

Vision

NEK Prosper! envisions a community where *everyone* is Financially Secure, Mentally Healthy, Physically Healthy, Well Housed and Well Nourished

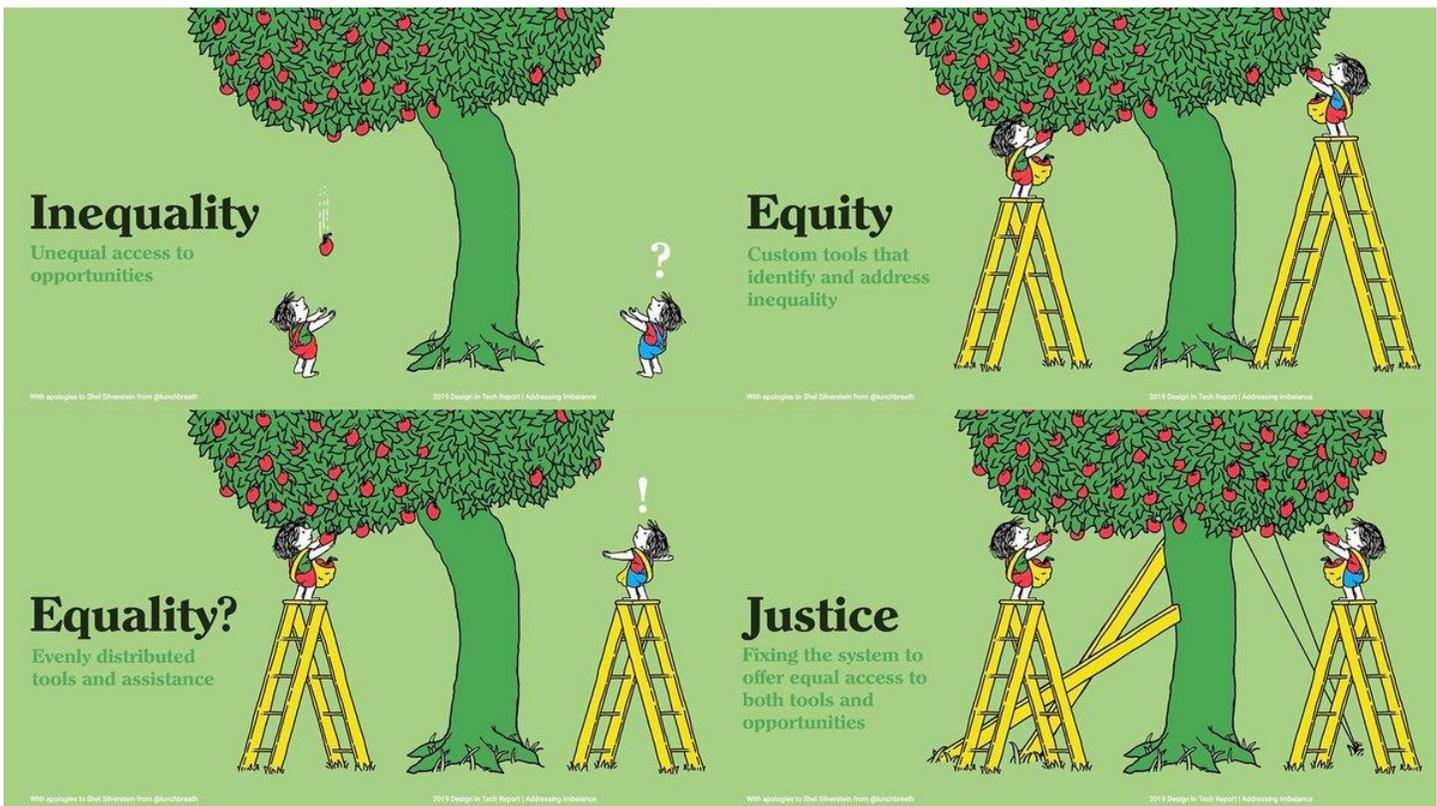
Values

As we work together, we:

- Encourage “outside the box” thinking with respect for all opinions by promoting an open and trusting environment that welcomes discussion and debate.
- Share our collective resources, data, staff, and efforts to the maximum extent possible as a means of expanding our capacity, while maintaining our individual organizations’ viability.
- Engage community members in our collective efforts, giving them equal status and shared responsibility in determining what and how services and programs are provided. We believe in having community voice front and center.

