Community Science

Effective Strategies – Equitable Systems – Strong Communities

Achieving Equity By Building Community: The Need, the Framework and How to Measure

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Welcome

Your Panel:

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Meet Community Science

Effective Strategies. Equitable Systems. Strong Communities.

Community Science is an award-winning research and development organization that works with governments, foundations, and non-profit organizations on solutions to social problems through community and other systems changes fostering learning and improved capacity for social change.

Community Science

A BCT Partners Company

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Key Takeaways
- Why Community Now
- Definition of Sense of Community
- Measurement & Assessment
- What's Next

Key Takeaways

- An improved framework for achieving equity
- Research-based and applicable across cultures and contexts
- Not a panacea, still has challenges
- Actionable
- Measurable

Why Community Now?

Ongoing Social and Environmental Injustices

- Deep-seated systemic racism persists, affecting fair access to quality housing, healthcare, education, jobs, voting, and more.
- Climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and pollution threaten certain populations' health and livelihoods and our planet's overall well-being

COVID-19 Recovery and An Epidemic of Loneliness

- COVID-19 has exacerbated the health and other disparities of some communities who still struggling to recover
- The Surgeon General declared an epidemic of loneliness and isolation in the United States

Increased Division and Polarization

- Political differences, social inequities, and cultural clashes have contributed to political polarization
- Psychological boundaries have become starker about who is "in" and who is "out"

Overcoming Backlash toward DEI Strategies

- DEI strategies are perceived as a zero-sum game
- People who have been involved in DEI work seek improvement in their strategies

Our goal is to create a beloved community, and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.

~ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Elements of a Sense of Community

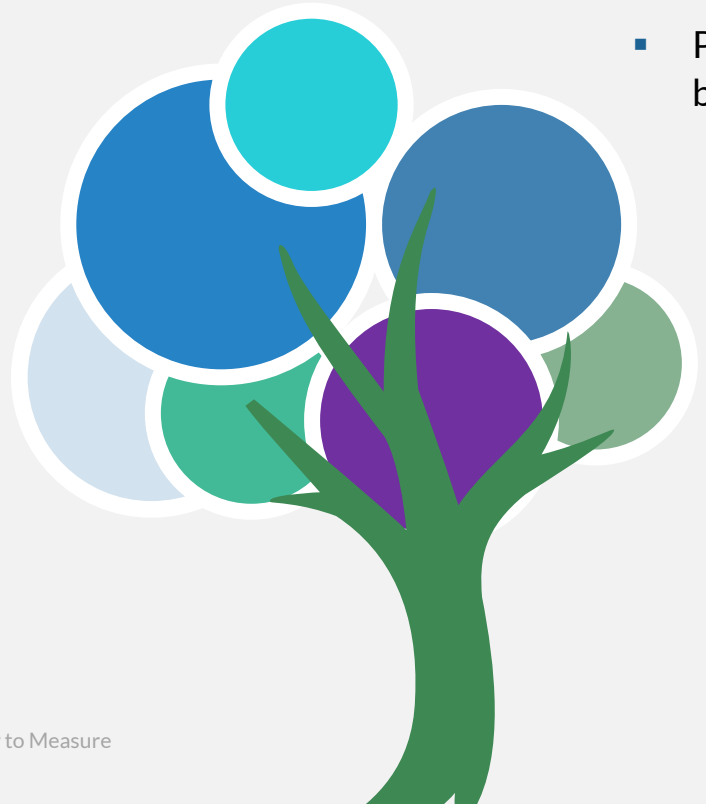
(McMillan & Chavis, 1986)

Membership

- People share a common identity.
- They are clear about who is and isn't a member of their community.
- Membership provides a sense of belonging based on trust and security.

Influence

- People know that their voices count.
- There is individual and collective efficacy that comes through being together and asserting their voice.



Fulfillment of Needs with Sharing of Values

- People's common needs can be met by being together.

Shared Emotional Connection

- Feeling of connection is created through the sharing of experiences that are <u>important</u> to them or a sense of shared history even if people have never met before.

