

## Chapter Four: Carrying Out Your Project

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## Introduction

Once you have finished planning your mental health promotion project, and you have gathered the resources you will need, you are ready to carry out your project.

Each mental health promotion project is uniquely designed to respond to the reality of a particular community at a certain point in time. The activities you have planned for your project will reflect

both the mental health issue you have chosen to focus on and the strategy you have selected to address that issue.

Because each initiative will be unique, there really isn't a standard set of activities that you should consider implementing in your project. Rather, there are a few key areas that you should keep in mind during the implementation stage:

- generating and maintaining the commitment of the community,
- keeping track of the day-to-day operations of the project, including, recording meetings, and getting feedback from participants;
- dealing with the unexpected, e.g. problem solving issues that may arise;

In this chapter, we look at each of those areas in a little more detail, and we provide tips and tools that will help to making your mental health promotion project a success.

## **4.1 Generating And Sustaining Commitment**

Commitment forms the backbone of community-based mental health promotion. It is what gives an initiative its strength. In this section we'll discuss why it's important to build and sustain commitment, and suggest different ways of doing so.

Everyone has the potential to become committed to the goals of your mental health promotion initiative. Your project will no doubt strike a chord with many people in the community -- and you want to make sure those people get involved and stay involved so that you can work together to accomplish as much as you can.

### **Why Is Commitment Important?**

People who are committed to your mental health promotion project care about the goals of the group, and they also care about the people in the group. They show up, follow through, and stick with it.

Committed people contribute an enormous amount of their time, energy and spirit, in many different ways. They:

- arrive at a meeting early to make sure that the room is set up and the coffee maker is working;
- actively promote your mental health promotion project in the community;
- stay late to stack chairs and clean up after a community meeting finishes;
- hang in there when the going gets tough.

Here are a few other reasons why having committed people involved is an essential ingredient for reaching your community mental health promotion goals:

Committed people can be effective in influencing others -- people take note when someone speaks or acts with resolve. If a whole group acts with determination and commitment, great numbers of people can really pay attention.

People who are committed don't give up easily, but persist in the face of discouragement. They set an example for those who don't have the confidence or experience to go through the difficult times and hold out for the rewards of success.

Commitment inspires co-operation. It fosters camaraderie, trust and caring -- the stuff your project will need to keep it going over the long run.

## **What Makes People Become Committed?**

How do you get people to come forward and join your efforts to promote mental health in your community?

People aren't born committed to a community or a cause. They become that way. Commitment grows within people over time, as they gain experience:

- working together;
- feeling successful at what they do;
- making decisions together;
- working through conflicts;
- supporting each other's leadership;
- having fun together;
- overcoming obstacles;
- appreciating and respecting each other;
- challenging each other;
- building relationships;
- having an impact on something they care about;
- learning from mistakes and setbacks;
- having solid, committed leadership.

People commit to a group because they gain something important from their involvement. When you invite someone to become involved, you are offering them an opportunity to:

- take action on an issue that's important to them;
- do work that helps others;
- meet and spend time with like-minded people;
- be part of a team;
- be challenged and held to high standards;

- learn how to lead;
- do something significant.

Your mental health promotion project will be an important contribution to the life of your community. When you invite people to become committed to initiative, don't feel that you are imposing something on them, but rather, that you are offering them something of value.

## **Who Will Become Committed?**

As you mobilize people to become involved in your community effort, you may not know at the start who will become committed and who won't. The factors that inspire participants to become committed to an initiative may not reflect the reasons they initially became involved.

Sometimes people will surprise you. There might be person who is quiet and shy at first, but who, over time, becomes a pillar of your initiative.

In the Forest site of the Inclusion in Community project, a group of people came together and sat around a table discussing ways to promote the mental health of people in their community. There were a number of people present: the local minister, staff from the community health centre, members of the nearby First Nations community, and people who themselves had experienced mental health problems. The group brainstormed different strategies for raising the awareness of community members of the importance of mental health, and the need to support people who had experienced mental health problems, and who were trying to take part in community life. One young man, who had firsthand experience on the need for this kind of support, sat quietly through the discussions, listening and observing more than taking an active part in the meeting.

