

Breaking Bread:

Engaging Religiously Diverse Youth in the Nashville Food Justice Movement



Resource Manual

Compiled By:

Jennifer Bailey
Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow
Manna-Food Security Partners
February 2010

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
About Breaking Bread	
Program Overview	
Key Terms	
Chapter One: Engaging Religious Communities.....	6
Faith-Based Community Organizing as a Strategy for Social Change	
Key Interfaith Terms	
Examples of Interfaith Partnerships: King, Gandhi, Heschel, and Hahn	
The Role of Food in the Practice of 5 World Religions	
Reframing the Conversation on Hunger from Charity to Justice	
Combating the Missionary Complex: A Word on Allyship	
Working with Religious Communities: 4 Points to Remember	
Chapter Two: Youth Faith-Based Organizing Basics.....	18
Youth Organizing 101	
Cycle of Youth Engagement	
Adults as Allies	
The Role of Youth in the Food Justice Movement	
Chapter Three: Tools for Youth Faith-Based Organizing.....	26
Introduction to Public Narrative	
Youth Public Narrative Writing Exercises	
Example of Public Narrative	
Photovoice as a Public Narrative Tool	
Introduction to Advocacy	
Planning a Youth Day of Action	
Facilitating Meaningful Dialogue	
Appendix: Additional Resources.....	46

About Breaking Bread

Breaking Bread is an initiative of the Re/Storing Nashville campaign that seeks to engage religiously diverse youth in dialogue and action with the goal of building a more just and equitable food system in Middle Tennessee.

Re/Storing Nashville is a program of Manna-Food Security Partners (Manna-FSP) launched in 2009 that is building a grassroots movement to ensure that **ALL** Nashvillians have access to affordable, healthy foods. In partnership with communities of faith, Re/Storing Nashville is working to reduce health risks – including obesity – facing residents of Nashville’s identified “food deserts”: East Nashville/Cayce Homes, Edgehill, and North Nashville/Charlotte Ave. The campaign has three over-arching goals:

- Helping to create more direct public transportation routes to existing grocery stores from underserved areas.
- Developing tax and zoning incentives to bring grocery stores to neighborhoods without them.
- Creating understanding about food deserts from the neighborhoods to the entire city, making sure that we work together to solve the problem.

Why Youth?

Young people have historically played a central role in the facilitation and forward progression of social movements in the United States. Youth leadership was integral to the civil rights and liberation struggles of the 1960s and 70s, including the American Indian Movement, the Black Liberation Movement, the Chicano Movement, and the Women’s Movement¹. Martin Luther King, Jr. was only 26 years old when he led the Montgomery Bus Boycott which served as the catalyst for Civil Rights movement.

Beginning in the early 1990s, urban areas across the country witnessed the birth of nonprofit organizations and programs dedicated to expanding organizing and activism among youth prompting what has become a “field” of youth organizing². Concurrently, the environmental justice movement was undergoing shifts with young people leading the way and challenging the notion of who is an “expert”.

Through Breaking Bread, Manna-Food Security Partners seeks to continue in this legacy by providing the next generation of youth organizers in Nashville with the skills and tools they need to enact positive social change in their food environments. In a city known as the “Buckle of the Bible Belt”, Breaking Bread provides the rare opportunity for young people to actively learn and build relationships with peers of different faiths around a common theme in religious

¹ J. Quiroz-Martinez, J. Wu, D. Pei, and K. Zimmerman, ReGeneration: Young People Shaping Environmental Justice (Oakland, CA: Movement Strategy Center, 2005) p. 6

² Daniel Hosang, Youth and Community Organizing Today (New York, NY: Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing, (2003) p. 6

traditions—food. Our goal is to reframe the conversation around hunger in religious communities from *charity* to *justice* with young people leading the charge.

Program Overview

The Breaking Bread program is divided into three major programmatic initiatives each reflecting different levels of commitment to the program: Youth Days of Action, The Breaking Bread Leadership Institute, and the Manna-Food Security Partners Youth Council.

Youth Days of Action

Youth Days of Action are service events sponsored by Manna-FSP and partners organizations that introduce youth to food justice movement. Working with community gardens, soup kitchens, and food banks, young people will leave with first hand experiences of how food is produced and exposure to barriers that exist in achieving food access.

Breaking Bread Leadership Institute

The Breaking Bread Leadership Institute (BBLI) is an intensive four-week training session for high school students on the fundamentals of food justice organizing and advocacy. Using interfaith partnerships as a lens to evaluate these topics, participants will gain the tools needed to facilitate their own projects while building leadership skills.

By the final session of the Leadership Institute participants will:

- Understand community organizing, advocacy, and civic engagement
- Have a broad knowledge of food policy basics
- Build communication and media skills
- Received training on systems of oppression and dismantling racism
- Be equipped with tools to facilitate interfaith dialogue
- Develop goals and action areas for their specific communities
- Build relationships with one another

Example Leadership Institute Topics:

- Food Justice 101
- Community Organizing Basics
- An Introduction to Advocacy
- Working with religious communities
- Dismantling Systems of Oppression
- Media Training

Key Terms

Food Access:

Food access is the physical proximity and availability to affordable, healthy food.

-Manna-FSP

Food Justice:

Food justice asserts that no one should live without enough food because of economic constraints or social inequalities. Food justice reframes the lack of healthy food sources in poor communities as a human rights issue. The food justice movement is a different approach to a community's needs that seeks to truly advance self reliance and social justice by placing communities in leadership of their own solutions and providing them with the tools to address the disparities within our food systems and within society at large.

-Brahm Ahmadi

Food Security:

Community food security is a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision-making.

-Mike Hamm and Anne Bellows

Manna-FSP Youth Council

The flagship initiative of the Breaking Bread program, the Manna-FSP Youth Council is leadership development program dedicated to empowering religiously diverse teens to be agents of individual, institutional, and social change in our food system. The group will meet bi-weekly to develop their own food justice project culminating in a forum created and facilitate by members of group. In order to eligible for the program, youth must have successfully completed the Breaking Bread Leadership Institute.

Chapter One: **Organizing Religious Communities**

This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a big house a great “world house” in which we have to live together - black and white, Easterners and Westerners, Gentiles and Jews, Catholics and Protestants, Moslem and Hindu, a family unduly separated in ideas, culture, and interests who, because we can never again live without each other, must learn, somehow, in this one big world, to live with each other.

-Martin Luther King, Jr., Nobel Lecture, December 11, 1964

Faith-Based Community Organizing as a Strategy for Social Change

The United States is the most religiously diverse nation in the world. Over the past 40 years, shifting patterns in religious observance and immigration contributed to a changing religious landscape. To encounter religious diversity we no longer have to look to travel books and films, but can see it first hand in our neighborhoods, our jobs, and ours children's schools. Every day, people of different faith traditions live, work, and interact with each peacefully.

Now more than ever, there are opportunities to capitalize on this religious diversity. Building on shared values found across faith traditions, we can begin a movement that addresses inequalities in our food system.

What is Faith-Based Community Organizing?

Community organizing is the process of building power that is based on people within a community defining the problems that they wish to address, the solutions they wish to pursue, and the methods they will use to accomplish these solutions.

Three principles of Direct Action Organizing³:

- Win real, immediate, and concrete improvements in people's lives
- Help people recognize their own power
- Alter the power relations of existing institutions

Faith-Based Community Organizing (FBCO), also known as Congregation-Based Community Organizing, builds on the principles of Direct Action Organizing by working with religious congregations to address issues within their communities while simultaneously strengthening the life of congregations⁴. The idea of FBCO is not new. In fact, it has been said that no social reform movement in the United States has been successful without participation from the religious community⁵. From the Catholic Worker Movement to the American Civil Rights Movement, the legacy of religious participation in the quest for social justice in this country runs wide and deep.

According to the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, “The foundation of faith-based community organizing lies in building relationships among congregants to allow people to identify their common values, concerns, and passions”⁶. In order to achieve this goal several steps must be taken:

- I. Identify the religious congregations in your community that are either most affected by the issue you are organizing around (i.e. food access) or have shown a particular interest and commitment to the topic.

³ Kimberly Bobo, et al *Organizing for Social Change*. 3rd Ed., Midwest Academy, 2001.

⁴ “What is Faith-Based Community Organizing”. PICO National Network Website. <<http://www.piconetw.org/about?id=0011>>., (26 January 2010.)

⁵ “Faith Based Organizing” United Christ of Christ. <http://www.ucc.org/justice/advocacy_resources/faith-based-organizing.html>, (26 January 2010).

⁶ “Faith Based Organizing” Jewish Community Relations Council. <<http://www.jcrcboston.org/focus/justice/synagogue/faith-based/>> (26 January 2010).

2. Build personal relationships with both the clergy and lay leaders in congregations by facilitating thoughtful and intentional conversations about the issue of concern.
3. Encourage congregation members to take action by providing them with the necessary tools, trainings, and resources to build their own agenda for change in their communities.

Figure 1.1: Pico Faith Based Community Organizing Model

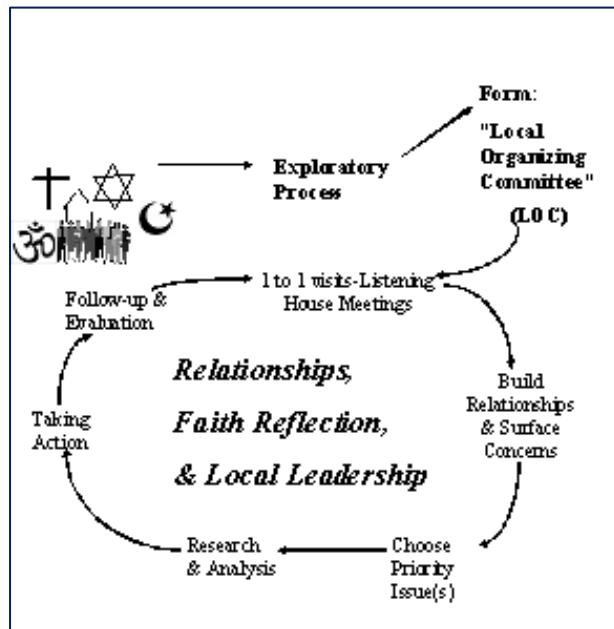


Figure 1.1 shows one model of FBCO utilized by PICO, a national network of community organizers working with faith communities. The PICO Model encourages local congregations to organize into “Local Organizing Committees” to facilitate dialogues within the community about social action and change.

