



# Working with Youth to Achieve Program Goals

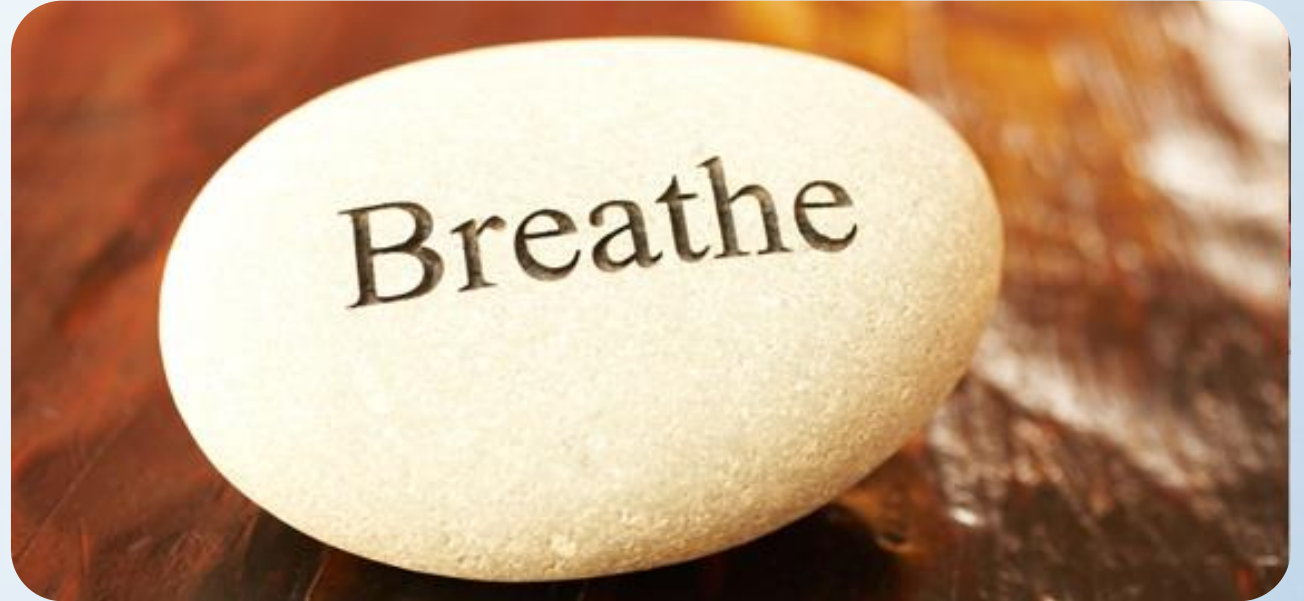
Conservation District Staff Conference  
March 8, 2017 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

# Check In

*What is one truth  
you are holding for  
yourself right now?*

*What brings you  
here?*

*What did you have  
to put aside to be  
here?*



# Definition of an Affinity Group

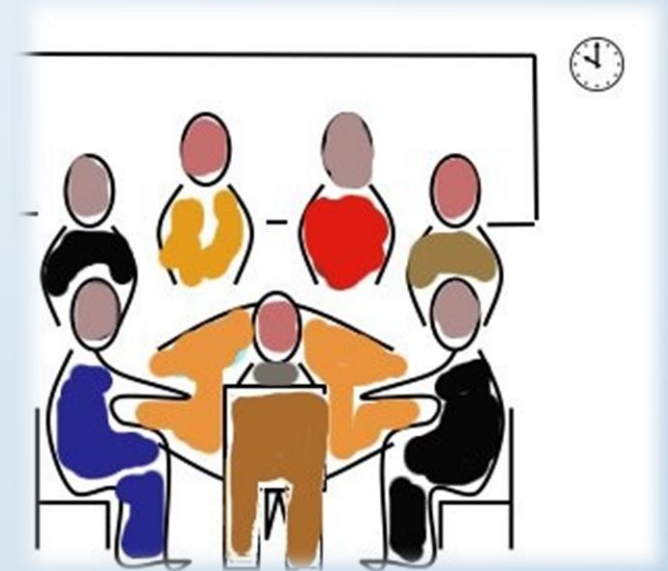


The term *affinity group* is used as a bringing together of people who have an identifier in common. Affinity groups are for individuals who identify as members of the group and can speak to the experience of being a member of the group from the “I” perspective.

# Benefits to Cultivating and Sustaining Affinity Groups

## Benefits

- Safety and comfort to be authentic
- Affirmation
- Critical mass
- Identity socialization
- Build resilience
- Prepare to engage deeply with other groups
- Empowerment toward action





