EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND
Teen Empowerment is a youth development/youth leadership organization that hires and trains youth ages 14 – 20, including high risk youth, to work as paid organizers with their peers in their community or school. Through the work of the Youth Organizers, Teen Empowerment seeks to change individual and institutional behavior by changing attitudes and relationships, rather than simply seeking confrontational legislative and bureaucratic mandates. The organization operates five sites throughout Boston, four of which are located in high schools.

THE CHANGE
The guiding principle of Teen Empowerment's work is that youth can significantly contribute to social change in their own communities when given authentic opportunities to exercise power. The Police/Youth Reconciliation Project is a joint effort by Teen Empowerment and the Boston Police Department to build on their relationship and to attempt to institutionalize processes for supporting changes in attitudes that can improve relations between youth and police in one Boston neighborhood. The expectation is that lessons learned and documented from this project could be replicated not only in other areas of Boston, but also in communities across the country.

APPLICATION OF TRANSITIONS
Teen Empowerment believes that the process Teen Empowerment has used over the past eight years to address deteriorating police/youth relations has begun the "Ending" stage by gradually replacing polarized relationships with relationships grounded in humanizing experiences. However, without a consistent structure that supports these changes in attitude within institutions, police and youth have been left in the Neutral Zone. The process outlined by Teen Empowerment and the Boston Police may illuminate the necessary supports for enabling youth and police to come through the Neutral Zone and move on to their New Beginning. At the heart of this project that attempts to guide the police and youth communities through a collective transition, is a process for prompting and managing individual transitions within each youth and police officer for changing attitudes about themselves and their relationship to each other.

EMERGING CHALLENGES, QUESTIONS & THEMES

1. How can we best integrate the Transitions framework into existing models of facilitation or other collaborative processes to fully 'operationalize' the framework?

2. What is the most effective way to use the Transitions framework both to create change on the individual level in addition to creating social change on an institutional or societal scale?

3. What does a Transition in an institution or a society 'look like'?

4. Is there a set of 'best practices' for facilitators working with bureaucratic institutions which have their own ways of doing things and may be resistant to new ideas from 'outsiders' to introduce new tools such as the Transitions Framework?

5. Similarly, is there a model for facilitators to use in introducing Transitions beyond a core group of staff and participants to the wider community?

6. Can we identify evidence or indicators that intentional use of Transitions builds capacity within communities to better navigate the next change or conflict to arise, ultimately strengthening communities themselves?

BACKGROUND

Teen Empowerment is a youth development/youth leadership organization that hires and trains youth ages 14 – 20, including high risk youth, to work as paid organizers with their peers in their community or school. Through the work of the Youth Organizers, Teen Empowerment seeks to change individual and institutional behavior by changing attitudes and relationships, rather than simply seeking confrontational legislative and bureaucratic mandates.

Melinda Estrada at the Youth Peace Conference
Photo courtesy of Merrill Shea

The organization operates five sites throughout Boston, four of which are located in high schools. The guiding principle of Teen Empowerment's work is that youth can significantly contribute to social change in their own communities when given authentic opportunities to exercise power. Part of Teen Empowerment's model[1] involves facilitated leadership that allows youth groups to come to their own understanding of what actions to take. Rather than driving in a linear way towards consensus, the facilitative leader works with a range of interactive techniques as a way of surfacing different points of view and working through areas of disagreement.

The job of a Youth Organizer is to work in a group of 12 youth (6 males and 6 females) to create dynamic strategies that have a positive impact on peer and adult attitudes, behaviors, norms, and relationships in their school or neighborhood. Teen Empowerment sites also work together to develop large-scale initiatives that involve a citywide cross-section of young people in creating a powerful movement for improving youth services and educational institutions.

The day-to-day responsibilities of the Youth Organizers include:
- Meeting with their group five days per week for two hours each day.
- Going through a training process that includes group building, identifying problems in their school or community, setting priority goals, mapping out a timeline for their chosen social change strategy, and orientation to the program's behavior change system.
- Weekly group work exploring the meaning and purpose of the social changes that the group has committed to accomplish.
- Planning and implementing the social change initiatives that they are working on.
- Making speeches, facilitating groups, and dealing with logistics for the initiatives that they have planned.
- Evaluating each day's work and evaluating the effectiveness of each initiative they carry out.

In the past, some of the initiatives developed by the youth have included: student-teacher conferences that focus on improving relations between students and teachers; community youth-police meetings; teen gatherings that weigh the consequences of territoriality vs. the benefits of unity and community investment; and cultural understanding initiatives to reduce racial and ethnic divisions in the schools and community.

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[1] For a detailed description of the Teen Empowerment Model please see Appendix 2 this document.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
The Police/Youth Reconciliation Project is a joint effort by Teen Empowerment and the Boston Police Department to build on the relationship that they have built in the past and attempt to institutionalize processes for supporting changes in attitudes that can improve relations between youth and police in one Boston neighborhood. The proposal includes a letter of commitment from the District Commander of the South End precinct. The expectation is that lessons learned and documented from this project could be replicated not only in other areas of Boston, but also in communities across the country.

The basic structure of the project includes selecting a group of youth organizers and a group of police officers that undergo parallel processes for group building, identifying priorities/issues related to improving police/youth relations, setting goals, and brainstorming components of a strategy to improve relations. The youth are selected through Teen Empowerment's traditional hiring process (please see Appendix 1), which attempts to select youth that represent the community in terms of race/culture/ethnicity, gender, neighborhood, and social/emotional development. Teen Empowerment's Program Coordinators work with the Command Staff for the police district involved in the project to select the officers. Officers are selected to represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the district's staff and are also drawn from a range of police work units (i.e. neighborhood beat cops, drug unit, gang unit, etc.) to ensure a spectrum of perspectives from within the police department.

After spending several weeks working as independent groups, the two groups of organizers come together to build relationships with one another, share their ideas, and formulate a shared strategy. The will then work together to implement their plans. Towards the end of the project, the Police and Youth Organizers will meet with youth from Teen Empowerment's other four sites and with police throughout the city to plan and implement cross-site meetings.

EVALUATION
The following include some of the benchmarks that are used to measure the effectiveness of the project:

Quantitative Benchmarks:
Number of training sessions and attendance by youth and police
Number of meetings and initiatives implemented involving youth and police
Number of participants in meetings and initiatives
Number and nature of follow-up projects that emerge

Qualitative Benchmarks:
Change in attitudes of youth and police toward one another
Degree to which police/youth organizers understand and accept responsibility for their behavior
Organizers' openness to Teen Empowerment's group work and facilitation methods
Degree to which youth, police, and community-at-large report improved relationships
Youth and Police interest in participation in future reconciliation efforts

This data is collected through the use of project-specific training evaluations, interviews with youth and police in the community, year-end interviews with project members, and year-end impact surveys from all organizers.

APPLICATION OF TRANSITIONS
Teen Empowerment has given much thought to the framework of transitions and its application to this particular type of project.[2] The staff believes that the process Teen Empowerment has used over the past eight years to address deteriorating police/youth relations has begun the "ending" stage by gradually replacing polarized relationships with

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[2] For an in depth analysis of Transitions including evidence of stakeholders participating in Teen Empowerment's Police-Youth Reconciliation Project (2001- 2002) moving through Endings, the Neutral Zone and New Beginnings please see Appendix 4.

relationships grounded in humanizing experiences. However, without a consistent structure that supports these changes in attitude within institutions, police and youth have been left in the neutral zone. The process outlined by Teen Empowerment and the Boston Police may illuminate the necessary supports for enabling youth and police to come through the neutral zone and move on to their new beginning. At the heart of this project that attempts to guide the police and youth communities through a collective transition, is a process for prompting and managing individual transitions within each youth and officer for changing attitudes about themselves and their relationship to each other.

For practitioners who are interested in learning more about the Teen Empowerment methodology, Teen Empowerment has begun producing a series of print and video publications for use in classrooms and other group settings. In addition the following book length publication is currently in production and will be available for purchase:

Moving Beyond Icebreakers: An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action
This comprehensive, practical guide to using interactive methods includes detailed instructions for designing effective agendas and for facilitating more than 300 exercises. *Moving Beyond Icebreakers* is written for anyone seeking to improve and expand their group work skills, including teachers, community organizers, youth workers, social service providers, camp counselors, religious leaders, and group facilitators of all kinds (please see Appendix 5 for additional information about this forthcoming book).

For more information on this and other Teen Empowerment training publications please access:
http://www.teenempowerment.org/publications/publications.html

TEEN EMPOWERMENT STAFF INTERVIEWS

The following Teen Empowerment staff were interviewed on site in Boston in January of 2004:

1. **Stanley Pollack**
2. **Jennifer Banister**
3. **Tia King**
4. **Banjineh Brown**

1. **Is there anything that you think it would be helpful for me to know about you, or your relationship to your project before we begin?**

Banjineh: I am involved in the Police Youth Project and I'm Program Coordinator of the South End / Roxbury site. I have worked on the Budget Cuts Project with police as well. I have been here for a year and a half.

Tia: I've been with Teen Empowerment (TE) for 8 years - since I was 14. I was a Youth Organizer for the project, then I went on to do some administrative work and some traveling, and some trainings at other schools including West Virginia, I did some office work while in college, and then upon graduating from college I became a full time Program Coordinator, I worked at the South End site for a year and when I finished up college I began work at the Madison Park High School site where I work now.

Jennifer: I have been here for three years. I actually moved from out of state and started here right away. I guess I began here the year after they did a conference between police and youth and a survey around racial profiling. And then that is where the larger vision of the police project started. So I have been the administrator on the project since the beginning of the Andrus funding.

Stanley: I was born here. I am the founder of TE so I've been working on this model for about 25 years. I founded this organization in 1992 and have been here ever since. My job is a little unusual in that I am the Executive Director but I tend to take on direct program roles as well as administrative roles. At the beginning of the project I wasn't actually directly involved in the day to day activities. And the year prior I was actually on the site and working as a staff person. In the year 2000 I ran this site and that is the year we did the police conference and the profiling work. The next year I was on the site and we continued to work and that year I met Masiel from AFF at a conference at the Harvard Law School, our youth were participating on a panel and I was supposed to facilitate the panel. She told me about this initiative and that is where we found out about Andrus which is funny because we already knew Surdna

2. **How long have you been involved with this project? Have you been involved in other similar conflicts/projects?**

Tia: Not me I came on at 14!

Banjineh: I worked at another organization called Teens against Gang Violence around similar issues out of Dorchester.

Jennifer: I guess I would say that I've worked with youth and in social activism and I had come into contact with police officers but never was I working directly with them.

Stanley: I worked as a street worker in program development for the city of Somerville from 1974 - 1982, I was a consultant doing work this work all over the state between 1982 -1992. And then I began the Center for Teen

Empowerment around that time so I've been working on teen empowerment in one way or another for a very long time!

3. **What is the change being sought in the community?**

Banjineh: With the relationships between police officers and youth I think one aspect to build those relationships is to build familiarity to actually bring them in and have real conversations with police and youth.

Jennifer: I would say I think it originally came out of youth's sense of their rights being abused and respect issues, and being treated fairly. And then the other aspects of community safety and the fact that there has been a lot of gang violence, or just violence, that has victimized young people. There has been a lot of evolution of the project since, especially in seeing the whole context – understanding where the youth are coming from, but then also understanding where the police are coming from, and that creates a stronger foundation on which to make changes.

Stanley: We made a major shift from the traditional organizing model, well it was never totally traditional, but one that sought to confront the problems. The change was to try to create a consensus for change between police and youth together rather than having them against each other and vice versa. Police were doing this in a disorganized manner institutionally. We had it as our strategy for a long time – what are we going to do about the police? So when this Transitions model came along we started to think about bringing the police in from the beginning of the process so they weren't the target of our work but they were involved as a stakeholder. That was a pretty significant shift and one that allowed the police to interact on an equal basis with the youth involved with the project.

4. **What was already going on in the community before the change effort began, and how did these activities set the stage, positively or negatively, for what evolved?**

Stanley: There were a couple of officers who were really bad and they were creating problems in the community. In general there is a problem between the culture of the police department and youth culture which clash. But there were a couple of guys in this area who were just running roughshod. That was really what we targeted and we actually did in that work get the guys who were involved in that transferred into other kinds of jobs off the street – we didn't ask for that and we didn't monitor exactly what happened to them but we know they aren't here anymore and I don't think they are on the street anymore. It wasn't like we went after them but when we went through this process the department actually got to see how bad they were and they were somewhat embarrassed by the level of unprofessionalism that these particular officers were perpetrating. And I'm sure that happens in lots of places in the city. The police have always been an issue with the young people but originally there was so much violence on the street that the main issue that youth were talking about was the gangs and territorialism and the police were in the mix but they didn't have time to think about that. And then the gang violence subsided and they started talking more about the police and particularly this one situation. We worked on that, as Jennifer said, through a survey and through the police conference which got a lot of attention and which did result in some changes in the department. We then began the transition process so that was sort of the background for the Transition process.

