

Why Community?

Paul Born asked those who were listening to send in an email answering the questions, "Why did you show up today? What was it about the title and description that resonated with you?"

He received the below responses.

The title of today's session appealed to me as a past participant and current curriculum committee member of Leadership Niagara. This is a group that participates in a year long leadership program with the intent of developing community leaders. Thanks.

It's all about relationships and connection - I need to find the kindred souls so I'm able to have a dialogue and new ideas to share with my immediate (geographical) community.

I showed up today because I -- like you -- believe that the answers to our most "pressing issues" can be resolved only "in community" as Margaret Mead said -- the power of the small group.

I want to understand more about what the key ingredients are that both build -- and weaken communities -- and how I as an individual can create community.

I am a volunteer with Leadership Victoria and we are working on ways to help participants understand community and how they can engage, participate, and effect positive influence...

Who are we as a community of people interested in community and how can we influence positive change?

I showed up because community is my life - it is not only my work, but it is my home reality. I actually work in my own neighbourhood!

I work with volunteers and community groups in the community so am hoping to learn how to truly engage them not only in our programs but to link them together to build the greater community.

I also have a personal interest in community development especially in relation to local food sheds, health, nutrition, supporting farmers, etc. would love to see/hear something on this.

As a person intensely engaged with my community – I often think about why community, how community, when community and why me?

What is it that compels us to engage – why are we drawn together – what do we get from the networks, social cohesion that occurs...

Where does altruism fit – where does self interest fit- the yin and yang of community engagement and why me?

Looking at a better connection between organizations and communities.

I showed up today because I am interested in exploring different career opportunities and I want to learn more about community development. I love people and want to put more intention into my role as a community builder.

Two things really. One, my work involves making positive changes in our community. We have just expanded – now how do we define community? Indeed how do we define the communities when they are so split...On a personal level, it is my interest in living in and possibly creating a community to live in, where I feel safe, secure and supported.

We registered because we are interested in learning how to strengthen the sense of community during these challenging times in order to facilitate cooperation, collaboration, and create a common vision for our community.

I signed in today because I work with the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and community is the base on which we build our work. I hope by the end of the series to have a clearer (intellectual) concept of community. Right now I have strong belief and commitment to the idea but if I understand the notion of community better I will be able to make a greater contribution.

I showed up today because I am keenly interested in your work and how it can inform the community mobilization/development work that we are doing in our organization. The opportunity to talk about community with people of common interest is an opportunity I can't miss! I want to stay current with new trends and practices.

I am longing for a sense of community in my workplace and life. I experience a separateness in society that is unfulfilling for me. I work in healthcare and recognize how community can enhance our learning and our ability to change and transform as a collective.

I am passionate about building community and through my work want to help others to recognize its importance.

Because I get asked the question "Why Community?" all the time. With increasing expectations on government and non-profit services, fewer people consider community as the most effective means of meeting individual and group needs.

I signed up for many reasons. One is that I work as a writer for many social network groups, websites, and NGO's that work in various ways with community. But I think even more compelling for me was that I just moved to a rural area, where I don't know a single person (or at least I didn't when I first arrived) and I have been thinking a lot about what community means, why it is important, and most significantly to me right now - how to develop strong community ties among people.

I am working on a coalition of municipalities against racism and working with communities of academics on bioethics. I want to explore the meaning of these uses of the concept and of the building of bonding.

I am here today because I have been deeply concerned about the loss of sense of community and because I am intrigued by the notions of 'community'.

I am concerned about rapid creation of communities in rural areas; about pods, etc. and the impact on our future. I have been working in and with various communities since the mid 1980s first with violence against women directly and the criminal justice system, and now in a wider way with this project that draws from and embraces the Comprehensive Community Safety Initiative, CCSI.

I hold the belief that creating community is a sacred act. I feel it is the only way that we can move forward to mend our world is together, in relationship with each other.

The title was interesting. Our organization has been working in the community development/ community capacity building field for the past 17 years.

Hoped to learn new and exciting ways to continue to expand our thinking of community...

I work in the community from a health perspective. Through my experience I have grown to fully understand and appreciate the importance of involving community in making decisions about what is important to be healthy and reengaging in community in sustainable actions. I am hoping to learn how to spread this to the senior level in our organization.

Hope to hear about complexity of community; complementarities within community

I live in a small town and am an elected official who is trying to rebuild a strong sense of community. I attended the Collaborating Communities Institute last September and am building on what I learned while there.

