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Sustainability: A Systemic Mindset

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Thinking About Sustainability

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Developmental Phases of Grants

- Problem exists in community (Sometimes for many years)
- Community identifies solutions to problems
- Community comes together with energy and writes grant
- Community enthusiastically implements grant
- Grant money goes away
- Search for sustainability
- Sustain

Sustainability

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- Psychological Task
- Fiscal Task
- Logical Task



Sustainability: Problem or Opportunity

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- Risk of regression to the “problem” phase of the development of services
- Sustainability can become the new “problem”
- Remaining enthusiastic about the sustainability process
- Remaining “real” while aiming towards “ideal”

Sustainability: Problem or Opportunity

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- The opportunity for sustainability depends on the ability of the community to move from the “problem” of sustainability to energetic, realistic and creative solutions
- Community collaboration can be the backbone of energetic, realistic and creative solutions

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Admiring the Sustainability Problem

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Admiring the Problem as an Enemy



- “If we had more funds”
- “If our systems allowed us to have more flexibility”
- “If only they would _____”
- If, If, If, If: Beware of the word if.

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Admiring the Problem as an Enemy

- Training and learning without action
- Focusing on the “ideal” as opposed to the enlightened “real”
- Expecting public funding to be the ultimate solution
- The drift of collaborative meetings towards problem admiration meetings
- The allure of constant planning efforts

Bruce Springsteen on Admiring Problems

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“You can hide 'neath your covers
And study your pain.
Make crosses from your lovers
Throw roses in the rain
Waste your summer praying in vain
For a savior to rise from these streets”

Lyrics from the song Thunder Road

Washoe County's Chronic Problem

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Photo source: <http://abe-research.illinois.edu/ASABERobotics/2009/nevada-reno-hotel.jpg>

The Writing on the Napkin

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- Impromptu meeting of three after a system of care training results in a solution written on napkin
- We set out to help ten kids: now we are at 40
- Pooling existing resources to add positions to existing wraparound program
- Collaborate on system evaluation/training/management

Why Washoe County?

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Photo source: <http://2.abov.com/visking/10/FN/2/renw001.jpg>

Washoe County Partners

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- State of Nevada, Division of Child and Family Services
- Washoe County Dept. of Social Services
- Washoe County School District
- Washoe County Dept. of Juvenile Services
- Children's Cabinet
- University of Nevada, Reno School of Social Work
- Nevada PEP

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Systems Change: A Creative Strategy for Sustainability

Systems Change

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- Sustainability
- Systems change as a policy instrument
- The same system structures produce the same results, if you want different results ... think about different systems
- Starts with collaboration among systems

A Creative Mindset for Sustainability

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- Identify the most pressing multi-systemic problem
- Identify the least expensive evidenced-based practice that addresses the problem
- Identify low or no cost collaborative efforts that could begin to address the problem



Community Collaboration & Sustainability

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- Collaboration is half the battle
- Strength in numbers
- Pooling of resources creates synergy and new program development
- Collaboration eliminates duplication of services
- Collaboration enhances advocacy efforts

Critical Component: Cultural Humility



Considerations for a Culturally Responsive System

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- Impact of oppression and intergenerational trauma
- History of “culturally incompetent” services
 - Removed individual from the family to “treat” them
 - Promoted individual recovery or growth without acknowledgement of family or tribal identity
 - Underutilized the role of extended family
 - Fragmented systems
 - Rural areas: distance and wait lists

Weirbach, Withers, & Neptune (2009)

Break

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A Few Simple Principles for Getting Started

"Build It and They Will Come"

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Photo source: <http://shs.iesummi.k12.mo.us/sports/shs/baseball/images/baseball-field.jpg>

Reverse Sustainability

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What you do when you don't have a grant and the community still needs a progressive system of care?

- Create the system without and/or before the grant
- Reallocate existing resources
- Play to the strength of community collaboration

“See if Something Sticks ...”

