Welcome to Session V

Community of Practice on Using a Public Health Approach In Communities to Build Pop-Level Mental Wellness and Resilience For the C-E-B Catastrophe

March 12, 2024

Many Thanks to Our Co-Sponsors!
Key Message

“Community is Medicine”

Throughout human history our ability to band together has always been key to responding creatively, adapting to, and solving complex problems!

By working at the community level we can do this again now!
So Always Remember

If trauma can be passed down through generations, then so can healing and transformational resilience!

This is Our Mission!

Adapted from Judith Landau 2021
Summary of Last Week

• Using a **public health approach** to mental wellness and resilience is **essential** to clean up the “sewer system” that is creating social psychological, emotional, and behavioral problems—**especially** those generated by the C-E-B catastrophe.

The First Foundational Focus

• Building social connections is **by far** the most important focus of RCNs, because social isolation **produces** mental health problems, and both “strong” and “weak” connections are **essential** to deal with toxic stresses and disasters.

• A **variety** of methods can be used to build robust social connections: it should be a **stand-alone** focus **and** a **central focus** of all **other strategies**.

• When building social connections do **not** isolate people or use siloed approaches that segregate people from others: Instead, use a combination of **proportionate universalism** and **life-course** approaches to connect people **across boundaries**.
Today’s Agenda

The Second Foundational Focus:
Ensure a “Just Transition” by actively engaging residents in creating healthy, safe, equitable, zero-emission, and climate-resilient physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions.

We are Honored to Have Two Outstanding Presenters

Ruben Cantu, Director of Safety and Wellbeing, Prevention Institute

Tamira Jones Machado, Director of Capacity Building National Association of Climate Resilience Planners
Resilience Pause

If it resonates with you, take a moment to use the “skylight method” to notice what are you experiencing right now in your body, your mind, and your emotions.

**Practice Another Presencing Skill: “Six Second Breathing”**

- **Inhale** for a count of 2-4 seconds and then **exhale** for a count of 4-6 seconds.
- Find a combination that works for you but try to **exhale longer** than you inhale.

- Breathe in slowly through your **nose**, letting your **lower belly expand**.
- **Breathe out** slowly through your **mouth**.
- If your mind wanders, **gently** bring your focus **back** to the counting and breathing.
10 Minute Breakout Rooms

Please share:

• In 1 word how you feel now in the present moment?

• Did you practice the “Control Test” and teach it to someone else? If so, how did it go? If not, why not?

• What stood out to you about Robin Saenger’s presentation and Bob Doppelt’s overview of Abundant Community Edmonton’s neighbor-to-neighbor initiative, and the importance and methods of building social connections?

• Did you share that information with 2-3 people you have already spoken with about forming an RCN, or expanding an existing one, and if so, did you decide how to proceed, and if not why not?
A Process For Forming and Operating an RCN for the C-E-B Catastrophe

First Week

Step One
Get Organized by Forming an RCC and Clarifying Mission, Values, and Operating Principles

Second Week

Step Two
Begin Building Community Capacity

Option A
Begin Trauma Healing and Resilience Education

Option B
Develop Asset Maps and Community Resilience Portrait

Today

Step Three
Establish Vision of Success, Goals, Strategy, and Action Plan

- Build Social Connections Across Boundaries
- Make a Just Transition in Physical/Built, Economic and Ecological Conditions
- Develop Universal Mental Wellness and Resilience Literacy
- Foster Engagement in Activities that Promote Wellness & Resilience Literacy
- Establish Ongoing Opportunities to Heal Trauma

Last 2 Sessions

Step Four
Implement Strategy with Focus on Five Core Focal Areas

Step Five
Continually Track Progress, Learn, and Improve

Step Six
Build on Successes to Plan for Long Term
The Five Foundational Areas Are Interconnected

1. Build Social Connections Across Boundaries in Communities
2. Ensure a Just Transition by Creating Supportive Physical/Built, Economic, and Ecological Conditions
3. Establish Ongoing Opportunities to Heal Suffering and Trauma
4. Universal Capacity for Mental Wellness and Transformational Resilience
5. Develop Mental Wellness and Resilience Literacy
6. Foster Engagement in Practices that Promote Mental Wellness & Resilience
The part of my identity that I am most aware of on a daily basis is________.

The part of my identity that I am least aware of on a daily basis is________.

The part of my identity that provides me with the most privilege is________.

The part of my identity that I believe is most misunderstood by others is________.

The part of my identity that makes me feel discriminated against is________.

Now think through how these factors affect you.

And how they affect BIPOC and LGBTQ+ residents!

Adapted from slide by Kevin McCloud, Trauma Resource Institute
A Just Transition for the C-E-B Catastrophe is Based on Three Realities

1. Both the **impacts** of **and** actions to **cut emissions**, **regenerate nature**, **and adapt to climate impacts** can generate social, economic, and ecological **harm**.

2. Without **explicit sustained preventative actions** those changes can **unjustly impact** BIPOC and low-income residents, communities, and nations—and unduly **benefit** wealthier populations who **contribute the most** to the climate crisis.

