proposed. While we surmised myriad reasons for the decline, we didn't really know the actual reasons. We did notice just by visual observation that new restaurants, bars, coffee houses, and shops had taken over storefronts formerly occupied by long-time local businesses, and we also realized that we no longer knew or had any relationship with the owners and operators of these newer businesses.

In July 2012, the Jubilee Center held a widely publicized Open House event to raise its visibility with a drawing for a new bicycle, and attendance was close to non-existent. Then the Jubilee Center and OMS Church collaborated to host a series of music concerts in the worship space of the church in the summer of 2013. Even with substantial publicity and the recruitment of excellent professional musicians, attendance from local residents was limited.

While we acknowledged that the new residents in the neighborhood — the “new gentry” — are also our North Denver neighbors, we had to admit that we didn't know and were not connected with them. They didn't attend OMS Church or volunteer at the Jubilee Center. We weren't sure what the new gentry did in the neighborhood other than frequent the new eateries and places to socialize. We wondered if the neighborhood associations knew any more than we did.

Over several years both OMS Church and the Jubilee Center engaged in internal rethinking and restrategizing how to make ourselves relevant and vibrant once again. We decided on ABCD as an outwardly focused project that could help us learn about our neighborhood — our external

context — and more importantly, help us foster relationships where we had few or none.

We have heard stories about how community organizing and its one-on-one conversations have led to building relationships and energizing communities to work towards desired transformation, and we knew we needed the help that ABCD could provide. We also knew that recognizing our changing context was not enough; we had to figure out how we would change in order to work effectively in our new dynamic.

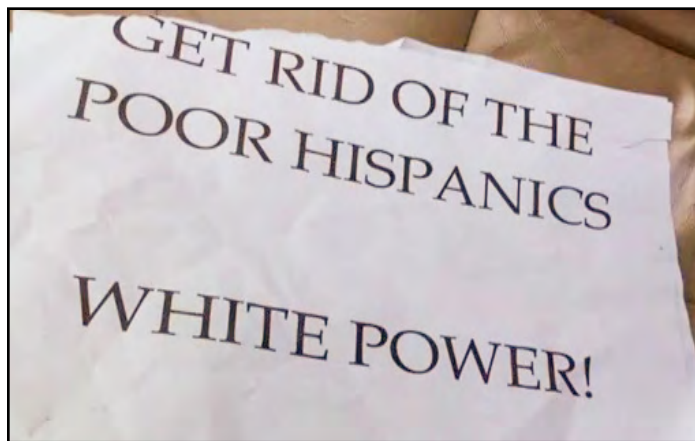
Among the transitions in the Jubilee Center during the ABCD project were some important leadership changes, which forced part of our attention to be focused internally once again. Our general manager announced early in 2015 that she would be resigning at the end of June to devote time to her diaconal duties. At the Jubilee Center's annual meeting, the president who had led us for the past two years stepped down, and a new president was elected.

The ABCD Coordinator also relocated to the western side of the state, but she has continued to participate via teleconference and occasional visits to the Denver Metro area in the production of this manual. While the board and staff have stepped up to adapt to these transitions, it has been challenging to gain the hands-on attention that is needed given the otherwise busy work, volunteer, and personal lives of the board members.

BECOMING AWARE OF NEIGHBORHOOD TENSIONS

During the ABCD process, we paid close attention to the local news about our neighborhood — how it was representing itself and how it was perceived by outsiders. In early summer 2014, residents of North Denver awoke 70 ABCD WITH YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

to find flyers scattered around the neighborhood with racist remarks directed at the neighborhood's "poor Hispanics." These hate acts were covered by local and national news media. While racist remarks directed against Latinos had been an undercurrent of private conversations, this was the first time this racism was so blatantly brought to public attention in our neighborhood.



Flyers posted around the neighborhood were anonymous and attracted local and national news. (Screenshot from KUSA 9News.)

Most people in the community did not know how to respond. One community leader said he printed flyers in a similar style that cited quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ultimately, he did not feel posting flyers with positive messages would help or change the raw feelings in the neighborhood.

At the Jubilee Center, we discussed our possible response from both the perspective of an organization that serves marginalized people and a neighbor in a changing community. We decided our role is to continue the dialogue in our one-on-one interviews and in small group conversations and to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalized by poverty and by racism. We created additional interview discussion questions that invited neighbors to explore feelings and ideas about the hate flyers, what was happening in the neighborhood, and what comes next. We found that in incidents like the hate flyers many people

have difficulty finding the words to express how they feel and are seeking conversation venues where there is the possibility of connection with others and a helpful outcome.

Out of this incident, a new community association, We Are North Denver, was formed. We Are North Denver describes themselves as a digital, grassroots campaign created to spark honest dialogue about neighborhood change, promote inclusiveness, and strengthen community. With a heavy focus on social media, We Are North Denver reaches younger audiences and has a following of primarily Latino families and families who have been long-time community members. The Jubilee Center's ABCD team immediately recognized the vibrancy and networking potential of partnering with We Are North Denver to publicize our upcoming meeting to which the entire community was invited.



The Aguirre family, owners of Rosa Linda's Mexican Cafe, posing with two “#WeAreNorthDenver” signs. (Photo by John Putnam.)

The Jubilee Center was also able to tap into our own networks to facilitate new partnerships between the leaders of We Are North Denver and of our Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO), Highland United Neighbors, Inc. (HUNI). HUNI works closely with the city to facilitate consistent communication among neighbors, improve quality of life for residents, and provide advocacy and recognition for the community.

Much of HUNI's agenda focuses on neighborhood events; however, HUNI is a key association in advocating for building codes, safety measures, and other neighborhood standards. HUNI meetings and social gatherings were primarily attended by the more affluent, new gentry in the neighborhood.

When HUNI and We Are North Denver met, a connection was forged between these two groups that had previously not been in communication with each other, and both groups found value in the work the other was doing. For example, We Are North Denver was connecting with a group of residents that was not represented in HUNI's membership or meetings. And We Are North Denver learned that HUNI is well positioned to work for the benefit of the community because of their status as an RNO. This new collaboration brings more people together to talk about big issues, includes people from all walks of life, and develops a sense of connection and shared leadership in the neighborhood.

- *“The ‘We Are North Denver’ movement could be really great.”*
- *“The important thing in the community is being able to work together and not having subdivisions, like race and class.”*
- *“Conflict is inevitable, but conflict does not cut out love; we can still accept people.”*

PRO-TIP #1: Share the successes you have experienced within the community! This can be done through email, social media platforms, newsletters, in person, or other ways. Identifying successes provides encouragement to the ABCD team and positive feedback to the community of the good things already happening in the neighborhood.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ABCD PROJECT

People are eager to talk about the neighborhood and their passions, hopes, and concerns. Once the ABCD team was ready to begin recruiting community members to be interviewed, we were delighted to discover how eager people are to be interviewed and how helpful they are in referring us to other possible interviewees. Our simple tri-fold brochure (reprinted in the ABCD Tool Kit) that explained the ABCD project and introduced the one-on-one interview process was an important tool for our ABCD Coordinator and other board and staff members to pass out to business owners and community members at neighborhood meetings and events. Many interviewees volunteered, and their referrals led us to more interviewees. We learned unexpected things from the interviewees, such as:

- *"I love to play, write, and sing. I would like to teach and have my own music shop. Music is my passion."*
- *"I care about child development, human rights, and the community. Since I've had my child and quit my full-time job, I care about knowing my neighbors."*
- *"I enjoy the high-end restaurants, but I'm worried that it's becoming unaffordable."*

The Jubilee Center board and staff are not representative of the neighborhood. As we listened to our conversation partners tell their stories about the neighborhood, especially their experience of it from a historical perspective over several generations, we realized that only two of our board members out of ten and one of our staff members live in the neighborhood. We also learned that many of the owners of the new businesses also do

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not live in the neighborhood, some commuting over 40 miles daily. This realization has directed our attention to the need to invite local representation onto the Jubilee Center's board and to help initiate neighborhood conversations about how to involve those new business owners in caring about the neighborhood beyond just making it a good place to do business.

Participating in community activities builds connections with our neighbors. The Jubilee Center's small lemonade stand and participation in 4th of July and Christmas decorations for business sites raised our visibility and the community's perception of us as good neighbors who are involved in the community's interests. We participated at North High School's flea market and passed out water bottles at the 4th of July parade that passed in front of the Jubilee Center.



Little Man Ice Cream hosted "Honor Thy Elders," where residents shared stories from the 1940s to today. (Photo by Basha Cohen.)

Our general manager and several board members attended the mixers, parties, talks, and board meetings of local associations such as the Lo-Hi Merchants Association, HUNI (Highland United Neighbors, Inc.), BRUN (Berkeley-Regis United Neighbors), We Are North Denver, Northwest Spiritual Leaders Alliance, Northwest Collaborators (of social service agencies), and North High School. We also interacted on social media such as Facebook and Twitter with local

associations, most notably, We Are North Denver, which has an active online presence.

- *“Living in a place that is still interesting and challenging, we have a lot to learn from each other . . . if we just find the time and space to be present with each other.”*
- *“Values for a healthy community: people know each other and leave the house; safety; opportunities for movement; parks and sidewalks; grocery stores; buy food, grow food.”*
- *“I wish there was a way to get people together and interact.”*

Neighborhood gentrification was not the subject of community-wide conversations. One of the insights from the one-on-one interviews is that this missing conversation was especially apparent from the perspective of the low-income residents and members of the Latino demographic. While North Denver has been constantly changing since it was first developed, changes since the late 1990s are the first to alter dramatically the architecture and structure of the neighborhood, including the mix of different demographics, businesses, and zoning codes. These changes also brought newcomers who are more affluent with higher incomes and more mobile in personal travel and choice of residence.

In addition to the one-on-one interview conversations which were a safe space for residents to voice their despair over the gentrification changes, the affinity groups gathered for small group conversations provided an outlet for residents to share their thoughts and feelings. These conversation opportunities afforded people living in poverty and those just above the poverty line a venue to explore their gifts and the value they add to the neighborhood. Our bilingual

interpreter, a North Denver resident, was crucial in making these conversations happen.

- *“Residents don’t really have a say in the development decisions.”*
- *“Having seen the poverty, there is such a gap between affluent younger people and older people — immigrants. There is still suffering in this neighborhood.”*
- *“Poor people can’t do anything in this neighborhood.”*
- *“Predatory lenders offer to take over the note for a house for a period of time, but then evict the original homeowners and take the mortgage for themselves.”*

The community was interested in the ABCD process. People in the neighborhood were both supportive and critical of the ABCD process. Critical questions arose early in the process out of a need to learn enough about ABCD to understand how community members would be involved and what the Jubilee Center would do with the information that it was gathering. As community members became interviewees and learned more about ABCD, they referred additional interview candidates and wanted to become involved in the next steps such as the small group conversations.



Local restaurant owners Kim and Ron Cito were early supporters of the Jubilee Center throughout ABCD. (Photo by John Putnam.)

Much of the feedback on our ABCD work came during our community meeting, in which the dialogue with community members was facilitated by the ABCD team. As previously mentioned, that community conversation was important to the community, who came out in a snowstorm to participate. With more people present to discuss changes in the neighborhood, new perspectives were shared and gained. At the end of the meeting, people left feeling hopeful and optimistic. The community's interest in next steps propels the Jubilee Center to continue the ABCD process as our transformed way of interacting with our community. We see a future role as being community conversation facilitators in partnership with community members and groups.

PRO-TIP #2: An ABCD project looks different in different communities. Staying engaged with the community will give you feedback on how you're doing and whether you're connecting with your neighbors. Ask open-ended questions to invite your neighbors to share their thoughts about what's happening in the community.

OBSERVATIONS FROM TWO EXAMPLES OF ABCD CONVERSATIONS

Example 1 — A Denver city councilwoman was one of the first to participate in a one-on-one conversation with a Jubilee Center interviewer near the beginning of the ABCD pilot project. This conversation focused on city policy and governance issues that might not have emerged otherwise as quickly or as fully. Such issues include building and zoning codes, public transportation development, and how to be a voice for lower income residents. Other local government officials and candidates for election became interested in the ABCD project.

At the community meeting held in January 2015, two community resource police officers and a candidate for city council came to listen, to meet neighborhood people, and to participate, along with representatives from neighborhood associations. By building relationships with diverse community people, the Jubilee Center provided an outlet for conversations emphasizing the importance of voting and interacting with and holding elected officials accountable.

