

MARK S. HOMAN



**Promoting
Community
Change**

MAKING IT HAPPEN
IN THE REAL WORLD

SIXTH EDITION

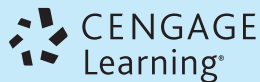


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Promoting Community Change

Making It Happen in the Real World

MARK S. HOMAN



Australia • Brazil • Mexico • Singapore • United Kingdom • United States

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To Ryann Stephanie Lane

May you draw upon the strength of your special roots to grow confident, thoughtful, and caring. Your beautiful smile is a beacon.

To Andrew

Your unique gifts have made me smile and sharpened my lens on the world. Your life has touched so many of us. Many more will be strengthened because of you.

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About the Author



Mark S. Homan remains active in work to promote community change after a career of more than 30 years teaching in community college and in undergraduate and graduate social work and human services programs. Mark is the past chair of the international Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA). He also served as adjunct faculty and guest lecturer for numerous colleges, universities, and training consortia in the United States, Russia, and Sweden.

Mark uses his own very active involvement in the community to contribute to its improvement and to increase his own learning. For more than 40 years Mark has worked with diverse populations in urban, rural, and reservation communities on a broad range of issues, including neighborhood stabilization and empowerment, hunger, reproductive rights, children with special health care needs, community mental health, family planning, community health work, capital punishment, public schools and community development, political campaign organizing, foster care, and adoption. In addition to his roles as organizer, lobbyist, consultant, and teacher, Mark has developed and directed several human services programs. A strong advocate of community empowerment, Mark is a founding member of many community organizations and agencies and has served in executive leadership roles on numerous community boards and councils.

Mark is the author of *Rules of the Game: Lessons From the Field of Community Change*, both a textbook and a practical guide for community change agents that is based on his many years of experience in community organization and development work. In addition to workshops and numerous keynote speeches and presentations dealing with various aspects of community building and community power, Mark is frequently asked by public and private organizations to assist

them in increasing their effectiveness. Mark has been the recipient of numerous awards for teaching excellence and for work with communities.

At this stage in his career, Mark has come to accept the fact that he will not be playing shortstop for the San Francisco Giants, but he is enjoying getting reacquainted with his guitar.



Preface

Hundreds of people. An interesting crowd. Even without any campaign buttons, the garb itself announced neighborhood activist, or maybe, gad, environmentalist. You'd expect them. But the button down shirts, the weary office worker, the frazzled mom, those with hair that grayed some years ago, and a few who rolled in still seated in their chairs? They keep turning out. Some biked to get there. Some walked. Some drove across town. You'd think they'd be worn out by now; but the numbers don't shrink, they grow. Probably not what the Transportation Authority and the road builders were expecting. This was the fourth public hearing they'd scheduled to wear down the opposition, claiming the show was to "get input." They got an earful. Each time they had changed the process and put a new twist on the information to get a response that would justify a decision that they thought had already been made. Each time citizens told them the same thing. They not only showed up, they were well organized, and they knew what to say—how to confront misinformation and how to get their points across. They were prepared to stay on point and emphasize the same message. We won't let you tear down more than 100 locally owned businesses, historic structures, and even a couple of churches. We won't let you waste almost a hundred million dollars to widen a road that doesn't need to become so bloated. We won't let you turn a place into a car corridor. We won't let you sit by yourselves and carve up our community. Everybody, back to the drawing board. Literally. The city council now demanded that the destructive expansion be taken off the table. They ordered a new design to protect, even enhance, the area, not destroy it.

Everyone taking part in the action knew this was not really about a road. It was about how community decisions get made, and who gets to make them. It was the backroom deal makers versus common citizens and the light of day. It was about power and organization.

A small, tattered neighborhood had raised opposition years ago. Didn't matter. They didn't count. They do now. They had beaten back other efforts that would have destroyed their homes and their spirit. They became skilled. They connected with policymakers, other neighborhoods, and their own abilities. They worked to transform the neighborhood, putting in a park, a garden, new

streetscape, and so many other improvements that the paper ran a story about its rebirth. They had more pride and even more to care about now, and they had learned how to work together, work with other partners, and organize.

When the road builders turned their sights on them this time, they saw a different neighborhood. With a rich, powerful neighborhood partner they built a coalition of more than 20 neighborhoods, scores of local businesses, and hundreds of other supporters. The coalition prepared well-researched position papers that gave credibility to their position. They met with elected officials. Members appeared on call-in radio shows, TV, and social media. Because it was organized, it could mobilize. They could turn out quite a crowd, and they could send the road builders and the deal makers back to the drawing board.

There is a lot going on in this story that you will find in this book, starting with a belief in the possibility of change—not only changing community attitudes but practices and conditions as well. What else do you see? Maybe you recognize that community, businesses, and history are at stake, but do you see that community values are as well? You might see that questions of social justice are being answered. What else did you notice that gives the organization strength? You probably understood that the power of the organization was more important than just the power of its position. Still, that position is important, and being able to state it well is an important contributor to credibility, a central factor in efforts to promote change. There are other things you are likely see: the importance of being well networked, the use of social media, the ability of participants to work well together, the presence of political capital, the awareness and use of members' abilities, and more. Of course, this is an unfolding story that has been going on for a few years, so there is much more than what these few paragraphs can hold. You probably have noticed that there are a few more pages in this book as well. So you might guess that there are a few more ideas here that can help you write your own stories of community change.

What you may not have noticed was the participation of social workers or other health and human services professionals featured in an active role (well, maybe there was one). Why might that be? Are roads or anything else that endanger older people or people with disabilities not our concern? Do we not care where tax money is spent, or not spent? Do we fail to realize that our choices about transportation and other matters affect the environment in which we live? Are we unable to recognize that those who shape decisions that affect the entire community may benefit some who already have many benefits and leave others further behind? I don't think so. I think we can understand these things, but we may not have a clear picture of how these matters fit into our professional roles. This is changing.

