Direct Church & School Partnership:

A Transformational Model to Education Equity

Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in

International Community Development to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences of

Northwest University

By

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**Author's Notes:

Portions of this paper were written for the following classes: Cultural Studies, Practicum I,

Social and Environmental Justice, Practicum IV, Social Entrepreneurship and Funding the

Sustainable Organization. Scripture references are drawn from New International Version (NIV)

of the Bible. Some names of individuals have been changed for confidentiality purposes.

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Acknowledgments

First of all, glory be to God in the highest for giving me the strength and the words.

This thesis journey would not have been possible without the support of individuals who came alongside me. I want to thank my husband, Mitchell, and my parents who have been so incredibly gracious and loving dealing with an absentee wife and daughter. Mitchell, in particular, has taken up many of the burdens in order to give me time and space to pursue my goals. It is due to his continuous support and profound logic that I am able to push through this journey. With that, he should get an honorary degree in ICD.

I would like to express my gratitude to Tom Brewer, my fieldwork advisor, Director of Community Relations and Chaplain, who gave me so much support, prayer and experience with Jubilee REACH. In addition, my sincere thanks to all the Jubilee REACH staff who have provided wisdom and encouragement during this time. Thank you, Mr. Brent Christie, Ms. Marnie Kern, Mr. Hugh Gladner, Mr. Peter Shin, and Mr. Jonathan George. I also want to thank all my interviewees, in particular to Bellevue School District Administrator, Judy Buckmaster, for your time.

I would like to thank Dr. Forrest Inslee, my thesis advisor and Program Director of ICD, for imparting your expertise and for your guidance as well as your continuous encouragement. Thank you for all your prayers.

Dr. Nikum Pon & Mr. Tali Hairston, thank you for your investment and time in this thesis.

Lastly, to my colleagues and friends, thank you for challenging and stretching me. During these past two years, I have grown with your help and support.

Introduction

Children are our future. Education equity is a responsibility for all to uphold. Every child has the right to a high-quality education in hopes of a strong future. With the existing opportunity gap plaguing the Seattle Public School District and in absence of structural changes, the church is the solution to the needs of the community and a beginning place for development. Too many Seattle Public Schools are left to fend for themselves. Without adequate resources, funding, and human resources, educators and school staff are desperate for help and a sign of hope. Specifically, school staff should not be required to sacrifice their own livelihood and salary in order to make ends meet for their classrooms and their students. They, too, have their own families to take care of. A teacher's personal sacrifice should not become a mandatory expectation or accepted norm. Thus, I argue the concept of a church and school partnership is a piece of the solution to the problem of an increasing opportunity gap, and can also decrease the desperation of schools. Using a model practiced by Jubilee REACH, a nonprofit from the City of Bellevue, as a case study, my thesis project will illustrate how their developmental model can be of use in the Rainier Valley and in the rest of the Seattle Public School District. I contextualize the principles from Jubilee REACH's developmental model to create a transformational model usable for Rainier Valley. Along with contextualization, I use appreciative inquiry to further the existing and positive outcomes on the ground for the creation of this transformational model. The outcome is a physical document of best practices which churches and school administrators can use or have a reference to if the project is to be implemented.

A Narrative Untold

It is midnight. Mai's husband finally arrives home from work. After a long day of cleaning, he is exhausted. Mai once told me that her husband works at Mercer Island High

School as a custodian. Every day, she stays up late waiting for her husband to arrive home so they can spend a short moment together before she goes to bed for her 8 a.m. shift at a nail salon on Mercer Island. Hardworking parents who work six days a week, Mai and her husband try to provide all they can for their two children, Brent who is in kindergarten this year and their daughter, Rylie, who started her freshmen year at Cleveland High School. Mai said, "We do not have much but we are happy, happy family. We live in a small house with my mother and try to have fun together when we do not have to work" (Thai). I remember our conversation clearly. I encouraged and reaffirmed her that she and her husband are doing their best and that their children are proud of them. Mai teared up and cried on my shoulder.

Mai's story is among thousands of families living in the Rainier Valley area, coming from an immigrant background, they are people of color and of the minority population. Their dream of coming to the United States was to have a better, more stable life for their family. Instead, they were met with difficult circumstances, discrimination, minimal opportunities and a lack of community. They do not have anyone to lean on or to help them navigate the American system. Oftentimes, they have to do it on their own. They lack a higher education because they never had the opportunity of obtaining one either in their home country or in the United States. As a result, many immigrants essentially start over in their career life, if you can call it a career life at all. They are discriminated against in their workplace, in their communities, and everywhere they go. Yet, Mai told me, "We are happy, happy family" (Thai).

Mai's story along with many others resonated deeply with me. My personal story is no different from hers. I am of an immigrant family, a person of color and a minority. I could not help but question what exactly made such a difference in my life that I was able to reach my goals while Mai's family is still struggling. People may call it luck or hard work, but Mai and her

husband are just as hardworking as my family. The distinction lies in the help we received. We had our church and a community of people who offered encouragement, comfort and guidance when we first settled, making our transition easier. My parents raised me in Issaquah, Washington. A smaller city at the time, which has a predominately white population. The schools I went to, Challenger Elementary School, Beaver Lake Middle School, and Skyline High School, are highly equipped with the latest technologies and exceptional teachers, who were dedicated to my excellence. I was given opportunities to excel in my studies, to build my resume and to expand my worldview. I was given scholarships and funding to follow my passion, traveling the world with a talented orchestra. I came out of my young years prepared to engage at the university level and now I am obtaining my Masters. If all of those opportunities had not line up perfectly, would my family have ended up in the same place as Mai's?

Mai's children, Brent and Rylie, are students in the Seattle Public School District. Brent, a kindergartener at Dearborn Park International School, is a concern for Mai because his teachers have voiced that he has difficulty engaging in school. He cannot concentrate and has trouble interacting with the class. Rylie, on the other hand, faces a different set of problems. She has to navigate the school system on her own, trying to fit in, and trying to find funding for her own passion and interests. She is part of the school symphony orchestra, much like I was when I was her age. Everything, from the instrument to the uniform has to come out of the student's own pocket. Having been in an orchestra myself, I understand the struggle of funding an interest, paying for an instrument, uniforms, and travel expense is costly. I was able to fund my travels due to my church raising funds for me, and because of it, I got to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York as well as in London and Paris. When Mai mentioned the stress of supporting Rylie's interest in the cello, I sensed her personal doubt and shame as a parent. She felt ashamed that she

could not provide more. I connected with her situation because of my own family's past struggles. Through this, I was given an opportunity to walk alongside her by giving Rylie my concert dresses. I mention this story not to share how I "saved" their situation. I mention this particular story because I believe every child should have the opportunity to function at their highest potential and should not be limited by the lack of resources to achieve their dream. Unfortunately, not every family in the Rainier Valley is given a plethora of opportunities and resources. As a result, students are falling through the cracks into paths that lead to destruction. Gang violence and substance abuse become an alternative to their void of a community and a place of acceptance. Students should have equal opportunity within arm's reach to a high-quality education. They should have a choice to every beneficial opportunity. A lack of resources and funding should not be their barrier to having a successful, meaningful, purposeful and prosperous future. But then again, for so many students in the Rainier Valley area, this is their reality.

Achieving success has been attributed to high-quality education. Kids are often taught at an early age to focus on school because obtaining a degree will open doors to life-giving opportunities. However, not every child has the privilege of obtaining a high-quality education nor do they have the right influences that point them to a bright future. Some children are less fortunate because of their family's socioeconomic status. Their zip code sets their future and, "A child's home address typically determines which [school] system she or he will experience" (Fulgham 14). In Seattle, there are many struggling families yet their surrounding communities are either unaware of the disparity or lack the knowledge to make a change. Some common justifications are either the achievement gap and the education disparity are far too complex of an issue to be completely eradicated or this is an endless social injustice and it will require those with millions of dollars to fix the problem. South Seattle, particularly Beacon Hill, has one of the

lowest income averages and highest achievement gap in the State of Washington. The average total annual income is around $45,000 and only about 28% of students go to college and actually graduate (U.S. Census Bureau). Dearborn Park International School, the school that Brent attends, has an 85% free and reduced-price lunch population (NCES). Based on these statistics, we can conclude that the majority of the student population are from low-income families.

According to Kelly Aramaki, the Executive Director of Schools Southeast Region in Seattle Public Schools, one of the strongest indicators of a student's future is their 3rd grade reading level (Aramaki). If a 3rd grader's reading is below grade level, it is 4 times less likely for them to graduate from high school (Aramaki). Also, if a 3rd grader's reading is below grade level and is living in poverty, it is 13 times less likely for them to graduate high school (Aramaki). Furthermore, students who do not graduate from high school are 63 times more likely to be incarcerated than college graduates (Aramaki). Lastly, one in three African American males will be incarcerated and the ratio is higher for those who do not graduate from high schools (Aramaki). The statistics are frightening. Imagine another generation of students falling behind; we cannot continue to allow the cycle of poverty to be the ultimate excuse. This needs to stop.

The Current Church in its Community

Every Sunday, I attend church at 10 a.m. at Seattle Chinese Alliance Church. That has been my routine for 17 years of my life. It is where I grew up, where I found my community, where I express my faith, and where I feel safe. Anything outside of these four church walls, I had overlooked. Until recently, that was my routine for 17 years. I began to question: what is the purpose of the church in its community? Is there more to every Sunday gathering than the typical worship service? Throughout my Christian walk, I was taught to love our neighbors and our enemies. I understood the "love your enemy" portion but my scope of defining my "neighbors"

was limited. I thought of it as my classmates and my church community. At the same time, I have overlooked the individuals who appear to be different from me, both physically and culturally.

When I looked outside the church walls, I saw families of lower-income, of diverse cultural backgrounds and of family structures unlike my own. I kept convincing myself that I could not relate to them or that somehow, I was different. Yet in reality, I am not that dissimilar. It is true that I live in the suburbs, am of the middle class, and am more Americanized. However, when I reflect on the times where I felt ashamed that I do not look the same as my classmates, when I lived in an apartment instead of a large, suburban house, or when I had to miss opportunities that could have built up my resume, I was only in denial that I was different from these families. There is more common ground between the people inside and outside the church. The problem is we practice denial so we can feel superior and more powerful. We want to believe that we are special. That is the humanness in all of us; we are all guilty of wanting to feel superior, but that is not the purpose of the church. Our purpose is to love our neighbors regardless of our feelings of dissimilarity because we are called to love.

The Church is the natural gathering place for community, especially for communities of color. It is where the congregation finds support, encouragement, and comfort. Hence, the Church has a unique place in the community. Being the central gathering place, the Church unite people from all walks of life, regardless of their status and background. However, the church I just described is rare these days. Too many modern day churches become a place of exclusion and too often, it is being created by those who have been Christians for a bulk of their lifetime. We are no longer embracing individuals who are different culturally, physically and spiritually.

Piper Robertson, a volunteer with whom I served alongside during my internship in my graduate program, claimed:

> The Church should be serving the community they are in. They are there to give people some guidelines to follow, so they should not be on such a high horse like they are not part of the community. As a matter of fact, they should be part of the community and be the basis of the community so they can help people feel accepted and feel like they have somewhere to go... That is why I am not religious because I hear so many stories of religious families being so cruel… (Robertson)

As a Christian community, that is not a type of church we want to portray. Is it not our duty to live out the gospel and be a light to the world? Let's imagine it is a typical Sunday. I get in the car and drive to church. The church is either in my community, the suburbs, or in the city. I arrive and see nicely branded parked cars, properly dressed individuals, some of whom are my friends. I enter through the church door to a clean, well-decorated building and are possibly greeted with coffee or donuts. I enter the sanctuary and sit among other members who dress and talk like me. After service, I socialize with my friends and then leave to go back to my respective life. Weeks become months, and this routine repeats itself. Richard Stearns claims that this is, "[the] Church of God's Blessings" but did I notice the community outside my church walls (173)? Did I notice the newcomers or visitors who are from the community? Did I ignore them because they look and dress differently from me? We live our lives so comfortably and with such routine that we have overlooked that our presence in the community should serve a purpose. The Church is a place we go on Sundays but also a place where all walks of life can gather and learn from each other. The Church I described is a typical North American church where the service is well-rehearsed and the worship is energetic and upbeat, it is indeed, "[the] Church of God's

Blessings." By no means is the American church, "[a] 'bad' church; it is just oblivious to the suffering," around them (Stearns 177). How did the Church become such an isolated place that ignores the suffering of the world?

The Divide of Two Theologies

Throughout history, the participation in social justice and social injustice by the church has created confusion in its role within society. Some churches focus only on spiritual formation while others devote their time fighting for social justice. The divide in church theology provokes many questions, some of which are: how are justice and the church connected, why is it important for the church to care about justice and why is there a split in Christian theology? In order to begin answering these questions, an exploration into church history is mandatory.

