

BEYOND COLLECTIVE IMPACT: MOVING TO COMMUNITY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE COLLABORATION

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TEN PLACES WHERE COLLECTIVE
IMPACT GETS IT WRONG AND THE NEW
DIRECTIONS WE NEED TO TAKE

- Collective Impact does not address the essential requirement for meaningfully engaging those in the community most affected by the issues.

Engage the community (residents and those most affected by the issue) and

Transform power relations/ share power with the community

Question: Does your collaborative have those most affected by the issue at the table?

Degrees of Involvement- Ladder of Participation

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Community initiated – shared decision making with agencies

Community initiated and directed– agencies support

Agency initiated – shared decision making

Consulted and informed

Assigned roles

Tokenism

Decoration

Manipulation

- A corollary of the above is that Collective Impact emerges from top-down business consulting experience and is thus not a true community development model.
- **Use a community development approach that is bottom up not top down**
- **Question: How would/does your collaborative do that?**

- Collective Impact does not include policy change and systems change as essential and intentional outcomes of the partnership's work.
- **Focus on policy and systems change to achieve the above stated goals (racial equity and social and economic justice achieved by transforming existing power relations)**
- **Question: Do you have the capacity to change policy?**

- Collective Impact as described in Kania and Kramer's initial article is not based on professional and practitioner literature or the experience of the thousands of coalitions that preceded their 2011 article.
- **Build successful models on existing research and practice literature from multiple fields. Include access to the many tools available to help collaboratives move forward**
- **See: Community Tool Box ctb.ku.edu**

Research on what works in effective coalition

- Roussus and Fawcett (Ann Rev of PH 2001)
 - Clear vision and mission
 - Action planning for community and systems change
 - Developing and supporting leadership
 - Documentation and ongoing feedback on programs
 - Technical assistance and support
 - Securing financial resources for the work
 - Make outcomes matter
- Plus: Naming and addressing conflicts as they arise (CSAP research)

- Collective Impact misses the social justice core that exists in many coalitions.
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- **Address issues of social justice, institutional and structural racism, etc.**
- **Engage the collaborative and the community in an examination of the root causes of issues.**
- **Address power, white privilege, white supremacy etc.**
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- Question: Does your coalition ever explicitly talk about racism as a part of equity? And then act?

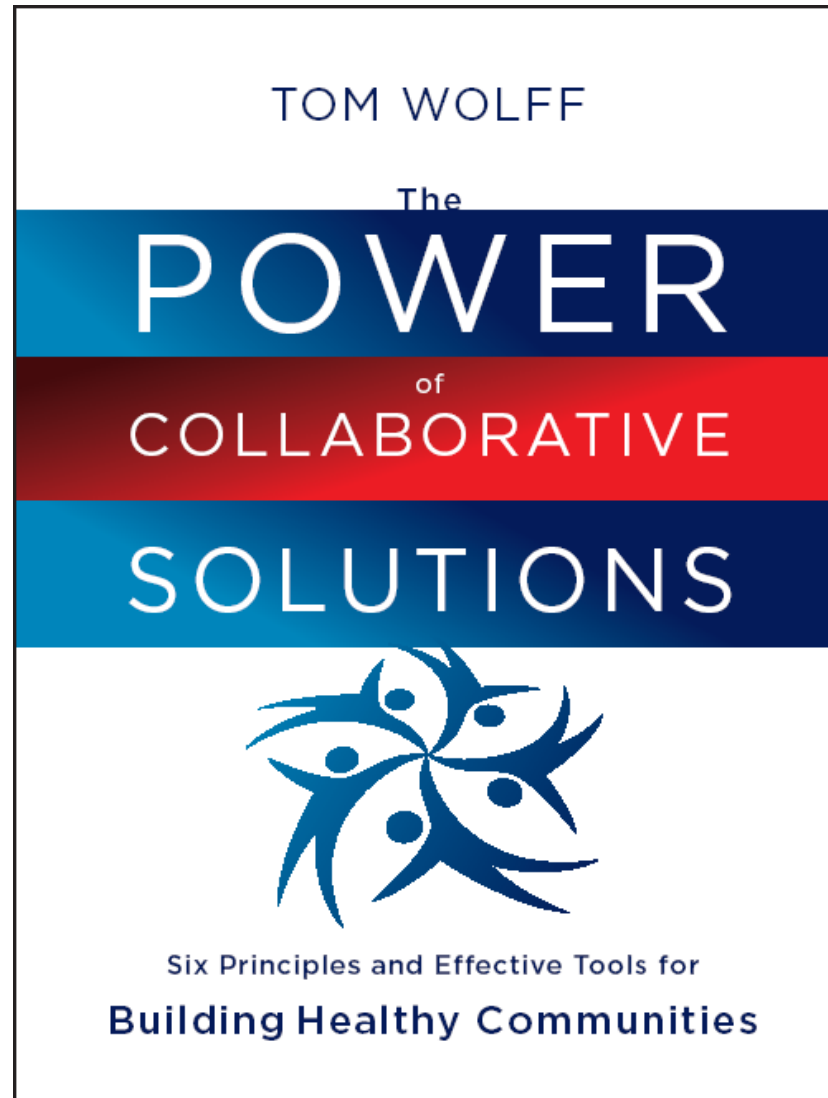
- Collective Impact mislabels their study of a few case examples as “research”.
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- **Ensure that our learning emerges from both our successes and our failures**
- Question: What have you learned from your coalition’s failures?

- **Collective Impact assumes that most coalitions are capable of finding the funds to have a well- funded backbone organization.
Collective Impact also misses a key role of the Backbone Organization – building leadership.**
- **Build models that can support both well- funded and less well funded coalitions.**
- **Articulate the basic necessities of support and structure.**
- **All models must provide for some form of central support for the coalition but all models must acknowledge that ultimately they are sustainable by building community ownership and leaders from the community**
- **Question: How does your coalition build new community leaders?**

Community wide, multi-sectoral collaboratives cannot be simplified into CI's five required conditions.

- **Acknowledge the complexity of multi-sector community wide efforts.**
- **Plan for the amount of time it takes to create change and the ups and downs of the process.**
- **We know how to keep a coalition vibrant and people involved over that time period**
- **Provide the guidance and tools to manage to succeed with complex change processes.**
- **This process cannot be simplified into a few stages/principles and funders and communities must understand this.**
- **Focus on sustainability from the start**

From Jossey Bass/John Wiley- and available at www.tomwolff.com



Six principles for successful coalitions:

- **Engage a broad spectrum of the community**
- **Encourage true collaboration as the form of exchange**
- **Practice democracy**
- **Employ an ecological approach that emphasizes individual in his/her setting.**
- **Take action**
- **Engage your spirituality as your compass for social change**

The early available research on Collective Impact is calling into question the contribution that CI is making to coalition effectiveness.

Collaborating for Equity and Justice Principles

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Principle 1: Address Issues of Social Injustice and Institutional Racism

Principle 2: Employ a Community Development Approach where the community equally shares decision making power

Principle 3: Build community leadership and integrate community organizing

Principle 4: Focus on policy and systems change;

Principle 5: Build on the community-engaged scholarship over the last four decades that shows what works, acknowledges the complexity, and evaluates appropriately

Principle 6: Describe the core functions and necessary funding of the central facilitating structure

Web Resources

- Tom Wolff & Associates www.tomwolff.com
- Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice www.gjcopp.org
- Vol.1 Sustainability Tool
- Community Tool Box <http://ctb.ku.edu>