

Asset-based and community centred approaches to improving health and wellbeing

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Alnwick



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Outline of the presentation

- Deficit and Asset Approaches
 - Deficits and assets
 - Principles, values and themes
- Asset approaches and resilience
 - Understanding resilience and 'social capital'
 - Salutogenesis and concepts assets
 - Asset approaches to community development
- Bringing it all together
 - Commonalities between different asset approaches
 - A 'Theory of Change'
 - Co-producing assets and outcomes



Sources

What makes us healthy?

The asset approach in practice:
evidence, action, evaluation
By Jane Foot

The follow-up to 'A glass half-full:
how an asset approach can improve
community health and well-being'

Head, hands and heart: asset-based approaches in health care

A review of the conceptual evidence and case studies of
asset-based approaches in health, care and wellbeing

Trevor Hopkins and Simon Rippon



Research
April 2015

The Health
Foundation
Inspiring
Improvement

A glass half-full: how an asset approach can improve community health and well-being



I&DeA
improvement and development agency

part of the LGA group



A deficit approach

- Much of the evidence and data currently available to describe communities is based on a deficit model
- It is a 'pathogenic' approach
- The deficit approach focuses on the risks, problems and needs in individuals, families and communities
- Professionals design services to 'fix' the problems
- As a result the community and individuals can feel disempowered or can become 'service dependent'
- Many people become passive recipients of expensive services



An assets approach

- Values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in individuals, families, communities and organisations
- It is an approach that highlights the factors that create and support resilience and well-being
- It requires a change in attitudes and values
- Professional staff have to be willing to share power
- Organisational silos and boundaries get in the way of people-centred outcomes and community building
- Never do **for** a community what it can do better **for itself**



The Principles

- Assets: are any resource, skill or knowledge which enhances the ability of individuals, families and neighbourhoods to create and sustain resilience, health and wellbeing.
- Instead of starting with the problems, we start with what is working, and what people care about.
- Networks, friendships, self esteem and feelings of personal and collective effectiveness are good for us.



Values for an Asset Approach

- Give support to identify and make visible the life enhancing assets in a community
- See citizens and communities as the co-producers of sustainable outcomes rather than just the recipients of services
- Promote community networks, relationships and friendships
- Value what is already working well
- Identify what has the potential to improve resilience, health and wellbeing
- Empower communities to control their futures and create tangible resources



Key themes

The defining themes of asset based ways of working are that they are:

- Place-based
- Relationship-based
- Citizen-led

...and promote social justice and equality



Two types of resilience

- **‘Status quo resilience’**
 - *Bouncing back or rebounding*

- **‘Transformational resilience’**
 - *Bouncing forward or successful adaptation*



Understanding resilience

Resilience can be found:

- Within us
- Between us
- Beyond us



Social capital: bonds within us between us and beyond us

- **Bonding capital** - links with similar people, similar outlooks and values, Strong ties, good for “getting by” or “bouncing back”
- **Bridging capital** - links with people with different outlooks and values, weak ties, good for “Getting on” and bouncing forward: adapting to changed circumstance and crises.
- **Linking capital** - links with those who make decisions that effect communities



Asset approaches

There is a wide base of activity that can be described as asset-based.

Broadly, asset-based working draws on three related strands of theory, evidence and practice:

- Salutogenic theory and the idea of positive health and wellbeing
- Concepts of Assets and Asset Approaches
- The practice of Asset Based Community Development and related approaches



Salutogenic Theory

- Literally means ‘What makes us healthy?’ from the Latin ‘salus’ - health; and Greek ‘genesis’ - the origin.
- Developed by American Israeli medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky from the 1970s
- Working in Israel with women who were holocaust survivors
- Generalized Resistance Resources (GRRs) 1987
- Sense of Coherence (SOC) 1992



Generalized Resistance Resources

- Found within people as resources but also to their immediate and distant environments and of both material and non-material qualities
- The key factor is not what is available but to be able to use and re-use them for an intended purpose
- GRRs provide a person with meaningful and coherent life experiences as resources at their disposal. They are genetic, constitutional and psychosocial.
- They include material factors, knowledge/ intelligence, ego identity, coping strategy (rational, flexible, far sighted), social support, ties, commitment (continuance, cohesion, control), cultural stability, magic, religion/philosophy/ art (a stable set of answers).