- *"Be a part of the community, and you'll be supported. Get to know people here. Be involved in the dialogue about life in the neighborhood."*

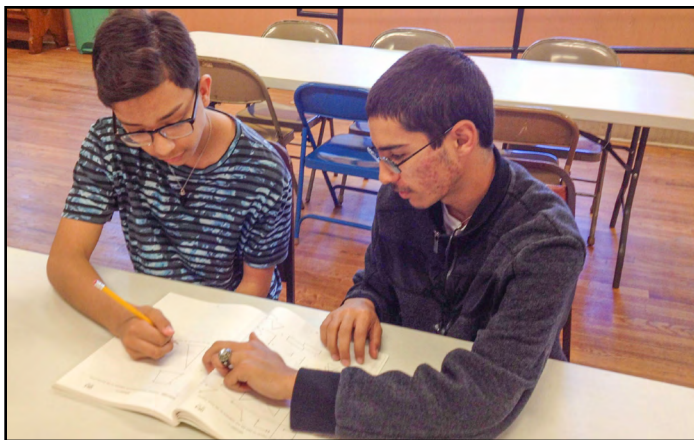
- *"Everyone wants to work to change the neighborhood, innovate."*

Example 2 — Through the ABCD interviews with residents, the Jubilee Center learned that parents in the neighborhood are passionate about helping the local schools to be excellent learning places for their young children and teens. Several parents pointed out how the reputations and educational opportunities of the elementary and middle schools in the neighborhood have improved over the last decade as parents have become personally engaged in these schools.

In the Denver Public School system, parents have the choice to send their children anywhere in the district so long as they can provide the transportation to that school. This parental choice approach means that the local schools have to market competitively the neighborhood school to local parents on the basis of academics, extracurricular activities, and other criteria.

The value of the neighborhood North High School quickly became evident in numerous

one-on-one conversations. North High School administrative staff and teachers expressed their desire to have a larger role in the community and have worked towards that goal by sharing school space with community groups, initiating internships for juniors and seniors with local businesses, and developing relationships with parents from the beginning of their child's enrollment at the high school.



Carlos Garcia (right), a North High School Senior, was a semester intern for our After-School Program. (Photo by Jan Pearson.)

As our awareness was raised, the Jubilee Center has intentionally worked on enhancing our relationship with the North High staff and teachers. We hired a North High senior for a semester to serve as a math tutor and mentor for at-risk youth in our After-School Program.

- *"What is my longing? Positive growth, which creates opportunities in other places."*
- *"I see gung-ho mentality in a few parents, but most ship their children out to 'choice' schools."*

ADMINISTRATIVE INSIGHTS ABOUT THE ABCD PROCESS

A self-evaluation of the Jubilee Center's ABCD project revealed a brief list of things that we would do differently in order to enhance the ABCD process:

- » **Establish a protocol** to provide a model

for standardizing how we handle one-on-one interviews. Ideas include an initial survey to capture demographic, biographical, contact information, and other "key word" descriptors of the interviewees. Identify suggested icebreakers, prepared questions, and possible flow for conversations. Create a template for how interviews are transcribed. Maintain a flow chart (database) of who referred whom to be interviewed. Use a scheduling calendar (wall or electronic) to prevent unintended coverage overlaps.

- » **Develop an interactive database.** In some cases, this would involve finding the funding and expertise to develop a database of community members contacted and interviewed. The Jubilee Center ABCD team simply lacked the funding and expertise to do this in a timely manner while also managing the interviews and conversations.

- » **Mobilize community assets through relationships earlier.** Because this was the ABCD team's first encounter with ABCD, we did not realize the importance and value of connecting the community assets early in the project. In retrospect, the small affinity group conversations could have begun earlier in the process, and connecting neighborhood people could have been a higher priority.

The next page contains a summary of the key discoveries that came to light over the course of our ABCD pilot project.

PRO-TIP #3: Go with the seasons. Plan conversations that take advantage of your environment's assets. For example, summer is when people in Colorado love to be outdoors socializing and interacting, and many people enjoy conversation over an early morning cup of coffee in a neighborhood gathering place.

KEY DISCOVERIES

- » **ABCD is a new way of being.** Work based on ABCD will continue even though the Jubilee Center's pilot project is completed. The value of community engagement and the practice of ongoing community conversations are outcomes of ABCD that transform the sponsoring organization and its community.
- » **People want to feel safe and accepted for who they are.** An ABCD-sponsoring organization can provide events and spaces that promote inclusivity and invitations to participation for all residents. When residents experience acceptance and acknowledgement of their gifts, they feel empowered to share those gifts generously and productively.
- » **People want to be heard.** The Jubilee Center observed vast differences in the opinions about the neighborhood from the long-term residents compared to the newcomers. To create change, the entire community needs to hear all the diverse voices; venues must be created and supported to make that happen.
- » **The Jubilee Center discovers a new role in the community.** As an acknowledged neutral party and leader in the community, the Jubilee Center is poised to become a significant bridge-builder by becoming a conversation and group meeting convener in order to foster relationships between diverse neighborhood voices.
- » **Everyone has gifts to share.** Discovering the community's gifts and then sharing that information with others are integral to the ABCD process. Ongoing ABCD work can help to mobilize the community's gifts into actions that are mutually agreed upon by residents.
- » **People want to be involved with their neighborhood.** An ABCD-sponsoring organization, through partnership with other neighborhood groups, has a role in facilitating conversations and activities that connect neighborhood volunteers with other helping organizations and residents in need.
- » **People want connection no matter how long they have been part of the community.** The Jubilee Center can help to create and strengthen community connections through hosting and facilitating community conversations. The new gentry must be invited and encouraged to join the conversations already engaging the long-time residents.
- » **Being a good neighbor means getting involved.** Being involved looks different for each person and group. Some days it means walking around the neighborhood and seeing who is out. Other days it means sitting outside, working in local coffee shops, and visiting the restaurant hotspots on the weekend.
- » **People want their children and neighborhood schools to succeed.** The Jubilee Center identified a priority and an opportunity to connect North High School with other organizations (*e.g.*, LoHi Merchants Group) to create meaningful learning opportunities for high school students and to raise community pride in an iconic neighborhood institution.
- » **People want to feel pride in the neighborhood.** Being able to take ownership and delight in community events, neighborhood aesthetics, and other community initiatives helps people feel connected. The Jubilee Center can demonstrate leadership in showing pride in the community.
- » **A combination of both people inside and outside of the neighborhood makes a good ABCD team.** We found ourselves valuing the perspectives of both neighborhood residents and non-residents in our reflections on one-on-one interviews and asset mapping efforts. Each perspective contributes to the analysis work to evaluate ABCD's ongoing progress.

SUSTAINING MOMENTUM AFTER ABCD

At the beginning of the ABCD project, the Jubilee Center had hoped the ABCD process would reveal what the residents in this rapidly changing neighborhood were saying; and from that, the center would identify ways in which its programs and role in the neighborhood could change to make it a better Northside neighbor. Much of what the center has learned over the course of a year's work has been described above and in the previous chapters. The chart titled "Key Discoveries" outlines briefly the key discoveries and questions that the Jubilee Center's board and staff continue to explore.

An example of the Jubilee Center's ongoing ABCD work is the collaboration with North High School by the two newly appointed Co-General Managers, who stepped in after the General Manager's departure. Together, the Jubilee Center and North High School are pursuing a grant to conduct a video-based program targeting their recent graduates to help them succeed in college. Many North High graduates are the first in their families to graduate from high school and attend college.

PRO-TIP #4: Maintain a single location for ABCD documents. Use your organization's shared server. Also use online platforms such as DropBox or Google Drive to allow remote access. Keep community members' information up-to-date (name; company, if applicable; preferred phone number; street and email addresses; interviewers' notes; and follow-up thank yous).

CLOSING REMARKS

The opportunity to engage in ABCD work has breathed new life into the Jubilee Center's board and staff. We have become transformed

by our ABCD experience. We have a new understanding of who we are as a nonprofit in Northwest Denver and a new appreciation for the people and the challenges here.

As the ABCD process progressed, the Jubilee Center was able to reach out as a bridge between various segments of the community. Going forward, our approach to our board, staff, and fund development will also change to incorporate what we learned and our new relationships.

Significant change envisioned for the Jubilee Center is recruitment of community members from the neighborhood for the board of directors. If the notion of serving on the board is too daunting a first-step of involvement with the Jubilee Center, then an interim step might be to establish a less formal and intensive "advisory board" that would be an intentional effort to listen to the voices of the neighborhood.

During our ABCD project, much of the work was done by the Jubilee Center's ABCD team. We decided when meetings were held and who was invited. We did much of the asset mapping. We figured out next steps, specifically for the Jubilee Center. One of our gifts is expertise in facilitation of meetings, and we see new ways in which that expertise can be tapped to benefit the community.

In the future we envision that the Jubilee Center will focus on more community-wide conversations to engage local residents and to help identify issues and action items that are important to the community. We plan to include community members in the planning, one-on-one conversations, and asset mapping activities. We are poised to begin sharing the how-to and benefits of the ABCD process with community leaders

and inviting their participation in ongoing ABCD initiatives to be designed with their input and participation.

Our ABCD work was ultimately about learning how a nonprofit organization can better serve a community. In learning about and deepening relationships through ABCD, we understand the ABCD process is designed to help our agency better see the gifts and the challenges in the community. What comes next are transitions for the Jubilee Center as part of a changing neighborhood, which we hope will result in additional positive partnerships for change for the wider community.

As an institution of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, the members of the ABCD team were mindful of our commitments from the baptismal covenant and the church's mission as stated in the Book of Common Prayer: "The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." One of the primary lenses through which we viewed the ABCD work was through the lens of restoration of our relationship with our neighbors in North Denver.



The Baptismal Covenant in the Book of Common Prayer is a guide for how to practice ABCD as a ministry. (Photo by John Putnam.)

We are deeply grateful to the Justice and Advocacy team of the Episcopal Church for the grant that enabled our ABCD pilot project

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and the ongoing guidance from the Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson, the church's Domestic Poverty Missioner. We also thank the Jubilee Center's board and staff and the leadership of OMS Church for their unwavering interest in and support of the ABCD project. We feel blessed to be located in and to serve the wonderful Northside community with its many caring, involved, and helping residents, business owners, and workers.

Our hope for all who are reading and using this manual is that you will find your engagement in ABCD to be as enriching and fulfilling as we have. We invite you to contact the ABCD team with any questions or comments that you may have. Most of us have listed our email addresses for your reference in our bios in the appendix. Linda, Lelanda, and Aspen, in particular, expect to continue doing work as ABCD process mentors and facilitators and will be glad to be of assistance to you.

With appreciation and thanksgiving for the work we have been given,

Linda Brown, Lelanda Lee, Aspen Matthews, John Putnam, Maria Casillas, & Joe Ellerbroek

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Thus says the LORD: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth; but let those who boast boast in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD; I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the LORD.”
– Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NRSV)

“Resisting gentrification is like trying to hold back the rising ocean tide. It is surely coming, relentlessly, with power and growing momentum. Young professionals as well as empty nesters are flooding into our cities, buying up lofts and condos and dilapidated historic residences, opening avant-garde artist studios and gourmet eateries. If market forces alone are allowed to rule the day, the poor will be gradually, silently displaced, for the market has no conscience. But those who do understand God’s heart for the poor have a historic challenge to infuse the values of compassion and justice into the process. But [this] will require altogether new paradigms of ministry.” – Bob Lupton, from “How to Do Justice in At-Risk Neighborhoods” article on Vergenetwork.com

» Who are well connected people in your community who will easily see the gifts and skills of others whom you could bring into your ABCD process? What makes them good connectors?

» What are the voices that are not being heard? How can you bring the experiences of those unheard people into the community dialogue?

» How does hearing the voices of your community change your outlook? How do they change your ministry’s vision and purpose?

The characteristics of a transforming community are shared understandings of community, knowledge about the community and its experiences, and commitment to mutual well-being, which might include specific aspects of growth. When a transforming community develops the skills and common vocabulary to articulate what its members are observing and experiencing, then there is a common foundation on which to dream and build an ongoing community for all its residents. A major aspect of this part of the ABCD process is that among the various community partners within the neighborhood, there are a few leaders and leader organizations that will continue to support community conversations to refresh what emerges as the current community passions and assets.



ABCD Tool Kit



This section contains helpful resources and specific examples of documents (such as promotional materials and asset maps) the Jubilee Center created during the ABCD process.

1. GLOSSARY: SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE

ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – ABCD is the abbreviation for Asset Based Community Development, a process for discovering the assets (gifts) of a community through one-on-one interviews, small group conversations, and community meetings, and then connecting the people with the gifts with one another. Utilizing the input of community members is key to ABCD as a way of transforming how communities view themselves and how they do mutually helpful sharing of their skills, venues, and other resources.

