Fullest Potential:

An Ethnographic Study of Workforce Training Programs in Seattle

Anthony Kyle Johnson II

Dr. Forrest Inslee

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Introduction

Eddie had a lot of potential! He had a charismatic personality that people were drawn to. He was friendly, empathetic, intelligent, and funny, which made people want to talk to him for hours on end. I remember the first time I met Eddie. With a giant smile on his face like we had known each other for years, he invited me to sit down by his bonfire. It seemed like he could tell that I had always felt awkward in new groups. He introduced me to his friends and included me into their deep conversations. I actually felt comfortable engaging in the conversation, which flowed between inspiring personal stories to world events to gut-busting jokes. Eddie had the electric personality of a politician like John F. Kennedy and the insight to see what you needed before you knew you needed it like the perfect salesman. Anyone who saw him in action would say that he had true potential to do anything he put his mind to doing. Unfortunately, we will never know where Eddie's potential will take him, he is dead. He died in great part due to the complications and stressors of life in homelessness.

In December 2011, I started working at Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, a faith-based organization addressing poverty and homelessness in Seattle. In my role, I did outreach work to those living on the streets. I would load a van with various supplies (clothes, food, water, etc.) and volunteers to serve people on the streets with the goal of meeting their physical and relational needs. My first day on the job, I pulled the van up to Eddie's encampment. Eddie and his friends were crowded around their trashcan bonfire. For two years, I learned more about Eddie and the issues that led him to where he was. He was an alcoholic, and, despite going through several recovery programs, he could never escape his addiction. He drank himself to a stupor every night. After driving away family and friends in these drunken states, he eventually became homeless.

He wanted to change and we often had conversations about how discouraged he was by his failed efforts. He did not know how to deal with the complexities of life without drinking. A stressful work situation would cause him to go on drinking binges where he would disappear for days. He would then get fired. He had enough raw talent to get a job but was not able to keep the job for longer than a few weeks. This was the cycle that Eddie could not escape. This was the cycle that eventually caused his death. I was told when I first started my position that people could get hypothermia in rainy weather when it was 50 degrees or less. I did not realize how true that was until one cold, rainy day in Seattle when I was told that Eddie was dead. Like I had found him so many times, he was found barely clothed in a puddle beside his tent. He had his last drink falling asleep one last time.

Years have passed since this, but I often dream about Eddie's potential. What would have happened if he lived it out? Possibly, he could have been on his way to being a political advocate. Perhaps, he could have been climbing the corporate ladder at a prominent business in the area. Furthermore, this makes me think about the lives of the thousands of other homeless individuals on the streets of Seattle. The question *how can individuals escape their cycle of poverty to achieve their fullest potential?* still plagues me years after Eddie's death.

When it came time to choose my research, I knew this was the topic I wanted to probe. Being inspired by the ethnographic and anthropological works of Pierre Bourdieu, Seth M. Holmes, Anne Fadiman, Edward Curtis, and others, my research is written primarily using my own narrative working with Seattle's homeless and the stories of people that I have worked with over the years. Throughout this work, I will use these stories to expose and propose solutions to the vulnerabilities within our social systems that prevent people from exiting their own cycles of poverty and carrying out their full potential. Ultimately, I came to the conclusion

to my plaguing question: many homeless people need and want to be self-supporting, but lack the means and skills to achieve it. Only workforce training programs that, equip people with tailored skills suited to the job market, empower them with the capacity for resilience, and collaborate with other homeless services to focus on the particular causes of homelessness in each individual, can people find the opportunity they need to achieve their potential that comes from long-term work.

Research Methods

This research is done as an ethnographic study, which includes a "thick description" of a particular culture to "convey the meanings participants make of their lives" (Merriam 30). I was inspired to do this because of Seth Holmes book entitled *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies.* In this book, he immersed himself into the lives of migrant workers for several years, conducted interviews, dug into records, and made a "thick description" of his experience and the people that he came into contact, which results in a truly noteworthy ethnographic work.

Holmes, for his thesis work, studied migrant workers from Mexico who came into the United States of America to work to support their families. In order to do this, he injected himself into the lives of Mexican workers working in Washington and California, border patrol agents, and American farm owners and managers. During this time, among other things, he "used the snake-inhabited latrine, visited the government hearth center when sick, carried water from the well, harvested and planted corn and beans, and took the bulls and sheep to pasture" (Holmes 6). This immersion allowed him to "experience more intimately the 'closed corporate community' aspect" of migrant workers. Holmes would have never been able to complete his book as an ethnographic study if he would not have put in the time and effort to truly get to know this people group through immersion.

Holmes wanted the American society to understand the true story of migrant workers. In order to do this, he wrote this book as descriptively as possible. By giving vivid details of his time crossing the border, he was better able to convey the realities that these people lived in. By describing his own bodily experience, readers could, through a surrogate, feel the fear of potentially being bitten by a rattle snake, imagine the feeling of achy muscles because of the arduous desert walk, and so much more. Conducting my research as an ethnographer, like Holmes, I immersed myself into the work of the Seattle's Union Gospel Mission.

Seattle's Union Gospel Mission (referred to as "the Mission) was established in 1932 by a collection of religious organizations (churches and non-profits) to address the issues that are associated with poverty in Seattle. At that time, it developed a mission to "serve, rescue, and transform those in greatest need" ("About"). The Mission started as a soup kitchen, developed into an overnight shelter for those living on the streets, and expanded over the years to address five main areas of concern: poverty, homelessness, hunger, addiction, and at-risk youth. With over 200 staff members and a budget of $22 million, it has transformed into one of the leading organizations in the country to address poverty in America.

Located in Pioneer Square, a downtown neighborhood in Seattle, it has several programs that work in conjunction with one another to see someone end their cycle of poverty and fulfill their potential. For men needing help out of homelessness and in need of addiction recovery, there are three programs at the Mission that they participate in sequentially: Bridge Recovery Program, Men's Recovery Program, and then finally CADRE. It is in the CADRE context of the Mission that I did my fieldwork and conducted my research. The goal of CADRE is to address the barriers associated with getting and keeping long-term employment. To do this, CADRE attempts to create a realistic working and living environment where the participant can

learn how to handle different life circumstances. The men in this program come from various backgrounds: race, religion, age, family backgrounds (e.g., single-parent homes, foster care, etc.), and employment and educational experiences. The common denominator for the participants, making their story similar and binding them together, are their need for recovery, a struggle with their own cycle of poverty, their desire to get help by from the Mission's programs, and the desire to enter the competitive workforce.

This study includes various research methods to create the thick description that is characteristics of an ethnographic work. To accomplish this, most of this work was based off of qualitative research including: aspects of action research, appreciative inquiry, and participant observation. To ensure that the qualitative research is grounded in true research rather than pure speculation, I have included some tradition quantitative data: some statistical analysis and archival research. The rest of this section will include a description of some of the qualitative research methods that may be less familiar to the common reader.

