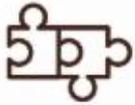


# ASPIRATIONS TO ACTIONS

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

The Aspirations to Actions initiative is about strengthening people, organizations, and communities to achieve greater impact and realize aspirations.



Connecting



Learning



Sharing



Evolving



Strengthening

Listening is Indeed Action!



[Turning Outward](#) ... [Community Rhythms](#) ... [Public Knowledge](#) ... [Expert Knowledge](#), each part of the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation's practice made me feel lost because working in an online community with mainly contributors that share expert knowledge felt unimportant compared to other public innovators' experiences. I struggled because it felt like my 'community' wasn't suffering and, subconsciously, one of my Harwood takeaways was that a community needs to be having problems for the learnings to manifest.

The importance of the [Aspirations to Actions Facebook page](#) paled in contrast to other public innovators working in homelessness, literacy, and violence, but the aspiration for a virtual hub for local public innovators to share their stories, make comments, and ask questions of one another seemed a worthy pursuit. I put a lot of pressure on myself to grow the page and began experimenting with ways that would garner interest.

So here I am, a few months after the Harwood virtual lab. The Aspirations to Actions Facebook page is basically on a



ventilator with a handful of supporters and the pulse for my motivation to Turn Outward felt like it was circling the drain too. Then - insert sound of a defibrillator. Again - sound of a defibrillator.



While I had thoughts about pulling the plug on the Facebook page, I managed to #Aspire2Action. In reading [Deborah Gauvreau's](#) blog, [The Sarasota 10 Complete Virtual Lab - Sharing Lessons Learned](#), she identified quotes from some of the participants. One in particular caught my attention. My coworker, [Beatriz Paniego-Béjar](#) who was on the Outreach Support Team for the [Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading \(SCGLR\)](#) said, "Working with the community, I am listening to them, fully dedicated to going beyond being an 'Outreach Team' and becoming the Engagement Team.

As an employee at [The Patterson Foundation](#), I know the campaigns work well, so it seemed like the thing to do was to rename them the Engagement Team.

What I imagined to be a small tweak ended up being much more. Both President and CEO of The Patterson Foundation, Debra Jacobs, and the Director of Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, Beth Duda agreed with the request to change the name and in the process remotivated me to Turn Outward. In the SCGLR team meeting, Beth surprised them with the news and presented each with new business cards which were well received.

From this experience, I now understand that to #Aspire2Action, the sky doesn't have to be falling. There doesn't need to be a problem present to change things and make them better. One just needs to listen, and if it makes sense, take a step forward.

- [Stacy Sternberg](#), Communications Coordinator, The Patterson Foundation

## From Aspiration to Reality: Age-Friendly Festival



Don't miss this 3-minute video of the Festival.

Turning an aspiration into a reality, the [Age-Friendly Festival](#) (AFF) was the first community celebration across the global Age-Friendly movement to bring together a day of fun, festivities, and focus to what it means to be an Age-Friendly community. Thousands of area residents gathered to catch the vibe of being a community #ForAllAges. It happened on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2017, at the Sarasota Fairgrounds.

The Festival was an activity of [Age-Friendly Sarasota](#) (AFS), the first community in Florida to become designated by the [World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities](#); a world-wide effort to promote active, engaged, and healthy living for people of all ages.

The genesis of the Festival was the thousands of conversations and sharing sessions undertaken by AFS as it sought to learn about the assets and aspirations of the community. AFS learned that the region wanted to be more connected, to know more about how we are already and are further becoming Age-Friendly. The Festival was a way to share in enchanting, informative, engaging, and innovative ways that our community - all sectors - and people of all ages are in the game to be a community friendly to all ages. The Festival was a cornucopia of activities with more than 125 organizations leading the way to make a difference in the lives of this community:

**Engaging Exhibits** - Individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and local government revealed practices, services, and products advancing age-friendly principles in the community and beyond.

**Hands-On Experiences** - Organizations encouraged attendees to try out fun, hands-on activities that demonstrate ways to enhance the quality of life.

**Live Entertainment** - Performances by artists of all ages were presented through a partnership with the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County.

**Educational Presentations** - Authors, longevity experts, and thought leaders shared insights and innovations on living optimally at any age.

The Festival was an opportunity to continue the conversation and evolve as attendees were asked to share thoughts, perceptions, and aspirations in Reflection Lounges and as they left the event.

So what's next? The AFF has set the stage to strengthen our community's assets and fulfill its aspirations as it continues conversations with people, organizations, and communities. Individuals and organizations are collectively and continually reinventing themselves for greater impact with innovations to allow us all to live optimally at any age.

- Deborah Gauvreau, Aspirations to Actions



## ARE YOU MOSTLY TURNED OUTWARD OR INWARD

A fundamental practice of the Aspirations to Actions (A2A) initiative is Turning Outward -- asking questions designed to find out what the community wants instead of arriving with the answer. Realizing the community's aspirations, teams and resources can be brought together to take action to make those dreams a reality. When is the last time you took the THE TURN QUIZ developed by The Harwood Institute?

# THE TURN QUIZ

## Are you Mostly Turned Inward or Outward?

Look at the two columns below. For each row circle the word that best describes the focus of your work or efforts in the community. Descriptions on the next page.

I am generally focused on:

| INWARD  |                     | OUTWARD  |                    |
|---|---------------------|--|--------------------|
|    | Activity            |    | Action             |
|   | Programs            |   | People             |
|  | My Organization     |  | My Community       |
|  | People as Consumers |  | People as Citizens |
|  | Process             |  | Progress           |
|  | Outreach            |  | Engagement         |
|  | Public Relations    |  | People's Reality   |
|  | Inputs              |  | Impact             |

**Click the image to take the quiz!**

"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."

On Sharing Responsibility - Mr. Rogers

YOUR PRESENT  
CIRCUMSTANCES  
DON'T DETERMINE  
WHERE YOU CAN  
GO; THEY MERELY  
DETERMINE WHERE  
YOU START.

- *Nido Qubein*

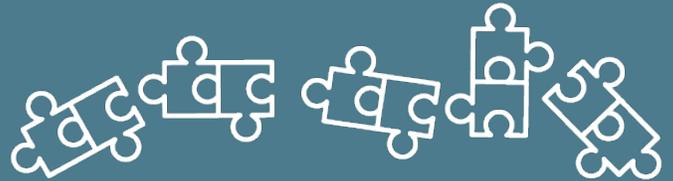
## GET CONNECTED

Learn more every month about how to turn aspirations to actions, follow this link to [A2A's October Newsletter](#).

Interested in learning more about Aspirations to Actions? Subscribe to the newsletter [HERE](#).

[Bloggers share how Aspirations are being transformed to Actions in our community.](#)

Have a story about turning outward?  
[Send it to Deborah Gauvreau](#)



[Aspirations to Actions Facebook](#)

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