

# **Building Better Connections - helping you through change**

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# What you will learn:

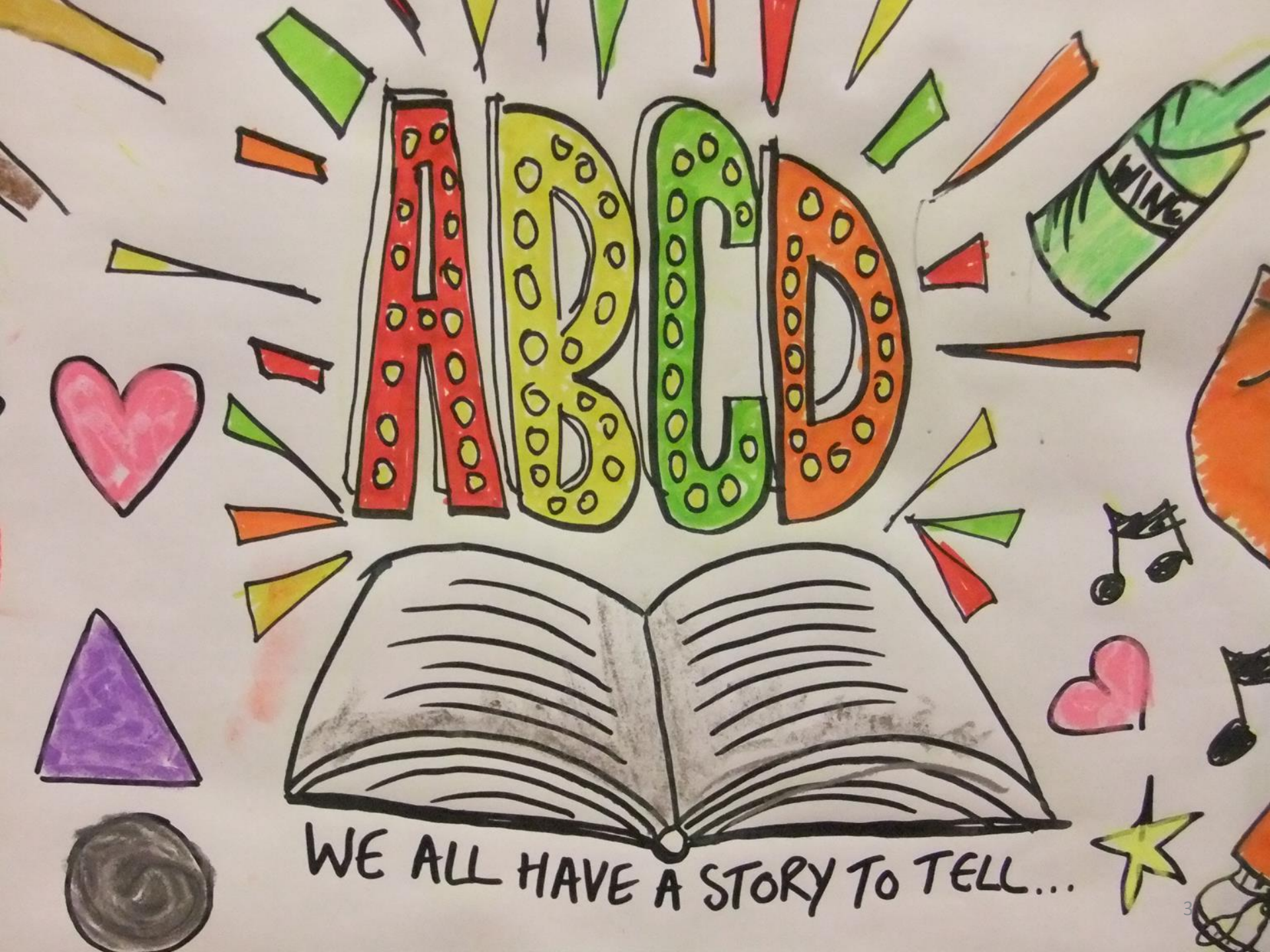
## How to:

- ✓ Identify and use your gifts, skills, connections to build on opportunities for change
- ✓ Identify your hopes and aspirations; how to work towards them
- ✓ Connect and build connections with others – why this is important