5. **What issue or event brought about the need for change/intervention?**

Stanley: Such high percentages of youth, especially young men of color from the neighborhood had reported on a survey that they had been stopped by the police without justification and in a very disrespectful and intimidating fashion.

6. **How did your project identify the change sought and how did you apply the Transition framework to that change? And can you talk a little bit about how your project deals with change on the individual level versus change on a system level (policy, legislation, community structures) and the interplay between these?**

Jennifer: We started inviting police officers in from the beginning. The way we do our hiring process here is we have young people in the interview process brainstorm in groups the issues that young people face. So we brought that to the police context and had police officers on their own, before the youth came into the process with them, identify the issues that police face. We brought them together and they got to share their issues. They looked for common ground, they looked for what set them up against each other, they developed a strategy together which Sabena was a part of – she sat in on a session with 14 police officers and 25 youth. There was a deep connection and discussion about the issues. We had a core group of youth and police and then there are some others. But in any event the core group took on a very productive role. The folks who go through a Transition become a base for reaching out to others because instead of us coming to try to influence people's ideas and experiences, people of like mind and identity can be more effective at sending out that ripple. For example, Frank is a gang unit officer and he was brought in at that dialogue session as his first interaction with the group of young people, and he stayed in over a period of time. When we first started talking about doing this training he said, and this was his idea, "let me go in to the police recruits first and talk to them before you go in there" – he said "I can pave the way for you in a way that will work a lot better. When you are done I'll go in and let you know what they really thought, not by violating their confidence, but to have a more frank conversation with them so you can learn and in fact that is what he did." So the Transition that he went through was a transition from, you know a very nice guy and an impressive police officer, but a gang unit guy which is a tough position. We use that insider connection and knowledge as a foundation to broaden out and get more people going through Transitional processes or initiate Transitional processes. That is the approach we are taking. Each step we take paves the way. We implement a widening spiral of change – now with the whole training process of the police department which is a huge institutional change.

This is an example of both change on the individual level and on the institutional level. The police department is a paramilitary agency – the cadets in training are in boot camp mode. They will do anything you tell them to do. Meanwhile, what is not stressed is the human services part of it. They talk a lot about community policing and that is the mantra. But our sense, at least from the outside and also from what Frank talks about, is that it's more training around the technical, legal, and safety issues. But not so much training on the human interactions or even understanding how to deal with stress. Police officers have the highest rates of suicide, alcoholism and divorce – off the charts for most professions. So a lot of the work we are working on the individual level is systemic to some degree because we are bringing into the institution the humanizing element.

7. **Have you signed any kind of MOU with the police department for training the cadets or is this a pilot project?**

Stanley: This is a pilot. We are actually doing the cadet training with the Boston Police Department and with the MBTA Police Department and they are two separate and independent units of police that we are working with. We did a pilot training consisting of three sessions with the MBTA this summer. We are re-piloting it now with the Boston police department. And actually we have a meeting next week to talk to MBTA about how to continue. The key challenge with doing individual transition work between police and youth or police and community is how do you take that leap from the individual – you know 'Frank is a nice guy who is open to working with youth and he likes us and we like him' – how do you make that leap from that experience to an institutional effect? That is a challenge to the Transitional model across the board – we have been probing to find that answer and the place that we have looked is through the training. The training of new officers is where you start and working into eventually look and see how police are trained and supported and supervised in an ongoing way. One of the things that is very apparent from the intense conversations we have had with police is that the police department is not organized very well for the jobs that they have to do, so the officers are subjected to huge amounts of stress and they get almost no support. So they make mistakes and they go through horrible experiences and unless you shoot somebody or somebody tries to shoot you then you get stress management training but they are really viewed culturally as a weakness. There is no cultural support within the department. What really needs to be done is it needs to be integrated and woven into the fabric of the department that you are going to need a place to talk about your experiences as a police officer. It doesn't even have to be enforcement—it could be a car accident – you see horrible things and you are supposed to just get back in your car and go on your way and nobody ever talks about it. There is

no recognition within police culture that they are under stress. As Jennifer said there is a huge suicide, alcohol and divorce rate. And when they look at how long police stay on the force it is a really short term job in relation to other jobs – on the average 7 or 8 years. Which complicates everyone's jobs – they have to keep training new people and the longer they are on the force the worse they get including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

8. **What methodologies, processes or tools is your project / intervention utilizing, and why and how are they expected to be effective with the issues at hand?**

Tia: As Banjineh was saying earlier about bringing both sides together, and realizing that there are similarities there but before we can get to what the real issues are and how people feel there has to be trust built and relationship building and one of the ways we do this is through our interactive methods to get that across and make that happen. So we do an introduction, let them know the purpose and why we are here; do a warm up question to get everyone's voice in the room and ground everybody in what we are going to do; and then we'll do an interactive exercise to get some energy flowing in the room to have some fun but also have a purpose behind it and tie it into the work we are going to do. Then we will get into the discussion. Why we expect it to work is that you can't really expect people who don't know each other, who have tension and 'issues' with each other to just come in the room and get effective honest information if they don't feel like they have an environment where they can do that so the first thing we do is set up that environment. They won't just be left there either - we won't just have it out there and not address it. We try to bring a sense of closure to our work at the end of the day and to talk about what we hope to accomplish the next day. We may even have goal groups. And we will say as a group what are our goals as a group together – what do we want to accomplish? We'll ask this at the beginning and then at the end we make adjustments when we see how far along we have come and what we still need to work on.

Stanley: The Teen Empowerment model (please see Appendix 2 for a detailed program description) is the primary tool that we use. The way we hire and select the youth is with an interview process which involves up to one hundred people. So when we do meet with the officers they are meeting with a representative group of youth because we have gone out and hired very specifically to find a representative group of youth. We also have a way of holding the young people to standards of their behavior through our contract and feedback process which is another tool that we use. The contract is about behavior management and feedback is really about communication skills and it complements the contract and we use these together to complement and support each other. But that skill of learning how to give and receive criticism and praise is a very important part of the young people's ability to then take on the roles that they are going to take on in the context of this project. There is a planning process that we have so there are tools that we have around planning so that when the group comes together and they come to consensus through the interactive methods which Tia was describing there is a series of steps we go through to make something happen such as setting goals, assigning tasks and responsibilities and so forth. And that is also true when we get into implementing speech training and core facilitation – some of the officers receive training in facilitation. Our model is that they go out together and do co-facilitated meetings. They did a Unity Day barbecue together. So there is quite an extensive set of tools that we use not only in this project but in our school based programs. The model is an active way of moving people through a process of Transition – it is a step by step approach. We didn't have that understanding or that context to do it in prior to learning about Transitions but we found it just fit. It did have an impact on what we were doing - instead of going *at* people we now *bring them in* which was a very important piece – but we were in a process of how do we change people and their relationships – this was a really big question and then how do we change society's institutions for the better was the other question that we have always been struggling with. So we developed a fairly extensive set of tools over the years to support this process

Jennifer: As well, the "Social Change Wheel" that we use gives us another framework for looking at the different layers of transitions necessary in change that includes the whole cycle of societal values and structure (i.e., the – ism's, democracy, capitalism, materialism, etc.), institutional (i.e., schools, police, media, social services, family, etc.), policies and the distribution of resources, and individual/community behaviors—and how each feeds off and informs/pushes the rest (please see Appendix 3 for a diagram of Teen Empowerments' Social Change Wheel)**.**

9. **What 'driving forces' [those pushing towards a change] and 'restraining forces' [those forces tending to resist a change] may be at play?**

Jennifer: When Stanley was talking about Frank coming in and saying 'I'll go in ahead of time and talk with the police recruits and do the debrief session with them' – it was actually a bigger issue than that which has to do with resistance. The culture of the police department does not typically value community service officers or youth service officers. Those officers are not really seen amongst many of their colleagues as 'real' police officers. They are considered 'Officer Friendly' if they do community work because they are not out on the so-called "beat" – many of them used to be out on the beat, but now this is their task and so there is this separation between community vs. patrol policing. So Frank's actual concern was when we told him we wanted to go into the Police Academy and do what we've been doing in the community – have police officers and youth facilitate together the training with police cadets, he said, "you know I almost think that isn't the greatest idea because they will look at me and see me coming in with you guys and they will immediately disengage from me and think I am just a another one of those cops that has an office job and does these little community meetings." His feeling was that there would be more legitimacy if he separated himself a little bit to reinforce what we were talking about. So we went in alone the first time. He and Tito had already had that talk with the recruits which probably really did pave the way to have a good first session. So that is an illustration of that resistance culturally in the organization to seeing community connection as necessary to 'real' policing.

Driving forces are that they have been trying to push community policing in the department. When they are not able to support that with the budget there is also the complexity of the Police Union vs. senior officers who are management. There is resentment sometimes between the Union and management because the Union's job is to keep their people safe and they might see some of these policies as wishy-washy and not helping them.

Stanley: But the driving force to have it happen from the inside of the Commissioner's office had a desire to implement closer contact with the community. He had a strong desire to do that and this is a major shift from the 80's which was more of a bust'em up approach. So that was a driving force that we have used on many occasions – we know if there is a problem we talk to the people upstairs and up to this point anyways they have been supportive of us. When we started this process we needed to get letters of support. We needed to get an agreement from the local district to do it and get the time freed up and the top officers we met with over there – the first meeting wasn't that great but the police superintendent Paul Joyce, he is a tough guy but a really nice guy, and he opened up a bunch of doors so that has been a driving force. Another driving force is the need that young people have to be able to function within the community without feeling like it's a police state. We get that all the time – the kid in Dorchester – Will is a really nice young African American kid who is 16, he is about 6'1" and he is walking down he street and is not involved in this project and he gets stopped by a police officer, roughed up, sworn at and searched and told to go on his way. He didn't even know why this happened and he is the nicest kid in the world. He is depressed from this. He was told he could go and place a complaint but he didn't want to go place a complaint. It is devastating. So one of the driving forces to do this is the absolute need and the other is that crime happens and so you also want the police to be effective at stopping crime – so it's not just a simple matter of getting the police to back off. The communication is critical both in terms of making sure that young people have their rights respected and young people and others in the community have a safe environment where crime doesn't rule. That is a driving force – to make this a more functional relationship. Poverty is a key thing that is hurting this process. Budget cuts on the police side, we were supposed to do this recruit training last year and they cut the budget and the class was canceled. So instead of doing this training last year we are doing it now. You can't train new recruits that aren't here. In police culture, as Jennifer said, there are elements that are resistant to change which is not a surprise. There are definitely elements in youth culture as well that are resistant to change. You take two steps forward and three steps back.

10. **What has working on this project taught you about the kinds of processes, events or people which facilitate change?**

Stanley: The biggest learning piece is that you need to bring in everyone at the beginning not after decisions have been made about what needs to be done and that is really fundamental and is probably the biggest piece of learning

and the most powerful. You also need to take a look at who else needs to be at the table? So when they did the work with the police it was also important to go to the community because these things are connected. Because you had the youth on the one hand saying the police were hassling them and the police said well the community is hassling us to crack down on youth. Then the understanding of how the institutions around it are affecting it – the budget cuts are hurting both police and youth so they started work on lobbying with state house. There were some community dialogue sessions around gentrification. Gentrification has a lot of different elements – people have no where to live but on top of it and people say 'we live here now so you guys can't and we are scared to look at you so we call the police'. They feel threatened because there are people on the corner and they might hurt their car so they call the police. So the importance of connecting the youth and the community so that when they look out there they can say 'Oh that's Jose out there and I know he's not going to hurt my car' and understanding them as human beings and vice versa like 'Oh they called the cops on us lets go mess up their car'. You get this vicious cycle and you need to intervene in this vicious cycle.

11. **What has working on this project taught you about the kinds of processes, events or people which seem to encourage maintaining the status quo?**

Stanley: That if you don't change the way that you do the work and combine that with an understanding of the process of change that efforts to sustain change over time will be much more difficult.

12. **How does the Bridges Transition model relate to and facilitate the change being sought?**

Stanley: By defining the different stages of the change process which provides a context to understand where you are in the process and develop strategies within that context.

13. **Was it explicitly communicated to those involved that the project is being 'tracked' through the lens of Transitions?**

Jennifer: It was eventually, but not at first because we were seeing it more as something that we were watching and monitoring. Then we spoke with Kelly and Sabena and they suggested that it had been helpful in the past to give people a sense that "it is OK that you are going through this experience because it is part of the Neutral Zone." So we did orient people both the youth and the police officers at the beginning of last year which was the second year of the project.