A Sense of Coherence

- **Comprehensibility**

An individual's cognitive ability to understand and find meaning in a situation

- **Meaningfulness**

Having reasons, motivation, hope and a positive outlook about moving forward

- **Manageability**

Having the skills, ability, support, help and resources to meet life's challenges and feeling that these things are under your control



Concepts of assets & asset approaches

- Developed mainly in Scandinavia over the last 20 years
- Based on a salutogenic theory of health and wellbeing
- First presented to the UK in 2006 by Antony Morgan and Erio Ziglio
- Health assets are any factor or resource which enhances the ability of individuals, families and communities to maintain and sustain resilience and wellbeing
- This refers as much to mental, social and other resources as it does to material and physical resources.



Asset Based Community Development

- Developed by John McKnight & John Kretzman – Northwestern University, Chicago (1993)
- A method of community and network building that starts by locating the assets, skills and capacities of individuals, local associations and organisations, rather than focusing on their needs and deficits.
- The aim is to help people to improve their resilience, independence and wellbeing by focusing on what can be done by working together.



...and related approaches

- Appreciative interviews
- Asset Mapping
 - Individual
 - Organisational
 - Community
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Community conversations
- Peer support & mentoring
- Community 'connectors'
- Community development to tackle health inequalities



Commonalities between salutogenesis, assets for health and ABCD

- All three share a focus on working with peoples' capacities and resources. Outcomes are seen as a product of the mobilisation of organisations, community, family and individual assets and resources
- The assets that McKnight & Kretzmann value align closely with the resources that salutogenic thinkers have demonstrated to be the sources of health and wellbeing.
- All the approaches are interested in mobilising the whole community to create outcomes – rather than targeting those deemed to be most at risk, or with greatest need.
- The approaches see sustainable outcomes as a product of social action. They reinforce the case that inequalities are a product of income and other structural inequalities.



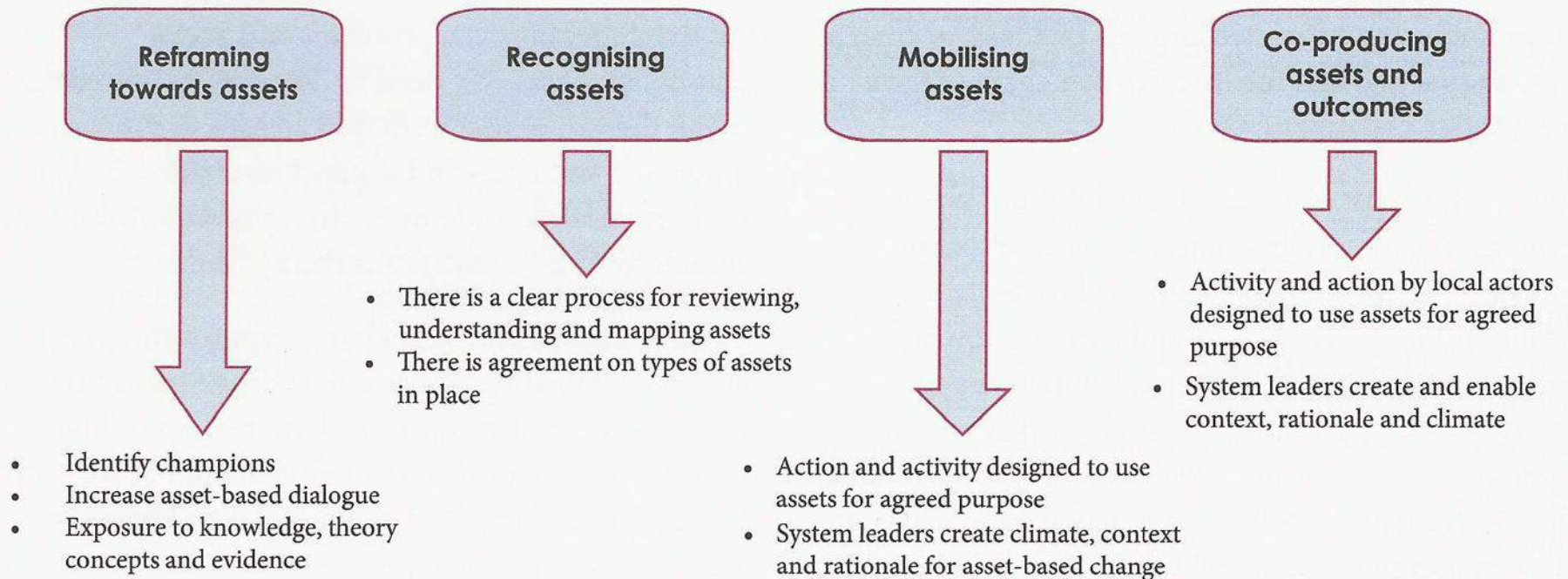
Commonalities between salutogenesis, assets for health and ABCD