Prior to the split in theology was the colonialization of North America, focusing solely on religious freedom for the Christians (Stearns 191). As told by history, the church has participated in the marginalization of Native Americans by ignoring the injustice committed. Later, the slave trade began and flourished for hundreds of years under the church guidance as, "Southern plantation owners would ride off to church…while their slaves were picking cotton to line their master's wallets" (Stearns 191). During this time, the church split between the North and the South due to conflicting views on human rights and slavery. Segregation at the time fueled by and led by the churches of the North and the South eventually drove the nation to one of the darkest times in American church history, the Civil Rights Movements (Stearns 192). Soon after, society had constrained the role of churches to only, "Preach and teach, not to act on social justice," and therefore, the nonprofit sector and charity exist to handle social justice so, "The church should perform its unique task of caring for [only] spiritual needs" (Pinson 372). In addition, John Stott, the Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, claims

that, "During the first thirty years of the twentieth century, and especially after the decade following World War I, a major shift took place which the American Historian Timothy L. Smith has termed 'the Great Reversal,' [a term known as] the evangelical neglect of social responsibility" (Stott 21). Richard Stearns calls it the divide of faith and works (200). The "works" aspect emphasizes on serving the poor through inventions and programs and neglect the needs for evangelism. The "faith" aspect, on the other hand, views the "works" proponent as worldly. Therefore, the church should focus solely on spreading God's love and grace through evangelism, as it is written in the Bible. As a result, the faith aspect was more prominently practiced in the majority of Christian churches.

Despite the drastic split of church theology in recent history, a hope for justice came around the 1960s. It was, "A decade of protest, when young people were rebelling against the materialism, superficiality and hypocrisy of the adult world they had inherited" (Stott 24). It was here that the mainstream evangelicals began to question their faith and recovered its morale for justice (Stott 24). The concept of faith and works merged together at the second half of the twentieth century. Some key events that propelled the unity were, "…the Wheaton Declaration of 1966, the Lausanne Covenant of 1974; and Salt and Light, a gathering of church leaders in Britain in 1988-caused the Church to begin to reunite evangelism and social action as indivisible part of the whole gospel" (Stearns 201-202; Stott 24-26). However, there is an incessant battle that runs deeply in, "Some conservative American churches a suspicion that social action and reform are somehow part of a liberal theology that substitutes goods works for evangelism" (Stearns 202).

The major split in church theology continues to affect the progression of Christian practices. It explains the reasons behind the long battle amongst denominations for the truth and

the best practice of faith and religion. Due to the ongoing conflict, this blurs the line between the truth and the real role of the church. The questions remain now: what is biblical justice and the role of the church according to God and how can the church fulfill its role despite its history?

What is Biblical Justice?

In his book *Generous Justice,* Tim Keller, Minister at Redeemer Presbyterian Church, defines the act of justice as, "Not only the rightings of wrongs but generosity and social concerns, especially towards the poor and vulnerable" (Keller 18). In the Bible, justice is written in two forms, *mishpat* and *tzadequah.* The Hebrew word, *mishpat,* means to treat people equitably (Keller 3). Based on Deuteronomy 18, *mishpat* also means their due or their right (Keller 3). Therefore, the complete definition of *mishpat* means, "Giving people what they are due, whether punishment or protection to care" (Keller 3). *Tzadequah*, on the other hand, "[refers] to a life of right relationships," and in the Bible, it, "[refers] to day-to-day living in which a person conducts all relationships in family and society with fairness, generosity and equity" (Keller 9). Together, *mishpat* and *tzadequah* convey the current meaning of social justice in the English language (Keller 13). It is clear that the Bible calls us to justice. Yet oftentimes, we confine the word *justice* into political acts of undoing wrong, only taking *mishpat* and ignoring *tzadequah.* Admittedly, the act of justice can be overwhelming under this limited definition since it requires tremendous commitment and investment. The basis for justice in its sincerity must stem from love. Likewise, the calling of all Christians is, "[to] love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves," as written in Matthew 22:37-40 and therefore, in the logic of love, justice must come forth as the byproduct of love. Surely, it is, "God's job to remember all the victims of injustices in our world, but might there not be one child, one prisoner, one widow,

one refugee that [we] can remember" (Haugen 53). Therefore, in its simplicity, justice is both love and action.

Furthermore, justice has many intricate layers that are personal and structural. In order to fully understand justice, we must dive into love since they are conceptually linked. Oftentimes, love in human terms is, "[used] for romantic love, personal preferences, divine love, friendship, familial love [and] limited it to the last of these" (Moe-Lobeda 165). Yet, Love, as written in the Bible, has three forms, *agape, eros, and philio* (165). *Agape*, a Greek word, specifically defines the Golden Rule of, "Love neighbor as self" (165). Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Seattle University, focuses on *agape* love and provides fourteen features of love in her book *Resisting Structural Evil* as a way to convey the importance of "neighbor-love" a term created in conjunction to the Bible, in relation to the works for social justice. Loving your neighbor means, "Valuing and protecting the life of each individual," to the extent of having "…[the] human right to be in a clean, chemical-free environment, down to the level of individual body" since the livelihood of the individual depends on their environment and the resources available (Moe-Lobeda 198; Pellow CH.7). She states that neighbor-love, "Seeks justice [and] is political as well as interpersonal vocation" (Moe-Lobeda 182). In other words, social justice must go beyond feelings of charity because, "A society cannot depend for justice upon voluntary feelings of goodwill that may come and go" (Moe-Lobeda 181). Thus, it requires political action which means justice must seek to end structural evil under the definition of love and demands perseverance and patience. As a result, Moe-Lobeda warns that many failures in, "Social ethics, political theory and education are due to a misunderstanding of the ontological character of love" (181).

When combining love and action, we have the full encompassing definition of social justice, which, "[calls] for dismantling structures of oppression that are damaging people in a given context [and] heeding the voices of oppressed sectors" (Moe-Lobeda 178). Therefore, any form of structural oppression requires social justice, whether it be anthropological, ecological, political or spiritual. As Christians, it is our duty to do justice as commanded in the Bible, but why does the present-day Church lack the direct action towards justice? Of course, the split in theological practices has affected the priorities of the church, but within the Bible, it also spoke of evil and the human fall in Genesis 3. When evil entered the world, love became minimalized through the concept of self-justification and self-desire. According to the Bible, humans were made in the image of God and were made perfect, finding our identity in Christ. When sin entered the world, that perfect relationship was broken and humans began to seek identity elsewhere. As a result, our identity is tied to the things we have, our careers, and our comfortable lifestyle. We overlooked the true meaning of living out the gospel and our lives have become more self-indulgent than ever. Money became the substitute for our broken relationship with God and as a result, our planet and our neighbors suffer at the brunt of our selfishness (Schut 220).

The Present-Day Church and Charity

In the year 2014, about 95.4% of households within the United States gave to charity (National Philanthropic Trust). Of which, 45% of the giving came from religious groups, an average of $1,703 per household (National Philanthropic Trust). The number seems significant yet when broken down, this only amounts to about 1.8% of the average household income (National Philanthropic Trust). Looking at the percentage holistically, that number is simply pocket change. Keller argues the word "charity" is equated with, "Gifts to the poor [known as] 'acts of righteousness' [and] not giving generously is not stinginess but unrighteousness, a

violation of God's law" (Keller 14). He further states that, "To not 'share his bread' and his assets with the poor would be unrighteous, a sin against God, and therefore by definition a violation of God's justice" (Keller 14). Charity might be considered a form of justice in Keller's terms, but as defined previously by Moe-Lobeda and the biblical text, justice must encompass love and direct action. Consequently, charity without relationships cannot replace social justice work. Churches solely focused on charity giving should consider revisiting the biblical theology of faith and works. Furthermore, charity becomes an escape from guilt and the suffering of the world for a global citizen. We donate because the news of tragedies and atrocities in other parts of the world and often leave social justice work to experts in our community. We find ourselves speaking of justice, but not reflecting justice in our actions. Hence, I argue that the act of charity is a cowardly way out of the demanding work of social justice because we are protecting ourselves from the hurt and the reality of the suffering. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "The great masquerade of evil has played havoc with all our ethical concepts. For evil to appear disguised as light, charity, historical necessity, or social justice is quite bewildering to anyone brought up on our traditional ethical concepts" (qtd in Moe-Lobeda 49). As a result, our hegemonic vision and cultural beliefs enforce the concept of charity as the solution to relieve our guilty conscience of knowing the suffering of this world. This dynamic puts the receiver of our charity at a distance and allows us to continue living without being affected emotionally, physically or spiritually. Is that the church we live in today? Have we reduced the act of justice to mere charity and the relief of our own conscience? Have our tendencies to seek after self-justification and self- identity blinded us from living ethically and treating those around us with love and care? We all want to believe that we are made good and are good. However, the truth is the burden of sin has changed the course of humanity. We have been blinded by the existing evil and lost our ethics and morals

along the way. Believers or not, it affects us all. We struggle from the same sentiments and thoughts against evil things of the world. Nonetheless, we continue to live comfortably with a blind eye knowing we could do more.

The Gospel and the Responsibility of the Christian Church

What does it truly mean to be a Christian and to live out the gospel? John Stott, in his book *Human Rights and Human Wrongs*, described the essence of being a Christian by entering into the conversation of Christian tradition and Jesus's ministry. He argues that living out the gospel and demonstrating God's love must be through action. Therefore, fighting for social justice in its many forms should be the heart of the church. All humans are made in the image of God and should have the divine right to be viewed as equal and share equal rights. Therefore, the Church should be on the forefront to protect those who are powerless especially when laws are set in place but not universally practiced.

Additionally, Richard Stearns, the President of World Vision, traveled to Uganda and arrived at the conclusion that the Christian walk is more than just a personal relationship with Jesus Christ but also requires an outward transformative relationship with the world. Coming from a Christian and biased angle, Stearns challenges the Christian community to seek out our neighbors, those who are in need. He also identifies the current issue with the Church and explains how church politics and structure need change but it must start with our own Christian walks.

To redefine the current practice of Christianity is crucial since it challenges the current Church to evaluate how it is making "Disciples of all Nations" and seeking to live out the gospel. It means to share the love that God has granted us freely and in return, Christians must reflect

this same love to those around them. To reflect, in this case, means through direct and social action according to both Stott and Stearns.

Redefining Church and its mission

Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen, authors of the book *The New Parish,* argue for a new way of doing church locally. Together, they redefined the word *Parish* which, "…represents the church's everyday life and relationships within a particular place," and it, "…calls us to *telos,* or purpose, of the church-living out God's dream and caring for the place we are called" (Sparks et al. 23). It is about re-envisioning the role of the church in its place and how it can address social issues. To do so, the church needs to ask what it means to be, "Living above place," which describes the process where, "…the tendency to develop structures that keep cause-and-effect relationships far apart in space and time where we cannot have firsthand experience of them" (Sparks et al. 23). We can simply ask, "who is our neighbor," and, "what does it mean to love our neighbor as a church?" These are crucial questions, essential to understanding the role of the church within its community in regards to social justice.

In his letter, James criticizes Christians who have missed the point that salvation does not rest on faith alone. Instead, faith without works is dead (James 2:20). Works is defined by meeting the needs of others and in modern context is known as social justice. In this context, I define social justice in the form of education equity, Nicole Baker Fulgham, the founder of the Expectation project, argues in her book *Educating all God's Children* that the moral and social responsibility of the church is to respond to the needs of the vulnerable. Addressing Christians who are concerned with education equity issues, Fulgham offers general suggestions on how the Church can participate and elevate schools in their communities to meet the needs of the children from providing resources and meals to advocacy work. She focuses on the importance of

collaborative work with the community including the increase of parental involvement, the elevation of the community voice and the empowerment of teachers through the foundation of relationship. However, she does not lay out how relationships can be sustained or cultivated, which is an area of development where many churches are in need of guidance.

