

From Outreach to Housing: Creative and Effective Tools for Engagement



HOUSING AND HEALTH
TO END HOMELESSNESS



HOUSING AND HEALTH
TO END HOMELESSNESS

Howard Bess
*Mobile Crisis Team
Case Manager*

Who we are: Samantha Oppenheimer, MSW
SHARP Project Manager

Christina Clayton, LICSW, CDP
Clinical Program Senior Manager

Agenda

Introduction

Philosophy & approach

Qualities & skills

Safety & boundaries

Q&A

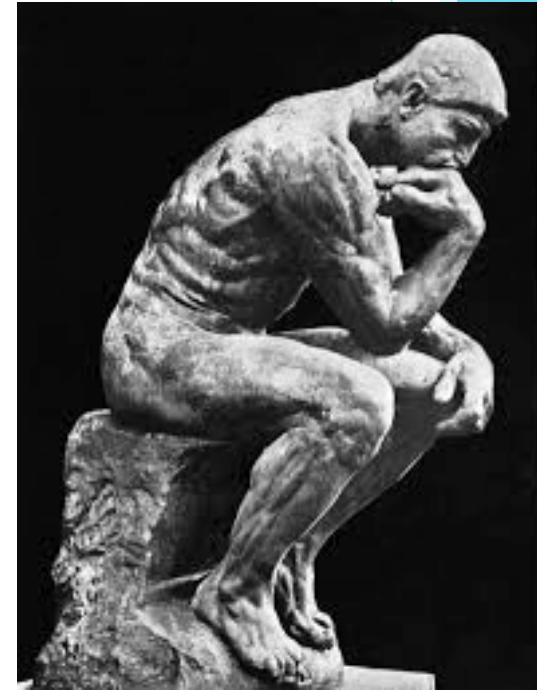
Getting to know you

- ▶ Role poll
- ▶ Community context
- ▶ What would be most helpful?

Philosophy

We remember people deserve to:

- Be treated as an individual
- Express their feelings
- Get empathetic responses
- Be recognized as a person of worth
- Not be judged
- Make own choices and decisions
- Have a right to privacy



What is Outreach?

- Finding and engaging
- Bringing services to people
- Building trusting relationship
- Helping people achieve their goals
- Connecting people with resources



Imagine an approach that...

- ▶ Asks “What happened to you?” instead of “What is wrong with you?”
- ▶ Understands past trauma can be triggered by experiences in the present
- ▶ Is committed to supporting people as they heal

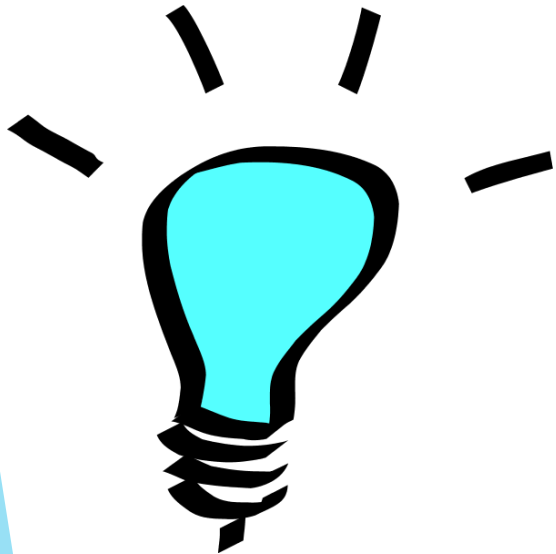


How and Why It's Different



Purpose

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Why
- How



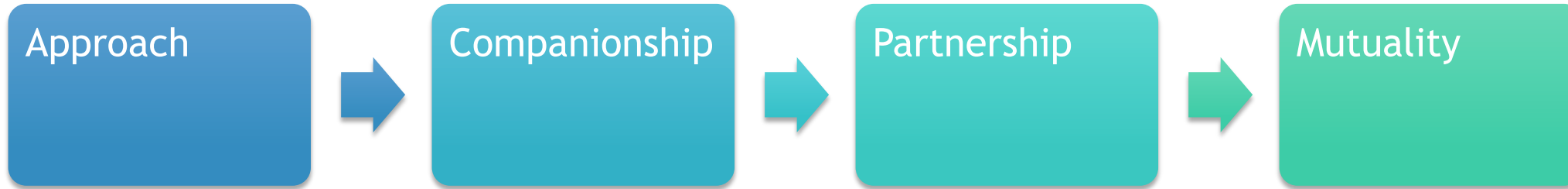


Who needs outreach?