Communities Are Nested

Measurement and Assessment: Sense of Community

The Sense of Community Index (SCI)

The most frequently used measure to gauge a sense of community

- Developed by Community Science
- Survey index that provides:
  - An overall sense of community score
    - Subscale scores:
      - Membership
      - Fulfillment of needs
      - Influence
      - Shared emotional connection
- Two versions: SCI-1 and SCI-2

Original Sense of Community Index SCI-1

Developed 1984

The 12-item SCI-1 is…

- Theory based
- Short and easy to administer
- Statistically reliable and valid
- Found to have relationships with behaviors, community conditions, and psychological well being
- Used successfully across cultures and contexts

The Sense of Community Index SCI-2

Developed 2008

The 24-item SCI-2 has all the benefits of the SCI-1, and improved…

- Subscale reliability
- Response set options
- Survey items (e.g., closer to SOC theory, reflects developments within the field)
- Clarity

The SCI-2 is Widely Used

At least 58 published articles between 2008 and 2019

Over 800 requests since 2011

Many settings (e.g., schools, military bases, rural villages, workplace)

18 Countries, plus online communities (e.g., Egypt, Laos, Portugal, Sri Lanka, USA)

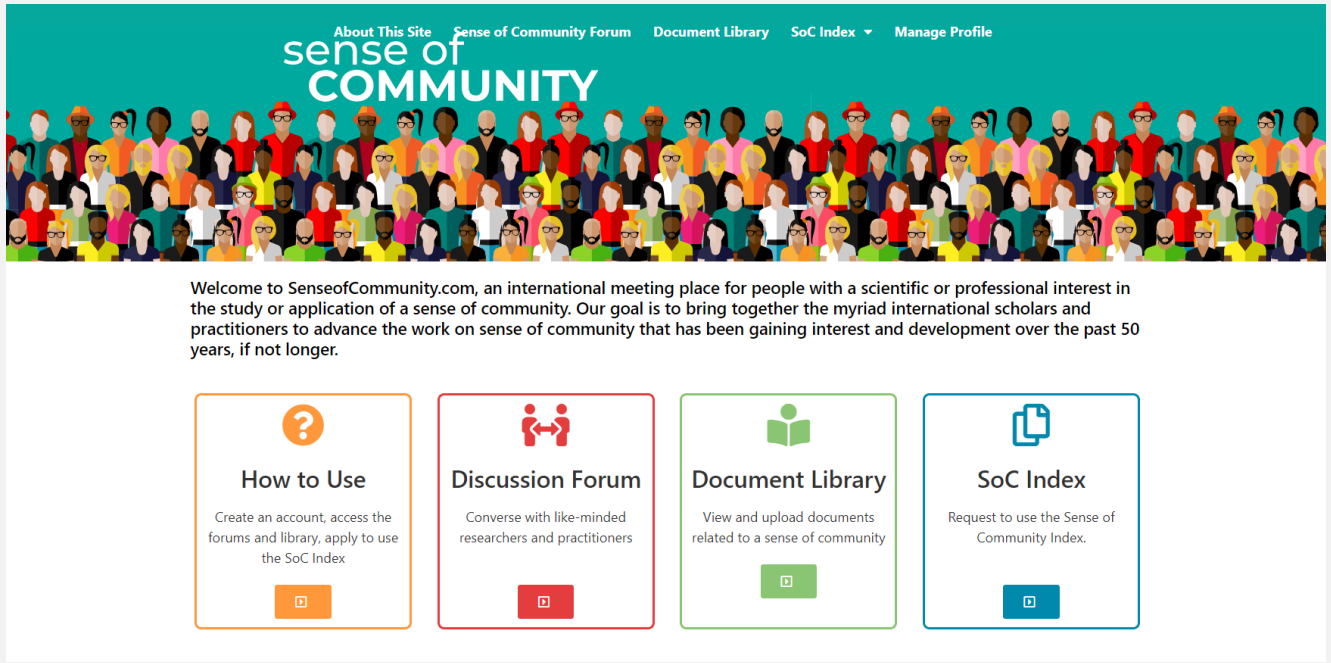
15 Languages (e.g., French, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese)

Interesting SCI Applications

- Wars: Before and after mine removal
- Participation in student movements
- Owens-Corning employees (16,000 employees in 28 countries on five continents)
- RWJF National Survey of Health Attitudes

Where to find the SCI-1 and SCI-2?