Love and Compassion: Our Human Duty

To love and be compassionate towards another fellow human being is not just a Christian thing to do. This is the basis of human duty and not only relevant to the Christian community. Most importantly, it is our human duty to uphold and care for our next generation. To educate is to elevate our next generation and to continue to pass down knowledge and skills so they can prosper and thrive. To favor only authoritative and power groups is selfish and negligent, especially with the increasingly diverse society we live in, where hundreds and thousands of cultures are cohabiting. The idea of selection bias towards a race or any one group is counterintuitive to the progression of society. Daniel G. Groody, the author of *Globalization, Spirituality and Justice*, believes that, "We have veered off course as a human family and... the world as we know it today cries out for moral and spiritual wisdom that can help us navigate the path to peace" (Groody 18). To limit power to only those who have money and affluence in the political arena speaks to the selfishness and shame we, as a nation have built, a reputation that is heartless and self-fulfilling. These values can be dangerous and can blind us from seeing the reality we are living in, thinking that we are no longer the greatest or the strongest. But instead, over the years, we have become strong due to the acceptance and sharing of thoughts and beliefs. We became great because we learned to speak each other's languages. Yet with our current education system, too many minority students are falling through the cracks. They are learning that because they are of color, of lower-economic status, and/or of a different background, they

do not stand a chance in this society. That is what our education system is reflecting. Students are learning that if they do not look Caucasian or have wealth, they are not worth the time and investment. The students of the Seattle Public School District, especially minority students, are living with that message from the beginning of their educational years. The lack of educator investments due to unstable staffing and scarce resources to make education captivating, rewarding and challenging are only some of the factors setting students back in their academics. Not only is the school system failing the students, all of the odds are stacked against them. In some cases, some families are struggling with finance, domestic violence or substance abuse. Regardless of the factors that are preventing the students' family life from being healthy and normal, most average families, like Mai's family, are hard-working but only scraping by. The typical stereotypes of families that are lazy or have the naive disillusionment of the American Dream are false. Instead, those stereotypes are created by political elites who want to justify their own selfishness and comfort. Thus, the problem does not lie in, "…capitalism per se but rather the abuses and excesses [created by elites] that flow from the capitalist system" (Groody 17).

Tension and Fear: The Hidden Truth

As common to man, we are living in a world where we experience tension on a constant basis. Whether it be at work, at home or in any given public space, we as human beings are sensitive towards our environment. We are deeply spiritual beings and are aware of the forces around us. There are tensions that we are aware of and those we are oblivious to. Our behaviors and decisions are controlled by these ominous forces. At a young age, we are taught the acceptable expectations and proper behaviors. It is common for us to live inside the safety of our comfort zones and what is expected of us. This is the world in which we operate.

The feeling of tension is fascinating because it reveals truths that we never imagined were possible. Our natural inclination is to run away from it. This reaction drives us and reveals something deeper about our own humanness, the concept of fear. Fear drives our action and our decisions on a daily basis. When we are faced with a pressing situation, we always think our options are either fight or flight. This is nothing new to us because we all have experiences that we can recall when faced with these decisions. Fear changes us from how we talk to our action and thoughts. We often behave out of fear, maybe to impress someone or to hide a secret. While it controls much of what we do, think, and feel, it also becomes a barrier for us from becoming an authentic and greater version of ourselves. Parker Palmer, the author of *Let Your Life Speak*, warns that, "Trying to live someone else's life, or to live by an abstract norm, will invariably fail and may even do great damages" (4). Instead, we should challenge ourselves to not, "…tell your life what you intend to do with it [but] listen…and let your life tell you what truths and values you embody, what values you represent" (Palmer 3). Are we living unauthentic lives in order to survive this world where we continuously feel judged and feel the need to impress? When we live unauthentic lives, we allow the external environment to control much of what we do. The status quo becomes an attractive element to uphold, instead of doing what is right and ethical. That same fear bars us from recognizing the pain that is surrounding us because fear naturally focuses ourselves at the center. The pain around us might be the children in the neighborhood who do not have clothes on their backs or families who are starving for food and living on the street. The pain is in our schools today.

Tension and fear go hand in hand and cannot operate without the other. It is natural for us as humans to flee instead of fight. However, imagine if we can live a more authentic life through the ways we face our fears; maybe it is acting on what is right or reaching out to a family in

need. If this was the case, tension would no longer have a deep grip on us and we can freely live with one another, even with those whom we deem powerful or different from us. There will be mutual relationships and appreciation for each other's genuineness and beliefs. Nonetheless, the picture I described might seem too ideal but it is not impossible.

The concepts of tension and fear have formed and continue to be a barrier between church and school partnerships. Let me begin by describing a reality based out of fear that we know and one without fear we can hope to strive for. We have gone through the narrative of the Church and the narrative of the school. In civic society, the concept of separation of Church and State is clearly evident. Every citizen knows this concept. There is no questioning of its existence and it continues to persist. On the contrary, I offer an alternative perspective, the myth of the Separation of Church and State.

The Myth on Separation of Church and State

In this section, I will provide a pointed analysis on the subject of, "Separation of Church and State," and it should not be taken as a comprehensive analysis on the subject matter. The popular view on religion is that it should be separate from the State and politics. First, we have to begin by understanding the laws behind the phrase, "Separation of Church and State." According to Professor Douglas Laycock, a Law Professor at University of Virginia and an expert in the field of religious liberty and the law of remedies, states, "The central meaning of separation is to separate the authority of the church from the authority of the state" (Laycock 46). This dominant constitutional clause is derived from Thomas Jefferson's word to explain the First Amendment and the Establishment Clause. The First Amendment states:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or

the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a

redress of grievances [while the Establishment Clause is embedded in the First

Amendment] the establishment of religion. (U.S. Constitution. Amend. I.)

Interpretation of these two phrases has created tension among scholars and the Courts. The

tension rests on the interpretation of the phrase from a "No-Aid Separationism" or "Neutrality"

angle. "No-Aid Separationism" is defined as forbidding any government from providing any

resources and help to religion, especially on the point of financial support (Laycock 48). As for

"Neutrality," it prevents the government from, "[discriminating] either in favor of religion or

against religion" (Laycock 48). In today's context, the Supreme Courts has the ultimate stance on

whether something is violating the First Amendment and the Establishment Clause. Yet, many

scholars have analyzed the possible myth behind this phrase and provided insights that revealed

gaps in our understanding of this Clause.

Patrick M. Garry, an American Law Professor and the director of Hagemann Center for

Legal & Public Policy Research, argues that the origins for the establishment of "Separation of

Church and State" has been based out of a distorted interpretation from its original intent. By

analyzing historical accounts, Garry uncovers the intent of our Founding Fathers to create the

Constitution with religion in mind as its moral guiding light. Much of the meaning behind the

clause "Separation of Church and State" was intended to protect religion from being sullied by

the State and, "…not between religion and non-religion" (Garry 14). Hence, modern

interpretation of that clause remains a political battle in order to, "…institutionalize a growing

animosity to religion" (Garry 19).

According to Garry and Laycock, the argument of "Separation of Church and State" been

distorted and taken out of context from the Founders' intent. Professor Douglas Laycock also

finds that the baseline in which "Separation" evaluated by the Supreme Court is often

inconsistent through his investigation of non-aid theory and nondiscriminatory theory, also

known as "No-aid separationism" and "Neutrality". These theories are evident in the

conversation of education where the State must remain neutral to avoid favoritism. Education

seems to reflect such dissension especially in the case of *Everson vs. Board of Education,* where

the State cannot aid a specific religious group nor can it discriminate against one particular

group. By analyzing Professor Carl Esbeck's theories of religious liberty, Laycock agrees with

Professor Esbeck and concludes that the "Separation of Church and State" is simply to,

"[minimize governmental influence] over personal choices concerning religious beliefs and

practices" (qtd in Laycock 69). Say that the State and religion are completely separate is

incorrect due to their dependence on each other to ensure nondiscriminatory decision to be made

by the State, especially in the debate of charitable choice and social services. Through the mutual

dependence, the State is able to maximize religious freedom and social services for the needy.

Thus, Garry and Laycock demonstrate that the misinterpretation of the clause

"Separation of Church and State" has affected how the current day church is able to respond to

social justice issues, especially education equity, since the church regards "Separation of Church

and State" as a law to be obeyed. Yet there is no actual law in place that prevents social services

provided by religious providers as long as the service offered is one that can equally be given by

an alternate entity and is nondiscriminatory (Laycock 44). In other words, secular and religious

organization of various backgrounds must provide the same standards of services and they

cannot limit to a particular group if the government choose to partner or participate. Therefore, to

say that under the clause of "Separation of Church and State" that churches cannot provide

services directly to a public entity, in my argument for educational purposes, is completely invalid since there is no law that states such prohibition.

Furthermore, in his article *The Many Meanings of Separation*, Professor Laycock analyzed Philip Hamburger's book *Separation of Church and State* and by examining the historical meaning of "Separation of Church & State", he argues the majority of people have no clue what the clause truly means without understanding the true context and history behind it (Laycock). Aside from the literal interpretation of "Separation of Church & State" derived from Jefferson, a historical battle between Catholics and Protestants has added to the fire and elongated the misuse of this clause. However, varying from group to group, the clause has adapted different meanings and lacks consistency. Laycock argues, "The phrase has no agreed core of meaning [but it] is deeply entrenched in American society and people will not quit using it" (1700). Hence, the danger of using the clause without knowing the historical context can be deemed as naïve and ignorant.

Similarly, Veronica C. Abreu, a clerk to the Honorable Michael Murphy, compared the works of Phil Hamburger and Noah Feldman. She concludes from both works that "Separation of Church and State" is a multi-interpretation of the Establishment Clause despite the difference between Hamburger's and Feldman's approach to historical accounts. She warns that judges should take into account historical contexts that have openly affected the meaning of "Separation of Church and State" and the danger of misconstruing the meaning that perpetuates, "…[the] infrastructural biases that favor majoritarian tenants" (Abreu 640). Without proper knowledge and a holistic perspective on the subject matter, popular biases and culture take hold which leads to false truths and further fear mongering.

Here, I have outlined the argument for school and church partnership under the concept of "the Separation of Church and State." The evidence reveals a profound naivety and fear that is looming over our modern society for those who believe that "the Separation of Church and State" is only regarded under the account of religion versus non-religion. Instead, it is referring to the government's control over religious freedom, activities and practices. The government must not treat the Church or any other religious group under a special case when compared to the secular counterparts. If so, it has violated the intent of the First Amendment and the Establishment Clause. To this day, tension remains on the interpretation of the First Amendment and the Establishment Clause; it is between the interpretation as separation versus neutrality.

Human-made Division

The lengthy debate on the "Separation of Church and State" remains a heavy subject. Even with scholars and experts of the laws' interpretation and extensive research, the public still holds onto the ideas that "Separation of Church and State" is regarded as a controversy between religion vs. non-religion. My perception on the subject matter reveals something inherently deeper and more personal. It is fear, our fear of what "should be" but our unwillingness to let go of "what is." We refuse to let go of our own judgement even if it might be wrong. Sometimes, our own feelings for anger and judgement can feel like righteousness but its origin is hate and not love. In line with the possibility of the school and church partnership, I argue that our own self-righteousness, selfishness and fear prevent children from a life time of opportunities. We want to prove that what has been set into motion for generations is absolutely the right thing to do. Can we not feel the weight of the responsibility knowing that children, our next generation, could obtain a hopeful future if we would only set aside our own self-proclaimed righteousness? When will we realize that we owe them and their families an apology? What if we could provide

a bright future for all children instead of lacking the determination to fight the good fight? At the end of the day, it boils down to our fear for change because it would affect the course of "what is;" it is unpredictable and uncontrollable. That is why when we hope for a systemic change, it takes a long time and requires our own "blood equity" in order to mobilize just a little change (Lynch & Walls 157). According to Kevin Lynch and Julius Walls, the author of *Mission, Inc*, "blood equity" is a business term that defines a form of personal investment into an enterprise that has become an endangerment to yourself, not only physically and mentally but also social-emotionally and to your family (Lynch & Walls 157). It is a sacrifice that most of us are not willing to make. Changes are not easy because it forces us into discomfort, places and feelings we do not want to explore. Changes come with sacrifice, which many of us are reluctant to give. At times, our sacrifice might not amount to anything. We find our efforts unnoticed and thus, we often go for the quick fix. This only treats the symptom of a much more deep-rooted issue. Despite the fear for change in the context of church and school partnership and the issue of the opportunity gap, we recognize that there is well-supported evidence for a large-scale solution. Yet, we refuse to try them because it is much too risky, or so we think.

The church and the school each face a different set of risks. For the church, the thought of getting political turns many volunteers and members away. They argue that it is too risky, it is not for them and would like to only take a low-risk approach. Perhaps, to write a check or maybe tutor a child or two which might not take too much commitment or disruption of the day-to-day lifestyle. Another response might be, "this is for the experts who understand development, nonprofits and education issues." Another might be, "the long-term commitment simply does not attract me because I already have too much going on and do not need another thing on my list." We live in a society where problems are dealt with by a quick fix, maybe with a check or a

program. Dear friends, we do not need more interventions and programs to fix the symptoms we see, we need a cultural change, a value change and a heart change. This is a moral and heart issue. It is not only a systemic issue. We see many community-based organizations, faith-based organization and nonprofits in Rainier Valley and yet, over the course of many years, the changes are minimal to none. Indeed, great works are being done but the change I am referring to is within our hearts. We have all these great organizations and the nonprofit sectors because we know the church and the government had failed us in the first place. Each of these entities had not taken up their responsibility in the community, which led to the creation of the nonprofit sector. A sector in which we know is not fully equipped to tackle the multitude of social justice issues at hand. Also, the school faces the risk of religious equity and acceptance of diversity. They refuse to receive help from the community because they fear the possibility of lawsuits. The fear is completely valid and no doubt can be destructive if the school were to run into such a situation. However, this fear again stems from a place of unknown, misinterpretation and mistrust. The brunt of this resting on the children who cannot thrive in a system that refuses to give them peace, a system that refuses to admit it needs help. When schools are suffering and no other "top-down" solutions can provide hope, why do we hesitate to turn to the church community for guidance and wisdom? With their wisdom and collaboration, we can begin to reassess the resources and manpower that are needed and available. It is time to take a stand and stop the perpetuation of old fears and old ideas.