14. **Was this helpful?**

Jennifer: I think our process is pretty organic so I don't think it would have been obvious unless we were bringing it throughout the process. I think the model that Tia described (in Question #8) helps us a lot. We are constantly reflecting and saying 'how are things going' and designing agendas around tensions that we see coming up for people and checking in so it would be hard to say whether explicit knowledge of Transitions was the factor for the participants in the project.

Stanley: I think it has had a bigger impact on staff's perspective – the people who were designing and understanding where you are in this process. For me understanding that Frank has been through the Transitions process and he is actually in the stage of New Beginnings is helpful as we go into the next phase of this process in understanding that the officers that we are working with are at an Ending – all of those things are helpful for our perspective. And just seeing it as a cyclical piece and understanding what is important about each part of that cycle is very powerful and helpful. But we have so much to attend to. In the Police Academy training, for example, we have three two-hour sessions and we can barely get through what we have to do with the police. They are just tripped out that they are sitting in a circle. They are used to sitting in rows and marching in and so a couple of minutes later they end up giggling and laughing and having a good time so they are in another world just from that experience. They go through that and it's pretty intense. For us to stop and say you are in New Beginnings – it is so far away from their reality that I don't think it would be terribly helpful for them to understand it. I think it is helpful for Frank and others

who have been through the process to get it and understand that that is what we are doing. It's just down the list of things that you would attend to.

Jennifer: It's too theoretical to just bring it in – people need to experience things and then it would make sense if you brought it up and said, "hey, here's what we've been experiencing and there is this model that we are also paying attention to that is helpful for making sense of the transitions we are going through as we do this social change work."

Stanley: It just wouldn't mean anything to them. They didn't really know they were going through a process of change. Last time we dealt with 'authority' - what is productive and unproductive authority and how does that fit into the role of a police officer especially with as it relates to youth and what skills do you need in order to do that effectively? We did this through an interactive process and we had to build trust with the group. That was very relevant to their experience and that was very hard work to get them to a point to where they are awake to it and looking at it. Now this time we will talk about the issues that police face and how those issues overlap and how they conflict with youth issues. This would be the Ending of the Old Ways if you put it into the Transition framework. That is what we are doing we are bringing them into Endings, but we can't both do it and tell them about it at the same time – they won't understand it. But once they are through it they will understand it. When you go to roll it out planning it from a program design standpoint then makes sense and it's very powerful. For instance when Frank went in there, that was the way we didn't come at them with something. *We came to them to connect with them rather than have them be the object of our strategy*. And we do verbal and written evaluations at the end of each session so we have a lot of ways to tell whether they are getting what we are putting out there. So during the process itself, that seems the wrong use of time at that stage of the process.

> 15. **Who is ultimately responsible for monitoring how and when these transitions occur - the facilitator/consultant or the participants themselves?**

Stanley: The facilitators and as the process has developed, the core group—especially the youth organizers with whom we work everyday.

> 16. **Does the Transitions framework provide a basis for the design of your process?**

Jennifer: Yes, absolutely—it informs the content/substance of our design—we have a model (See question #8) that acts as a perfect method through which to implement Transitions, which we find, helps us conceptualize more deeply as we move through each next step of the process (See #14).

> 17. **Does it serve as a tool for reflection on progress or set-backs?**

Stanley: Yes definitely – this is probably the strongest piece. You can tell where you are. When people don't show up, like the police officers come or they don't come, someone doesn't want to participate—you have a context to view that behavior that's not just your own emotional state. It allows you to take a step back and keep your emotional balance and to take design steps based on that understanding rather than just on your gut. You do it based more in a rational context.

> 18. **Does it provide 'clues' about when/how to take advantage of ripe moments/ripe phases in the process?**

Jennifer: Yes, because it provides a context of understanding that allows you to view the change process from a more balanced position and perceive resistance and opportunity for change within this context.

> 19. **How might we relate the Transitions model and reconciliation work?**

Stanley: Reconciliation is supposed to be the movement between groups or people who are having difficulty with one another to a place of reconciliation and the resolution of their problems—so it is a context to view that process.

What we did is a good case study of that – we are trying to resolve this problem and the way we were doing it wasn't taking into account the fact that people have to go through this process that has these defined and recognizable stage. So, without this awareness, we just kept going at it and saying lets try to get them to come to this conference and they have to recognize that what they are doing is wrong and wondering why they weren't recognizing what seemed so obvious. Seeing change as a process that the police needed to be involved having an awareness of the dynamics that are recognizable to design around. Reconciliation is a goal and the Transition process is a context for viewing that and Teen Empowerment is a set of methods to make it happen.

20. Have you used or combined the Transitions model with other theories or models of change or conflict?

Stanley: Yes to me it seemed like the perfect combination. The Transition model sounds like a context for Teen Empowerment. What I thought was missing from the Transition model is the "okay, so what do you *do*?" You understand it now, but what is the method you use to approach it? Teen Empowerment tells you what to do. We had the 'what do you do,' but we didn't understand it. So Transitions gave us the understanding – we already had the 'what do you do,' weren't using it properly. So we reoriented our approach. Our methods didn't really change, they were just applied in a different way based on the understanding that we gained from the Transition model.

21. If so, how has it complemented or detracted from these other theories/models?

Stanley: It complemented - a pretty seamless fit.

22. Does the model teach us anything useful about 'reconciliation?'

Stanley: Yes, Transitions provides understanding of the context that change takes place within.

23. Did your project have a transition plan as well as a change plan in place?

Stanley: It's funny because if you look at teachers and administrators and community members there was a part of us that already understood that you need to build relationships and that was a way to create change, to change people's attitudes and understandings of each other and develop a consensus towards change rather than creating pressure towards change. Pressure towards change only works as long as you keep pressure on and that is a very fragile way to create change. So the idea that you are going to do this very intentionally through relationships that have been through a Transitional process as a foundation for further change in individuals but also for institutional change has become pretty central to what we do. It wasn't a real long walk to it either but it was a significant step because we didn't have that understanding clearly enough. So you end up being confrontational when it was really antithetical to what we need to get done for real sustainable change to happen. If you looked at this with teachers and administrators in schools we are in partnership. We don't organize against teachers and administrators. We build relationships with them and we do create change based on those relationships and it is systemic change. It is a pathway. The Transition model actually looks like a pathway – they illustrate it as a path – and it gives us that pathway. We know we are going down that pathway and it's an intentional thing. It's not something we have to find each time or reinvent. It is defined and you can understand it.

24. How can Transitions best be applied proactively in the design phase?

Stanley: The idea here is to create partnerships with the constituencies that are going through the change process and you do it from the beginning. That is really the fundamental understanding. If you are going to do something new everyone has to be there from the beginning. You don't start down that pathway and say well here we are, we want to

change and you need to come over here with us now because we tell you you have to. That has to be your beginning point. You can't begin before you have brought everyone together around that change that is going to happen. Everyone needs to be a stakeholder at the beginning whether they are committed or not.

25. Do you have specific examples of participants' experiences with Endings? How did project participants' successfully navigate through their Endings? What were some expected and unexpected outcomes dealing with Endings?

Stanley: I think the use of the interactive methods was very effective in getting people to let go of being the authority figures and for the youth to let go of the stereotypes that they had about people and what they expected their relationships to be with them. I think the young people and Teen Empowerment understood the life of a young person pretty well in the community – what are the pressures and stresses of drugs and gangs and all those kinds of things – of course they are living it directly. I think one of the biggest unexpected outcomes was the amount of learning about what it was to be a police officer. That was just huge. As youth ended that relationship of 'they are this uniform' stereotype you would start to hear like Eric when he acted out the confrontation he had with a kid with a machine gun where he had a choice of either being killed himself or killing this kid. Neither thing happened so that was good. When we got to have that conversation with him – I will never forget it - it was an amazing piece of learning as well. I think it was an amazing piece of learning for the police officers as well. There were a lot of situations where we would hear more about what was driving the police officers and what looked like irrational behavior on the part of the police officers made a lot more sense when we got that context from them and the communication began to flow and once the stereotypes and the ending of the old relationship took place. And again it was not smooth and that stage is not and there were flashes of anger and chaos and all the rest of it but it came across. I think that was really huge because it allowed us to create training programs based on what we learned and to have an institutional pathway. So what is the Transition for the institution? What does that look like? I think we were trying to get at this before - you can talk about the Transitional process pretty easily between people – but what is the pathway for institutional or systematic change? If you are going to do this on a person by person basis it will be effective but limited. If you can change an institution you can have a much broader impact on society and many more people obviously on both sides of the equation police and youth and the community for that matter. The communication that came out from the police allowed us to understand what is the institutional pathway for Transition and how do we get to the point of Endings and New Beginnings for institutions? It can't be done in the same kind of clear cut way that it can for individuals where you can say 'oh on that day they entered a new stage.' You can almost do that although it's not quite that clear cut. With Frank we are now colleagues – it is a totally new relationship – we are partners. You can see it clearly. But when you talk about institutional change and systemic change it's harder to nail it down like at what point you are in what phase? But it's still very important to look at it in that context. You need a lot of windows into it and there are so many variables involved. If you look at the evaluations we did with the police from last time they are pretty amazing.

What we are doing here is working with individual officers but now we are really looking at systemic change. How do we bring what we have learned through the process to the systemic level? One of those windows is through training the new recruits. So what comes out of this now? Do we continue to do more training? Hopefully. If we go through all three of these sessions and they receive the same kind of evaluations that we received the first time then I think the department will take a pretty hard look at it. Most of their training is very dull and there is a very low level of engagement on the part of the officers and I think that they don't see it as a very valuable tool – there are certain things they have to cover and they cover them but it's not a richly rewarding experience. If you could have a two hour session where everyone was like 'wow that was great!' We had 55 police officers and there were probably 35 '10's' on a scale of 1-10. I personally had never seen such positive evaluations. But now how do we connect with these officers once they are on the force? Do we bring them together in some sort of way? And how does the department start to look at institutionalizing real training in human relations skills and stress management to address some of the things that we learned from the Transitional process and from the individuals we have been through it with that we can see very clearly? I talked to the officers in one of my groups – and we did a 'wordstorm' [one of the techniques that we use] on authority. He picked leadership as the most important part of authority. I asked him to

comment on why he picked leadership. He said because 'you gotta know what's right and you gotta know what's wrong and you have to do what's right!' I asked is it that clear cut in all situations? And then we had an intense conversation about that and the ending of it was that you are going to make mistakes – this was a huge thing. It hadn't been said in training before. You are a human being and this is such a complex job and you won't get through

it without making some mistakes and some of them will be fairly serious mistakes and there is no place to talk about it. An institution should have the knowledge that these people are in really complex positions where mistakes are unavoidable and there is no place where it is built in and no culture of acknowledgement of mistakes. In fact it is exactly the opposite. There is no place to talk about it and if you make a mistake hide it. How do you end that way of being? That is a *big* transition. There are all kinds of institutional blocks to this: unions, public service rules, civil servant stuff so there is a lot to go through but that is a clear pathway to understand what has to be done. Getting there is going to be a long process. But really every step of the way we are making progress - just for us to be in this training is huge – we would be able to find out more by following it up in six months. If they remember anything that we did that would tell you a lot.

26. Do you have specific examples of participants' experiences in the Neutral zone?

Stanley: I think some people in the process are still there. One example would be a kid who connected with police officers in the context of the program and had a really good relationship but when he saw them on the street he ran away. He said I can't figure out what I am supposed to do? I went through this process in the context of the program but now out on the street I am in a different place and I don't know what to do. There was total chaos. He was friendly and angry at the same time. He really did not know what to do. The police were better able to handle this but then their feelings were hurt and then they reverted back to their old behavior. These officers in the old days would get angry at us and say 'so and so behaved this way and what is wrong with your program'? But now that the relationships have transitioned for us we talk about it together and can say 'yes this behavior was inappropriate – we know that and you know that but we are still partners' and we can discuss it and we don't throw the whole process out. But in the beginning of the process the youth were unhappy, the police talked too much and thought they were there to instruct the youth and that's the way they always came into these kinds of things. The police were really thrown off by the fact that they were not supposed to talk all the time but actually have to listen as well, they are really here as equals and in the context of this conversation you are really not in charge you are a participant as well as the youth and you have to listen to one another. The police had a real hard time with that and it was a struggle. Letting go of the old way was for them to come into youth groups and do lectures but they came in here and that wasn't the way it was set up. They were doing interactive stuff and brainstorming together and they had to learn and struggle with decision making in a way that they weren't used to doing. Some officers were less supportive than others. In the beginning they would come late. Some would grouse about the interactive exercises, and some of the youth were angry so people had a lot of time in the Neutral Zone. There was a feeling about police entering the space - it was tense. The New Beginning now is when the officers come in and it is relaxed even when you are disagreeing. But that took a long time working on that with the core group.