ABCD

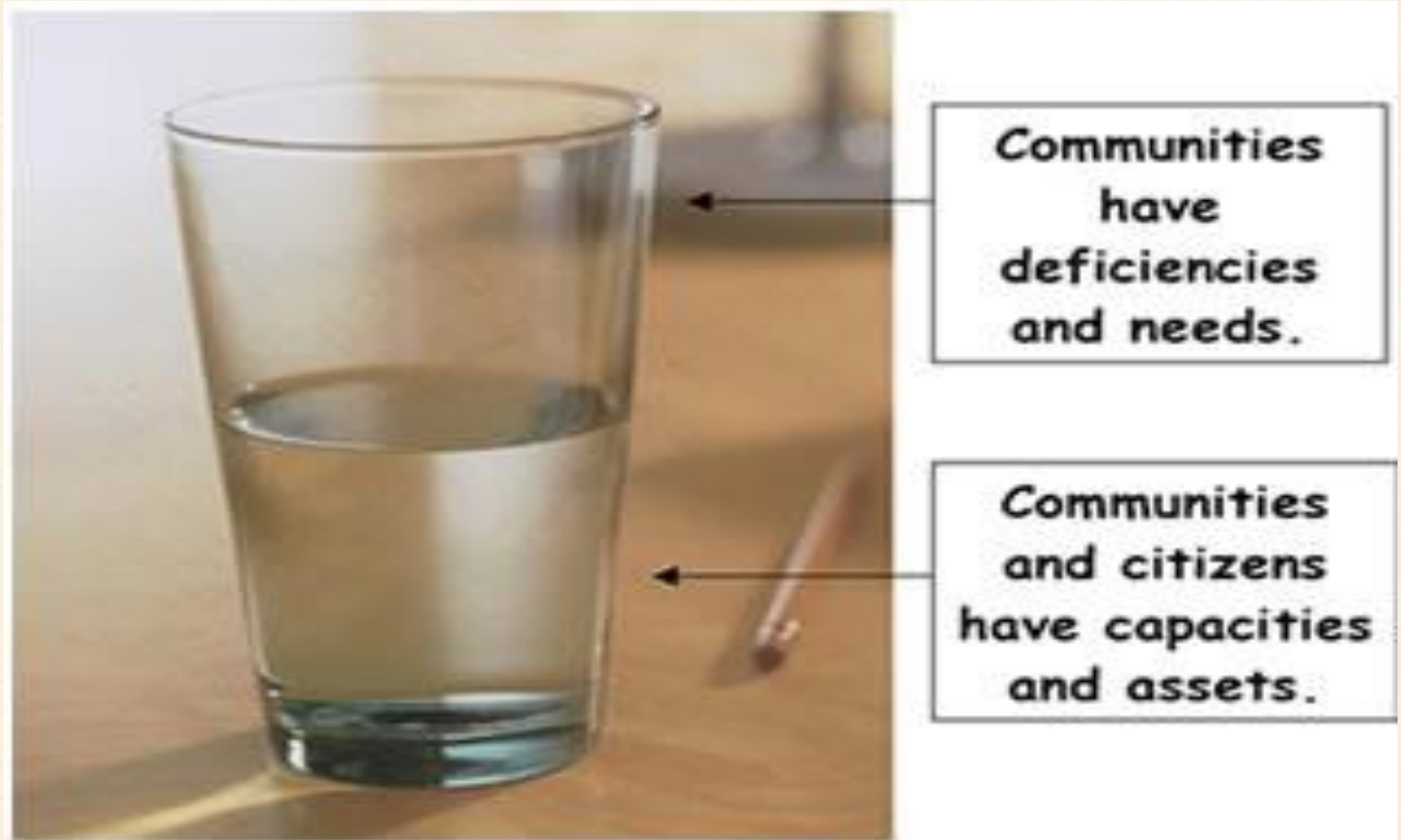


WE ALL HAVE A STORY TO TELL...





# Building Connections— think glass half-full!



Kretzmann & McKnight



# Introductions: 4 'H's

*What do you know about yourself? About others?*

In pairs, share

- one gift of the head ('what you know')
- one of the heart ('what you are passionate about')
- one of the hands ('what you can do and can teach someone else to do')
- and one human connection ('who are you connected to and how?')

*To help you remember, write/draw them on post-its and lay out on the table*

*Then:*

Introduce each other to the  
group by name

Tell us about one of their  
gifts



We have just shared  
some assets - but  
what are 'assets'?  
Think of them as  
strengths



Let's explore more of the gifts written down. Can we add more to the table?

We can all find it difficult to recognise our strengths –  
But 'why'?