Transformational Model: Relationship Building

When our schools fail to meet minimum standards, the children are the ones who bear the detrimental consequences. Many people question how they can possibly help reconcile this unfortunate reality. Churches that seek to provide some assistance find that a transactional model

of relief, solely relying on financial donations, is not a sustainable solution. Jayakumar Christian, a development practitioner, argues:

> [T]hat the economically rich often have 'god-complexes,' a subtle and unconscious sense of superiority in which they believe they have achieved their wealth through their own efforts and that they have been anointed to decide what is best for low-income people, whom they view as inferior to themselves. (qtd in Corbett & Fikkert 61)

In other words, a transactional model focuses on the helpers' "selfless" act of giving instead of the dignity of the disadvantaged. Such a model often appeals to the masses because it elevates a sense of self-worth and does not require a long-term commitment.

With the movement of churches that seek to do good will for the disadvantaged, Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert discover that not all approaches are effective because they do not address the root issues that the communities are facing. Instead, work done in good will can bring tremendous harm despite good intention. Criticizing the Western Church, Corbett and Fikkert argue that the goal for poverty alleviation must seek to restore relationship between God and people and therefore, relationship is key to developmental work and poverty alleviation. In order to restore a community, Corbett and Fikkert encourage churches who want to help "the poor" must adopt a, "Gospel-focused, asset-based, participatory developmental [model]" (Corbett and Fikkert 233).

Similarly, in the opinion of Bryant L. Myers, a Professor of transformational development at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, transformational development is described as a progressive way to redirect our current understanding of poverty and how we ought to interpret and live out the gospel. By meticulously defining poverty, Myers

advocates the importance of the spiritual aspect to development work on the ground. He argues that the spiritual framework is absent from many existing developmental models. With that, these frameworks resort to logic, numbers and sciences as a solution, while often neglecting the concept of relationships, empowerment and inclusion of community voices in addressing the issue of poverty. Myers sets the precedent that relationship-building is the foundation for development but it requires radical, personal transformation through understanding the crux of the true gospel.

The key to a transformational model is relationships. Relationships that stem from a love that is beyond human understanding. A love that is spiritually grounded and in the Christian context, a love that is derived from God. Corbett, Fikkert and Myers, in their research, illustrate the importance of relationship and how development can form out of personal relationship and mutual understanding. It is getting down to the essence of being human, to love and to care for your neighbors by living out the gospel.

However, the push to fight for social justice leaves many unsettled because the majority believes that they are not well-trained or well-versed in this area. Because of it, churches that push their congregation towards long-term social justice movements often receive pushback. So how can churches prepare themselves who are willing to help? The transformational model is an approach that goes beyond helping the needy since it also transforms the lives of the helper. The transformation is mutual. Oftentimes, Christians are more familiar with the idea of "Servant Leadership." As a matter of fact, if you have grown up in the church, you are most likely taught this concept of serving others as a way of being a leader. Unlike Servant Leadership, the transformational model comes with a different set of leadership skills. Although similar, the difference is in the leadership style.

A. Gregory Stone, Robert F. Russell, and Kathleen Patterson, the author of

Transformational versus Servant Leadership: a difference in leader focus, examines the

similarities and differences between the two leadership approaches. They find that

transformational leadership often strives to empower their followers to an organizational

commitment in order to accomplish goals and objectives. The empowerment is derived from the

leaders transforming the personal values of their followers, "…to support the vision and goals of

the organization by fostering the environment where relationships can be formed and by

establishing a climate of trust" (Stone et al. 350). Whereas, Servant Leadership frequently leads

through the act of servanthood in hopes to motivate followers to meet the needs of others.

Transformation is not only the act of help and action but first, it is a transformation of personal

values and inner-workings of the individual. Hence, transformational leadership enhances

transformational development as a method to motivate others to follow the same vision. The key

in motivating others is through relationship building and challenging others to action.

Thus, churches who seek to alleviate injustice among their communities must first

prepare their hearts, minds and souls and have a clear understanding of their will and reason

before establishing any program or structure to address the needs of their community. They must

comprehend the significance of relationship building not only with their community but among

their own congregational brothers and sisters. Failure to establish a strong foundation will lead to

more harm for the community and for the church.

Jubilee REACH: A Transformational Model for Development

A modern day example of a transformational model that achieves significant results is not

too far from my own home. In the City of Bellevue, a nonprofit named Jubilee REACH, exists to

transform the way education equity is approached. REACH is an acronym for Relationships,

Education, Assistance, Community and Hospitality, which are the core values Jubilee REACH

upholds. There is no secret or a particular model that Jubilee REACH practices other than the

concept of relationship building. Their mission is simply, "[to] transform communities one

student at a time" (Kern). Brent Christie, the Executive Director of Jubilee REACH, stated that

their work is about, "Love, listen, and learn," to the needs of the community (Christie). Their

goal, through the process of relationship building, instills motivation and passion for learning in

individual students so they can reach excellence. Jubilee REACH's method is simple, which is to

have consistency and long-term commitment in the schools they work with so the students can

be exposed to their presence. The most important aspect to children's positive development at a

young age, especially in elementary and middle school, is having good influence and strong

relationships with adults in their life. According to Kathryn Copsey, the author of *What is A*

Child, we need to look at the child from a holistic angle and, "What is important for the child at

[the] early stage of development is to have one or two consistent caregivers with whom she can

build up a bond of security and trust [but] the caregiver does not necessary have to be the

mother" (5). Jubilee REACH is able to provide such influence by placing site coaches in fourteen

Bellevue Schools to engage the students. The site coaches meet with the students one on one and

are present during school hours, lunch hours and after-school for extracurricular activities. In

addition, they help in various classrooms and are an extra resource for teachers and school staff.

Not only do they spend day in and day out in the schools, they also act as an older brother or an

older sister figure to these students. For most students who come from a low-income and

minority background, the struggle of finding belonging, having confidence and a healthy self-

image can be challenging. Unlike their white counterparts, who might have parents that are well-

educated or from a stable family, children from a low-income and minority background often

have to navigate the system on their own much like Rylie from the beginning narrative. Hence, the site coaches provide such guidance and support for the students as they progress through the Bellevue School system. During my internship, the site coach from Tillicum Middle School explained to me that our presence matters so much in the kids' lives, especially since, their parents cannot always be present due to financial reasons and poor work schedule (George). The best part of the coaches' work is not simply addressing the opportunity gap in Bellevue but being present in the students' lives and the satisfaction from knowing that the students can succeed. From my own personal site visits to the schools, I witnessed firsthand the impact the site coaches have on the students and the staff. They are well-loved and appreciated for all the work and time spent with the students. With the investments that coaches give to the students, they become an alternative resource for students who have mistrusted school administrations and come from dysfunctional families. Hence, the relationship between the coaches and the students is essential to the work and impact Jubilee REACH is having.

During my fieldwork with Jubilee REACH, I have learned about their establishment and the amazing story behind its inception through a conversation with their Director of Community Relations and Chaplain, Tom Brewer. The story began a little over ten years ago. Jubilee REACH started with a church in Bellevue, Bellevue Presbyterian Church, where the lead pastor at the time, Pastor Scott Dudley, saw a need to motivate his congregation to contribute to their community and see that the church is more than just the four walls (Brewer). With that, they got a group together and began to reach out to the community by asking what the needs were. Just around the same time, the Principal of Lake Hills Elementary at the time, but now the Executive Director of Student Services, Judy Buckmaster, saw an immediate need for her young students. When Judy arrived at the school at 6:30 a.m. every morning, a few of her students were already

dropped off at the school about an hour or so earlier without any adult supervision or protection (Buckmaster). Parents would have to drop off their children early due to their work schedule and also, their lack of finances to have a caregiver to watch over their children. These students would stand in the cold for hours without proper clothing and breakfast. Buckmaster expressed her discomfort and concerns for her students to Jubilee REACH (which was not officially established during that time), when they reached out to identify the needs of the community. During the meeting, Buckmaster and her team worked together to identify their goals for the students as well as describe the gap. In response, Jubilee REACH answered that, "They wanted to step into the gap and start helping to figure out how to serve those needs" (Buckmaster). With that, they fundraised, purchased and refurbished a surplus building in the Lake Hills community (Buckmaster). Under the guidance of Buckmaster, the Jubilee REACH center opened after six months and a group of volunteers from Bellevue Presbyterian Church began to take in children during the morning and serve them breakfast. This was Jubilee REACH's first service to the community, a before-school program for the children at Lake Hills Elementary (Buckmaster). With the consistency and ongoing generosity and commitment by the church, Jubilee REACH soon gained the trust of Buckmaster, who is now a strong, long-term advocate for their work. Jubilee REACH was soon known for their work and their consistency in service towards the children. The miraculous occurrence was God-sent because the surplus building is located very near to Lake Hills Elementary schools, which could not be a more convenient and safe place for the parents to drop off their children. The children now have a safe, warm place to go to as early as 5:30 in the morning and are fed before school session. The Jubilee REACH staff then make sure the children get to school on time by walking them over to the school from Jubilee REACH, which is about a block away. Due to their consistency and care, Jubilee REACH has grown to be

very credible and brought, "[a] mammoth evolution of services," to their community with the approval and endorsement from the Bellevue School District (Buckmaster). More importantly, the services that Jubilee REACH is providing to the community as simply, "…walking along side people," to meet them where they are; it is about, "[a] hand up and not a handout" (Buckmaster). Today, Jubilee REACH has expanded to working in 14 out of 28 Bellevue Schools (Kern).

During my fieldwork, I had the opportunity to partner with Jubilee REACH and the Bellevue School District to teach one of their enrichment classes during the Bellevue School District Summer School. The program was called Junior Achievement, which teaches students about their community and business models to help students to begin thinking and investing in their future goals and dreams. I was assigned to Sherwood Forest Elementary, which is located in the Crossroads neighborhood. That particular neighborhood and its surrounding communities are mostly made up of immigrant and low-income families. Many parents have multiple jobs and cannot stay at home with their children. As a result, the summer school provides a safe place for children to find activities to do over the summer as well as catching up on their academics. Summer School is only one of the services Jubilee REACH participates in. They also have other programs like ESL classes during the weekdays and after-school sports activities for the students. Aside from the program that I participated in, a key component to my internship was the opportunity to personally be among the students and observe the classroom life. This experience enabled me to see a glimpse of an educator's life. We often blame and put the responsibility on our educators to teach our children well but in a lot of ways, there is a limit to how much a teacher can do. Taking the second graders as an example, most second graders should know how to read and write well. A teacher should not need to teach the alphabet because a second grader

should already know it by heart. However, I had to do that with my second graders. I spent most of class time teaching the basics instead of teaching about their dreams and goals. I had to teach them the alphabet and vocabulary in order to move on with my intended lesson. Teachers are faced with students who have major learning deficiencies and are unable to fulfill their job. Much of their time is spent on helping students getting back on track with their academics before they can begin teaching their curriculum. I find this to be a systemic issue where teachers are not well-informed and well-supported by their administration because oftentimes, teachers are the ones to be blamed for the student's poor academic progress. Educators are also bound by various rules. A site coach who I got to work with during my internship expressed that teachers are tied down by strict rules whereas site coaches can share openly and deeply with the students (Shin). The opportunity to connect with the students on a more personal level enable the site coaches to give students "tough love" (Shin). He argued, "Why Jubilee REACH works is because we can work with the teachers but we are way out of those rules… It's not so much a formula that we have created, it's just that we are allowed to have the freedom to just be ourselves and love the kids in a way that seems fit" (Shin).

My heart goes out to the teachers and the students who are lacking the access to be successful. My anger goes towards the system that is prohibiting students from getting opportunities and access at such a young age. These children are being forced to disengage and the system does not build in a time and place for these children to be loved and cared for. Yet, Jubilee REACH is present day in and day out loving these students. The work that they are doing is inspirational and heartwarming.

Trust: The Foundation of Relationships

One of Jubilee REACH's greatest strengths is their ability to gain trust from the community they serve and work with. Judy Buckmaster said, "One of the qualities that stands out about Jubilee REACH is their ability to earn and maintain trust." In any given relationship, trust is the key component that ensures the relationships stay healthy. There are many ways where relationships can be broken in a matter of minutes. Yet, it takes years to fully build a strong, trusting relationship with someone. It is easy to describe trust as a feeling but when we have to explain why someone cannot be trusted, we find ourselves often out of words.

