The Edgewood Commons Story

Shared by:
Lesia Alleyne-Lamorell, Yerodin Avent, Frankie Blackburn, Ranell Davis and Bill Traynor
• Turn to your neighbor, introduce yourself and then share **one thing new or good that has happened in your personal life** in the last few days.

• We’ll take only 2 minutes to do this (so don’t take more than one minute each).
Why were we asked to share our story?

- Achieved some success in shifting the operating culture – from disconnection and fear to a place of connection, trust and interdependence.

- And, we are seeing signs that this shift in operating culture is translating into better outcomes for those residents seeking a new path and a higher quality of life.
Typical Affordable Housing Environment

Managers

Owners

Financiers & Regulators

Residents

Service Providers

Community Partners

Fear

Isolation

Division

When these gaps and elements dominate, it is difficult to solve problems, transform communities and achieve long term viability.

Individuals Suffer

Resources are wasted or misused.
Application of Triple Aim Impact

Typical Affordable Housing Environment

Shared Goals:
1. Operating Efficiency
2. Individual Transformation
3. Community Transformation

Intentional Spaces and Practices = New Exchanges of Value and New Understanding

A New Form = New Network of Collaborative Relationships and Shared Problem Solving Across Lines of Difference
Our objectives this morning:

• To pique the interest of a few of you in trying out the strategies we used at Edgewood commons.

• To explain four of the most important components of this strategy and how we implemented them.

• To give you a chance to ask us a few questions.
The Basics on Edgewood Commons

- 900 units on 16 acres
- Over 80% are Sec 8/voucher.
- Owned by CPDC, 20 year old nonprofit with a portfolio of 4,900 units in DC region.
- Managed by Edgewood Management Company, a long time partner of CPDC.
- Vast majority of residents are unemployed or under-employed.
The Starting Point:

- Residents/staff keep to themselves.
- Most people hesitant to invite anyone into their housing unit.
- Very few people exchange small favors.
- Most people showed no interest in attending meetings.
- Some people said they are interested but would not follow up.
- For those who did come to a meeting, many would not make eye contact or visit with those sitting next to them.
Assessments After 18 Months:

• Fun and effective practice for coming together monthly

• Resident-led initiatives are the primary means of community change.

• At least 300 people are actively connecting and providing mutual support with neighbors.

• At least 100 people are pursuing better paths as a result of a new connection.

• A core group of 30 diverse people (20 residents and 10 staff) are fully committed to the One Edgewood Network, based on principals of interdependence and shared quality of life.

• Seven residents and three staff devoted 80 hours to increasing their leadership skills and their collective sense of trust and shared mission.
Four Critical Components:

1. Work from a framework grounded in a philosophy of interdependence versus altruism.

2. Seek to change the operating culture instead of starting a new program.

3. Introduce new intentional spaces and practices, with quality, zest and consistency.

4. Form a network which includes everyone and not a resident organization.
## HOW?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Component</th>
<th>Practical Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work from a framework grounded in a philosophy of</td>
<td>Adopt a clear hypothesis statement and show it to everyone repeatedly – and refer to it at EVERY gathering.</td>
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<td>interdependence versus altruism.</td>
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Our Edgewood Hypothesis:

If we create intentional spaces, practices and a network for mutual exchange and collaborative action, WE CAN SHIFT THE OPERATING CULTURE OF ISOLATION AND ANGER TO A CULTURE OF ASPIRATION AND CONNECTION.
# HOW?

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<td>Seek to change the operating culture instead of starting a new program.</td>
<td>Create a diagram that illustrates the change and show it to everyone repeatedly – and refer to it at EVERY gathering.</td>
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Our Quest: To help spark and shape a quality operating culture within our shared eco-system of a housing community.

- **Mission**: Thriving Communities within our resource frame.  
  - Owner & Asset Managers
  - Property Managers
  - Resident Services
  - Residents

- **Operating Culture**: Quality Customer Service within our profit goals.  
  - Leasing, Retention, Collection, Maintenance, Long Term Viability
  - Economic Opportunity, Safety, Youth Development, Healthy Living, etc.

- **Products or Programs**: Quality Life within my community and personal opportunity frame.  
  - Neighbor to Neighbor Exchanges, Small Group Initiatives, Political Influence

**Shift from fear and isolation to aspiration and co-investment**
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<th>Practical Strategies</th>
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| Introduce new intentional spaces and practices, with quality, zest and consistency. | • Hold a monthly gathering using the Network Night rituals.  
• Hold weekly Network Action Team meetings using mutual support rituals.  
• Hold regular staff team meetings using synergy rituals. |
An informal gathering with good food and music

A Place to meet and get to know each other

A Welcoming, Fun and Interactive Space

Time for conversation about things we care about and how to take action together

Opportunity to Get Good Information and Exchange Favors

NETWORK NIGHT
N E T W O R K  
N I G H T

6 Components

1. Q the Space: Work to create an open and fun atmosphere in the space, including good food, music, decorations, comfortable seating and a welcome table.

2. Q The Welcome: Host an easy way for people to start informal conversation, such as a game or mixing activity that occurs while folks enjoy good food.

3. New and Good: People are brought into a circle to share name and something new or good that has happened in their life in the past few weeks, giving everyone the opportunity to speak or pass.

4. Table Talk: 20-25 minute small group conversations. Individual participants are invited to propose conversation topics that they want to have and would agree to host. 3-4 of these are selected and participants choose which conversation to participate in.

5. Marketplace: Convened back together in a circle, participants bid for time to make specific offers and requests of skills, talents, capacity, advice and stuff.

6. Bump and Spark: Fun energetic ending as people are invited to close the deal on any new matches or connections they made, and to help clean up the space.
Network Night
- Dinner + Mixing
- New + Good Circle
- Community Sharing
- Table Talk
- Bump and Spark

New and Good Circle
- Share your name and what you love
- Share something NEW or Good in your personal life
Network Action Team
To support increased capacity and accountability
in expanding and deepening the network.

- Personal Check In
- Group Review of Network Building Progress
- Focused Action Planning: One or Two Topics
- Learning Nugget
- Mutual Support and Check Out
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<td>Form a network which includes everyone and not a resident organization.</td>
<td>Name and claim it using creative branding – like any marketing campaign.</td>
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I'm KHYATI
Connect with me!