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY – ABCD builds upon the Appreciative Inquiry approach to organizational development to search for the best in people, associations, and the world around them. Appreciative Inquiry is based on the premise that all organizations — even the dysfunctional ones — have something that is working for them. The challenge is to find the good things from the past through one-on-one interviews and storytelling, and then to bring the good things to the present as building blocks for the future development of the organization. See Chapter 1 for a discussion of Appreciative Inquiry as part of the ABCD process.

ASSET – An asset is something that is a resource — whether it's a person, thing, or skill — that can be identified and used as a building block to enhance a community. When the ABCD process is engaged, a community is empowered through conversations to identify assets that might have been invisible, unknown, or unacknowledged previously. Another word often used to describe assets is “gifts” — the gifts found in the people and places of a community.

ASSET MAPPING – Asset Mapping is the method within the ABCD process for organizing information, finding themes, and discovering connections between different assets. An Asset Map is a helpful tool for seeing the relationships between the assets and themes that are identified. See Chapter 6 for how Asset Mapping is applied to the ABCD process.

COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD – In this manual, Community and Neighborhood are used interchangeably. A Community or Neighborhood is the geographic and social place occupied by family, friends, neighbors, associations, civic groups, local enterprises, churches, local unions, local government, and local media. Neighborhood refers also to the smaller, possibly more closely aligned, groupings of housing, shopping, and people that often have a discernible identity.

ENERGY AND PASSION – Energy and Passion are somewhat interchangeable in this manual, referring to the interest and vitality of the people in the community for principles, people, and things that they care enough about to invest their time, talent, and treasure. The ABCD principle of “Follow the Energy/Follow the Passion” is built on honoring and valuing the same things that the people in the neighborhood value, which may not be obvious to the casual observer.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS – In ABCD, Environmental Assets refer to the typically unnoticed and unnamed things that are taken for granted in the community's environment and yet contribute to the value, charm, safety, and livability of a neighborhood. Environmental Assets may include physical features and/or

1. GLOSSARY: SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE

characteristics such as underground utilities and traffic signals, parks and community gardens, walkability, friendliness towards bicycles and dogs, location near social or cultural attractions, ease of transportation, availability of off-street parking, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANS – In addition to conversations with community members for the purpose of gathering data about the neighborhood, Environmental Scans also provide helpful information about current community activities. In fact, comparing inputs gained from conversations with input gained from Environmental Scans may serve as a way of validating the data and give direction as to where to seek further inputs. See Chapter 7 for more information.

INDIVIDUALS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONS – John McKnight, who is credited with originating ABCD as a community development tool, defines Individuals, Associations, and Institutions with specificity. Individuals are defined as citizens—key stakeholders who are residents, business owners, and employees, within the community. Individuals, as citizens, have both a stake in the community, as well as the capacity to influence change in the community. Associations are groups of people who gather around shared interests and are not paid to do so; examples include book clubs, parent-teacher organizations, church members, mothers' groups, etc. Institutions are groups of people who gather around a job and are paid; their jobs can be in the not-for-profit or for-profit sector of the economy and tend to reflect a hierarchy. Institutions include schools, churches, social welfare agencies, hospitals, businesses, etc.

NEIGHBORHOOD HUB CONNECTOR – In the one-on-one interviews and the Asset Mapping method of ABCD, certain individuals emerge as people who know many people in diverse circles, the history of the neighborhood, and the businesses and buildings in the neighborhood. Such people have the potential to be Neighborhood Hub Connectors, and they are often viewed as trusted community leaders by virtue of their personalities, known connections, and potential to facilitate further connections.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS, SMALL GROUP CONVERSATIONS, AND COMMUNITY MEETINGS – The information gathering portion of the ABCD process includes these three types of conversations, and the most logical way to begin is described in Chapter 5.

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION – This refers to the agency or consortium of agencies that initiates and oversees the ABCD process. It is the organization that assembles the ABCD team as described in Chapter 3.

THE PROCESS IS THE WORK – This is a meme that the Jubilee Center developed to describe the ABCD process. It's akin to other memes that say the journey is equally as important as arriving at the destination. In the case of ABCD, the relationship building and connecting people and assets with other people and assets are the critical elements of doing ABCD work. By merely implementing the ABCD process, the community and the people involved become transformed.

2. SAMPLE TIMELINE

Proposed Timeline for Implementation of ABCD Project* 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center, Denver, CO

Phase	Milestones	Timeframe
Preparation • <i>Identify and assemble team</i> • <i>Conduct Training</i> • <i>Begin work</i>	Conduct initial consultation with ABCD consultant(s) regarding project plan and implementation	Month 1
	Identify and train staff, board members, and volunteers on ABCD concepts and implementation.	Month 1
	Interview and hire part-time intern (if needed) for 10 months	Months 1-2
	Determine preliminary geographic boundaries of study area	Months 1-2
Community Conversation • <i>One-on-one fact-finding</i> • <i>Meet with interest groups</i> • <i>Meet with intersection of interest groups</i> • <i>Begin Asset Mapping</i>	Conduct initial one-on-one fact-finding interviews with key groups/organizations: passions, interests, concerns, assets, etc.	Months 3-6
	Begin Asset Mapping of neighborhood: Identify key groups and organizations in study area (for-profit, nonprofit, social services, government agencies, etc.)	Months 5-7
	Hold 3-6 meetings with key organizations. Meetings will be organized by interest groups and by intersections of areas/persons served.	Months 6-9
	Hold team meeting possibly with facilitator (TBD) to discuss outcomes of community conversations and steps forward	As needed
	Identify where groups' interests intersect	Months 6-9
	Identify common themes and solutions	Months 6-9
Outcomes • <i>Identify Themes</i> • <i>Engage Community to Identify Solutions</i>	Prepare report for use in community conversations	Months 8-9
	Set up and conduct community conversations about engagement with solutions	Months 9-10
	Compile information and data from community conversations	Months 10-11
Documentation	Map assets of the study area	Months 9 to 11
	Document findings	Months 9 to 11
Final Report	Prepare final report or recommendations for moving forward	Month 12

* This timeline is an example only. Your project may take more or less time depending on your community and team size.

3. SAMPLE PUBLICITY MATERIALS - TRIFOLD

FRONT

My name
is: _____
and you can reach me at
(Phone#): _____
Or
(Email): _____

I can meet for an ABCD
interview (please circle
day and time):

M T W Th F Sa

Sun

Mornings

Lunch

Afternoons

Evenings

We look
forward to
hearing your
stories!



**Building
on our
Strengths**

**Asset
Based
Community
Development
In Northwest
Denver**



BACK

What do people in this
neighborhood do together to
make it a better place? Better
can mean anything: more
beautiful, more hospitable,
more fun. We at the 32nd Ave-
nue Jubilee Center want to
know from you:

- What do you think is im-
portant in a community?
- What brought you to
Northwest Denver?
- What passions do you
have? What gifts do you
have?
- How are you involved in
the community (e.g., book
club, rec sports team)?

We are starting conversations
around the neighborhood for
a new project in Asset Based
Community Development,
and we want to hear what you
have to say.

**What is Asset
Based Community
Development?**

Asset Based Community
Development, or ABCD, is
a model of bringing a
neighborhood together by
identifying the assets a
community might have.
Instead of identifying the
problems in a neighbor-
hood, ABCD first looks at
what works in a particular
neighborhood. We'd like
to connect individuals, as-
sociations, and institu-
tions in this community
by having conversations,
starting with you!

*Would you join us for
a conversation about
our community?*

Let us know how we
can contact you by
filling out the back of
this pamphlet and
dropping it off at the
north mail drop at
2222 W. 32nd Avenue
or email us at
gm@jubilee32.org

Pick a time that
works, and be our
guest for a cup of
coffee!

This trifold brochure was printed front and back on an 8-1/2" by 11" sheet.

3. SAMPLE PUBLICITY MATERIALS - FLYER



Would you join us for a conversation about our community?

Let us know how we can contact you to set up an opportunity to discuss your story and what brought you to Northwest Denver.

Pick a time that works, and be our guest for a cup of coffee!



What do people in this neighborhood do together to make it a better place?

How do people join together to create a better space to live and work? Better can mean anything: more beautiful, more hospitable, more fun. We at the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center want to know from you:

- What do you think is important in a community?
- What brought you to Northwest Denver?
- What passions do you have? What gifts do you have?
- How are you involved in the community (e.g. book club, rec sports team, game nights)?

We are starting conversations around the neighborhood for a new project in Asset Based Community Development, and we want to hear what you have to say.

What is Asset Based Community Development?

Asset Based Community Development, or ABCD, is a model of bringing a neighborhood together by identifying the assets a community might have. Instead of identifying the problems in a neighborhood, ABCD first looks at what works in a particular neighborhood. We'd like to connect individuals, associations, and institutions in this community by having conversations, starting with you!

2222 West 32nd Ave. | Denver, CO 80211 | 303-477-3944
aspen.matthews@jubilee32.org

4. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ABCD Interview questions

How long have you been in NW Denver?

What influenced you to move to, or to choose to work in, the NW Denver neighborhood?

What do you care about? What passions do you have? What makes you excited, motivated to make something or help people?

What skills do you consider yourself to have?

- What do you do well?
- What positive qualities do people say you have?

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

What do you think is important in a community?

If you could start a business what would it be?

What do you do with other people in the community, and who do you know that lives and or works around here?

What would you tell someone who was considering moving to, or working in the NW?

What kinds of things here make this a good neighborhood for you and for others to live in? to work in?

What have people in this neighborhood done together to make life better here?

What relationships/connections exist in the community?

What makes the community feel connected?

What do you think this community does well? That you would like to see more of?

What do you consider its greatest untapped resource?

How do you think the community can foster that resource?

What are your longings for the North side of Denver?

4. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for Students

How long have you been here?

What do you enjoy doing in your free time? What do you and your friends do for fun?

When you're older, what will you tell your children about the neighborhood you grew up in?

What is your favorite thing about being in Northwest Denver?

What is your least favorite thing about being in Northwest Denver?

What do you wish people that don't live here knew about you, your friends, and your family?

What is your hope for this neighborhood?

4. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ABCD Entrevista

LA COMUNIDAD

¿Por cuánto tiempo ha sido un parte de este barrio?

(How long have you been a part of this neighborhood?)

¿Qué fue su motivación para mudarse aquí o trabajar aquí?

(What was your motivation to move or to work here?)

¿Cuáles son los aspectos de este barrio que lo hace un buen lugar para usted y para otros a vivir y trabajar?

(What are the aspects of this neighborhood that make it a good place for you and others to live and work?)

¿Qué le diría a alguien considerando la posibilidad de mudarse o trabajar aquí?

(What would you say to someone considering the possibility of moving or working here?)

¿Conoce a otras personas quienes viven o trabajan aquí? ¿Cómo se interactúa con otras personas en la comunidad?

(Do you know other people who live or work here? How do you interact with other people in the community?)

¿Qué relaciones o conexiones existen en la comunidad en general? ¿Cuales redes sociales de que sepa existen en la comunidad?

(What relationships/connections exist in the broader community? What social networks exist in the community that you are aware of?)

¿Cuáles son unas cosas que han hecho juntas las personas en este barrio para mejorar la vida aquí?

(What are some things that people in this neighborhood have done together to make life better here?)

¿Qué crees que es importante en una comunidad?

(What do you think is important in a community?)

¿Qué hace la comunidad sentirse conectada?

(What makes the community feel connected?)

¿Qué cree que esta comunidad hace bien?

(What do you think this community does well?)

¿Qué le gustaría ver más?

(What would you like to see more?)

¿Qué considera es el mayor recurso de la comunidad que no ha sido utilizado?

(What do you consider the greatest untapped resource in the community?)

¿Cómo cree que la comunidad podría fomentar éstos recursos?

(How do you think the community can foster those resources?)

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 1/3*



Notes/Comments/Ways In:

- *Values diversity of community but not sure how to be a positive force for that rather than contributing to problem*
- *Ultimate Frisbee – he loves it and wants people to come play with him!*
- *Entrepreneurship/Microfinance/Social Enterprise/Sustainable Non-Profit – TONS of connections, expertise, passion, etc.*
- *Biking – wants to get into it*

How long in NW Denver?

- 8 years
- Prior near Coors Field

How long at OMS?

- 3-4 years

Why came?

- Wanted to buy close to downtown
- Between Curtis Park and here
- 32nd had Gallup Coffee but wasn't developed much yet; could see potential for commercial development
- Wanted the coffee shop lifestyle; was first to buy condo above Gallup
- Since have moved a block away to house with outdoor space

Passions? Interests? Fun? Gifts?