Brené Brown, a research professor at the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work, in her research, analyzes what trust is. Brown states, "Trust is choosing to make something important to you vulnerable to the action of someone else [while] distrust is what I have shared with you that is important to me that is not safe with you." She illustrated an example of a marble jar to describe how trust can be build. Each time someone does something worthy of your trust, they essentially add a marble to your marble jar. Eventually, the marble jar gets filled to the top where you begin to realize the reasons why someone is worthy of your trust. Brown found that, "Trust often occurs in the smallest moments" and called these, "sliding door moments." These are opportunities where you can build trust or where you can betray someone (Brown). Furthermore, she breaks down trust into seven components, created an acronym "B.R.A.V.I.N.G", which stands for boundaries, reliability, accountability, the vault, integrity, non-judgmental and generosity (Brown). Each of these seven components must be present in order for a healthy relationship to thrive.

In the same way, many Jubilee REACH site coaches must reflect and uphold these components to build a relationship with each of their students. To do so, the Jubilee REACH

leadership team must lead by example to create an environment that fosters such expectations and behaviors where their staff will naturally follow. From my personal interactions and observations, everything that the Jubilee REACH leaders have done comes from a place of the "Love, listen and learn" approach, which is a foundational value of the organization (Christie). They remain consistent in their words and actions; this gives credibility to their work on the ground. As Brown describes, the anatomy of trust is complex and the only way to earn trust is first by, "…braving self-love," which translates to trusting self (Brown). She argues that, "You cannot ask someone to give you something when you do not first have" (Brown). In other words, we cannot expect someone to believe in what we say and do without first doing and practicing it. As Christie said, "We live among the people, that is the way Jubilee REACH does it." Therefore, we cannot expect a relationship to thrive and grow if we do not first put in our effort (Brown).

The "Why" behind the Model

Much of the motivation behind the research and the push for a model for School and Church partnership stems from an existing partnership on the ground in Beacon Hill. About 12 years ago, my church, Seattle Chinese Alliance Church (SCAC), started a partnership with Dearborn Park International School, an elementary school across the street. A simple observation and a heart of curiosity has led to a movement for a school and church partnership in Beacon Hill. It began with the church leadership staff asking the question, "Why are all these cars parked at the church around 2 p.m. every day?" By their observation, the church leadership saw parents picking up their children from school. In response, they started to pass out snacks and greeted families and students who parked at the church. My lead English pastor reached out to the leaders at Dearborn, introduced himself and began to ask about the needs of the school. The conversation brought forth a series of needs and concerns, especially when a majority of the

student population were on free/ reduced lunch program. From that point on, SCAC has been a strong supporter for Dearborn. The beginning of the partnership focused solely on providing for Dearborn's immediate needs. Through donations from the church, members have collected canned foods for families, and school supplies and purchased uniforms for students. As the partnership has grown, in addition to the donations, scholarships are given yearly to the school to support their PTA and graduation field trips for the students. About 4 years ago, SCAC partnered with Union Gospel Mission (UGM) to create an after-school program for the students, so they can have a safe place to go to after school. Here, the students receive academic tutoring in all subjects, participate in extracurricular activities like robotics classes, and attend fun educational field trips like to the zoo. These activities are all provided through the church and the church's local community partners. The development of the partnership is thriving and helping students succeed as well as providing free alternatives for parents who cannot be with their children after school.

The story of Dearborn and SCAC prompted me to begin a journey by searching for a model that could be widely used for any church who is seeking to start a partnership with a local school. By using appreciative inquiry, an action research method that provides, "a holistic view of what already is and seeks answers to a new set of questions," I got an opportunity to analyze the positive development outcomes from this partnership (Myers 259). However, this analysis has also raised a whole set of new questions of "what could be" and "how." They are the following:

1. How can we earn the trust of the school?
2. How can we earn the trust and have endorsement from the school district?
3. How do we help other interested churches establish a partnership?

4. Why is only a subset of members fully involved and engaged in the work of this partnership and not everyone?

5. How can we expand this partnership to other schools?

These are all important questions and by using appreciative inquiry, they have revealed areas for improvement. For example, in the area of the church, how can we engage and motivate members to take on the long-term commitment? Likewise, in the area of the school, how do we collaborate together and develop the school so we can be sustainable and trust the church? For this particular project, the scope is only addressing the preparation of the church and the development of a healthy partnership. In regards to the long-term collaboration, there will be room for further research and development in the future. Furthermore, I specifically chose the approach of appreciative inquiry to analyze the work done in Beacon Hill because, "Appreciative inquiry encourages transformational development promoters to find God's redemptive work in the life of the community, and within themselves, and to seek to become intentionally part of it" (Myers 259). Until we live among the people, we can never fully understand their pain. Instead of being bystanders of their pain, we need to become actors and be intentional with our actions as suggested by Myers (259). Truly, appreciative inquiry is, "More than a method, it is a way of viewing the world," and with that, sustainable development depends on such a mindset (Myers 259).

Direct Church and School Partnership: A Model

Taking all of my research, my observations, and the lessons I have learned throughout the past 2 years, I have, with my best intentions and a heavy heart, created a model with practical steps and best practices. My model is broken down into four phases. Note that my model is located in the Appendices. Figure A.1 is a concise chart of the breakdown. Phase 1 focuses on

relationship building within the church as a whole before any partnership begins. This entails a clear mission and vision of the church, unity of the church, a spiritually-ready congregation and clear expectations and direction of the partnership vision. This phase is incredibly crucial to the foundation of the partnership because all too often I have seen a vision cast within a church that led to a lack of response. One would think that most members would be on board and would be on the same page as the church leadership. However, time after time in my personal life, I have witnessed friends and members of the church leaving to seek guidance elsewhere or quitting church altogether when the focus and direction of the church shifts. I question why this is the case. Personal friends of mine shared their thoughts with me and the common theme of "disconnection" emerged. When people feel disconnected from a group, either a church or any organization, the natural inclination is to leave or the less likely choice, to stay. Similar to the concept of flight or fight, most of the time, the result ends up being "flight" or, in other words, "to leave." As a result, my model places a huge emphasis on relationship-building within the church. Until we sort out the church's mess and address the internal gaps and inconsistencies, we will not be ready to take on the work of social justice, especially in the case of education equity. Linda Ruthruff once said, "The church is not equipped to take on the pain and the suffering of this world. We have the motivation but again, good intention is not enough." Since education equity involves the messy and broken stories of students and families as well as the broken story of an unjust system, the church needs to be at a place where it understands and accepts that the mess is fundamentally a "heart" issue that requires deep conviction and reflection. Daniel Harkavy, the CEO of Building Champion, Inc. and the author of *Becoming a Coaching Leader*, says, "[the heart] is the home to both convictions and courage…" (23). Similar to Brown's argument on trust, we cannot expect others to give us something that we do not have. If we do

not sort out our own mess and our own heart, how can we begin to help those who need the most help? We might have great interventions and programs in place and our head is engaged but until our heart connects with the people we are serving; all the work will be self-motivated. We would only be doing the work out of obligation because it feels morally right or feeds our own ego. That applies to the way we approach church as well. The fundamental question we have to ask ourselves is: "what is the motivation behind the work we are doing?" We can easily ask what the needs of the people are and write a check. This form of so-called "development" is nothing but transactional, as previously mentioned. We personally have not connected with the people. Instead, our perspective is viewing the recipient of our "aid" as victims but not as equals. The thought behind such action is deeming us as the "helper" or the "savior," also known as the savior complex. Bryant Myers warns that, "Our attitude about ourselves can become messianic. We are tempted to believe that we are the deliverers of the poor, that we make their lives complete" (115). If we hold such an attitude towards the way we do justice, then let this be a warning that, "We [act as though] we own [the people we are helping] before caring for them. That is immaturity in development" (R. Ruthruff).

Phase 2 focuses on relationship building with the school and listening to its needs. The ultimate goal is to gain trust from the school. During this phase, the church must focus on deep listening and consistently respond to the needs. The church and the school need to come together to prioritize their needs, when all voices needing to be heard are at the table. This will include community members (gatekeepers like the parents), school staffs, and church leaders. The struggle will be trying to narrow down the priorities instead of doing everything. We have the tendency to want to fix everything but we have to be realistic and prioritize. There is a lack of resources and funding so prioritizing and focusing on the major needs will be crucial to the

growth of the partnership. Bjorn Lomborg, the Director of Copenhagen Consensus Center, warns that, "There are many, many things we can do out there, but we've not had the prices nor the sizes" (Lomborg). The danger of stretching ourselves too thin not only harms ourselves (as a church) but also the community we are trying to help. Therefore, the church needs to identify the level of its assets before making any promises. I encourage the church to seriously consider this particular step because once promises are made, they need to be delivered. This is the reason Jubilee REACH is successful because they are able to consistently meet all the needs they have promised to address. As I have mentioned previously and as a word of caution, we are not here to save anyone but merely walk alongside and elevate them so their lives are accounted for and are dignified. Thus, Corbett and Fikkert remind us, "By showing low-income people through our words, our actions and most importantly our ears that they are people with unique gifts and abilities, we can be part of helping them to recover their sense of dignity even as we recover from our sense of pride" (64).

Phase 3 focuses on establishing a workable system that would keep the partnership and all partners accountable. Each partner should have a clear idea of its role and its part in the relationship. Again, every voice needs to be at the table. It is easy to have a transactional relationship where the church can act as a resource "bank." Instead, the success of the partnership should be evaluated through the level of sustainability and the communities' ability to stand on its own and not how much the school is receiving in aid from the church. Dr. Dambisa Moyo, a Ph.D. in economics and a former consultant for the World Bank, argues, "Aid-effectiveness should be measured against its contribution to long-term sustainable growth and whether it moves the greatest number of people out of poverty in a sustainable way" (44-45). The goal of the partnership is to move our next generation out of poverty and be individuals who

can make significant impact to better the world. However, too often these partnerships end up having the church be the school's crutch. Moyo warns, "[the proponent] of aid themselves have acknowledged that unconstrained aid flows always face the danger of being egregiously consumed rather than invested" (46). Therefore, as the partnership grows, we have to critically ask ourselves, "are we working ourselves out of the partnership?" and, "are we building people up to stand on their own two feet?" In addition to sustainability, continuous engagement and investment in the volunteers (in this context, church members) are crucial to the health of the partnership. Members should be cultivated and developed. In the Christian context, this is equivalent to discipleship. Simone P. Joyaux, the author of *Sustainable Fund Development*, explains that, "Effective engagement [involves] people and generates understanding and ownership, cohesion and alignment" (184). The key term is ownership. The only way growth can happen for individuals is that they embrace a sense of ownership in the work they are doing. Likewise, our walk with God is our personal responsibility, so own it. In every aspect of our lives, we should have ownership so we can begin to live a life that is our own and utilize the gifts God has so graciously given us to bring his Kingdom closer. In terms of education equity in the school, the church's role in the partnership is to allow space for the school to make decisions and find solutions to its needs. The church can certainly come alongside to provide support as requested by the school but ultimately, the church should not be doing everything for the school. The church is not the school's crutch.