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Photo source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/bb/b2/Flickr_-_cystonabell_-_Spaghettil_%282%29.jpg/800px-Flickr_-_cystonabell_-_Spaghettil_%282%29.jpg

“Good Enough for Now”

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“More Simple Than You Think”

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“Low Tech Solutions”

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Activity

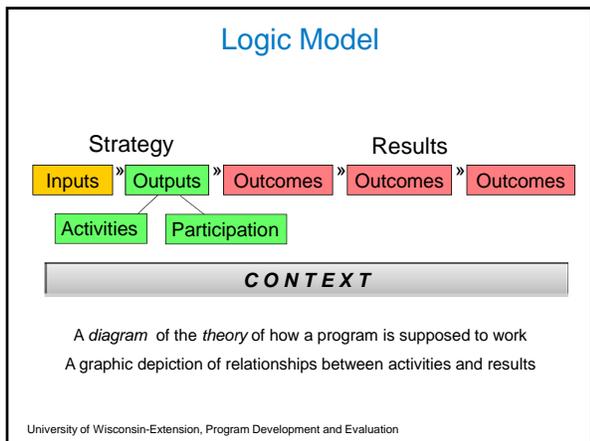


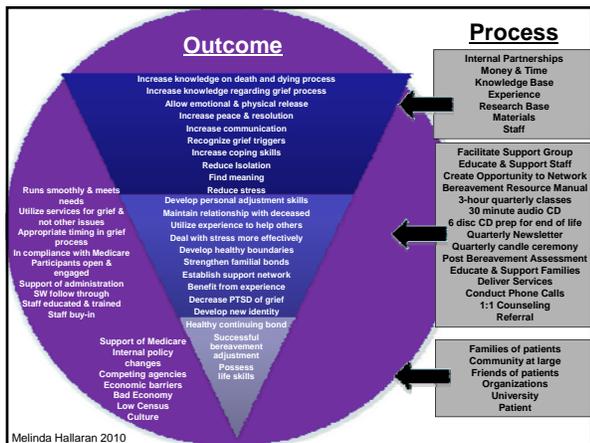
Your own
“Writing on the napkin”

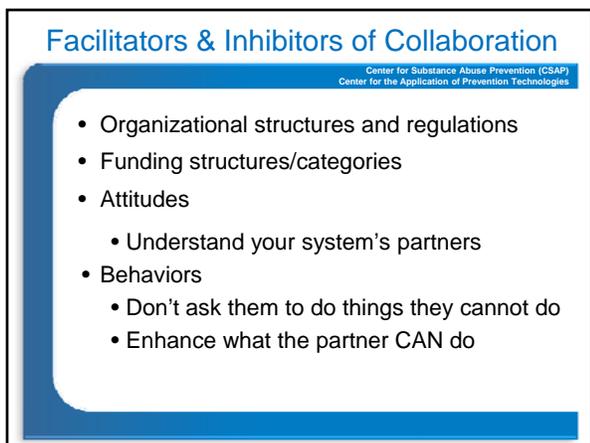
Photo source: http://wiki.vizthink.com/files/08n532/airport_napkin_500.jpg

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Logic Models as a Tool for Moving Forward







Logic Modeling for Sustainability
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- The logic model pushed us to focus on the “realistic” first and the “idealistic” second
- The logic model was the basis for a “town and gown” collaboration
- The logic model is guiding collaboration

How Do You Make Your Napkin a Reality?
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The Road to a Sustainable Solution
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- Washoe County has long embraced the concept of a System of Care for youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED)
- Wraparound services is a service coordination model used extensively in Systems of Care
- Wraparound focuses on maintaining youth in their community at the least restrictive level of care

The Road to a Sustainable Solution

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- System of Care tends can entail a complex service delivery model
- We in Washoe County have long been admiring the problem of creating a system of care in Washoe County
- We have tried twice for System of Care grants
- We are mostly likely not eligible due to match criteria

The Road to a Sustainable Solution

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- Washoe County required a new, realistic way to realize a system of care
- Training on system of care values and programming was extensive
 - but tended to present the “ideal” system
- The focus on the “ideal” tended to bring about paralysis
- New system funding is not likely to be available

The Road to a Sustainable Solution

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- Services are prioritized
- A community leadership process is in place
- MOUs are drafted
- The program is on track to begin in the summer
- 40 kids will receive improved services