Key Terms and Concepts

1. **Collective Impact** is a network of community members, organizations, and institutions that advance equity by learning together, aligning and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems-level change. – [Collective Impact Forum](#)
2. A **Culture for Equity** is made up of two parts:
 - 1) You identify the problem, and
 - 2) You take responsibility for addressing it.A Culture of Equity exists when team policies, practices, mindsets, resource allocations, decision-making processes, and capacities are aligned with the goal of ensuring everyone has a fair and just opportunity for health and wellbeing. In teams with a strong Culture for Equity, there is an explicit focus on removing barriers that create inequity. - [Advancing Health Equity](#) and [Vermont Public Health Institute](#)
3. **Equity** is fairness and justice achieved through systematically assessing disparities in opportunities, outcomes and representation and redressing those disparities through targeted actions. - [Stanford Social Innovation Review: Centering Equity in Collective Impact](#) and [Urban Strategies Council](#)
4. **Health Equity** exists when all people have a fair and just opportunity to be healthy – especially those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage, historical injustice, and other avoidable systemic inequalities that are often associated with social categories of race, gender, ethnicity, social position, sexual orientation and disability. - Vermont Public Health Institute



Defining: Equity, Equality and Justice by Nikki Erdmann

What is Equity?

Equity is not only dividing resources fairly and equally, but also factoring in differences amongst people. Differences such as race and socioeconomic status that would require different support to ensure the same opportunity of success. This can be shown in the image below by the different height of the ladders. The boy on the right has a taller ladder because the tree is higher on his side. Whereas the other boy has a shorter ladder because he has a shorter distance to reach to gather apples. They have different sized ladders to make sure they are both able to pick the apples.

What is Equality?

Equality is dividing resources equally but does not factor differences in need and ability. Everybody is given the exact same quantity of resources. As seen in the image, both boys are given the same size ladder not factoring in differences of access – leading to one boy not able to access the apples.

What is Justice?

Justice is long-term equity. It looks to create equity in systems as well as individuals. “Justice can take equity one step further by fixing the systems in a way that leads to long-term, sustainable, equitable access for generations to come.” As seen in the image, both boys are given the same size ladder but instead of giving them different sized ladders, they give added supports to ensure both are able to access the apples.

“The route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by treating everyone equitably, or justly according to their circumstances.”

PURPOSE: Exploring together what it means to [CENTER EQUITY](#) – with self and in relationship with others in Collective Impact and Health Equity work.

WHAT

Action/Intended Result and Notes

Action 1: Welcome, Acknowledgements, Agreements and Check-In (Kari and volunteers) – 30 minutes

Land Acknowledgement Practice

NEK Prosper! recognizes and acknowledges the [Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation](#) as the traditional stewards of this land we occupy. We acknowledge, appreciate and honor the indigenous people who have been living on, working on and caring for the land from time immemorial. We recognize that colonialism and the oppression of Native peoples is an ongoing process. We commit to building our awareness of our present participation. We also commit to the recommendations of Chief Don Stevens of the Nulhegan Band: “Please **learn more** about Abenaki culture and history, **support** the Abenaki people, **stay engaged, be kind and caring to and accepting of** the Abenaki people, and **honor** the fact that they have always had, and continue to have, a lot to offer.”

[What is a “Land Acknowledgment” and why is it important?](#) – Middlebury College

Good Neighbor Agreements

- **Good Neighbors Know Community Starts with Them**
- Our actions, words and choices are examples to others
- We make connections by being curious and interested
- **Good Neighbors Are Considerate of Others**
- We choose to be kind and friendly
- We make others feel welcome
- **Good Neighbors Are Supportive**
- We address challenges and disagreement by asking questions
- We share our skills and knowledge
- **Good Neighbors Encourage Safe Spaces**
- We are attentive to community needs
- We acknowledge the different experiences of others

Oops, Ouch, Whoa Practice

- If you say something that comes out wrong, that you suddenly realize is kind of crummy, or just sounds different hanging in the air than it did in your head, you say “oops.”
- If someone else says something that hits you in a way that feels bad, you say “ouch.”
- If the conversation is moving too fast, you’re not following a line of reasoning, you aren’t familiar with a concept or an acronym, or you just want to slow down, you say “whoa,” and ask for clarification.

The point of this tool is to signal a clear set of values: Mistakes are normal, harm can be mended, it’s okay to not know something, and accountability is a shared responsibility. – [Annaliese Griffin](#)

Check-In – (Solo, In Pairs and then Full Group Share)

- **Who are you (what identities are you bringing with you to this time together)?**

Action 2: VT Community Health Equity Partnership Discussion (Heather) – 15 minutes

- Learning Collaboratives (overview, data, engagement)
- Supporting Infrastructure (people, services ([notes](#)), tools, [webpage](#), etc.)
- Where we are now and what is ahead (Health Equity Assessment, data driven problem statement, stipend process, grant funding)
- Takeaways from Collective Impact Action Summit

Notes/Questions:

Intended Result 2: Evolving our understanding, questions and concerns surfaced

Action 3: Disparities Exercise (Solo and Small Groups) – 30 minutes

Vision: *Everyone* (living?) in Caledonia and Southern Essex Counties is Financially Secure, Mentally Healthy, Physically Healthy, Well-Housed and Well-Nourished