Fast Facts about Religion in the United States:

- According to Gallup, 91% of Americans identified as Christian in 1948 compared to only 77% in 2008¹.
- Religious institutions are the number one provider of emergency food assistance in the United States
- According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 83.1% of all Americans claim allegiance to a religious tradition²
- Tennessee ranks 5th among states in the U.S. in the religious commitment of its citizens.³
- In 2008, over half of Americans considered religion a very important part of their life.⁴

¹<http://www.gallup.com/video/117394/Christianity-Slow-Decline.aspx?CSTS=tagrss>

² <http://religion.pewforum.org/reports>

³ <http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=504>

⁴ <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1690/religion.aspx>

Working with Multiple Faith Communities: Religious Pluralism 101

Faith-based community organizing does not have to be limited to one congregation or religious tradition. It is possible and powerful to engage religious communities across lines of difference to build a broader base of support for food justice.

According to Dr. Diana Eck, Director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University, religious pluralism is the, “dynamic process through which we engage with one another in and through our very deepest differences” (Eck 70). Religious pluralism calls for active engagement with people of different faith traditions with the goal of building relationships of respect and understanding across lines of difference. It does not call for us to give up our religious identities for the sake of peace and agreement, but rather emphasizes that the potential to strengthen our personal relationship to our faiths through learning about the faith traditions of others.

Pluralism is **NOT**...

- **Diversity:** Religious diversity is an observable fact of American life that can be seen and counted from afar. Pluralism calls for the recognition and engagement with religious diversity. It is something to be worked towards not a given.⁷
- **Tolerance:** Tolerance is a necessary step towards religious pluralism yet it is important to recognize that tolerance alone is not enough. Pluralism requires that people go a step beyond tolerance and actively seek understanding of those faith traditions that are unlike our own.⁸
- **Relativism:** Pluralism does not require that we give up our deeply held religious commitments and beliefs in favor of universal standards that we can all agree with. Instead pluralism, “Means holding our deepest differences, even our religious differences, not in isolation, but in relationship to one another.”⁹

Pillars of Religious Pluralism

Chicago’s Interfaith Youth Core identifies three pillars that are central to building religious pluralism that are also affective strategies for organizing around food justice:

- Storytelling
- Shared Values
- Common Action

Storytelling

The act of telling stories is a central component in many religious traditions. Whether handed down orally or through sacred scripture, stories are often the way we learn and communicate our faith to others. Stories have the power to transform both the story teller and the audience by creating an open line of communication.

⁷ Diana L.. Eck, *What is Pluralism?* Harvard Pluralism Project, 2006, <http://www.pluralism.org/pages/pluralism/what_is_pluralism>, (December 8, 2009).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Particularly when addressing topics as complex and personal as religion and food access, it is important that individuals feel comfortable and safe. Storytelling can be a powerful strategy in creating an environment where people feel their identities (religious and other) are respected.

Shared Values

While rich in their diversity and variation, many of the world's religious traditions also share some deeply held values. These values include broad concepts like love, compassion, and justice and more specific actions like caring for the environment, service to the community, caring for the elderly, and in our case--- feeding the hungry. Recognizing these shared values is an important step in mobilizing religious communities to work together.

Common Action

Common action refers is any project taken on by a group of diverse individuals that seeks improve the quality of life for all community members--regardless of race, religion, gender, class, or other markers of difference. Within in the context of religious pluralism, this means taking the shared values of different religious communities and transforming them into action.



Key Interfaith Terms

Adopted from the Interfaith Youth Core's *Interfaith Leader's Toolkit (2009)*

Diversity: Diversity is the simple fact of people from different religious, racial, ethnic, gender, geographic, etc., backgrounds living in close proximity to one another in their communities. It should not be used interchangeably with **religious pluralism.**¹⁰

Interfaith: Interfaith refers to the cooperative and positive interaction among people of different faith traditions and moral perspectives –religious and secular- at both the individual and institutional level. The aim of interfaith is to derive a common belief about similarities between faiths-**shared values**- and commitment to the world. It does not ask people to water down their faith, but promotes understanding between different religions to increase understanding of others.¹¹

Interfaith Dialogue: Interfaith dialogue is a conversation between people of distinct religious or philosophical perspectives with the intention of illuminating the commonalities and nuances of their shared values through the exchange of stories. Interfaith dialogue can be a one-time event or a series of conversations. It might span hours, months, years, or a lifetime. It might be structured or unstructured; facilitated by a third party or unfacilitated; preplanned or organic.

What characterizes interfaith dialogue is the intention on the part of its participants to better understand conversation partners who hold different religious or philosophical perspectives rather than convincing one another of a particular viewpoint.¹²

Religious Pluralism: Religious pluralism describes a community where different individuals or groups respect each other's distinct religious identities and perspectives, seek mutually enriching relationships across lines of difference based on their **shared values**, and establish active partnerships oriented toward collective action for the common good of all. Religious Pluralists don't have to be particularly religious; secular, agnostic and atheist people can all be religious pluralists.¹³



Shared Values: Shared values are deeply held, widely shared principles that exist within and across all of the world's religious and philosophical perspectives. Grand values such as compassion, justice, and service, as well as more tangible values such as hospitality, protection of the environment, and care for the poor and/or elderly are among some of the shared values that participants in interfaith work often discover they share.¹⁴

¹⁰ Interfaith Youth Core (2009). *Interfaith Leader's Toolkit*.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Examples of Interfaith Partnerships King, Gandhi, Heschel, and Hahn

From the Interfaith Youth Core's MLK Day Service Curriculum



social action.

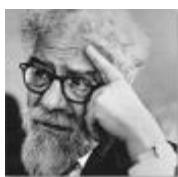
Today, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is known most widely as the Baptist Minister whose faith journey inspired the U.S. Civil Rights movement. His deeply held belief that all people are created in God's image inspired Dr. King to embrace the wonderful diversity of religious beliefs and to struggle nonviolently for social justice around the world. His heartfelt conviction that God called on all people of faith to confront social injustice encouraged Dr. King to reach out to all communities of faith in creating a Beloved Community of shared values, mutual understanding, and positive



Mahatma Mohandas K. Gandhi

Mohandas Gandhi was a Hindu whose concept of *satyagraha*, or love force, helped India gain its independence from British colonial rule in 1947. Although the British authorities repeatedly jailed Gandhi and his followers, his calm commitment to loving his enemies while resisting them nonviolently never wavered.

Rev. Dr. King was inspired by Gandhi's non-violent methods and brought them to the United States Civil Rights Movement. After Gandhi's death, Rev. King traveled to India to study Gandhi's life's work with those who had worked with and known him personally.



Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, a Jewish theologian and leader of the Conservative Movement sought to transform the United States through the concept of *Tikkun Olam*, or "healing the world." Born in Poland, Heschel studied theology in Germany but eventually fled to the United States when the Nazis came to power. The Holocaust, which eventually killed six million Jews, convinced Heschel that the leaders of all faith communities must expose social injustice. He also believed that God called on all people of faith to work together in confronting and defeating social injustice. After Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel saw the legacy of the ancient prophets of Israel reflected in King's work, Heschel invited King to speak at a conference on Religion and Race sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Chicago in 1963. Heschel later joined Dr. King in the march from Selma to Montgomery during one of the most critical points in the Civil Rights Movement.



Thien Su Thich Nhat Hanh

In Southeast Asia the Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, was using the principles of compassion and nonviolence to stop the war in Vietnam. Hanh believed that people of faith, especially youth, could not remain silent in the face of social injustice. They must work together to heal the world. He founded the School of Youth for Social Services in Saigon, a grassroots relief organization that rebuilt bombed villages, set up schools and medical centers, resettled homeless families, and organized agricultural cooperatives.

Rev. Dr. King built a relationship with Thich Nhat Hanh and his struggle against the war in Vietnam. In 1967, King nominated Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Role of Food in the Practice of 5 World Religions

Excerpt from “From Charity to Justice” a publication of Manna-FSP

Buddhism

In **Buddhism**, there are not many dietary rules, but fasting or feasting on holidays is common. Buddhists believe in reincarnation, including the possibility of humans being reborn as animals and vice-versa. Consequently, they do not wish to harm living creatures, and many Buddhists are vegetarians. However, meat is not completely forbidden in Buddhist doctrines and is eaten in small quantities in some Buddhist countries. In maritime countries, fish and seafood are generally accepted as being valuable sources of protein; the issue of not killing animals is rationalized because the fish are not killed but merely removed from the water. Some Mahayana Buddhists in China and Vietnam also avoid eating strong-smelling plants such as onions, garlic, chives, shallots, and leeks, believing that the strong flavors of these vegetables may excite the senses and present a challenge to Buddhists seeking to control their desires. In rice-growing Asian communities where Buddhism is practiced, food in rituals reflects the rhythms of food production, including its scarcity or abundance during the year. Food rites mark changes in personal status as well, serving as temporal boundary markers through the life cycle. Special foods may be prepared for birthdays, weddings, funerals, tonsures, and ordinations. Puffed rice is used at funerals to symbolize rice that cannot be grown again. Rules are generally stricter for monks and nuns than for lay people. For example, monks may eat only twice a day-in the morning and at noon, fasting for the rest of the day and night. Lay people can gain merit for themselves and for their dead relatives by preparing food and offering it to the monks.

Christianity

Given the centrality and importance of food for all living things, it is not surprising that images associated with what we eat have become important in **Christianity**. The most powerful of these images, in both the Eastern Orthodox and Western Christianity are, of course, the bread and wine of communion, which refer to the body and blood of Jesus, and his sacrifice on the cross, and are powerful symbols of unity, redemption, and a sharing in the life of God. There are many other such examples from the Old and New Testaments, including milk, honey, grapes, lamb, olives, and eggs, which have symbolic value, particularly at Easter when they represent renewed life. In fact, since Christians believe that all good things are a gift of God, every meal has deep religious significance. In the Bible, meals were special times of fellowship shared among believers, and between believers and God. Jesus ate with his disciples and attended numerous parties at which delicious food and wine were served. Two of his most famous miracles involved an abundance of food (Mark 6 & 8). He compared Himself to bread that satisfies (John 6:35).

Hinduism

Food occupies an important place in the life of **Hinduism**. In fact, such great emphasis is placed on the role of food that Hinduism has been called “the Kitchen Religion.” Food is offered to gods during invocation ceremonies, to deities in the temples, to ancestors during rituals. Food is served to the poor and needy as part of charitable service, or seva. Food is also served to birds and animals as part of religious duty. Food is offered to one’s personal deity before it is eaten, with the belief that the deity will neutralize harmful energies in the food. It is one’s duty not to disrespect or reject food. Hindus are to keep plenty of food on hand and be ready to offer it fully to any guest who might appear.