An aspect of action research includes the different stakeholders into the conversation. This helps in better understanding and addressing the complexities of the issues of poverty. Ernest T. Stringer, a lecturer and guest professor on research methods, writes the following in his book *Action Research*:

> Action research seeks to enact an approach to inquiry that includes all relevant stakeholders in the process of investigation. It creates contexts that enable diverse groups to negotiate their agendas in an atmosphere of mutual trust and acceptance and to work toward effective solutions to problems that concern them. (31)

In order to give the different stakeholders a voice into this research, I had regular meetings with them, did surveys, and hosted focus groups where the participants could speak into the different

parts of the program. Holmes noticed how "the voices of the most powerless groups tend to go unheard, their agendas ignored, and their needs unmet" (32). By engaging those stakeholders, they have a part to play in providing a solution.

Another way I included action research into my research was to let the participants be a part of the research process. During this time, I connected each participant with a staff member who could train them in different areas. Having regular meetings between the two, the interns could give feedback for the direction that they wanted in the program. This provided a good opportunity for both parties to learn from one another to address the individual's cycle of poverty.

As a means to increase the contribution of the participants, I used appreciative inquiry to regularly evaluate what the program was doing right. "Appreciative Inquiry," according to Sue Hammond's work *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*, "suggests that we look for what works in an organization" (1). This is a bit different than the normal evaluation of a program, which tends to focus on what can be fixed. "By paying attention to problems," Hammond continues, "we emphasize and amplify them;" however, through appreciative inquiry, "participants walk away with a sense of commitment, confidence and affirmation that they have been successful" (2). Before any critical assessment of the program occurred, I wanted to remind the participants, staff, and graduates of the positive effects that the program has had.

In this phase of the research, I hosted a focus group for current program participants with various questions and discussion prompts, listed below:

- What do you value most about being in this program?
- What skills are you gaining?
- Describe an activity or set of activities that you did to build those skills.

- Describe a time when you were excited about waking up to do your internship.

- Describe a time when you went the extra mile in your internship.

- Describe a time when you felt that someone else was going the extra mile.

It was during this time that I followed Hammond's advice, where she writes, "You are looking for three levels of information: (1) what the interviewee actually experienced and how their own performance made a difference, (2) how other people contributed to the experience and (3) the systemic factors or policies that made success possible" (25). This allowed me to see how the program had truly impacted people so they could escape their own cycle. Many of the solutions found in this work come directly from appreciative inquiry and knowing what was going right within CADRE and other programs like it.

Lastly, I wanted to include myself in the process on a daily basis to truly make this an ethnographic study. This is known as participant observation. Sharan Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell describe the importance of participant observations in this kind of study:

Immersion in the site as a participant observer is the primary method of data collection. Interviews, formal and informal, and the analysis of documents, records, and artifacts also constitute the data set, along with a fieldworker's diary of each day's happenings, personal feelings, ideas, impressions, or insights with regard to those events. (30)

To further give that thick description that is so integral to ethnographies, I needed to involve myself in the process as much as possible. I did this when I stepped into the role of overseeing CADRE. Part of my job was to change CADRE from only providing Christian discipleship to include workforce training. I had to get involved in every aspect of the program and in the lives

of the participants to make this change happen. In the following pages, you will see many of the

lessons that I learned in this transformation process.

Working in Poverty

There are various reasons for why people are thrust into poverty. Eddie's poverty was

predicated by addiction. Other people have been brought into poverty because of a break in

relationships, abuse, physical disabilities, mental illness, lack of skills, and so on. Yet, it is

extremely hard for people to climb out of poverty. While I wanted to do this research because

of my experiences at the Mission, part of my research included understanding my own

connection to the subject on a personal level, known as reflexivity or phenomenological

analysis. Pierre Bourdieu describes how anthropologists need to process in this manner in order

to better ascribe meaning to their research. Not only does this help to define different terms

revealed through this fieldwork process, but also exposes the inherent biases of the researcher

(1-6). Bryant L. Myers, further elaborates on the importance of critically examining feelings

and thoughts in his book *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational*

Development when he writes:

> Like so many of our ideas, the meaning we ascribe to an abstract noun reflect our way of
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> looking at, thinking about, and making sense of our world. Therefore, we need to
>
> examine how we understand poverty as well as how we think and feel about the poor.
>
> We need to identify our assumptions and look for blind spots. (105)

Taking this into consideration, before doing my fieldwork, I reflected on my own experience

and emotions around poverty.

My own family experience has taught me how difficult it is to escape the cycle of

poverty and see potential fully realized. My mother raised me predominantly as a single

mother, additionally taking care of her bipolar mother and supporting her incarcerated husband. After giving birth to me, she started working for a local gas station. Through sheer grit and effort, it took her decades to overcome her own cycle of poverty. After several years, she gained enough experience to work at a job that would allow her to stop living from paycheck to paycheck. Then after several more years, she was at a place where she could have some wiggle room in her finances instead of operating in emergency mode. Finally, after more time, she climbed the ladder of employment to truly see her potential realized. I want to see other people do this too.

Even though it is an issue that I want to address, it has not been a comfortable place for me to go. Growing up I always felt a twinge of shame and anger when I saw people experiencing homelessness or was confronted with people living in poverty. I had assumed the homeless men and women were there merely because of financial difficulties. I had not wrestled with the idea that homelessness was a complex issue. In my ignorance, I thought everyone could do what my mother did. Little did I know of the systemic relational issues, addiction problems, mental illnesses, and the welfare system breakdowns that contribute to the problem.

At the beginning, I refused to probe deeper into the complex problems of poverty in an attempt to push against what my family had experienced. I did not want to enter those places again. I remember one time when my grandmother said to me, "I want you to have a class ring and if I have to go out on the streets to get enough money to buy you one then I will do it." In many ways, I irrationally felt that if I associate with those in poverty then I would once again live in the poverty that my family has lived in for so long. A compelling question that I had to deal with throughout this process was, how can I overcome or cope with this irrational fear?

Fortunately, this irrational fear inspired me to address this subject in the first place. I truly want to see people walk out of poverty like my family has. We are not rich by any stretch of the imagination, but we do not live in constant fear of losing housing, living from paycheck to paycheck, or living off credit cards just to have food in the cupboard. On one hand, I want to see other people fulfill their full potential because I have seen the effects on my family. On the other hand, I stepped into this work so I could understand how to avoid living in my own poverty again.

