

Building an MS Community:



The Foundation for
Building Stronger
Community

MS Communities : the idea




- ⌘ The idea comes from a realization that, when working with those with Multiple Sclerosis, unless we meet and come to know those persons, there can be no true understanding of the environment into which they have been thrust.
- ⌘ There is a need to become fully aware of the importance of openness and of the need for inclusion in the larger community.

The Result Must Be An Awareness Of:



- ☒ the importance of inclusion;
- ☒ and the importance of engaging, in the larger community, those who are in danger of being marginalized by a disease over which they have no control.

Therefore the concept of Community is:

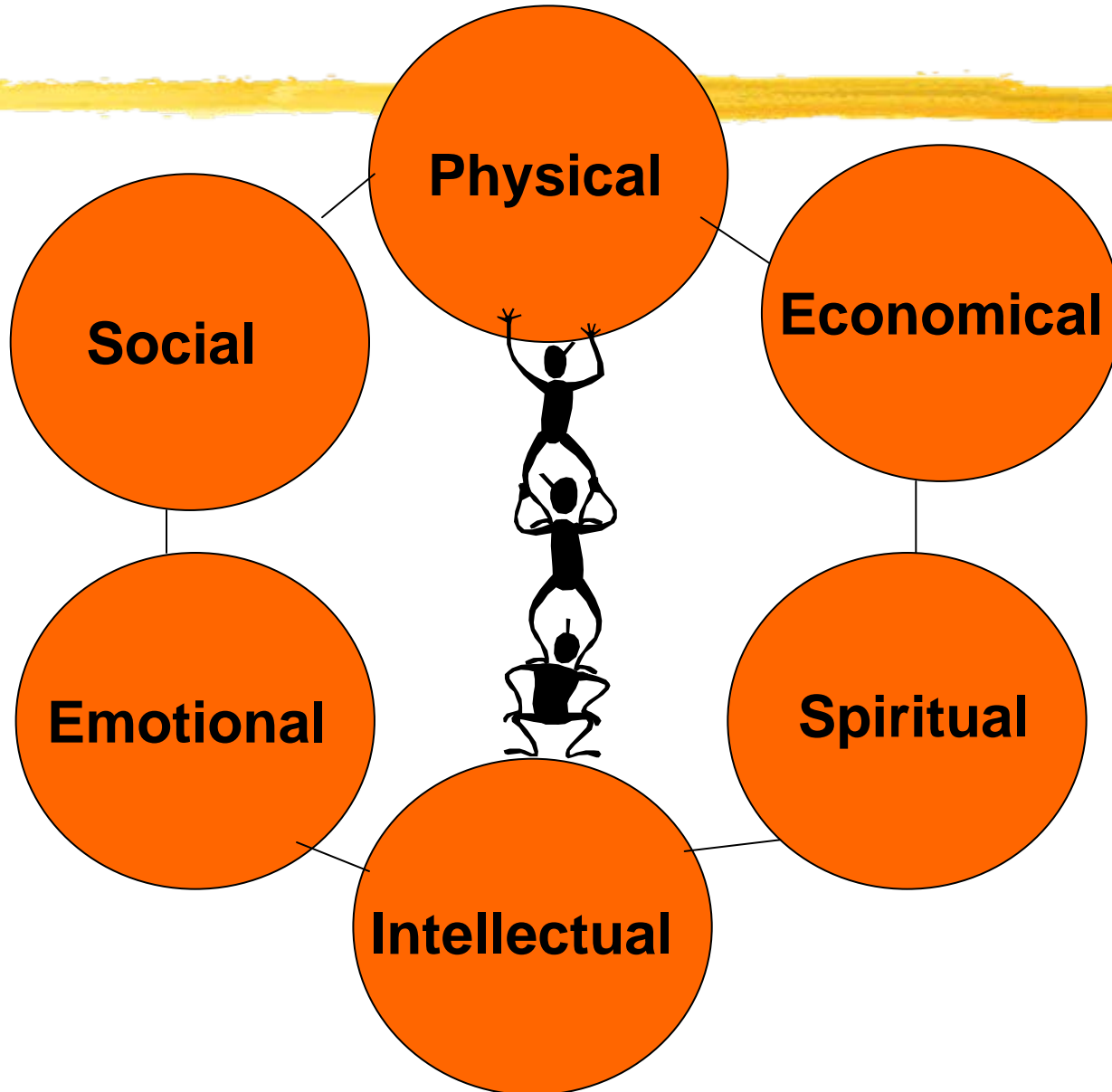


⌘ ".....about universality, acceptance and self determination; - a creation and integration of communities sharing knowledge, skills, abilities and gifts with one another. It represents opportunity to share and exchange the assets of one community for those of others".