I might like to hear Robert Putnam (Bowling Alone) or Mark Anielski (author of The Economics of Happiness; based in Edmonton).

Community is a big part of my life in so many aspects that I felt compelled to participate.

Why? I am working on creating resilience in the communities and organizations that I work with -- and interested in getting better and better at doing this work.

I recommend Peter Block -- Author of "Community -- the Structure of Belonging".

Want to hear about resident impact on community, how gov't can work better with community

How better to move understanding from society to community....(see UBC President Stephen Toope)

How to understand and foster community leadership as a dimension of community-building..(new paradigms)

Hoping to hear more stories from communities to help us to explain to other civil servants why communities are so important....

I think these are incredibly chaotic times, and people are feeling lost, isolated, hopeless, (until Obama, of course) and I believe community is our only way to get through it together- whole and healed and to get the best result for the world.

I am part of a project that strives to create the world we actually want, not to continue to sustain the world we don't want, and community is essential in this.

What made you sign up for today?

I work on a grant program that helps to ensure that seniors can benefit from, and contribute to, the quality of life in their communities. To share their wisdom, experiences and knowledge with others; to be role models; take on a leadership roles and leave a lasting impact in their community.

What do you want to hear?

Ways to involve the entire community as a whole, as most senior groups tend to be segregated or isolated, to see what is missing in their community and who can they partner up with to accomplish that.

I'm here today because building community is imperative for my organization to move forward in our mission. Personally, I want more community in my life for my own happiness and for a better world. I'm here to learn.

"there can be no daily citizenship without daily democracy" Ralph Nader

As a clinical psychologist who has specialized in community psychology, I'm interested in all things "community" related. The organization I work for delivers programs in the community, but we also conduct research and evaluation, and contribute to policy development, all of which needs to be done in a way that is complementary to what is happening in communities.

I also have a personal interest in the benefits of community as I was raised in a very cohesive community that I left at the age of 24 and have had a first hand experience of the difficulties a person can encounter when disconnected from their community.

I was asked to join the Board of the Community Council about a year ago. I find we talk about finances and details at our meetings – often not discussing the real value of community. I wanted to know more about what it means to build community. We have 13 municipalities in our region and it can be hard to create an initiative that gets buy-in from a majority! I think a lot of traditional "communities" are not inclusive and there are many communities for youth or seniors developing in new areas (social networks on internet).

Coming from the business "community", I often find that business people are not part of the "social communities".

So I am interested in being challenged by new and different viewpoints – so I develop a broader community perspective. But ultimately, I want to see actions that enhance our value of life.

The question is simple and the answer is complex....

Competing agendas, external demands, global community ...has eroded what we all crave ...

From Facebook to LinkedIn ...we've never had so many friends yet so lonely

I am interested in learning more about community initiatives... and the relationship between building resilient communities and specific government policies and programs (at all levels) that can help achieve this goal.

I believe in the concept of community and have seen first-hand the benefit of people working together, building capacity and working collaboratively.

I am new to Vibrant Communities, but I have signed up because my life's work has been about building community. I believe that the only way that we really can make a change is by working closely, reflectively with people, but in the community. So I am interested in how you, we, are developing this dialogue and community across Canada.

What about individuals who live in one community and work in another?

Community is becoming the flavour of the month. Words are our tools so just as a carpenter can not use a hammer for every task we can not use community as an all inclusive tool.

Community is achieved when the I becomes WE.

I think I may have misunderstood the question... if it was "What is Community?"... my answer would be simple and not so simple... There is no one definition of community, as it has different meanings for different people within different contexts. In the government, when we talk about community, we generally refer to one within a geographic location. However, even within that definition, there are questions of scale. Personally, I am comfortable with not having one definition of community and recognizing the inherent organic nature of the term. However, when trying to design policies and programs for and with communities, it may be useful to have specific definitions... or even better, programs and policies that take into account different community characteristics...

I showed up today because I work with a development company that looks at how our built form affects our function as a society. We are creating urban eco villages that promote social interaction in British Columbia. Our underlying question of what are the necessary elements to magnify the potential of a community? inclusion, diversity, population, community services, trails, parks, community hall, streetscape and landscape, etc.

Community is an important key to happiness. The formation and maintenance of communities is what is informing our design. I'm interested in collaborating with a variety of individuals in understanding how to create favorable villages to promote community.