Over the years I have seen students, faculty members, and practitioners questioning the confinement to routine ways of going about our work or even understanding what our work might be. I have seen a growing recognition that just providing services and doing little to improve conditions that require those services may be at odds with some noble, provocative features in our profession's ethics code.

Although you don't see any member of the helping professions in the opening story, more and more are getting into the game—I should say, back into the

game. Our professions have a rich history of working to secure human rights and improve living conditions. It is part of our identity. It is more and more again becoming part of our education and practice.

A groundswell of recognition and interest is moving the field. The National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) has been openly examining the organization's role in political advocacy, and they are now developing a new Code of Ethics with a stronger commitment to matters of social justice. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is currently rewriting the Education Policy and Accreditation Standards that govern accreditation for baccalaureate and master's level social work programs. A stronger place for macro practice is emerging. The social work Baccalaureate Program Directors (BPD) and the graduate level National Association of Deans and Directors (NADD) are bringing more attention to macro practice. After a hiatus of years, social work researchers and faculty interested in policy practice are now holding Policy Conferences and organizing again to promote policy research, teaching strategies, and ideas for maximizing social work's involvement in social policy at the national, state, and local levels. Jack Rothman, a social work scholar and a National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Pioneer, authored a report in late 2012 documenting the marginalization of macro practice in social work. This led to the creation of the Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work. Not only have 18 social work educational leaders with national stature agreed to become members of the Special Commission, but as of this writing more than 100 faculty, students, and practitioners are now participating in the work, which may well produce a sea change in the social work profession.

There's more. The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA), the community psychology division of the American Psychological Association, and the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA), an international organization for community organizers, activists, nonprofit administrators, community builders, policy practitioners, students, and educators, have led the formation of the Policy Action and Research Collaborative (PARC). This collaborative brings together members from about 20 professional organizations in social work, psychology, public health, and human services to promote social justice and strengthen communities.

More collaboration is under way. The leaders of NASW, CSWE, the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) that guides social work licensing, the Special Commission, and ACOSA have agreed to a set of principles and pledged to work together to restore and strengthen social work's commitment to human rights and social justice and the professional education and practice that is needed to make real progress.

Yes, social work, psychology, and health and human services faculty and practitioners have been actively redefining professional roles, practices, and education. A remarkable amount of momentum has been building in just the last few years. Students are not sitting on the sidelines either. The Macro Social Work Student Network (MSWSN) has been developing chapters in schools throughout the country to strengthen the voice of students in setting the direction of social work. They may well spark the work of student organizations in other professions to strengthen their macro level curriculum as well.

There is an ever-increasing recognition that conditions and professional education and practices throughout the world deserve more attention. Global content is found in this book, and it is also finding a place in curriculum. Educators and practitioners throughout the world are meeting, exchanging ideas, and finding ways to work together.

Much is happening in our professional education and practice, as well it should. Much is also happening in communities and in the cause of human rights throughout the world. The demand for knowledge and competence in working with individuals and families to improve their lives, their communities, and beyond is more than a response to professional requirements. It goes much deeper than that. It is demanded by our understanding of the challenges people struggle to meet every day, our recognition of their ability and courage, our values, and our common humanity.

I challenge you to think deeper about the reasons for this work. I want you to examine the nature of the work itself. I want you to consider and question theories that attempt to explain what leads to conditions that deny or interfere with full regard for human welfare, what keeps them in place, or what provokes change. Even more, I want to take you outside the pages of this book. I hope that what you may learn and think about starts or strengthens an image you hold of yourself as an agent of change.

I recognize that many of you do not see yourselves as community activists, nor do you see yourselves working for community change as your primary professional role. I have taken that into active consideration in writing this edition. Throughout their careers all social workers, human services workers, public health workers, and others dedicated to helping people realize that well-being will be confronted by the challenge to promote change. Almost every day you see something that could be different, that could be better. You will see things that frustrate, confuse, and harm. You will also see signs of inspiration and noble purpose. You will see people acting with fear and some acting with courage. You will see that a few of your colleagues and a number of the people whom you serve have resigned themselves not to see much at all. In large part, this is due to a belief that no one can really make a difference. I expect you will challenge that belief and find ways that others can challenge it as well. Even if it is not your primary professional role, I want you to know that it is an important role, recognize the part you can play, and believe that you can be successful. For those of you who envision a larger role for yourself in promoting community development and building community organizations, you will find information here to deepen your commitment, increase your confidence, and strengthen your effectiveness.

In the following pages you will come to note some basic principles and common themes that are at the heart of community practice. Matters such as doing things with people, not for them; recognizing that there are many sources of strength in every situation you face; knowing that every day your own cultural framework shapes what you see and what you do and that is true for every other person as well; understanding that power is essential for bringing about change; and many more core tenets that are fundamental. You will also gain an

understanding of very practical things. How to put a plan together is pretty important, so is knowing how to raise money, the best day of the week to hold a press conference, or how to engage in negotiation. You will understand that there are many points at which you can have influence and have an effect and know what to do when you put yourself out there.

Promoting community change is not something you should only study and discuss in theory. It is something you should learn how to do, which is what this book emphasizes. This book is presented in three sections. Part 1 looks at the need for community change, considers how community change activities relate to the change agent's professional and personal life, and provides a theoretical framework to deepen your understanding and give you direction.

Part 2 gives clear, practical guidance on how to go about the business of promoting change. Each of these chapters concentrates on a specific issue with which a successful change agent needs to be familiar.