After a long discussion, the group voted to use theatre, specifically role plays, to address the issue of providing support and understanding to people in the community who had experienced mental illness. The group was very excited to have chosen a strategy that fit so well with the needs of the community, and there was great enthusiasm to move ahead with the project. The quiet young man didn't share the same infectious enthusiasm for the idea - in fact, he had some doubts about it -- but said that he would like to continue to attend the meetings, as an observer rather than an active participant.

As the group moved from sitting around planning tables to developing and performing the role plays for various local organizations and groups, the young man became an increasingly involved and committed member of the group. He began by helping out with the technical aspects of the group's work, such as setting up the space before the role plays began.

Eventually, he became the group's narrator -- skillfully handling the interaction between the players and the audience, leading the discussions after the role play ended, and contributing the insights he had gained through his own experience to captivated audience members.

## **How Do You Foster And Maintain Commitment To Your Project?**

Although commitment grows in a natural way, there are a number of things that you, as a leader or group member, can do to foster commitment to your initiative.

The first thing to do is to think about why people become involved in and committed to a group. Start with yourself. Why are you committed to your mental health promotion initiative? What is most important to you?

- the goals of your group?
- your vision of what's possible?
- the time you've invested in the group?
- your role in your group?
- what you've learned in your group?
- the satisfaction you get from doing significant work?
- other reasons?

Once you've thought through those questions yourself, it will become easier for you to express your commitment to others, and thus encourage them to become committed, too.

Here are some other practical suggestions that will help you find and keep committed participants.

### **Welcome people into your group**

Something all people need in order to become involved is to feel genuinely welcome - and if people don't feel welcome, they will not stick around. Try to personally welcome people when they arrive, and ask questions and get to know them.

Make it part of the culture of your initiative to provide a welcoming environment to newcomers, as well as those who've been involved since the start.

### **Be sensitive to cultural diversity**

Those involved in community mental health promotion initiatives need to explicitly communicate their openness to cultural diversity. People will become committed to your initiative if they feel they are respected and their cultural identity is valued.

Try to be aware of how different cultures might interpret the language, symbols and process used in the initiative, which may have different meanings to people of different cultures.

### **Be open and clear about your mission, goals and objectives**

People have to know what they are committing to. They will want to join your initiative if they share the same principles and goals. In fact, people will be more committed if they have gone through the process of naming the goals and objectives themselves.

Post your mission, goals and objectives in your meeting space, so that everyone will be familiar with them. Talk openly about why they are important to your group.

### **Model commitment yourself**

Everyone looks to the leader or leaders of a group to see if they are committed. If you care about the work of the initiative, it will show in your attitudes and actions. People will watch to see how you act, and they will follow your lead. If they can count on you, it's more likely that you will be able to count on them. Commitment is contagious.

However, if you are working so hard that you are burnt out and unhappy, people will take note of that too, and they will shy away from following your lead. Remember that the process of mental health promotion is as valuable as the outcome!

### **Give people the right kind of work to do**

People need to feel they're making a significant contribution in order to feel committed. Find out what they are interested in doing and see if you can match their interests to some work that needs to be done.

Pay attention to picking the right level of challenge for people, so that they don't end up feeling either overwhelmed or bored. As you get to know people better, you can give them increasingly challenging work to do. Being challenged keeps people excited about the work they're doing.

Sometimes people will need encouragement to try things they have never before considered. Talk to people about what kind of jobs they would like to try. Also give people jobs that bring them into contact with other people involved in the initiative, so that they will begin to feel they're a part of the group as quickly as possible.