Since 2008, I have been a part of groups and organizations whose aim is to alleviate poverty. As a freshman in college, I joined a campus group who went to the local high school to mentor students at lunch. This high school, placed in the heart of an economically depressed area of the city, had a reputation as the poorest and most violent school in the metropolis area. Our aim was to mentor students who did not have the same opportunities as other students in the region. In addition to this mentoring group, I also created an Adopt-A-Block campus group called Block Partners. Block Partners went to a low-income neighborhood every week to help meet the physical needs of the residents. On a regular basis, we would cook hot meals, provide groceries, do chores, and babysit children. This reminded me of times growing up where my mom and I received assistance from different groups and friends. After graduating from college and moving to Seattle, my first—and only—professional work has been with the Mission for that last 6+ years. The experiences of the last decade has helped me understand the complexities and extent of poverty on a macro level. Rather than being overwhelmed by my fear, I have used it, along with my experience, to propel me towards finding new solutions to address poverty.

The Cycle of Poverty

In my role with the Mission, I tend to work with people who have experienced poverty because of homelessness. While this research does not focus on the causes or the significant increase of homelessness, having a cursory understanding of these causes is important in figuring out how to help someone escape their cycle and achieve their fullest potential. Homelessness, defined by Ken Kraybill, "is a real life drama about being caught among the forces of extreme poverty, a lack of access to adequate resources and services, the experience of illness and disability, and feelings of estrangement from self and community" (1). In my 6+ years at the Mission, I have had four different roles: outreach worker, case manager, at-risk youth worker, and graduate programs manager. In those various roles, I have seen Kraybill's definition of homelessness up close.

In my first role as outreach worker in 2011, I regularly went to the same encampments. I met people like Nathan[1] who at a young age ran away from home to escape parental abuse. He did not want to be sleeping on the streets at 17, but he was forced to by his circumstances. If he had any say in the matter, he would be at a safe home filling out applications to college with his parents and taking trips to visit different campuses. Unfortunately, everything was now harder for Nathan. He had dreams that he wanted to realize; he had potential too. With the help of case managers, he finished his GED and got accepted into a local community college. When he told me that he was accepted, I remember noticing something strange in his demeanor. Anyone who went through that much work to achieve their dream would be overjoyed, but he seemed too reserved in his excitement. As I probed deeper, he revealed that he was having to sell his body

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[1] Names throughout this document have been changed to protect the dignity of certain clients and co-workers.

so he could buy books and other school supplies. Nathan wanted to live out his full potential,

but like so many other people experiencing poverty, had too many barriers stopping him.

In my next role, I was a part of a team who helped transition individuals out of tent cities

into more permanent housing options. We set up a table in the encampment for a few months so

we could start placing them into apartments. The Mission paid for these apartments for one

year and provided case management with the goal that they would be able to take over the rent

when it was time to renew the lease. It was in this role that I got an even deeper glance into

how people start the process of walking out of poverty but, like the moon stuck in Earth's

gravity, return back to the same cycle.

I thought Kathrine and her husband Tom would make it. My co-workers and I moved

them into their apartment and within a couple months, Katherine quickly worked her way up

into management positions at a local gas station, enabling her and Tom to save money for rent

once their one year program was over. Six months into housing, we started to notice them

acting differently. Tom had stopped coming to the case management meetings and when asked

about his absence, Kathrine's eyes darted around the room as if she was hiding something.

After several weeks of asking the same question and seeing her eye's dart, she revealed to us

that Tom had started using drugs again, lost his job, and was avoiding our meetings because he

did not want to get kicked out of another place.

My co-workers and I did not want to see him get kicked out either. They had charted

their path out of poverty and if we did not intervene in some crucial way, they would find

themselves back from where they had just came. We gave him an option to go through a

recovery program and when he was done he could join his wife once again at the house. It

worked! The cycle had started to come around again, but with some substantial changes they

were able to escape seeing their potential unfold before them. Tom got ahold of his addiction and Kathrine was continuing to make her way up the ladder. After the program ended and it was time for them to take over the monthly rent, they signed the lease with tears in their eyes.

I would like to say that when I saw Kathrine a couple years later that she shared with me how well her and Tom were doing. Except, that is not the story she began sharing with me. After a year of steady housing and employment, Tom had a heart attack and passed away. She did not know how to deal with the pain of losing her husband, so she escaped her feelings with drugs. That last year, she had returned to her addiction, lost her job, and was forced to leave her apartment. Because she was not able to cope with her feelings, she returned back to her same cycle of poverty.

The number of people like Eddie, Nathan, Tom, and Kathrine continues to increase dramatically every year. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUB) submits a report to the American Congress on the state of homelessness in the country. *The 2016 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress* presented that homelessness among those living on the streets across the United States increased by 2% between 2015 and 2016—an increase of almost 11,000 people ("Department" 1). The problem is rising in some areas more than others. The Washington State report had a surge in the homeless population of 7.3% within that same period of time (91). Homelessness in Seattle had one of the largest growth rates in the US with an increase of approximately 22% between 2014 and 2015.

I have seen this increase with my own eyes and am increasingly plagued by the same question: how can people escape their cycle of poverty and realize their full potential? I typically see people who want help getting out of their cycle enter housing or recovery programs where they receive housing and case management. After several months or years in

the program, they get help from service providers in overcoming their various barriers (e.g., addiction, criminal background, mental illness, inability to navigate housing options, lack of financial skills, etc.). Finally, after a season, they are thrust back into homelessness or into other unstable housing options because they lack the ability and skills.

The main issue for many of these individuals is not their lack of motivation to get out of their predicament, but rather the skills to get out of it and stay out of it. As seen in Nathan and Kathrine's stories, there is a desire to escape their cycle of poverty. However, they are not able to deal with the barriers that confront them in that process. Continually providing services, like temporary housing, addiction recovery, or outreach services, can only help to a certain extent. Because they are continually dependent upon these services, it becomes difficult to deal with difficult situations when they are on their own. *Rather than making them reliant upon service providers, they should be taught the skills to overcome their own predicaments.*

This is an integral step to breaking the cycle of poverty in their lives. Imagine if Eddie had learned the skills to regulate his negative emotions when he got a critical review from his supervisor. Consider how far Nathan might have gone in life with a college degree, had he been given the skills to navigate the financial aid and scholarship processes. Or visualize a world where Kathrine could, albeit difficult, go through a healthy grieving process. Some people have learned these skills with the help of family or school. For various reasons many people in poverty lack these skills and regrettably, never have a chance to learn them.

Workforce Training

There is only so much death and disappointment that someone can take. Eddie was not the only person I knew to die in this line of work. Over the last decade, I have known over fifteen people who have died because of overdose, freezing, suicide, or various diseases. I have

also known countless individuals who have tried to get out of their cycle of poverty only to return. With a heavy heart, I admit that I know several dozen men and women who have been within the Mission's care for years. Many of whom I got to know my first year at the Mission. After a while it is easy to get numb to the pain that is associated with seeing this.

