Andrus Family Fund

TRANSITIONS

Sustaining Social Change

Introduction to the Collaborative Change Approach (CCA): A tool for facilitating community transition

Two important first steps to creating lasting change are understanding the Transition framework and learning how to use it to gain a more nuanced appreciation for stakeholders' positions in a community change. At a minimum, this understanding helps leaders view the change with new eyes. But how can change leaders apply this understanding throughout the change process and use it to actually guide people through the transition that each will experience?

One tool that effectively integrates the Transition framework into a process for achieving community change is the Collaborative Change Approach, or CCA, co-developed by the Aria Group and the Andrus Family Fund (AFF).

What is CCA?

CCA provides a structure for bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to collaboratively create change in their community. Through CCA, parties develop a shared set of goals and values to design and guide the change.

CCA guides participants through the process of letting go of behaviors and attitudes that may interfere with the change, supports them through the confusing in-between time as they begin to implement their action plans, and assesses their progress as they accomplish and work to sustain their goals.

How does it work?

CCA is based on the Aria C3 model, which addresses community change from three perspectives: the individual, stakeholder groups, and the community as a whole.

Phase 1 – The Individual	The first step is to give voice to each individual who will be involved in or affected by the change. Specifically, participants complete individual questionnaires that ask them WHAT they want the initiative to accomplish, WHY this matters to them, and HOW they think the change can happen.
Phase 2 – Stakeholder Groups	Individuals meet with their stakeholder group and develop a set of shared goals. For example, in a community tackling bias against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender students, the stakeholder groups might include students, teachers, school administrators, and community members. After weighing members' individual goals, expressed in the questionnaires filled out in Phase 1, each stakeholder group reaches consensus on shared goals.
Phase 3 – Community of Practice	Representatives from each stakeholder group present their group goals and work with other representatives to develop a set of community-wide goals. Once goals are agreed upon, the representatives design action plans and divide participants into implementation teams.

How do CCA and Transitions Framework Work Together?

At its core, CCA is about reflection. The process provides structure for individual, group, and community-wide reflection on the community change and how participants are responding to it. Formally ensuring that participants are continually reflecting on the change opens them to the reflection that is necessary to consciously experience each phase of transition.

Managing Endings	CCA's goal-setting questionnaires and subsequent discussions about them guide participants through Endings. First, by talking about what individuals want from this change, they acknowledge that a change is happening. As they articulate why this matters to them – the values behind the goals - participants may begin to reveal some of the risks and losses that are at stake with this change. Additionally, thinking about how to accomplish those goals nudges participants to identify behaviors or attitudes *they* may have to shed or adjust to reach the goals. CCA allows participants to gradually transition from individual to collaborator, as each person reflects individually and then within their stakeholder groups before sharing their goals and values with the larger community.

Navigating the Neutral Zone

Making a CCA action plan adds some much-needed structure as diverse groups attempt to work together through the Neutral Zone to make their goals a reality. Action plans should focus on one or two initial tasks that, as Aria recommends, are "big enough to matter, but small enough to work." By breaking larger changes into chunks participants feel they are making progress without being overwhelmed.

When the process does get stuck, or when people back slide, reminding participants of the values behind their goals helps keep them focused on their purpose – a key for getting through the neutral zone.

Sustaining New Beginnings

By the time action plans are developed and teams are assigned to implement them, participants have created a shared vision based on shared values. To get to this point, participants will have viewed the change through the eyes of others, possibly adjusted their behaviors and attitudes, and established working relationships with people that they might not have otherwise. These are all important components for lasting community change. When the next change arises, or when new participants join the mix, the core group of collaborators will have a process for managing future transitions.

How do I find out more about CCA?

To find out if CCA is an appropriate tool for facilitating your community transition, contact the Andrus Family Fund at www.affund.org or the Aria Group at www.ariagroup.com.