### **Build a culture of appreciation and respect**

People need to feel respected and appreciated in order to stay connected and committed to your project. Try to create an environment where people treat each other well, and appreciate each other's work.

In heated discussions or conflicts, make sure that people continue to show respect for each other. Conflicts are natural and can provide important growing periods. Conflicts need to be acknowledged and openly addressed by recognizing the legitimate interests of those involved and the goals of the group.

To ensure that they are useful rather than destructive, do not let people personally attack each other. Keep discussions focused on the issues. Remember your ground rules, and hold people to them!

### **Listen!**

Since an important key to mental health promotion is participation in decision-making about issues which affect one's life, it's important to ensure that everyone's voice is heard when those decisions are being made. Active and respectful listening is a crucial element of creating the kind of initiative that people will want to commit to.

As we've seen in the Helping Skills project, listening is a powerful tool. Everyone could use someone to listen to them. When you listen to others with respect, they sense that you have confidence in them and are interested in what they think. In turn your interest and confidence in them helps them to think clearly and creatively.

### **Support people's leadership**

Even though people have different levels of leadership skills and experience, everyone can contribute something of importance. To help sustain commitment in your initiative,

think about each person as a potential leader, and help them to recognize their leadership talents. Leadership means more than chairing meetings -- the person who informally resolves conflicts is performing an important leadership function, and so is the one who gets everyone laughing during a long meeting, when the group's energy is at a low.

If people view themselves as leaders, they will develop a sense of ownership, and will be more likely to take initiative to make sure things work well.

### **Have fun together**

Last, but not least, don't forget to celebrate your accomplishments and enjoy each other's company! Spending some social time together helps people to get to know each other better and feel more a part of a cohesive group.

"Commitment requires hard work in the heat of the day; it requires faithful exertion in behalf of chosen purposes and the enhancement of chosen values."<sup>1</sup>  
Gardner, J. 1990

## **4.2 Keeping Track**

### **A. Obtaining Feedback About Your Project**

Getting people's opinions about the issue your project is addressing, and how well your project is doing to address that issue, can be very helpful to the work you're doing in the community.

#### **Why Should You Obtain Feedback?**

Obtaining feedback can help you to better understand a number of things:

- how your project is perceived;
- what the community really needs;
- how to prioritize tasks;
- how to generate renewed interest and excitement in your project;
- how to increase community awareness of who you are and what you're doing;
- how to improve your program.

You should try to obtain informal feedback about your issue and mental health promotion initiative from participants and the broader community on an ongoing basis. This may be as simple as having a casual conversation with a community member or monitoring articles or editorials in the newspaper.

More formal feedback - data that you can measure -- may be needed at various points as well, and is usually obtained through personal interviews, questionnaires and surveys. This information often forms a part of the project evaluation, which we'll talk more about in the next chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> On Leadership. Gardner, J. New York, N.Y. The Free Press 1990

As you go about gathering feedback about your initiative, you should always keep in mind how you will actually use the information you obtain. Nothing will be more frustrating to your participants than giving feedback that is not used.

## **How Do You Obtain Feedback?**

Before you begin asking others questions, you should begin by asking yourself a few:

### **What do you want to know?**

Make sure your questions are clear and framed in such a way that the information you gather will be useful to you.

### **Whom do you want to ask?**

Make a list that includes a variety of people you want to get feedback from, so that you can be sure you will be getting a wide range of input and opinions.

### **What's the best way to ask?**

In some cases it may be best to simply ask a few questions informally, as part of a conversation, for example "How did you find the meeting?" At other times, a more formal method such as an interview or questionnaire would be more appropriate. Be sensitive to the people whose feedback you are soliciting by giving some thought to what the best way of asking your questions would be.

Have you considered literacy level, cultural background and language preference?

For the staff of the Friendship Centre who worked with the in the Medicine Wheel program, using an informal, conversational style was the best way to find out how the Elders felt the program was going, and how they would like to see it change.