John P. Kretzmann & John L. McKnight -

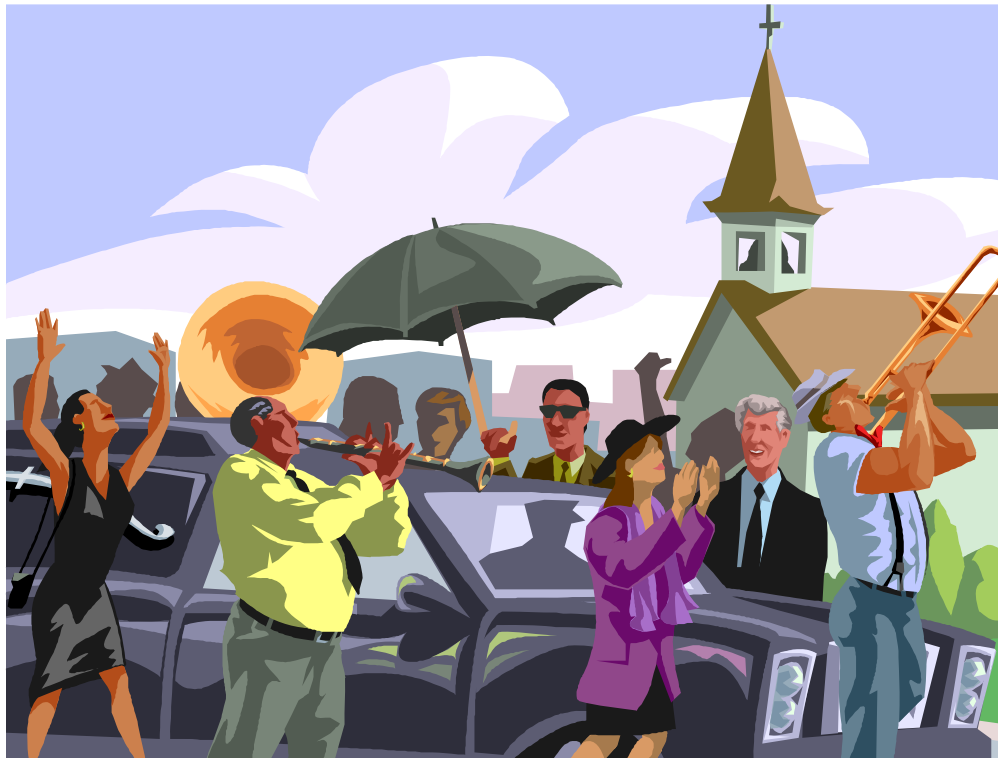
'Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Towards Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets'

All Communities Provide -




Can We Lose Our Connection To Community?

How does having a chronic disease affect our community connections?



Multiple Sclerosis brings possible losses and the risks of marginalization



- freedom
- healthy identity
- integrity and dignity
- hope
- control over the body
- faith that life is just
- social relations

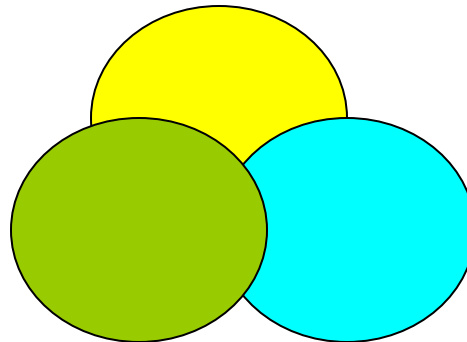
What assets do we have to cope with losses?

Informal Institutions

- Groups (coffee, community)
- Clubs
 - social, athletic, church etc
 - card playing

Formal Institutions

- Governments
- Organizations
- Agencies
- Religious
- associations



People

- ⌘ Self
- ⌘ Family
- ⌘ Citizens
- ⌘ Neighbors
- ⌘ Etc

Our Community Vision and Environment:

Connection to broader Health systems



Creating partner-ships and working together i.e. Community Advisory Council

Connecting people with Ms to the Society

Developing capacity & assets. Formal, informal, people

Dr. Al Condeluci identified



The notion of Self efficacy and Interdependence
but....

- We must examine the Systems, Services, Actions and Paradigms of how we operate in society – He says
- *“Even if we focus on services and supports, the differences of vulnerability drive people apart. Our efforts as noble as they are, often can not change the differences people have”.*



Dr. Condeluci (cont):



“We must promote a sense of similarity between people and promote an agenda of building **Social Capital** – *relationships and how they can promote positive by-products in your life*”

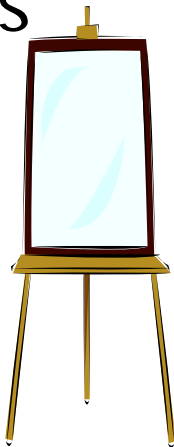
“In building community we need to find similarities and engage each other toward a common goal or objective”.

