



The PATH & MAPS Handbook

Person-Centered Ways to Build Community

John O'Brien, Jack Pearpoint and Lynda Kahn

The PATH & MAPS Handbook

CONTENTS

About this Handbook	9
What do the acronyms stand for?	10
What about the earlier formats for path & maps?	10
Thanks	10
Foundations	11
path & maps serve community builders	11
path & maps support person-centered work	14
Comparing Approaches To Individual Planning	16
Person-centered doesn't mean alone	19
How path & maps encourage positive change	20
Alliances	20
Belief that positive change is possible	20
Creativity	21
What kind of plans are path & maps?	22
Facilitation	23
The purpose of facilitators	23
The powers of facilitators	25
What is all right?	29

The importance of graphics	30	
Facilitators is plural	32	
A quicker, cheaper way?	32	
Seeing the process	33	
I. Many steps, not just a meeting	33	
Listening	35	
II. The logic of path & maps		36
III. A sequence of conversations	37	
Sheltering flames	44	
Getting ready	45	
When these steps are done well	45	
It's all about relationships	45	
Steps to select an approach	47	
Before the path or maps meeting starts	47	
Steps to gather the circle	49	
Invitation	50	
Steps to identify planning circle members	52	
Steps for discovering possibilities	54	
Pre-meeting checklist	56	
Supplies	57	
Negotiating the boundaries: Whose plan is it?		58
Boundaries with the system	58	
Family troubles	60	
Who is the focus?	61	
Changing the process	62	
path	63	
When these steps are done well	63	
Before physically setting up the meeting space	64	
Setting up a space for work	65	
Steps in convening the path	66	
Exploring with images	69	
Steps to locate the North Star	70	
North Star reflection starters	71	
Steps to create a vision of a positive, possible future		72
Steps to describe the now	74	

Words that work	76
The pushy part: Supporting action & ownership	77
Steps to invite enrollment	78
Steps for identifying strengths to develop	80
Identifying bold steps	82
Steps for organizing the planning circle's future work	84
Agreeing on next steps	86
Getting Unstuck	88
Steps in reflecting	92

maps 93

When these steps are done well	93
Before physically setting up the meeting space	94
Setting up the space for work	95
Steps in convening maps	96
Exploring with images	99
Steps to hear the story	100
Steps to honor the dream	102
Steps to recognize the nightmare	104
Steps to name gifts	106
Words that work	108
The pushy part: Supporting action & ownership	109
Steps to identify what it takes to receive the Gift	110
Steps to make action agreements	112
Getting Unstuck	114
MAPS	116
Steps in reflecting	118

Keeping On 119

When these steps are done well	119
Circles at the growing edge	119
Acting strategically	122
Keeping the support in support circle	125
Getting the work done	125
Sustaining the circle	127
The gift of wobbles	128
A circle's life cycle	128

“I don’t want any meetings”	129
Conversation formats	130
Getting Better	135
When these practices are done well	135
Keeping a log	135
Why not write?	136
Journaling	136
Following-up	137
Learning Journeys	137
Wondering at the edge	138
Try this	139
Useful Web-sites	148
References	149

What do the acronyms stand for?

In addition to her genius as a facilitator, Marsha Forest delighted in creating acronyms. And she didn’t hesitate to change what the letters stood for when the desire struck her. At one point, maps stood for “**m**aking **a**ction **p**lans”. At another time it was the “**McGill Action Planning System**”, named after the university that hosted a Summer Institute on Inclusion where many people learned maps and from which Marsha and her colleagues published two papers that are referenced in the professional literature.* Now, at least for us, it is simply maps, and no more an acronym. path sometimes went by “**P**lanning **A**lternative **T**omorrow**s** with **H**ope”. Now we think the word itself says well enough what the process is about and we have retired this acronym too.

What about the earlier formats for path & maps?

Think of what’s here as an alternative rather than a replacement. This Handbook describes the ways we facilitate maps and path and the way we teach people now. However, we know that many people get results that suit them with earlier formats and we don’t want to discourage their practice. Inclusion Press will keep materials that support earlier alternatives available.

Thanks

To Eric Trist and David Morley for the logic of the search process.

To David Sibbet for teaching us graphic facilitation.

To Connie Lyle O’Brien, Beth Mount, David Wetherow, Faye Wetherow, Patti Scott, Dave Hasbury, Mike Green, Jo Krippenstapel, Candee Basford, Heather Simmons, Sherrie Anderson, and Stacey Rameriz for their help with this handbook.

To journey through chaos, we must engage with one another as explorers and discoverers. I believe the passage is possible only if we claim these roles. We need to realize that no single person or school of thought has the answer, because what's required is far beyond isolated answers. We need to realize that we must inquire together to find the new. We need to turn to one another as our best hope for inventing and discovering the worlds we are seeking...

If we take seriously the role of explorer and inventor, we'll realize how much we need each other. In this time of chaos, the potential for disaster is as strong as for new possibilities. How will we navigate these times? The answer is, together... We cannot hide behind any old boundaries or hold onto the belief that we can make it on our own. We need each other to test out ideas, to share what we're learning, to help us see in new ways, to listen to our stories. We need each other to forgive us when we fail, to trust us with their dreams, to offer hope when we've lost our own.

—Margaret Wheatley