Building Social Capital and Community

Al Condeluci, PhD

All People Want

- To be productive
- To be treated with dignity
- To live in a home of their choice
- To stay active in the community
- To be able to get around the community
- To build, maintain and retain relationships

When people have problems

- They are often seen as having a problem
- They are quickly referred to systems
- Systems are formalized
- Systems goals are to return people to their community

Human Service System

- Therapies (OT, PT, ST)
- Mental Health Counseling
- Group Therapy
- Self Help/Support Groups
- Advocacy Efforts
- Community Building
- Broader Elements of Systems Change - Policies

Jurgen Habermas, 1984

SYSTEM

GOVERNMENT

BUREAUCRACY

ECONOMY

LIFE - WORLD

VALUES

BELIEFS

DREAMS

MYTHS
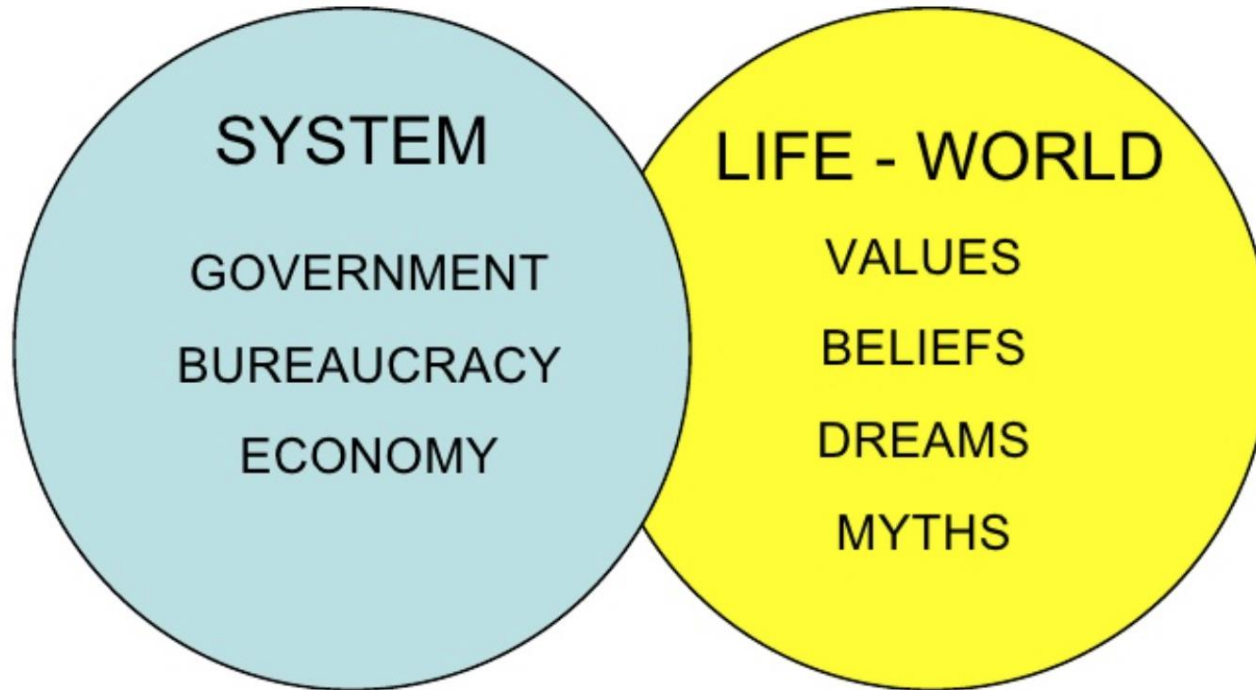
HABERMAS 1984

"SYSTEM IS COLONISING THE LIFE WORLD"

Change Theory

- **Micro Change** – individual gets help within their Lifeworld

- **Macro Change** – the border is moved to make a larger Lifeworld

Micro Change

Micro change is when we look to clinically, or therapeutically, change the person or his/her circumstances. This change is where we work specifically with the person to have them learn or acquire something new, or utilize something that will make them more viable and successfully in their "Lifeworld".