Lastly, Phase 4 focuses on collaborative networks for extensive services to the community. The hope is to eliminate any duplicate services on the ground. Too often when duplication occurs, it leads to the thinning of funding and resources. A collaborative network is an ideal structure for transformational development practitioners to find encouragement, insights

and learn from each other's experiences. However, Ellen Karsh and Arlen Sue Fox, authors of *The Only Grant- Writing Book You'll Ever Need,* caution that, "Collaboration does not come naturally to most people because it goes against everything we have learned and believed [especially] when Americans usually respect rugged individualism, often viewing people who believe in working together as wimpy idealists or non-self-starter" (180). Although, "[it] isn't easy to leave out preconceived notions [and] our long-held beliefs," when working with one another, children who suffer as a result of an unjust system will experience some relief through our collaborative efforts (Karsh & Fox 180). Furthermore, in her book, Joyaux argues that there are four specific relationships needed to be in place to have a sustainable organization: 1) relationship within your organization, 2) relationship with your community, 3) relationship with your constituents, and 4) relationship with your volunteers. Especially on the relationship with your constituents, Joyaux states that, "Constituency development refers to donors as well as clients and volunteers, and other constituents [and] only by developing strong and effective long-term relationships will your organization have sufficient constituents to survive and thrive in the future" (291). In order to have a sustainable model for a school and church partnership, a necessary network of collaborative relationships must be present to mobilize change on a systemic level. When the possibility of a model exists, as illustrated through Jubilee REACH, the hope to rebuild a community is achievable and within our reach.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have educated the Church on how to better respond to social justice, in the context of education equity, through action and love. The existing opportunity gap is growing at a rapid rate. The Church must equip itself to respond and tackle the needs of its community. The work of justice begins with us. For the Church, the key is to internalize and fully understand the

encompassing Gospel of faith and works, which includes social justice. The Gospel cannot and should not stop at the level of our personal relationship with God but should encompass our outward response to the Gospel, the cause of social justice. The work of justice is not only for the experts in the field. In fact, our own two hands can make a significant impact if we accept and comprehend that the work of justice is not just about us. It is about the people who we are serving but most of all, the work of the Kingdom we as Christians are called to do. Moreover, I have delineated a pointed analysis surrounding the Myth of the Separation of Church and State to dispel the political and physical barriers for churches to be on the forefront of justice work. Furthermore, I have discussed how fear can no longer be our excuse to turn a blind eye to the suffering and pain. If fear is the barrier to the work we do, then the Church needs to ask themselves: where is their faith? The author of 1 John writes:

> And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is Love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:16-19)

If we say that we internalize the "love" we are given and understand the cost of that "love," then a lack of action will simply not suffice.
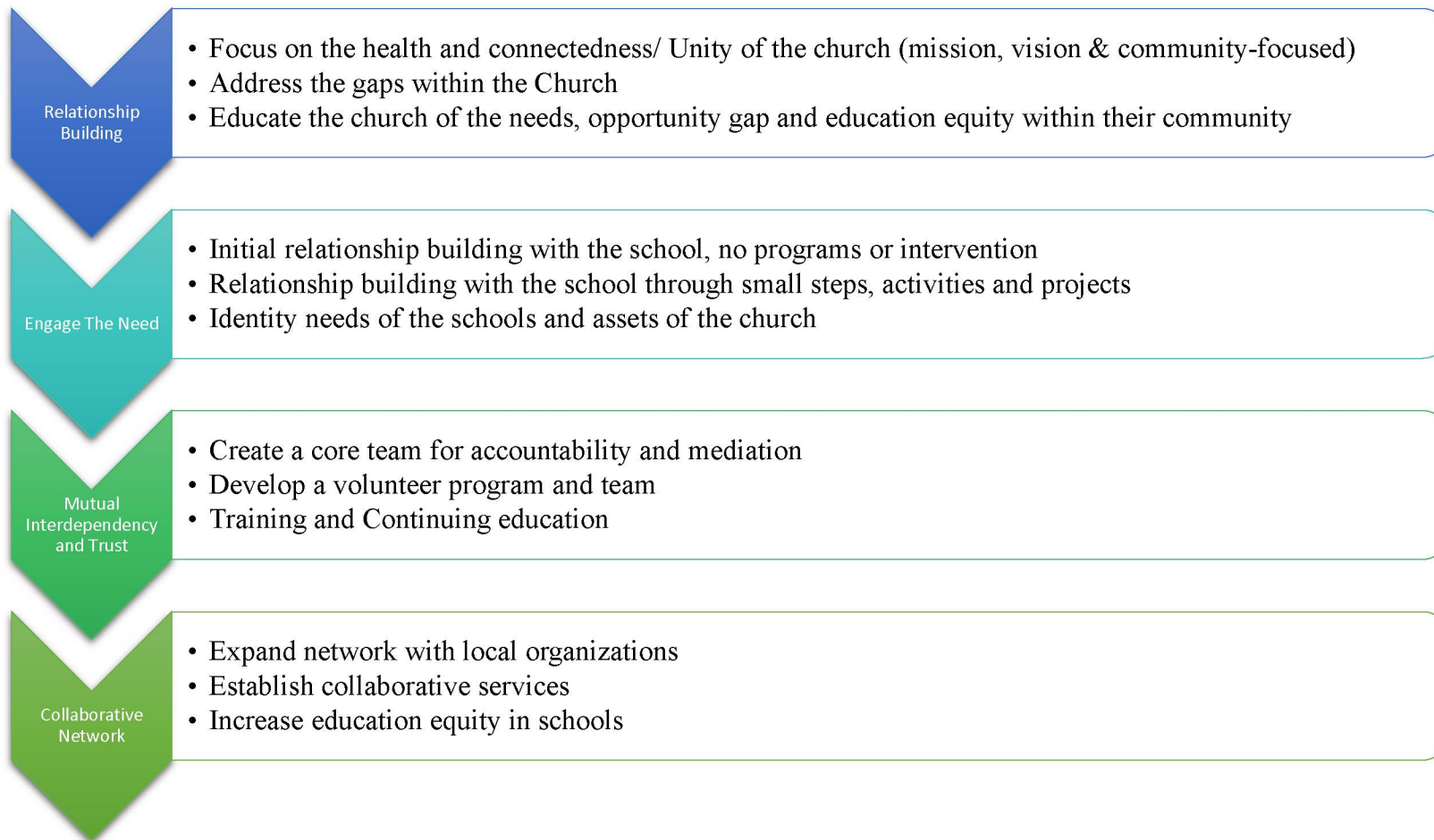
In the midst of desperation for systemic change, hope arises from the smallest acts of love. The evidence is clear and the success is visible. The movement has started and it is happening in our own backyard. With Jubilee REACH leading the way here in the Greater Seattle area, it gives hope that the principles can be contextualized and used to restructure our

communities. Small scale, grassroots movements in the Rainier Valley can grow and make a systemic impact when churches and the government take up their role and responsibility instead of leaving the work for nonprofits and community-based organizations. In the context of education, the concept of relationship-building is the fundamental basis to earning trust with the schools and the district. Trust can only be earned through consistency and deep listening.

For churches, organizations, and practitioners who are interested in school and church partnership, my model is a starting point towards a long-term commitment. Certainly, my model is neither the full story nor the ultimate solution but my research and observations do offer steps for best practices, especially if the model is to be implemented in Seattle. Although I do not go into full detail on the intricacy of collaborative networking, my model is meant for those who are considering a school and church partnership. Due to the innumerable and complex issues each school faces, each partnership will look different as the work begins. Furthermore, this transformational work requires immense flexibility, patience and consistency. Skepticism and reluctance towards a school and church partnership model is natural. However, through overwhelming evidence and the real-life example of Jubilee REACH, a church and school partnership model will help restructure communities and raise generations of new leaders to continue the work of justice ahead.

APPENDIX I: Direct Church & School Partnership Breakdown

Figure AI.1: Diagram of the Direct Church and School Partnership Simplified

Relationship Building

- Focus on the health and connectedness/ Unity of the church (mission, vision & community-focused)
- Address the gaps within the Church
- Educate the church of the needs, opportunity gap and education equity within their community

Engage The Need

- Initial relationship building with the school, no programs or intervention
- Relationship building with the school through small steps, activities and projects
- Identity needs of the schools and assets of the church

Mutual Interdependency and Trust

- Create a core team for accountability and mediation
- Develop a volunteer program and team
- Training and Continuing education

Collaborative Network

- Expand network with local organizations
- Establish collaborative services
- Increase education equity in schools

<u>Phase 1 (1-5 Years): Church Preparation</u>
1.1 Relationship Building within the Church Walls

- Creation of community
  - Implementation of community groups or small groups
    - Make it an expectation for members to join
    - Opportunities to serve each other
    - **Toolkits** on creation of a small group structure: How to be a Great Cell Group Coach and How to Lead a Great Cell Group Meeting by Joel Comisky
- Creation of unity and cohesiveness
  - Have clear mission and vision
    - **Toolkits**:
      - Becoming a Coaching Leader by Daniel Harkavy, specifically CH.6 & CH.7
      - The Practice of Adaptive Leadership by Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, specifically CH.19
- Creation of transparent and sensitive environment
  - Provide training to leaders of community groups to engage the members
    - Training on how to ask the deep and open questions instead of closed questions
    - Training on deep listening skills, 30/70

1.2 Addressing the Elephants in the Room

- Assess what is hindering growth
  - **Toolkits**: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership by Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, specifically CH.7
- Assess issues in the Church system
  - **Toolkits**: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership by Heifetz et al., specifically CH.4 & CH.5
- Assess church politics and church leadership unity
  - **Toolkits**: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership by Heifetz et al., specifically CH.6

1.3 Church Evaluation #1

- Assess whether or not elephants are addressed

- Assess unity and community growth

  - **Toolkits**: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership by Heifetz et al., specifically CH.12

1.4 Present the vision of Church & School Partnership

- Assess readiness of congregation

- Receive feedback and concerns

- Address concerns raised

- Raise Awareness for the concept of Opportunity Gap

- Education congregation the potential needs and concerns of the surrounding community

1.5 Church Evaluation #2/ Church Engagement

- Acknowledge progress and celebrate

- Cultivate and Nurture congregation to have ownership and stake in the partnership

  - Maintain passion and motivation

  - Encourage commitment

- Allow culture of the church to change naturally and gradually

Phase 2 (5-10 years): Engage the Need

2.1 Relationship Building

- Maintain Consistency

- Relationship Building deepens

- Enter with no agenda

- Love, Listen and Learn

- **Toolkits:** Strategic Fund Development by Simone P. Joyaux, specifically CH. 3, Ch.6, CH. 7 & CH.8

2.2 Community Projects

- Church leadership and School administration come together to establish and discuss partnership and needs of the school

  - Focuses on the needs of the schools

- Start small with no agenda to begin the initial phase of partnership
  - Service Day
  - Supply Drop-off
  - Uniform Drive
  - Volunteer Opportunities
  - Christmas Dinners
  - Thanksgiving Dinners
- Ensure projects increase face-to-face interaction between school staffs and church members
  - Trust building
- Acknowledge progress
  - Elevate passion and motivation
- Elevate staffs and educators
  - Connect to their needs and pains
  - **Toolkits**: Becoming a Coaching Leader by Daniel Harkavy

2.3 Identify and Categorize needs of schools with assets of the church

[Level of Needs]

Tier 1: Funding and supplies

Tier 2: Funding, supplies, volunteering at the school

Tier 3: Funding, supplies, tutoring, mentoring and counseling through social programs (created by the church/ through the school/ existing nonprofits etc.)

Tier 4: Substance abuse, domestic violence, and homelessness (consider out of scope for the church unless resources and skills available, requires professional help)

[Level of Assets]

Tier 1: Provide supplies, funding [transactional relationship]

Tier 2: Provide supplies, funding, volunteers with available time to engage schools (one time/ occasional events/ in school volunteer) [partial transactional and transformational relationship]

Tier 3: Provide funding, supplies, daily volunteers with available time, volunteers with professional assets to provide time and resources to students and family for occasional events (dental check or car checkups) [transformational]

Tier 4: Out of scope unless the church has capacities and training (rare) [Reestablishing community and church]

2.4 School and Church Relationship Assessment

- Reassess capacities, resources and needs to redistribute based on needs of schools
  - If there are gaps that a church cannot fulfill on their own, consider to partner with another church

Phase 3 (5-10 years): Mutual Interdependency and Trust

3.1 Create a Core Relationship Building Team

- Includes community members, school staffs and church staffs
  - Put all voices on the table/ Empowerment
- Pass on ownership to team
- Evaluate passion and keep accountability
- Mediation and Co-planning with the school and administration

3.2 Develop a Volunteer Program and database

- Be clear with the expectation and role of a volunteer
- Define the volunteer work clearly
- Ensure volunteers are always informed and are invested via relationships
- Communication is key
- **Toolkits**: Practical Project Management for Agile Nonprofits by Karen White, specifically Part III and Sustainable Fund Development by Simone P. Joyaux, CH.6 & CH.7

3.3 Training and Continuing Education

- Training in theology, skills and development (early childhood education, foundation for work, cultural competency, racial reconciliation, structural racism etc.)
  - Training be provided by church leadership, school staffs or district administrations, PDAC)

Phase 4 (Ongoing): Collaborative Network

4.1 Expand networks with local organization and partners

- Churches and local Community-Based Organizations can partner to expand on programs and service that can be better crater to the school's specific needs

4.2 Establish collaborative programs and services together

- To eliminate duplications of services and thinning of funding and resources
    - Expanding on existing after-school programs at the schools instead of creating new ones on another facility (i.e.: churches, Community centers etc.)
- Spur and encourage each other on the hard journey
    - Coming together to share ideas
- Increase Education Equity in Schools through long-term investments from partnerships and collaborative networks
    - Relationships deepen
    - Trust

Appendix II: Project Plan

Project Guidance Document		
Project Identification		
Project Name	**Project Number**	**Date Created**
Direct Church & School Partnership Model for Seattle Public Schools	1	12/30/15
Project Sponsor	**Project Owner**	
Seattle Chinese Alliance Church Seattle Public School Jubilee REACH	Fonnie Ishimitsu	
Project Manager	**Project Managers/ Team Members/ Role**	
Fonnie Ishimitsu	Fonnie Ishimitsu	
Project Overview		
Project Background		
12 years ago in Seattle, the first direct church and school partnership began with Seattle Chinese Alliance Church passing out snacks to their students and families after school. The beginning of that relationship started due to a small observation by the church administration staff that around 2pm daily, the church was flooded with cars even though the church did not have any special function. This small observation led the English congregation lead pastor to the school, Dearborn Park International School, and began a conversation to comprehend the needs of the school. The conversation brought forth a series of needs and concerns from the school staff and administration. The main concern was 85% of their students and families are of low-income population, whom rely on free and reduced lunch. Most students are from bilingual families and of immigrant backgrounds. Diversity has driven the school through a series of complications to meet the needs of all students of color while lacking the resources and support from the school district. Due to a lack of funding and resources and because of it, students are falling through the cracks. As a result, many have difficulty meeting standards and by the time of high school, many have dropped out and/ or lack the foundation to meet the standard of universities. Therefore, they miss out on the opportunity for higher education and a stable future. The severity of the need alarmed the leadership of SCAC and the desire to fill		

the void led to a long-term commitment to this mission. Over the course of 12 years, SCAC has been supplying resources, scholarships and even established an after-school program with the help of UGM (Union Gospel Mission) in order to touch the surface of the issue Dearborn is facing. To this day, the issue remains but with the contribution of SCAC, Dearborn began to see hope even though changes are slow. Dearborn is only an example of the hundreds of schools facing similar or worse issues within the Seattle School District. The grassroots movement and the relationship between SCAC and Dearborn has captured the attention of leaders from SPS (Seattle Public School District), local CBOs (Community- Based Organizations), local nonprofits and churches all over the Seattle area. The desire to make a change and for collaboration has grown over the years but the remaining question is how to establish a relationship in order to begin such work. The goal for Direct Church & School Partnership is a project plan to engage, prepare and elevate churches to come alongside the school district, local CBOs and nonprofits to better support students of SPS. Using the principles of another nonprofit in Bellevue, Jubilee Reach, the goal of this project is to construct a sustainable and accountable model for the Seattle School District. The model will provide insights, practical steps and standards for churches, School Districts, CBOs and Nonprofits to work together in order to address the ever-deeply rooted needs of their students and elevate them so they can have a successful future.