Hindus put heavy emphasis on the preparation and eating of the right kinds of foods. Food is the main source of energy for the body, so, like Muslims, it is important to eat foods that promote longevity, purity, strength, health, happiness and cheerfulness. Although many Hindus are not vegetarians, the beliefs of Hinduism state that it is bad karma to engage in the killing of animals or support it through buying and eating animal flesh, which they believe impacts entire nations and the planet itself. Hindus observe a number of rituals before, during and after eating.

For Hindus, food is in truth the Lord of Creation. '*From food are produced all creatures which dwell on earth. Then they live by food, and in the end they return to food. For food is the oldest of all beings, and therefore it is called panacea.* -*Taittiriya Upanishad*

Islam

In the **Islamic** tradition, food is an essential prerequisite for life, and, as such, the primary goal of eating and drinking is to enable the body to function normally. With food, or the lack of it, the destinies of individuals are greatly influenced. We should "eat to live," and "not live to eat." The Holy Koran states: "*O you people! Eat of what is on earth lawful and good!*" (2:168). To ensure a proper supply of essential nutrients, Muslims are advised to combine food sources of different nutrients in the right amounts. This results in a healthy well-balanced diet. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Getting off to the right start each day enables one to honor Allah by being energetic and healthy throughout the day.

All of the Koran's 114 chapters except one begin with the phrase "Allah is merciful and compassionate." Mohammed repeatedly forbade cruelty to animals, and although the Koran does permit meat eating, it also encourages healthful food, which many Muslims conclude does not include animal products. Given these traditions, many Shi'ite Muslims and the Islamic mystics, such as the Sufis, see vegetarianism as the Islamic ideal and choose this diet. Like Judaism, Islam prohibits eating pork.

Judaism

Judaism's food history is long and rich, characterized by their many migrations and their status as a minority group. From this viewpoint, it is as diverse as Jewish cultures, languages, and community experiences have been, as Jews have related to the multiple cultures and populations they have been in contact with throughout the world and throughout history. From manna in the desert to the Promised Land being referred to more than 20 times as flowing with milk and honey, metaphors relating God and his people over food abound throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

In Judaism, food is primarily defined by the dietary laws of Judaism. The Judaic religion is prescriptive in the selection, cooking preparation, and consumption of specific food items. Daily practice is meticulously structured to comply with Jewish law, the Halakhah, and the community of Jews can be considered to be organized as a community of religiously complying eaters. Specific dishes, food combinations, and cooking preparations are prescribed for religious festivals. Throughout their history of multiple migrations, Jews have been in contact with different cultures, languages, and cuisines. This has generated a diversified Jewish cuisine. Under the classifying terminology of kosher versus non-kosher, the system of dietary prescriptions and prohibitions in Judaism primarily involves the consumption of animal flesh, and is codified in the Pentateuch, in Leviticus (Chapter 11).

At the core of all Jewish festival tables is the sanctified bread, or challah. The Jewish festival of Passover, a ritual narration of the Jewish slaves' exodus from Pharaoh's Egypt, includes special food prescriptions, each commemorating an element of the Passover.

Reframing the Conversation on Hunger from Charity to Justice

In many faith communities, the role of food is central to religious tradition. For practitioners, religion is an influential factor in shaping what they can and cannot eat and when they must abstain from food. There is a growing awareness among religious communities about the injustices embedded in our food system, from how our food is produced to its distribution. Thanks to recent local food initiatives, more members of faith communities are participating in Community Supported Agriculture, working in community gardens, etc. However, the current dominant narrative concerning food and faith remains centered around charity.

Efforts by congregations to engage hunger issues tend to focus on emergency food assistance by making donations to food pantries and volunteering in soup kitchens. Organizations such as Meals on Wheels and Feeding America depend on volunteers from religious communities to do their work. Volunteerism and service are undoubtedly a necessary part of ending hunger in American society. Yet if the goal of faith-based organizing is to create change that is both transformative and sustainable, the conversation around hunger in communities must be reframed from *charity to justice*.

Figure 1.2: Charity vs. Justice

<u>Charity</u>	<u>Justice</u>
Charity = social service. Charity provides direct services like food, clothing, and shelter.	Justice = social change. Justice promotes social change in institutions or political structures.
Charity responds to immediate needs.	Justice responds to long-term needs.
Charity is directed at the effects of injustice, its symptoms. Charity addresses problems that already exist.	Justice is directed at the <i>root causes</i> of social problems. Justice addresses the underlying structures or causes of these problems.
Otherwise put: LOVE MOPS UP.	Otherwise put: JUSTICE TRIES TO MAKE SURE THE MESS ISN'T MADE TO BEGIN WITH.
Charity is private, individual acts.	Justice is public, collective actions.
Examples of charity: homeless shelters, food shelves, clothing drives, emergency services	Examples of justice: legislative advocacy, changing policies and practices, political action.

Source: Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis <www.saintmarys.edu/~incandell/charjust.html> (Accessed 1 January 2010).

Combating the Missionary Complex: A Word on Allyship

As seen in Figure 2, a justice-based approach to issues of food justice and security recognizes the need for long-term institutional change. It is also important to note that in order to accomplish true transformation; this change must come from within the communities most directly impacted by food injustice. In addition to making a shift from *charity to justice*, it is important that religious congregations also make the shift from *doing for the community* to *doing with community* an idea known as **allyship**.

The language of allyship is of particular importance when working in conjunction with religious communities whose members are not directly suffering the consequences of food injustice and/or are not located in an area that is food insecure. To have a truly justice-centered approach it is vital that participants understand the personal privileges and power they may bring to the table.

Ally: Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own and reaches across differences to achieve mutual goals¹⁵. In the case of food justice work, an ally is someone that does not directly suffer the consequences of food injustice (i.e. the target group) but is moved by compassion and a sense of moral conviction to work on the issue.

12 Qualities of an Ally

Adopted from “Privilege, Power, and Safe Space” a publication of the Oberlin College Multicultural Resource Center

1. Recognizes one's own privilege
2. Has worked to develop an understanding of a target group and the needs of this group
3. Chooses to align with the target group and respond to their needs
4. Believes that it is in one's self-interest to be an ally
5. Is committed to personal growth (in spite of the possible discomfort or pain) required to promote social change
6. Expects support from other allies
7. Is able to acknowledge and articulate, without guilt or apology, how oppressive patterns operate
8. Expects to make mistakes, but does not use it as an excuse for inaction
9. Assumes that people in a targeted group are already communicating in the best and most comfortable way
10. Does not expect members of the targeted group to educate them
11. Does not attempt to convince target group that one is on their side. Shows support through actions, not words
12. Does not expect gratitude from people in the target group and remembers that being an ally is a matter of choice

¹⁵ “Definition of Terms”. University of California at Berkeley Gender Equity Resource Center.<http://geneq.berkeley.edu/lgbt_resources_definiton_of_terms#ally>, (26 January 2010).

Working with Religious Communities: 4 Points to Remember

1. Know Your Audience

Organizing religious communities around food justice, like any good community organizing, begins with establishing relationships of mutual respect and understanding. Investing the time to get to know the personal stories of community members and the basic tenets of their faith will only serve to strengthen the community's willingness to help you when the time comes.

Reflection Questions: What brings me to this work?
How can I share my story and learn from the story of others?

2. Have a Clear Message

Once you have started facilitating relationships with each faith community, the next question is how to get them on board. The key is being able to articulate the history and goals around in a way that is compelling to the target group and facilitates buy in. In essence, your primary objective is to connect the broader food justice movement with immediate local concerns and issues.

Some messaging tips from the Midwest Environmental Advocates' Guide to Community Organizing¹⁶:

- Your message should be clear, concise, and consistent
- Avoid making your message too scientific or technical
- Make your message about people, not things
- Your message is not a slogan

Reflection Questions: What are the goals of this project?
Why is my issue relevant to the religious communities that I want to engage?

3. Recognize the Assets Each Community Brings to the Table

When tackling a complex issue like food security, the focus is often played face on the deficiencies of a particular community rather than its assets. In order to build a solid foundation for the sustainability of your project, it is necessary to start from a space that recognizes each religious community as an equal stakeholder in the fight. The Asset-Based Community Development Model calls for projects that build on existing community strengths, resources, and skills to create a more just, sustainable community¹⁷. Remember that religious communities should be engaged as sincere partners not tools to reach an end goal.

Reflection Questions: Am I working **for** the community or **with** the community?
In what ways can I assure community voices are at the center of the work I am doing?

4. Follow Up and Follow Through!

There is nothing worse than a person that doesn't deliver on their promises! Once you have engaged a community it is your responsibility to keep them updated on the progress of the project.

Reflection Questions: What are some creative ways I can keep partnering organizations in the loop?
How can I use the insight gained from religious communities to strengthen my project?

¹⁶<http://www.midwestadvocates.org/media/publications/MEA'SCitizen'sGuideToCommunityOrganizing.pdf>

¹⁷<http://www.abcdinstitute.org/>

Chapter Two:

Youth Faith-Based Organizing Basics

Under your shoulders. Dear young people of the entire world, weigh the responsibility to transform tomorrow's world into a society where peace, harmony and fraternity reign.

- Bishop Carlos Belo

Youth Organizing 101

Adopted from the Work of the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing

Youth Faith-Based Community Organizing (FBCO) begins with the intentional effort to engage young people from the beginning of organizing efforts. Many religious congregations have well-established youth groups and ministries that participate regularly in projects that benefit the greater community. This service-learning approach provides youth with the opportunity to meaningfully combine community service with thoughtful reflection and instruction to enrich the teachings of their faith¹⁸. Youth FBCO takes this approach one step further by recognizing young people as the leaders of *today* and gives them the tools and resources they need to facilitate long-term sustainable change in their communities.

Breaking Bread seeks to build a movement of youth faith-based community organizing in Nashville that works across lines of religious difference and engages young people in healthy and productive interfaith organizing. To paint a fuller picture of youth organizing and how it operates, it is useful to address how it differs from other forms of youth engagement.