Micro Change – the clinical model

- Individual has or is the problem

- Locus of the problem is in or about the person

- Actions look to identify or label the problem and create an intervention strategy

- Usually an expert or specialist oversees the process

- The goal is to enhance or augment the person

Macro Change

Macro change is about the environment around the individual. This type of change revolves around the perceptions, attitudes and assumptions about the issue. Macro change attempts to change these attitudes in either formal ways (through laws) or informally through relationships that in essence moves the border of the "Lifeworld".

Macro Change – community model

- Problem is not the person, but assumptions about the person

- The problem exists around the person (e.g., staff perceptions, community perceptions)

- Knowing the individual and their interests are **key -** link the person to communities and experiences that matter to him/her

- Goal is to help person build social capital and relationships in order to broaden their "Lifeworld"

Macro Change – changing the "rules"

Sometimes macro change is about adjusting or creating a new law, policy, procedure or other type of formal action that will mandate change. Examples here are the Civil Rights Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Macro Change – building relationships

"It's not differences that divide us. It's our judgments about each other that do."

"Human conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change – personal change, community and organizational change, planetary change. If we can sit together and talk about what's important to us, we begin to come alive."

~~Margaret Wheatley

Community and Social Capital

A **community** is a network of different people, who come together regularly, for something in common.

Similarities connect us, but difference creates challenges.

How we get beyond these differences are influenced by: 1) Regularity of exchange and 2) Finding similarity within these exchanges

"If you belong to no community and decide to join one, you cut your risk of dying in half over the next year."

Robert Putnam

Social Capital

"The value we get from of our social networks"

Refers to the **value** of our relationships, and their impact on our lives…

Our levels of relationships:

- Acquaintances – People we know and see

- Activities – People we actively engage with

- Covenant – People you love and trust

Community and Social Capital

- Influences and builds all the major pro-social behaviors of tolerance, respect, kindness, honesty, cooperation, social awareness

- Enhances healthfulness and happiness

- Keeps us safe, sane and secure

- Builds more Self-Confidence

- Actually promotes longevity

Social Capital

- Bridging – Relationships built on interests

- Bonding – Relationships built on deeper issues

Building Community

- Look to (or help others) find their common passions

- Look for places (communities, lifeworld) where these common passions are celebrated

- Find out what is important in how this community behaves (Rituals, Patterns)

- Look for (or become) the Gatekeeper to other community members

Gatekeepers

In community, the **gatekeeper** is key to informal change or behavior adjustments. Gatekeepers are influential members of a community that promote or deter certain behaviors and actions. When a gatekeeper endorses, or rejects a certain behavior or action, most other people follow the trend. Think of your own behaviors and who was influential. This is "social influence theory" at work.

Types of Gatekeepers

- Positive, proactive players who see opportunities or possibilities

- Negative, reactionary players who see obstacles or problems

People Awareness – Modified

Please check the items that you think describe you in terms of your behavior. If you are not sure, think if this is how your best friend might describe you.

L-1 _____ Precise	R-1 _____ Talkative
L-2 _____ Thorough	R-2 _____ Expressive
L-3 _____ Perfectionist	R-3 _____ Outgoing
L-4 _____ Accurate	R-4 _____ Entertaining
L-5 _____ Detailed	R-5 _____ Popular
L-6 _____ Structured	R-6 _____ Sociable
L-7 _____ Cautious	R-7 _____ Spontaneous
L-8 _____ Meticulous	R-8 _____ Good Mixer
L-9 _____ Hate Criticism	R-9 _____ Trusting
L-10 _____ Suspicious	R-10 _____ Charming
L-11 _____ Impatient	R-11 _____ Traditional
L-12 _____ Controlling	R-12 _____ Methodical
L-13 _____ Aggressive	R-13 _____ Slow to Change
L-14 _____ Demanding	R-14 _____ Amiable
L-15 _____ Argumentative	R-15 _____ Worrier
L-16 _____ Stubborn	R-16 _____ Patient
L-17 _____ Impulsive	R-17 _____ Easy Going
L-18 _____ Decisive	R-18 _____ Predictable
L-19 _____ Temperamental	R-19 _____ Diplomatic
L-20 _____ Bold	R-20 _____ Hold Back Feeling