Business Needs

The reality of the opportunity gap is growing and more students are not graduating from high school. The common assumption is due to student laziness and their families not working hard enough to provide for their children to receive adequate opportunities. However, low-income families often have barriers that are continuously overlooked. The stories of families who work three jobs in order to survive are not stories that regularly surface. Instead, they are viewed as homeless or low-income because they are lazy and/ or they do not use their funds wisely. These assumptions have labeled them as "the others" and blocked the heart of many to openly and willingly help those in dire need. The goal of this project is to provide practical steps to reeducate the church of the following:

1) The purpose of mission
2) The gospel's calling for mission and the concept of neighbor
3) Prepare and elevate churches to see mission as a local and not only a global phenomenon
4) Train churches to understand the severity of the opportunity gap
5) Train and prepare churches to give generously to elevate students in SPS
6) Train and prepare churches to develop relationship with schools

By providing these specific steps, the approach will prepare churches and schools to work together to elevate their students and provide a better, more stable future for the next generation. The outcome of this goal is for resources and funding to naturally flow out of

churches through educating and envisioning what local mission is and the purpose of the church to the greater public.

Project Objectives

- Church Preparation and Training for Church and School Partnership (theological guidance, social justice training, community unity, declaration of mission and vision)
- Establish Church and School Partnerships for all Seattle Public Schools (building relationships, meeting needs through projects)
- Determine Community Partnership Projects for each church and school partnership (service day, fundraising, uniform or supply drive)
- Determine professional and skills development for congregation members, church leaderships and educators
- Raise up church leaders to engage the schools daily (volunteer or paid staff)
- Develop social programs between church, school and CBOs (After-school program, sports program, mentorship, skills training etc.)

Deliverable Description

A 30-year transformational model and plan for direct church and school partnership created specifically for Seattle Public School District (SPS), Seattle Chinese Alliance Church (SCAC), local Seattle Churches and local Community-Based organization (CBOs) alike who are interested in church and school partnerships. This strategic model and plan is a step-by-step guideline for local Seattle churches and Seattle Public Schools to grow their partnership with high accountability, collaboration, mutual transformation and on the basis of a strong relationship. This plan is divided in to four phases.

Phase 1: Church Preparation. In other words, this is relationship building within the church. This phase ensures that churches are ready physically, financially, spiritually, mentally and theologically before the establishment of church and school partnerships. This phase will be the starting point and will be ongoing. Initial steps of Phase 1 must be taken with caution and time to ensure the church body is ready for a long-term, commitment-based partnership. The length of this phase will be dependent on the readiness of the church and the comfortability of the church. Whether a church is ready will be based on the level of understanding on the social issues on the ground like racism, cultural competency and the issue of the opportunity gap. At the end of Phase 1, establishment of a school and church partnership can form. Community projects will be the starting points to create a bridge between schools and churches like service days, supply drop-off, and/ or fundraisers. Each community project will be based on the needs of the schools, the context and level of comfortability between churches and schools.

Phase 2: Engage the Need. Once Phase 1 is completed, the goal of Phase 2 is to build a relationship with the school. This will require consistency of the church to show up and meet the needs of the school. It will require continuous community projects, not just an occasional event. The main outcome for phase 2 is begin to build trust and secure the relationship between the school and the church.

Phase 3: Mutual Interdependency. During Phase 3, a core team should be developed to act

as a liaison between the school and the church to provide accountability and to be a mediator. This core team will be comprised of community members, school staff and church members. This ensures all voices will be at the table. A volunteer program should be developed to ensure the congregation is personally invested and have stake in the partnership. Necessary training will be given by the church leaders and school administration on topics such as cultural competency, racial reconciliation, structural racism.

Phase 4: Collaborative Networks. At a given point after a long period of investment, a goal to strive for is to eliminate any duplicated programs and services given by another organization. This would mean any programs that offers the same curriculum can be replaced with this model. In doing so, CBOs, churches and school district can better collaborate with each other. By doing so, funding can be made available for other necessary needs. Collaborative networks ensure resources and funding are distributed relatively equal among all schools. This enables more programs to be specifically catered to the schools and the needs of students and families. This increases accountability among service providers and create a more collaborative spirit and decreases the needs for local CBOs to create more services when funding is limited.

Key Dates and Milestones
Phase 1: 1-5 years – Church Preparations Phase 2: 5-10 years- Engaged the Need Phase 3: 5-10 years- Mutual Dependency and Trust Phase 4: Ongoing- Collaborative Networks **see Project Model Breakdown and timeline is subject to change based on partnership
Organizational Considerations
The Project Sponsors are Seattle Chinese Alliance Church, Seattle Public School District and Jubilee REACH. The Project manager in practice is Fonnie Ishimitsu. Stakeholder is any organization, church and schools that are interested in Church and School partnerships, especially in the Rainier Valley. Project Sponsors will be responsible for the following: 1. Give guidance and necessary support to project manager to roll out this model when approved 2. Provide feedback on changes that needs to be made 3. Provide training when necessary Project Manager will be responsible for the following: 1. Create the project model breakdown and guidance material for all stakeholders 2. Work with Project Sponsors and Stakeholders to launch a more contextualized timeline and plan 3. Work with Project Sponsors and Stakeholders about training sessions and workshops for all interested parties 4. Create a database of all existing and potential partnerships (accountability purposes) 5. Work with Stakeholders to create a volunteer program 6. Provide training on how to execute the model if necessary

Stakeholders will be responsible for the following:
1. Be prepared and answer the "why" to the work of church and school partnership before committing for long-term
2. Be committed to work of church and school partnership for long-term
3. Be prepared to handle the hard work
4. Be open and come with no agenda
5. Be prepared to learn and listen
6. Prepare and educate the church of the mission and vision of the partnership
7. Be consistent, it is not a "hand out" but a "hand up"
8. Provide services to students and family at service events or programs (i.e: after-school, during school given the opportunities and context of the church and school etc.)
9. Build relationship with students, families, and staff
10. Be flexible for any sudden changes
11. Assist with programs at the given church and school site
12. Be open to potential partners (i.e. other local organizations and churches)

Business Case

Summary:
- Implementation of School and Church partnership model in Rainier Valley to increase education equity, increase opportunity for students and provide social & emotional support to students.
- Budget will vary based on the funding and giving of the church and the level of partnership

Expected Benefits:
- Increase education equity and opportunity for students
- Increase support for schools and educators
- Increase community support
- Increase empowerment and community voice
- Train churches in social justice issues

Scope Definition

In scope: *refer to breakdown of model Appendix 1
1. Project Manager will consult beta site (Dearborn) and work with Seattle School District if project is approved for launch
2. Increase Church and School partnership awareness
3. Increase awareness of education equity and the Opportunity Gap
4. Increase the participation of churches in partnerships

This will require project manager to educate Seattle School District, churches, and potential Community-Based Organizations the model for partnerships. Churches will need to do initial preparation to take on partnership. This will require them to provide a clear contextualized project plan based on the model. Project Manager can act as consultant to provide insights and guide the process, cost of consultation will be discussed.
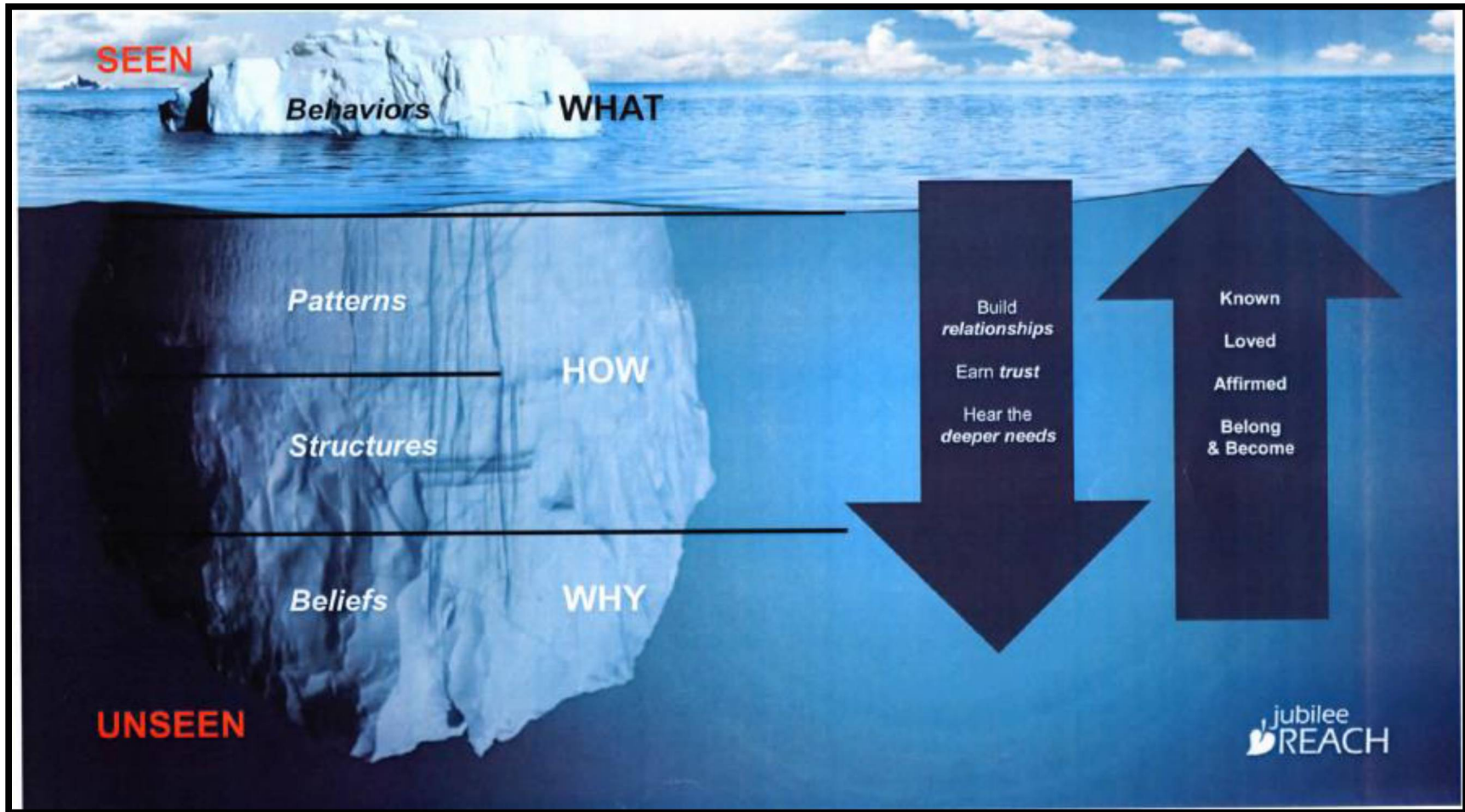
Out of Scope:
1. Creating a consulting company or nonprofit to run this partnership
2. Project Manager will not keep all partnerships accountable alone