Forms of Youth Engagement

Youth Services Approach

In their Occasional Working Paper series, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing defines youth services organization as organizations or programs provide treatment and supports needed to address problems young people encounter. The services approach defines young people as clients instead of active participants or members. The work strives to intervene in a young person's life to confront personal problems. Within a youth services framework, the inherent strengths or skills young people possess are overshadowed by the academic, psychological, or economic obstacles they face. Success is measured by an organization's ability to help individual young people overcome personal barriers rather than seeing such barriers as part of a collective struggle for improved life chances. Youth services are usually offered as crisis intervention or prevention.

Example of youth service organization: Boys and Girls Club

Youth Development Framework

The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center defines youth development as an approach focuses on strengthening the capacity of young people to successfully navigate the life stage of adolescence. Its underlying premise is based on the belief that youth are valued assets and can contribute to family, school, and community life¹⁹. It emphasizes not simply providing services, but offering a network of opportunities to encourage youth to get active and involved, and to support them in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and power²⁰. Some of the developmental outcomes anticipated by the youth development model include: a

¹⁸ "What is Service-Learning?". [Serve and Learn America Website](http://www.servicelearning.org/what-service-learning). <<http://www.servicelearning.org/what-service-learning>>. Accessed 27 January 2010.

¹⁹ <http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/facts/dev.asp>

²⁰ Report of the Analysis of Federal Youth Development Programming, National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth, November 1999.

positive sense of self, a sense of connection and commitment to others, and the ability and motivation to succeed in school and participate fully in family and community life.²¹

Example of Youth Development Organization: The 4-H Club

Youth Leadership

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability has adopted the following definition of youth leadership²²:

- (1)The ability to guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinion and behavior of other people, and show the way by going in advance²³ (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1998)
- (2) The ability to analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem to carry them out. It includes the ability to identify community resources and use them, not only to live independently, but also to establish support networks to participate in community life and to effect positive social change²⁴

Example of Youth Leadership Organization: Girls Scouts of America

Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement exists when individuals recognize that they have responsibilities not only to themselves and their families, but also to their communities—local, national, and global—and that the health and well-being of those communities are essential to their own health and well-being. They act in order to fulfill those responsibilities and try to affect those communities for the better. Those actions, in turn, give them an even deeper understanding of their interdependence with communities²⁵

Example of Civic Engagement Organization: The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University.

²¹ Incorporating a Youth Development Perspective into School-To-Work Systems, Resource Bulletin, National School-to-Work Learning and Information Center, March 1996.

²² Andrea Edelman, Patricia Gill, Katey Comerford, Mindy Larson, and Rebecca Hare, "Youth Development & Youth Leadership", [National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/background/YouthDevelopment.pdf), 2004, <<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/background/YouthDevelopment.pdf>>, (27 January 2010).

²³ Wehmeyer, M. & Schwartz, M. (1997). Self-determination and positive adult outcomes: A follow-up study of youth with mental retardation or learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 245-256.

²⁴ Adolescent Employment Readiness Center, Children's Hospital. D.C. Youth Leadership Forum. Washington, DC.

²⁵ S. Raill and E. Hollander. "How Campuses Can Create Engaged Citizens: The Student View." *Journal of College and Character*, Vol 7, Issue 1 (2006)

Youth Organizing

Excerpt From “An Emerging Model for Working with Youth: Community Organizing + Youth Development = Youth Organizing” by Lisa Sullivan, Ditra Edwards, Nicole Johnson and Kim McGillicudd²⁶

Youth organizing is a youth development and social justice strategy that trains young people in community organizing and advocacy, and assists them in employing these skills to alter power relations and create meaningful institutional change in their communities. Youth organizing relies on the power and leadership of youth acting on issues affecting young people and their communities. Young people themselves define issues, and youth organizing groups support them as they design, implement, and evaluate their own change efforts. Employing activities such as community research, issue development, reflection, political analysis, and direct action, youth organizing increases civic participation and builds the individual and collective leadership capacity of young people.

Therein is the critical divergence in theory and practice between youth organizing and other forms of youth work. Youth organizing, youth leadership, and youth civic engagement all pay attention to culture and identity. They all study political systems and structures, and all value sustained relationships with caring adults and expanded opportunities for youth leadership. But in explicitly acknowledging the marginal social and political status of teens and young adults, and by providing young people with the tools necessary for them to challenge systems and institutions on their own, youth organizing pushes the adult-determined boundaries of traditional youth work. Ultimately, youth organizing seeks to develop within a neighborhood or community a base of young people committed to altering power relationships and creating meaningful institutional change.

For marginalized youth, who are most isolated and frequently discriminated against, youth organizing has particular utility. Within youth organizing, marginalized youth find companionship, structure, and a critical framework for studying and understanding the world around them—connecting their public and private life. By helping young people see how their individual experiences, both positive and negative, are shared by others, young people participate in group efforts that lead to building collective power. Youth organizing skills include the following:

- Analysis of community governance structures including dissection of decision-makers
- Analysis of mainstream socialization—corporate commercialism, media imaging, and pop culture
- Practice of issue analysis, power analysis, and communication skills
- Importance of building relationships and alliances with peers and adult allies; and
- Recognition of limits of engagement without organization and/or mobilization.

In addition to political development, youth organizers are increasingly assuming responsibility for supporting young people through the stresses of daily life. Youth organizing groups often

²⁶ Lisa Sullivan, Ditra Edwards, Nicole Johnson and Kim McGillicudd “An Emerging Model for Working with Youth: Community Organizing + Youth Development = Youth Organizing”. *Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing Occasional Paper Series*. Listen, Inc. (New York: Jewish Fund for Justice, 2000), p. 13

work with youth who are at risk of incarceration, in danger of dropping out of school, or are disconnected from family. Managing the diverse and sometimes life-threatening needs of these young people can be overwhelming. Oftentimes, youth organizing groups establish partnerships with existing social service agencies in order to refer young people for formal intervention such as health services, literacy, and tutoring. In the absence of such partnerships, many youth organizing groups find the lack of resources and expertise within their organization—or within the community at large—an obstacle to maintaining youth participation.

Example of Youth Organizing Organization: The Center for Teen Empowerment, Boston

Figure 2.1 Youth Engagement Continuum

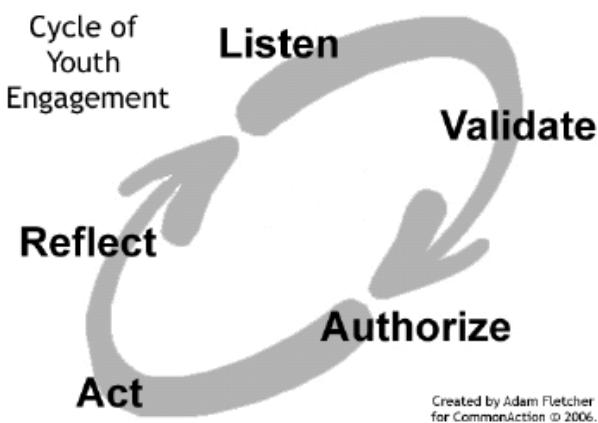


Source: Lisa Sullivan, Ditra Edwards, Nicole Johnson and Kim McGillicuddy "An Emerging Model for Working with Youth: Community Organizing + Youth Development = Youth Organizing". *Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing Occasional Paper Series*. (New York: Jewish Fund for Justice, 2000), p. 10

Cycle of Youth Engagement

From *The Guide to Social Change Led By and with Youth People*
By Adam Fletcher and Joseph Vavrus

The Cycle of Youth Engagement is a tool that documents the trends the Freechild Project has identified in successful youth engagement. It can be used to plan, evaluate, or challenge any activity that seeks to engage young people in social change.²⁷



validating young people does not mean automatically agreeing with what is said, either. It is important to offer young people sincere comments, criticism, and feedback. Disagreeing with children and youth lets young people to know that you actually heard what was said, thought about it, and that you have your own knowledge or opinion which you think is important to share with them, and which you feel they are entitled to because their shared their perspectives. Young people must know that democracy is not about autonomous authority, and that a chorus of people, including young people but not exclusive to young people, is responsible for what happens throughout our communities.

Step 3: Authorize Young People Young people are repeatedly condemned, denied, or abandoned everyday because of the identities they possess. Democracy inherently requires *ability*, which comes in the form of experience and knowledge. Authorizing young people means going beyond historical expectations for children and youth by actively providing the training, creating the positions, and allowing the space they need in order to affect change.

Step 4: Mobilize Young People Transitioning from passive participants to active change agents and leaders requires young people actually taking action to create change. Mobilizing children and youth with authority allows them to affect cultural, systemic, and personal transformation in their own lives and the lives of others. It also encourages adults to actively acknowledge young people as partners throughout society.

Step 5: Reflection about Young People Social change led by and with young people is not and cannot be a vacuous event that affects only young people or the immediate situation. Children, youth, and adults should take responsibility for learning from social change by engaging in conscious critical reflection that examines assumptions, reactions, outcomes, and change. Young people and adults can also work together to identify how to sustain and expand the Cycle of Youth Engagement by applying what is learned through reflection to the first step of the Cycle.

²⁷ Adam Fletcher and Joseph Vavrus, *The Guide to Social Change Led By and with Youth*. (Olympia, WA: Common, 2006) p. 4.

The Role of Youth in the Food Justice Movement

Young people have played a pivotal role in moving the food justice movement forward. Below is a list developed by the Free Child Project of organizations that have utilized one or more strategies of youth engagement to push forward the mission of creating a more just and sustainable food system²⁸:

Rooted In Community

<http://rootedincommunity.org>

A national grassroots network that empowers young people to take leadership in their communities. It is a diverse movement of youth and adult counterparts, who are committed to building healthy communities through urban and rural agriculture, Community gardening, food security, and related environmental justice work.



GRuB - Garden-Raised Bounty

<http://www.goodgrub.org>

Offers empowerment programs that focus on building youths' nutrition, self-esteem, community connections, and academic enthusiasm. These programs are in the form of academic and employment opportunities to these youth, primarily between the ages of 13 and 19 in Thurston County, Washington.

Durham Inner-city Gardens

<http://www.seedsnc.org/dig.htm>

A youth-driven urban market farm and landscaping business. We empower ourselves by learning all that we can about organic gardening, healthy business practices and responsible leadership. We break down racial and cultural barriers through communication and understanding within our diverse crew. We grow produce using organic techniques and sell it at the Durham, North Carolina Farmer's Market. And we promote and maintain open green spaces within the city.

