

v1.0  
11.2012

# collective action toolkit



groups  
make  
change

frog

**HELLO!** THIS TOOLKIT IS FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK WITH GROUPS IN THEIR COMMUNITY TO:

## **solve problems**

No matter what size of problem you're looking to solve, the activities here can help your group investigate and generate solutions for community problems. For example: you might be motivated to help people around you get access to healthier food, reduce how many people are becoming sick because of an infectious disease, construct a new building, or start a small business.

## **build new skills**

Gain important life skills with you group and understand how to best put them to use. For example: critical thinking, listening to others, asking better questions, generating ideas, active collaboration, creating better stories, and inspiring and sustaining collective action.

## **gain knowledge**

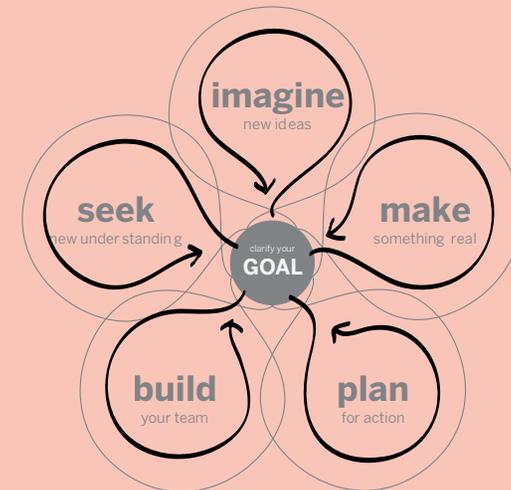
By pooling what you know and who you know, you can better support each other in your group and beyond. For example: with your group, you can gain perspective on a community problem or need, as well as reach out to more people that could support those solutions.

# all you need is a group and a goal

The Collective Action Toolkit was created to help community leaders bring together groups to solve shared problems and act on them. It consists of an **action map** and activities arranged into **six activity areas**. The action map that follows will help you understand what activity options you have for when your group meets.

# how to use this toolkit

It all starts with the action map. At the center of the action map is your **shared goal**. You want to make these goals real. This is where your group begins.



**There are six activity areas** that a team can move through in pursuit of their goal. The areas around your goal inspire how you move through the process of taking action. Each time you do an activity, you'll learn something valuable that helps you better understand your goals and how to act to reach them.

**Goals change over time**, based on how we learn and grow as people. So while you will start your group by setting a shared goal, your group will continuously return to the center of the action map to take stock of what you've accomplished and look ahead to what still needs to be done to reach your goal.



# Learning card

Record what your group discovers and map your progress as you use this Toolkit.

**what we did**  
activity names in the order we completed them

**what we learned**  
key ahasi from the activities we did

**what we're going to do next**  
try another activity, clarify our goal, revisit our approach

cut along line

# Learning card

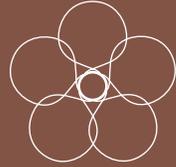
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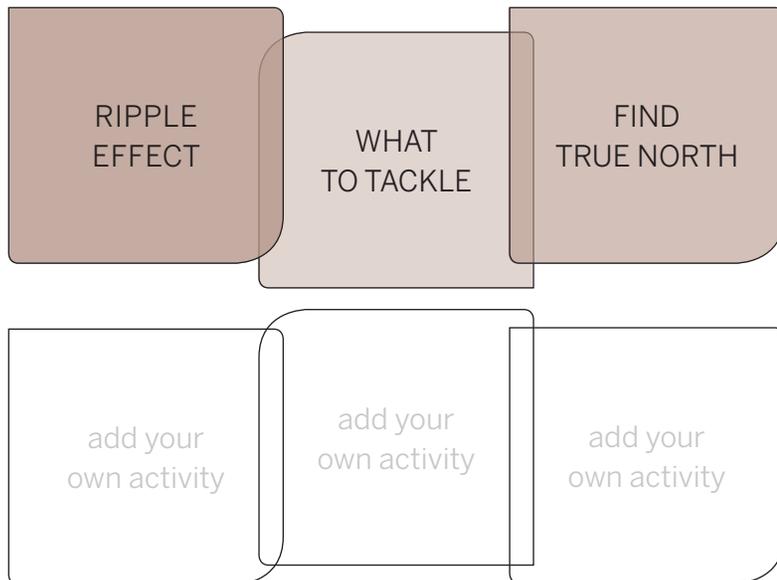
**what we're going to do next**  
try another activity, clarify our goal, revisit our approach

# clarify your goal



Agree on the problem you're trying to solve and what goals you want to achieve by working together. This activity area is critical to your team's success, as your goals may change depending on what your group learns.

## clarify activities



## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

### keep a visual record of how your goal evolves

Continue to remind your group of their goal and how they're moving towards it. Hang things up on the walls, keep stacks of paper with old sketches, and photograph your time together. They will serve as both a record of your progress and an inspiration for future work.

### stock up on the right supplies

While most activities in this toolkit require no more than a pencil and paper, there are suggestions for extra supplies that may come in handy and help your group use your time more effectively.

### be aware of your shared values

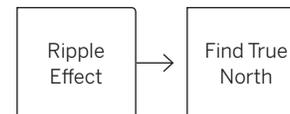
Openly discuss with your group what's important to you and how you like to work, so there aren't big surprises when you take on big challenges.

### make sure you're having fun

Even if you get serious in the activity you're doing, remember to laugh and celebrate when you're done. You're accomplishing great things!

## suggested sequences

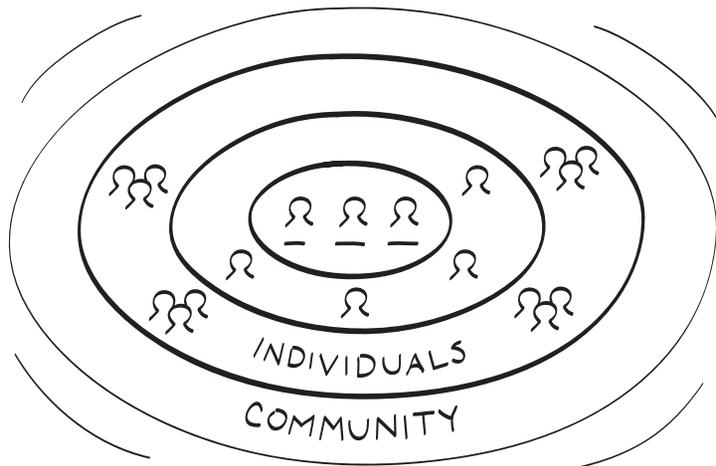
*Define your goal when your group meets for the first time:*



Revisit this area as you travel from one activity area to the next, so your team stays aligned.

# ripple effect

Decide what kind of impact you want your group to have—from improving the lives of individuals in your community to changing your country or the world.