Part 3 offers more detailed insights into three common arenas of change. These chapters help you understand typical settings where change can occur. Building on principles and techniques described in earlier chapters, you are introduced to particular knowledge and skills that apply to these circumstances.

Increasing our recognition of a broader field of practice, our understanding of the nature of this work, and promoting our ability to function competently within that field is not only challenging, it is rewarding. This work will bring you some anger, some humor, some joy, and a strengthened sense of purpose. You will more clearly see that many things matter—and that you do as well.

Acknowledgments



A good organizer knows that there is a lot of knowledge, talent, and support in every community. Building the organization involves drawing many assets into the effort and making good use of what they can provide. At the beginning, you may not know that you need this skill or that connection or this particular resource. You often find that out as you move ahead.

Preparing a book works much the same way. You don't do it all yourself. Not even close. Putting ideas into words is just one of the jobs. You soon discover that there are lots of jobs, and if you are lucky, you find good people who can help get them done. An author needs to listen, make adjustments, draw on offered support, and rely on the skills of partners whose particular talents improve the final product. As an author, though, I have the final responsibility to see that the information is accurate and useful. Any errors are the result of my mistakes or inattention.

Jo Namsik, a specialist in library sciences, once again lent a hand to get the ball rolling. She has been so willing to help me make my way to library resources throughout the world and to find the treasures of the written word. She helped me get material and improved my own skills of knowing where to look and how.

Monica Bujak, librarian with the Pima County Library system, added her knowledge and connections as well. These assets were important, and her friendly manner made tasks much easier. Kassy Rodeheaver, also a librarian with Pima County, has kept me current with the rich variety of information available through the Foundation Center and its Funding Information Network Partners.

Attorney Abby Levine, Legal Director for the Alliance for Justice's Bolder Advocacy Initiative, responded graciously to my request to strengthen my understanding of relevant laws and regulations governing lobbying by nonprofits. Her careful scrutiny of what I had written on the topic significantly improved that section. As an attorney, she would want to make sure that I put in a disclaimer that the passage provides a general overview of information and does not constitute legal advice. There, Abby, I did it. (The disclaimer is also in the text.) Her

commitment to social justice as well as that of other Alliance and Bolder Advocacy staff offers important allies to all who do this work.

Karina Pedroza not only helped me keep track of reference materials I had used but also helped get things back on track when the printer quit or the computer seemed to hiccup. Knowing that she was willing to get things sorted out kept me from having a hiccup or two myself.

Rachel West responded to many emails and phone calls. Her expertise helped guide me through the new developments in social media and e-organizing and advocacy. Her politalsocialworker.org website is an excellent resource for news and perspectives on political issues through a social work lens and explores nontraditional social work roles and community practice.

I know much more about community organizing and development than I did when I first tried to get people together to get things done. I know more than I did a year ago, and I hope I can say the same thing next year as well. I learn from what I read, but I learn even more from what I do and especially from the people with whom I work. My partners in the Broadway Coalition, particularly Margot Garcia and J. D. Garcia, Laura Tabili, Marc Finc, Ron Spark, Les Pierce, Linda Dobbyn, Bob Cook, John O'Dowd, Mary Terry Schiltz, Jessica Shuman, and Mary Durham-Pflibsen, humble me with their commitment and fortitude and gave me new insights. The Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association continues to be an inspiration and a steady source of learning. Colby Henley and Karen Henley, Chris Wilke and Michael Wilke, Gretchen Lueck, Bernie Croteau, Melody Peters and Jay Vosk, Michelle Graye, Evren Sonmez, Tim Olcott, Matt Somers and Deb Dedon, and Stacey Plassmann and Joe Plassmann are just a few who show me how people can work together and remind me how important that is. The Center for Community Dialogue is changing the way people in southern Arizona talk with each other and think with each other. The center's Rita Pollack, Catherine Tornbom, Dot Kret, Del Jones, Ann Yellot, Patty Valera, Steve Brigham, and Arnold Palacios; Jane Prescott Smith with the National Institute for Civil Discourse; and Vicki Totten's work with the Kettering Foundation and other organizations have deepened my understanding of principles and methods of dialogue and deliberation and earned my respect.

Jim Cook, Ryan Kilmer, Jean Hill, and other colleagues with the Policy Action and Research Collaborative have given me a better understanding of network building and organizational cultures. The Special Commission for the Advancement of Macro Practice in Social Work is bringing a rededication to social justice and macro practice in social work education and practice. I thank Jack Rothman, not only for getting all this started but for his wisdom and tenacious commitment to the highest ideals of social work. Darlyne Bailey, Terry Mizrahi, Jen Norton, Kelsey DeAvila, and Meg Baier have taught me lessons in leadership, how to bring the complex issues to focused work, and the gritty details of getting things done. My ACOSA colleagues, particularly Tracy Soska, Michel Coconis, Fred Brooks, Sondra Fogel, Butch Rodenhiser, Rose Veneklasen, and Bill Butterfield, have so much knowledge and ability. Thank you for your willingness to share it.

More than 15 of my colleagues have brought this work to life in the new feature for this edition, *From Ideas to Action*. Roseann Bongiovanni, Kathy Byers, Dick Cook, Linda Plitt Donaldson, Dan Duncan, Rukshan Fernando, Marjorie Fine, Andy Germak, Michele Kelley, Meredith Minkler, Dorlisa Minnick, John Moore, Sunny Harris Rome, Tracy Soska, Lee Staples, Michelle Tremillo, Rachel West, your stories remind me that organization and leadership bring change for good every day.

