

Conversations on Health Equity And Prosperity--An American Freedom and Justice Movement

Introducing the Conversation

On Friday, February 19 partners who are working on the Health Equity And Prosperity (HEP) project held a conversation on the meaning of the project terms and then planned how the project can roll out. This report shares highlights from the conversations and summarizes the project plans. As described by Figure 1 (below), one goal of the project is to engage 5 million people in America in the health equity and prosperity conversation. A second is to learn how communications can best support a movement that engages people with vision and compels action for systems change to expand health equity and prosperity. The meeting provided more detailed plans for recruiting people, creating the menu for systems change and designing the feedback system to support a continuing movement for health equity and prosperity.

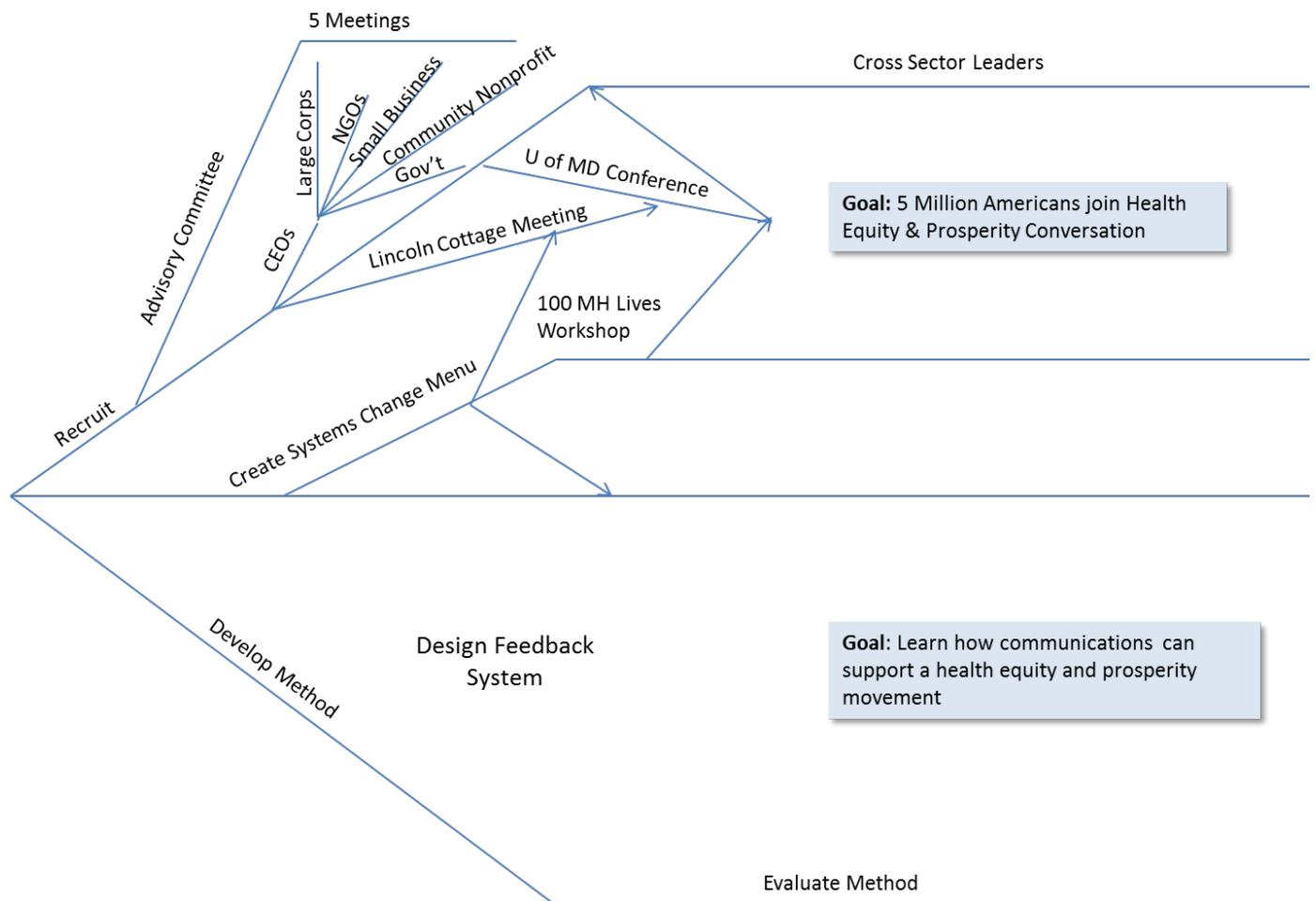


Figure 1: Project Plan

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At the beginning of this conversation we exchanged stories that were prompted by memories of when the words “health equity,” “prosperity,” and “freedom and justice” became meaningful to us and why. This exchange combined information and affirmation as people oriented to both the objective content conveyed by the words and the subjective experience grounding those words in our lives. There were noticeably emotional responses to the stories people told. While much of our emotional experience is unconscious, when we make a conscious effort to share a memory that includes powerful feelings, then associated ideas convey more powerfully. Most importantly, it also establishes trust as people felt their experience welcomed into the conversation.

The meeting was designed to test a process that explicitly sought to structure the conversation using different forms, including debate, dialogue and vision. This process did not appear to work well, though the conversations articulated below were positive. What worked most effectively was to have people draw from their life experience and share stories that represented their personal understanding of the project’s intention. As a result, IAF and Community Initiatives will create a new process that builds from the strengths of the initial conversation among partners and develop a Conversation Guide to help new people join in a way that works for different people meeting on health equity and prosperity.

Highlights from Conversations

There were different points of view that sometimes form dualities which can offer a creative tension. Given the diversity of life experience we seek, differences in how we understand ideas means we don’t necessarily resolve the tension when we come upon dualisms, such as self-determination and co-creation. Instead, we approach concepts from all sorts of directions and they can be unifying, or not. It is not enough to say the differences are grounded in shared values and morality when they emerge from people’s lived experience. We can use debate to both get to empathy and clarity about intentionally shared words that can then be used in dialogue.

Health Equity Conversation

We are making a moral argument for health equity that has implications for child rearing as well as how we measure our financial condition. We share a fate and are connected to a shared conversation that can help us mediate the tensions that arise when different values appear to conflict.

