



Global Grassroots

CONSCIOUS SOCIAL CHANGE FOR WOMEN

Conscious Social Change Workshop Leveraging Personal Gifts and Assets to Create Social Change

Objective: To assess the specific gifts, capabilities, passions and assets the individual participants and community possess. Tapping into individual callings and passions will enable participants to see what tools they have to use to solve the problems they have identified as a priority. The second objective is to release the creative ideas of the community. By coming from a place of inner strength, the participants will be more likely to generate solutions that they will find inspiring and meaningful to pursue. Having understood the gifts, capabilities and assets they bring to a solution, they will be more likely to design solutions which will be sustainable long-term. Other activities will help expand the depth and complexity of solutions, as participants maximize the social value created by their ideas.

Note: This workshop is most effective when used in conjunction with our workshops on conscious leadership, our workshop exploring the root causes of social issues on a systemic level, and our workshop on how change happens: developing a theory of change. Contact Global Grassroots if you are interested in arranging for our staff to lead a longer workshop series.

Duration: 120 minutes

Materials

- Notebooks for participants to take notes in
- Flip Chart, tape and markers for group brainstorm
- Index cards

Part 1: Identifying Assets

We at Global Grassroots propose that each individual has a gift, possibly several gifts. Maybe not all of these have been discovered. Many of them come forth in the form of a passion, something you love to do, a capability, a way of connecting with people, a sense of knowledge, a skill, a talent, a perspective on life, etc. They can all be used to support you in creating social change.

Work individually or in a group and make a large list of all the gifts and assets that you have available, using flip charts.

Internal Passions:

What do you love to do? (e.g., athletics, arts, hobbies)

What do you really care about?

When do you feel truly alive? (e.g., performing, in nature)

What do you feel called to do?

What do you like best about yourself?

Individual Skills and Competencies:

What do you know a lot about?

What are you really good at doing? (e.g., debate, telling jokes, building things)

What are your gifts?

What are your strengths?

What have you learned to do better than others?

External Assets:

We are never as poor or without resources as we think. See what you can find around you as assets. Some resources can be used directly to help you, others can be traded or shared, and others can be used to make money to support you. Some questions to get you started:

What tools do you have?

What technology do you have access to?

What forms of transportation can you use?

What items do you have that can be used to create art or music?

What items have you created or can you create that can be used to entertain, learn, build, etc.?

Equipment/Space: Consider what type of equipment and space you have available to you. Think broadly even if an item does not seem to relate to your social change work, because there might be something you have that you never thought would be useful.

What is in the natural environment?

What does each person have or have access to or through others?

What does your group have access to?

Raw Materials or Supplies: These are the items you may need to produce a product or provide a service, or these could be items that you could trade or sell.

Human Resources: Start thinking broadly of where one's support network is based, and on whom you can rely for the things that you will need for your projects.

What kind of support do you have?

Who might be available to volunteer?

What connections do you have to other groups or influential people?

What skills, gifts and competencies do these people offer you?

Financial Resources: When starting a new venture, there is often a need for financial resources to be able to invest in equipment, supplies or other start-up expenses. This can be obtained through grants, loans, sales of things you own, cash you have, money you ask other people to donate, fundraising events, etc. Consider what you have now in terms of sources of funds.

Part 2: Identify Issues

This is often the most fun or easiest part of this exercise. Make a large list of all the issues you, your group, your school or your community is dealing with. It's a chance to complain, to critique and to make sure you include everything that you want to change to establish a more conscious, whole society. After you have exhausted your list, choose 10 as your top priority for inclusion in the next exercise.

Part 3: Creative Brainstorm

Using index cards of two different colors, add individual assets and problems to the cards – one item per card, with all assets on the same colored cards, and all issues on a different colored set of cards. Gather the asset and issue cards into two piles. Have a member of the group pick one from each pile. Read out the issue. Then read out the asset. Ask the group to consider how they can use the chosen asset to solve the chosen problem. Allow yourselves to consider at least three different ways to leverage that asset creatively in designing a social solution. All silly ideas are welcome to engage the group in creative problem-solving.

Example: Issue: *homelessness* + Asset: *talent at telling jokes* = host a comedy night to raise money for homeless, inviting the homeless to take part in the gathering.

Let each person have a turn until it inspires more targeted brainstorming on priority issues. Write all ideas on a large piece of paper.

Part 4: Consider Conscious Social Change

After completing the creative brainstorming process, begin the process of crafting your solution to priority issues using the combined offerings of the group. Together, take a moment to breathe deeply, close your eyes, meditate on your particular issue and your passions. When you open your eyes, begin a discussion about what you each have to offer and how you can incorporate (a) your gifts, (b) an understanding of suffering and compassion, (c) your power within and (d) mindfulness to begin to address the underlying core or root issues of your problem area. Once you begin to develop your ideas further, consider the ways in which you might enhance the social value opportunities by asking how else can this idea can create social value, three more times.