# Starting the Journey

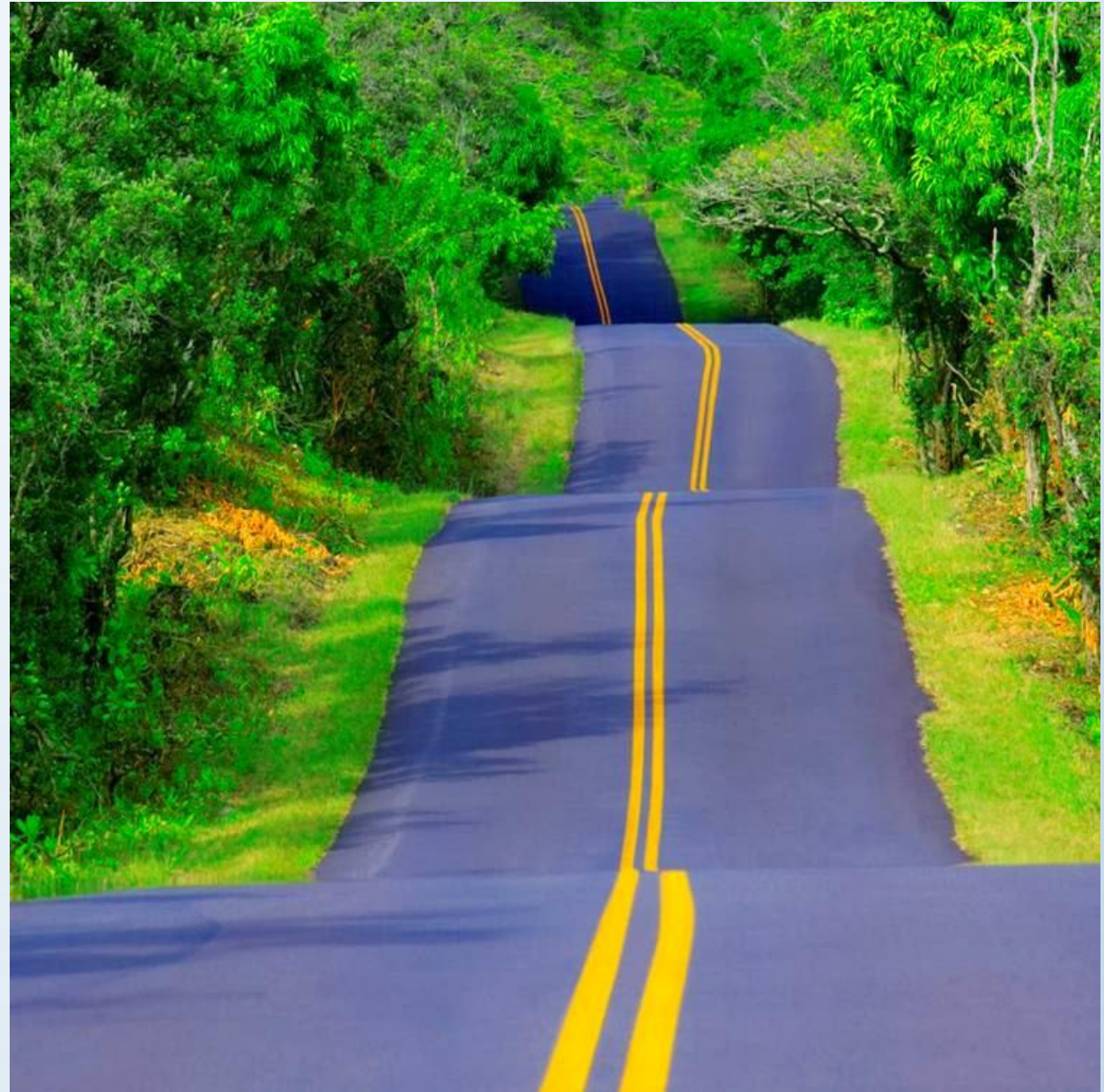
Stage 1: Identify Need

Stage 2: Determine  
Format and Definitions

Stage 3: Communicate  
and Invite

Stage 4: Facilitate

Stage 5: Repeat



# Stage 1: Identify the Need

- **Connect to your mission**
- Gather data around the community's population and demographics around constituency that utilize PACD youth programs.
- Gather research on the challenges the group faces.
- Gather research on the benefit of affinity groups, have crucial conversations.
- Gather information around the need and desire.

# Stage 2: Determine Format and Definitions

- What type of group? Affinity, alliance or interest?
- What identities/identifiers?
- Timing
- Space
- Facilitators
- Group Goals
- Curriculum

# Coming Into Focus

<b>Time</b> Frequency, duration	
<b>Talent</b> Who's strengths will be able to contribute to success	
<b>Money</b> Funding sources, financial line item	
<b>Contacts</b> Who will be the supporting and influential contributors?	
<b>Communication</b> How will the story be shared?	



# Stage 3: Communicate and Invite

- Initial communication from upper management or program leader
- Communicate the why, the how, the what, the who, and the purpose
- Share definitions, goals and mission
- Consider the message to staff, volunteers, youth and other stakeholders
- FAQs

# Stage 4: Facilitate Groups

- Identity pride
- History
- Positive change and activism
- Opportunities and challenges
- Strategies for success
- Supporting each other

# Stage 5: Wash, Rinse, Repeat: Thrive and Sustain

- Assess effectiveness
- Make refinements
- Re-launch every year
- Utilize group member voice
- United front



# Encountering Resistance

## **Why a Community May Resist Affinity Groups**

- Unacknowledged fear of assembly
- Unacknowledged resistance to empowerment
- Desire to stay ignorant of issues
- Privilege

## **Forms of Resistance**

- Dismissal
- Minimization



# Considerations for PACD

## Factors Leading to more Success

- Sense of pride
- Deflection of blame
- Closer sense of inclusiveness
- Group driven curricula and programming
- Collective action

## Factors Leading to Less Success

- Lack of consistency (false starts, leadership disconnection)
- Lack of budget
- Lack of action plan
- Momentum diminishes with the rise of discomfort
- Wonders and perceptions from patrons (visitors and gawkers)



Reflective Wisdom  
Revealing your Distinctions



# Let's Connect

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