The health equity argument needs to recognize that the term can limit us. Yet our nation was founded on the principles of equity and unless we truly make this a land of opportunity we will damage our ability to lead the world. This is the only country you can come to from wherever and become what you dream. The moral argument stands on its own while the economic rationale also rests on our collective self interest in assuring all thrive.

If we consider who is involved in equity we may frame health equity in a way that brings down barriers between the self and others so it creates oneness. If we analyze who bears the greatest burden of health inequities then we identify systemic factors that create the conditions that shape those inequities. The greatest need and burden takes us to very different places—geographic and people with different race and sexual orientations. This then helps us change conditions to meet those needs.

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Yet the barbaric intentionality of oppressors will keep some people holding positions that limit the understanding of equity to race, ethnicity and gender. Our aim is to transcend these limits.

Prosperity

Prosperity is woven into the American fabric. Our nation was founded on the pursuit of happiness, and Locke argued that the pursuit of property was tied to happiness. This tie has led our culture to indelibly mark success with acquisition of property. At the same time we are hardwired for fairness by nature, so the opportunity to pursue prosperity has to be viewed strategically in the tension between these dual pursuits. Our historic drive for property has leveraged a material culture that underlies business, which makes the linkage between prosperity and health equity strategically vital to our partnership with business leaders. This partnership needs to be based on a prosperity that ties individual happiness to collective well-being. We can develop a selfless capitalism that gathers wealth so that it contributes to the prosperity of all.

Freedom And Justice

The commitment to freedom is a deeply held American ideal that has expanded over our history to include those who were previously excluded. The drive to expand freedom connects us to the spiritual intelligence which shares love, joy, faith and awe and makes cooperation the key to our ongoing human evolution. By basing our conversation explicitly in the spiritual intelligences we can continue the ongoing drive for freedom by removing the systemic barriers to health equity.

Justice is supposed to be the mediator between freedom and inequality as we address both individual and collective interests. Justice is fairness in the bigger sense. Justice means we need to press against unequal treatment and unfair outcomes that offend us as the current manifestations of injustice. Capitalism is a way of doing business and it will change as the economy shifts and so too will the meaning of justice as our income inequality grows. Our sense of fairness changes as a manifestation of our evolving humanity.

Martin Luther King said that “justice is love in calculation and justice is love correcting that which works against love.” When viewed in this light, freedom and justice work together less as a duality and more as a shared expression of our humanity.