- ▶ People who are not accessing traditional services and have difficulty meeting their basic needs
- ▶ People who would benefit from connections to housing, welfare benefits, healthcare and other supports
- ▶ People in crisis

Relational Stages of Outreach

From the Training Curriculum for HCH Outreach Workers & Craig Rennebohm, MH Chaplaincy



Engagement Strategies

- ▶ Enter with a "beginner's mind"
- ▶ Bring something of value
- ▶ Offer choices to help address power differential
- ▶ Ask the folks you serve what they would like to do...and then do it!
- ▶ Seek diverse perspectives
- ▶ Acknowledge strengths and differences
- ▶ Accept when you've made a mistake

Group Discussion

Direct Service Providers

- Who are you working with who is the most challenging person for you to engage & what are the barriers you're facing?

Administrators

- Who do you hire to do outreach work and why?

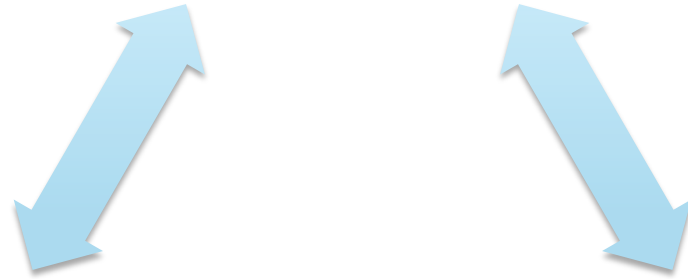
Policy Makers

- Who do you think needs outreach in your community and why?

Alternate

- What behaviors do you find challenging in a relationship and how do you manage your response?

Individual skills



Community
Building



Teamwork

What NOT to do...

- Interact with judgement
- Push client too far or fast
- Overstep your role
- Make promises
- Hand them a flier and then walk away
- Give up at the first sign of disinterest
- Get in the middle of an unsafe situation
- Panic!
- Burn a bridge with a community partner



Cultivating Joy



- ▶ Observation
- ▶ Objectivity
- ▶ Open-mindedness

MORNINGS ARE FOR:



COFFEE AND CONTEMPLATION

MEMEUL.COM

- ▶ How do you prepare to greet the world?
- ▶ What makes you feel important?
- ▶ Engage in self-care and discharge effects of secondary trauma

I THOUGHT I WAS IN A
BAD MOOD BUT IT'S BEEN
A FEW YEARS SO I GUESS
THIS IS WHO I AM NOW.

@REBEL.CIRCUS



Tips for Self Care

- Find time for yourself every day
- Delegate- learn to ask for help
- Have a transition from work to home
- Learn to say no (or yes) more often
- Assess for Compassion Fatigue and impact of vicarious trauma
- Recognize burnout
- Recommended Resources: University of Buffalo Self-Care Starter Kit
<https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit.html> and
Trauma Stewardship by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

Self-Care is a
priority and necessity
- not a luxury -
in the work that we do.

Safety & Boundaries

- ▶ Avoid assumptions
- ▶ Train staff on best practices
- ▶ You are not a hero!
- ▶ Trust your gut
- ▶ Carry first aid and overdose prevention supplies
- ▶ Keep everyone safe
- ▶ Pay attention to your environment



Linking to the Community

- Be an ambassador & advocate
- Building Relationships
- Schedule outreach to providers too!
- Offer to be of assistance
- Recognize who you may encounter in your work





Transitions

- Talk about it
- Feelings of abandonment
- Recognizing your reactions
- Celebrating a person's journey
- Making a secure connection
- Summarizing

Challenges

- Losing the person in the community
- Person becomes paranoid about your role
- Trauma history
- Limited services available
- Long waitlists
- Coordinating without reliable communication



Build Some Skills

EXERCISE:

1. Pair up
2. Person A: Describe a scenario where you are struggling to connect with a person
3. Person B: Suggest some creative or new ideas

DISCUSSION POINTS


1. What are the goals according to the person?
2. What is the person interested in?
3. What other services or resources could benefit the person?
4. What creative ideas come to mind?



Take-home Points

- Understand nature of outreach
- Be open, flexible and adaptable
- Recognize the complexities
- Listen without judgment or agendas
- Pay attention to your reactions
- Know your role & limitations
- You don't operate in a vacuum
- “Lone Rangers” need not apply
- Have support and a life outside of work





Q&A

For further information/questions,
contact us at:

- ▶ Howard Bess: hbess@desc.org
- ▶ Samantha Oppenheimer: soppenheimer@desc.org
- ▶ Christina Clayton: cclayton@desc.org