Dr. Condeluci identified (cont):

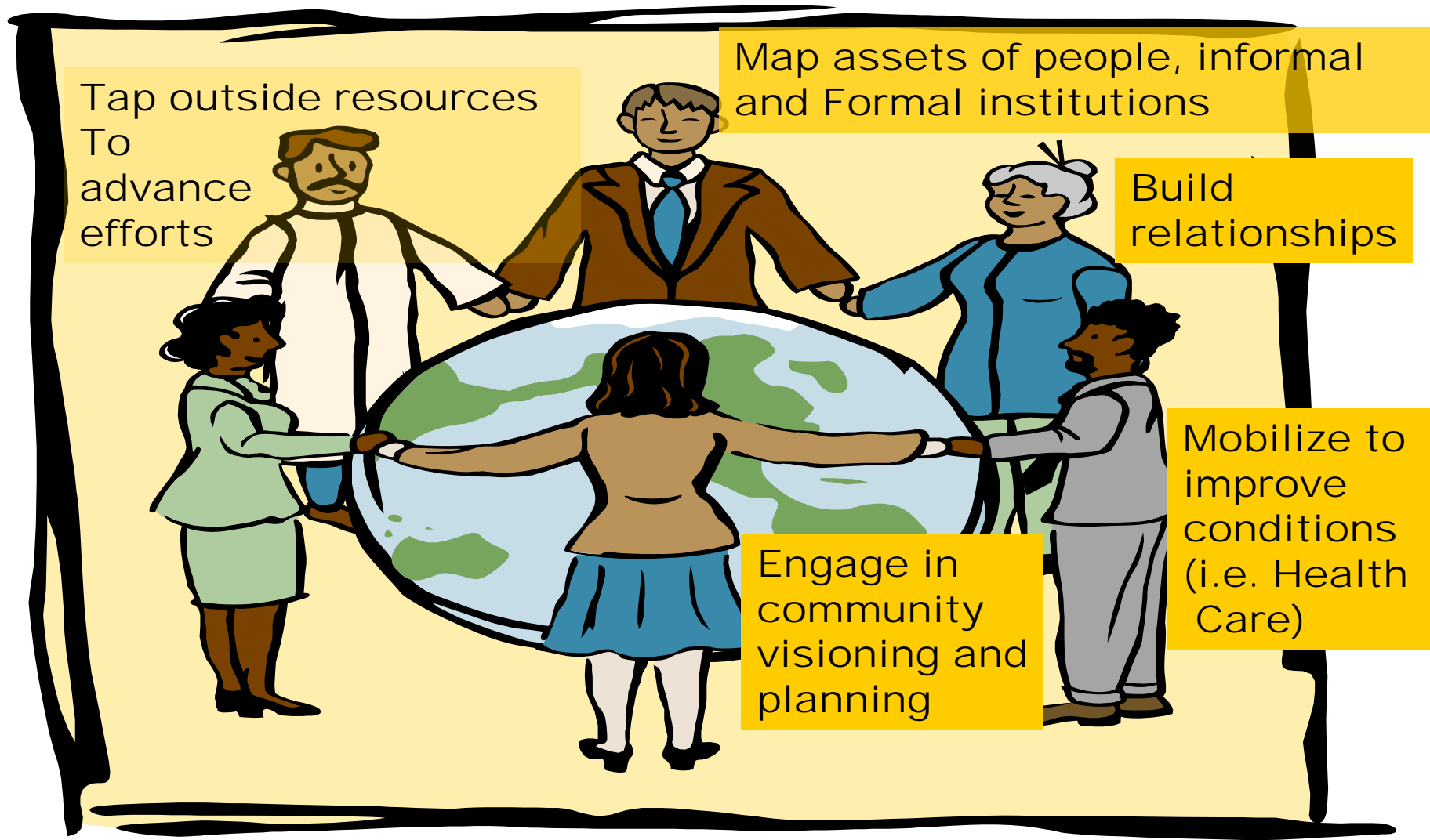
- The notion of Gatekeeper -

Who are our Gatekeepers and who could they be?

“A valued member of the community who other members find to be influential or powerful. When this person endorses or acknowledges a new person, their influence affects or motivates other members to do the same”.



Putting it all together: The Key Steps to Community Enhancement



How do we engage in Cultural Shifting

- ⌘ Be Positive
- ⌘ Reach Out
- ⌘ Take Risks
- ⌘ Enthusiasm
- ⌘ Flexibility
- ⌘ Action-Oriented
- ⌘ Brevity
- ⌘ Creativity



Sense of Community

⌘ "...a feeling that members have a belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together". (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 9)



Interdependence: Community-based Wellness



- ⌘ Interdependence is about building relationships that lead to mutual acceptance and respect.
- ⌘ Model for advocating the inclusion of all.
- ⌘ Community and individuals within define themselves.

The Edmonton Chapter believes we can **REACH OUT** through the

capacities, skills, and assets of our MS
Community to enrich, engage, and empower
those with MS and those in the Community at
large

PEOPLE