Dialogue Questions

Dialogue is the art of thinking together and in our dialogues over health equity and prosperity we seek to build social capital through trust and intimacy. In a relationship built on this social capital people listen to each other and their conversation can embrace long silences that mark deep reflection. A quiet conversation helps all involved go inside to discover new questions that help people think differently. The process draws from unconscious material and reveals possibilities that were unseen. The questions that follow invite further dialogue.

How do we increase our consciousness by sharing positive emotions?

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What thwarts our spiritual reciprocity and keeps us from sharing love, joy, faith and awe?
How do we allow ourselves to be changed?
Do we unconsciously project our static view of ourselves onto others as a form of arrested development?
Is leadership a noun and a status or a verb and a process?
What do you do about people who are left out?
Can we measure prosperity by whose life is getting better?
Can individuals truly prosper if the people around them are not also prospering?
How do we learn each other's stories so that we can then engage effectively in debate and dialogue?
What are we doing today that will help people thrive in five generations?
How is equity an expression of health?
Is it possible to talk about collective prosperity in deeply personal terms?
Is health relational?
What prosperity would allow us all to thrive?
How do we address the doubt that comes from the experience of fighting the good fight?
What system adaptations create new injustices?
Can we disconnect greed from prosperity?
How do we adapt our strategies to incorporate the spiritual intelligences through which we share love, joy, faith and awe?

Vision Statements

An authentic vision encompasses the meaning found in dialogue and imagines it has become an aspiration that has shaped life. We can describe a future in which this aspiration has fully emerged and become widely shared. The description of this future may include vivid imagery and create a shock of recognition among people who share a deep commitment to the shared aspiration expressed by the vision. A powerful vision also compels action because the future appears so much more meaningful than the present that we become motivated to bring about change.

The statements below arose from our early vision conversations and offer an invitation for others to consider when they articulate their aspirations for health equity and prosperity.

We see a broader cross-section of leaders expressing the values and vision that expands freedom and justice for the poor and excluded as well as for those who are wealthy and thriving. We represent a love that expands freedom and justice with transcendent leadership which acknowledges that our work in 2016 must endure so we can embrace change as an adaptation and harness this change for the greater good.

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Health equity makes everyone part of bringing health to others. Every neighborhood, every business, every leader can bring the opportunity for all to prosper on a common path to freedom and justice. We strive on this path for a moral prosperity that constantly measures whose life is getting better.

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This is the prosperity that weaves through the American fabric and gathers wealth for the benefit of us all. We share a fate. We are connected. We ground ourselves in shared experience to bring health equity and prosperity that can reach generations to come while we dream of people coming together across races, social divides and economic classes to thrive.

Project Plans

We detailed the three lines of effort: a systems change menu, recruitment and a design for a feedback system. Each of these plans will need further work that our partners can help with. The Systems Change Menu will be worked on in Orlando on March 21. All partners can help with the recruitment effort. Monte Roulier is leading the feedback system design and we invite interested partners to reach out to him directly or to Jonathan Peck.

Recruitment Plan

How

1. Utilize Partner feedback to develop master lists.
2. Have the Partners and the Advisory Group introduce Jonathan Peck (JP) to potential Lincoln Cottage participants
3. JP to extend invitation to the Lincoln Cottage Meeting
4. Lincoln Cottage participants + Advisory Group + Partners to each personalize 15-20 invitations to the UMD meeting
5. Provide a number of tickets for UMD invitees

Tools

Invitation materials: Inspiring/Compelling (? Bill Novelli to advise on this)

Electronic messages: The meeting you cannot miss/ we each have a piece of the puzzle

Create a project app: ? UMD team created app to track the meetings, agenda and blogs

University of Maryland (UMD) Meeting specifics:

- Require a concurrent remote meeting: There is some concern about this requirement
 - o 6-10 remote participants
 - o Develop mechanism for an asynchronous meeting option (video the meeting and provide electronic meeting kits)
- Create a UMD buzz... social media

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Who

Advisory Group

These are recommendations for individuals for Jonathan Peck to contact for the Advisory Group:

Wallace D Loh, President, University of Maryland
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Isabel V Sawhill, PhD (Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, Brookings Institution)
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<http://www.brookings.edu/experts/sawhilli?view=bio>
or

Ron Haskins, PhD (Brookings Center on Children and Families) *lives in Rockville, MD
202-238-3158 (Allegra Pocinki, staff assistant)