27. Who determines which officers would be involved moving forward? Is it voluntary?

Stanley: That is an open question- Teen Empowerment doesn't have the capacity to do much more than what they are doing now. If the department starts to support it – we would like to follow up with the officers now that they are in the field working. What I think will happen is that they will go through some individual transitions with officers and create some bonds with them then we can roll that into institutional transition in the same way we've done with this program – we can continue that process. But I think its very unrealistic to think that we will do this or that and then we'll have institutional change – it's too big, there are too many variables involved – what you need to be able to do is stay alive to the possibilities and stay focused and keep at it. Any incremental change that you make when you do it on an institutional level is very significant – little tiny changes in culture have huge ramifications in terms of individuals who are suffering and who are suffering a lot less and who are actually developing and growing as individuals.

28. Can you talk a bit about how participants are selected for the process and about why particular stakeholders drop out of the program and your thoughts on why this happens?

Jennifer: Youth organizers are hired and sometimes they leave. We've also this year had to make choices around choosing a separate core group from our South End group for the time being because the South End group didn't

specifically choose to work on police issues this year. We are integrating police into our gentrification dialogues because they are part of that picture mostly because the community as it has gotten more gentrified the more powerful rich contingent that has moved in uses the police a lot through their neighborhood watch program to impact young people. So anyway there have been some shifts that I can describe. We have lost police and youth organizers along the way.

On the youth end there are the regular aspects of people's lives can sometimes be really hectic, or they are having struggles in school and so feel like they can't do this job anymore. So it's job-related but not necessarily directly with the police/youth part of the project. In fact I'm not so sure that there has ever been youth that have specifically left as a result of something to do with the Police Youth Project – it has been other life stresses which can be real. And then also we have a Behavior Management process or contract that youth organizers sign when they come on board and so there are some folks who have gotten fired through a very transparent process where they in most cases they can apply though a group process to get their job back. It's based on a series of steps. They have, say, five absences without valid excuses for instance or behavioral stuff in the community, or if you are out there promoting negative or disruptive, violent or divisive kinds behaviors and that comes to our attention, there are five steps that they go through before they get fired – five occurrences. But if they go three weeks having not had that problem or having worked on it, they can earn that step back. So I'm sure we lost a few youth in the process but right now they are not coming to mind. The behavior management aspect of our program is also crucial in any of the partnerships, reconciliation, and social change work we do. Even though we specifically try to hire a wide range of youth in terms of the kinds of activities and personalities and social spheres, including people who have dropped out of school, to people who are really active in school and civic activities, we still have to maintain a sense of credibility and growth as well. So when folks come in and are committed to working on things—contradictory behavior can affect our partnerships and lower our credibility when, for example, we want to speak out around issues that have to do with police officers who are acting in negative ways. To the community or police, we can't do that very well if we are supporting and enabling destructive behavior in the community.

On the police end we did have some police officers who had to leave basically because the police department cutbacks on staffing and shifting people to different assignments or they have so few people that are doing so called community work. We lost Eric who stopped in yesterday. There is another officer who is a very complex character who just got tired of doing the work. He came into our office and there is a poster on the wall that has to do with police brutality—along with many other things—and he made a joke in a menacing tone to some of the youth he knows that "some of you know that's how we get down." He would threaten youth, but also has a good relationship with some youth. He is one of those folks that can play either side of the line and at some point he decided to drop out. He didn't really talk to us about it, but we will follow up on it. For instance Frank and Tito don't have as much time now. Last year they were there every time, this year has been harder for them. And John Ridge, he is on & off— for all community organizations that I know who work with him, that is their experience. But we have a very solid relationship with him. So, in many cases, it is neither healthy, nor unhealthy related directly to the transitions process. It is more structural and/or circumstantial and can have healthy or unhealthy impacts, but not directly because of the transitions work we are doing itself. In the cases that are more questionable, we need to do more follow-up.

29. **How did the facilitators' balance their own expectations in terms of substantive, practical end goals for the process and how against the need to remain flexible to allow stakeholders to come up with their own goals for the process? Put another way, how does one balance advocating for a certain 'new beginning' and serving as a simple facilitator of the transition process?**

Jennifer: Well I guess I would say that it is a really organic process, our ultimate new beginning is to see police and youth being able act in more functional ways in relation to each other and for the benefit of the community and to protect the rights of young people and to also understand the reality of officers as well. Those are pretty broad goals and so each initiative that we set out to do – we as a group set the goals together. The process that we use is about that very thing. It's about having a general sense of where we are going overall but at the same time having lots of room for voice - it comes out of the people in the room. But it is something that you need to always be giving

attention to. Any kind of facilitator needs to be giving attention to the degree to which we have a preconceived sense of what we are trying to achieve. That is a matter of reflective and conscious facilitation.

30. From your experience what is the extent to which the Transitions framework can foster social change?

Jennifer: Well I think it helps people be more empathetic to self and each other in the process of change and perhaps more patient with the fact that things don't change overnight. It is a cliché but I think oftentimes people expect…for example we have a feedback process here and we give people feedback and we want them to change that behavior as soon as they are aware of it but the reality is that we are dealing with deep issues – personality, institutional messages, and oppression and privilege, superiority, inferiority and all of those things that are deeply ingrained. Conceptualizing it can help you design your process so you can be more intentional around those processes.

31. How does one define or measure success in using the Transition Framework?

Jennifer: I would say that being aware of the fact that there are huge rifts between officers and youth – even just some people in the police recruit training yesterday were really quiet in my group I think because they were resentful. Officers think that youth make excuses and ask 'when does Teen Empowerment put responsibility on youth'? Which I think is a little bit of selective hearing because I think we did state a few different times in different ways and next time we go in we will talk more about how youth and police play it out on the street and analyzing those interactions. There is a real sense of blame on each side. I think for us success is really having Jeremy in this group – he just came in when we were doing the police academy work – because we have been through such a process he has been able to come in at a place where he could listen even though he has had really negative experiences with officers he has been able to be really interested in hearing their stories and feels like he has been heard as well. But I expect that that will switch up because that is what has happened in the past as we've gone through this process. It seems like people are really open but then they go through what is called the Neutral Zone in Transitions where things will start to get messed up in terms of schedules. The police schedules are hard to balance and police have been really resistant to our processes and come late to avoid the interactive work or at least that is how it is perceived sometimes by the youth. And then the youth will go through these dialogues with the police officers and police will expect that youth "get it now" and "if they would just get that we are just trying to do our job and be respectful then it will be OK." But meanwhile there are several youth that still have negative experiences with other officers on the street and still hold a lot of those feelings of ending those feelings like why should I have to deal with this stuff in the first place?

So there are these Neutral Zone areas that make us crazy I guess. But it feels like as long as we can keep people engaging with each other than I feel like that is a success. The New Beginnings piece is actually a place some people get to quicker than others and some people will never get there. For myself I think holding people in the Neutral Zone as long as they are willing to stay there and if they can then make a leap to truly embracing and committing to New Beginnings – because I think you can have glimpses of New Beginnings. The Neutral Zone and letting go of the old ways can kind of blend together for me because a lot of the tension that goes into the Neutral Zone has to do with having difficulty letting go of old ways.

32. How does one define or experience failure relative to Transitions?

Jennifer: If it doesn't keep moving forward – if it just got stuck with the core group – we work with a core group and then we try to branch out – so if it only gets stuck there then it feels like an interpersonal relations activity – where people get to meet each other but then they can't extrapolate that out.

33. Does this relate to making change on the individual level versus change on the institutional level?

Jennifer: Yes and not even just institutional but community level too. I would definitely say that everything about the work that we do here we are constantly struggling to make sure that - we do a lot of individual and interpersonal work – dialogue processes and reflective opportunities like the feedback we use with the youth and we also did that two times with the police and youth (although not many of the police officers showed up for one meeting that we

did). Since we do that work so in-depth and we consider that to be integral because I think there are some social change organizations that are working really intensely on institutional systemic change and not working enough on really looking inward at their own organizations and their own relationships and the relationships between themselves and their antagonists or their opponents and I think they are usually framed much more in that way and so I think that has its limitations as well. I think that is what Transitions is talking about – it's how to translate to each individual change – that is how I originally interpreted Transitions – that it was more talking about if you want a policy change how do you get investment from each individual in your organizations? That is how it works more neatly. The individual vs. the institutional - I think both levels need to be happening and there has to be an eye on both levels. And what is necessary at least in most of the work we do around race or class issues, and justice and inequity and resources - you need to be able to say difficult things that have to do with systemic issues that people take more personally and they put up resistance because they feel personally attacked. If while you are doing that work, if suddenly you aren't able to say the things you need to say on either side, then that is probably an aspect of failure as well. If it moves to a place where people feel like they have to be nice to each other because they have made a "New Beginning" - if people can't remain honest. I am happy with the process in terms of now being in the police academy. I think that is a place that we have needed to go and as well to have police allies who have been pretty moved by the process and feel like they want us to speak honestly about some of these issues as well.

34. Do you feel that working in the police academy is a New Beginning?

Jennifer: I think we will see. I think that because of the Community Policing model…one thing I was talking to Frank about last night is this is their period when they have lots of outside groups coming in like the Gay/Lesbian police officers come in to chat to the recruits. That has been a long time coming and that is something that has been going on in some police departments because of gay bashing and homophobia in the police department – so that is a change. The Boston police department is considered one of the more progressive police departments relatively speaking.

35. Do these outside groups actually affect police working on the ground?

Jennifer: I think it has become part of the institutional 'think' to bring these groups in but whether or not…because the culture of the actual training overall - there is no real connect – they have no context in which to put this. We did our first session the week before last and then we had a hiatus of ten days of other kinds of programming that they have been having so now they are burnt out so it will be interesting to see where it goes. What we'd like to do is follow up with officers. Tomorrow we want to really go in and connect with recruits who are interested and have connected to this work. We also have been trying to pay attention to how different officers react to this process. There may be an indication that there is a need for more kinds of experiences like this so they don't let loose on the streets. Andy said yesterday that there were people whose attitudes frightened him. It's true you can see that a lot of the interactive methods that we use in terms of how people react to them and how skilled they might be in being able to interact with people.

36. What sort of pre-determined benchmarks were used, if any, to gauge the success of the project, either along the way, during the 'new beginnings' phase of the process or once the project has been concluded?

Jennifer: I would say first of all is that my sense of Transitions - maybe its because we are dealing on so many different levels between a core group, and then reaching out to the community and then reaching out to the institution - but I do think that New Beginnings have been happening at different levels & probably more in the core group type space. I would say as Frank and Tito particularly filter to the top in terms of levels of commitment, John Ridge is fairly committed but he has a lot of life situations. A lot of times he says he really wants to be there and he and I have some really genuine interactions and he is engaged in terms of following up, but then he doesn't always show up and we need him. That is a benchmark in terms of just genuine interaction and when you can rely on people to show up are measures of success. In terms of youth – same thing - we have an opportunity as a group to work together more closely and we know to some degree where we are and make really intentional efforts to check in to see how people

are doing and what they are thinking so those are benchmarks as well. The youth organizers or adult staff are working through things. Like Andy and myself even have had a really huge resistance to police officers. And then somehow I ended up as the head of this project and I was very concerned about this project and I still remain attentive. My own reactions in terms of personal stuff have changed. That actually would be a New Beginning absolutely because I do have a lot of respect for the humanity of the work that police officers are doing. For a long time I have experienced what youth have been going through but the humanity of the officers was less apparent to me because they are behind this badge and shield. And I also watch how institutions like government institutions in particular, military institutions use of propaganda, use opportunities as PR, and so I think that since I have been able to see the genuineness of the work and that we really haven't been used so far in that way and even if we do get used in that way as long as its for a constructive purpose I think that is OK because I understand more about how officers feel about how the media portrays them. But I still remain attentive – and I think I have to – I don't go into warm fuzzy mode I guess, but I go into really human mode. And I really genuinely appreciate and like so much some of the individual officers that we work with and I'm more open to the recruits in the room. I feel really open even to the ones that are resistant because I understand them to be in that context of the institutional boot camp that they are in so that is a New Beginning for me. But I really think it is important within that New Beginning to – I think it would be a mistake to let down all guard or all awareness of real dynamics that are there and will remain there as long as our institutions operate the way they do.