- Want to use or learn more about the sense of community theory or index? Please visit: senseofcommunity.com
- Coming soon: SCI-2 Global Benchmarking Study



Other Measures of Sense of Community

- Brief Sense of Community Scale (Peterson et al., 2006)
- Three-factor Psychological Sense of Community Scale (Jason et al., 2015)

Unobtrusive and Other Measures

- Focus Groups and Interviews
  - Questions to assess sense of community
  - Questions to identify and define community indicators and how to measure them
- Observational Methods
  - Document street-level symbols of belonging
  - Conduct neighborhood observations of behaviors
  - Photograph social events, common spaces, and other community scenes

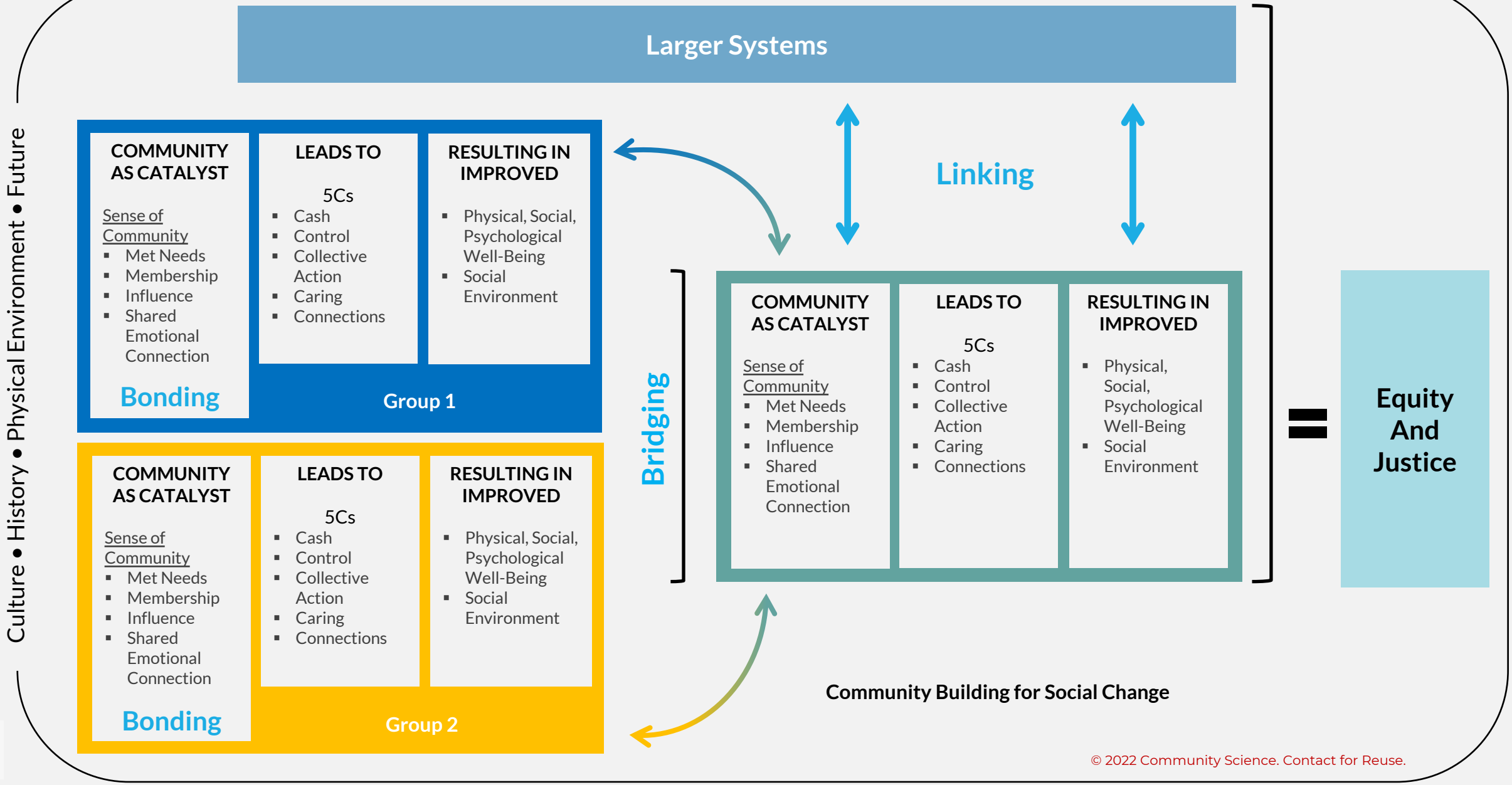
What's Next

- Strength of Community Framework
- Strategies, Interventions, and Policies to Strengthen Community
- Evaluation

Join us on June 20, 1 pm EST!

You will receive an invitation from Zoom within the next 24 hours.

Strength of Community Framework



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THANK YOU