Jim Krieger, MD
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Get recommendations from Bill Oldham for CEO representative

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Andy Shallal (Busboys and Poets)
202-332-6432
andy@busboysandpoets.com

Philip Tegeler, Executive Director Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC)
ptegeler@prrac.org
1200 18th St. NW #200, Washington, DC 20036
(202) 906-8023

Lincoln Cottage (35 key invitees)

Business: Invite from the Forbes top 10 list:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/10/02/the-companies-with-the-best-csr-reputations-2/#1a6e259122bc>

- #1 Microsoft, The Walt Disney Co., Google and BMW
- #5 Daimler (Mercedes-Benz)
- #6 Sony
- #7 Intel
- #8 Volkswagen
- #9 Apple
- #10 Nestle

From the top 100 list where we have contacts:

IBM: Kyu Rhee, MD
kyurhee@us.ibm.com

Johnson & Johnson: Fik Isaac, MD
(732) 524-3404
FIsaac1@its.jnj.com

DuPont (Dow merger): Cathy Basse, MD
cbaase@dow.com

Bob Rosen recommendations for CEO participants

Thomas J Donohue, President and CEO, US Chamber of Commerce

If he is not available, the advisory board for US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Corporate Citizenship Center: <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/corporate-citizenship-center/advisory-board>

Kellogg Scholars Alumni: http://www.kellogghealthscholars.org/scholars/kellogg_alumni3.php

Recommend: Denae W King, PhD from the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs because of her work on Environmental Justice

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Texas Southern University
3100 Cleburne Avenue
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kingdw@tsu.edu

University of Maryland (500 + remote meetings)

Excel sheet in development

Systems Change Menu

The group brainstormed ideas in different areas through which systems change can be facilitated including:

- Community Equity Maps showing federal, state, county and local bright spots
- Map the movement with health in all policies and equity in all policies highlighted
- Catalogue sector-specific policies that can counter the production of inequities
- Identify policy leverage points, such as IRS requirements
- An equivalent to Match.com for civic action on health equity
- Develop equity entertainment programs
- Tap into and promote chief resiliency officers who address health equity
- Develop relationship processes as a resource
- Hold meet-ups for health equity
- Use volunteer currency for community action
- Bring people's lived experience into every health equity and prosperity conversation

- Focus on healthy birth outcomes to help all kids have a great start to life
- Message that "all kids are our kids"
- Develop cradle to career strategies
- Use a "Black Girls Code" challenge to enlist kids
- Alter pre-conception and conception conditions, e.g., with paternity and maternity leave policies
- Identify free college options early in a child's life
- Create incentives for youth to finish mentorship programs

- Work for restorative justice
- Expand prison education and training
- Work with employers to provide jobs for post-incarcerated people
- Create mental health awareness and intervention for juveniles
- Abandon "Three Strikes" and separate substance abuse from incarceration
- Address gun violence and develop gun control

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Interrupt the cycle of poverty and race leading to incarceration

Address work options for the dispossessed in the new economy

Identify opportunities in the “Gig economy” for low-wage workers

Raise the minimum wage and improve benefit package availability

Assure living wages in the shift to information-based work

Shape new economy for philanthropy program using crowd sourcing and giving circles

Work with “People-Centered Internet” to develop networks connecting technology and people

Connect with Solano County, California Living Lab

Create digital health apprentice positions and train people for digital skills

Prepare cartoons raising awareness of issues

Develop health equity ads for Facebook and other social media

Facilitate online conversations on health equity and prosperity

Create youth art masterpieces for health equity and prosperity

Develop a fun health education effort

Start new conversations such as those by HONY—humans of N.Y.—and creative blogs

Do youth organizing to bring new energy to the Culture of Health movement

Use conventional story techniques to make good health important

Collect stories on successful health equity actions

Create a Health Equity And Prosperity Story Corps

Reach out to Barber Shops and Beauty Shops—add art and drama to Barber Shop Therapy

Recruit Barber Poets into Health Equity and Prosperity conversations

Start a Healthy Black Lives Matter movement

Develop peer-to-peer approaches

Start equity challenges (like coke-a-thons only healthy)

Have a radio campaign for health equity

Hold community dinners engaging people with personal stories on health equity

Create a food, hunger website that encourages breaking bread together with people at risk for hunger