**time**

30 min. for a team of 3 people, add 5 mins. each additional team

**roles**

Participants, 1 recorder, 1 facilitator

**materials**

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens  
Optional: camera, markers

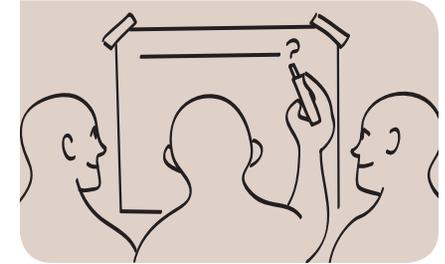
**where to next?**

Try another Clarify activity like 'Define Your Problem' to better understand the problem you want to solve.

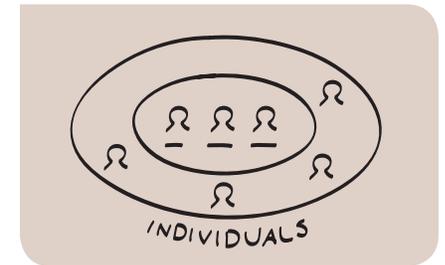


frog along line

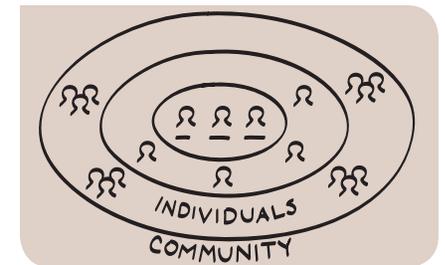
- 1 Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write a question they're trying to work through at the top. Then draw a circle in the center of the page that contains the names of the group members.



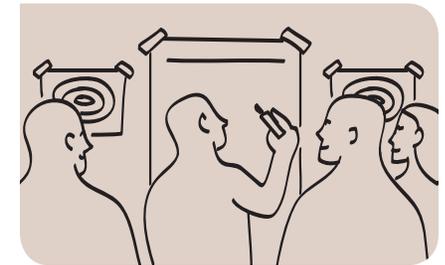
- 2 Have each team write around the first circle the effect they'd like to have on close friends or family. Draw a larger circle around these names and label it 'individuals.'



- 3 Write the effects the team would like to have on their community around the individuals circle. Draw a larger circle around these newly added affects and label it 'community.' Continue the exercise for the effects the team wants to have on their country, nation, and world.

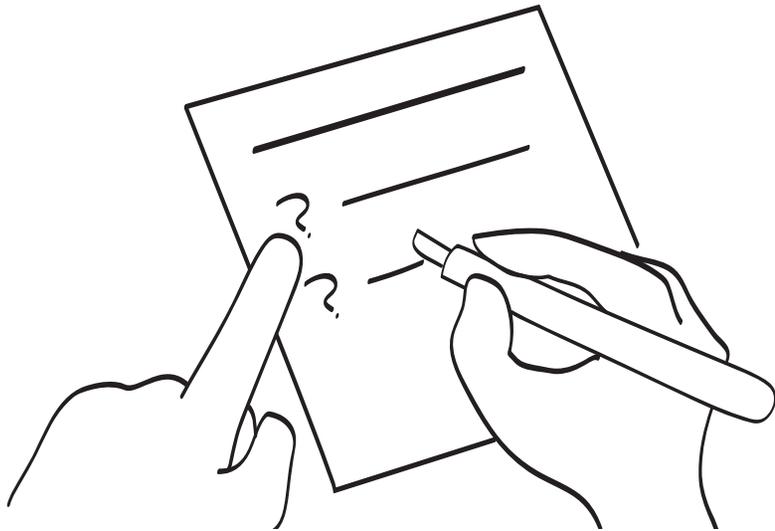


- 4 Ask everybody to post their Ripple Effects on the wall and talk about their similarities and differences. Choose a circle to focus on and the effects you'd like to see. Write these on a clean sheet of paper with when you'd like to see this happen. Put this sheet on the wall so the team can use it later.



# define your problem

Define the problem your group wants to tackle and establish key questions to answer along the way.



## time

45 min. for a team of 3 people, add 5 mins. each additional team

## roles

Participants, 1 recorder, 1 facilitator

## materials

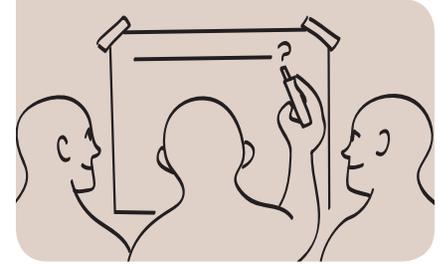
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens  
Optional: camera, markers

## where to next?

Try another Clarify activity like 'Ripple Effect' to see what impact you'd like to have with this project.

Ripple Effect

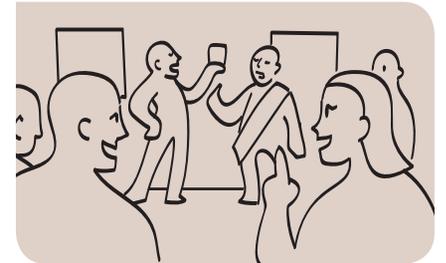
- 1 Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write the most important problem their group is trying to solve, plus one to three key questions the team needs to answer to tackle this issue.



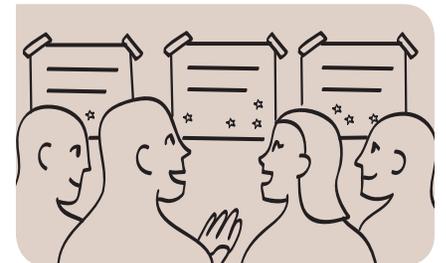
- 2 Give each team 10 minutes to make a skit that illustrates their problem. Teams can use whatever props they can find where they meet.



- 3 Have each team perform their skit. After each performance, have the audience guess the problem they tried to illustrate. Ask each team to read aloud and post their problem and question sheet.

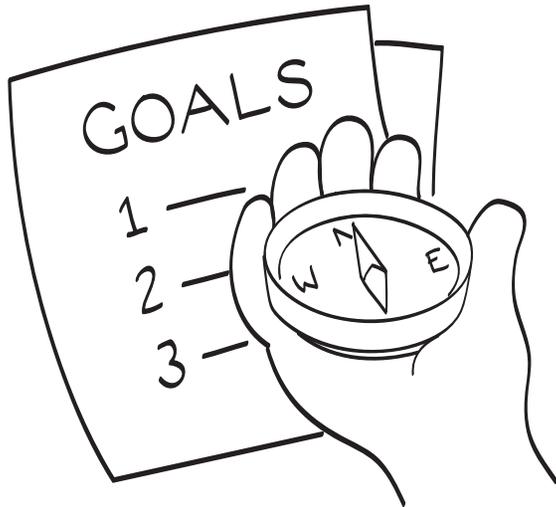


- 4 After every team has gone, ask everyone to put a star next to the problem they feel is most important. Discuss the problems that received the most stars and come to an agreement on the problem and key questions the project needs to address.