Targeted Outcomes:

- Financially Secure: Earning enough money to support yourself and your family, and not worrying about money. Areas of Focus include: increase average household income, employee retention, employment rate and length of employment, training and education for employees.
- Mentally Healthy: Every individual realizes her or his own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, is able to make a contribution to her or his community, feels okay reaching out for help when times get tough, and knows where and how to reach out for help.
- Physically Healthy: The Physically Healthy Collaborative Action Network (CAN) of NEK Prosper! is committed to maintaining physical health & well-being through healthy behaviors & medical care.
- Well-Housed: Living in affordable and safe homes located in healthy communities with opportunities for positive social interactions.
- Well-Nourished: The Well Nourished Collaborative Action Network (CAN) of NEK Prosper! is enhancing health in our region through encouraging increased fruit and vegetable consumption.

What disparities (e.g., differences in outcomes across groups) exist related to NEK Prosper!'s targeted outcomes?

Which groups are experiencing these disparities?

Are some groups disproportionately disadvantaged and advantaged?

Which groups should be prioritized by our efforts?

Intended Result 3: Initial pass in identifying those who are closest to the problems and closest to the solutions

Action 4: Marketplace (reflections/declarations, asks, offers) – 15 minutes

Intended Result 4: Anchoring reciprocity and human-centered actions and next steps

ⁱ All NEK Prosper! Values – not prioritized or ranked

Strive for maximum flexibility from our funders, donors, and regulators to more efficiently and effectively coordinate our services and programs;
Engage community members in our collective efforts, giving them equal status and shared responsibility in determining what and how services and programs are provided;
Seek to address issues related to creating safe communities and families as part of the strategies we develop for each of our outcomes;
Encourage “outside the box” thinking with respect for all opinions by promoting an open and trusting environment that welcomes discussion and debate;
Strive for consensus in what we propose to achieve, but if this is not possible, allow the majority to proceed;
Share our collective resources, data, staff, and efforts to the maximum extent possible as a means of expanding our capacity, while maintaining our individual organizations’ viability;
Engage in “disruptive innovation” without being judgmental and without fear of failure or being judged;
Trust and treat each other as equal partners, knowing that ideas and effort are not dependent on the size of one’s organization or resources; and
Attend and participate in NEK Prosper! monthly meetings in order to stay informed and contribute to achieving success.

ⁱⁱ Work done at October 2021 NEK Prosper! Neighbor-Up Meeting

Each participant chose from one of three virtual tables themed around top three priority Culture Statement goals/Values, discussed ideas to answer the prompt and then shared out:

- 1. Encourage “outside the box” thinking** with respect for all opinions by promoting an open and trusting environment that welcomes discussion and debate - ***How can this group promote or better promote outside the box thinking with respect to all opinions?***
 - Identify places where health outcomes have significantly improved
 - Plan an Action Summit for wider sharing and presenting
 - Revisit past projects and initiatives
 - Intentionally break out of old mindsets in favor of new perspectives (i.e., we dismiss initiatives that have worked in urban areas because we are rural and they “couldn’t possibly work here”)
 - Use and repurpose existing resources and partnerships (i.e., Northern Express Care)
 - Encourage two-way communication
 - Use this group as a problem-solving group
- 2. Engage community members** in our collective efforts, giving them equal status and shared responsibility in determining what and how services and programs are provided - ***How can we engage or better engage community members in our collective efforts?***
 - Define community
 - Support CANs in engaging community (encourage them to constantly ask who is missing from this conversation?)
 - Follow-through with communication back to community when community is asked to participate or provide information (surveys seem to go out, but nothing comes back to those who participate)
 - Each person make a personal invitation to a community member to join – even just a single meeting
 - Think about what actions we can take to build trust (truly meet people where they are – physically, emotionally, socially, etc.)
 - Involve the Steering Committee in the solutions to invite community voice
 - Consider paying community members for their time and participation
 - Reach out in multiple ways ensuring sincere, clear and consistent messaging (PSAs and advertising, 100 Cups of Coffee conversations)
 - Build a business case for participation that others could take back to their employer to demonstrate the value/benefit to the business

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- Use the HUB
 - Identify this in NEK Prosper! “policy” – “we believe in having community voice front and center”
 - Encourage fun - St. J Can CANs!
3. **Share our collective resources**, data, staff, and efforts to the maximum extent possible as a means of expanding our capacity, while maintaining our individual organizations’ viability - ***How can this group share or better share its collective resources?***
- Create Resource guide in multiple formats and system to support it (What formats? What would it include? Who keeps it up? How are updates communicated? How does it get promoted?)
 - Utilizing CANs and recruiting for the CANs
 - Way for organizations to acknowledge and celebrate staff who are involved in NEK Prosper!