Ways to Macro Change

- Values

- Leadership

- Programs

- Monitoring and Evaluation

- Organizational Social Capital

- Advocacy

Values

- 1. What are the key values you want your stakeholders to know?

- 2. Once the values are in place, how do these get articulated to your stakeholders?

- 3. What are the ways you can assure that your values are being upheld?

- Examples – be aware of language and the way you talk to/about people; model language/behavior for friends, family, and the staff who work with people; take a person-centered approach

Leadership

- 1. Who are the key leaders that need to guide change?

- 2. What is the leadership role for folks you serve, and how do they become engaged?

- Examples – identify and encourage people to be self-advocates; if someone needs help advocating, be a "gatekeeper" who can help link him/her to community resources/networks; identify other gatekeepers in each person's life

Programs

- 1.Can your treatment planning include goals/objectives related to inclusion and engagement?

- 2. Can programming take place in typical settings? If not, why, or how can we make this happen?

- 3. Can people you support decide how their funding is spent. If not, how might they have authority in what services they receive?

- Examples – include community engagement/inclusion, social engagement and social participation goals in your treatment planning process; support people to trial/error activities; reach out to supportive caregivers to carryover "engagement" goals at home/in their communities; carry out sessions in natural environments; encourage people to seek out new funding streams such as "Self-Directed Services" funding

Monitoring and Evaluation

- 1. What are the ways we can evaluate clients' progress in community engagement?

- 2. How can you share successes/struggles with your stakeholders to keep them enthusiastic and invested in supporting people?

- 3. What are the ways we can monitor our programs/services so we can stay on track?

- Example – set clear short-term goals and ways to monitor/check in on them (e.g., Goal Attainment Scaling); share success stories with stakeholders, caregivers, other self-advocates

Organizational Social Capital

- 1. How might the facility where you work become more connected to the greater community?

- 2. What other community groups could you create partnerships with?

- 3. How might your organization raise its profile in the greater community?

- Example – create a link between your organization and other community organizations to create greater opportunities for people; host events or your therapy sessions at community sites

Advocacy

- 1. How might you organize or enlist your stakeholders to advocate for change?

- 2. How might you develop or enhance an advocacy effort within your programs?

- 3. What would it take for you to offer advocacy/technical assistance in your programs?

- Example – be a part of advocacy efforts WITH self-advocates (e.g., Erase the 'R' Word campaign, 'Nothing about us without us' campaign); initiate advocacy in your work and professional organizations or at the state govt. level

An Aztec Story

"A long time ago there was a great fire in the forests that covered our Earth. People and animals started to run, trying to escape from the fire. Our brother owl, Tecolotl, was running away also when he noticed a small bird hurrying back and forth between the nearest river and the fire. He headed towards this small bird.

"He noticed that it was our brother the Quetzal bird running to the river, picking up small drops of water in his beak, then returning to the fire to throw that tiny bit of water on the flame. Owl approached Quetzal bird and yelled at him: "What are you doing brother? Are you crazy? You are not going to achieve anything by doing this. You must run for your life!"

"Quetzal bird stopped for a moment and looked at the owl, and then answered: "I am doing the best I can with what I have."

It is remembered by our Grandparents that a long time ago the forests that covered our Earth were saved from a great fire by a small Quetzal bird, and owl, and many other animals and people who got together to put out the flame."

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