Sometimes my prose is witty, sometimes it just lumbers along on a bumpy road strewn with excess words and labored phrases. Thank goodness for Kay Mikel whose keen eye and steady hand untangles verbal knots and brings home the point much more clearly. There is no better copyeditor.

The Cengage team coordinates the enterprise. Gordon Lee helped connect me with Cengage resources and kept things on track. I would also like to thank Stephen Lagos, Ruth Sakata Corley, Deanna Ettinger, Kristina Mose-Libon, Debby Kramer, John Chell, Greg Albert, and Judy Inoue.

Chris Santos and his colleagues at the J. L. Hahn Consulting Group brought everything together. Chris oversaw the work that you see here. I appreciate his willingness to include me in many decisions along the way so that the final product reflects some of my preferences, made much better with his and his team's abilities.

I disappeared into my writer's cave for hours a day for many, many days while working on this book. It is a long process. Some other things that need to get done fall on others' shoulders and into others' hands, or they don't get done at all. I appreciate the patience and understanding of my colleagues and friends.

Most important in all of this, though, is my family. Each of you in your own way put up with my distraction, and each of you gives me encouragement and support. Frankly, I would be adrift without you. Whatever I write here is not enough. No matter how many words I might use, there are many more that should accompany them. No matter what words I choose, none can reach as deep as I'd hope. I am not only a richer man but a better one because of you. I am so blessed with your love.



Key Elements for the Sixth Edition

Having written five editions of this book, you'd think I'd pretty much have it down by now. That might be true if nothing ever changed in the world, there were no new ideas, I couldn't think of any better way to present things, and no one made any suggestions. That would be a depressing state of affairs. There are changes, new ideas, better ways, and lots of suggestions, and this Sixth Edition has a number of new elements.

I like stories. Stories help us picture ideas, bringing them to life through the actions people take and the events they create and respond to. You probably have a couple of hooks somewhere in the place you live where you hang your jacket or keys or purse until you need them again. Stories give us mental hooks, a place where we can easily find ideas when we need them. At the end of every chapter is a story that can help promote examination and discussion of topics the chapter addresses. I have lots of colleagues who have stories to tell, and I've asked a number of them to bring you a story in this edition. From Ideas to Action is a new feature for this edition, and these stories provide a snapshot of an actual community change event that illustrates a theme of the chapter.

At the core of our work is a commitment to *human rights and social justice*. Sometimes these stare us in the face as we look at community conditions. Sometimes they don't seem so prominent, but they are always there. I so commonly look at the world through that lens that I assume it colors much of what I write. It is important to weave these themes in more vibrant colors, and I have more prominently featured human rights and social justice so these issues are not far from your consideration of any topic the book addresses.

Twitter was relatively new when I prepared the previous edition of this text. It is now common, and other new communication, linking, problem-solving, and information gathering tools and methods are being introduced, probably as I tap out these words. Aspects of *e-organizing*, *mobilizing*, and *advocacy* have been introduced or further developed in many chapters to keep up with evolving technologies.

The economy, particularly in the United States, is starting to recover, but efforts to starve government and the loss or stagnation of income for all but the most wealthy continues to make *fund-raising* in difficult times a challenge. In this

edition I have added new techniques for fund-raising and resource development, along with methods for you to use to connect with potential contributors.

As mentioned in the Preface, there have been encouraging *developments in the health and human services professions* that are renewing the call to macro practice. You will find these ideas more fully described in the pages ahead.

A number of *new, specific topics* have been introduced in this edition, for example, the ability of communities and groups to examine difficult issues through *dialogue and deliberation*; or that *population-focused funds* help counter the common mistake of keeping underrepresented groups underrepresented in matters of fund-raising and resource development; or that *community benefit agreements* provide a tool to see that residents, particularly in inner cities, get their share of economic growth. These and a number of other new topics add to your understanding of community practice and give you more options for engagement.

It is always a challenge to understand the various *models of community practice*. I have added more discussion about models and reexamined aspects of *social capital*, which is an important element in many approaches to strengthening communities and securing human rights.

Although much of what we do as change agents is to spark new change, we also influence the nature of change that is occurring around us, sometimes accelerating its pace or altering its direction. The fact is that change is always taking place. This edition includes a picture of current conditions that have a bearing on community work and the changes you may promote. *Updated data, information on new regulations, introduction of innovative methods*, and other features keep information relevant to the real world where you will be promoting community change.

So there are changes in this new edition, quite a few. These are changes in a book. As you read, I hope you are sparked with the desire and the intention to promote much more important changes and that you will find what you need here to give you the confidence to act.



PART I

Responding to the Need for Community Change

Norman Karpenfussen didn't know how much longer he could put up with this insubordination. He could remember, word for word, the warnings issued to staff in his last two memos. If anyone were to question his memory, he could pull the memos from the file and show them. In fact, everything that issued forth from his office was copied and placed in a file. Norman liked everything in its place. Norman liked order and orders. The sounds coming from the agency conference room (right next door to his office) flouted these very notions, and Norman could feel the anger rising up in him.

Norman allowed himself a shrewd little smile as he recalled the words of his last memo: "No member of the Health Clinic staff, including volunteers, is authorized to speak to private citizens regarding the alleged matter of contamination of groundwater in the vicinity. Such action is not under the purview [he particularly liked that word] of this agency and is an unwarranted exacerbation [he liked that one too] of an increasingly volatile situation. Any staff member ignoring this admonition will be dealt with in accordance with the full measure of the administrator's authority [he loved that one]."