# find true north

As a group, come to agreement on the goals you want to achieve—and when you want to achieve them.



**time**

45 min. with a team of 5 people, add 3 mins. for each additional person

**roles**

Participants, 1 recorder, 1 facilitator

**materials**

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens  
Optional: camera, markers

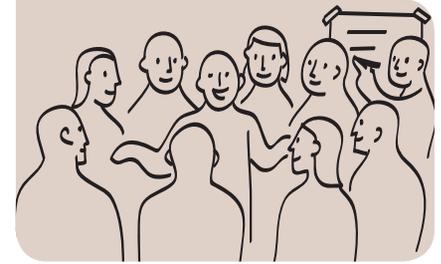
**where to next?**

Try Build Your Group activities like 'Skill Share' to identify resources you'll need to reach your goals.

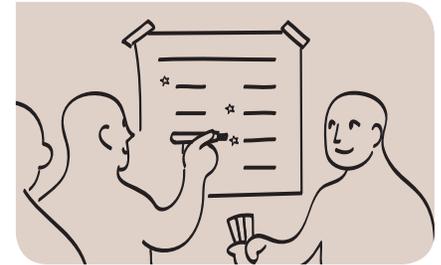


frol along line

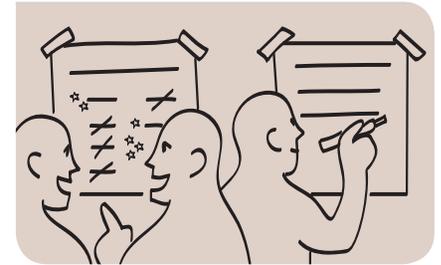
- 1 Stand in a circle. Have each person stand in the middle of the circle, one at a time, and say out loud what they want to achieve with this project. Record these on a large piece of paper.



- 2 Once everyone in your group has spoken, give everyone a pen and ask them to put a star next to their first, second, and third choices for possible project goals.



- 3 Look at the statements that didn't receive any stars and talk about why no one voted for them. Record any key ideas from discussing them and then cross out these statements on the piece of paper. Feel free to combine or edit people's sentences to better capture their ideas.



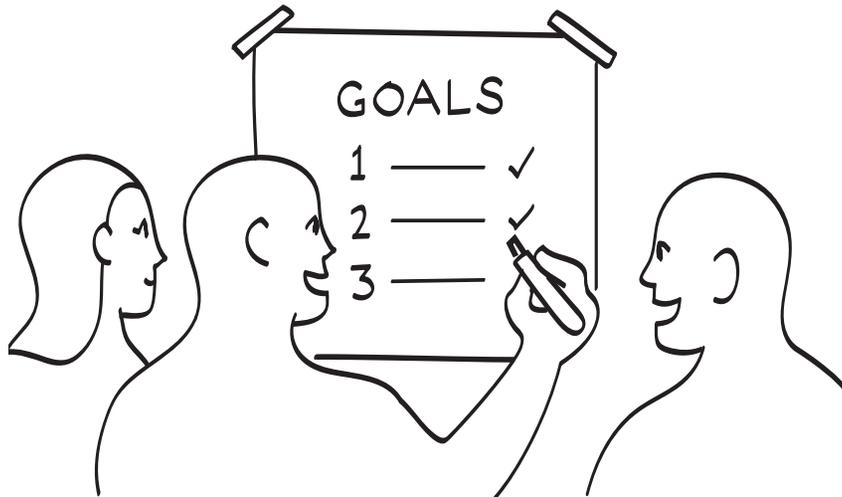
- 4 Count the stars that were given to each statement. The statement with the most stars is your primary goal, the second-most stars your secondary goal, and so forth. Write your goals on another sheet of paper. Then work with your group to establish the timeframe for achieving these goals.



**When you're done:** Put your goals and timeframe up on the wall for people to see when they come to your group meeting.

# check your goal

See if anything has changed about the goals you want your group to achieve.



**time**

45 min. with a team of 5 people, add 3 mins. for each additional person

**roles**

Participants, 1 recorder, 1 facilitator

**materials**

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens  
*Optional: camera, markers*

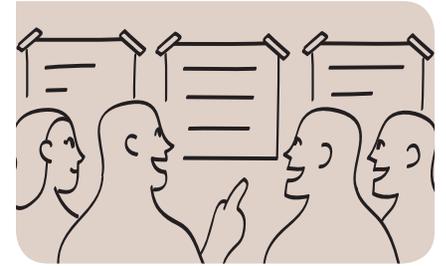
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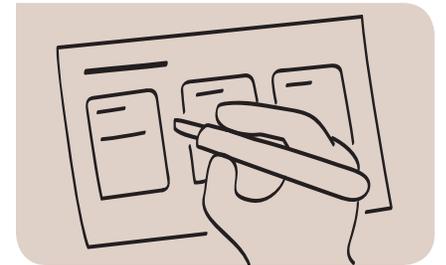


frod along line

- 1 Take a minute to look at the output of all the activities you've done and reflect on what your group has learned.



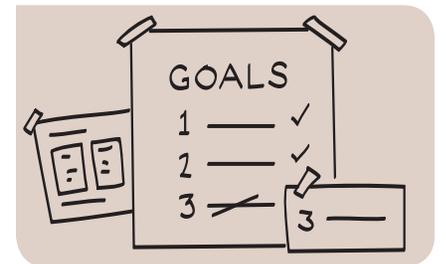
- 2 Fill out a Learning Card or write on a sheet of paper what your group did: activity names in the order you completed them, as well as what your group learned: big takeaways from the activities you did.



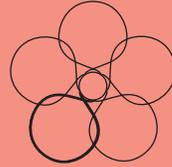
- 3 Compare what you learned with the goals your group had agreed upon. If your goal still holds true, continue on to another activity. Write this next step at the bottom of the Learning Card or piece of paper.



- 4 If the group feels like their goal has changed, write why you think your goal may be different at the bottom of the Learning Card or piece of paper. Then go through one or all of the other Clarify Your Goal activities to find your team's new shared goal. Put this new goal up on the wall for people to see when you meet.