# Why we may be confident – or struggle

*For yourself:*

Look at the following image:

what are the 'protective factors' in your life  
(past/present)

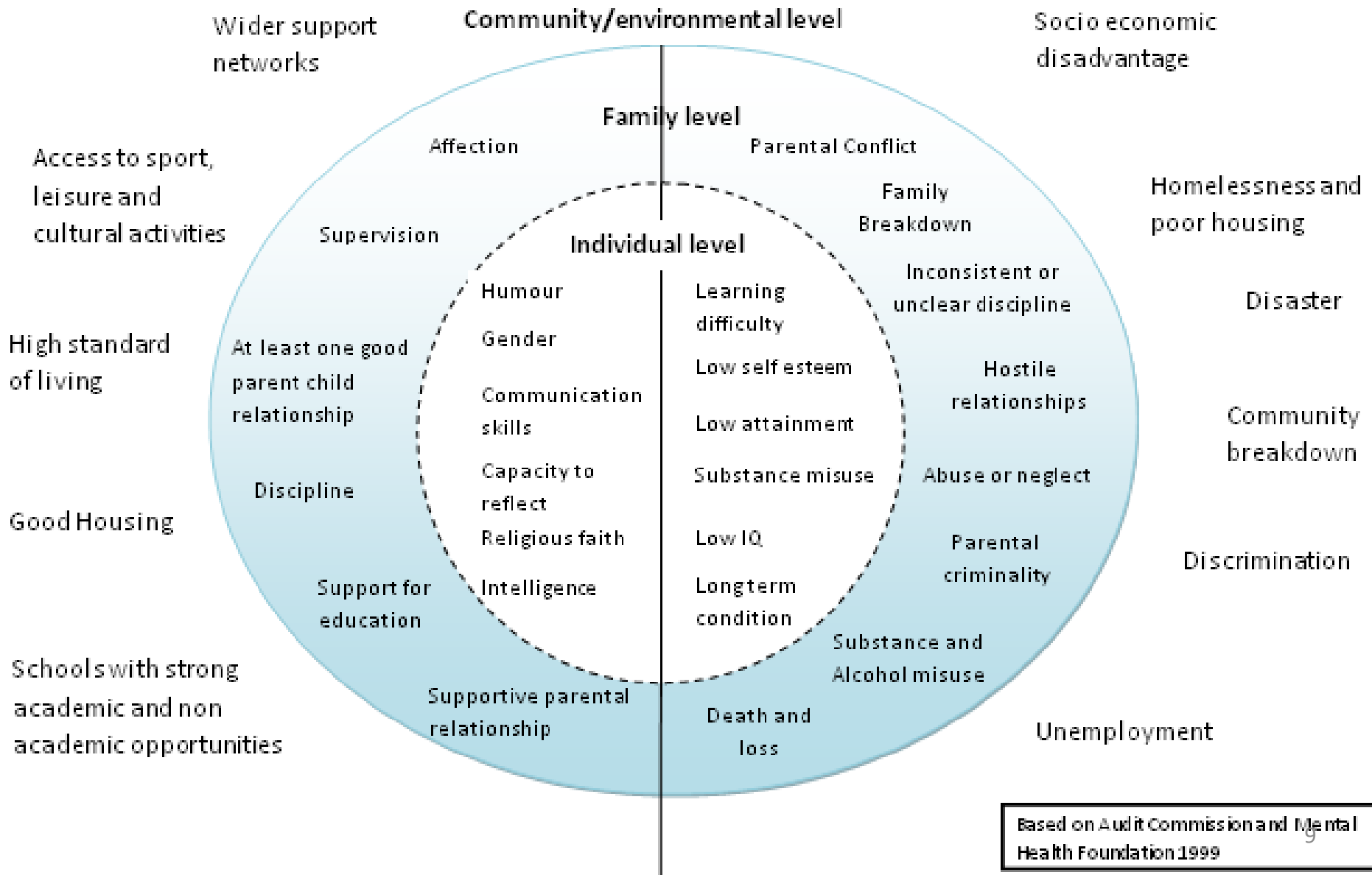
what are the 'risk factors'?

Think about/write down just a few – and try to  
find factors from *both sides*.



## Protective Factors

## Risk Factors



# Let's take the story of: “Legless Les” Courier business

Peter Kenyon ‘Rural Development around the World, through the lens of ABCD’:

<https://youtu.be/nUKGx4ORqOk>

*(third story on video)*

Peter Kenyon <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/faculty/international-faculty/Pages/peter-kenyon.aspx>

- The man was (to quote) an alcoholic and drug addict. By age of 50 he was Type 2 diabetic and had to have both legs amputated. He was told he had less than six months to live.
- Peter was asked to take him back to his village, where he was moved to a local hospital. The community rallied – but the “talk of the town” was only about his disabilities.