- Ultimate Frisbee @ Garland Park. Could be at Sloans, but you need huge fields and lights in spring/fall/winter.
- Working with younger people: mentoring, tutoring – but not much in n'hood
- Business development and strategy, small business incubation
- On a lot of boards
- Unreasonable Institute – bring 12 entrepreneurs who have businesses addressing social and environmental issues for mentoring and fundraising. More than 200 potential mentors from places like Google and beyond. Next one June 13. Help select participants.
- Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute – do business launch bootcamp for 12 weeks for very low income in Curtis Park/Denver
- Have done bootcamps for high schoolers on social enterprise development.
- Currently working with social entrepreneurs “Knotty Tie” who will employ refugees. Connecting them to guy who started AOL in 90s for funding.
- Work for self, so work/free blend together
- Hiking, biking

Spend time with others from neighborhoods

- Just visiting with neighbors on street; dogs playing together
- Know who everyone on the block is, but spent time with about half – will visit with or invite to BBQ or parties when we see them.
- Don't know folks in the apartment building. Turnover faster, not as engaged with nearby residents (come and go)

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 1/3*

- Neighbors come out mostly during snowstorms to help each other shovel – sense of community amps up

Bounds of n’hood

- Federal > 38th>Tejon
- A little into LoHi, but doesn’t really feel like “my” neighborhood anymore
- Powder Highlands

What differentiates “Powder Highlands” from other Highlands?

- Not sure the name
- Historically significant – harder to develop
- Not sure how restrictions came about, but probably a resident 20-30 years ago got it designated
- Like that housing has been preserved; not as much development activity.
- Some development of 40s-50s style houses, or leaving bottom but renovating top
- Residents don’t really have a say in the development decisions

Homeowners association?

- No, just part of HUNI.

What would you tell about PoHi?

- Walkable
- Trees and shady streets
- Interesting homes and variety of architecture
- Quiet
- Lots of restaurants, bars, coffee shops, ice cream shops
- Can’t really walk to supermarket – King Soopers downtown might be closest; there’s a little bitty market on 32nd by the tap for just essentials
- Ace Hardware just moved in.

What small associations have you observed?

- HUNI - It was hard to figure out how to connect with HUNI. A few people really involved – felt like an unnecessary accessory. No role. The real estate people and restaurant owners seemed to really be the influencers with power.
- Highland Mommies – Formed a group with others who had a kid at same time. Memorial Day BBQ, playgroups. The rumor with them is that a bad review from a Highland Mommy can be a death blow to a local business.
- NextDoor – Have used it to find someone to share a workspace with us. Good for local marketing, stray dogs, etc.
- One time block party on neighboring street – Haven’t done on our street because there’s no one to take and own it. Have thought about hosting in neighbor’s big front yard. Worried that no one would show up.

What works in PoHi?

- Highland Haunt
- July 4 parade

What have you noticed neighbors do of own volition to improve n’hood?

- Helping each other take care of dogs – our neighbor’s dad has cancer, so the neighbors are helping with that

NOTE: The interviewer, who is not from the neighborhood, transcribed “Potter Highlands” as Powder Highlands.

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 1/3*

- The single people in the duplexes across the street all hang out together.
- [REDACTED] is the “neighborhood watch” who is vigilant and keeps an eye out for n’hood

What are some of the shared social spaces you’ve seen where cultures overlap?

- The Sandoval School
- Menchies Yogurt
- Ashland Rec Center Gym – workout room, pool

What’s the role of OMS in the n’hood?

- Food bank
- Seen positively
- The bell
- We came and thought we’d be the first of other young people, but hasn’t really happened.

Other ways OMS could interact with hood?

- Could have more of a role as public gathering space, not just place church people go; people don’t really know Jubilee Center at all
- Concerts
- Zumba – mostly Spanish speaking service attendees
- Draw more people into Food Bank

Do Spanish service attendees live nearby?

- Many used to but have left, some don’t live here but have been drawn in to the church through relationships
- [REDACTED] lives a few blocks away

Hopes/Goals

- Don’t want it to be homogenously upper income like Wash Park or that plus shops like Cherry Creek or LoDo
- Don’t want to lose local shops like Tony P’s taqueria; multiculturalism
- Want diversity – personally want to stay connected to lower income diverse communities, but personally struggle with role as gentrifier. Maybe the gentrification of RiNo and Stapleton are positives because there’s no displacement of established cultures. Here we hit that tension and see that pain. One of my wife’s students had grown up there, they sold their house for \$300k and moved to Aurora and Westminster, then it was flipped and sold for \$600k. A lot of people have gone to Aurora and Federal Heights.

What’s your role in making that happen?

- Getting to know neighbors who aren’t like us – hard when we don’t bump into people, need a reason to knock on the door
- Getting involved with #WeAreNorthDenver
- But sometimes feels inevitable and we ponder moving

Who else to talk to?

- [REDACTED] – been there for 30+ years, don’t know number, has a few little dogs he walks 2-3 times a day, right around the corner, really fascinating knowledge of neighborhood history, he’s pro-gentrification
- [REDACTED] – since early 90s, early gentrifiers, email: [REDACTED] phone: [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] – the neighborhood watch

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 2/3*

5/12/14

How long have you been in NW Denver?

- 43 years, born and raised.
- Went to Bryant Webster and North
- Family is very well connected, tried to get away.
- Went to the University of Vermont, came back to CU to study theatre.
- Moved to Puerto Rico and then came back and graduated from CU Denver
- Has 150 cousins within a 10 mile radius
- Wanted to raise daughter around family that will make her feel safe, secure, and loved

What are you passionate about?

- Issues around the triple bottom line: economic, social, sustainability
- Turned passion into business
- What am I going to do to give back to the world?
- Masters degree in environmental leadership with an emphasis in sustainability
- Can help change by designing systems around the issues of sustainability.
- Connecting, nonprofits, businesses, government

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

- Spend time with daughter, family
- Read
- Swim
- Yoga
- Meditate

What do you think is important in a community?

- Supporting small business
 - One big change that has happened is there are more small businesses popping up again
- Culture
 - Supporting local culture

What was the neighborhood like when you were first here?

- Early Latinos moving in to the neighborhood
- Little bread shops, grocery stores, walked everywhere

What changes have you seen happening?

- When the charcuterie opened, the people living here thought, no that's a butcher – language differences
- Cultural communication gap – watching a new culture emerge, without embracing the culture that existed here
- Why isn't it embracing? 1 – we don't want to, 2 – we don't know how, most people in most cultures don't have the vulnerability to say “how do I connect with you”

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 2/3*

- In 2003, we saw a quick shift – new artists came. Tried to deal with the conflict in her heart about the change that was happening, about being a bridge builder in a community that was changing so quickly and embrace own anger and frustration about it. Boyfriend was a local artist, he introduced her to a new community of people, allowed her to let her guard down and get to know it better.
- New developments are very expensive. Historically, growing up in this neighborhood we were poor, the people that are still here from the past generation are still poor, still don't have a lot of money. They can't spend their money at coffee shops that grow coffee elsewhere, don't understand the difference between Folgers coffee and the coffee that's being served at \$10/cup. That difference takes education, which is why she works to bridge the understanding that buying a cup of coffee like that actually changes the world, because we are supporting better practices, better ecology, and better economy.
- Several things created the perfect storm: Cute neighborhood, walkability, you can walk a couple miles and feel like you got a good walk in. People wanted to move here because they wanted a home they could raise their family in and were able to move here – afford a house and an upgrade. Then you want other amenities that go with that, coffee shops, small bars, because you're not quite having kids yet, but you want to go out with your significant other. Brought in a wave of young people, Gen Xers. Development of LoHi, [REDACTED]. Must come to terms with that. Then he purchased the place where the GrowHaus now is and find a funder for it. Create a significant small business district.

If you could start your own business, what would it be?

- Build a full waste stream composting plant that would be a training program for prison inmates that will be released soon. A large scale, replicable system that will create the compost that we need for top soil across the country, eliminate waste from the landfills, and train inmates (the most marginalized population) to become functional in a world where we will have local food and local systems.
- Timeframe: 3 years. Write a book this year, go on book tour in the next year to raise awareness.

How are you involved in the community?

- More of a global person
- Apart of the board of historic Denver (very elitist)
- Started Colorado Latino Forum
- Colorado Latina Chamber

What would you tell someone who was thinking of moving here?

- [REDACTED]
- Want North to be this shining place for these 3rd and 4th graders to go to.
- Great high school experience, but didn't feel educated (was student body president)
- Only have Skinner Middle School. Only one feeder into high school – poor model
- Everyone wants to go to East (always been like that, East is the cool school)

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 2/3*

- Super valuable about going to North. There are people that have her back to this day just because we're all from the same place and we all grew up in a place that was tough, gangs.
- Daughter goes to Waldorf.
- Most important training is that she loved herself and her world. And she didn't value her outside more than her inside.

What makes this a good neighborhood for you and others to live in?

- Such a sense of closeness here. Just a couple blocks to downtown, walkable.
- Family, gorgeous.
- Great Mexican food.
- Always changing

What have people done to make it better?

- Perception in the question. Better for one is not always better for the next.
- [REDACTED] didn't make the neighborhood better by developing LoHi, but [REDACTED] will attest that he made the neighborhood better by developing LoHi.
- People come in and make it better for themselves and their families and what is better for them. That's pretty awesome, that people will invest in their own home and in their own community.
- Highland Mommies, compassionate group of women trying to help each other on in the world, helpful for young moms.

What relationships and connections are there in the community?

- A LOT, there is a true underlying North High Alum web – facebook, reunions (knowing when reunions are), church bazaars.
- Run into each other at restaurants.
- Lakeside Amusement Park

What do you think the community does well?

- So many communities here now. Has to do with geography, Sunnyside, Berkeley, different business districts.
- Great parties. People like to get together across the block, have barbecues, kids play together.

What is the neighborhood's greatest untapped resource?

- Historical context of the neighborhood and people who have lived here – Jewish families, Italian families, Latino families. Always a mentality that pioneers forget about the people that were here before them that could increase community.

What is important about the signs is that the underlying rumbling is coming to the surface.

- Very big difference between a North-sider and someone from the Highlands. Would never say she's from the Highlands. How you identify?

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 3/3*

10-26-2014

How long have you been in NW Denver?

- 12 years

What's kept you in NW Denver?

- Parents like the neighborhood

What do you care about?

- The neighborhood, how it's changed
 - o Housing is extremely expensive
 - o They are building new houses with no fences and destroying the old houses that have been here for more than 100 years
 - o New housing and business are making North Denver a better place to live
 - o New neighbors care about their health
 - o They go biking ridding, running and walking their dogs

What skills do you have?

- Customer Service
- Excellent cook
- Gardener

What do you think is important in a community?

- "Education is the key for success."

Group would you consider yourself a part of?

- Our Merciful Savior an Episcopal Church

What would you tell someone who was considering moving to NW Denver?

- Closer to downtown
- Light rail
- The neighborhood is changing and its beautiful to live here
- Good opportunity to open a business
- RTD Transportation
- It's expensive to own or rent property
- Must have money and a good job to live here
- Good neighborhood to raise kids

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

5. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS 3/3*

What things work well here?

- The church, the after school program, and the food bank

What have people done together to make this a better place?

- Property owners not selling their property no matter how much they are offering for the property
- Helping to maintain their property in a clean and neat manner.

What relationships do you still have in the community that you value?

- [REDACTED] gave me the support and advice to continue with my education.
- I have my associates degree and working on my business bachelor's degree and working full time.

What's the North side's greatest untapped resource?

- Youth Educational Enrichment Programs
- Bienvenidos Food Bank
- Aztec Recreational Center
- North Side Pride
- Denver Police Department
- North High School

What are your hopes for North Denver?

- More Businesses
- More Recreational Centers
- More affordable Housing
- More Jobs
- Safer to live here

Future contacts

[REDACTED]

*NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION HAVE BEEN BLACKED OUT TO MAINTAIN PRIVACY.

6. SAMPLE BLOGS 1/2

ROOFTOP PORCH: THE NEW FRONT PORCH?

Wednesday, August 6, 2014

In our past blog, we discussed the idea of urban planning and how we use our public spaces for socializing, recreation, and work. This blog posting adds the influence of the new home private contractors and developers in their building around North Denver. Along Quivas Street in particular, there is one startling design element that has not been present previously in any Denver architecture: rooftop porches. These were right next door to the more traditional and ubiquitous front porch. In LoDo, rooftops are easily accessible by walking across the bridge. In the new restaurants along Tejon and 16th Street, rooftop porches on bars and restaurants are coveted spaces, perfect for enjoying Colorado summer. Some folks have decided to bring the feeling of looking out over the city to their own homes by creating rooftop patios and ridding themselves of traditional front porches.



Examples of roof top porches.

THE 32ND AVENUE JUBILEE CENTER BLOG CAN BE FOUND AT JUBILEE32.BLOGSPOT.COM.