37. What does successful reconciliation look like?

Jennifer: I think that is going to be a longer term thing because it does require both institutional commitment and funding so that there can really be community policing. Since we are not doing reconciliation between two distinct groups coming together - we have police and youth coming together but in terms of actually real reconciliation – there is no true peace without justice. My sense is that reconciliation is actually a road we are on and so true reconciliation won't be reached until all the institutions are more in tune with community needs and really challenging racism and classism and sexism and that they really can commit to that and that communities can really commit to supporting the institutions in achieving that. We do a lot of work around self-oppression so that is the work that communities are doing. The communities that are typically overwhelmed with police presence are communities that probably have a lot of crime issues and a lot of that is played out in self-oppression – that is the way we read it, which can be prevalent in systemically oppressive relations and environments. Here youth are all in a similar situation without resources, without jobs, school systems that are completely failing them and are imposing standardized tests, family problems, drug problems, all these things so they have a lot more in common than not, and their enemy is probably somewhere else, but they are killing each other and their own communities are the ones that are suffering from the cycles of oppression and self-oppression. Our social change wheel has a lot to do with that. The way that racism, sexism, classism, capitalism plays out in how institutions make policies and how they distribute resources and then those policies and resources influence the way people act out in their individual behavior. It's not the causal A+B=C, but it contributes to a lot more people acting out in ways that are dysfunctional or destructive. And if people could start to see those dynamics - this is sort of what we are doing with the police officers - if you can see those dynamics that are playing out you might not feel that rage towards the young person who has just given you a lot of attitude because you will understand a little bit more where they are coming from and you can depersonalize your reaction to their challenging your authority and figure out a way to diffuse the situation. And likewise in the community - if you understand the dynamics that you are feeding into and you really want to see change you might join with people like yourself who want to see that change and are suffering in the same way as opposed to hurting one another.

38. You mentioned that some of the police recruits mentioned in their evaluations that communities need to take some responsibility for their own actions – in a way this seems to address that critique doesn't it?

Jennifer: Yes – we do training with them around authority but what they don't see is the other work we do with self-oppression, which is going on all the time. That will be our responsibility to try to communicate some of that.

39. How, if at all, have you been affected, personally or professionally, by working on this issue/project?

Jennifer: I think I have been profoundly affected by it. It has given me a lot more ability - I have been working on my own empathy and humanizing people who work in institutions. I am a social change activist, a social justice activist who for a long time was standing outside the walls of institutions and feeling very alienated from them and feeling that the people inside them are like, what do you call them? Cyborgs that are just plugged into the institution and losing their face. I have stood on many protest demonstration lines facing off to people who you couldn't see dressed in Darth Vader outfits with shields and gas masks. That is very dehumanizing to the officers you are facing off with, its dehumanizing for them looking at you because suddenly they can't see each other and they can't express emotion to each other. If one of them is distressed or is trying to communicate I'm OK, the others can't see that. I feel like that is a good analogy for how I've experienced officers and institutions in the past. I feel like it's yet another step of understanding human dynamics within a socio-political context and not losing either one of them.

40. Would you say the personal face to face relationships you've developed with individual officers are the genesis of any changes in your understanding?

Jennifer: Yes - the police talking about racism within the department and feeling safe to do that on the side. They can't do it in the group or in front of the other white officers but their ability to talk really openly about the cronyism in the department, and the Union politics, and really understanding that dynamic. I never understood. I always saw the police department as this one model but now I understand because I am actually a labor activist as well and support Unions so I think there are some beneficial situations with Unions and meanwhile the Police Union is one of the most distorting dynamics. They should be doing their work around keeping officers safe and making sure they are getting fair pay because it's a very dangerous job but at the same time they fight the very thing we would be advocating for like more controls on police officers who abuse their power. Or the management that superior officers impose through Internal Affairs – so if the superior officers institute heavier internal affairs rules, then the union actually goes against that because to them they are protecting…so understanding those dynamics has been huge. I know that everything is complex and it just has given me an 'in' to understanding that more.

41. What have you learned over time about the issue, the process or about your self and others with relation to the project that you feel it would be important for me to know?

Jennifer: Yes more of the flexibility in finding another way to use the model in a really challenging situation between two really divergent cultures. What I mean by cultures again is the institutional police boot camp and paramilitary culture and our empowerment community based model. That is really interesting. Throughout this process…..you were here to see us go through trying to figure out how to do the police academy training. And that is the process we go through. When we sit down today we will think a lot about how are we going to address the feedback we got in the evaluations and really think about how to do that better. We almost never go in to a multi-stage process without really looking deeply at changing things. The model is very flexible.

42. Is there anything that you had hoped I would ask you that I have not asked?

Jennifer: I think the Transitions model is very useful as a reflective tool – but it's not a set of methods. I think for any Transition process to work there has to be a parallel process of figuring out what are the methods that fit best and help keep present the Transitions model and follow that process also that kind of mirrors it. Transitions doesn't tell you anything about how to do it – it just talks about what is happening along the process. I do think that it offers a certain flexibility so that people can be creative but it has to remain intentional throughout. Some of the questions you have asked like 'to what degree did you let go of your goals in order for the process to move forward?' – that kind of stuff is non-negotiable – the flexibility. Because really Transitions to me is a process of intentional evolution.

Appendix 1

Selecting a Leadership Group
for a Teen Empowerment Program[*]

Introduction

Youth leaders in a Teen Empowerment program are selected by means of a competitive hiring process designed to allow youth to exercise and display their leadership skills. All applicants participate in both a group interview and an individual interview. In this way, they have the opportunity to display both how they work in a group and how they articulate their thoughts on an individual basis.

About half of the initial applicants are selected for a second round of group and individual interviews. In both the first and second rounds, youth are asked to explore both their own values and the issues that are important to them in their community. They discuss the root causes of social problems, and are charged with developing ideas on how to address those problems.

Selecting the young people to be trained for leadership in a Teen Empowerment group is the critical first step in the success of the group. The Selection Process is not a prologue to the program; it is actually the first major piece of the program. It should be a broad-based effort that reaches throughout the community and that brings the program its first visibility in the community. When properly executed, the process brings the program's staff into contact with a large number of community youth, first while the staff does outreach prior to the interviews, and then during the actual interview process. It gives youth an opportunity to find their way to the program's physical location, to meet the staff, and to learn first-hand about the program.

Each aspect of the selection process is important — from publicizing the availability of positions, to setting up interview groups, to conducting interviews, to assessing and selecting the group to be hired, to contacting those not selected. Failure to do any part of the process well has an impact on the program's ability to meet its goals.

There are two major criteria for a successful leadership group:

- Each individual must be motivated to do the work. Motivation to work for broad-based, positive change in the community is the most important characteristic a person can bring to the job. Often the Teen Empowerment interview process can spark or uncover a high level of motivation for positive change among youth whose behavior on the streets is having a negative effect on the community.

- The group as a whole must reflect the community it is mandated to reach. When a community is in crisis, the Teen Empowerment group must work with high-risk youth and youth involved in street life in order to have an impact. Therefore, some members of the leadership group must themselves be high-risk youth who have connections on the streets.

The Teen Empowerment Selection Process is designed to help the program meet its goals by taking that essential first step: assembling a leadership group of young people who understand what the work is, who are motivated to do it, and who have the connections that will bring the program's work into the volatile heart of a community in crisis.

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The Teen Empowerment Model

A Program Description

Social Change
▲
Operational Structures
▲
Methods
▲
Beliefs
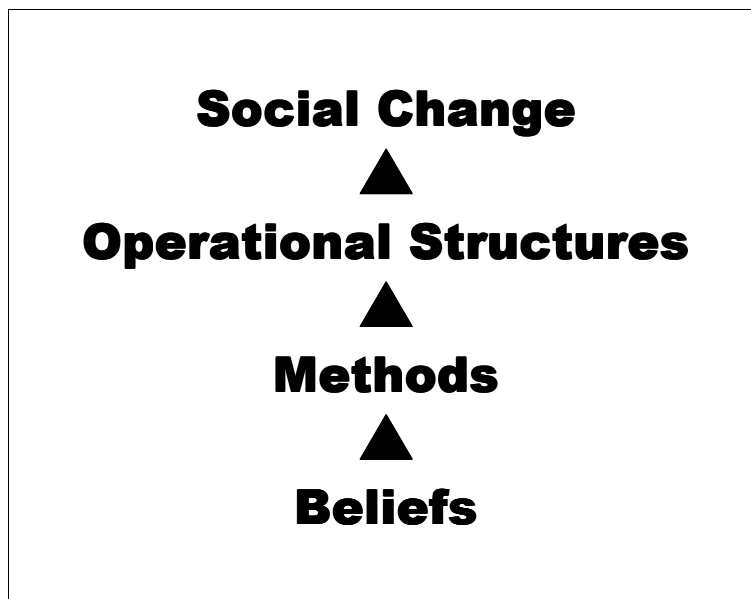
48 Rutland Street • Boston, MA 02118 • 617-536-4266
www.teenempowerment.org

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Mission
Teen Empowerment's mission is to empower youth and adults as agents of positive social and institutional change.

Project Summary
The Teen Empowerment Model, upon which the Center for Teen Empowerment's programming is based, is a comprehensive methodology for working with groups that has wide-ranging applications in both youth and adult settings. It is made up of a clearly articulated set of beliefs that are actualized through a system of group building, skill development, decision making, and behavior management methods. Teen Empowerment (TE) programming is implemented through a common-sense operational structure that consists of three components:

- *Youth organizing.* TE has a community-based site in Boston's South End/Lower Roxbury area and sites in three Boston public high schools. At each site, youth are hired and trained to identify critically important issues and to design and implement effective actions to address these issues.
- *Consulting and training.* TE trains teachers, school administrators, police officers and other adults working in human service organizations in the use of Teen Empowerment's unique and effective methodology.
- *Dissemination of instructional materials.* Teen Empowerment is in the process of developing a series of publications that will make TE's methodology accessible to a national audience.

Goals
Teen Empowerment's program structures are designed to meet the following goals:

- Empower urban youth to be **catalysts of institutional and social change** through youth-led organizing efforts that reach and engage over 4,000 youth and adults per year.
- **Develop leadership among urban youth** by providing intensive training and practice in organizing and communication skills, and many opportunities to take effective and meaningful action.
- **Expand academic and vocational options** for youth working as Teen Empowerment Youth Organizers by widening their horizons and assisting youth in achieving their goals.
- Utilize Teen Empowerment's four project sites as **learning laboratories** for gaining valuable insight into the further development of TE's methods and operational structures.
- Train other organizations to **adapt Teen Empowerment methods for use in a variety of settings** for more effective and authentic engagement of the youth they seek to reach.
- Provide consulting and training in the **integration** of Teen Empowerment group building, decision-making, planning, and communication methods **into adult work settings** to increase productivity.
- Create and disseminate print and video publications as **tools for increased understanding and use of TE's philosophy and methods.**

History
The Teen Empowerment Model is the product of over 25 years of thoughtful experience in changing the values, beliefs, and behaviors of youth and adults, making institutions more effective, and developing mechanisms for people of all ages to work productively together toward achieving important goals. The model's developer, Stanley Pollack, began his career in 1973 as a street worker for the city of Somerville, Massachusetts, and the basic components of the model were created over the next eight years in Somerville. From 1982 to 1992, Stanley built a successful consulting practice, implementing the model in communities throughout Massachusetts. In July 1992, with the support of the Boston Foundation and the Hayden and Riley Foundations, he founded the Center for Teen Empowerment in order to demonstrate both

the power of the TE Model to generate solutions to difficult problems that confront urban communities and its potential application in a wide range of social service and educational settings.

The Center began work in Boston's South End/Lower Roxbury community by hiring a group of 14 teens as Youth Organizers. Through the TE training process, these youth identified their initial goal of finding solutions to the epidemic of gang violence that had taken the lives of several of their friends and was filling their neighborhoods with hatred and fear. The strategy they developed included organizing a series of community meetings for youth, police, and adults. This process culminated in the first Youth Peace Conference in May 1993, which brought together five rival gangs to create a peace treaty.

As an integral part of these community change initiatives, the young people emphasized the connection between gang violence and the lack of jobs and educational opportunities available to urban youth. In addition, they highlighted the pervasive racial and class biases that were helping fuel the rage that many urban youth were expressing through gang-related and other destructive and self-destructive activities. They successfully focused their organizing efforts to push the city, local businesses, and media outlets to expand youth employment programs. Over the next several years, Teen Empowerment Youth Organizers implemented strategies that encouraged the Boston Police Department to increase community policing programs and decrease the practice of negatively profiling neighborhood youth.