His smile quickly faded as the scraping of chairs in the adjoining room brought him once again to the realization that preparations for a community meeting were under way—a meeting organized by the clinic's staff. How could this have happened? The staff used to be so docile, so afraid of his authority, so afraid of him, that they almost apologized when suggesting any new direction for the agency. He knew that the people in the surrounding community were poor, uneducated immigrants, if, indeed, they were legal at all, and they needed to be treated carefully lest their fears get the better of them. His staff had seemed to think so too. Now this! His staff, stirring up trouble, organizing the community to protest the City's supposed cover-up of groundwater contamination, raising fears of dangers to community health. This was not their job. Didn't they know that? The Neighborhood Health Clinic's purpose was to treat sick people, refer people to other programs in the community, and maybe do a little counseling. They were certainly not supposed to be agitators. Norman realized he would have to go next door and put a stop to all this nonsense.

As Norman opened the door, he was greeted by Grace Marquez, the director of volunteers, who seemed to be running the show. “Welcome, Mr. Karpenfussen,” she said with a smile. “Ladies and gentlemen,” she continued, “this is Mr. Karpenfussen, our Executive Director, who has come to join us. Maybe he can explain the clinic’s role in helping you get your groundwater cleaned up.” And then Mrs. Gaxiola, a longtime Clinic volunteer, chimed in . . . “Senōras y senōres, les presento al Senōr Karpenfussen . . .” Now what am I going to do? Norman wondered.



David Fitzsimmons

Part 1 introduces you to the idea of promoting community change—the idea that you do not have to contribute to the presence of problems by inattention and inaction. I believe you should look at, not look away from, problems that go beyond the individual and be willing to confront those problems with the knowledge and skills at your disposal. You cannot take sole responsibility for the problems you see, nor can you tackle them all, but you can make a conscious decision to help change policies and improve conditions that affect the lives of people in your community. Further, you have the opportunity to bring people together to discover the personal gifts and other community assets that may lie hidden from view. With community members you can figure out how to use these resources to strengthen the community, even building on what is working, and improve the lives of its individual members. It is important to acknowledge this as a legitimate, if not fundamental, part of your role as a social worker, public

health worker, community psychologist, or human services professional.

As in any significant aspect of your life, being a community change agent requires a sense of conviction and balance. This is not to be confused with being devoid of passion—far from it! Your strong feelings that the rights of the people you serve be acknowledged and fully granted provide a necessary fuel to your involvement. A spirit of principle should infuse your actions, but your passion should not substitute for purpose.

Four chapters make up Part 1. In Chapter 1, Understanding the Challenge to Change, I provide an overview of the enterprise of community change. You will glimpse the range of community conditions you may confront as a professional working in the human services field. Together we will reflect on the pursuit of social justice as a vital calling for those who enter this field of work and explore some of the fundamental issues involved in working to promote change, including the critical importance of recognizing the diversity of cultures. This discussion will help you see the community itself, not just its individual members, as a client, and I describe a number of ways your work can help improve your community. We will even examine the word “client” to help you understand that your relationship with people is one of partnership, not dependency. Finally, I discuss the value of idealism as a source of strength and clarity for your work.

In Chapter 2, Theoretical Frameworks for Community Change, I present the theoretical principles that provide a structure for understanding how you can promote action to change conditions that affect people. Having a strong theoretical base

for your actions will help you to interpret what is occurring and gauge what is likely to occur from the actions you take. A number of foundation theoretical frameworks, along with the cornerstones of community building, will guide your understanding. We examine the elements that contribute to a healthy community and the circumstances that must be present for change to occur. It is the wealth of communities that we use to promote change and build community strength. You will go beyond an understanding of wealth as only money, recognizing nine different forms of community wealth or capital. You will learn how forms of oppression contribute to many of the problems we need to face and the fundamental matter of working to secure human rights. You will come to value people as beings who transform the world, not just adapt to it. In every situation something is going well or has gone well, and you will learn to use the spirit and insight of appreciative inquiry as a powerful tool for change. Several models of community change are described, which will acquaint you with a variety of different approaches. Your ability to recognize and develop the assets available in the community and your belief that the members of the community are the most important contributors to actions and decisions will influence everything you do.

Chapter 3, *Relating Community Change to Professional Practice*, focuses on the role community change plays in professional practice. Perhaps you aren't sure how community change fits with your picture of what people in the human services professions do. This is a common and legitimate reservation. Many workers are not striving very visibly for community change, so it is hard to recognize its function. To help explore this issue, we examine the basic purposes of social welfare, surveying traditional approaches used by human services professionals and relating community change activities to professional values. This is a time to consider your own professional identity. I encourage you to look at the difference between a more common service approach and one that builds on and develops combined strengths to make a sustained difference in community functioning. I

invite you to question professional tolerance for conditions that not only harm clients but also restrict the extent and quality of professional practices themselves. I also ask you to think about the connection you will make as a professional between what you think and what you do. Your professional preparation gives you the theoretical framework and practical skills you can put to use in the context of community change. You start off well equipped for this kind of work.

In Chapter 4, *Putting Yourself in the Picture*, the focus is on you as a change agent. Much of the writing in the field of community change talks about community change agents, almost as if we were talking about a group of people it would be nice to know about . . . but not become. I take a different approach and speak directly to you as an individual who will be involved in the business of promoting community change and recognize many opportunities for doing so. I encourage you to develop the habit of reflective practice to promote your self-awareness and elevate your effectiveness. Everyday matters with which you must contend as a worker engaged in community change are examined: How do you get your boss to go along with your change efforts? How do you fit activism in with other aspects of your job? How do you avoid becoming burned out? Finally, I discuss the value of some simple, down-to-earth tips that will increase your effectiveness.

