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Paper #2

Collective Strategy

In Marshall Ganz “ Why Stories Matter “ a quote that is relevant to my collective I work at is as follows:

THE INITIAL CHALLENGE for an organizer—or anybody who’s going to provide leadership for change—is to figure out how to break through the inertia of habit to get people to pay attention. Often that breakthrough happens by urgency of need. “ (Ganz.2009)

Working at The Oregon Food Bank the urgency of need is a major factor in the work I do. With many of the working poor barley making it after rent and utilities, the urgency of need is very transparent in the cause, mission, and history of my organization. In reference to Wheatley and Frieze’s Walk out and Walk on the most relatable collective strategization from the book is from the work in Columbus Ohio:

“Leaders in some of the America’s largest institutions –healthcare, academe,-government –are changing how they lead. They’ve given up the take–charge, heroic leadership. Choosing instead to engage the members of the community in difficult social issues that other communities find intractable.” (Wheatley and Frieze.2011, p.189)

In relation to Ohio and Working at the food bank it became very obvious to me that recruiting the community to help solve these issues instead of the state is a very effective means of collective strategy to improve on these issues. At the end of every shift at the food bank it is repeated that if it wasn’t for the two million volunteers that work t a the food bank each year Oregon would not be as well abled to address the issue of food insecurity in the state. Subsequently the solutions to food insecurity in Columbus Ohio are not much different than that of Oregon:

In mid 2009, Ohio relocated to it’s new headquarters: a gigantic former mattress outlet that moves thirty –three million pounds of food per year onto the tables of central Ohio’s hungry citizens. (Wheatley and Frieze.2011, p.191). Even Ohio’s relocating of facilities is similar to the history of the Oregon food bank as The Oregon Food bank relocated its headquarters to larger facilities in 2001. Other effective strategies that these states have in common is the reduction in food waste: “The cold storage layout that makes efficient use of cooler and freezer space the organic recovery program that sorts leftover produce from grocery stores. (Wheatley and Frieze.2011, p.191).

Looking at this example The Oregon Food Bank utilizes the same strategies as Ohio more or less. At the Oregon food bank there is also large energy efficient freezer, and a food sorting area in which not just produce but other goods discarded from grocery stores are recovered to be sorted for the working poor in Oregon. These goods include frozen/ store made meals, juices, produce, meats, eggs, milk, etc.

Another similarity in the work of the Ohio Food Bank and The Oregon Food bank is what Ohio calls a: “Choice pantry”. (Wheatley and Frieze.2011, p.193).

These pantries function more like a grocery store in which patrons may choose their food instead of receiving packaged grocery from the state. One in which I am aware of is Portland state university’s Food pantry. What is called: the Harvest share. This program is where the Oregon food bank donates some of its freshest produce and fruits to help provide healthier options, and to solve food insecurity with some of the school’s students on campus.

As this relates to my own Personal narrative I’ve found that change does not come about from individuals in a sense, but change happens when individuals become a collective. While there may always be a hierarchy it is of ten the community as a collective that initiates change. Form my experience a the food bank there are many individuals who work there voluntarily or not, but there are many groups that volunteer to work at the food bank.

These groups range from families, churches, and schools. Its is these collectives that often are the ones to initiate the change needed to address the issues at hand whether its food insecurity, pollution homelessness the list goes on. These changes happen when individuals like the political leaders in which facilitate welfare programs allow the collective community the autonomy to address and solve these issues.

In conclusion from my own personal narrative, and the stories of our text I have found that allowing the community to act as a collective to solve their issues is an efficient strategy to address problems with in their smaller communities and in tandem society at large.