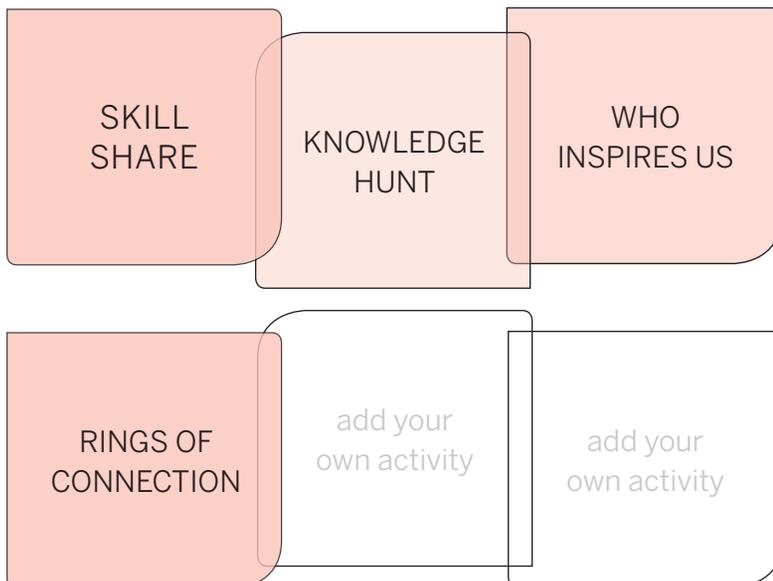


# build your group



Bring together people in your community, identifying their unique strengths and their commitment to your cause. These activities will help your group members better understand each other and recruit members that want to help you reach your shared goals.

## build activities



## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

### respect people's uniqueness

Encourage different points of view. Part of the joy of spending time with other people is celebrating their differences as much as their similarities.

### be mindful of their time

Spending time with your group can be fun and rewarding. But as a leader, set healthy boundaries for meetings and how their time is respected.

### provide constructive feedback

Build on each other's input. Say "yes, and..." rather than "yes, but..." Free exchange of ideas thrives on this kind of feedback.

### make conversation visible

Designate someone from your group to capture information and ideas that come up in your group meetings. Then share them with back with your group to fuel inspiration.

### ask what to improve

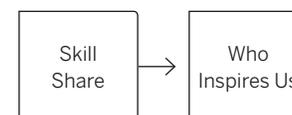
Ask your group what went well and what could be made even better for the next time you get together. Everyone in the group will feel like they've been heard.

## suggested sequences

To grow your team:



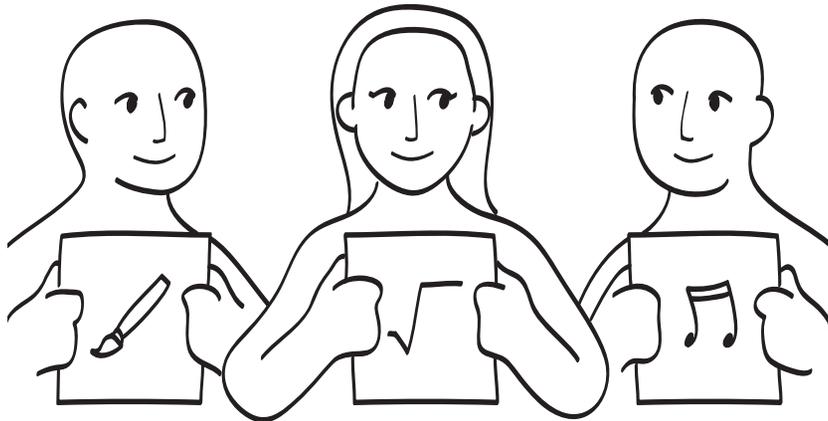
To quickly get to know your teammates:



Try any activity you like until your team feels good about it. Then we recommend trying the above sequences.

# skill share

Encourage your group members to share their unique skills—and determine what skills they may need to reach their goals.



**time**

45 min. with a team of 5 people

**roles**

Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

**materials**

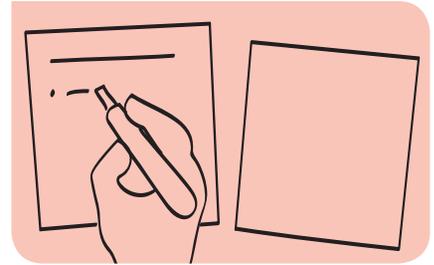
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens, camera  
*optional: stickers, photos, markers, colored paper*

**where to next?**

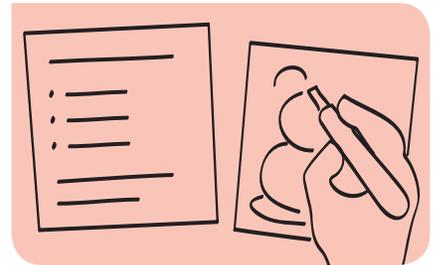
Try another Build Activity like 'Rings of Connection' to determine who your group members might know who have desired skills.



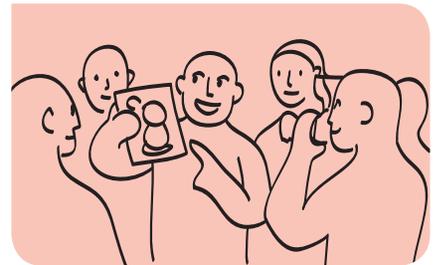
- 1 Hand out two sheets of paper per group member. On the first sheet, have each person write:
  - The name they'd like the other group members to call them
  - The skills and talents they have and believe are relevant
  - One recent accomplishment



- 2 On the second sheet of paper, ask each person to create something that expresses who they are and what they like. For example, they could create a drawing or a collage. But group members don't *have* to use the paper. They could also make a skit, a dance, sing a song about themselves, and so forth.



- 3 Ask each group member to share their first page and whatever they made on the second page. Take notes about what they share, and consider taking pictures as they present so everyone in the group has a record of who each person is for future group members.

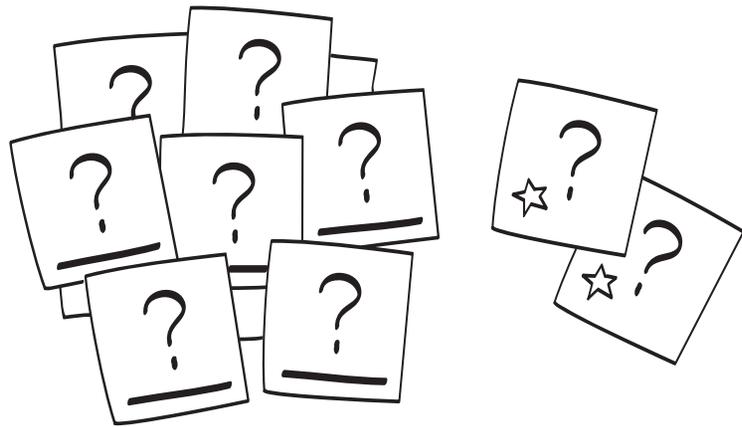


- 4 Once everybody has shared, ask people to put up their two sheets of paper on the wall. Lead a discussion with the group and capture on a large piece of paper:
  - The types of skills your team has a lot of
  - The skills your team still needs
 Keep this visible where you meet, so group members are reminded of these skills.