Working to promote community change is an exciting endeavor that will energize you and make your decision to become a professional in the field of human services more meaningful. Many of the changes you make may seem small or relatively minor, but you will see them grow over time into meaningful improvements. Perhaps you will even initiate actions that substantially alter the balance of power in your community, producing significant, permanent change. You have the ability to help eliminate problems rather than contribute to their maintenance. Recognize the strengths in your community, your own and others', and using them to build a better future.

I invite you to consider these opportunities more fully in the following pages.



CHAPTER I

Understanding the Challenge to Change

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Acknowledge systemic problems
- Confront the challenge to promote change
- Recognize clients as community members
- Acknowledge human concern and helpful action
- Discover how you can have an impact in your professional role
- Learn that you cannot and should not do everything yourself
- Understand the terms community, community problems, and community change
- Face the fact of oppression and privilege
- Learn the lesson of empowerment
- Understand and deal with resistance to change
- Recognize the differences in superficial versus fundamental change
- Acquire cultural competence
- Value diversity in our increasingly diverse society
- Understand that the community is the client
- Identify the range of community change opportunities
- Retain your idealism

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

Beginning in the 1930s through his death in 1972, Saul Alinsky upset the comfortable status quo of the “haves” in many communities through his social action organizing of the “have-nots.” He was the founder of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), which trains organizers and builds organizations whose primary purpose is power and whose chief product is social change (IAF, 2009). Some time back he made these observations on social workers:

They come to the people of the slums not to help them rebel and fight their way out of the muck . . . most social work does not even reach the submerged masses. Social work is largely a middle class activity and guided by a middle class psychology. In the rare instances where it reaches the slum dwellers it seeks to get them adjusted to their environment so they will live in hell and like it. A higher form of social treason would be difficult to conceive. (as quoted in Meyer, 1945)

Strong words aren't they? How do they apply to the way you will provide human services? Will you address only the singular problems of individuals, or will you stand back from time to time and bring into focus the larger picture these individual images combine to form? Will you look beyond the immediate situation to understand the fundamental barriers your clients face? Will you shake your head and wring your hands, or will you do something about it? What kind of a human services worker do you intend to be?

You will come to realize that a variety of forces outside your office contribute to the problems people bring to your office. Paying attention to those outside forces may improve the lives of the people you see every day in your agencies more than the individual service you offer there. Maybe some of these people wouldn't have to come to you at all had you addressed these outside forces directly.

What You Will See If You Look

You may find it hard to ignore the call to social justice and action if you are willing to open your eyes and your ears. In 2010, the serious violent crime (rape, robbery, assault) victimization rate for persons with disabilities was 16 per 1,000 persons. This is triple the rate of 5 per 1,000 persons for those without disabilities (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). Caregiver abuse and neglect of people with dementia was found in 47.3% of surveyed U.S. caregivers (Wiglesworth et al., 2010). The Children's Defense Fund (2013a, 2013b) reports that every day in America, 7 children or teens are killed by firearms—one child every 3 hours and

15 minutes; 208 children are arrested for violent crimes—one child every 7 minutes; 1,825 children are confirmed as abused or neglected—one child every 47 seconds; 838 public school children are corporally punished—one student every 30 seconds of a school day; 2,857 high school students drop out—one student every 8 seconds during a school day; 16,244 public school students are suspended—one student every second and a half of every school day. Every day this occurs—every day. Are these conditions you find acceptable?

The U.S. Census Bureau (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2013) reports that 46.5 million people in the United States lived in poverty in 2012. That's more than 1 out of every 7 people you see, or maybe don't see. Children are particularly hard hit. More than 16 million children, one out every 5 children, were poor, and almost half of them—about 7.1 million children, about 1 in 10 children—live in deep poverty, in homes whose incomes fall below 50% of the poverty line. Almost half (47%) of all related children living in households headed by women with no partner present are poor. Is this a condition you find acceptable?

Understand that these figures may understate the real measure of poverty. The federal poverty level developed in the 1950s is based on a belief that the average family spends one third of its income on food. Things have changed a bit since then. A newer measure, the Self-Sufficiency Standard, developed by Diana Pearce, more adequately reflects economic conditions, acknowledging current spending needs, various family configurations, regional differences, and a host of other factors. Although this standard is a more accurate measure, providing a more honest, clear picture of poverty may not be politically feasible (Mukhopadhyay, Shingler, Alter, & Findeis, 2011).

Income inequality keeps us a nation apart. Forty percent of Americans receive less than 12% of the nation's income, and the top 20% receive more than half of all the income, more than all the "lower" 80% combined (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013). A few Americans, just 5%, take in more than one fifth of all the income. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities report concludes that in the

last 3 decades, the after-tax incomes of the richest families climbed substantially, while the incomes of middle- and low-income families saw only modest increases (Stone, Trisi, Sherman, & Chen, 2013). From the late 1940s until the late 1970s prosperity among all income groups grew at about the same pace. Then things changed. From 1979 to 2010 the average income of the top 1% was 4 to 5 times greater than the middle 60% and the bottom fifth. Remember, the top 1% had a lot of money to begin with, so their incomes really grew dramatically during this time (Stone et al., 2013). Is this a condition you find acceptable?