- Each approach puts a high value on a sense of belonging, capacity to control, finding meaning and self-worth – these psychosocial assets promote resilience and well-being but they also bring connected individuals and flourishing communities.
- All put a high value on social relationships – the networks and connections in a community that reduce isolation and vulnerability to shocks.
- They start with a premise that strong communities – whether of geography, identity or interests – generate resources, through fundraising, mutual aid, lobbying power, voice and empowerment.

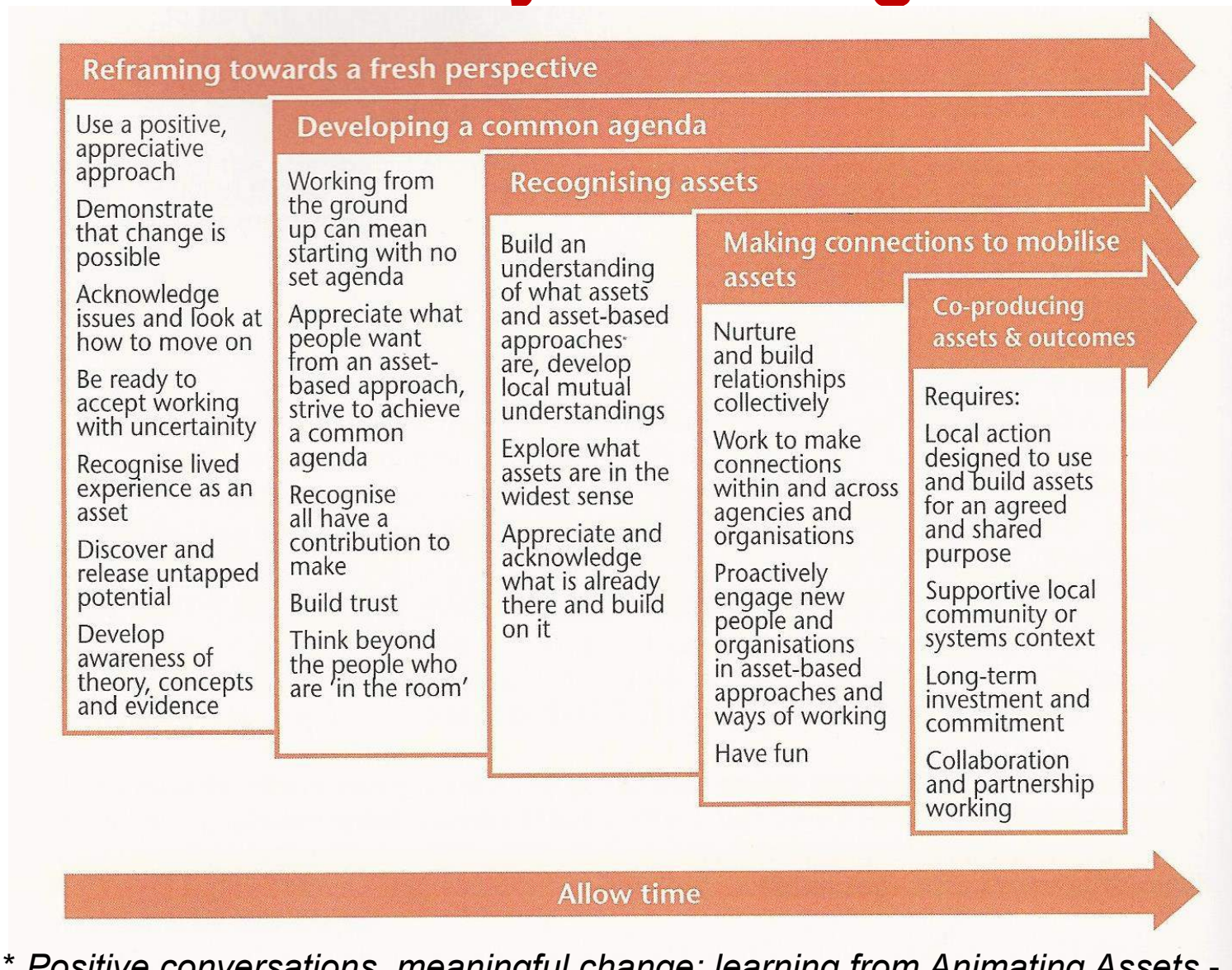


How do we know outcomes are being achieved?

A Theory of Change



A 'Theory of Change' *



* *Positive conversations, meaningful change: learning from Animating Assets* -
Dr Jennifer McLean (2016)

Connections between the theory, evidence and approaches to building resilient communities