# knowledge fest

Find out what your team already knows about challenges you're interested in solving together—and what you'd like to learn.



**time**

45 min. with a team of 5–10 people

**roles**

Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

**materials**

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens  
*optional: tape, pins, camera, markers*

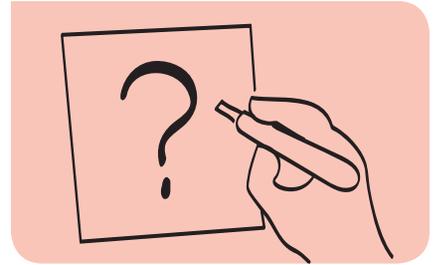
**where to next?**

Try another Build Activity like 'Rings of Connection' to determine who your group members might know who can help you with the information you need.

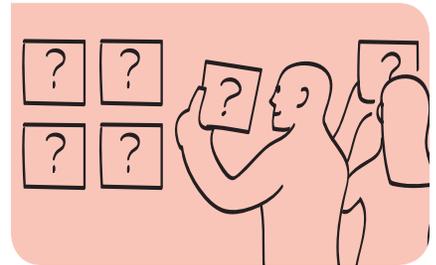


frog along line

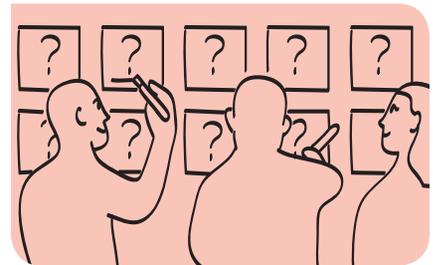
- 1 Give each group member a piece of paper. Ask them to write down a question, either big or small, that is relevant to the specific problem the group is interested in solving together. Make sure there's only one question on each sheet of paper.



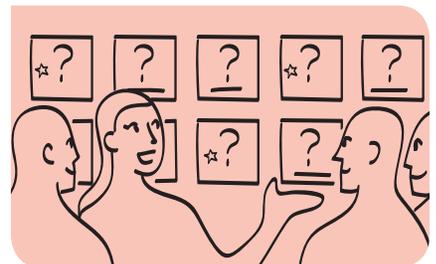
- 2 After everyone has written down a question, pin or tape all the questions up. If you don't have enough wall space, you can spread them out on the floor.



- 3 Have each group member walk around the room and respond to as many questions as they can by writing their answers directly on the pieces of paper. If someone thinks of another question to ask, have them write the question on a new piece of paper and pin it up with the others.

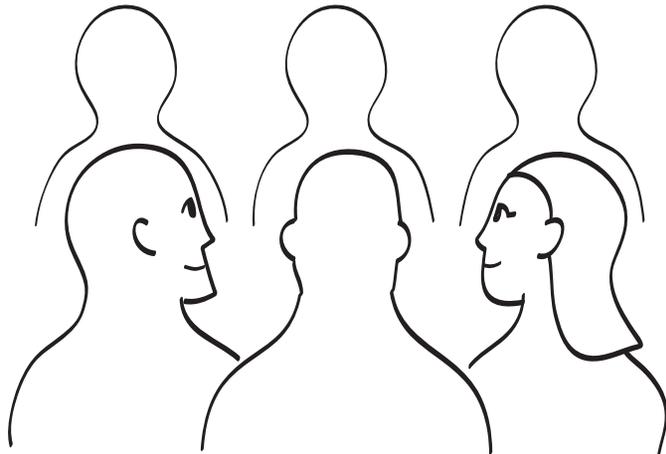


- 4 Read all the questions and responses aloud to the group. As you read through them, identify which questions the group feels they still need answers to by putting a check mark or star next to them. Make a list of these unanswered questions and what group members can do next to answer them.



# who inspires us

Identify people in your community and beyond that inspire your group and could help you solve your group's challenges.



**time**

40 min. for a group of 5 people

**roles**

Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

**materials**

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens  
*optional: stickers, photos, markers, post-its*

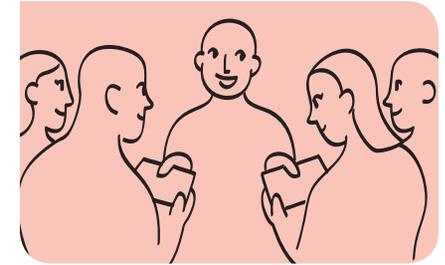
**where to next?**

Try another Build Activity like 'Knowledge Fest' to help your team answer questions that stand in the way of moving forward.

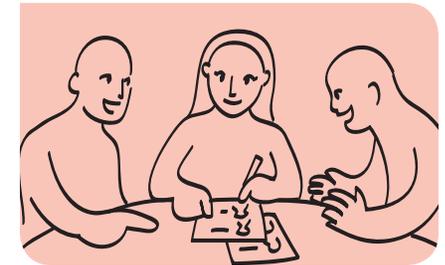


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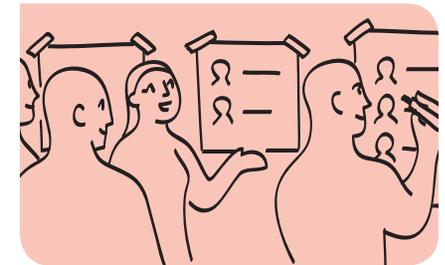
- 1 Divide your group into two teams and give them a piece of paper.



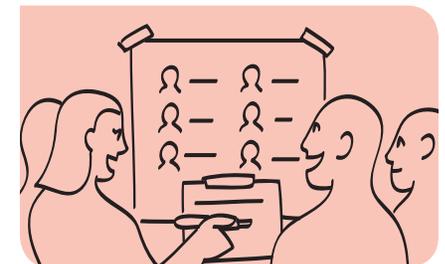
- 2 Ask each team to write down the names of as many people as possible who could help them solve a problem. These people could be famous, infamous, personal family, friends, and other connections. Note the reasons why group members chose each person.



- 3 Give each team five minutes to share their list with the other group. As the teams share, have someone write down all of the names and reasons why each person was chosen on a sheet of paper everyone can see.



- 4 Next, have the entire group look at the names on the list and talk about what all these people have in common. Write down these commonalities and any other interesting discussion points for everyone to see. Put these notes on the wall so everyone can remember who inspires them and who could help them in the future.