The Food Project Youth Program

<http://www.thefoodproject.org/newtfp/youth.shtml>

Agriculture, enterprise and service are combined to create a rigorous, practical and integrated experience. Through all of our youth programs, people of all ages bridge communities through farming and food and discover their interdependence with each other as well as with those who purchase and receive their produce. Youth and adults in Lincoln, Nebraska and Boston, Massachusetts learn that work on the land can be a powerful equalizer, teacher and catalyst for personal, local and global change.

Mo Better Food

<https://www.mobetterfood.org>

This student-led organization works in the West Oakland, California seeks to establish a self-sufficient network between African-American farmers and predominate African-American communities; to preserve and improve Land owned by African-Americans by networking with African-American farmers in the Southern states; and to educate the predominate African-American communities of their history concerning land ownership and farming.

²⁸ Freechild Project. "Youth-Led Agriculture," 2008, <<http://www.freechild.org/food.htm>>, (27 January 2010).

Adults as Allies

An important issue to address when doing youth organizing is the appropriate role for adults when doing youth organizing work. There is a tendency in our culture to make blanket assumptions about the young people's abilities because of their age. Over and over again, youth seeking to make positive change in their communities are told what they cannot do or should not do because they are not "old enough" or "mature enough". Even the most well meaning adults can fall into the trap of **adultism**—attitudes or behaviors that flow from the assumption that adults are better than young people and thus entitles to enforce their ideas and beliefs upon young people without their consent.

It should be understood that not all adult-youth relationships are adultist in nature. Without question, youth depend on adults as a source of mentorship, love, guidance, and protection. Nor is the discipline of youth by adults a clear cut sign of adultist attitudes. **Adultism** is about a consistent pattern of disrespecting and mistreating young people by considering them innately inferior. The result is an undermining of young people's agency and a blatant disregard for their talents and capabilities.

The consequences of adultist attitudes are devastating. According to John Bell of Youth Build, adultism can result in the following negative effects on young people²⁹:

- An undermining of self-esteem
- An increasing sense of worthlessness
- A consistent experience of not being taken seriously
- Increasing destructive acting out
- Increasing self-destructive acting "in" (i.e. getting sick frequently, depression, attempted suicide)
- Feeling unloved or unwanted

To combat adultism, adults should take on the project of being **allies** that support the well being and ability of youth to make change in their communities and allow them the space to do so. Understanding that young people have a voice and allowing them to express their views is the best thing an adult doing youth organizing can do.

Key Terms:

Adultcentrism: is the practice of regarding adult, including their opinions, interests and actions, above young peoples' opinions, interests and action³⁰.

Adultism: Adultism refers to all of the behaviors and attitudes that flow from the assumption that adults are better than young people, and are entitled to act upon young people in many ways without their agreement.³¹

Adult Allyship: Adult allies are adults who advocate for and support young people. These adults work hard to assist young people with their lives, support them, and help them out when they struggle, remind them of how important they are, and let them know that change is possible.³²

²⁹ John Bell, "Understanding Adultism: A Key to Positive Youth-Adult Relationships", <<http://www.freechild.org/bell.htm>>, (27 January 2010).

³⁰ The Freechild Project. "Youth Discrimination Terms". <<http://www.freechild.org/SNAYR/language.htm>>. (30 Nov 2009).

³¹ B. Checkoway, "Adults as Allies", *WK Kellogg Foundation*, 1998, <<http://www.wkfd.org/pubs>YouthED/Pub564.pdf>>, (30 Nov 2009).

³² J. Sazama, *Get The Word Out! Youth On Board*, 2004 <<http://www.youthonboard.org/atf/cfi%7BDB81B10C-CCBB-46FE-BEF4-011DCFE93F33%7D/GetTheWordOut.pdf>>, (30 November 2009).

Chapter Three:

Tools for Youth Faith-Based Community Organizing

If I am not for myself, who will be
for me?
If I am not for others, what am I?
And if not now, when?
-Rabbi Hillel

Introduction to Public Narrative

From *Leading Change: Public Narrative Workshop*
Marshall Ganz, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Introduction to Public Narrative³³

The first step to affective food justice organizing is to understand the personal motivations and reasons that drive you to do the work. Public narrative (also known as *storytelling*) is a strategy that provides youth participants with the opportunity to reflect critically about what brings them to food justice work and how their story fits into a large narrative of the movement. Stories move us to act because they tap into our values (rather than just issues) and create in us emotions that move us from inaction to action—emotions of hope, anger, urgency, solidarity, a sense that we can make a difference.

Things to remember when doing public narrative exercises with youth:

1. Public narrative is a practice of leadership

Public narrative is the “why” of organizing—the art of translating values into action through stories. It is an iterative discussion process through which individuals, communities, and nations construct their identity, make choices, and inspire action.

2. Each of us has a compelling story to tell

Each of us has a story that can move others. As you learn this skill of public narrative, you will be able to tell a compelling story that includes elements that identify yourself, your audience and your strategy to others. In addition, you will gain practice in hearing and coaching others to tell a good story.

3. Public narrative combines a story of self, a story of us, and a story of now

The process of creating your public narrative is fluid and iterative and can start at any place. Once you develop your story of self, story of us, and story of now, you’ll probably want to go back to the beginning to clarify the links between them.

The Story of Self, the Story of Us, and the Story of Now

Public Narrative is a leadership skill — the skill of telling stories that motivate other people to get up and join us in action. The skill of public narrative in can be divided into three parts:

Story of Self: Who am I, and why am I called to this work?

Story of Us: Who are we as a community, and why is it we in particular who have responsibility to act?

Story of Now: What are we called to do now? What challenges do we face? What’s the story of our strategy and what hope is there that our action could make a difference?

³³ Marshall Ganz, *Leading Change: Public Narrative Workshop*, p. 4-8.

A “story of self” tells why we have been called to serve

The story of self expresses the values or experiences that call each person to leading a social movement or organization. The key focus is on choice points, moments in our lives when values are formed because of a need to choose in the face of great uncertainty. When did you first care about civic engagement? When did you learn that you were concerned about a particular issue? Why? When did you feel you had to do something about it? Why did you feel you could? What were the circumstances? What specific choice did you make? Why were you called to lead a social movement?

A “story of us” communicates the values and experiences that a community, organization, campaign or movement shares and what capacity or resources that community of “us” has to accomplish its goals

Just as with a person, the key is choice points in the life of the community and/or those moments that express the values, experiences, past challenges and resources of the community or “us” that will take action. For example, tying a current effort to win a campaign to a past campus campaign victory and describing the effort it took to win, the people who worked hard to make it happen, their capabilities, their values, etc. is a story of us.

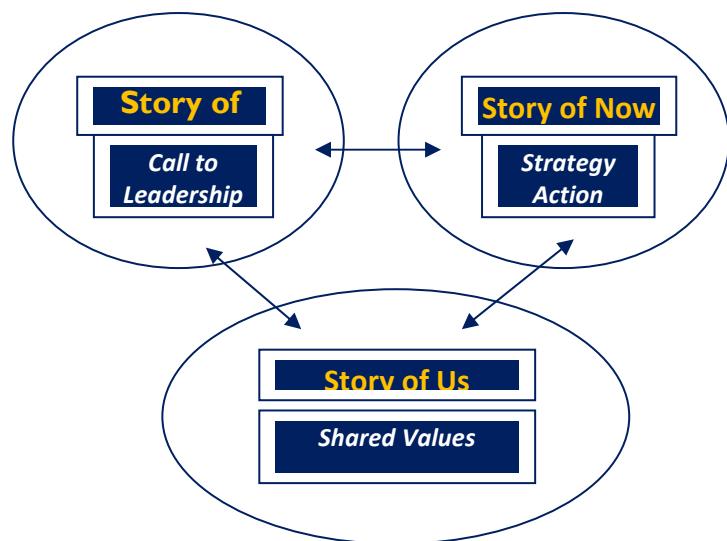
A “story of now” communicates the urgent challenge we are called upon to face now and calls us to action

The story of now articulates the urgent challenge in specific detail. It also includes a description of the path we can take to achieve goals relative to the mission – the unique strategy or set of ideas that will help us to overcome the challenge we face and succeed.

The story of now includes an “ask” that summons the audience to a specific action they can do to achieve our collective mission. Finally, the story lays out in detail a vision for the potential outcome we could achieve if our strategy succeeds.

Linking Self, Us, Now

You are looking for the link between these three stories, the place where they overlap, to help explain why you are called to this work as a leader in an organization or social movement, why we are called to act with you, and why we are called to act now. This means being very selective about the story you tell—for example not trying to tell your whole biography when you tell your story of self.



Youth Public Narrative Writing Exercises

The key to introducing public narrative to young people is to give them the freedom to express themselves and their stories in the way that is most exciting and personal to them. Whether it through narrative, poetry, rap, or art, allowing this space for creativity will only serve to strengthen their message and confidence in conveying that message to a broader audience.

The following are writing exercises complied from the work the Poetic License Project, a documentary film about teen poets, (http://www.itvs.org/poeticlicense/teach_writing.html) and author Meredith Sue Willis (<http://www.meredithsuewillis.com>) that can be incorporated into the curriculum of the Breaking Bread Leadership Institute and/or the work Manna-FSP Youth Council.

Each is designed as a prompt for telling either the “the story of self”, “the story of us”, or “the story of now”.

Exercise One: I Am...

One of the keys to good writing is developing confidence in your voice - finding out who you are and what you want to say.

Note: In the creative writing classroom, it is important that every voice is invited to be a part of the discussion. Students should be encouraged to read their work out loud, but should also be allowed to say "pass" if they are not yet comfortable.

- 1) Students write down five words they would use to describe themselves.
- 2) On the board, the teacher creates a table like the one below, listing six broad categories across the top. (We have suggested some categories, but feel free to use whatever titles you like.)
- 3) Students copy the table into their notebooks.
- 4) The class as a whole calls out and fills in each of the columns with descriptive words.
- 5) Students copy those words into their notebooks and circle four of the words in each column. Those words, combined with their original five words, will compose their poetic pallet.
- 6) Students then use these words to create a poem. (They can use any other words as well, but they must use the words that they wrote down and circled.)
- 7) The first words of the poem must be: "I am..."

ANIMALS	MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS	MYTHICAL/POPULAR CHARACTERS	WEATHER	PLACES	COLORS

Note: For more advanced work, change "I am" to "I was" or "I will be." Also, the students can use for their pallet the words that they did not circle.

Take-Home Assignment: Find Your History

America is a collection of immigrants: nearly all of us have come from someplace else. The aim of this activity is to have students trace their history and then write about it. Students can ask their grandparents, parents, or older relatives about their family's history; or look at old scrapbooks and

family photo albums; or do research in the library and on the Internet. Remember, everyone has a story to tell.