If staff had presented the Elders with a questionnaire, they would no doubt have had little success in getting their feedback, because many of the Elders would not have been comfortable using a written format to express their opinions, but were willing to express their thoughts on the program through informal discussion.

For further information on asking questions, please see the tools section at the end of this chapter.

## **B. Recording Meetings**

### **Why Should You Record Meetings?**

Trying to remember all of the important points that were raised during a lengthy meeting can make the already challenging job of promoting mental health even more difficult. That's why it's good to get in the habit of recording your meetings, so that later, you'll be able to review the notes and follow up on what was said.

This section will focus on the benefits of recording meetings - to help your initiative move forward and solve problems effectively.

## What Are The Advantages Of Recording Meetings?

- Recording a meeting lets people know that they've been listened to and heard;
- It provides a historical record that can be used at future meetings for verification of decisions, and evaluation and serves as a reminder of past events and outcomes;
- It can provide important information to people who weren't able to attend;
- It helps to keep everyone on track. If everything is written down, people are more likely to stick to the agenda, or get back to the agenda when they've strayed. It's quite easy to note that things are getting off-track when the recorder is no longer writing things down, or if they're writing things unrelated to the day's agenda.

And for visible recording, on a flip chart or board, there are several other advantages:

- It provides a visible running record - everyone can see what has happened, and what is happening, as you go along;
- During brainstorming activities, having the group's ideas in front of everyone can help the group stay focused. People are also less likely to repeat themselves.
- It demonstrates that people's contributions were heard and acknowledged.
- It can increase people's attention to, and interest in, the meeting.

Although your meeting notes can be an invaluable resource, it's a good idea to ensure that everyone knows in advance that the meeting will be recorded, and agrees upon the intended use of the material that is recorded. Is it just for the use of the group, or will it be made public? In order for everyone to feel at ease, these issues should be decided collectively at the outset

## How Do You Record Meetings?

Let's look at the different methods of recording that you are most likely to consider using:

### Written notes

Written notes are most commonly used if the meeting is a regular or routine meeting of the group, with no major decisions or actions on the agenda

### Visible recording (flip charts)

Visible recording is most appropriate when:

- the group is engaging in problem-solving, decision-making or brainstorming;
- there are several options for solution or decision;
- the problem or discussion topic is complex, controversial, new or unfamiliar to the group;
- the decision to be made is important;
- group members do not know each other well;

- there is low trust among the members of the group, and/or a history of conflict

### **Tape recording**

Tape recording is most appropriately used when:

- the discussion moves too fast for a person to keep up with;
- it's important to capture the exact language used;
- it's important to listen to vocal tone, as well as verbal content;
- other group members, who will be making decisions on the topic, cannot be physically present
- at the meeting.

### **Who Should Record Meetings?**

There is an art to recording meetings, so when your group is choosing a recorder, try to make it a person who has some experience, who knows the group well, who has clear handwriting, and who works well with the facilitator.

If possible, it's preferable not to combine the roles of facilitating and recording a meeting. Your meetings will probably be more productive and successful if the facilitator can concentrate on facilitating, and someone else does the recording.

### **Tips For Recording Meetings Effectively**

Regardless of who is chosen to record your meetings, there are several things that person should keep in mind:

- having the proper tools:
- working effectively with the group;
- choosing what to record;
- recording effectively.

Now we'll look at each of these points in more detail.

#### **Having The Proper Tools**

For visible recording, the best (and cheapest) tools include pads of large newsprint, or flip chart paper, mounted on a portable easel, and magic markers that write clearly. Once a sheet of paper is filled, the recorder can tape it to a wall so that it is still visible to the group.

Arrange the room before the meeting begins, so that everyone will be able to see what's being recorded. You might try testing out your writing, to make sure that everyone will be able to read it from the most distant chair.

If you choose to tape record your meeting, it's important to make sure that the equipment is working before you begin. Try doing a few tests and playing them back, so that you'll know if the machine is picking up your voice, or if you need to change its position or raise the recording level. Be sure to have extra blank tapes so that you can capture the whole meeting.