When I joined the International Community Development Program at Northwest University, I had already become numb to this pain. Yet in class discussions, I was constantly brought back to the question that had been plaguing me: how can individuals escape their cycle of poverty to achieve their fullest potential? I desperately wanted to avoid the question. The problem of poverty is too big and too painful for me to solve. Despite my efforts to look into different arenas, it felt like I was a moth to a flame—inexplicable drawn to the question.

By this time, I had worked for the Mission almost 5 years. In that time, while I had seen a lot of death and disappoint, I was reminded that I had also seen a lot of success stories. I saw Wendy return to her husband after dealing with years of living on the streets as a prostitute and heroin addict. I saw Brad break his addiction, gain long-term employment, get married, and announce the birth of their newborn daughter. I saw Jack denounce his gang ties, get trained in a new line of work, and gain employment where he makes three times my salary. I have seen positive aspects of this work where people have escaped their cycle to achieve their fullest potential.

Even though there are a lot of positive stories, the current interventions have not been successful across the board as evidenced by the increase of poverty in the Seattle area. The amount of recidivism is rampant. When I looked at the Mission through the researcher lens, at first glance our programs seemed successful. Outreach programs were effectively providing resources to people on the streets. Recovery programs were seeing people overcome their

addiction. Youth programs were helping at-risk youth graduate with their high school diploma and get accepted into college programs. If all of these programs were successful on their own, why were we still seeing the same people entering our programs time after time? For some reason, the participants of these various programs had forgotten the skills they had developed. Either they could not retain those capacities or they were uncapable of applying what they had learned in real world circumstances outside of their programs. I rhetorically asked myself if there was a program that could train them to apply what they had learned in real world circumstances.

After digging through library queries about this, I came across a government act that directly answered what I was asking. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act states that its goal is "to increase, for individuals in the United States, particularly those individuals with barriers to employment, access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services they need to succeed in the labor market" (sec. 2). In other words, workforce training programs are set up by the government to increase skill development for long-term success of those with barriers of various kinds.

I continued to read everything I could get on workforce training and development. William J. Rothwell states that "workforce development is about helping people qualify for jobs and careers, maintain their skills in the face of changing business conditions, and prepare for future challenges such as promotions or technological change" (Kindle Location 100-1). It was hard to believe, but it seemed like this was exactly what I was looking for to address my probing questions. It gave me a renewed sense of hope that people could be taught the skills they need to end their cycle of poverty to achieve their fullest potential.

In this process, I went to interview people at Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets (PSKS), a drop-in center and overnight shelter for homeless youth in Seattle. Since this organization was close in scope to the Mission in working with homelessness and had a workforce training program (WTP), I wanted to hear about how they addressed the barriers of their homeless youth in their WTP and if they saw long-term benefits as a result of their program. I met with Sarah, the staff person in charge of their education and training, and Ash, her intern from University of Washington, at a coffee shop blocks away from their youth center. I learned that they have four internship positions available every quarter. Two of those positions were for drop-in center workers and the other two were LGBTQ advocates positions. The drop-in center interns were responsible for the day-to-day operations of the center, which includes checking other youth into the center and arranging various activities for them to do. The LGBTQ advocate interns were responsible for making all of the arrangements for an LGBTQ community event at the end of the quarter. I liked what I was hearing because it seemed like a great program to help their youth escape their cycles of poverty and achieve their fullest potential.

After 15 minutes of getting to know the basics about their organization and hearing the overview of their internship program, they continued to share with me their structure for the internships. They used to have the interns work 15-20 hours a week and give them a stipend of $150 per week. However, they had recently changed their structure to provide "fair-labor market rate of $15/hr" to their interns. In an effort to do this, they decreased the amount of hours they provided. Instantly, my heart stopped with panic. I put aside my list of prepared questions and probed more into their intensions. I asked, "Do you provide your internships for skill development or for extra pocket money?" They responded without a beat, "It's to provide

them skills at a fair-market rate. We want there to be a fair correlation between what we ask them to do and what we pay them to do." I did not quite understand; was I hearing that they were more concerned about giving their interns employment or was it about developing their skills so they could find employment somewhere else?

I needed to dig deeper, so I asked what kind of specific skills training they offered; had they given them any specific hard or soft skills so they could enter the job market? With astonished and confused looks on their faces, they retorted that their interns are "anarchists" who do not want "to work for the corporate man" (Sarah). Processing through this interview, I discovered that their internships more resemble volunteer work to put money in their participant's pockets rather than a training program which helps the youth develop skills to end their cycle or achieve their fullest potential. This experience crushed my spirit. I had found a system to deliver what I desperately wanted. When I came face to face with one of these programs, it lacked the scope to truly deliver.

That is when I remembered CADRE, the Christian discipleship program at the Mission. For many years, this program was set up for men who had come through its recovery programs. These men were grateful for what the Mission had done for them so they wanted to learn how to carry out its work. This program though meaning well appeared to use the participants for volunteer labor just like PSKS. Making this connection, I had wondered if these programs could be transformed into proper WTP that paid attention to the participants' long-term skill development. When the position came open to oversee CADRE, I jumped at the chance to make this transformation happen. I needed to see what components would change CADRE into a full-fledged WTP. Throughout the research process, I began implementing these ideas into the program. Some of the lessons that you will read about CADRE are relatively new to the

program and are continually being developed within the program for maximum benefit to the participants.

Intentional Skill Development

The first component I discovered was the need to equip people with tailored skills suited to the job market by which they can start to be self-supporting and find the opportunities they need to achieve their potential. People going through these programs need to be prepared to get well-paying jobs. To do this, programs need to equip their participants with job skills that match up to the job opportunities around them. When programs train in this manner, the participants have a higher chance at getting and keeping those jobs since they have the skills to meet the demands of their work. While each WTP can have a different training focus (e.g., some work on coding while others focus on welding), WTP need to develop specific, marketable skills into its participants. Rather than incidentally producing skills, these programs need to have teaching methods and principles that intentionally develop these skills to get people working in the job market.

I had heard of a WTP called FareStart that had prepared their participants with tailored skills in the culinary arts. I thought that by meeting them I could gain some insight into how this kind of training could be done and if they had success with their approach. I got in touch with Anna Fiorella and met her at the FareStart restaurant to see what they were all about. I learned that FareStart is a social enterprise, defined by David Bornstein and Susan Davis as, "institutions to advance solutions to social problems, such as poverty, illness, illiteracy, environmental destruction, human rights abuses and corruption, in order to make life better for many" (1). As a social enterprise, FareStart, just like other WTP, developed a compelling vision to accomplish their mission. Kevin Lynch and Julius Walls Jr. writes about this fact in *Mission,*

Inc.: The Practitioners Guide to Social Enterprise, "your most important role is to articulate the vision, whether that's drawn from a process you engage in with your team or board or merely from your inspiration. However you arrive at your vision, it must be well-articulated and omnipresent in your plans" (54-55). Anna shared that it was their vision to create "a pathway out of poverty through foodservice and soft skill training, and targeted job placement." To accomplish this, FareStart intentionally crafted every part of their program around delivering skills training to address the specific needs of their homeless participants.