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Resilience	Asset Based Community Development	Social Capital	Sense of Coherence
Within us	Individual	Bonding	Comprehensibility
Between us	Associations	Bridging	Meaningfulness
Beyond us	Organisations	Linking	Manageability

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Applying a Theory of Change to evaluating the effectiveness of these approaches

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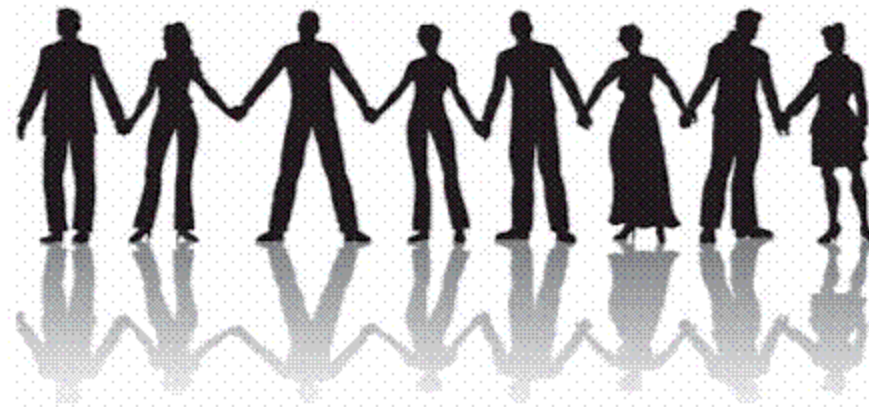
Within us: Reframing towards a fresh perspective and recognising our assets

Between us: Developing a common agenda and mobilising assets for a purpose

Beyond us: Co-producing assets and outcomes



“The asset approach is a set of values and principles and a way of thinking about the world.”



It takes everyone to build a healthy, strong and safe community.

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