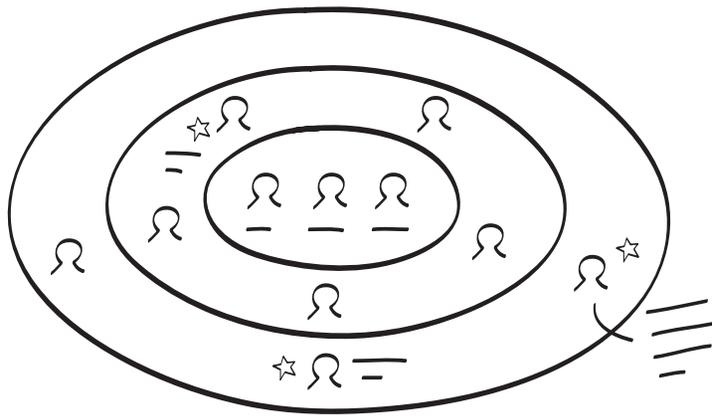
**When you're done in this activity area:**

Try moving to the Seek New Understanding activity area to try 'Interviewing 101' and meet some of these people.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

# rings of connection

Discover which people in your community can help your team with specific challenges



**time**

30 min. for a team of 3 people, add 5 mins. each additional team

**roles**

Participants, 1 facilitator

**materials**

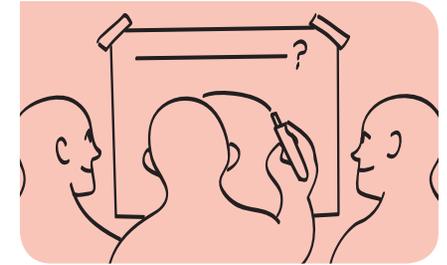
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens  
*optional: stickers, photos, markers, post-its*

**where to next?**

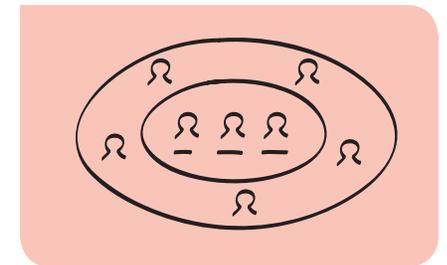
Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities like "Interviewing 101" to start talking with some of the people you've identified. Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.



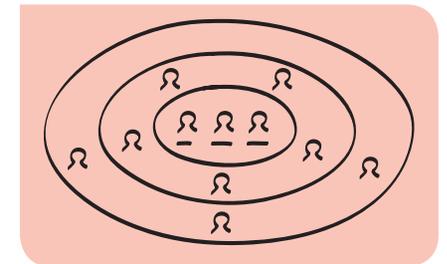
- 1 Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write a question they're trying to work through at the top of the page. Then draw a circle in the center of the page that contains the names of the team members.



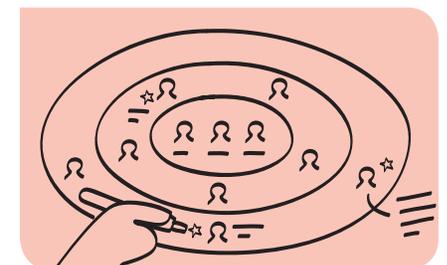
- 2 Have each team write around the first circle the names of people they'd reach out to first for help. These could be trusted friends and family members. Draw a larger circle around these names.



- 3 Write the names of the people the team would reach out to *next* if those people in the second circle weren't available. Draw a larger circle around these newly added names. Then have each team look at their initial question and review their network of relationships.

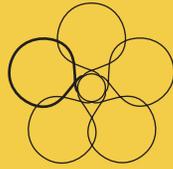


- 4 Ask team members to place a star next to the people they'd talk to that could help them answer the question. Write down what the team would learn by speaking to them. When all of the teams are done, put your diagrams up on the wall so the rest of the group can see them. Repeat as necessary for other questions you need to answer.



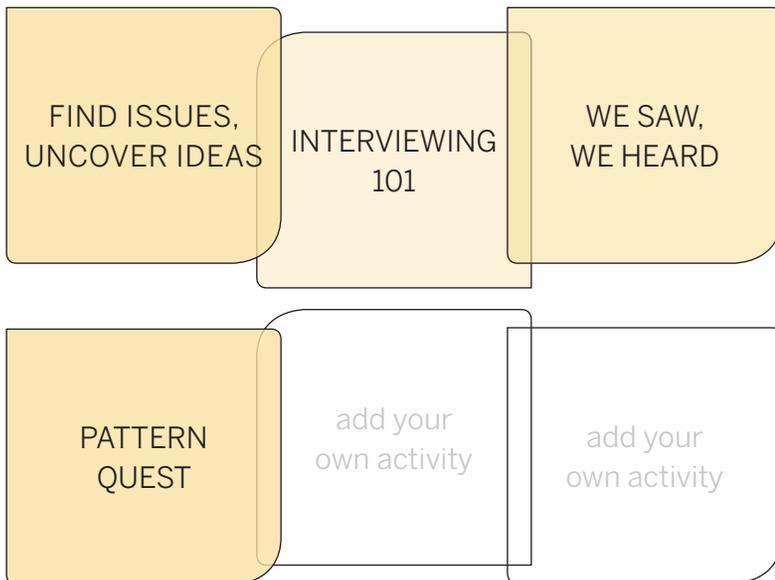
Try doing this activity with materials or meeting spaces you might need instead of people.

# seek new understanding



Reach out to people in your community and gain their perspective on issues that matter to them. Ask the right kinds of questions and explore how people in your community live their lives. Discover their unmet needs and better inform and inspire your group to help.

## seek activities



## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

### start where they live

Talk with people in your community. They may know more than you realize and give you perspective on how to deal with issues.

### look for difficulties or obstacles

They could be problems your group can solve. Note what little things you could help with immediately, or big issues that haven't been addressed.

### watch what people do

It's great to listen to what people say when you talk with them, but it adds so much more to watch what they do in real life. What do you notice?

### pretend you don't know

When meeting with other people, ask open-ended questions, even if you think you may already know how they'll answer. You might be surprised.

### capture your thoughts

Take notes about what you talk about, so you can reflect on what happened. Words, drawings, photographs, and video can come in handy.

### look for patterns

Once you talk to several people, you may see and hear some of the same things come up. Note these patterns, as they can help you identify issues and possible solutions.