Ultimately, they wanted their participants to finish the program and become employable as entry-level kitchen staff. They do this by providing "16 weeks of food service training," "work side-by-side with top chefs," "resumé and computer skills," "interviewing" skills," "help looking for a good job," and "6 months of support services after … get[ting] a job" (FareStart). Furthermore, as Anna and I were touring their campus, she mentioned that not only do they give skills training to become chefs, but also provide case management while in the program. These case managers help to address each person's specific barriers to ending their cycle. Nothing is left to chance, but rather every part plays a role to help them accomplish their vision.

By teaching skills in the culinary field through several teaching methods, FareStart was teaching its participants how to be successful in various cooking jobs. By doing this, FareStart was doing on the job training. Ronald L. Jacobs and Michael J. Jones write that one of the approaches to on the job training is "to present training programs related to a work process or a set of operation[s]" (41). When the participants finish the program they know how to be line cooks because they have cooked on the line at FareStart. They know how to cater for large orders because they cooked for FareStart's catering company which provides meals for several

schools and homeless shelters. Ultimately, they know how to work in the industry because they were taught the tailored skills suited for this kind of work.

I also met with Fred Krug, the president of Year Up's Seattle branch, to see if there were more programs like FareStart who focused on equipping people with tailored skills for the job market. "Year Up is committed to closing the ever-widening Opportunity Divide in this country" (7). According to *A Year Up* written by the founder Gerald Chertavian, this organization is primarily focused on teaching marketable skills:

> "Year Up teaches technical and professional skills that change with the job market; the program is flexible enough to meet needs in different locales and markets. In Boston we began teaching Web design and dropped it when the demand dipped; we added financial operations and quality assurance after listening to what local employers said they needed—badly and right away" (10).

This social enterprise is focused on setting proper outcomes so it can generate a stunning end product. To paraphrase Jane Reisman and Judith Clegg in the handbook entitled "Outcomes for Success!", outcomes are used as a means to increase a program's delivered results (9). Chertavian writes about the outcomes that their programs delivers, "Within four months of completing the program, 80 percent of our graduates are employed or in school full time" (8). Year Up's outcomes proves that the training they provide actually works.

In my meeting with Fred Krug, he began telling me of their processes to teach those technical and professional skills. The participants come to classes for six months learning how to be professional in the workplace including timeliness and being properly dressed. Because of the Seattle job market, they are also taught how to code and do project management so they can start work at Microsoft, Boeing, Expedia, or one of the other tech related companies in the

Seattle area. To prepare the participants for this kind of work, Year Up has a point system where the students can gain points for regularly doing their work on time and with precision or lose points for showing up late or goofing off in class. Fred said that by doing this, the students knew what the real work experience would be like and could better prepare themselves to meet those expectations. This kind of dedication to skill development is how they get the 80 percent success rate.

Both FareStart and Year Up are examples of workforce training social enterprises whose aim is to see someone exchange their cycle of poverty for potential. Instead of having a hand out, they can be a part of their own solution. That is exactly what Susan Davis claims when she says that those in poverty do not need to be considered as a hand-out, but rather they could be reframed as the new customer known as "full-economic citizenship" ("Research Channel 43:50-44:14). When people can be a part of their own solution, everyone wins. Instead of giving a hand out to someone on the side of the streets, they could do some kind of work to help their situation. As they stand on the streets, instead of asking for spare change, they could be hired by marketing agencies to show advertisements. By equipping tailored skills for the job market, these organizations have created full-economic citizens who are helping themselves out of their own cycle of poverty.

Using FareStart and Year Up as an example, I knew I had to develop the same kind of skill development into the CADRE program as it transformed into a viable training program. Because of this, I asked Mission staff, participants, and volunteers what skills they thought CADRE could teach within its program. Volunteers like Dean and Scott emphasized the importance of creating a more robust structure to the program (6 July 2017). They started teaching a class for the program two years prior to our conversation. They both described the

unstructured state in the class they taught. They rarely saw the participants prepare for class or engage in class discussions. Instead, they had to adjust their teaching to a lecture based model where it seemed like the information was going in one ear and out the other. In this meetings, I started to talk about a possible new structure to accommodate a well-rounded teaching environment to include classes, internships, and intentional living. I brought a new focus to these areas, which provided dialogical teaching in the classroom settings around specific skills focused curriculum, internships that allowed the participated to practice the skills in a real work settings, and an intentional living environment as a way for them to practice every day life skills in a home setting.

Shortly after implementing this new structure, Dean and Scott expressed the difference the change was making on the participants (14 September 2017). With the new class structure, it had started to change. The participants started bringing the red journals that we provided for them. They were taking notes and starting to engage in the discussions. Dean was visibly excited about the new curriculum and added structure.

Rather than incidentally producing skills through haphazard teaching methods, the program started to have a structure to intentionally develop specific skills. FareStart had honed their craft to include culinary technical skills and soft skills. Every WTP delivers different hard and softs skills training, some work on coding and professionalism while others focus on welding and project management. Because of the need to focus on specific skills, I went on a journey to discover what skills CADRE could teach.

This is the reason why Stu Childers started helping with the CADRE program. After working with the CADRE men for about a month, I got a call from the development department at the Mission. They said that they had a donor who was going to retire soon and

wanted to get involved in the Mission more. Going into Stu's business, I began talking to him about what he was passionate about getting involved in. He started to share a story that happens too often. Stu expressed his appreciation for what the Mission did. Because of this love, he hired a couple of guys from the Mission. For a few months, the new hires did a good job at his company. However, as time went on, they lacked the skills to keep the job. Both of his hires, Stu mentioned, were easy to train and picked up the hard skills pretty fast. However, it was because of the lack of soft skills that Stu fired them. They were late constantly and let personal fights with their spouses enter the workplace (30 August 2017). Stu desired a different outcome; he wanted to be a part of a solution.