In the spring of 1994, Teen Empowerment received funding from the Riley Foundation to bring the TE Model into the context of a Boston public high school. TE opened its first school-based site at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School in September of that year and began utilizing the model as a means of involving students in leadership positions in the school community. Initial efforts included the development of student-led initiatives to reduce tensions and fears among students and teachers and to integrate student voice into school governance. Youth Organizers also initiated ongoing efforts to advocate for adequate school supplies and books, for various changes in school policy, and for improvements in the quality of the classroom experience.

In 1996 and 1997, TE opened sites at two district high schools, first at the English High School, then at Dorchester High. At all sites, the TE Model is used to systematically involve young people in analyzing their school community, determining the priority issues that need to be addressed, and then developing and carrying out strategies to address the identified issues.

Teen Empowerment has organized hundreds of school and community reform initiatives since 1992, and our focus continues to be on youth organizing -- developing effective strategies that involve youth in creating positive social and institutional change in their communities and schools. In recent years TE has also expanded its work to include adapting the model's component parts as tools to increase productivity in adult work settings and to enhance the effectiveness of other youth and educational service providers. This work includes designing and facilitating training sessions for teachers, police, and human service and youth service providers; developing curricula for schools, residential treatment facilities, and vocational training programs; and developing and publishing instructional materials that document Teen Empowerment methods.

The Teen Empowerment Model[*]

What follows is a description of the beliefs, methods, and operational structure of the Teen Empowerment Model.

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A. Beliefs

The first four in this set of beliefs have particular ramifications for youth program structure and approach, while the final two apply more broadly to both youth and adults in terms of how education and training are provided and how these constituencies work and relate together in groups.

There is a connection between feeling powerless and increased risk of engaging in dysfunctional behaviors.
- When youth, particularly those at greatest risk, do not have access to legitimate sources of power, they are more likely to be attracted to negative behaviors as a means of acquiring power.
- While most youth do not have input into decisions about how schools and communities function, they do have easy access to negative forms of power, such as dealing drugs or using weapons.
- Providing varied opportunities for a broader range of youth to access legitimate forms of power reduces the need among young people to pursue destructive forms of power.

Analysis + Decision-making + Action + Success = Power
- Teen Empowerment provides youth with the tools they need to analyze the issues in their communities and schools, to identify those issues they consider to be most important, and to make decisions concerning the best ways to address these issues. Adults then provide the necessary support to ensure that these efforts are as successful as possible. While people can and do learn from their failures, the TE Model is based on the belief that people of all ages usually learn more from success than from failure and are more likely to be inspired by success to continue traveling down a positive path.

Youth have the ability to make real and meaningful changes in their schools and communities.
- The work done at Teen Empowerment is not merely an exercise that is good only for the youth involved. Teen Empowerment Youth Organizers are engaged in real work with the expectation that their efforts will result in the achievement of powerful and positive changes in their schools and communities.

To make real change, youth need access to adequate resources to implement their ideas.
- Teen Empowerment actualizes this belief by paying young people to work as Youth Organizers, and providing them with the resources they need to implement their organizing strategies. Every TE site has access to the financial resources needed to carry out their chosen community and school change strategies.

The most effective forms of youth and adult leadership are facilitative rather than command in nature.
- The role of a Teen Empowerment leader is to facilitate a process by which the group identifies the best solutions to the problems it faces and makes decisions about the actions that need to be taken.

In both youth and adult group settings, there is a connection between the skillful use of interactive group work methods and the ability of the group to reach consensus and to maximize the amount of productive work they are able to accomplish.
- Interactive methods used skillfully can help to form deep relationships among group members and to build a trusting environment where people are willing to take chances and experiment with new forms of creative problem solving. Furthermore, these methods can build real consensus in a group by bringing out voices, thoughts, and feelings that might otherwise

remain hidden. This genuine consensus provides a significantly more powerful basis for action because the chosen actions are more fully supported by all group members.

B. Methods

This section first gives an overview of Teen Empowerment's interactive methodology and its centrality to all of TE's work. It then describes the procedures by which the TE Model carries out its youth organizing mission: selecting and training the Youth Organizer group, working with the group to plan and implement social-change initiatives, and creating and maintaining a highly productive group by managing behavior and practicing effective communication skills.

1. The Innovative Use of Interactive Modes of Learning and Work

One of the important factors enabling TE's success is the Teen Empowerment Model's unique approach to group facilitation, which emphasizes interactive modes of work and communication as a means of significantly increasing productivity. This reliance on interactive methods is based on the belief that groups function optimally when everyone's voice is heard and when group members are given the tools they need to develop relationships based on trust. In this kind of caring and safe environment, people of all ages become willing to take chances and experiment with new forms of creative problem solving. Furthermore, the use of interactive methods brings out thoughts, feelings, experiences, and skills that would otherwise remain hidden, thus creating a much broader basis for reaching a consensus to take action and for maintaining the motivation to ensure that the chosen actions are successfully implemented.

Teen Empowerment uses these interactive methodologies in every aspect of our work with both youth and adults. We have found that the thoughtful application of these methods helps groups to effectively achieve their goals — from goals as simple as learning names to more sophisticated goals such as resolving dysfunctional classroom dynamics or developing innovative curricula that enable populations with special needs or learning challenges to succeed. Furthermore, TE uses interactive techniques to continuously reinforce the vital link between the group's mission and its current work, thereby increasing the group's investment in its work and in the ultimate success of its organizing efforts. Thorough integration of these methods into all aspects of our work allows TE to engage the hearts, minds, and energies of diverse groups of students, teachers, and other youth and adults in finding solutions to difficult problems.

2. The Participant Selection Process

The initial phase of the Youth Organizing project at each site is the Participant Selection Process, which is used to select young people who will work as a Youth Organizer group. The selection process includes an extensive recruitment of applicants; a first interview consisting of a two hour interactive group session and a ten minute individual interview; and a second interview, using the same methods as the first, conducted with about one third of the initial applicants.

Following the second round of interviews, staff considers each of the applicants. At each site, TE seeks to hire a group that is gender-balanced, reflects as closely as possible the diversity of the school or community where the group will work, and includes those who are considered to be at-risk. Through this process, staff identifies youth who are connected to all of the various subgroups of the targeted school or community and are willing and able to exert a positive influence over those subgroups.

3. Initial Training Modules

During the first two weeks of the project, Youth Organizers complete a detailed curriculum designed to:
- Build group and individual relationships.
- Identify key issues in the community or school where the project is based.
- Place identified issues within the larger social context using TE's Social Change Wheel.
- Develop a strategy to address the identified issues.

- Place the strategy within the context of a year-long timeline.
- Begin implementation of the first strategic initiative using TE's 10 Step Planning Process.
- Orient group members to Teen Empowerment's Behavior Change System.

4. Ongoing Training and Planning Sessions

After the initial training period, Youth Organizers continue to meet for interactive work sessions four or five days per week. The first session each week is used to address group issues and implement the Behavior Change System (see below). Each of the other sessions uses the TE meeting format, as follows:

- *Introduction*, covering the purpose of the day, the timeline of upcoming initiatives and projects, and a review of the day's agenda.
- *Warm-Up Question*, which poses a question to be answered by each member of the group. Facilitators select the question to highlight some aspect of the group's work, to educate the group regarding a societal or community change dynamic, or to work with a particular group dynamic.
- *Interactive Exercise*, which consists of a physical or intellectual group challenge that is designed to generate and focus group energy, to highlight a societal, community, and/or group dynamic, and to connect group members to the purpose of their work together.
- *Work Section*, consisting of decision-making and educational activities that take place in the whole group, and of small group work (such as planning logistics, producing graphic materials, and writing and practicing speeches, skits, or raps) needed to carry out the chosen organizing strategies.
- *Report Back*, in which the small groups report back what they accomplished and in some cases demonstrate what they have produced and get feedback from the group.
- *Evaluation*, in which group members rate and comment on the day's work.

5. Implementation of Social Change Initiatives

Every year at each Teen Empowerment site, Youth Organizers plan and implement numerous initiatives designed to achieve their goals for positive change. In addition, youth from all the TE sites come together to work on citywide initiatives. For a description of this essential aspect of the Teen Empowerment methodology, see "Youth Organizing Projects" on the next page.

6. The Behavior Change System

TE's Behavior Change System is used to manage behavior and to develop appropriate work, learning, and communication skills within the context both of TE Youth Organizing groups and of the larger community. The system also has broad application and has been used in a variety of projects that seek to employ participants in a group work setting while addressing communication and behavioral issues. The system used by TE's Youth Organizing projects includes:

- *Weekly Feedback:* In this element, participants learn how to give and receive both criticism and praise and to view feedback as a set of skills that can be improved through practice and reflection. Feedback aims to connect positive emotions with both positive and negative information about each group member. In the weekly session, facilitators first lead the group through exercises designed to surface group issues. They then provide training in feedback skills. Finally, the facilitators open the feedback session; facilitators give feedback to group members, and group members give feedback to one another and to the facilitators.

- *Youth Organizer Work Contract:* The Youth Organizer Work Contract details exactly what is expected of each group member and the precise consequences for failing to meet the expectations. Expectations are clearly outlined and cover some 25 behavioral categories (including motivation and attitude within the group and behavior within the classroom or the community). Here is an example of how the contract works: The first time a participant is late for group, he/she is warned; the

second time, the participant loses two hours pay; the third and fourth times, he/she loses three hours pay; and the fifth time, the participant is fired. Participants can earn back an assessed fine if they work for a specified amount of time without incurring that infraction. If a participant is fired, he or she may, at the discretion of the staff, reapply in writing and, after volunteering in the program for a week with no contract infractions, be rehired.

- **Intensive Feedback:** Once a year, each TE site participates in a daylong Intensive Feedback session that takes place on a school holiday or a weekend. In the morning of the session, an outside facilitator conducts interactive exercises designed to surface group issues. The afternoon consists of further training in feedback skills, time to prepare feedback, and about three hours of giving and receiving feedback, using one of several formats. Intensive Feedback sessions are life-changing in nature and result in significant individual growth, resolution of group tensions, and noticeable gains in the group's ability to work productively for the improvement of their school or community.

C. Operational Structures
Teen Empowerment's methodology is implemented through the three basic structures described below.

1. Youth Organizing Projects
Teen Empowerment operates four Youth Organizing Projects -- three in Boston public high schools and the fourth in the South End/Lower Roxbury area of Boston. Each site is staffed by two adult Program Coordinators and 10-12 young people ages 14 to 20 who are selected through an intensive hiring process.

Once selected, Youth Organizers meet with TE Program Coordinators four or five afternoons per week for two to three hours per day. The initial focus of the group's work is to identify the most dynamic issues that need to be addressed in order to maximize the potential of youth to gain the education, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain economic and political standing and power. Following the completion of this process, the group develops a strategy to address these issues and does the planning, skill development, and problem solving necessary to implement its plans. At each site, youth and adult staff develop and carry out a strategy that includes five to seven large scale initiatives (reaching up to 700 people each), such as community meetings, student-teacher conferences, cultural understanding celebrations/ceremonies, or police, community, and youth conferences. These initiatives also typically involve 20-50 other youth volunteers (called Youth Associates) in the planning and running of the event. In addition, each site implements 25 to 40 smaller scale initiatives (engaging 25-75 people each), such as classroom sessions and workshops designed to address issues.

In addition, Youth Organizers and Youth Associates from all four TE sites work together to organize and run the annual citywide Youth Peace Conference. Since the first conference in 1993, the event has evolved into a daylong forum bringing together over 800 Boston youth each year. The Youth Peace Conference has become a recognized and respected vehicle for young people to express their thoughts and feelings about the issues of the day and to present their visions for the future.

2. Consulting and Training Services
Teen Empowerment provides materials, training, and consulting services regarding the integration of TE methodologies into the organizational structures of schools, social service agencies, and youth agencies. The resources that we have devoted to this component of our work enable us to:

- Build the capacity of our partners and clients to provide more effective services to the youth and families they serve.
- Infuse TE's philosophy and methodology into the framework of significant institutional partners.
- Learn from experience how TE methodology can be most helpful to a broad range of educational and human services providers, and use this knowledge to inform our dissemination efforts.

Many of our recent consulting projects represent linkages with major institutions that have broad ramifications for building their capacity and the capacity of similar organizations to provide effective services to the young people living in difficult urban environments. Recent clients include:

- ***Boston Public Schools***
  Training teachers in interactive teaching methods, assisting with team-building among faculty members, developing specialized interactive curricula for classroom interventions requested by teachers.
- ***Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Police Department***
  Training MBTA Police recruits to deal effectively with adolescents.
- ***Boston After School for All Partnership***
  Conducting a research project to assess what young people need and want in after-school programming.
- ***Harvard Graduate School of Education***
  Training graduate students about interactive learning methods and best practices for teaching in inner-city schools.
- ***Juvenile Resource Center***
  Working with young men in a court-monitored treatment program to explore the issues they face and to begin acquiring the skills they need to transform their lives.