## suggested sequences

### Quick exploration

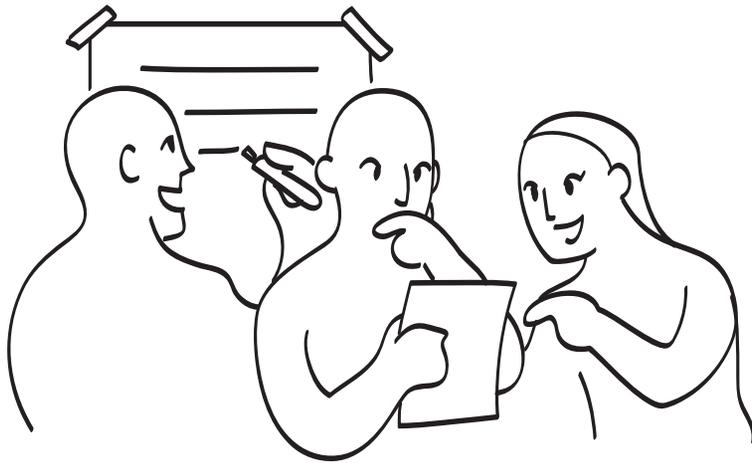


### Go in to the community



# find issues, uncover needs

Better understand the problems people face in your community and consider what your group can do collectively to help.



## time

1 hr. 45 min.

## roles

Participants, 1 facilitator and timekeeper

## materials

Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), large paper, pens, a watch  
*optional: camera, markers*

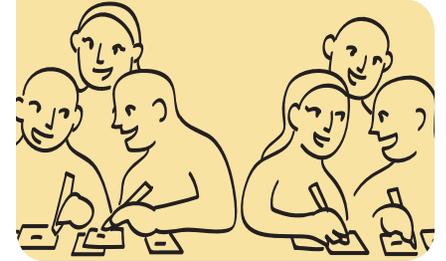
## where to next?

Try another Seek activity like 'Pattern Quest' to compare what your teammates found in their community explorations.

Pattern  
Quest

frog along line

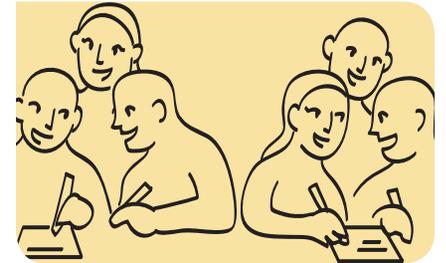
- 1 Split the group into two teams. Hand out paper and pens to each team. Give both teams 10 minutes to come up with as many brief skits as they can that illustrate issues they want to address in their community. It helps when individual team members quickly write down potential skit ideas before creating the skits.



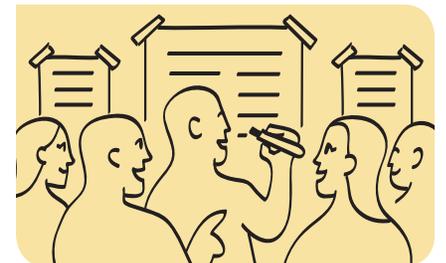
- 2 Flip a coin to see which team will act out their skits first. The winning team will be the actors first, the losing team will be the recorders first. As one team performs, the other team draws or writes down what they have learned from the performance and potential solutions for the issues that were discussed.



- 3 Once both teams have performed, each group should draw or write down ideas about how to change the other group's issues for the better. Bring everyone back into the larger group so the members from each team can share their possible solutions. Have one person record these solutions on a large piece of paper.



- 4 As a group, take a look at the solutions you had all generated. Write down next to them what resources and support people in your community might need to make those solutions real.



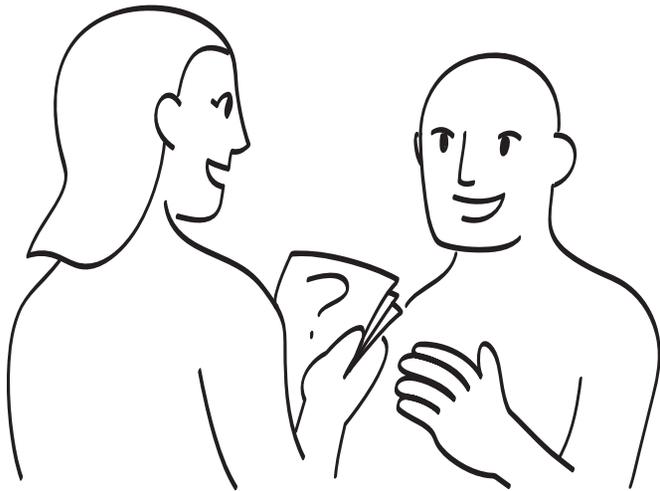
## When you're done in this activity area:

Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something you found in your skits that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

# interviewing 101

Plan an interview from start to finish, then go into your community and talk with people about issues that matter to them.



## time

1 hr. for a group of 10

## roles

Participants, 1 facilitator,  
1 recorder

## materials

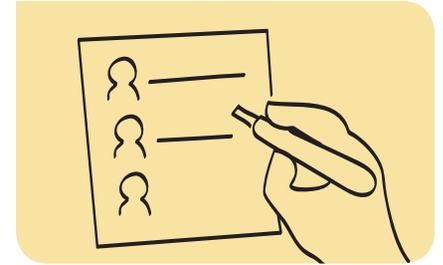
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11")  
or larger, pens  
*optional: camera, markers*

## where to next?

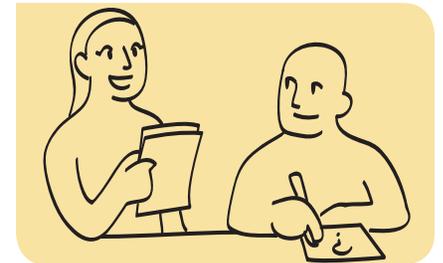
Try another Seek activity like 'We Saw, We Heard' to share what you discovered in your interviews.

We Saw,  
We Heard

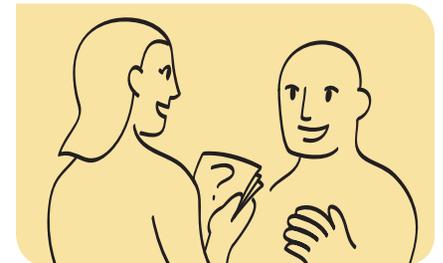
- 1 Ask your individual group members to write a list of people that struggle with issues related to the goal you want to achieve. Write down:
  - Why you would want to talk with them
  - What you would learn by talking to them
  - Where you would want to meet with them



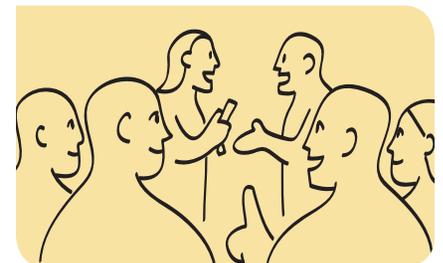
- 2 Divide your entire group into pairs. Ask the people in each pair to read out loud each list and select one of the people they would like to interview. Ask the pair to write down at least five questions they'd like to ask that person at their interview. Encourage each team to ask follow-up questions like "Why?" to provide surprising insight.



- 3 Each pair will roleplay the interview. The teammate who is being asked questions will provide feedback about whether the questions make sense and suggest additional questions to ask. The pair will update the interview questions accordingly.



