Aspirations Facilitator’s Guide

Instructions for leading a conversation about aspirations

• For this exercise you’ll be asking the three questions shown below and helping to identify patterns or themes from the answers given.
• Make sure everyone has a copy of the Aspirations questions.
• Give your participants ten minutes to read and write down their answers to these three questions.
• Go through the questions in order and for each, record their answers on a flip chart and identify any patterns or themes that emerge from their answers.

1 What are your aspirations your community?
Record your participant’s answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:
• What patterns do you see?
• Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes. Make sure that you’ve captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

2 What challenges do we face in reaching these aspirations?
Record your participant’s answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:
• What patterns do you see?
• Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes. Make sure that you’ve captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

3 What needs to change in the community to reach our aspirations?
Record your participant’s answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:
• What patterns do you see?
• Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes. Make sure that you’ve captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

(continued on the back)
Aspirations
Facilitator’s Guide

How to summarize:

Once the three questions have been answered and the responses recorded, summarize what your participants have said by telling a story.

We began by saying that we wanted a community where ________________ (aspirations) but we face ________________ (challenges). So if we want to reach our aspirations, we need to create ________________ (new conditions/change).

HOW TO MAKE IT WORK

1. Record the themes and post them where people will frequently see them. Ask: If this story about our shared aspirations is true, then what does that mean for our work together?

2. Share this exercise with others - with your co-workers, at your place of worship, with friends, your PTA, your board, etc. Ask: What are the implications for our work? What other groups could use this exercise for their own work?

Next Step? Register for a Harwood Learning Experience, like a Public Innovators Lab, read a Harwood book or sign up for our weekly blog for inspiration and news: www.theharwoodinstitute.org/harwoodhalfhour