## **Working Effectively With The Group**

### **listen actively**

The role of the recorder may be quiet, but it is anything but passive. The recorder needs to listen hard at all times, to make sure that quiet comments don't go unheard, and that points briefly made don't go unnoticed or unrecorded.

### **remain neutral**

Generally, the recorder doesn't interject his or her own opinions into the conversation. Like the facilitator, the recorder draws out the opinions of the others in the group.

### **communicate with the group**

It's important for the recorder to interject. However, if the group is going too fast to write everything down, or if people are speaking too quietly. If the recorder is unclear about what someone has said, he or she could step in and ask for repetition of the point.

If the recorder didn't understand something, or didn't have a chance to write it down, there's a good chance that other members of the group would benefit from slowing the pace down a little as well.

### **accept corrections gracefully**

The recorder may have heard something wrong, or made a spelling mistake that someone feels compelled to point out. The recorder should simply thank the person for pointing it out, correct it, and move on.

### **work with the facilitator**

The facilitator can repeat or check the speaker's statement before the recorder writes it down. It will clarify what has been said for the recorder as well as for the rest of the group.

## **Choosing What To Record**

In general, the recorder will write down what is often called the "group memory", or what it will be important to remember from this meeting. Each meeting is different, but the points that are recorded will often include:

- questions;
- answers;
- feedback;
- concerns;
- ideas from brainstorming sessions;
- decisions.

How do you decide if a comment or question is important enough to write down?

Record a comment if it:

- is a specific suggestion made by a member of the group;
- is stated several times;
- introduces a new idea, or gives new information;
- is a decision made by the group;
- describes any action to be taken by the group;
- states who will be doing the action.
- If in doubt, it's fine to ask the group to help you to decide what to record.

## **Recording Effectively**

The following tips can make the job of recording easier:

Don't try to write every word - you'll never keep up. Paraphrase what's been said. If you have changed the speaker's words, check to make sure you have captured the idea correctly.

- Use high-energy words, such as active verbs (e.g. contact, organize);
- Write large, legibly, and fast;
- Don't worry about spelling - you'll get the point across;
- Label and number your sheets. This will make it a lot easier to write up the notes later;
- Use colour, symbols and underlining to highlight your points. Separate thoughts and topics with symbols, such as stars. Save numbers for larger items, such as agenda items, or for ordering pages.

## **What To Do With What You've Recorded**

You will probably want to type up what has been written and add it to your files, and possibly distribute them to all the members of your group. These notes are an important part of the recording process, and will help you to keep track of the different activities of your project for the process evaluation. The notes generally follow and parallel the items on the meeting agenda and generally include:

- the name of your group;
- the date;
- the time and place;
- the names of those present and absent;
- the key points made for each agenda item;
- specific decisions that were made. You might want to underline, or highlight these in a different way, so that they stand out.

The meeting report is then distributed to all those present at the meeting (as well as those group members who were unable to attend), along with an agenda for the next meeting. The preparation and timely distribution of accurate reports can add to the effectiveness of your group, provide a historical record, lead to better decisions, as well as more effective follow-up to those decisions.

Your group should adopt its own policy regarding reports. Not every group needs detailed reports, and not every meeting may need written reports at all. You can adapt these tips to the situation in your project. The most important thing is that action is taken on the basis of the decisions made

at meetings. Distributing meeting reports serves as a reminder for group members to follow through on what they agreed to do.

### **4.3 Dealing With The Unexpected**

Often the greatest learning from a mental health promotion project is the difference between what you plan and what you actually do -- the proposal for a project is really just a "best guess". Although planning is very important, it's done in the abstract. The ability of your project to adapt to the changing issues and realities of the community is the best indication of successful implementation.