Exercise 2: Wake Up America!

Have students write something that begins with the phrase "Wake Up America!" But here's the trick: the speaker must be someone other than the student. Try it in the voice of someone from a different political party or even a different country or in the voice of a person from a different time. This exercise can be directed to specifically address a topic related to the food system.

Exercise 3: Community Voice

Many writers find the material and inspiration for their work in their communities. The environment informs their voice, prompting them to observe and chronicle life around them. This section is intended to have students draw on their communities for their own work. These exercises will ask youths to observe their neighborhoods, encouraging them to notice the people and events that make up their everyday lives.

What observations can you make about your own neighborhood? What makes your neighborhood unique? Where could you be most inspired to write? Why?

Exercise 4: The List Poem

Students create a list, writing down descriptive phrases. The list should describe elements of their community, whether it is their street, the school cafeteria, or their corner market.

From that list, students then construct a poem. To help get students started, you may find it helpful to offer some writing prompts:

- "Everyday on the way to school, I see..."
- "During the school day, I hear..."

Exercise 5: The Group Poem

Great writing can happen in collaboration - a process in which more than one voice contributes to the poem. In this exercise, two students work together to create one poem. (The class should be divided into groups of two.)

To start the poem, student #1 writes down the first word and passes the paper to student #2, who writes the next word. Student #1 then writes down the next two words and passes the paper to student #2 , who writes the next two words. This process is repeated until they reach 10 words a piece. At that time, they should decide whether the poem is finished or whether they would like to continue writing.

Note: For more advanced work, students should try working "backwards", going from ten words to one.

Take-Home Assignment: The Persona Poem

Students identify a person that they know in their community and write a poem in his or her voice.

Exercise 6: Dialogue with Food

Draft a dialogue with food in it. This could be memoir writing or a new scene for some fiction you are working on. Are the people talking directly about the food or just ignoring it? Do their words get garbled as they gobble, or do they just pick at the odd spear of asparagus and concentrate on talking? Try to make the food an active part of the dialogue--not the subject necessarily, but an important part of the scene

Exercise 7: A Poem for My Generation

Tim Arevalo's One Poem For Us is a testimonial to his generation. Asking his peers to take a hard look at themselves and believe in their beauty, Tim says that the poem "was just something that I needed to say."

...How have we managed to travel so little, but hate ourselves so much?
Ginsberg said he saw the best minds of his generation destroyed and I
have seen the same. I have seen us in our rooms, foil and lighter in our
hands, straw in our lips and nose, chasing Black Dragons, snorting White
Cobras, because 10 dollars was cheap for a double hit of Joy.

I have seen us hunched over the toilet bowls vomiting self-esteem down
the drain because Vogue and Elle always have beauty in a size three and
that was only a heave-ho and up-chuck away.

I have seen us on the corner complacent and numb, coping doom in dime
bags because we didn't know the Grim Reaper wore Filas and a hoodie.

I have seen us swigging golden poison because we were fools and thought
manhood was sold in 40 ounce bottles.

I have seen us spread our legs like the horizon because some man tricked
us into accepting that love was only found on our backs.

I have seen us -

I have seen us and I see us for what we are -- nothing less than great
because we are the poets.

What words, phrases and/or images caught your attention? Why? What kind of statement is Tim making about his generation?

Students write a poem to their peers. What message would they like to convey to other teens around the country?



Example of Public Narrative: We Are Each Other's Business

As heard on NPR's "Morning Edition". November 7, 2005

Eboo Patel - Chicago, Illinois

I am an American Muslim. I believe in pluralism. In the Holy Quran, God tells us, "I created you into diverse nations and tribes that you may come to know one another." I believe America is humanity's best opportunity to make God's wish that we come to know one another a reality.

In my office hangs Norman Rockwell's illustration Freedom of Worship. A Muslim holding a Quran in his hands stands near a Catholic woman fingering her rosary. Other figures have their hands folded in prayer and their eyes filled with piety. They stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing the same direction, comfortable with the presence of one another and yet apart. It is a vivid depiction of a group living in peace with its diversity, yet not exploring it.

We live in a world where the forces that seek to divide us are strong. To overcome them, we must do more than simply stand next to one another in silence.

I attended high school in the western suburbs of Chicago. The group I ate lunch with included a Jew, a Mormon, a Hindu, a Catholic and a Lutheran. We were all devout to a degree, but we almost never talked about religion. Somebody would announce at the table that they couldn't eat a certain kind of food, or any food at all, for a period of time. We all knew religion hovered behind this, but nobody ever offered any explanation deeper than "my mom said," and nobody ever asked for one.

A few years after we graduated, my Jewish friend from the lunchroom reminded me of an experience we both wish had never happened. A group of thugs in our high school had taken to scrawling anti-Semitic slurs on classroom desks and shouting them in the hallway. I did not confront them. I did not comfort my Jewish friend. Instead I averted my eyes from their bigotry, and I avoided my friend because I couldn't stand to face him.

My friend told me he feared coming to school those days, and he felt abandoned as he watched his close friends do nothing. Hearing him tell me of his suffering and my complicity is the single most humiliating experience of my life.

My friend needed more than my silent presence at the lunch table. I realize now that to believe in pluralism means I need the courage to act on it. Action is what separates a belief from an opinion. Beliefs are imprinted through actions.

In the words of the great American poet Gwendolyn Brooks: "We are each other's business; we are each other's harvest; we are each other's magnitude and bond."

I cannot go back in time and take away the suffering of my Jewish friend, but through action I can prevent it from happening to others.

Eboo Patel is the founder and executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core, a Chicago-based organization fostering the international interfaith youth movement.

Independently produced for NPR by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman with John Gregory and Viki Merrick

Photovoice as a Public Narrative Tool

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words, and in the case of food justice a picture can be worth even more. Combining the public narrative strategy with physical evidence can be a powerful tool for building a case for changes in Nashville's food environment and give youth the power to document the world as they see it. One way to do this is through the use of "photovoice".

In the study "Flint Photovoice: Community Building Among Youths, Adults, and Policymakers", researchers define photovoice as a participatory action research strategy that provide people with cameras so they can record and represent their everyday realities.³⁴

Photovoice has two primary goals:

1. To promote critical discussion about personal and community issues and assets.
2. To reach and touch policymakers and community leaders embracing the idea that images carry a message, pictures can influence policy, and citizens ought to participate in creating and defining the images that make healthful public policy.

Tips for Facilitating Photovoice

Adopted from the Youth Photovoice Project at John Hopkins School of Public Health³⁵

- Keep overall group small with no more than 20 youth
- Keep sub-group teams small (4-5 youth)
- Recognize the reality of youth's busy lives and *value their time*
- Recognize and work within the developmental stages of youth
- Provide examples and positive encouragement
- Pass out cameras early on. Provide a tutorial on how to use the camera, but **DO NOT** articulate to them what is and is not a "good" picture. They should have the creative control of the pictures they choose to take.

Resources

Napier Youth Photovoice Project, Vanderbilt University

http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Center_for_Community_Studies/Urban_Neighborhoods/Photovoice_Project.xml

"Photovoice as a Tool for Youth Policy Advocacy" Healthy Eating, Active Communities, California

<http://www.healthyeatingactivecommunities.org/downloads/PhotoVoice.pdf>

Witnesses to Hunger, Philadelphia

<http://www.witnessestohunger.org>

Youth Photovoice Project, John Hopkins School of Public Health, Baltimore

<http://www.jhsph.edu/hao/cah/youthphotovoice/home.html>

³⁴Caroline Wang, Susan Morrel-Samuels, Peter M. Hutchison, Lee Bell, and Robert M. Pestronk, "Flint Photovoice: Community Building Among Youths, Adults, and Policymakers," *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 94, No. 6 (June, 2004): 911

³⁵ "Process," Youth Photovoice Project, <<http://www.jhsph.edu/hao/cah/youthphotovoice/home.html>> (1 February 2010).

The Centers for Community Change defines advocacy as solving individual or public policy problems by representing people, or communities, in need before those with the power to address the need. The advocate may be a volunteer or a professional, but speaks for or on behalf of the person or class of persons directly affected by the problem. Often in consultation with those affected, the advocate identifies the forum for redress, the outcome desired, and the approach to take to convince decision-makers to meet the need or change the policy. The advocate seeks to correct an injustice, change a law, improve enforcement, or raise public consciousness on an issue. The result sought is always specific, and the advocate gains credibility, builds relationships, provides opportunities for individuals to speak out for themselves, and establish a track record for effective advocacy.³⁶

Advocacy can be used as a strategy for many issues related to food and food policy from creating new laws to help seed grocery stores in low-income neighborhoods to changing zoning policies to make it easier to start a community garden. The Breaking Bread Program believes that youth should play a role in defining food advocacy objectives and goals in Middle Tennessee.

Advocacy Strategies

From the Just Food publication [NYC Food Justice Action Guide](#)³⁷

Action Alerts: As you learn about different organizations and decide who to trust for information, you may decide to sign up for email “action alerts” to keep you updated on policies and when it is time to act on certain issues. Most action alerts ask you to act immediately depending on the timeline for the policy, and usually only require you to fill in your name and address in order to generate an automated fax or email to your elected official. Some action alerts allow you to personalize the message that will be sent, which is always more meaningful than the same letter coming in from many individuals. The benefit of action alerts is that they put concentrated pressure on officials at key times (just before voting on an issue, for example). We don’t envy the staffer who has to sort through his or her email box after an action alert has gone through! While many action alerts allow you to send a prewritten automated message, it is more effective to take that message and call your congressman’s office personally.

Phone Calls: Calling your legislator’s office directly is one of the fastest and most effective actions you can take. You can call on your way to the subway, while walking your dog or on your way home from the office. Because calls are usually brief, have your facts in front of you, so you can simply state your name and where you’re from and what you would like them to do (vote for or against an issue, cosponsor a bill etc...) You can also leave a message with the same information after hours. It is important to know what you are asking for, but do not be intimidated if you don’t know every detail about the issue, it is rare that a staffer would challenge you or ask you a question. They are busy, and want to take down your position and get you off the phone! One easy tip is just to keep your legislators numbers plugged into your

³⁶ Center for Community Change. *Community Organizing: People Power from the Grassroots*.