**3. Publication and Dissemination of Instructional Materials**
TE is in the process of developing a series of training materials structured to provide schools, social service agencies, and youth programs with instructions on how to implement and adapt Teen Empowerment methods and operational structures to meet their specific programmatic needs. This fall, TE will publish an expanded and substantially revised version of its first publication, *The Art of Group Facilitation©*. The revised book, to be titled *Moving Beyond Icebreakers©: An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action*, will grow from the present length of 180 pages to 350 pages. When the revision is complete, TE will mount a major campaign to market the book through direct mail and targeted local, regional, and national advertising to educators, human services providers, and others who seek to improve and expand their group work skills.

Over the next three years, Teen Empowerment staff will complete publication of a series of additional instructional materials. Subsequent publications will document TE's Youth Organizing Curriculum, Behavior Management System, Participant Selection Process, Intensive Feedback Process, Program Orientation and Retreat Design Process, Youth Organizing Strategies, and approaches to training youth in public speaking and event planning.

<div align="center">

D. Conclusion

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The Teen Empowerment Model is a comprehensive system for bringing people together into working groups that function effectively to reach their goals for creating positive change. TE is committed to continuously refining the model and to learning through practice and reflection how best to fulfill our organizational mission. In addition, we are immersed in ongoing efforts to disseminate what we have learned and to broaden the scope of the model to serve other populations that could benefit from this work. Through this process, Teen Empowerment is

building an ever more sophisticated system for increasingly productive, meaningful, and significant institutional development.
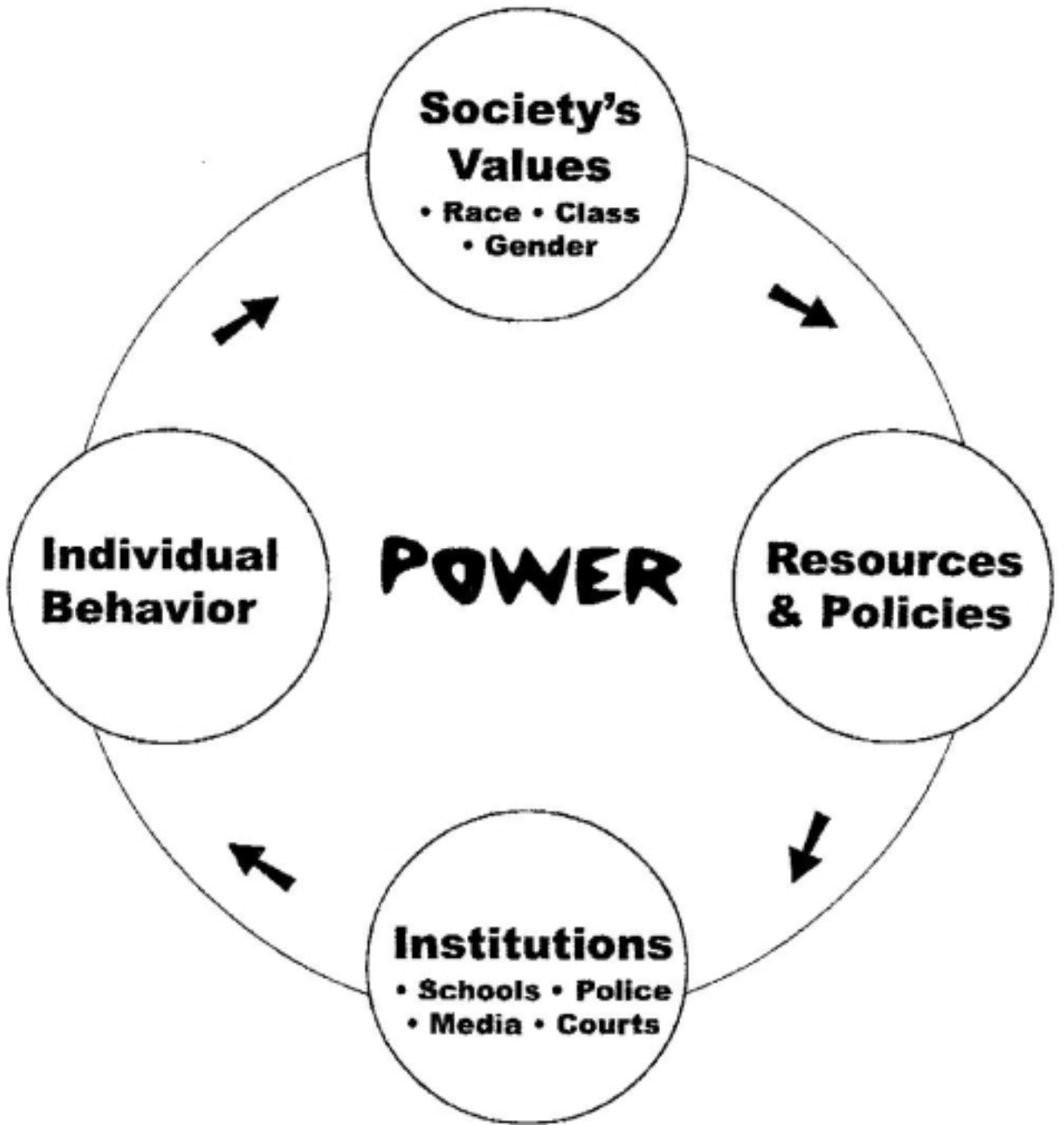
Appendix 3

THE SOCIAL CHANGE WHEEL

Appendix 4

Center for Teen Empowerment
Police-Youth Reconciliation Project, 2001-2
Transitions Framework at Work

Introduction

To Teen Empowerment, change *is* process—not simply an end. The TE model is infused with this fundamental assumption throughout its practices involving both youth and adult staff, including techniques to bring all voices into shared decisions; to encourage healthy growth in individuals and the group through regular group "feedback" (constructive criticism & praise) sessions; and through the nature of "organizing" itself, which is a process of peers moving one another to coordinated action.

The *Transitions* framework has offered TE a more explicit opportunity to employ and enhance the details of the method and experience of transition inherent in the work of change that TE Youth Organizers, Program Staff, and change partners engage in everyday. This past year, TE's community-based site in the South End/Lower Roxbury neighborhood of Boston was enabled by the Andrus Family Fund to apply the language and construct of the *Transitions* framework in its ongoing efforts with the Boston Police Department to alter counter-constructive patterns between police and youth in the community and across the city.

We have learned a great deal in the process and seek to bring this learning to our next phase of the Police-Youth Reconciliation Project (PYRP). Our work benefits from the depth of change offered through attention to the transitions experienced by participants in the process and, in turn, we offer the *Transitions* framework another ground from which to further develop its theory in practice.

PYRP 2001-2: Phases in Transition

According to the *Transitions* framework, in order for organizational or societal change to be effective and lasting, the individuals who are implementing and/or affected by those changes must be supported in going through necessary phases of transition. These phases move from experiences of loss as people "let go of the old way" to a "neutral phase" of discomfort, confusion, but also creativity as people adjust to the change, and finally to the "new beginning" in which people become emotionally present and invested in the change they are part of making.[3]

Before outlining these phases as they were manifested in the 2001-2 PYRP, it will be helpful to recognize unique aspects of the project, some of which distinguish it from other initiatives employing the *Transitions* framework:

- The participants in the project conceive of and essentially pilot the changes that they will later offer to their peers as new ways of seeing their actions in the context of police-youth relations. Thus, the changes sought happen on two

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[3] Descriptions of the phases in this report come from AFF webpage article by William Bridges, "AFF Grants Emphasize Transition," as well as from experiences of implementing the project.

levels—the first is more immediate, intensive, and ongoing between a set group of individuals (TE youth and adult staff and participating police officers), while the second involves a broader population of youth, police, and other community members. In the latter case, the degree to which people successfully move through transition phases will prove more challenging to assess—an assumption that must be incorporated into the design and monitoring of the project. In certain ways, the goals at the second level of this project would be to bring as many people as often as possible into the Neutral phase of the *Transitions* process and, to the best of the project's ability, to keep them there as long as it takes for them to move to the New Beginning phase.

- The changes sought through the PYRP *come from* the participants in the project as opposed to a change that has been mandated from a decision made somewhere else in the organization/society and imposed on a group of individuals. The structure of the model as laid out in the project proposal provides the framework, but the goals for change and the initiatives to reach those goals are constructed together by the group—though often integrating insights and ideas coming from the learning by previous groups of Youth Organizers and Police Officers as well.

- At the same time, despite acting as partners with the Boston Police Department in this project and despite BPD's commitment to what is termed "community policing," TE, as the initiator of this project, does not have institutionalized influence over the policies of the BPD. Thus, whereas several examples of *Transitions* being utilized involve unambiguous authority to institute change and then to guide and support the transition processes that emerge within their organizations, the PYRP does not necessarily have this power. This necessarily becomes a factor in applying the framework as the PYRP must contend with the extra obstacles posed by institutional resistance.

- As TE Program Staff (the authors of this report), we had far more ample opportunity to view and analyze the impact of the PYRP on ourselves and the Youth Organizers than we did on the police officers. Even though we created opportunities to assess these impacts on officers beyond our discussions and anecdotal observations, the reality was that the TE staff (youth and adult) work together everyday processing what we have experienced and planning for the next session. We did not have such opportunity with the police.

- In our experience, transition phases were not necessarily linear or chronological as individuals and the group moved into and through phases, and sometimes back. Moreover, different developments represented the characteristics of various phases regardless of the chronology of their occurrence.

The following are highlights of each phase, identifying first, the evidence of the phase, and second, the attention or resources given to facilitate people's transitions.

Ending the Old Way

As people enter a change process, they must leave behind some degree of themselves in their former ways of behaving, believing, and/or feeling about their world. In doing so, even if they logically accept that the change is for the better, they experience a loss. Through much discussion of issues and goals, the PYRP youth and police named the "old ways" and designed initiatives that would move people away from these old ways toward more constructive relations. The "old ways" they sought to address can be characterized as the following (with some contrast to the new ways they wanted to bring about):

For Police Officers, the "old ways" were/are:

- Dehumanizing youth, seeing only a criminal profile (rather than assuming that youth represent a diversity of commitments, needs, interests, hopes, fears, etc.);
- Often behaving toward young people and other community members in a confrontational and alienating way (rather than respectful and bridge-building ways);
- Seeing themselves as outside the community and the people within the community as 'Other' (rather than seeing themselves as integral members of the community— whether or not they live there, but do work there on an ongoing basis—who have a role in working to establish a healthy community);
- Focusing solely on the symptoms of larger societal problems and injustices (rather than working to better understand the underlying conditions that contribute to high rates of crime and violence);
- Maintaining a general code of silence in regards to stressors they face on the job and to protecting fellow officers from scrutiny (rather than challenging the culture of their organization to support officers' needs and rigorously ethical actions).

For Youth, the "old ways" were/are:

- Dehumanizing Police Officers, seeing only a uniform (rather than assuming that Officers represent a diversity of commitments, needs, interests, hopes, fears, etc.);
- Seeing Police Officers uniformly as enemies (rather than being able to identify genuine allies amongst Officers);
- Experiencing themselves as powerless in the context of what is happening in the community (as opposed to experiencing themselves as significant players in the community who are able to powerfully voice their concerns and ideas, and moreover, understanding the rich history of community organizing in the SE/LR neighborhood (especially around housing and green spaces) and projecting that they, too, could get involved in efforts to improve their community);
- Focusing solely on the symptoms of larger societal problems and injustices (rather than working to better understand the underlying conditions that contribute to high rates of crime and violence);
- Keeping anything you witness to yourself and not "snitching" (as opposed to seeing themselves as guardians of their community who can decipher when people's actions are damaging to the community);

In the PYRP there were several indications that participants were experiencing an "ending" from the "old ways," a transition which we facilitated in a variety of ways.

Evidence:
- Youth Organizers and Program Staff expressed concerns re.: working with the police so intensively, especially with fears of TE losing credibility with young people on the streets; of limiting TE's ability to express public opinions re.: BPD performance; or of being used by BPD as a watered-down public relations ploy.
- High officials in the BPD approved the participation of 6 officers for an indefinite period of time—significant particularly in the context of a "commissioned officer" staffing crisis. BPD is low on beat-patrol "manpower," officers often shared; thus, it

became difficult to commit several officers to an ongoing project that kept them in a room talking and building relationships while there is crime taking place out on the street. The Youth Service Officer who coordinated the project could only find 4 officers besides himself who were willing to participate. The coordinator could rarely make it to meetings and others often had conflicts as well—especially as we arrived closer to the dates of events requiring us to meet more than once a week, which was not originally discussed.