Since Stu owned his own business, he had the experience to know what competencies were needed. Over the next couple months, Stu and I began to meet on a weekly basis to discuss this. He would come to the newly formed classes on Tuesdays to listen to our class discussions. Afterwards, we would then go out to lunch to discuss the scope of skill development within the program. *Those conversations helped to determine three workforce training skills that CADRE could intentionally teach: time management, relationship management, and resiliency.* Including the CADRE men on the discuss using principles of action research, we came up with a definition for each term:

- Time Management— the basic management of time, priorities, energy, and resources, which includes scheduling and organizing one's time, setting priorities, and developing goals.
- Relationship Management— the care, preservation, and progression of already existing relationships, which includes basic communication, setting boundaries, building rapport, and crucial conversations/conflict resolution.

- Resiliency— creating a long-term plan for how something or someone can keep their nature, structure, character, or make-up—at the very least, resiliency allows something or someone the ability to recoil back after a stressor changes it momentarily.

Time management was chosen as a particular skill set because employers want dependable employees who can show up regularly to do their job. It can be a barrier for people in this demographic to show up on-time, regularly. However, keeping track of one's schedule is not the only barrier associated with this skill-set. Employers want employees that they can rely on and know that they are getting the right tasks done at the right time. They do not want someone that they have to repeatedly give tasks and instructions to, but rather someone who knows the priorities of their role and is able to complete tasks on time.

On a personal level, people need to know how to keep appointments like doctor's appointments, etc. and know how to schedule them in conjunction with work. If sick/personal time is available then that time can be used to take time off for such appointments. However, if that sick/personal time is not offered then people need to make those appointments outside of work time or go without pay for that day.

Relationship management was chosen because another barrier for people living in poverty is being able to build mutually beneficial relationships. It is easy to develop a mindset that says everyone is on their own. Employers want emotionally intelligent employees who know how to navigate relationships in the workplace. Increasingly, in order to do one's job, good rapport needs to be developed, maintained, and increased. If this does not happen, employees will find their work difficult to do because of the lack of aid co-workers will offer, the fights that will take place without any resolution, and the loneliness from a lack of connection with other like-minded co-workers.

On a personal level, people need to know how to build, maintain, and grow friendships and relationships. Community is an important part of maintaining sobriety, growing personally and professionally, and sustainable living. Regular arguments with spouses or friends wear people out. If that happens, it is easy to take those problems and frustrations into other parts of life, which will negatively affect one's ability to live in long-term, stable housing and work.

Resilience Training

While integrating these skills into place, I realized the importance of empowering people with the capacity for resilience if they were going to be self-supporting and find the opportunities they need to achieve their potential that comes from long-term work. If workforce training programs want to see people escape their cycle of poverty instead of returning back to it, resiliency skills must be integrated throughout their program. Time management and relationship management are taught as common practices in these types of programs. These skills are generally accepted as prerequisite skills for employment. Resiliency, unfortunately, has not had the same standing as these other skills. This next section emphasizes the point that resiliency skills should not be overlooked in workforce training programs, but rather taught as a prerequisite skill that needs to be developed just like, if not more than, other important skills.

Resilience was chosen as a skill for CADRE because it is the difference between being employed and being employable. Being employed is having a job, in generality; however, being employable is being sustainably employed. It is easy for people to get a job, but more difficult for people to keep a job for long periods of time. If these practices can be put into workforce training, clients can begin to see the need to build capacities in themselves for standard workplace vulnerabilities. They can prepare themselves for regular reviews, difficult feedback, and bosses that micro-manage. Instead of getting caught off-guard by negative feedback and

reacting in an improper way, which gets them fired, they can gain the skill of viewing that feedback through a positive and constructive lens.

Resiliency is a commonplace and industry specific word used in various professions. While looking at the concepts of resiliency found in disaster relief, I found that this concept is extremely compatible in the fields of addiction recovery, as well as, workforce training. Building boundaries around someone's triggers is commonly practiced in addiction counseling; however, this verbiage is not commonly or widely used in this field. Instead of seeing relapse happen shortly after graduation from recovery programming, resiliency skills can be produced to see long-term recovery. Likewise, if resiliency skills can be taught to someone in a WTP, participants can become employable instead of only employed for 6 months at a time.

This type of sustainable action is quintessentially resilience. Resilience, based on the work of Judith Rodin, "is the capacity of any entity—an individual, a community, an organization, or a natural system—to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience" (119-20). In other words, resiliency is creating a long-term plan for how something or someone can keep their nature, structure, character, or make-up—at the very least, resiliency allows something or someone the ability to recoil back after a stressor changes it momentarily. Trees exemplify resiliency in extraordinary ways: Redwood Trees are sturdy enough to maintain their structure through gales of wind, similarly resilient yet distinctly different, Palm Trees bend under the hurricane winds in Florida, but whip back into place when the storms stops.

The main problem with poverty, especially with employment, is sustainability. Paul LaRose, Director of Emergency Services at the Mission, said regarding the importance of operating a program like CADRE, "It is easy for guys to get jobs—anyone can walk down the

street right now and get a job at McDonald's—the tough part is keeping a job, which our guys aren't able to do" (28 June 2017). This correlates with the actions and statements made by many of the program participants.

In a case management meetings with Jack, now a CADRE graduate, he admitted his struggle with keeping a job long-term. "You know the longest that I've ever had a job? 6 years, 7 months, and 3 days" (26 January 2017). This 73 year old man memorized how long he held his longest job. It was such a big deal to him that he had a long-term job that he literally counted every single day of it. Up until that time and since that time, he has not experienced employment for longer than a year or two.

On another occasion, I learned of another intern's struggle to keep a job. One day, Nate, a current CADRE intern, crossed boundaries in what his job description allowed him to do. My boss and co-workers, not happy with the situation, confronted me about the matter to see what could be done. After coming up with a plan of action, Nate and I talked about what happened and made a plan for how to react in similar situations in the future. In that discussion, Nate exclaimed, "This is why I haven't kept a job for more than 6 months" (14 November 2017). In the moments after he said this, a lightbulb went off for me, this explained a lot regarding his story. Even in his short time in the CADRE program, he had been switched in and out of three internships. People wanted the best for him, but, whether consciously or unconsciously, he was displaying repeated actions of breaking the rules or wielding more authority than he was given. This caused his supervisors a lot of grief since it was getting them in more trouble than the help that he was actually giving to them. Instead of teaching him those skills to help him become more resilient, he was cast aside—similar actions taken in his past employment history.

Jack and Nate are not the only people living in poverty with this kind of employment history. If Jack, Nate, or the countless other men and women in similar positions are to succeed in the workforce instead of being thrust back into poverty and addiction after 6 months of employment, something needs to change in how they are deployed into the professional field. They need to develop resiliency skills that will allow them to learn from their mistakes and be stable in their work for a sustainable amount of time.