6. SAMPLE BLOGS 1/2

During a one-on-one with a community member, he brought up an observant description of how we use our homes. He said, “We drive home, park in our garage, go in through our garage door, and never have to speak to our neighbors. Then we repeat this process to leave our houses.” Where a front porch might help create a space where residents could sit and watch the neighborhood, now some are opting for the rooftop because of its undoubtedly cool look, and trendy location for entertaining or relaxing.



A front porch on the same street.

But how does this influence how we interact with our neighbors? Even outgoing residents may feel odd to call to a neighbor on a rooftop three stories up from the street. And side-by-side rooftops don't lend themselves to easy mobility from one to the other. It resembles a type of castle fortress, with the owners calling down to potential guests that need keys or passwords or codes to get to it. We may be bold in saying this, but it's exclusive. It does not open the opportunity to meet your neighbors.

What are your thoughts? Do you think a rooftop porch is hindering our ability to befriend our neighbors? Are trendy and neighborly mutually exclusive? Does your dream home contribute to community development?

- Aspen Matthews, The 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center Asset Based Community Development Intern

THE 32ND AVENUE JUBILEE CENTER BLOG CAN BE FOUND AT JUBILEE32.BLOGSPOT.COM.

6. SAMPLE BLOGS 2/2

ONLINE / OFFLINE

Thursday, February 5, 2015

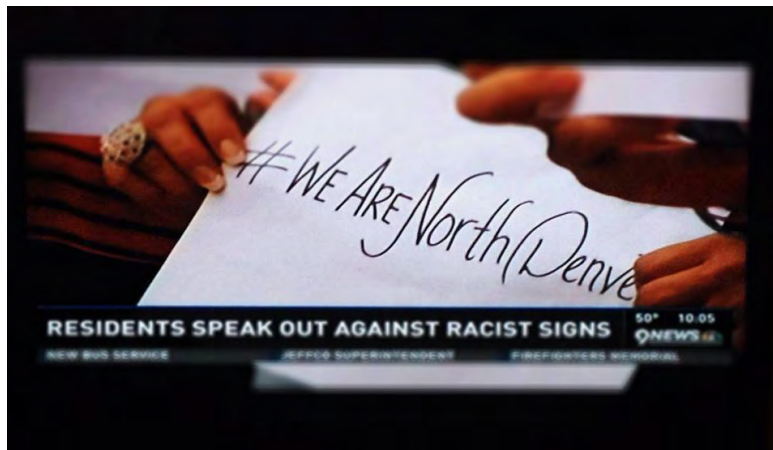
I've lived in a world with the Internet and constant technological updates my entire life. I've also grown up in a world where most Americans don't know their neighbors, with some studies finding that Millennials, young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 (I'm 23), are least likely to know their neighbors. These facts are from coincidental.

One of the biggest complaints we have heard from residents throughout the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process is that new residents moving into the neighborhood don't want to get to know their neighbors like the older culture in Northwest Denver where folks knew their entire block.

It seems more and more that people are moving their communities online through social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor.com. There is nothing inherently wrong with these sites, but they can either create or tear down community depending on how they are used.

One of the main problems with the Internet is the idea of anonymity and problems with physical separation. It's much easier to type something hateful or rude to someone that isn't in your immediate vicinity and may not have a picture of you or know your name. Anybody who has spent any amount of time online on social media sites, article comment sections, or chat forums have seen this type of unproductive bickering where opinions are rarely changed (i.e. controversies like GamerGate).

Where, then, is the place for the Internet and technology in community? North Denver happens to be a place where great things are happening online. These illustrations show how online community can build up offline community.



THE 32ND AVENUE JUBILEE CENTER BLOG CAN BE FOUND AT JUBILEE32.BLOGSPOT.COM.

6. SAMPLE BLOGS 2/2

#WeAreNorthDenver was a movement started by the Hispanic community in Northwest Denver after flyers were put up around the Highlands area that targeted Hispanics and other racial groups. This movement is more than just a hash tag and has been used as a resource for community members to create and share events, keep up with neighborhood news, and mobilize outside of this online community. Recently they posted a list of neighborhood associations on their Facebook page, encouraging members to join and advocate for themselves from within.

Other examples include blogs like this one, neighborhood publications like The North Denver Tribune, campaign websites to organize volunteers for local elections, and advertising for events happening in the neighborhood, all of which can be found online. When technology is used like this, it can build up offline community - not destroy it.

What we have with modern day technology is a resource that can be used for both good and bad. North Denver and all communities that are surrounded by these technologies have a choice: use technology to organize, advocate, and collaborate, or use it as a way to keep distance from our neighbors and mask our identity while attacking others. The problem then, is not the tech itself, but rather how we choose to use it. Let's use our online resources to make community happen offline.

7. SAMPLE ASSOCIATIONAL MAP

AN ASSOCIATIONAL MAP

Northwest Denver

Artistic Organizations: Navajo Art District
Book Clubs: Book Bar groups
Business Organizations: Realtors, LoHi Merchants, W 38th Avenue Merchants Association
Charitable Groups and Drives: Firehouse Church 5K, School Supply Drive (August)
Church Groups: Northwest Spiritual Leaders, Northwest Collaborators
Church Events: Mt. Carmel Church Bazaar (July), Our Lady of Guadalupe Church Bazaar (July)
Civic Events: 4th of July Bike Parade, Totally Tennyson, Farmer's Market, Highland Haunt, Hispanic Heritage Festivals, Festival 38, Dragon Boat Festival
Community Support Groups: Alcoholics Anonymous
Digital Community Groups: Nextdoor.com, #WeAreNorthDenver, Facebook Groups (North High School Alums),
Ethnic Associations: Italian Americans, #WeAreNorthDenver
Health and Fitness Groups: Highland Tap & Burger Running Club, Denver Cycling Club
Local Government: City Council Members – Susan Shepherd, Judy Montero, Deborah Ortega, Rafael Espinoza
Local Media: *North Denver Tribune*, Latin Life Denver Magazine
Men's Groups: Highland Hunters
Self-Help Groups: Alcoholics Anonymous
Neighborhood and Block Clubs: Highland United Neighbors Inc., Sunnyside United Neighbors Inc., Berkeley-Regis United Neighbors, Jefferson Park United Neighbors
School Groups: North High Alumni
Service Clubs: Sloan's Lake Citizens
Veteran Groups: Heather Grove
Women's Groups: Highland Mommies

Other categories: Outdoor Groups, Political Organizations, Social Cause Groups, Study Groups, Youth Groups, etc.

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

PRESENTATION HANDOUT FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

SHARING STORIES: USING ASSET BASED COMMUNITY

Friday, October 3, 2014

DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Colorado Diocesan Convention

WHAT IS ABCD?

Asset Based Community Development is local people working together for the betterment of their community. It is a method of relationship building to organize action for a common goal.

This method focuses on local community assets and then mapping them to find the connections, avenues, and spaces people share. This way, people can come together to build on the assets and create positive impacts in their community.

PRINCIPLES OF ABCD

Community members are solutions to challenges.

There are already strengths, gifts, resources, relationships available in the community that can be built on.

Assets are brought together and transformed into action as decided by community members.

ASSET MAPPING EXERCISE

Write the assets you personally have for each category: individual, associational, and institutional (each category on a different sticky note).

Examples (taken from responses in North Denver):

Individual: technology savvy, social work, pastoral, culinary, musical, filmmaking, appreciation for arts and food, entrepreneurial, working with youth, placemaking, marketing

Associational: coffee groups, high school alumni, veterans, mommy meet-ups, neighborhood associations, book clubs, running clubs, merchants group, art districts

Institutional: restaurants, churches, local newspapers, public transportation, local schools and colleges, food bank, rec center, library

Write what most excites you about Diocesan Convention on another sticky note. We will use this to create our themes board to see how passions and interests overlap.

People with the same passions and interests have different assets and experiences that inform their passion. Using these two maps, we can connect people that ordinarily might not get a chance to meet or work together.

ABCD GLOSSARY

Appreciative Inquiry: Searching for the best in people, associations, and the world around them. It affirms past and present strengths, recognizes the good in people and the world around us. It discovers what gives the "life" to a community when it is at its most effective and inclusive.

Asset Mapping: Used as a way to organize information, find themes, and discover pathways between different assets.

Community: The social place used by family, friends, neighbors, associations, civic groups, local enterprises, churches, local unions, local government, and local media.

Gifts: Used interchangeably with skills or capacities to describe a person's assets.

Types of Assets

Individual: Land owners, residents, employees. These citizens are key stakeholders in the community.

Associations: Groups of unpaid citizens that gather together about something they care about.

Institutions: Groups of citizens that are paid. These are organized into hierarchies and cannot care.



32nd Avenue Jubilee Center

2222 W. 32nd Avenue Denver, CO 80211-3318

jubilee32.blogspot.com

If you have any questions or are interested in more resources about Asset Based Community Development, please contact aspen.matthews@jubilee32.org.

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

Sharing Stories: Asset Based Community Development in Your Neighborhood

Presented by:
Ms. Aspen Matthews
The Rev. Linda Brown
Ms. Lelanda Lee



32nd Avenue Jubilee Center
2222 W. 32nd Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
www.jubilee32.org | jubilee32.blogspot.org

32nd Avenue Jubilee Center

- Established in 2001 as a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit
- Located in Northwest Denver
- Created out of mission and ministry of OMS Church
- Jubilee Ministry



32nd Avenue Jubilee Center

- “Breaking the cycle of poverty”
- Focus on at-risk youth, low-income residents, elderly, disabled, and immigrant community
- Rely on donations and grants to fund programs and staff positions



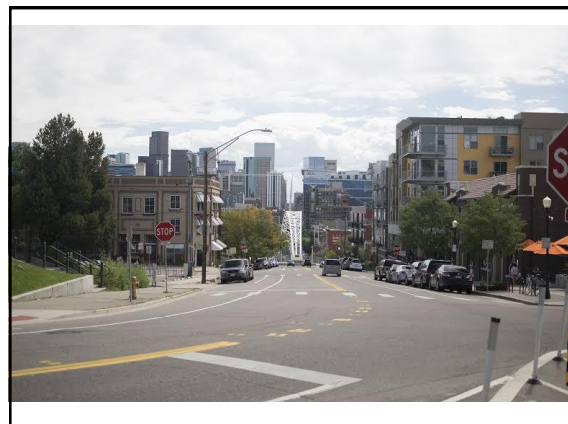
32nd Avenue Jubilee Center Current Programs

- Youth Educational Enrichment
- Intake and Emergency Assistance
- Community Healthcare
- Immigration Advocacy Initiative (IAI/DACA)
- Partner with Bienvenidos Food Bank



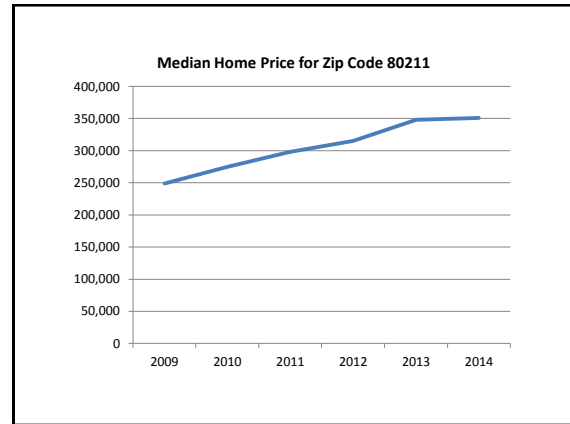
Northwest Denver

- 18.5% of residents had an income below the poverty level in 2011 (citydata.com)
- 35% of the neighborhood is Hispanic/Latino (Mission InSite data)



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION



About Our ABCD Pilot Project

- Awarded Episcopal Church Grant in 2014
- Follow ABCD model described by John McKnight from Northwestern University
- Access online resources and videos

Why We Are Here

- Excited about what we are learning
- Desire to share with you the process and outcomes
- Encourage you to explore using ABCD in your churches and community



Principles of ABCD

- Recognize community members are solutions to challenges
- Focus on strengths, gifts, relationships, resources already available
- Build on gifts, talents, and resources through community connection

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

ABCD in Practice

- Use “one-to-one” interviews to gather stories and share experiences
 - Started with board members, continued through word of mouth
- Identify gifts, passions, motivations
- Start asset mapping
- Explore opportunities for people to connect



The Process is the Work

- Conduct asset mapping
 - Themes map
 - Individuals, Associations, Institutions
- Engage community members in focused discussions
 - Interests and passions
 - Voices of concern
- Keep going
 - Follow up for new interviews
 - Determine community goals



Appreciative Inquiry: Defined

- Appreciative
 - Valuing
 - Honoring
- Inquiry
 - Discovering by asking questions



Appreciative Inquiry: Outcome

- Recognize each person has unique gifts, skills, and capacities
- Identify the good things, bring them to the front, and build on them
- Share gifts and motivations with others

Appreciative Inquiry: Practice

- Turn to the person next to you and introduce yourself – your name and where you’re from
- Share your answer to ONE of the following questions:
 - What did you do to prepare to come to Convention?
 - What did you leave behind in coming to Convention?