- 4 Bring the entire group back together. Ask each pair to roleplay their interview again, soliciting feedback from the whole group. Then task group members to do their interviews when they leave the group meeting, encouraging them to take good notes at each interview to share with the rest of the group.



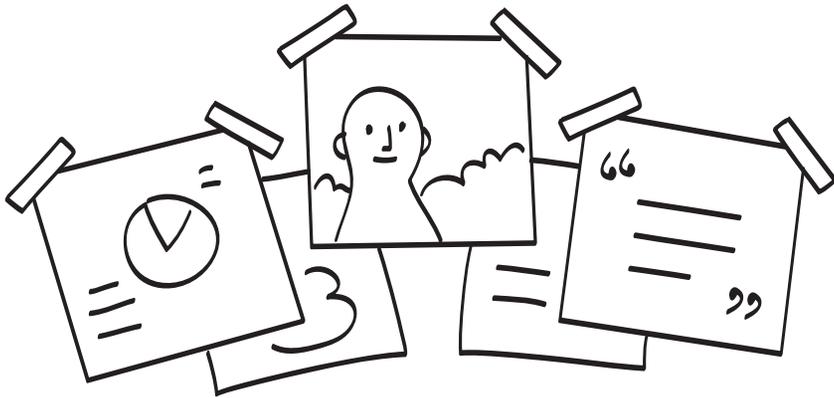
## When you're done in this activity area:

Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something in your interviews that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

## we saw, we heard

Share what group members discovered from their interviews with community members, then identify important themes to consider across the interviews.



### time

45 min. for a group of 10

### roles

Participants, 1 facilitator,  
multiple recorders

### materials

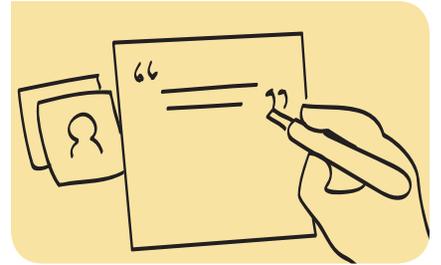
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11")  
or larger, pens  
*optional: camera, markers*

### where to next?

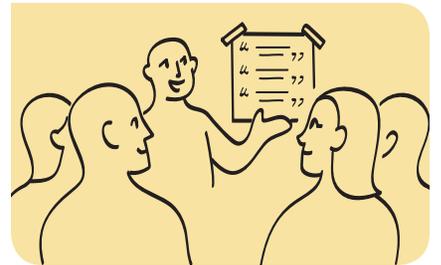
Try another Seek activity like 'Pattern Quest' to find similarities across interviews

Pattern  
Quest

- 1 After your group members have interviewed at least five people in the community that they had identified, bring your group together and give each person five minutes to write out the three most interesting answers they'd received in their interviews.



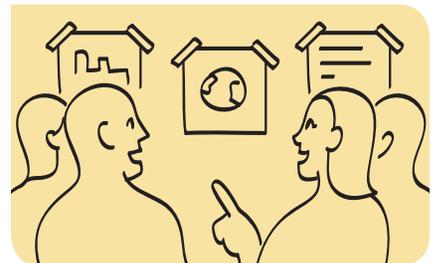
- 2 Have each group member act out their three most interesting answers for the group, pretending to be the person they'd interviewed by emulating how they speak and their body language. If group members want to, they can also share a one-sentence description of why each answer was so interesting to them after each answer.



- 3 People in the group who aren't acting out answers are required to draw, sketch, write, or make collages that represent the needs of each person that had been interviewed by a group member.



- 4 After every group member shares the answers from their interview, ask everyone to post what they had recorded on the wall. Then have a discussion about what people heard: what stood out to them, the similarities and differences between what group members had created, and so forth.



**When you're done in this activity area:**  
Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something in your interviews that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

# pattern quest

Dive deeper into what group members discovered in their interviews, identifying the deeper reasons behind issues people struggle with in your community.



## time

1 hr.

## roles

Participants, 1 facilitator and timekeeper

## materials

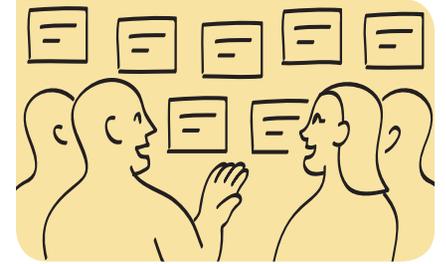
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), large paper, pens, a watch  
*optional: camera, markers*

## where to next?

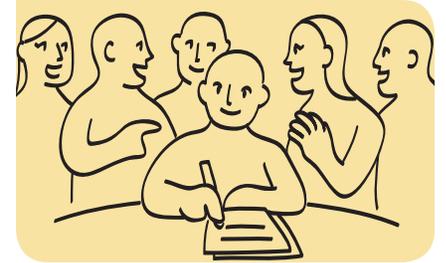
Move to the Imagine More Ideas activity area to act on a topic that emerges from this activity.

Jam  
Session

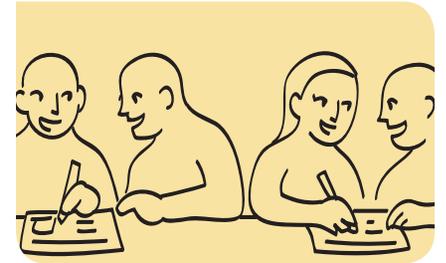
- 1 Ask each person in your group to bring to your meeting the notes they took while interviewing people in their community, plus any reflections they had on those notes based on what they'd discovered to date in their group meetings. Have them post their notes around a room. Spend about ten minutes reading through everyone's notes.



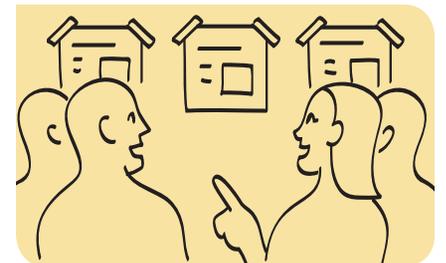
- 2 Have a discussion about what people think are the most important topics the entire team has learned about by going out and talking to people in their community. One person should listen and write each of these topics on separate sheets of paper. When everyone has shared their perspectives, post these topics sheets on the wall.



- 3 Divide up your group so there are at least two people assigned to each topic. Give each group 15 minutes to locate notes or generate sketches representing things from the interview notes that best express their topic. Hand write those quotes or stories on the topic sheet.



- 4 Finish by reviewing the information on each topic sheet as a group. Ask the group:
  - Is there anything you learned from your interviews that should be added to the topic sheet?
  - Is there something you captured here that should be on another topic sheet?



Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.