

Community Organizing

In times of crisis



**The goal of
community organizing
is to make what's
impossible, possible
and what's possible,
inevitable!**

“Highlander
was where we
found the
courage to
fight and the
tools to win.”
Rosa Parks



“We had members in every elementary, junior high and senior high school. We had them organized from federal and state and local jobs, wherever there were more than 10 Blacks employed, we had a member there. We were organized to the point that we knew that in a matter of hours we could corral the whole city.” Jo Ann Robinson, co-founder of the WPC



“We had
planned the
protest long
before Mrs.
Parks was
arrested.”

Jo Ann
Robinson



“Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Community Organizing Nuts and Bolts



Principles

Self Determination: directly impacted people are the best suited to understand systems and determine the solutions, demands, strategies & tactics.

Power: people are building a base of collective power and leadership capable of transforming abusive power systems.

Justice not “Just Us”

Direct Action: organization engages in direct, collective action to win demands.**

Campaigns to win specific demands:

Bring new people into organization

Nurture leadership

Create opportunities for political development

Create opportunities to experience and practice real democracy

Top Reasons why people join organizations: (Self interest)

- 1. To feel powerful.**
- 2. To be more powerful as a collective than as an individual.**
- 3. To meet people and make new friends**
- 4. To get a problem solved: housing, job, healthcare, etc.**
- 5. To feel that they are making a difference by contributing.**
- 6. To learn new skills.**
- 7. To feel proud about themselves and their work.**
- 8. To advance themselves.**
- 9. To have a community.**
- 10. To find healing, hope and joy.**

QUESTIONS

What is my self interest in
justice and transformation?
How can I organize more
effectively?

What can I do
to fortify myself
so I can
organize more
effectively?

Campaign Criteria

Issue is both widely and deeply felt in the community*

Policy has a real and meaningful impact on people's lives*

Campaign creates meaningful leadership development opportunities (both 'skills' experience and roles)

The policy is specific and measurable so you will know when you win*

Creates ample opportunities for base building

Gives people a sense of their own power

Alters power relationships

Centers the leadership, expertise, and brilliance of directly impacted people*

Creates opportunity to use self interest as a tool to move closer to shared interest*

Allows us to create a culture of belonging, affirmation, and joy in our organization and movement

Allows us to strengthen relationships with potential movement partners

Shares a long term target with another community org's campaign.

QUESTIONS?





We are looking
for the ones who
are looking for us.



I think people were fed up. They had reached the point that they knew there was no return. That they had to do it or die. And that's what kept it going. It was the sheer spirit for freedom.

Jo Ann Robinson



SNCC

LEGACY PROJECT