3. **Everyone** thus has an **ethical** and **moral responsibility** to ensure an **equitable distribution** of both the **downsides and benefits** of their actions and policies.
A Just Transition Means “Leave No One Behind”

Should Include Three Key Elements:

1. **Active participation** of affected communities in planning, implementing, and evaluating solutions.

2. **Anticipating the negative impacts** through assessments that foresee and proactively prevent harmful outcomes.

3. Significant ongoing **support** through targeted **financial aid** and **capacity building** efforts that enhance the **capabilities** of **marginalized populations** and **communities** to **actively participate** in ensuring a **just transition**.
Three Areas Where a Just Transition is Especially Needed for the C-E-B Catastrophe: **Physical/Built, Economic, and Ecological Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical/Built Conditions</th>
<th>Economic Conditions</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>• Transportation</td>
<td>• Local business operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Housing</td>
<td>• Living wage jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public spaces</td>
<td>• Transition to “Cradle to Cradle”</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Energy and climate adaptation</td>
<td>• Energy and climate adaptation</td>
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</tbody>
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**Ecological Conditions**

- Air, water, and soil toxins and pollution
- Waterways, lakes, ponds, wetlands
- Forests, grasslands, soils, and other ecosystems
- All forms of biodiversity
Why Focus on Local Physical/Built Conditions?

- **Transportation** infrastructure affects mental health by creating separation, limiting physical movement and producing high stress during commutes.

- Transit **pollution** is often concentrated in BIPOC and low-income neighborhoods, causing mental health problems.

- **Housing** and mental health are closely connected. Dilapidated/toxic housing is directly linked to psychological distress and poor child and adult development.

- Parks and other **public spaces** that fail to provide safe healthy places to meet, recreate, and connect with nature create mental health problems.

- Efforts to slash local GHG and adapt to climate impacts can also increase inequality and mental health and psychosocial problems.
Why Focus on Local Economic Conditions?

- Automation, off-shoring, corporate/Wall St. market power and other forces have eliminated millions of living wage jobs and reduced wages for millions of others, especially for BIPOC and other low-income residents and those less educated.

- People who lack living-wage jobs and the long-term unemployed have 3 times greater chance of low self-esteem and hopelessness that can lead to severe anxiety, depression and other mental health problems.

- Poor mental health can activate a viscous cycle of reduced employability and inability to retain a job, which produces more psychological & emotional problems.

- These factors are major contributors to rising alcohol abuse, drug addiction, and suicides among those with low-wage jobs or no jobs—especially those without a college degree: called “Deaths of Despair.”
Why Focus on Local Ecological Conditions?

- **Polluted** and **degraded** local forests, waterways and other **ecosystems**, lack of **greenspaces**, and the **loss of biodiversity** create mental health problems. E.g. certain **air pollutants** have been linked to depression, anxiety, and suicide.

- Research found people living more than **2/3 of a mile (1 Km)** from **green spaces** have **50% greater chance** of experiencing severe stress; and people living **without greenspaces** had **44%** higher rates of **anxiety** compared to those living near it.

- BIPOC and low-income communities often **suffer the most** from these issues.

- And without great care efforts to **shift to clean renewable energy** and **prepare for** and **adapt** to climate impacts can **increase** unjust and inequitable practices.
Why Should RCN’s—and Mental Health and Social Service Practitioners--Actively Engage Residents in Making a Just Transition?

**Because Doing So Can:**

- Build healthy social connections
- Involve residents in pro-social activities
- Protect residents from climate impacts
- Increase their sense of safety and security
- Create greater social efficacy
- Enhance their physical health
- Reduce local emissions and regenerate local ecosystems and biodiversity and thus do their part to minimize the C-E-B Catastrophe

Seeing small signs of progress can generate healthy hope for future!
EVERY RCC Activity Should Ensure a Just Transition

- Building just, equitable, safe and healthy climate-resilient physical/built, economic, and ecological conditions should be a **stand alone RCC focus**.

- It should also be a **central focus** of **each of the other 4 foundational areas**.
Introducing Ruben Cantu

Director of Safety and Wellbeing,
Prevention Institute
Introducing Tamira Jones Machado

Director of Capacity Building
National Association of Climate Resilience Planners
Resilience Pause

If it resonates with you, take a moment to use the “skylight method” to notice what are you experiencing right now in your body, your mind, and your emotions.

**Practice “Six Second Breathing”**

- Inhale for a count of 2-4 seconds and then exhale for a count of 4-6 seconds.
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Q & A with Ruben and Tamira

Please post questions in chat
Breakout Rooms

• Share what you learned from Ruben and Tamira

• Discuss if and how you can help your RCN make a Just Transition in the neighborhood or community

• Identify key questions
Q & A

Please post comments and questions in chat
If you want CE credits please complete the APHA session evaluation form

Homework

- Practice a “Six Second Breathing” Resilience Pause once a day—and teach it to someone.

- Share what you learned today with the people you are talking with about forming an RCN and discuss how you can help your neighborhood or community make a Just Transition.

Remember the 1-hr “Special Session” on Thursday of next week, March 21, focused on helping youth build resilience for the C-E-B catastrophe: The outstanding Mycelium Youth Network will make a short presentation

Next Tuesday, March 19 CoP: The third foundational focus: Build universal “literacy” about mental wellness and transformational resilience
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