CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

Using Values-Based Narratives To Build Healthy Communities

Clear, Values-Based Communication to Build Bridges

To communicate effectively, understand and clearly express your core values. Cut through jargon with plain language to build trust and shared understanding. Intentionally cultivate spaces that prioritize open dialogue, encouraging others to speak up and disrupt the "spiral of silence." To galvanize support, illustrate how issues impact entire communities, not just individuals, fostering a broader sense of connection and urgency.

> " If we're using the term equity, we have to say what it means. If we care about families who can support themselves because there's a living wage, and schools that stimulate children because classrooms are the right size, teachers are well paid, and kids arrive with full bellies, then we need to say that.
> **Lori Dorfman, Director, Berkeley Media Studies Group**

When you feel like you're alone or in the minority on a topic, are you more or less likely to speak up? **The Spiral of Science** explains how this fuels perceived division and isolation. Explore this resource to shift narratives toward connection and collective action.

Embracing Tension to Uncover Common Ground

Embrace productive tension and conflict to forge deeper collaboration and innovative solutions. Tackle complex challenges head-on to ignite growth, both personally and within communities, recognizing these are the efforts most worth pursuing. Ground efforts in shared values and struggles to build stronger interconnectedness to support collective action and facilitate broader impacts beyond individual concerns. Act within your spheres of influence, identifying core shared values to drive meaningful, values-based change.
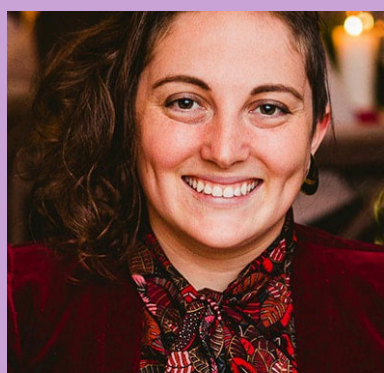
> " We avoid conflict. We avoid tension. We just want everyone to get along. But instead of addressing what lies beneath the surface, we often resort to tone policing. When we back away from those spaces of tension, nothing changes, the problems remain, and people still aren't being heard. Rather than running away, let's face the discomfort. Let's use an asset-based, Common Ground approach and explore with curiosity and creativity to understand what's really going on behind closed doors.
> **Rachel Peller, Director, Wisconsin Partners**

Engage with Wisconsin Partners' **Values Bracket**. What did you learn about your core values, and what surprised you?

Spaces Where Shared Values, Innovation, and Transformation Flourish

Drive change by centering community perspectives and actively resisting outdated practices. Embrace innovation, grounding dialogue to foster inclusive conversations that welcome diverse voices while upholding core principles. Initiate transformation within; honor lived experience and ancestral wisdom, allowing systems that no longer work to give way to deeper stewardship and vision, and making space to dream of a better future.

> " When we look back at the history of what has worked in community building and bring those practices to the center, we can begin to think beyond the current system, which we know is failing. There comes a time when we must give hospice to old systems. When we're able to grieve that loss in a way that honors the dignity of our efforts, that we tried, and some of us had the best intentions, we can acknowledge that it didn't work. Only then can we let go of what was and create space to form networks that are capable of envisioning the future.
> **Kellie Easton, CEO, Action4Equity**

How can we practice being better ancestors right now? **The Better Ancestors Framework for System Change** asks us to honor past efforts and reimagine just systems of care for future generations.

Take a look at the **Crafting a Health Equity Centered Narrative Factsheet** to explore practical tools, guiding principles, and real-world examples that help shift dominant narratives, foster cross-sector collaboration, and center equity in how we communicate and build community.

Call To Action
Join Build Healthy Places Network as we co-create resources to support challenging conversations needed to drive transformative change.
Sign up for our **newsletter** to stay connected and informed and learn about opportunities to take action.

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Discover more resources at **Build Healthy Places Network**

The Build Healthy Places Network is a program of the Public Health Institute, Oakland, CA