The first step in creating resiliency is knowing the vulnerabilities that could bring instability. Vulnerabilities, defined by Stephen Latham in his Operations Manual on Resilient Practices, "are the things that carry the community one or more steps backwards" (18). Vulnerabilities vary. There are numerous environmental vulnerabilities: blizzards, windstorms, hailstorms, thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, mudslides, etc. Likewise, other arenas have a plethora of vulnerabilities—service industries like addiction recovery and workforce training are no different. For example, addicts experience triggers (their version of vulnerabilities) from a variety of causes—deaths, unwanted memories, stressful situations— which would take that person "one or more steps backwards."

Sometimes, real life circumstances get in the way of being resilient and keeping someone working for long-term. Rumors had been going around about the twenty-five year old Matthew quitting CADRE. He just spent a week in the hospital with his grandma and the doctors told him and his family that she would not be released without someone living with her to help her around and to make sure she took her medication. Matthew's family willing to help out in rhetoric only decided he would be a good candidate to do this, despite his participation in a live-in WTP. The growing rumors were true, even though Matthew wanted to continue into

the program, he felt there was no other option; he was boxed into a situation that was beyond his control.

Personal and family health problems affect everyone at some point in time. In the final few years of my grandma's life, she lived with my mom. My grandma, once a nurse who helped other people with their medical situations, was now in consistent, agonizing pain. Hunched over with back pain, she would walk only to find herself on the floor without any way to get up. This was one problem of several that prevented my—once independent—grandma from being on her own. This vulnerability spans across the world and has the potential to cause many set-backs, especially in the lives of those already living in poverty without many resources to help alleviate the situation.

Knowing that vulnerabilities exist, the next step is building and using capacities to maintain or re-enforce stability and reduce the effect of the vulnerabilities. Capacities, again defined by Latham, are "mechanisms" that "help the community to take one or more steps forward" (18). Just like vulnerabilities, a multitude of capacities exist in various forms across different disciplines. Continuing onto the previous example, addicts can build capacity by keeping an emotional processing journal or by creating a community of accountability partners. This, conversely to vulnerabilities, takes that person "one or more steps forward."

Ultimately, creating resiliency is a dance between knowing vulnerabilities and building capacities. When vulnerabilities are revealed then capacities can be constructed to address those vulnerabilities—the results being a stabilized structure. For example, if an addict knows that around the holidays they are triggered to drink excessively because their mother (who they were extremely close to) died during the holidays, they can plan for those moments by creating

a community around them to check in on them regularly. These actions result in prolonged sobriety and stability.

Matthew's only apparent option was to quit CADRE to take care of his grandmother. However, just like in real-life employment scenarios, adjustments could be made to allow him to fulfill the obligations of the program while taking care of his loved one. He could skype into the classes to hear the teaching and participate in discussions; and, his internship hours could be adjusted to help him still meet the requirement of having 40 hours FTE (full-time equivalent) work. As long as he was still willing to participate and make adjustments, he could stay in the program to completion.

These adjustments are made all of the time across various fields and workplaces. My mom had a decision to make; she could either take a leave from her work, resulting in lost wages, or make substantial arrangements. Instead of quitting her job, she made adjustments in her schedule to regularly check in on my grandma. At lunch time, rather than going out with co-workers or having a genuine break from work, she would rush home to see how her mother was faring. She would also keep her phone close to her in case she got a call from my grandma who had fallen on the floor. Taking an hour off from her sick/safe time, she could go home to help her off the floor.

People do not know how to handle disruptive experiences like this—trapping them in a downward spiral of poverty and addiction. We can reduce this cycle by implementing resiliency principles found in disaster relief organizations. The five main characteristics of resiliency outlined by Rodin are being aware, adaptive, diverse, integrated, and self-regulating (261). To become more resilient each individual can ask themselves probing questions in each of these five areas: "when are times that I want to use?" (being aware), "what are the ways it can be

addressed?" (adaptive), "if that plan falls through, can a plan in another area of life or using other resources be put together to address that trigger?" (diverse), "can I put several plans together to work in conjunction with one another to see a greater chance of success?" (integrated), and "if I need to, what can I do myself to lessen the impact of my triggers?" (self-regulating).

Resilience is the difference between being employed and being employable. In a CADRE class, I asked the interns what they would do if their boss took credit for their work. Immediately, Julian spoke up saying that if he was on a construction job where his boss took credit for his work in front of the client then he would call his boss out in front of the clients. Unfortunately, no one taught him that saying this would jeopardize his further employment. No one taught him that this circumstance is normal within that field and that the clients would not think the work was done by the boss himself.

If these practices can be put into workforce training, clients can begin to see the need to build capacities in themselves for standard workplace vulnerabilities. So I started to implement resiliency training in two main ways through internship supervision and intentional living space. Each participant is set up with an internship based off their current skill set, past work therapy assignments, future professional goals, and the need of the Mission. For their internship, they are connected with an internship supervisor who guides them through their internship responsibilities and learning objectives. In this process, the intern will learn how to navigate regular feedback, working through scheduling conflicts, and have an authority figure who gives them direction. All of which are pitfalls for people to keep long-term employment. By putting them in this position, CADRE can start to train them to deal with these situations in

a controlled environment with coaching that teaches them how to deal with it in real work settings.

The participants are also placed in dormitory style living situation with up to three other roommates. The program refers to this as intentional living and encourages them to build constructive relationships in their living environment. Because of their previous socio-economic status, most of them will need to find housing with several roommates or in transitional housing programs. This prepares the them for potential living situations after the program where they will live in close quarters with other people.

Collaboration Between Providers

As described in the previous sections, workforce training programs are an integral step in helping people find the opportunities they need to achieve their fullest potential. However, this kind of work cannot be done by workforce training programs alone. They must collaborate with other service providers to focus on the particular causes of homelessness in each individual. The cycle of poverty is a complex issue with compounding issues contributing to the overall cycle. Ending this complex cycle is a long process with many stage since each of the compounding issues need to be addressed. WTP are not typically comprehensive enough to take care of all of the contributing factors on their own which is why they need to work in collaboration with other homeless providers to better help someone escape their cycle of poverty.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognizes this in their report on "Financing Employment Programs for Homeless People," which asserts the importance of creating collaborations between homeless service providers and employment programs: "Successful collaborations are built on the recognition that the homeless assistance

and workforce development systems have much to offer each other" ("Financing" 10). In other words, there are benefits to each program that the other program needs to offer. One program on its own can bring added benefit, but both programs can bring much more stability and advancement to their participants.

One specific example of this is how the Mission systematically ties its programs together. CADRE works in conjunction with a network of programs at the Mission to address the barriers associated with getting and keeping a job. Building off the skill competencies of previous Mission programs, the Bridge Recovery Program and the Men's Recovery Program, CADRE completes the process of helping someone become sustainable in both housing and employment. The Bridge Recovery Program helps to stabilize someone coming directly from the streets. This allows the individual to detox off drugs, make doctor's appointments and start taking prescribed medication, and to meet with a legal team to address any legal barriers. After 30-90 days when the participant is stabilized, they proceed into the Men's Recovery Program.