- Continued cynicism on the part of Youth Organizers re.: police, their attitudes and motives (i.e., using Latino street term for police: "po-po", general anger/frustration with amount of times they and/or their friends had been stopped by the police because they so-called "fit the description," cavalier attitudes they described by the Police).
- Police Officers arrived late, at times to avoid opening interactive exercises.
- Frustration on part of everyone that group meetings started late and thus, made it impossible to get through entire agendas.
- Early on, Youth Organizers and Police Officers sat in clumps around room before group meeting began, talking, semi-reserved, amongst themselves.
- Officers of color acknowledged that racial profiling *does* happen and offered that youth need to know this and behave in a way that they do not aggravate an officer who has stopped them. This frankness was welcomed particularly in light of the denial of this dynamic on the part of some white officers we had met in a previous project. The Youth Organizers took issue, though, with the matter-of-fact tone with which this admission and advice were offered. They wanted the Officers to question the realism that they portrayed and admit that such practices should be challenged.
- Disconnect in how TE and Police Officers understood the project. Insofar as the project aimed directly at police-youth relations and how the two groups could become allies in making changes that benefit the community, TE saw the need for changes to happen on all sides—i.e., Youth would work to humanize the police, understand their rights and protocol for dealing with the police, work on the issues that place so many youth under police scrutiny (poor educational access, no jobs, addiction, materialism, etc.), and take responsibility for their own actions and complicity in negative interactions with the police; Police would work to understand the perspectives of youth and how police behavior is read, analyze the underlying causes of youth involvement in criminal activity, and look inward at the issues that police face that contribute to any negative impact on the community. However, even after the several day process of sharing issues that police and youth face and coming up with goals for the PYRP, Police Officers seemed to view the project as a one-sided attempt to enlist the Youth Organizers for reaching the "harder-to-reach" youth in the neighborhood, (who, in the analysis of several Police Officers, are the crux of the problem). Issues that police face became irrelevant until TE youth and adult staff got it back on the agenda. We came to understand this phenomenon as police not being accustomed to discussing their issues, much less seeing themselves in the larger picture of the problem.

How Transition was Facilitated:
- Validated and shared issues and struggles that people face 'from where they are'…youth as young people in a society that privileges some at the expense of others, and police officers as people who have chosen to do a job that often places them in the midst of society's crises.

- Interactive methods that made each person comfortable in their new setting/role.
- Shared anecdotal stories that give light to whom each person is, their joys, fears, hopes, and the realities of their life experience, especially in relation to policing.
- Talked honestly about apprehensions toward entering into the PYRP. This open discussion happened primarily between Youth Organizers and TE Program Staff who already had a high level of trust established. It was perceived as less of a possibility with Police Officers who would be more guarded in terms of what they would reveal, both as members of a generally internally protective workplace culture and as representatives of the BPD, which placed certain institutional demands on them. Still, on an ongoing basis, we integrated "warm-up questions" and group discussions that tried to uncover how Officers were feeling about the project.
- Paid close analytical attention to what might have influenced behaviors that arose in order to inform our design as facilitators of subsequent sessions.

Neutral Zone

The "neutral zone" feels anything but "neutral." Of all the phases, it is arguably the most disconcerting, spinning people into questions of why we are engaging in this change process at all. It takes the "neutral" name, apparently, from the objective experience that this phase takes place when the old way is now obsolete, but the new way has yet to take hold and offer grounding. Amidst the confusion, discomfort and even discouragement, people tend to become innovative and creative in this phase, perhaps looking for something to take hold of. These elements definitely arose in the PYRP.

Evidence:
- Police Officers often dominated group discussions either by cutting people off or speaking over people or by "rambling" in their story-telling to the degree that others either tuned out or were unable to find space to speak.
- As well, rather than understanding their role as equal partners in a social change effort, Officers often interpreted their role as benevolent authority figure who could offer wisdom and/or correction to the youth. For example, when the youth and police presented their issues/struggles to one another through role plays, instead of viewing and listening to the Youth Organizers' perspectives on their experience and how they had chosen to portray them dramatically, the Officers used the role play as a lesson for what to do and what not to do.[4] The result was either that youth would fall silent as they questioned their positions in the face of an authoritative stance (as benevolent as it was, or perhaps especially because it was well-meaning and not combative), or they would become angry and frustrated with the Officers, reinforcing the very divisiveness and stereotypes that the PYRP aimed to challenge.
- Frustration, especially on the part of Youth Organizers, with absences, latenesses, and resistance to interactive methods by Police Officers. They said they felt alone in the process since Officers could not always be there when we needed them to make decisions together. Several Youth Organizers questioned the commitment of some of the Officers.

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[4] *NOTE: This 'evidence' might also be considered an element of "ending the old way" as Officers were being asked to behave radically different from their role both in their everyday work and in other types of community service efforts they might have participated in previously in which they gave workshops on crime and policing to young people. It is included in this section because of the discomfort and frustration that it caused in the Youth Organizers; we know less about the level of "loss" that the Officers were experiencing in this process.*

- Frustration, especially on the part of the Police Officers, with time taken up on interactive exercises and discussion of goals.
- Taking 2-1/2 sessions to work through contentions in the goal-setting re.: proposals to promote the institution of a Citizens' Review Board to oversee grievances against the BPD and to analyze the existence of racial profiling. These discussions proved challenging in the group, both in trying to catch people in the group up as to the issues themselves (i.e., some people did not know what a Citizen's Review Board was), and often people disagreed on the parameters or substance of the argument (i.e., a few Officers disagreed that "racial" profiling was as much of a problem anymore; some Youth Organizers stated the problem as "classist" profiling).
- Disappointment on part of one Youth Organizer re: his aunt (who happened to be one of the Officers) as he saw new, more authoritative side to his aunt in her professional role.
- One of the Officers had to step away from the regular weekly meetings balancing demands of family and work. He did, however, remain connected to the project and participated in some of the organized events.
- Many youth attended the Community Sessions anticipating either confrontation or instruction from the police. Some arrived with their backs up; others were demure. Instead, however, they found a safe opportunity to speak their minds without devolving into a contentious argument. Several spoke up strongly for what they believed in a rare opportunity to do so. Others remained reserved or cynical—but they came, stayed and participated.
- A young person who has been affiliated with TE for several years and who has served time in jail, been shot, and is continually harassed by local police, regularly expresses that he wants nothing to do with our police project. Nonetheless, he showed up at Unity Day with his little nephew, and when he unexpectedly wound up in a situation where (in front of his nephew) he was introduced to one of the officers, in a confused, remotely hesitant manner, he reached out and shook the hand of an officer— something he had said he would never do.

How Transition was Facilitated:
- Gave Police Officers more in-depth and repeated orientation to TE processes that allow the maximum number of voices to be heard (such as, speaking order and being aware of the amount of airtime each of us takes up in relation to others, importance of developing shared goals, importance of everyone's presence for opening interactive exercises which set the tone, build trust, and get people into the work for that day).
- Took as much time as necessary to work through difficult topics of discussion, particularly during goal-setting. Then, re-evaluated and adjusted to move into the hands-on work of organizing the initiatives in order to mitigate the experiences of frustration that were emerging re.: "spinning our wheels" while setting goals.
- Invited Officers to attend one of our regular feedback sessions (held weekly by the TE youth/adult staff) in which people give each other constructive praise and criticism as equals in front of the rest of the group. This process is invaluable in our regular work for working through tensions and uncertainties, resolving conflicts, and promoting individual and group growth.
- Explored with Youth Organizers in everyday sessions (without police present) how they were feeling about the meetings with police, and discussed the issue of "silencing" or feeling "shut down' by another person.
- Used brainstorms, research, and debate-style exercises with Youth Organizers to boost confidence and access to information regarding policing and criminal justice

issues, and to develop collective knowledge and practice of how to discuss and/or argue a point effectively and diplomatically.

- Discussed with Youth Organizers the symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, particularly in light of the issues that the Officers themselves had presented regarding the high levels of stress they face in their work and how that plays out in their relationships with the people they interact with on the job, their families, and themselves. One symptom of PSD is a tendency to talk incessantly. We also discussed the difficulty they must have in leaving behind the authoritative role they play on a daily basis, which the group began referring to as "adultism times 3."
- Created opportunities for the Youth Organizers to facilitate small groups. This proved to be one of the most effective tactics/supports to bring both Police Officers and Youth Organizers together to the table as partners. The Youth Organizers are trained facilitators and leading group discussions allowed them to balance the power scales within the context of the group.
- Trained Police Officers to facilitate interactive methods, through practice and then feedback from Youth Organizers and vice versa. This skill-sharing took place in the context of preparing for the series of Community Sessions that the group had decided to hold in different neighborhoods around the SE/LR.

New Beginning

Once people have moved more or less successfully through the phases of letting go and negotiating the shaky ground between old and new, to the degree that they are committed to change, they open themselves to setting about a whole new way of seeing, experiencing, and behaving in their context. *Transitions* poses this as the true "new beginning" as opposed to the beginning of the change process itself. This phase happens on its own schedule for each individual and group. We have definitely found this in our work with the PYRP, which takes such a complex set of relations in shifting contexts that have become institutionalized over decades and perhaps centuries, and seeks to influence change step-by-step, person-to-person, interaction-to-interaction with an eye on systemic change. This is a long-term effort with glimmers of evidence of "new beginnings" that lend hope and direction for the viability and sustainability of the changes.

Evidence:
- Youth Organizers focused on the power of their work and the end goals, and appreciated and maximized benefits from the 2 officers who were most consistent in attendance— though they never felt entirely positive about the experience.
- Genuine relationships were built between Officers and TE youth/adult staff.
  - (1) For example, one day during facilitation rehearsal for the Community Sessions, we needed some people to go out and do outreach for the first Session. The only 2 people who did not need to rehearse for that particular meeting were an Officer ("F.") and Youth Organizer ("M."). When the facilitator announced that "M." and "F." would be going out together, "M"—who had been struggling with her ambivalent feelings about the project, who likes to hang out with certain people in the group, and who had recently gotten feedback for refusing very vocally and negatively to do tasks that were asked of her—made the most repressed look of disgust and anger at being made to walk around the neighborhood with a cop in uniform. When they returned, the two of them (both of whom speak Spanish) were giggling about their outing and the funny interactions they'd had with people. This was a big moment for "M." in

particular as she had remained one of the more disillusioned young people in the PYRP.

- (2) Another example: One of the Officers stayed after group one day and initiated a conversation with one of the Program Staff about the politics (particularly related to racism and cronyism) of the police department and the series of occurrences that had alienated him from his work. This was an incredible breakthrough, both in terms of TE's learning and understanding of our partner organization in the project, and in terms of recognition of the level of trust we had achieved.
- Youth Organizers and Police Officers began chatting and joking informally before group meetings.
- A high level of collegiality between Youth Organizers and Police Officers as they co-facilitated Community Sessions exploring challenging issues related to racial profiling, security issues, the well-being of the community, and rivalries between neighborhoods.
- Frank discussions, complete with tensions in the room, at the first Community Session when one of the Officers stated that he did not understand the glorification of many of the victims of shootings, who, he said, had been living the 'thug' life and had essentially put themselves into the situation. Several young people in the room took issue with the statement. Through skilled facilitation by two Youth Organizers, the conversation ran smoothly and respectfully without losing its passion on both sides.
- The success of the process of speech-writing and shared proposals for change that a Youth Organizer and Police Officer engaged in and their authentic, shared presentation of these at the Unity Day event *(See attached speeches)*. Just their appearance together, saying words that meant something to them—while those words did not always agree—they presented an unexpected combination offered solutions that they shared together.
- Melinda developed and presented a speech before 800 youth at the annual TE Youth Peace Conference in which she fleshed out her own struggles with thinking of speaking out against violence in her community as "snitching." (*See attached speech*).
- Stereotypes and assumptions on both sides were both challenged and reaffirmed—which reminds us that the work has a long way to go, but that it was on its way…

How Transition was facilitated:
- Recognition that in the context of this project engaging youth and police, any "new beginning" should not be expected to be an unambiguous embracing of new warm-fuzzy relations. For both sides, the structure within which policing takes place is complex. Officers represent a larger structure/institution that has a record of being tainted by racism, classism and sexism, though many officers do not see it this way. Ambivalence, in this context, can be expected & viewed as healthy insofar as it represents a level of critical questioning/skepticism on all sides.

Appendix 5

In 2004, Teen Empowerment will be publishing

Moving Beyond Icebreakers©

An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action

This book contains more than 300 interactive exercises and it will teach you how to

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