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

Finding Gifts

What from your story is an asset or gift in your life?



What can Appreciative Inquiry do for us?

- Identify little hints about each person
 - What they mention off-hand
 - Who they know
 - Where they travel
- Develop that connection
 - Find common interests

Asset Mapping

- Used as a way to organize information, create themes, and find common responses
 - Individuals
 - Associations
 - Institutions
 - Land and Economy
- Creates a guide to relationships, not just data
- Discovers ways to unite in a common cause

Individual Assets

- Local employees, residents, land owners
- Gifts of the hand, head, heart
 - Hand
 - Culinary
 - Good with children
 - Head
 - Entrepreneurial spirit
 - Teaching music
 - Tech savvy
 - Heart
 - Pastoral
 - Appreciation for arts, food

Associational Assets

- Groups of citizens that gather together out of common interest, NOT paid
- These groups CARE
 - Coffee groups
 - Mommy meet-ups
 - Neighborhood events: 4th of July Parade, music festivals, farmer's markets
 - Merchant groups
 - Nextdoor.com

Institutional Assets

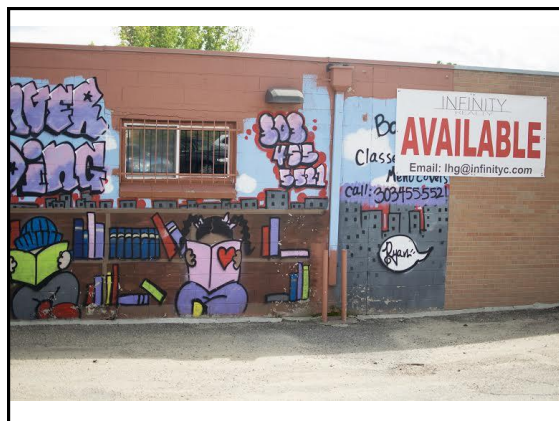
- Groups of citizens that gather together and get paid to produce services
- Organized into a hierarchy
- CANNOT care
- For-profit, not-for-profit, governmental agencies
 - Restaurants
 - Newspapers
 - Churches
 - Schools

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

Land and Economic Assets

- Land
 - Infrastructure
 - Streets
 - Utilities
- Economic
 - Trades
 - Exchanges
 - Purchases



Asset Mapping With Sticky Notes

- Write the assets you personally have for each category below on a different sticky note.
 - Individual
 - Associations
 - Institutions
- Write what most excites you about Diocesan Convention on another sticky note. This will go on our 'themes' board.
- Place sticky note on corresponding newsprint sheets

Reflection

- How was this process for you?
- Was your experience different than what you expected?
- Do the answers in the room have similarities?
- How can you apply completing this asset map to your greater congregation or neighborhood?

What we do with an Asset Map

- Find common interests, passions, motivations
- Take the 'pulse' of the community – what people are talking about
- Identify connectors, trusted community members
- Remember the good, how community works together
- Develops a road map for connecting people together and builds relationships



What we have learned through the ABCD process



- Work is transformative
- Being active in the community is imperative
- Need to find ways to reach all of the different population groups
- Connectivity is key
- Sharing stories generates success

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

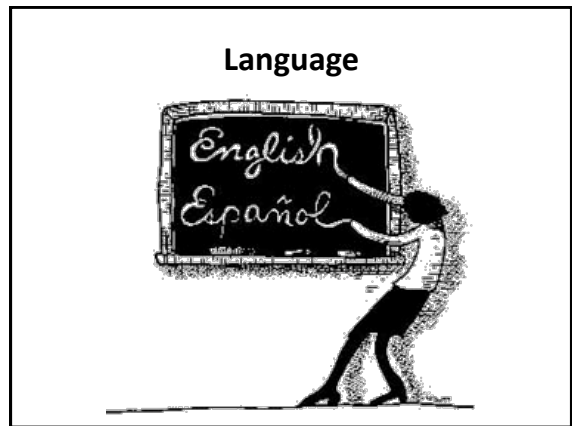
SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION

North Denver themes

- Gentrification
- Neighborhood Identity
- Language
- Leisure
- Education and Youth
- Entrepreneurial



Language



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF COLORADO 2014 CONVENTION



What is coming next in North Denver?



What we are doing next in North Denver

- Discovering how to be actively involved in the neighborhood
 - Merchants group
 - Co-sponsoring events
- Facilitating small community meetings for people to gather over common interests
- Planning for a larger community meeting
- Providing continuous engagement to past interviewees through newsletters, social media, and blog
- Preparing “how-to” manual for doing ABCD work

Questions?

8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE ABCD BRIEFING FOR JUBILEE CENTER BOARD

ABCD Briefing for the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center Board

February 8, 2014

Presented by
Lelanda Lee



ABCD Pilot Program

Building a Successful
Community Development
Project



ABCD Focus

- Focus on Community
- Assess Poverty in Context
- Build Relationships & Trust
 - Social Capital
- Avoid Pitfalls
- First Steps
- Next Steps



ABCD Online Course

- 1.Detriments of Traditional Charity
- 2.Fundamentals of ABCD
- 3.Sustainability
- 4.Asset-Mapping
- 5.Capacity Inventory
- 6.Appreciative Inquiry
- 7.ABCD Case Studies
- 8.Critiques of ABCD
- 9.ABCD Wrap-Up



ABCD Principles

- YOU (community members) are the solutions to your community's challenges
- Build on what you already know
- ABCD practice is built on listening to stories through one-to-one conversations



ABCD Founder

- John McKnight – university prof., community organizer, citizen, father, dog owner, Chicago-based
- Visited thousands of communities
- Asked: *“What have you done that has been successful in your community that you could share with others?”*



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE ABCD BRIEFING FOR JUBILEE CENTER BOARD

5 Core Assets

- Citizens
- Associations
- Institutions
- Land
- Economy



1st Asset: Citizens

- Local Residents = Citizens
- Recognized as an Individual
 - Land Owners
 - Tenants
 - Employees



2nd Asset: Associations

- Groups of Citizens that gather
- They are not paid
- They care
- Examples: Lo-Hi Merchants, North High PTO, Condo HOAs
- Associations in lots of stories of successful communities



3rd Asset: Institutions

- Groups of Citizens that gather AND are paid to produce services
- Organized into a hierarchy
- Institutions CANNOT care
- 3 Kinds of Institutions:
 - For Profit – Mom & Pop
 - Not-for-Profit – goodwill
 - Government – public institutions



4th Asset: Land+

- Infrastructure
- Buildings
- Streets
- Utilities



5th Asset: the Economy

- Things that are shared
- Things that are traded
- Things that are purchased
- Things that are exchanged



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE ABCD BRIEFING FOR JUBILEE CENTER BOARD

Focus on Individuals

- ABCD: “People have the answer.”
 - WHO has WHAT asset?
 - HOW to connect assets?
 - HOW to get people to contribute those assets to help solve community problems?



Toxic Charity vs. ABCD

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| ▪ CLIENTS who are | ▪ CITIZENS who |
| ▪ Deficient | ▪ Make contributions |
| ▪ Need to be fixed | ▪ Community pride |
| ▪ Dependent | ▪ Emphasize local relationships: important, improvable |
| ▪ Agency can fix us | ▪ WE are the answer |
| | ▪ Each is equal |
| | ▪ Work together |



“In those places where one encounters very powerful and rich men, the weak and poor feel, as it were, burdened by their lowly status and since they discover no means of being able to recover equality, they lose any sense of hope in themselves, drifting below any standards of human dignity.”

■ Alexis De Tocqueville



- Seek and serve Christ in all persons
- Strive for justice and peace among all people
- Respect the dignity of every human being

■ *Baptismal Covenant in the Book of Common Prayer*



Asset Mapping: Focus on Gifts

- Everyone has them – often hidden
- Negative labels can be removed
- Gifts are NOT gifts unless shared
- Acknowledge Individuals also have talents, dreams, hopes & fears



Personal Assets

- Gifts of the Head:
 - Things you know
- Gifts of the Hand:
 - Things you do/create
- Gifts of the Heart:
 - Things you care deeply about – your passions



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE ABCD BRIEFING FOR JUBILEE CENTER BOARD

Asset Mapping Questions

- What gift (skill, interest, hobby) do you have that would surprise most people?
- What makes you a great family member?
- What absorbs you enough that you lose track of time?
- What really good thing is going on in your neighborhood?



Why do Asset Mapping?

- Guide to relationships
 - Not just data
- Knowing others in your community with similar interests allows you to gather together with purpose
 - United in a common cause
- Community Building Tool
 - Using what WE have



Motivation Exercise

- Think about organizing a community concert
- What are the reasons / cares / passions of people who might participate?



Roles for Individuals

- What roles are there for participants?
 - Leader – brings people together
 - Gift Giver – contributor, participant
 - Invisible – not yet discovered or not yet convinced person
 - Connector – integrator, networker
 - Gift centered
 - Well connected
 - Trusted
 - Believes they are welcome



Institutions & Associations

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ▪ INSTITUTIONS | ▪ ASSOCIATIONS |
| ▪ Control | ▪ Consent |
| ▪ Paid | ▪ Not Paid |
| ▪ Produce Goods & Services | ▪ Contribute Care (Love) |
| ▪ Clients & Consumers | ▪ Citizens |
| ▪ Fill Needs | ▪ Build Capacity |



Who cares?

- Cannot be produced, unlike products
- Freely given, consent
- Cannot be mandated or managed, like services
- Common error: pretending systems can care
- Associations can care



8. SAMPLE PRESENTATION MATERIALS

SLIDES FOR THE ABCD BRIEFING FOR JUBILEE CENTER BOARD

Glass $\frac{1}{2}$ Empty or Full?



ABCD in Action

- Determine community goal
- Find allies
- Determine additional players
- Decide how to bring them on board
- Identify assets to contribute from your institution, association, and/or individually
- Utilize these resources to map and mobilize community
- Share stories, successes and challenges



Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, a motivational speaker and self-help author, says, "Transformation literally means going beyond your form."



Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Franciscan friar, Roman Catholic priest, and author, says, "Most Christian 'believers' tend to echo the cultural prejudices and worldviews of the dominant group in their country, with only a minority revealing any real transformation of attitudes or consciousness. It has been true of slavery and racism, classism and consumerism, and issues of immigration and health care for the poor."

It certainly is true that the butterfly must shake off its cocoon, going beyond its form as a caterpillar inside a chrysalis to emerge into the colorful butterfly, adopting both a new appearance and a new way of being as a beautiful flying creature. What does a similarly complete transformation look like for a community that seeks to become its best version of itself? How does a community get in touch with the values being called forth by the entirety of its citizenry and not merely echo the prejudices and worldviews of the dominant group in the neighborhood?

These are the important questions that engagement in an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process will help to answer. Unless all segments of the community are invited to participate in identifying the neighborhood's assets and passions, the answers will be incomplete and reflect only echoes of the status quo. Transformation is literally about changing one's form through the process of turning oneself inside-out and upside-down so as to find the form that aligns best with the assets that are present in, and the dreams that are being dreamed and voiced by, the community. Transformation is a lofty goal that requires the input and effort of as close to everyone as possible in the community.

APPENDICES



- A. A Theology of Accompaniment and Asset Based Community Development
- B. ABCD Team Biographies
- C. ABCD Feedback to Sponsoring Organization
- D. ABCD Resources: Helpful Books and Websites
- E. “ABCD with Your Neighborhood” Visual Style
- F. Postscript: A View from the Edge

Appendix A

THE THEOLOGY OF ACCOMPANIMENT AND ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

By Lelanda Lee

INTRODUCTION

I have tried with all my heart and soul to live into the theology of accompaniment for many years. It is a theology that I came to through the example of my father and his service to our Chinese immigrant community when I was growing up in Detroit, Michigan, in the 1950s and '60s. It was reaffirmed for me as I sat in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Church Council meetings and listened to the teaching and preaching of their former presiding bishop, The Rev. Mark Hanson. The theology of accompaniment is what ultimately led me to embrace the work of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), which I believe exemplifies this theology in praxis.

Jesus said in a parable, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." [Matthew 25:40 NRSV] For me, this verse tells me several things: first, that the people who are poor, who are dispossessed and forgotten, and who are living at society's margins, are members of Jesus' family, and second, that how I treat members of Jesus' family is a measure of how Jesus judges how I have treated him. This verse also reinforces for me how the entire family of human beings is Jesus' family and that I am obliged by my baptism into Christ's Body to love and serve all the people of God's Creation.