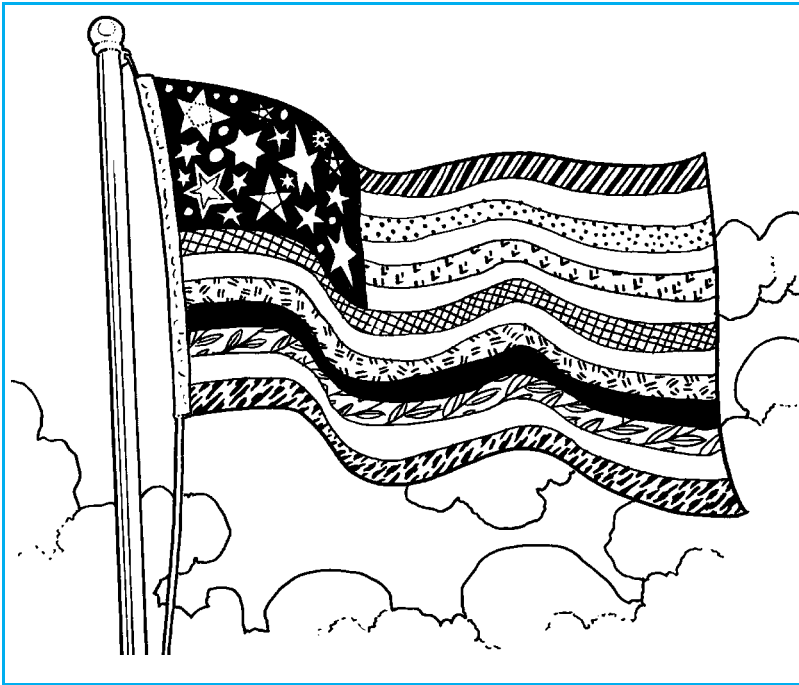
When the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2005) examined the health and well-being of children, it found that social and economic factors have a noticeable affect on children's health. Not only are the children directly affected, but the physical and mental health of children can affect the family as a whole. Low-income children are more likely to be in poorer health and are twice as likely to have socioemotional difficulties. They are more likely to live in neighborhoods that do not feel safe or supportive, and they miss more days of school. Moreover, the physical and emotional health of a child's mother affects how she can care for her children, and it has an impact on the health and well-being of the entire family. Mothers in low-income families are much less likely than mothers in higher-income families to be in excellent or very good physical and mental health themselves. Furthermore, higher levels of parenting aggravation are more likely in lower-income families. The report notes that "these circumstances may combine to put children in low-income families at a health, developmental, and educational disadvantage" (p. 5). Is this a condition you find acceptable?

At the end of 2013, almost 11 million workers were out of a job, with more than 4 million long-term unemployed. People of color were particularly affected. The unemployment rate for Hispanic workers was one and a half times that of White workers. Black workers fared even worse with an unemployment rate twice that of White workers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). A father's involuntary

job loss increases the likelihood that children will repeat a grade or be suspended or expelled from school (Kalil & Ziol-Guest, 2008). With parental job loss, middle-class children are less likely to obtain any postsecondary education, and the effect for Black children is 4 times as strong (Kalil & Wightman, 2009). One event can set in motion a host of other long-term consequences. This at a time when the stock market grew faster than it had in 15 years and set an all-time high (Vlavelica, 2013). This at a time when after-tax corporate profits were at an all-time high (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2013; Hungerford, 2013; U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). Is this a condition you find acceptable?

What's it like to be hungry? After completing more than 52,000 in-person interviews and reviewing responses to more than 31,000 questionnaires from member agencies, researchers for Second Harvest (now called Feeding America), the nation's largest organization of emergency food providers, discovered these compelling facts: 42% of clients choose between paying for food, utilities, or heating fuel; 35% must decide between paying for food or rent or a mortgage; and 32% face a choice between paying for food and medicine or medical care (Cohen, Kim, & Ohls, 2006). These are daily decisions that many Americans know nothing about. But this is not news to more than 50 million Americans, including more than 17 million children who, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, suffered from "food insecurity" during 2011 (Coleman-Jensen, Nord, Andrews, & Carlson, 2012). Food insecurity means that "they were, at times, unable to acquire adequate food for one or more household members because they had insufficient money and other resources for food" (p. 5). Almost 37% of households with children headed by a single woman were food insecure in 2011. More attention is being directed to hunger among older persons as well. In 2011, more than 3.5 million households with an elderly person living alone or with others were food insecure (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2012). Is this a condition you find acceptable?

More than 2.3 million adults were locked behind bars in 2013, up from 500,000 in 1980,



David Fitzsimmons

and by 2010 the price tag to the states had quadrupled to over \$50 billion (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013). The Pew study reported that 54% of these inmates were parents of minor children, and 2.7 million children had a parent behind bars, up from 1 in 125 just 25 years ago. Children with incarcerated fathers are about 6 times as likely to be expelled or suspended from school. These children live in homes whose income has significantly dropped and will likely continue to experience much lower income after the parent is released (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010). What other effects might this have?

About 200 children with disabilities may be unnecessarily growing up in Florida nursing homes, and an additional 3,000 children with disabilities are at risk of being sent to adult nursing homes because the state slashed services that would have kept them at home with their families (Kennedy, 2013; Perez, 2012). Sound good to you?

The widespread use of antibiotics in cattle and poultry—not just to treat disease but to promote

faster animal growth—also promotes another kind of growth: antibiotic resistant bacteria. This has become a huge public health concern leading to reduced effectiveness in treating diseases in humans and increased hospital costs. Policies that would hold industrial farm animal producers accountable for hazardous environmental pollution and other practices that endanger the public's health have been systematically blocked (Kim et al., 2013). Kind of makes you sick, doesn't it?

According to the National Research Council (2013), the climate is changing as fast as any warming trend in the last 65 years and is likely to continue for the next 30 to 80 years. Things are changing so quickly that some species just cannot adapt fast enough. They will be lost forever. Does this get you a little hot under the collar? Are all these conditions acceptable to you?

Of course, many people in other parts of the world struggle even more. The World Bank (2014) tells us that more than 1.45 billion people eke out a living on less than \$1.25 a day. How about this? Is this acceptable to you as well?