³⁷ Just Food, “Food Advocacy 101”, [NYC Food Justice Action Guide](#), <[{ 34 }](http://www.justfood.org/sites/default/files/file/Food%20Justice/Advocacy%20101.pdf?phpMyAdmin=d9c4aa8a5cf13c19028d>>, (30 November 2009).</p></div><div data-bbox=)

cell phone so if you read about an issue, you can just call on your way out of the office at the end of the day. See the attached sample phone call script.

Letters/Emails

After 9-11, heightened security has made it all but useless to send letters to Congressional offices in DC. Letters to local and state officials, however, are still a great idea! Keep your letter focused and brief, and start the letter by clearly stating what you are asking for. Continue by including your personal story about how an issue has affected you or your community and end by thanking the legislator for considering your position. See attached sample letter.

Meetings: Few people realize that as an everyday citizen, you can (and should!) meet with your legislators to let them know the issues that concern you. All you have to do is call ahead to schedule the meeting and adequately prepare yourself. Meetings will go into much more depth than phone conversations and you'll want to be fully prepared. See attached a step-by-step guide to meeting with your legislator.

- **Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor:** Op-eds and letters to the editor are great because they educate not only policymakers but the community at large about an issue. Most elected officials pay attention to what local papers are saying about issues in their district. See attached list of tips on writing effective op-eds and letters.

Planning a Youth Day of Action

As articulated in the Breaking Bread Program Overview, Youth Days of Action are service events sponsored by Manna-FSP and partners organizations that introduce religiously diverse youth to food justice movement. Working with community gardens, soup kitchens, and food banks, young people will leave with first hand experiences of how food is produced and exposure to barriers that exist in achieving food access.

Steps to Planning a Youth Day of Action

I. SET GOALS AND A TIMELINE

What is the purpose and vision for the event? How does this event connect to larger vision for the Break Bread Program and Manna-FSP? What message do you want to convey to the wider Nashville community? When do you want to host the event? Who is your target audience? How many people do you want to participate?

These are just a few of the questions that should be posed during the initial planning stage of a Youth Day of Action (YDA). The most affective YDAs are done with community buy-in, so it may be helpful during this phase to *form a core group of organizers* that is made up of youth advisors or ministers from different congregations that have participated in previous YDAs. This group of organizers can be helpful in shaping the answers to the questions asked above and to Step 4: Recruiting Others.

In choosing a date for the event, be sure to consider religious holidays and weekly worship services. Websites like www.interfaithcalendar.org are helpful resources in cross-checking dates.

2. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO FUND THE PROJECT

Establishing partnerships with a broad range of organizations that have similar mission statements to Manna-FSP is a key step in facilitating YDA. The following is a list of types of organizations you may want to consider partnering with for funding or requesting in-kind donations:

- Food Service Providers/Restaurants
- Screen Printing Companies
- Local Congregations
- Service Sites (see below)

3. CHOOSE A PROJECT SITE

Choosing a project site is one of the most important stages of planning is YDA. The partner service organization should share in Manna-FSPs vision for creating a more just and sustainable food system. It is often best to work with agencies that have realistic expectations about what can be accomplished in the allotted time and that have experience working with volunteers. Paying attention to details at the beginning of the project is important in making sure the day runs smoothly. If an agency is very difficult to contact or does not return calls promptly, consider choosing another site.

Key questions to pose in initial conversations with potential service sites:

- Does this organization have a proven track record of doing positive work in the community?
- Is there already a mechanism for facilitating volunteer days (i.e. does the organization have a volunteer coordinator or similar position?)
- Given the target goal of participants determine in Step 1, does this organization have the capacity to host that number of volunteers?
- Has Manna-FSP had a positive experience partnering with this organization in the past?
- What kind of work will the young people be doing? Will Manna-FSP need to provide any equipment?
- Is the site at an easily accessible location?

4. RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

Finding groups to participate in your YDA is one of the most time consuming aspects of planning for the day. Remember you are recruiting participants for one of two functions: team leaders or youth participants.

Team leaders are adult volunteers who will assist in setting up the event and leading young people through the activities of the day. These team leaders should have some experience working with youth and general familiarity with the type of work you will be doing during the YDA. Team leaders will be the touch point for young people throughout the day so they should be well equipped with knowledge of the general layout of the volunteer facility, the location of a first aid kit and other emergency services, and clear understanding of the schedule of events.

Youth participant recruit involves outreaching via email, follow up phone calls, and some personal meetings with those in charge of youth programming for congregations. It is always good to begin with organizations Manna-FSP has established partnerships with in the past, but if one of your goals is to reach out to new communities be prepared to do a significant amount of relationship building. Make sure that you are conveying a clear message about the purpose and logistics of the event.

5. GET READY FOR THE DAY OF THE EVENT

After the site is selected and recruitment has begun, you want your service day to run smoothly. The key to success and sanity on this day is good management and good planning. The more people who know what are going on, the more likely it is that things will run smoothly. Make a list of who will manage what areas on that day:

- Who will manage registration?
- Who will manage the kick-off presentations?
- Who will make sure transportation is set and in motion?
- Who will manage the distribution of supplies?
- Who will be a trouble-shooter?
- Who will greet the media?

Establishing a well thought out hour-by-hour schedule with tasks and the person in charge is a key to success. It is important to talk through everyone's roles on the day of the event, so there will be efficient communication, even when things are chaotic. Organizers should wear special identifiers that make them easy to find in a crowd. If your event is very large and complex, consider renting or borrowing walkie-talkies or cell phones to facilitate communication.

Checklists and written instructions are also a must for the day of the event. Organizers will have lots of details to remember, and written checklists can save the day. Written instructions for registration,

transportation, supplies, and other areas will help free organizers from having to explain things again and again. Written instructions are also an alternative way of communicating with those who may be hearing impaired.

Set up a time before the event to review the schedule and walk through the day with Team Leaders. Doing some will make sure everyone is as prepped as possible for the day so there are few surprises. Try to get lots of rest in advance so that you will be clear-headed and have a great time!

Sample Schedule

12:00-1:00pm	Staff Arrive to Set Up
1:15-1:45 pm	Team Leaders Arrive for Run through of Event
1:45-2:05pm	Youth Participants Arrive Registration
2:05-2:25pm	Welcome Introduction to Service Site Agenda for the Day
2:25-2:30pm	Break Into Groups with Team Leaders
2:30-4:00pm	Service
4:00-5:15pm	Meal and Interfaith Dialogue Around Shared Value of Service
5:15-5:30pm	Closing and Next Steps

6. CONSTRUCT MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

Youth Days of Action are unique opportunities to get young people talking about broader issues of food justice. In order for participants to gain the most from a Youth Day of Action, they must be made aware of the bigger picture of their service experience. When working on issues of food security presenting young people with information about food access and hunger in the United States can have a powerful impact on their work.

Make sure to set a generous portion of time to allow the young people to reflect on debrief immediately following the YDA over a meal and/or in smaller groups. You can borrow from the model of interfaith dialogue found on page 41 or develop your own.

7. BUILD MOMENTUM

A marketing and publicity strategy for your event should be at the forefront of your mind from the initial planning stages.

A Few Tips:

- Create colorful and age appropriate marketing materials that will catch the eye of potential participants walking by.

- Contact local media outlets via press releases and media advisories to spread the word about your event in magazines, newspapers, and other publications (Sample press release and poster pgs. 41-42).
- List your events on local community calendars. Be sure to check deadlines for submissions at least a month before the event
- Utilize social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook to spread the word

Note: Follow up quickly with news agencies. Reporters are often on a deadline and do not have time to chase you down for details of the event. The more work you do for them, the more likely the coverage of the event will be the way you wanted.

8. HOLD THE EVENT AND HAVE SOME FUN!

9. FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT

Hold a meeting for organizers to discuss wrap-up details and to share experiences from the project. Bring pictures, give certificates, thank-you gifts, or whatever is appropriate for your group. Make a list of all wrap-up activities and delegate assignments. Make sure to include:

- service site evaluations
- reviewing volunteer evaluations
- writing a final report
- sending thank-you letters to team leaders, donors, media, volunteers, speakers, and others
- cleaning and returning equipment

Case Study: Lessons Learned from the MLK Youth Service Event

On January 17, 2010, Manna-FSP held its first Youth Day of Action in celebration of the many interfaith partnerships built by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Nashville Urban Harvest, a small urban farm. The event had three primary goals:

1. To serve as an opportunity for young people of different faith traditions to interact with one another in a meaningful way
2. Support the work of a community partners in need of assistance
3. Convene food justice organizations with religious communities provides space for future collaboration

Lessons from Event:

- Begin planning early and include more than one stakeholder in the planning process. That way the responsibility for the event is not squarely on the shoulders of 1-2 people
- Start outreach early and secure firm commitments from a group of core congregations at least one month in advance
- Set deadlines and stick to them
- Meet with service site coordinators and visit the service site facility before making a commitment to work there
- Make sure you are aware of any other events going on in the community on that date so you will not overlap
- Have a first aid kit handy at all times
- Check in with service site coordinator to see if there is any additional equipment you need to bring (including toilet paper)
- If you are planning a meal, make sure your check list includes: ice, cups, **sturdy** plates, utensils, drinks, and napkins
- If planning an outdoor service event, have a back-up plan in case of bad weather including a way to communicate whether the event is occurring or not.

Words of Advice:

- When recruiting youth participants from religious communities make sure to first touch base with the youth advisor or a clergy person from a congregation.
- Make sure when scheduling meetings that you are aware of potential conflicts with days of worship or religious holidays www.interfaithcalendar.org is a great resource to cross check dates with such potential conflicts

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 1, 2150

Contact:
Person X
Phone Number
Email Address

Manna-Food Security Partners celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with an interfaith youth service day at Nashville Urban Harvest Farm

Nashville, TN - In celebration of the many interfaith partnerships built by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and his work uniting communities around justice, the Re/Storing Nashville program of Manna-FSP will host a gathering for youth in the fields of Nashville Urban Harvest Farm in west Nashville, **Sunday, January 17th, 2010 at 12pm.**

Gather for a day of getting your hands dirty, composting, weeding and discussing the importance of food justice and youth community service with a diverse background of religiously active youth. Participants will be assigned service groups with individuals from different faith traditions lead by volunteer team leaders. At the end of the day, groups will gather around a late lunch to discuss the importance of service and food justice across faith communities.

This event ties together the teachings of Dr. King Jr., using scripture and community activism to inspire youth to promote healthy food environments in their community. Youth will have the opportunity to sign up for future Re/Storing Nashville training sessions to improve their food environment through community organizing around food justice.

