

A Little About What You Can Expect in the CCLD CoP

Topics within the CCLD CoP

The CCLD course is an intensive 15 week study with weekly webinar sessions via ZOOM. The course is centralized around a series of exclusive video interviews conducted over a two year period with key experts in the fields of Appreciative Leadership (Diana Whitney; www.positivechange.org); Asset-Based Community Development (Mike Green www.abcdinstitute.org with bonus video contributed by John McKnight); Person-Centered Planning (John O'Brien, Jack Pearpoint www.inclusion.com; Michael Smull, www.elpnet.net; Beth Mount, www.capacityworks.com); Employment (Connie Ferrell and Denise Bissonnette, www.diversityworld.com); and Appreciative Inquiry (Diana Whitney).

The core areas addressed in the course include Citizenship; Leadership; What is Community; Person-Centered Planning; Employment and some system transformation bits.

Access to new course material series will open on the morning of scheduled webinar days. Our live webinar sessions maintain a Tuesday (in North America; Wednesday in Australia) 90 minute session from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. EST.

Course content will include written and select video-taped interviews specifically addressing the month's topic. There will also be recommended reading, opportunity for personal reflection and practical field assignments to apply what you are learning in your own community and later to share this experience within our group.

Selected excerpts from the interviews appear in the coursebook, *Conversations on Citizenship and Person-Centered Work* (2011) and will serve as a companion guide throughout the course. You will be sent a copy of this book and Conversation Starter packs.

We at the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability here at Cornell University are delighted to present to you a body of knowledge that has been thoughtfully collected with every intention to preserve the legacy and the history of the evolution of the field of disabilities. At the same time this work is geared toward advancing the field into a new generation of community-building and citizenship.

Our aim is to discover new ways of working with and being with people that transcends the assumptions associated with traditional service designs. To the best of our knowledge, our course library of video resources and transcripts is the first of its kind in the world today. This material is for your use during the course and is not to be used for any other purpose. You will be asked to sign a user agreement when you first log in to the course.

An Invitation to Establish Your Local Community of Practice and Learning Partners

The CCLD is a genuine community of practice that requires participants to engage and invest in a multi-level learning journey and to include other people.

There is a *personal* level through which you are provided opportunity for self-reflection and self-awareness.

There is a *practical* level through which you are provided field-based opportunity to practice with your team and/or with your learning partner(s).

There is a *professional* level through which you engage colleagues and others in conversation and in sharing about your learning journey.

You are required to work with other people throughout the course. You must select and invite learning partners to assist you in your learning journey. These people will not have access to the Moodle to the live sessions, rather, you will be the conduit between what you are learning in theory and how it can be applied in practice. It is best to be able to work directly with someone who receives disability services since this greatly impacts the quality of the learning experience.

We encourage each of you to invite a minimum of **two key learning partners** to actively work with you throughout the semester. They will be your guides, mentors and coaches as you immerse yourself in your personal learning journey. They should be included as partners at the table of your local community of practice. A helpful resource on selecting and working with learning guides is provided for you to use and share with your learning partners.

If you work directly with (or have ready access to) individuals with disabilities (i.e. direct support worker; teacher; teaching assistant; etc.), you should invite at least one person to support your learning. This means that you would engage the exercises/activities throughout the course with this person in a mutually beneficial relationship. This person must understand and be willing to assist you by participating in relevant field assignments and discussions. They are, in fact, guides for your learning. This partner should be someone living with the impact of disability in his/her life and who desires greater expression of his/her contributions of citizenship. If you are that person, your learning partner should be someone who works directly with you from within the service system who is invested in exploring and discovering new ways of supporting you toward citizenship contribution.

We recommend inviting a second learning partner in addition to the first partner. This individual should be selected and invited to support you based on his/her familiarity with the system in which you are working and who holds a reasonable degree of positive influence. In essence, you are asking for support from someone who will understand what you are facing as you organize your local community of practice. Ideally, she or he will be able to assist you in navigating your system and networks. Your invitation to this person to share in the learning should be based on his or her ability to provide encouragement, advice and support to you as you go along. He or she should be someone who embraces potential and possibility rather than someone who prefers to dwell in what cannot be done.

If you do not work directly with individuals with disabilities or do not have the ability to engage in this level of learning partnership with a person with a disability throughout the course, you must agree to develop and facilitate a local community of practice. This is a group of people (i.e. your team at work; colleagues; other stakeholders) with whom you will share field assignments and discussions. You should aim to host and facilitate a minimum of 4 people within your community of practice.

“The student becomes the teacher.” You are, in essence, the “ambassador” between the course material and the world around you. It is our intention that each member comes to this learning community with an investment in mobilizing the ideologies represented in the course by creating and energizing home-based communities of practice that cultivate productive contributions of citizenship between individuals who require assistance and their local community. We have found that the more people with whom you engage in sharing your learning, the faster and deeper the impact occurs in and around the lives of people who use school-based and/or community-based disability services.

You are encouraged to include as many people as you like in your local community of practice. Invite people to gather to think about key concepts that you will share during your learning journey. Provoke discussion that opens up assumptions and welcomes new possibilities. Your local community of practice can include family members, people who rely on services, co-workers, etc.

Finally...

In a nutshell: the central critical components of the course comprise two elements: 1) having meaningful conversation around learning with and from each other and 2) the practical application of material in real life with real people in real places. There is no one size fits all approach here. While there is sound theory from which to draw, it is really about moving theory out of the head and into the heart and soul of our work as community-builders with people who are often excluded from the mainstream of citizenship and contribution.

As a CCLD CoP member, we invite you to contribute feedback to improve course design; brainstorm ideas that will better allow future participants to meet the objectives of the program and especially to co-create a learning community of trust, respect and partnership in a virtual environment. There will be formal assessment tools provided to you at the end of the course and your informal feedback is always welcome anytime throughout the duration of the course. Feel free to call me (518.265.3759) or email me personally (cjb39@cornell.edu) any time.

Again, on behalf of the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability at Cornell University, allow me to extend our deepest appreciation to you for the investment and contribution you are making to our local and global communities through the Citizen-Centered Leadership Community of Practice.