Adding onto the stabilizing skills built in the previous program, the Men's Recovery Program helps the individual establish their sobriety and redevelop a healthy community. Sobriety principles are taught through various classes and regular meetings with their case manager/counselor. This gives the participant tools to recognize and address the triggers that cause them to use their drug of choice. They are also led to build a healthy and supportive community, which is paramount to long-term success in recovery programming. This is done by requiring regular attendance in a church community and a recovery group (e.g., Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA), etc.).

After going through the Men's Recovery Program, they enter CADRE, a Christian Discipleship and Workforce Training Program. The goal of CADRE is to address the barriers

associated with getting and keeping long-term employment. To do this, CADRE attempts to create a realistic working and living environment where the participant can learn how to handle different life circumstances. Each participant is placed in an internship as their work assignment, attends classes that teach workplace skills, and is put in dormitory style housing to understand how to live in roommate situations. CADRE teaches three workforce skills that every employee should have a firm understanding of to keep long-term employment: time management, relationship management, and resiliency.

Each of these programs have to work with one another in addressing the different components of a person's cycle of poverty. Luckily, the Mission has a large enough scope to tie different services together. This allows better collaboration because all of the internal procedure are the same. This is something that both FareStart and Year Up have also done. Chertavian describes the process at Year Up in this manner:

> Along with those high expectations for the performance, students draw on a deep and well-honed support system. Each of our sites employs mental health professionals to help students cope with the persistent challenges they encounter in their lives. Students are assigned on-site advisers who check in often—daily, if necessary—to ensure that "outside noise" is not keeping them from doing their best. They are also partnered with mentors drawn from the business community who provide more support, role modeling, and networking opportunities. (13)

Year Up understands that if one of their participants is going to be successful they need to support them as a whole person. They are not only training them in a vacuum away from all of life's circumstances, but rather they are giving them the skills to address the particular causes associated with the participants cycle of poverty.

While the Mission, FareStart, and Year Up are large entities that can integrate the different programs together, they also include an ever increasing pool of partnerships with other service providers to address issues as well. This is the exact point that Jenny Weinstein, et al. write about: "The goal of collaborative practice is to enhance care services" (39). That is why the Mission partners with places like Sound Mental Health to better address mental illnesses. While the Mission has professional counselors on staff, places like Sound Mental Health have more resources to deal with particular participants' mental illnesses.

Everyone at the Mission and within CADRE knew that Samson had some unique circumstances which brought him to need the Mission. Yes, addiction was a part of it, but it was not the whole story. At an early age, he never learned how to read. His parents had always said that he was stupid and would not amount to anything. Wanting to prove them wrong, he went into a profession that he could excel at despite not having learned how to read—culinary arts. He went to learn how to cook. He recounts the following about his skills and talents: "I was good. My chef said that I had the greatest potential." Then one fateful day, Samson took a nap only to be woken up by the paramedics. He had fallen asleep and, unbeknownst to him, there was a gas leak. He had been exposed to a large amount of carbon dioxide. Everything had changed for him. His boss now said that he was "as dumb as rocks, if not dumber." His cycle of poverty included dealing with his own abuse as a child, overcoming his lack of academic skills, being estranged from his family and himself in the wake of carbon dioxide poisoning, and his addiction. Samson could not escape his cycle of poverty to achieve his fullest potential if the Mission had not internally collaborate between the different programs and refer him to other service providers.

By collaborating together with various other Mission programs and external service providers, Samson was able to get the help he needed to continue walking out of his cycle of poverty. Robert McSherry and Jerry Warr describe how effective this kind of collaboration is for the entire health and social care community:

> As delivery and organization of health and social care becomes increasingly dependent on team functioning, it is reassuring that evidence suggests that team working does improve patient care. Borrill et al. (2001) investigated a sample of community health care teams, primary health care teams and secondary health care teams. They concluded that there is a significant and negative relationship between the percentage of staff working in teams and patient mortality. In other words, the more people who are members of a team in an organization, the better the outcomes for the patient. (63)

The better outcomes there are for people escaping their cycle of poverty, the better chances they have at actually escaping their cycle instead of living a life of recidivism.

Samson is not the only person within the Mission's context that needed external help. Thomas also needed the collaborative efforts of other agencies to help him with the complexities of his cycle of poverty. In a moment of vulnerability, Thomas admitted that he had struggled for years with sexual addiction. Thomas needed a holistic way to deal with this. After years avoiding the deeper issues, the Mission decided to include a network of providers into Thomas' life. He was connected to a counselor to help him deal with some sexual abuse that he sustained as a child, a doctor to prescribe medication for the mental health issues that plagued him for years, a pastor to reassure him of his faith in God and his worth as a person, a support group to let him know that he was not doing this on his own, in addition to his connection with different Mission programs. He was doing what Mo Yee Lee describes as a "holistic

orientation" (5-9). Not only was he addressing his addiction, he was also addressing deeply rooted psychological, spiritual, and physical issues—all of which could not be handled by the Mission's programs alone. The Mission needed to collaborate with all of these people to better help him achieve his fullest potential. Thomas is now on track to finish his internship within CADRE, get employment, and move into stable housing. For the first time in over four years, Thomas will be out of a program because he was able to get this kind of holistic help from several service providers at the same time. Without the full offering of programs, people will never end their cycle of poverty. Each part plays an integral role in helping people escape their cycle of poverty and achieve their fullest potential.

Conclusion

At the end of this research time, I am still brought to tears when reminded of Eddie. Ultimately, I did this study to address my probing question around Eddie's potential: How can people exit their own cycles of poverty to achieve their fullest potential? I was once again in awe of Eddie's potential to effect change. He led me to find the answer I had been asking for so many years. Many homeless people need and want to be self-supporting, but lack the means and skills to achieve it. Research shows workforce programs are the prime place to do the skills training to see someone exit their cycle of poverty and achieve their fullest potential. To make this happen, workforce training programs must equip people with tailored skills suited to the job market. CADRE implemented three skills to make its participants employable. These programs must also empower their participants with the capacity for resilience, which is the difference between being employed and employable. Finally, there must be collaboration between homeless services and workforce training programs to focus on the particular causes of homelessness in each individual. The complexities of poverty are too much for one organization

or program to handle on its own. However, if several services and service providers are put together, they can be a part of a comprehensive fix for an individual's cycle of poverty. Putting all of these solutions into place, CADRE has changed into a viable workforce training program that helps people escape their cycle of poverty. If Eddie was still around, I would have liked to see him in this program. I think he would be on his way to seeing his fullest potential lived out.

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