Nashville Urban Harvest is a community driven, non-profit group working to build sustainable food systems in Nashville, Tennessee, and surrounding environs. They seek ways to align values through public action: education for food justice, creation of markets to support local producers, and production of food on urban green space, all with an eye toward sustainable, local, community-supported agriculture and action.

Re/Storing Nashville, a program of Manna-FSP, is a city-wide grassroots campaign to ensure that all Nashvillians have access to affordable, healthy foods. Re/Store brings the issues facing Nashville food deserts to the forefront, through creative, youth, and interfaith programs.

Space is limited! To sign up for the youth service day, or to find out more about the program, contact Main **Person X** at personx@foodsecuritypartners.org

XXX

YOUTH DAY OF ACTION



[EVENT SUMMARY]

Date	Location	Time	Contact

Facilitating Meaningful Dialogue: Sacred Texts on Service

From the Interfaith Youth Core's MLK Day Shared Values Curriculum

Facilitating dialogue about faith is a difficult and sometimes thankless task. The following is a strategy for connecting young people to the *shared value of service* via texts from several religious documents, reflective dialogue, and storytelling. With a little research, you can adopt this format to other shared values from care to the environment to hospitality by finding texts that directly relate to those topics. This approach is intended to be used following a Youth Day of Action or other collective service.

Steps to Facilitating an Interfaith Dialogue³⁸

Part I: Text on the Shared Value of Service

1. Pass out copies of the Texts on the Shared Value of Service (Found on pgs 35-36)

Tell the group, “Now we’re going to listen to some of the ways that different religious and philosophical traditions understand service.”

2. Go around the circle and ask each participant to read one text passage aloud

Be sure that participants know they can pass if they feel uncomfortable reading the texts.

3. See if there are any clarifying questions about the texts

Ask the group: “Do you have any questions about these texts?” If someone has a question, make sure you always defer to the other participants to answer first (especially if it is a question about a tradition that is not your own). If no one can answer, go ahead if you feel comfortable, but also suggest that it makes sense to seek out someone from that tradition who might be able to answer the question.

4. Discuss the texts with the group by asking

- Did any of these texts particularly resonate with you? Why?
- Was the text that did resonate with you from your own religious or philosophical tradition? If not, were you surprised that you found another religious or philosophical tradition’s text compelling?
- Did you hear anything from the texts that you found particularly challenging? Why were they challenging for you?
- Did you hear anything from the texts today that made you think about service differently or in a new way?

Part 2: Dialogue through Sharing Stories

Sharing stories from our own experience is a powerful way to affirm our unique identity while building community with those who hear our stories. An exchange of ideas, experience, and trust occurs each time we tell or hear a story. For this reason, the next portion of the dialogue will consist of storytelling and will build upon the previous conversation on the shared value of service.

1. How do you benefit from service?

Explain to your group, “We’ve just spent the last couple hours [enter your service project here], and by extension, serving this community and this city. Most of the time, however, we are recipients of service. Tell a story about a time when you or your community benefited from service”

2. How does your tradition value service?

³⁸ Interfaith Youth Core. “Martin Luther King Junior Day of Interfaith Youth Service,” <www.ifyc.org/files/file/MLK-SharedValues.pdf>, (16 September 2009), p. 2-7

Ask the group to brainstorm: “How do you relate to [enter your shared value here] in your faith tradition, family, or community?” Try to get them to list things: “Our scriptures talk about service” or “My family engages in service a lot,” etc.

Now push the question further, “Can you tell stories of specific instances when your community valued service? A story from your faith tradition that shows the importance of service to that tradition?”

Part 3: Returning to the Texts

Return to the pages with the selections of text. Ask the group to read the texts aloud one more time.

8. Ask and discuss the following questions

- During this second reading, did you have any new insights based on the stories we just shared with one another?
- Did you see the themes of these texts in the stories we just shared?
- Do you see the source of your understanding of [enter your shared value here] in any of these texts? Which one or ones?

Wrap Up the Conversation

Sacred Texts on the Value of Service³⁹

Baha'i Tradition on Service (Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha)

One amongst His Teachings is this, that love and good faith must so dominate the human heart that men will regard the stranger as a familiar friend, the malefactor as one of their own, the alien even as a loved one, the enemy as a companion dear and close.

Buddhist Tradition of Service (from Itivuttaka 18)

If beings knew, as I know, the fruit of sharing gifts, they would not enjoy their use without sharing them, nor would the taint of stinginess obsess the heart and stay there. Even if it were their last bit, their last morsel of food, they would not enjoy its use without sharing it, if there were anyone to receive it.

Christian Tradition of Service (Matthew 25:35)

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

Hindu Tradition of Service (from Bhagavad Gita 3.10)

At the beginning, mankind and the obligation of selfless service were created together. “Through selfless service, you will always be fruitful and find the fulfillment of your desires”: this is the promise of the Creator....

Jain Tradition of Service (from Tattvarthasutra 5.21)

Rendering help to another is the function of all human beings.

Jewish Tradition of Service (Deuteronomy 10:17)

³⁹ Interfaith Youth Core. “Martin Luther King Junior Day of Interfaith Youth Service,” <www.ifyc.org/files/file/MLK-SharedValues.pdf>, (16 September 2009), p. 8-9

For the LORD your G-d is G-d supreme and Lord supreme, the great, the mighty, and the awesome G-d, who shows no favor and takes no bribe, but upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing. You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Muslim Tradition of Service (Surah 93:111)

I call to witness the early hours of morning, and the night when dark and still, your Lord has neither left you, nor despises you. What is to come is better for you than what has gone before; for your Lord will certainly give you, and you will be content. Did He not find you an orphan and take care of you? Did He not find you perplexed, and show you the way? Did He not find you poor and enrich you? So do not oppress the orphan, and do not drive the beggar away, and keep recounting the favors of your Lord.

Secular Humanist Tradition of Service (from the writings of Pablo Neruda)

To feel the intimacy of brothers is a marvelous thing in life. To feel the love of people whom we love is a fire that feeds our life. But to feel the affection that comes from those whom we do not know, from those unknown to us, who are watching over our sleep and solitude, over our dangers and our weaknesses – that is something still greater and more beautiful because it widens out the boundaries of our being and unites all living things.

Sikh Tradition of Service (from Guru Granth Sahib)

The individual who performs selfless service without thought of reward shall attain God's salvation.



Appendix: Additional Resources

Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free."
- 14th Dalai Lama

Faith-Based Resources

American Jewish World Service

An international development organization motivated by Judaism's imperative to pursue justice.

www.ajws.org

Beliefnet.com

The ambitious venture-capital-backed multifaith "supersite" on religion, spirituality and morality.

www.beliefnet.com

Bridge-Builders

A network of leaders for the interfaith youth movement.

bridge-builders.ning.com

Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR)

International organization focused on interfaith dialogue and peace.

www.cpwr.org

Interfaith Youth Core

Builds mutual respect and pluralism among young people from different religious traditions by empowering them to work together to serve others.

www.ifyc.org

National Council of Churches of Christ

Board ecumenical coalition of Christian churches, engaging 36 Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, historic African-American and Living Peace denominations, and speaking to the critical issues of the world.

www.ncccusa.org

(For a list of member communions and denominations, see: www.ncccusa.org/members/index.html)

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

Association of Muslim organizations and individuals providing a wide range of services for the Muslim community in the U.S.; publishes *Islamic Horizons* magazine.

www.isna.net

Jewish Federation of Nashville

The Jewish Federation of Nashville is the central voluntary communal organization of the Jewish community.

<http://www.jewishnashville.org/index.aspx?page=1>

Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)

With offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., MPAC defines its mission as "working for the civil rights of American Muslims, for the integration of Islam into American pluralism, and for a positive, constructive relationship between American Muslims and their representatives."

www.mpac.org

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, launched in 2001, seeks to promote a deeper understanding of issues at the intersection of religion and public affairs.

The Forum pursues its mission by delivering timely, impartial information to national opinion leaders, including government officials and journalists. As a nonpartisan, non-advocacy organization, the Forum does not take positions on policy debates

<http://pewforum.org/>

PICO Network

PICO is a national network of faith-based community organizations working to create innovative solutions to problems facing urban, suburban and rural communities.

<http://www.piconetwork.org/about>

Pluralism Project, Harvard University

The Pluralism Project: World Religions in America is a decade-long research project at Harvard University dedicated to engaging students in studying the new religious diversity in the United States.

www.pluralism.org

Sojourners: Faith, Politics, and Culture

A monthly magazine of the socially committed Evangelical movement.

www.sojo.net

United Religions Initiative (URI)

Works for peace and justice through global interfaith cooperation.

www.uri.org

United States Department of State: Muslim Life in America

Provides a range of resources including speeches, articles, and official texts related to Islam.

usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife

Union for Reform Judaism

A lay body linking Jewish Reform congregations across the U.S.

www.urj.org

World Council of Churches

A Geneva-based fellowship of over 340 member churches in 120 countries, representing the entire spectrum of Protestant and Orthodox churches.

www.wcc-coe.org

Organizing Resources

Centers for Community Change

The mission of the Center for Community Change is to build the power and capacity of low-income people, especially low-income people of color, to change their communities and public policies for the better.

www.communitychange.org

Freechild Project

The Freechild Project advocates, informs, and celebrates social change led by and with young people around the world, especially those who have been historically denied the right to participate.

www.freechild.org

Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing

The mission of the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) is to substantially increase the philanthropic investment in and strengthen the organizational capacities of youth organizing groups across the country.

www.fcyo.org

Highlander Research and Education Center

Highlander serves as a catalyst for grassroots organizing and movement building in Appalachia and the South.

www.highlandercenter.org

John Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, Stanford University

Partners with local communities to support their efforts to continually renew themselves, by way of developing well-rounded young people who are successful—intellectually, emotionally, physically and socially—and who in turn are motivated to contribute to their communities, both as leaders and as responsible participants

<http://jgc.stanford.edu/index.html>

Just Food

Just Food works to increase access to fresh, healthy food in NYC and to support the local farms and urban gardens that grow it.

www.justfood.org

Midwest Academy

Training and consulting for activist organizations. Regularly scheduled five day training sessions around the country.

www.midwestacademy.org

People's Grocery

People's Grocery is a community-based organization in West Oakland that develops creative solutions to the health problems in our community that stem from a lack of access to and knowledge about healthy, fresh foods.

www.peoplesgrocery.org