There are bound to be changes in your mental health promotion program during the implementation stage. Although change is a natural part of the process and shouldn't necessarily be perceived as threatening, unexpected change can be disconcerting. In this section we'll look at a few of the most common changes that your initiative may be faced with and some ideas about how to deal with these changes.

#### **Losing participants**

Most community groups go through a stage when they begin to lose members and flounder a bit, as the initial energy and enthusiasm gives way to more tedious tasks. This can be compounded by the perceived risk of failure. Any difference in perception of goals will become evident at this stage, and sometimes conflicts arise among group members.

This stage is a normal part of the community process -- some turnover should be expected, and may even be healthy. Unfortunately, the loss of some participants may be discouraging to those who are sticking it out.

In order to keep the energy and momentum of your group alive during those times when people are starting to drift away, it's important to keep in mind that some loss is natural. If you make sure to develop new leadership and involve new people as you go, you will be able to take these changes in stride.

#### **When your project changes course**

A project may take on new meanings and direction as it progresses; it may spark a new initiative, one that more closely reflects the mental health needs of the participants. The Seniors Medicine Wheel project did just that, as we'll see in the following example.

The Elders who attended the Medicine Wheel program came to receive information on the services and supports that were available to them in the community, and to spend time with others who shared their culture and concerns.

While the program was successful in sharing this important information, and providing Aboriginal Elders a welcoming and warm environment in which to meet, staff and participants were left feeling that information alone would not help to empower the Elders to take greater control of their health. Something was missing.

The Elders continued to come to weekly meetings, along with the staff member who had started the group. The program had initially brought them together to talk about their own health needs, but increasingly, the Elders began to discuss their shared concern for the children in their community, and their sense of responsibility for the emotional, spiritual and physical health of the younger generations.

Simply by meeting and sharing their feelings and experiences, the Elders gained the confidence to become more involved in the lives of young people in a positive way. The Medicine Wheel project was conceived as one that would bring Elders and services together, but became one that brought generations together. The Elders transformed the Medicine Wheel project into an initiative that addressed the needs of the community in a truly holistic way.

As the story of the Seniors' Medicine Wheel program illustrates, things don't always turn out exactly as planned. Sometimes community initiatives veer off course and lose momentum, but other times, instead of fizzling out, they grow and transform into new, more meaningful projects that genuinely improve life for people in the community.

## Summary

- Committed community members are the most essential resource that your project needs. People are often eager to contribute to their community, and by asking them to participate in your mental health promotion initiative, you are offering them something of value. Appreciate whatever level of commitment a person can make.
- Obtaining feedback is essential to: understanding community needs; generating interest; increasing awareness; improving your program; and finding out how your project is perceived.
- Recording your meetings will help to ensure that you to take action on your group's problem-solving, decision-making and brainstorming ideas, and will help you to evaluate the process of your initiative.
- There is often a difference between what you plan and what you actually do. The ability of your project to adapt to the changing issues and realities of the community is the best measure of successful implementation.
- Simply bringing people together can produce almost magical results. New ideas are born, new opportunities are seen, and a new belief in possibilities can take hold.

## Tips For Carrying Out Your Project

**Focus on the positive.** Notice what's going well, as well as what needs to be improved.

**Try to recognize progress,** even when the going is slow. Take satisfaction in the good things that happen, including your decision to act in the first place.

**Keep people informed.** Members of the group, your stakeholders and community members need to be kept apprised of progress and challenges. The more people know, the more they can contribute to the effort.

**Recognize contributions and let people know they are valued.** Make gestures to show people they're appreciated, e.g. certificates, acknowledgements, etc.

**Acknowledge when things are going differently than planned,** and discuss the change in direction with your group. Determine if it's a desirable change or not, and hence how to deal with it.

**Distribute leadership.** Different people can provide different forms of leadership that your group will need. Leadership is an action, or a set of actions, not a person. Because no one will be able to provide all the leadership necessary, it's a good idea to encourage all members of your group to take on leadership roles.