Risk Identification

| |
|---|
| If Project proceeds:
• Small participation/ small number of churches and school interested
• Decrease in congregation members in participating churches if vision is not supported
• Difficulty to find leaders to conduct training
• Issues that schools are facing might be out of a scope for a church
• Difficulty to find consultant to keep all partnerships accountable
• Cost to pay for consultant to run this project |
| **Assumptions and Constraints** |
| Assumptions:
• Seattle Public School District will approve this model
• Project Manager will act as a consultant to the project
• Churches who are interested in School and Church partnership will accept outsider opinions/ consultation
• Schools are open to partnership
• Churches will have funding, resources, manpower and assets to partner |
| **Acceptance Criteria** |
| Project model is sufficient enough to start partnerships. A successful project will increase education equity, increase opportunities to families and students, restructure communities and increase development of students (academically and social-emotional). |
| **Necessary to Proceed** |
| Next Phase Activities/ Resources:
This project need to be funded in order to keep partnership accountable, in doing so, a consultant who is an expert in this kind of work is needed to be hired. |
| **Approval** |
| |

Appendix III: Jubilee REACH Models

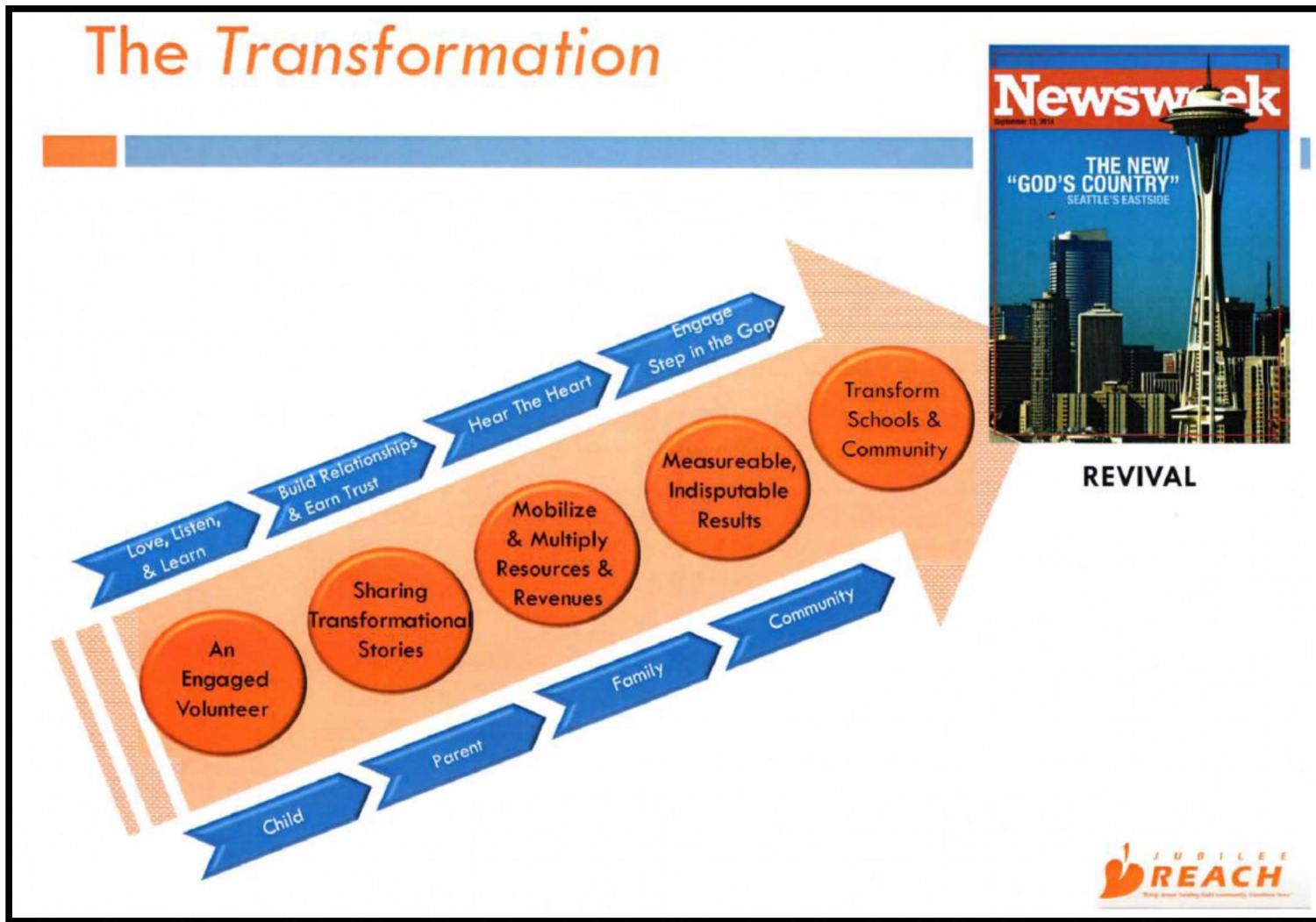Figure AIII.1: Iceberg Model of Relationship Building

Source: Jubilee REACH. Iceberg Model of Relationships. Digital image. Print. June 2015.

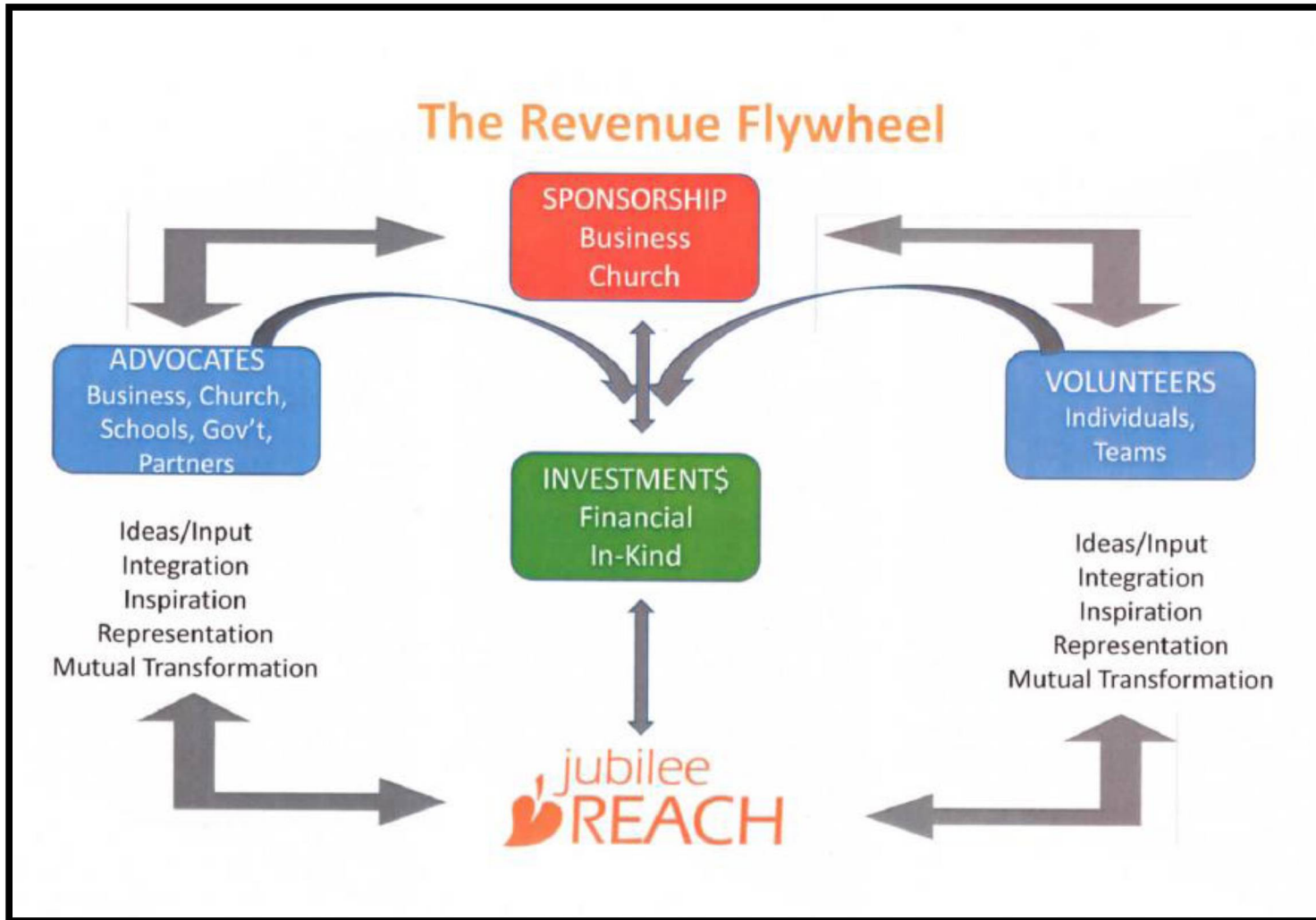Figure AIII.2: The Movement Model & Vision
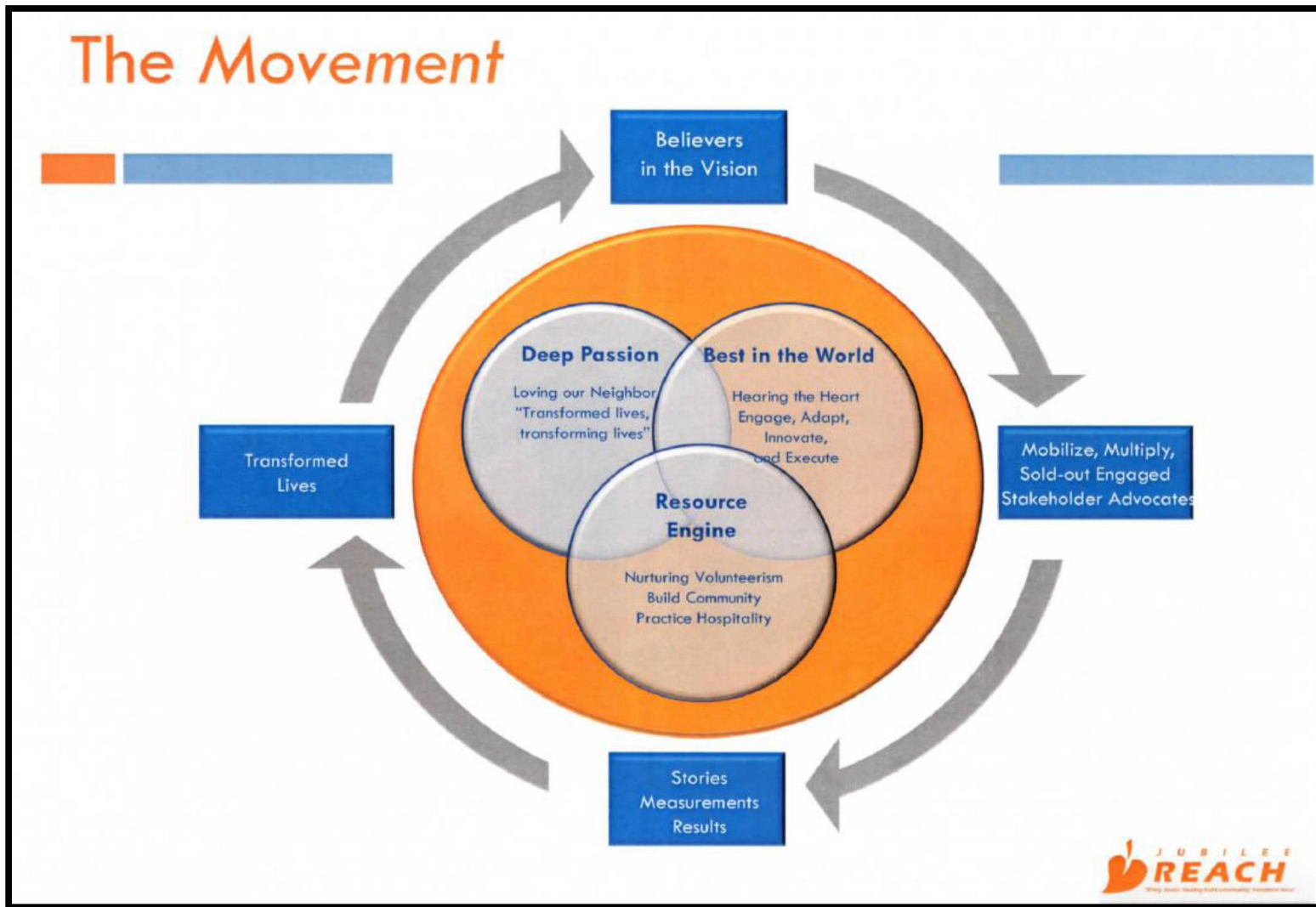
Source: Jubilee REACH. The Movement Model & Vision. Digital image. Print. June 2015.

Figure AIII.3: The Transformation Model

Source: Jubilee REACH. The Transformational Model. Digital image. Print. June 2015.

Figure AIII.4: Long-Term Sustainability

Source: Jubilee REACH. The Revenue Flywheel & Sustainability. Digital image. Print. June 2015.

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