My earliest image of God is from the Old Testament account of God the Creator and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. I pictured a kindly, yet stern, God the Father walking hand-in-hand with little girl me, and I felt safe and a sense of belonging in the company of the Father. My perception of the theology of accompaniment arises from that image of God the Father and all the nuances of "walking with" that walking hand-in-hand conjures.

WALKING WITH

"Walking with" is an iconic statement of equality and belovedness, and an affirmation of the Episcopal Church's baptismal covenant that requires each of us to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself" and to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." [Book of Common Prayer, page 305] The idea that a stern God the Father chooses to walk hand-in-hand with an unsophisticated child who has not yet formed mature concepts of being in community strikes me as important in the theology of accompaniment, *i.e.*, that we must choose to "walk with" people who perhaps haven't quite figured out the importance of following Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Appendix A — THEOLOGICAL ESSAY

“Walking with” means that we treat each other as we want to be treated, because Christ expects no less. In religions worldwide, this philosophy is known as the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” “Walking with” begins with being in each other’s company, spending time together, sharing experiences of the community in common, and relating to each other’s stories. Being in each other’s presence leads to conversations in which we tell our hopes and dreams to one another, share our troubles and worries, and listen to and take in what our sisters and brothers have to say. In a sense, one could assert that “walking with” points to a theology of hospitality that views the stranger or guest—the “other”—as like the occupants of the house or space. *They are us, and we are them.* There is no difference between us and them; we are equally beloved in the sight of the Creator.

This description of “walking with” is similar to the description of ABCD, which says that ABCD is a process of learning what a community cares passionately about and identifying the assets or gifts that exist in the neighborhood through one-on-one conversations, and then, together with community members, figuring out how to bring those assets together to develop the community that the neighborhood wants. “Walking with” has the essential elements of journeying with, through thick and thin, in joyful and celebratory moments, and in heartache and grief. What’s important is the sticking together and holding each other up, because those with whom you walk also love the same community and its people and their interests and concerns.

PRESENCE AND AVOIDING TOXIC CHARITY

The theology of accompaniment—of “walking with”—also encompasses the ministry of presence where we simply are in the company of another person or in the company of a community, being present, listening, paying attention, and not “doing anything.” That is a tough practice for most individuals, who think of themselves as helpful and helping, and a very tough practice for a human services agency that is founded on the principle of being a “helping organization.” Even when we “do something” for another, it is important to avoid “toxic charity,” i.e., doing things for another that takes away the acknowledgement of their gifts and their ability to do things for themselves.

As someone with a background in economics and banking, I appreciate the difference in God’s economy from our human economy. In God’s economy, there is always sufficiency; what we have been given is always enough. That is contrasted with the human economy in which we frequently go from one episode of perceiving scarcity, feeling like we don’t have everything we need, to another episode of feeling anxious and victimized by what we believe we lack. From the study of scripture, our eyes are opened to seeing the abundance that God has created and gifted to human beings, and we are invited into an ethos of gratitude and sharing that abundance with others. God invites us into an economy where gratitude is the place of initiation and thanksgiving is the currency that frees us from fear. In a similar way, ABCD invites us to be thankful for the assets in our community and to lift up and share those assets with others for the benefit of the entire community. Gratitude is where we begin—acknowledging with our fellow community members that we have what is needed to strengthen us as a community.

Appendix A — THEOLOGICAL ESSAY

Robert D. Lupton wrote in his book Toxic Charity [2011, HarperOne] of the importance of partnerships and acknowledging the capacity of people and communities to learn to do their own work to improve their communities as opposed to helping organizations coming in to give help and resources without acknowledging the existing resources and giftedness within those communities. In the fifth chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus models the opposite of toxic charity by healing one man who had been ill for 38 years and commanding him to "stand up, take your mat and walk." Also note how Jesus began the interaction by asking the man, "Do you want to be made well?" Jesus engages in holy listening and takes nothing for granted about the man's desires. The man answers Jesus, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." ABCD suggests to us the importance of attending to what the community desires. Being present and willing to accompany another on the journey to self-discovery of one's and one's own community's gifts is a gracious invitation to claiming one's self-actualization of those gifts and one's self-empowerment.

STORIES CONNECT US

Just as Jesus told parables to teach the disciples and other people who came to hear him, sharing our personal and familial stories with one another—storytelling—is fundamental to our Christian identity and to the principles of ABCD. Our Judeo-Christian tradition is full of storytelling as a means of teaching to the community, from the examples of Jesus' parables to the Jewish Seder's recounting of the Passover to the Christian Eucharist's recitation of the Last Supper. ABCD also uses storytelling in the form of individual community members being invited to tell their stories through one-on-one conversations (interviews). These stories—*our* stories—connect us to each other's humanity and show us how much we have in common and how many gifts each of us has to offer to our neighbors. The ABCD process further shows us how to connect ourselves and our gifts to one another for our mutual thriving.

From the youngest to the oldest, from the least educated to the most educated, whether in one language or another, telling stories is something that everyone has the innate ability to do to share who they are, where they come from, who has shaped them, and what they hope and dream for themselves and their community. Storytelling is an everyday way of living into the African Bantu philosophy of *ubuntu*, which is often explained as "I in you, and you in me," or "I am, because you are." Our stories tell who we are and lay out points of connection to which we can grab hold and build mutuality and understanding. We become part of another's story when we hear their story and can see ourselves in their story because of our shared humanity—when we are moved by what we hear, empathize with the person telling the story and the people in the story, and desire to do something to help the storyteller and people like the storyteller. The more stories we hear and share, the more we recognize that we are all part of one story created by God the Creator, God the Companion, and God the Reconciler.

[I am grateful for the friendship and conversation with the Rev. Deacon Linda J. Brown, who collaborated in the planning for this theological essay.]

REFLECTION & QUESTIONS

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” – Romans 12:2 (NRSV)

“You have to maintain a culture of transformation, and stay true to your values.” – Jeff Weiner, CEO of Linked-In

» When you accompany someone, what do you do? How would you describe your relationship with someone whom you accompany?

» When you help someone, what does that look like? How do you set boundaries in your helping relationships?

» When you form a new relationship, especially a friendship or a partnership on a joint project, how do you and your new friend or partner get to know each other? What are the stories that you tell that help the other person get to know who you are and what your values are?

Appendix B — ABCD TEAM BIOGRAPHIES



THE REV. DEACON LINDA J. BROWN, GENERAL MANAGER

Linda is a deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado and has served in various capacities at the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center since 2009. She is a native of the Washington, D.C. area and spent nearly 30 years as a consultant in the engineering and environmental industry. Linda's call to ministry to the underserved came later in life, and her diaconal service revolves around empowering others of all ages to reach out to their neighbors in need. She and Jesse, her husband of 40+ years, live in Arvada, and enjoy fly-fishing and hiking in the great Colorado outdoors. Linda may be contacted at deacon@holycomforterchurch.net.

MS. LELANDA LEE, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lelanda began volunteering with the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center in 2004 as a board member and believes strongly in urban ministry among immigrants and the disenfranchised. Lelanda is a retired banker and trust officer, who has focused on racial and social justice ministries and diverse advocacy efforts in the Episcopal Church at the churchwide, regional, and diocesan levels. Lelanda and her husband, Herb Berman, live in rural Boulder County and enjoy seeing the Rocky Mountains everyday. Lelanda may be contacted at lelandalee@gmail.com.



MS. ASPEN MATTHEWS, ABCD COORDINATOR

Aspen is a Colorado native and a graduate of the University of Denver. During her time in school she was an active member of Delta Zeta Sorority and served as a Service Learning Associate for the Center of Community Engagement and Service Learning, both of which sparked her interest in community development. Aspen worked at the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center on the ABCD project and felt generously supported by the staff and community. She now lives in Craig, Colorado, where she continues to look at the glass as half-full. She may be contacted at aspenkmatthews@gmail.com.

Appendix B — ABCD TEAM BIOGRAPHIES



MR. JOHN PUTNAM, EPISCOPAL SERVICE CORPS INTERN

John is a native of Dallas, Texas, and an alumnus of both the University of Oklahoma, where he studied Human Relations and Public Relations, and the Richardson High School Law Magnet. John served on the Diocese of Dallas Youth Committee, was a worship leader at St. Anselm's of Canterbury in Norman, Oklahoma, and led small groups for the Diocese of Oklahoma young adult retreat, "Altered," before joining Colorado Episcopal Service Corps. For John's year of service he served as the Diocese of Colorado Jubilee Ministries intern where he split his time between the Colorado Episcopalian, St. Clare's Ministries, Colorado Interfaith Voices for Justice, and the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center.

MR. JOE ELLERBROEK, EPISCOPAL SERVICE CORPS INTERN

Joe grew up in Urbandale, Iowa, and has lived in Oregon, Germany, Austria, and Colorado. He came to the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center as an intern working for the Colorado Episcopal Service Corps. Joe had just finished undergraduate study at Lewis & Clark College, where he studied German and Philosophy, played rugby, and met people from all over the world. Joe joined the Colorado Episcopal Service Corp's first year looking forward to the creative opportunity of working with a new program. He was instrumental in organizing the ABCD project, especially the interview process, identifying people in the community to interview and questions to ask.



MS. MARIA CASILLAS, BILINGUAL TRANSLATOR

Maria has served as a volunteer at the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center since 2012, providing intake at the front desk and helping its various guests with their needs. She is originally from Mexico and has lived in Colorado for 41 years. Because of her bilingual skills, Maria has been an essential member of the team in helping to translate written ABCD materials for Spanish speakers as well as serving as interviewer of Hispanic/Latino people in the North Denver community. She and her son, Christian, live in North Denver and enjoy going to Dillon, Colorado, every winter and summer.

Appendix C — ABCD FEEDBACK TO SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS



32nd Avenue Jubilee Center

*Jubilee Ministry of the Episcopal Church
2222 W. 32nd Avenue Denver, CO 80211-3318
Phone 303-477-3944 Fax 303-380-2459
www.jubilee32.org*



MEMORANDUM

TO: Jubilee Center and Our Merciful Savior Church Leadership
FROM: ABCD Pilot Project Team (Linda, Aspen, John, and Lelanda)
DATE: June 17, 2015
SUBJECT: Learnings from the ABCD project for the Jubilee Center and OMS Church leadership to consider

Over the past year and a half, the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center has implemented an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process as a pilot project in the North Side of Denver. In the course of writing the ABCD Manual for the Episcopal Church describing the outcomes of this work, the ABCD team has gathered some “learnings” that are specifically pertinent to the Jubilee Center and OMS Church. These are what might be called the “internal factors” that we gained as new and enhanced insight during our ABCD work. We wanted to be sure your leadership groups had access to this information.

- Recognition of the “outsider” status of the Jubilee Center board and staff—the vast majority of us don’t live in the Denver North Side neighborhood. The Jubilee Center must recruit some new board members from the neighborhood and also volunteer to serve in the local associations such as HUNI and Lo-Hi Merchants.
- The ABCD team recognizes the need to continue the Jubilee Center’s ABCD presence in the neighborhood. We have received permission to use the remaining ABCD grant funds to support another ESC intern in the 2015-2016 program year. Additional funding must be secured to supplement that amount.
- Relationships with the local associations—such as We Are North Denver, HUNI, Lo-Hi Merchants, the Northwest Spiritual Leaders Alliance, Northwest Collaborators (of social service agencies), the North High School supporters, etc.—must be strengthened, including appointing Jubilee Center representatives to participate in these associations.
- The relationship between the Jubilee Center and OMS Church must also be strengthened, including some collaborative planning on how to use the Church building and facilities to do work with the community. The Jubilee Center does not otherwise own or control any meeting or activity facilities.
- The Jubilee Center must be proactive in hosting or collaborating to host community conversations on an ongoing basis. Support for such ongoing conversations may include some brainstorming sessions and workshops with community leaders. The question is how do we add value to the fact that some people are already meeting and getting together? How do we invite people to listen, hear, learn, and act differently in a gentrifying and changing neighborhood?

Appendix C — ABCD FEEDBACK TO SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

- The Jubilee Center needs to reflect on its potential role when neighborhood emerging events occur, such as the anti-Latino posters from 2014. What role does the Jubilee Center (and OMS Church) have in mobilizing people—some or none?
- The Jubilee Center has some internal work to do as a result of the ABCD process. We learned things about the way we are organized, the way we recruit board members (who they are), and the programs we currently offer. Those new insights make us cognizant of the fact that we must change to meet the needs and passions of the neighborhood—that is, do what the community cares about and not just what we have always done or what we think are the important programs.