Hold equity games

Hold truth and reconciliation sessions at the local level

Tap into shared outrage, reach out to movements such as Black Lives Matter, Fight For 15, Ban the Box

Develop equity entertainment programs and do “Equity Product Placements” for TV and movies

Hold cross-sector dialogues on shared opportunity with an action menu

Create a Health Equity Pedigree exercise

Form faith-health equity partnerships—engage the U.S. Conference of Bishops and Archdioceses

Hold health equity sermon contests

Start faith youth groups for health equity and prosperity

Connect with Bus Boys & Poets--encourage poems that form spiritual rituals

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Hold community meetings in green spaces
Have a Health Equity Sader
Emphasize religious tolerance, forgiveness and social justice

Address Veteran homelessness and broaden the issue
Link water rights and health equity
Recruit environmental justice partners
Describe racism as an infectious disease and track it

Feedback System Design

What Constitutes An Effective (Dialogue) & Feedback System? An approach that...

- Propagates and sustains a conversation that keeps on connecting people
- Spurs action at the local, regional and national levels...
 - Generates new narratives—to foster understanding and inspiration
 - New forms of case making (moral & economic dimensions) for different sectors
 - A stepping stone for dialogue participants to move into collective action
- Creates feedback/enhancements to the process of conducting health equity and prosperity conversations
- Links the different/mixed perspectives together with shared aspirations
- Links assets of existing facets of the equity movement with new partners, & elevating what is working
- Creates mechanism to listen and learn from fresh narratives and new possibilities that emerge
- Reflects back to the places where dialogues took place—and what we're hearing and learning

Design Principles, Assumptions & Considerations To...

- Generate and capture stories as a powerful starting point for discovering shared values and making the stories memorable
- Capture wide range of individual and community stories, as well large (meta) stories from diverse sets of conversations
- Meet folks/communities where they are
- Connect our past and future
- Lead us on new pathways and different worlds where new champions emerge
- Foster peer-to-peer conversations, such as business-to-business, school-to-school, so they:
 - Connect champions to their right counterparts
- Create avenues to invest in each other's success (by learning, sharing, mentoring)
- Link to evaluation (including use of stories) to new views, catalyzing fresh actions and new relationships

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Additional Considerations...

- Do the dialogues at Lincoln Cottage and/or U Maryland go deeper than the satellite and virtually supported dialogues look a little different? Might the early face2face gatherings (Lincoln/UM) frame the dialogue/conversation guide to be used all over the country
- Need to create dialogue process that allows each community flexibility to tailor to unique local circumstances and purposes—see old healthy communities dialogue guide (set up a number of different scenarios for hosting conversations)
- How do we bring the perspectives of those who are uncomfortable or resistant to the equity and justice frame – which will provide some rich learning
- Recognize that these words are not the only pathway to having productive conversations about equity and justice—a meaningful and inclusive framing will be key (add wellness and avoid jargon)
- Link to 100 MHL/Commons--change strategies, along with linkage to menu strategies & access to tools/examples
- Use some sort of pledge—if meaningfully done??
- Tap the existing infrastructure of partners and other leaders in Equity movement
- Models to build on: Study Circles; CommonHealth Action (tools?); WOTN Process Guides; Collaborative Multiplier (link to tools); Healthier Communities Guide

What Does This System Look Like? Mechanisms/Strategies To Capture And Track...

- Leverage with social media—Hashtags, Photos & Videos to help measure change
 - Facebook
 - Snapchat, Instagram
 - Video Vine(Note: perhaps stories, photos, videos are the most meaningful material we collect)
- Easy templates for reporting
 - Capture key ideas, who was involved, where and when
 - Videos and pictures, photos that are illustrative
 - Ways to depict a growing movement in organic, crowd sourcing way?
- Build on and link to existing assets of the movement
 - Events that build awareness
 - Menu of possible actions
 - Virtual book club
 - Possibilities and simple steps
 - Content based on different sectors and geographies

Additional Comments

- Creative PhotoVoice
- Produce Images & ask the movement for options of captions
- Lincoln (or some meaningful visual) composed of mini crowd sourced photos or videos

Conclusion

The Partner's Meeting demonstrated the ability to hold a meaningful conversation on health equity and prosperity and developed plans for snowballing this conversation while supporting it with a systems change menu. The scope of this project is large. Success depends on commitment from our partners. IAF will reach out for ongoing help as we work to realize our goals using this plan.