CAPTURING CONCEPTS

The Client

I have struggled to find the best term to identify the people with whom we work to change conditions that affect their lives. There is no one good term to describe this relationship. Some writers prefer the term *consumer*, but this implies a greater sense of choice than many people really have. It also implies that people are only users, not contributors. The term *recipient* conveys a rather passive role. *Patient* implies an illness.

Some have suggested that the term *citizen* conveys a sense of dignity and equality. This is useful, although it falls short of the implication of a professional relationship, and others have questioned whether *noncitizens* would consider themselves included. Though *partner* is often a good

term, it is so broad that it doesn't recognize any particular sort of partnership.

Client is the most common, and it is likely that it is the designation with which you are most familiar. Although it comes as close as any to connoting a relationship characterized by respect and professionalism, it may unintentionally convey notions of dependency rather than partnership. I use this term only when describing a relationship or circumstance in which the use of "client" reveals a particular meaning. Throughout this text I more commonly use **community member** or **participant** to refer to those with whom you have a professional helping relationship, including those with whom you will be working to promote community change.

Maybe the state will authorize only a few days of treatment for a young client of yours who needs much more than that to cope with years of being the victim of molestation. You might wonder how the administrators of the school district you work for can go jetting from this conference to the next, yet deny the use of a school bus for fifth graders to go on an educational outing because of a "lack of funding for travel." How frustrated will you be when you realize that the young man sitting across from you, disheveled and insolent, has had four different doctors in the last year "directing" his treatment, and that his case is not a whole lot different from others you have seen this week? Continued patterns of violence bring women to emergency rooms and the response is . . . maybe some counseling. Perhaps in your community neighbors are disconnected from each other, disillusioned, and shrink in fear behind locked doors. You watch community members rich in insight and skill being ignored, while professional colleagues busy themselves creating yet another service program. These are actual situations workers face. Are these conditions you find acceptable?

Other problems are less sweeping or poignant; you will see some evidence of them almost daily as

you work in human services. Taken together, they imply that the people you work with have little dignity. Clients have to wait too long for an appointment, wait too long to be seen on the day of their appointment, and have too little time with you or other professionals when they are finally seen. All they are given are appointments; rarely are they given the opportunity to come together in an organized way to change the conditions that seem to call for all these appointments. But they are given forms, lots forms, often lengthy and confusing.

Some agency staff are insensitive, unhelpful, or downright rude. Are these conditions you find acceptable? Will you grow to accept a system that employs denial and defensiveness as primary responses? Will you care if workers and agencies are isolated from the day-to-day lives of the people they are supposed to assist? Will you too ignore those who are chronically unrecognized and unreachable? Will you tolerate mediocrity as the standard of your profession and keep silent about a "service" system that lives in fear of being found out?

Many of us don't like to be confronted with these questions. We get fidgety and hope they will

just go away . . . but they don't. Can't somebody else just do something?

These challenges are yours. These are situations you will face. "Oh great," you may be thinking, "here I am planning to help make the lives of individuals or families happier and more fulfilling, and now I'm expected to save the whole world."

Relax. Unless your presence here on earth is some fantastic historical event, you are not going to save the world (though some of you may well have a pretty significant impact on it). Many of you are not going to work for community change as your primary professional role. Many of you will be case managers, therapists, or generalist human services practitioners. But all of you will be confronted from time to time with the challenge to promote change. All of you will face barriers to your practice. All of you will have your professional ethics tested. All of you. Will you respond or look away?

Beyond a Consideration of Problems

An honest reflection on the many national, community, and personal problems that exist can be intimidating, even discouraging. You may look at our provision of human services in the face of so many difficulties and conclude that people just don't care about each other. Plain and simple, we—including you—just don't care. That could be, but, frankly, I don't think so. Take another look.

People are burdened by their fears, held back by their prejudices, and confused by their myths. This is undeniable. These factors exist, and they play a part in shaping what is available to enhance the quality of life. But just as these limitations are facts of life, so too is the genuine concern we feel for those in distress. People are moved by suffering, emboldened in the face of injustice, and strengthened by their desire to contribute. People are touched by the recognition of their common humanity.

If you believe people have an interest in and the capacity for good, you will act to capitalize on it. If you don't, you will quickly be burned out in your cynicism. Surely, your belief in good will be tested, sometimes to the point where you fail to see its signs right around you, but you will pass these tests. You will find strength and energy when you

convert the power of caring and common decency into an active force to counter those influences that flaw the system in which you work as a professional. You will also find examples of effective practices in your community and tremendous wealth beyond dollars that you can use to change conditions that you find unacceptable.

Thousands of public school students are suspended each day, but millions are not. Every day many families do not have enough to eat, but many more are well fed. Ignoring or rationalizing pain and suffering will callous our souls and bring threats even closer. Recognizing these conditions can spur us to action, and realizing that we can learn by looking at what is working well can give us confidence and direction.

You care enough to think about your own involvement in human services. Don't you think it highly unlikely that you are the *only one* who feels this way?

CAN YOU REALLY DO ANYTHING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Perhaps a better question is this: Can you do anything about *any* of the challenges you encounter? You will have to leave many matters for other people, but you can tackle a fair share of your own quite well. Some thought, some planning, some common sense, some interest, a sense of purpose, some power, and a touch of luck are the basic ingredients. You can do quite a lot with just these. Add some understanding of human behavior, some recognition of resources available to you, some skill in determining tactics, and some creativity and you have a potent combination that will definitely produce results. All these components are available to any human services worker.

You can provide significant leadership in bringing people together to make needed changes although you may not be the only leader or even the most "important" one. You can make a difference in your community even if you have other primary professional responsibilities, especially as