For example, if opportunities to convene as neighbors are important, how can the Jubilee Center foster such gatherings so that they become organic and self-sustaining? The board needs to review how it might want to change to be a transformed ABCD agent. Metaphor: we need a heart transplant versus just putting on a new garment; this affects the language that we use and thus, concepts that we have. We need to change and update our brochures and other written materials. This is about a foundational change. [Often, boards are involved after the fact and not in real time.] First task: identify, create, and facilitate the connections between long-time residents and new gentry.

- There are many more resources in the neighborhood than anyone realizes. What role can the Jubilee Center play in identifying those resources and connecting them? Personal introductions and facilitated conversations are important, where topics of true and acknowledged importance are shared.

Appendix D — ABCD Resources: Helpful Books and Websites

HELPFUL BOOKS

This listing of helpful books is purposely limited. There are many good books on various elements of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). Some books focus on the ABCD process, as this manual does. Other books focus on specific elements of the ABCD process, such as working with families and neighbors, identifying assets, and the communication models for working with communities. Browsing in person or online in a book retailer will lead you to other books.

Kretzmann, John and McKnight, John, 1993. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*, ACTA Publications.

Kretzmann, John and McKnight, John, 1996. *A Guide to Mapping and Mobilizing the Economic Capacities of Local Residents: A Community Building Workbook* (Asset-Based Community Development Institute Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research), ACTA Publications.

McKnight, John and Block, Peter, 2012. *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Green, Mike with Moore, Henry & O'Brien, John, 2007. *ABCD: When People Care Enough to Act*, Inclusion Press.

Green, Gary P. and Haines, Anna L., 2015. *Asset Building & Community Development*, SAGE Publications, Inc.

Snow, Luther K., 2004. *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Lupton, Robert D., 2012. *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help, And How to Reverse It*, HarperOne.

Appendix D — ABCD Resources: Helpful Books and Websites

HELPFUL WEBSITES

These few Websites are ones that we referred to as we engaged our ABCD pilot project. Because each community context is different, not all will find the same online resources helpful. There were also some online resources that we utilized that are not currently on the Internet. That is one of the challenges of perusing the Internet for helpful resources. We did not list the resources that were specifically about one organization's ABCD experience with the exception of Episcopal Relief & Development, whose worldwide ABCD efforts are noteworthy.

» The Asset-Based Community Development Institute, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University Website, found at “abcdinstitute.org” – This Website contains a treasure chest of research, downloadable publications, training videos and podcasts, tool kit, and discussion, and is highly recommended. The ABCD Institute is staffed by three individuals, including the founders of ABCD, John McKnight and John Kretzmann.

» Mike Green: ABCD in Action, found at “mike-green.org” – Mike Green's Website contains practical materials from which to learn ABCD from the ground up, including downloadable workshop handouts. The 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center was fortunate to receive mentorship advice and feedback from Mike early in its ABCD pilot project.

» Episcopal Relief & Development's Asset-Based Community Development, found at “<http://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-we-do/asset-based-community-development>” – This Website includes stories and videos of how ABCD has been used by Episcopal Relief & Development in response to worldwide development challenges, frequently in places hard hit by catastrophe.

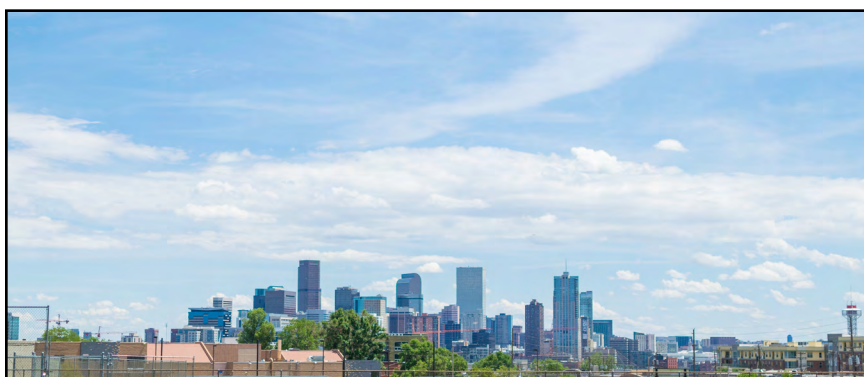
» LISC Institute for Comprehensive Community Development, found at “<http://www.instituteccd.org/resources/index.html>” – This is the Website of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and contains a downloadable document titled “Neighboring Toolkit: A Guide to Implementing Neighboring and Its Asset-Based Community Development Principles” with good information. They use the term “Neighboring” to describe the process of accompaniment that is an essential principle of ABCD work. Enter “Neighboring Toolkit” in the search box.

Appendix E — “ABCD with Your Neighborhood” Visual Style

By John Putnam

The photography and art used in “ABCD with Your Neighborhood” was selected to help aid readers to understand the ABCD process and also to give readers a sense of place in North Denver as they read about this vibrant community. Locations such as La Raza Park, North High School, Little Man Ice Cream, and construction sites at the heart of gentrification are examples of some of the places we wanted to feature in order to show readers *where* we are. We also wanted to show readers *who* we are at the 32nd Avenue Jubilee Center (Jubilee Center) and in North Denver with pictures of our ABCD Team, participants at our community meeting, members of We Are North Denver, and some of our favorite neighborhood characters. We hope that these images were useful in learning about the ABCD process and highlighting not just the despair, but also the hope, that can be found in the midst of gentrification.

The rest of this appendix will be dedicated to discussing the front cover and a selection of chapter cover photographs featured throughout this manual. Many of these photographs become even more important in context. We will explain what is happening in each photograph and why we chose these photographs to represent their respective section of this manual. We will also tell the origin of the butterflies featured throughout this manual and on the back cover.



We wanted the cover photograph to be something that would be familiar for readers both in the neighborhood and in organizations and ministries across the globe. This photograph of the Denver skyline was taken on a bright, sunny day, just outside of North High School. North Denver is just across I-25 and the Platte River from downtown, so this is a common sight for residents of the neighborhood. This photograph shows that North Denver is urban and highlights the giant sky above it. Downtown is where many North Denver residents work and play, and it is also the primary source of gentrification. For these reasons the Denver skyline was an ideal choice for our cover.

Chapter 2 focuses on the context of our ABCD project in North Denver, so we chose a photograph of a building that I saw coming to and from work each day near the Jubilee Center. The building featured in the background is representative of many of the older brick buildings in the Highlands neighborhood. The choice to include the intersection’s street signs was made to give a very literal sense of place and context as we discussed our context in North Denver in very concrete ways throughout this manual.

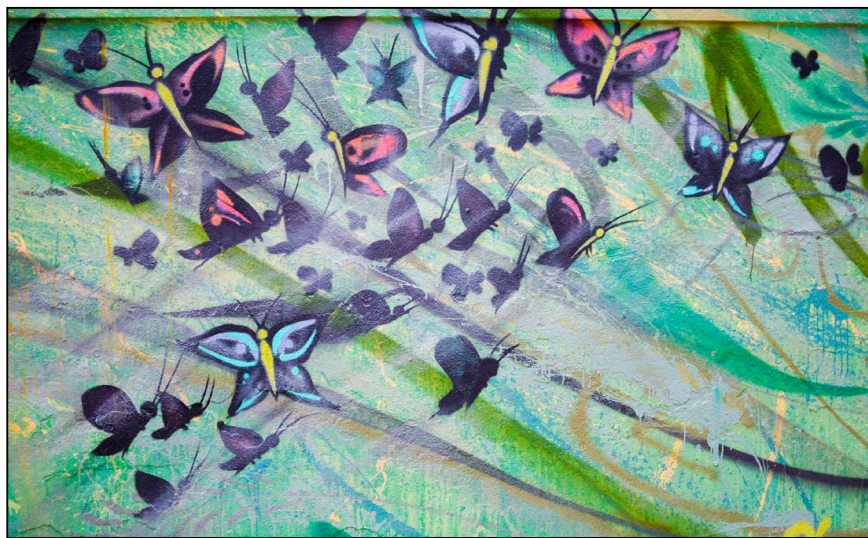


Appendix E — “ABCD with Your Neighborhood” Visual Style



North Denver is a very colorful place; so, throughout the book we wanted to use images that highlighted bright colors. This image was taken at a vigil that was organized by Latino leaders in the neighborhood to reflect the growing concerns about gentrification in North Denver. In this photograph sage and sweetgrass are being burned on the steps of the La Raza Park pavilion, a site where police disrupted a peaceful gathering of Latino community members at an annual pool party in the early 1980s.

Among the best resources for our ABCD project were local bartenders and waiters like W.B. from Patsy's Inn, Denver's oldest family-owned Italian restaurant. W.B. has a truly a one of a kind personality that I tried to capture in this photograph. He also helped us out when we wanted to know how people felt about happenings in the neighborhood, such as a new business or a city council race, because he talks with regular folks from the neighborhood every day.



I saw this mural near North High School while touring the neighborhood the first week of my internship. When looking for ways to fill the blank pages at the end of each chapter, I was inspired by the butterfly mural. It allowed us to take something beautiful from the neighborhood and combine it conceptually with the idea of transformation, which permeates all parts of the ABCD process. Artistically, we wanted the butterflies to look like they were still a part of the wall, plastered on each page.

Appendix F — Postscript: A View from the Edge

By The Rev. Deacon Linda Brown

As the General Manager for the Jubilee Center for the past 2-1/2 years, I have wondered how this small nonprofit entity could possibly remain relevant in the midst of the rapidly gentrifying Northside neighborhood. In some ways, it seemed our mission of “breaking the cycle of poverty” was perhaps losing its impetus. We were seeing fewer and fewer people coming to the door in need of assistance. We weren’t quite certain why.

Were people finding employment and not needing help any longer? Had families finally decided to move away – not only out of the neighborhood, but also out of the Denver metro area where affordable housing is virtually impossible to find? Our youth enrichment program also experienced some ups and downs, but has remained steady. Our staff and volunteer numbers were shrinking. It was growing ever harder to find suitable grantors willing to provide consistent support. The food bank with whom we partnered and who had occupied the basement of Our Merciful Savior Episcopal Church moved about a mile or so away.

Many questions ran through my mind, but they boiled down to these two: 1) Had our mission and ministry run its course, and 2) Was it time to close the doors of the Jubilee Center? I truly felt that we were sitting on the edge. Part of me said, “Don’t give up. The sea is choppy, but hold onto your faith. After all, there are still people in need finding their way to the Jubilee Center.” Another part of me said, “Perhaps it is time for a proper ending. After all, much good work had been done; many had been served and sent on their way.” Perhaps you have had similar questions arise in your mind.

I think ministries and their leaders – whether they are church related or secular – need to periodically take a hard look at what they are doing and honestly assess how effective their work is. Is the work centered on God and community? Or is it being perpetuated because it’s always been done that way or reflects someone’s personal desire? How engaged is the community in the work? Is the work “toxic charity”? Or is it truly walking with someone and strengthening that person to stand on his/her own? Is it building up the community by creating new connections?

I can only attest to how valuable the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) process has been in opening my eyes – as well as the eyes of staff and board members alike – to the possibilities of outreach ministry. I knew very little about the ABCD process when Ms. Lelanda Lee, Vice President of the Board, helped the Jubilee Center secure the funds to carry out a demonstration project.

(continued on next page)

Appendix F — Postscript: A View from the Edge

I want to pass along to you some of my key learnings, and I encourage you and your ministry team to try the ABCD process to see what you can learn.

- » **Educate yourself.** There are many good books and Websites on ABCD. Look for Webinars and seminars.
- » **Let go of expectations for any particular outcomes.** Be open to the process and be willing to be transformed by it. What you learn along the way will help shape your understanding of the community, your role in it, and where God is at work.
- » **Be sure to engage everyone** on your staff and board in what the ABCD process is all about. Encourage them to participate and take a role.
- » **Keep team members involved** with the ABCD process motivated and on track. It is easy to get distracted.
- » **Don't expect immediate results.** What I found most important is being attuned to the process.
- » **Look for openings to new relationships and connections with people.** Explore how these connections and relationships might intersect with the work of your ministry or nonprofit in a new, different, and positive way.
- » **Become a practitioner of holy listening.** Listen to what people are saying about the actual needs of their community.
- » **Give you and your team the time you need.**

Through the ABCD process, the Jubilee Center board members and staff learned to engage with its Northside community in new ways. As we developed more connections with Northside residents, businesspeople, associations, and institutions, the Jubilee Center began to see its role in the community in a new light and began to envision possibilities for its existing outreach ministries, as well as for new ones.

My prayer for ministry leaders is that you will try the ABCD process and be open to the possibilities that God presents to you.