## **Checklist**

- You have a plan for building the interest, leadership and commitment of other people.
- You anticipate some unexpected setbacks.
- You are respecting the different interests and time availability of your group members.
- You are managing conflicts constructively.
- You are taking action on the plans and decisions made by your group.
- You are recognizing contributions and letting people know they are valued.
- You are keeping people informed of what's happening in your project

## **Tools**

### **Asking The Right Questions**

Skillful questioning will help you to gather the information you need by encouraging people to give clear, full, and honest replies. There are several different things you should keep in mind when you are formulating your interview questions:

#### **Open questions**

If you want people to talk at length and give full, detailed answers, you should ask open questions, such as "What do you think the project has done to make the community a more welcoming place for people with mental illness?"

#### **Closed questions**

Closed questions elicit short, factual answers, usually expressed as yes/no, for example "DO you think the project has contributed to making the community a more welcoming place?"

If you require brief, factual information, then closed questions could be what you're looking for. If you want more detailed information, however, be careful to frame your questions in a way that will ensure that you get more than a yes/no answer.

#### **Biased questions**

Biased questions indicate the answer that the questioner wants, or expects, to hear. In other words, biased questions (sometimes called 'leading questions') are likely to bias the response by leading the person who answers in a particular direction, for example "Tell me how you think the project has been successful in making the community a more welcoming place . . . "

Asking the question this way assumes that the project has been successful, whereas that's exactly what you're trying to find out. Try to make sure the questions you ask are as neutral as possible, and that they don't lead the interviewee in a particular direction.

## Multiple questions

Multiple questions contain more than one question. Multiple questions are likely to confuse, because the person being questioned will not know which question to answer, and probably will not remember each question. An example is “What has the project done to make the community a more welcoming place for people with mental illness, and could it have done more to promote inclusion?”

Making your questions as clear and straightforward as possible will help to ensure that you obtain the kinds of information you’ll need to develop and evaluate your mental health promotion project.

## Annotated Resource List

**Community tool box.** Chapter 10A, Section 4. Capturing what people Say: Tips for recording a meeting. Nagy, J. and Berkowitz, B. <http://ctb.ukans.edu/ctb/c10as4.html>

This section of the Community Tool Box focuses on ways to record meetings effectively, to help community groups in planning and implementing initiatives. It discusses the advantages of recording meetings and presents different options for doing so. The section on “Recording Meetings” in this Tool kit was modeled on the Community Tool Box section

**Community tool box.** Chapter 10, Section 5. Building and sustaining commitment. Wadud, E. <http://ctb.ukans.edu/ctb/c10s5.html>

The concept of commitment and why it is necessary to generate commitment to your project is the topic of this section of the Community Tool Box. The section provides a straightforward and comprehensive guide to help you build commitment to your initiative. Much of the information is summarized in this Tool kit’s section on generating and sustaining commitment.

**Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving In.** Fisher, R. and Ury, W. London:Penguin, 1983.

This bestseller on conflict resolution shows how conflict can be quite healthy if you can separate the people from the problem and focus on interests rather than on positions. This book will help you to identify unexpressed interests so that your group can create options that will benefit everyone.

**When everyone’s a volunteer: The effective functioning of all-volunteer groups.** Sheier, I. Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc. 1992.

This booklet written by an expert on building organizations with volunteer support. Sheier covers goal-setting, distributing work, getting members, working with no money, and cooperating with others. He also details a collection of group exercises and networking ideas.

**Working collectively. Women’s self help network.** Courtenay, BC: 1990.

Six British Columbia womens’ collectives contributed material to this condensed, spiral-bound booklet on working in an atmosphere of democracy and cooperation. Using straightforward language, it covers decision-making and overcoming common problems, and provides tools to help ensure a happy and productive group. It is available from the ComoxValley Women’s Resource Centre, PO Box 3292, Courtenay, BC V9N 5N4.