- Les was a truck driver – a hospital orderly (assistant) asked if he would start up a business, as the village no longer had a courier service. Someone finally focussed on his abilities!
- That evening Les had already had the local printer producing business cards; the local men shed also modified his car so that he could drive and tow a trailer.
- He called his new service “Legless Les Courier Business”.

# The Outcome?

Legless Les lived for six YEARS

It took a conversation around his *abilities* to motivate and mobilise his assets



Peter Kenyon talking about his cousin Les



# Questions

1. What were the 'protective factors' and what were the 'risk factors' in Legless Les's life?
2. Who recognised his assets?
3. What immediate impact did this one person have on Les and on others in the local community?
4. What was the long-term benefit? Who benefitted?

# Key message – ABCD

We cannot change alone

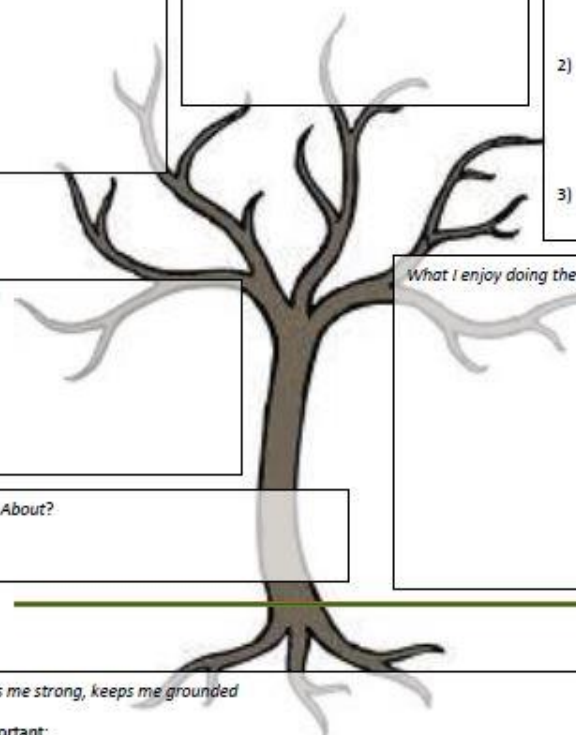
- When we look at gifts, we also look at a person's connections
- How to recognise them, how to build them
- An asset approach is about making the invisible visible. And to build on it
- This is important to our health: see 5 Ways to Wellbeing (Happier Lancashire)

# In our opening exercise..


- .. You will have identified gifts, capacities, skills, human connections
- .. You may have been surprised by the number of assets you discovered in such a short conversation
- .. You may have discovered a lot of local connections, just in the short exercise
- .. Let's now build on this



# Another tool – assets tree



The diagram is a tree with a central trunk and several branches. The trunk is labeled 'TREE TRUNK: My Skills'. The branches are labeled 'BRANCHES: What I'd like to get involved in:'. The roots are labeled 'ROOTS: What makes me strong, keeps me grounded'. The canopy is labeled 'Long term ambitions:'. The canopy is also labeled 'Learning Opportunities:'. The canopy is also labeled 'What I enjoy doing the most:'. The canopy is also labeled 'What am I Passionate About?'. The canopy is also labeled 'Groups/activities I'm involved with:'.

  
West Lancashire Council  
Community Voluntary Service

**BRANCHES: What I'd like to get involved in:**

in:

Activities:

Groups:

**Long term ambitions:**

**Learning Opportunities:**

1)

2)

3)

**TREE TRUNK: My Skills**

**What I enjoy doing the most:**

**What am I Passionate About?**

**ROOTS: What makes me strong, keeps me grounded**

People who are important:

Groups/activities I'm involved with:



# Exercise

Look at the asset tree diagram. Add your post-its to the tree

- Where do they fit?
- Where are the gaps?

In pairs, try to fill some gaps

Name one 'aspiration' – something you would like to do – however **BIG** or small!



# Relationships Build a Community

You may be beginning to see new ideas about yourself.

But let's look at the 5 Ways to Wellbeing:

Connect-Be Active-Take Notice-Keep Learning - Give

and a key idea in ABCD: **Relationships Build a Community**

But how do you connect to others?



# The role of motivation

Think of an example when you were motivated to take action.

- ✓ Why were you motivated?
- ✓ Did you motivate others? How?
- ✓ How did you use your gifts, capacities, skills and human connections to mobilise others to act?
- ✓ What was the outcome? Did you use existing relationships, or create new ones?



# Summary and moving forward

Hopefully you feel you have learned a little more about you – not based on what you need, but on your strengths

And that you can take away your asset tree with some ideas on ‘what to do next’

But also the importance of getting connected and being connected to other people and to build better connections!

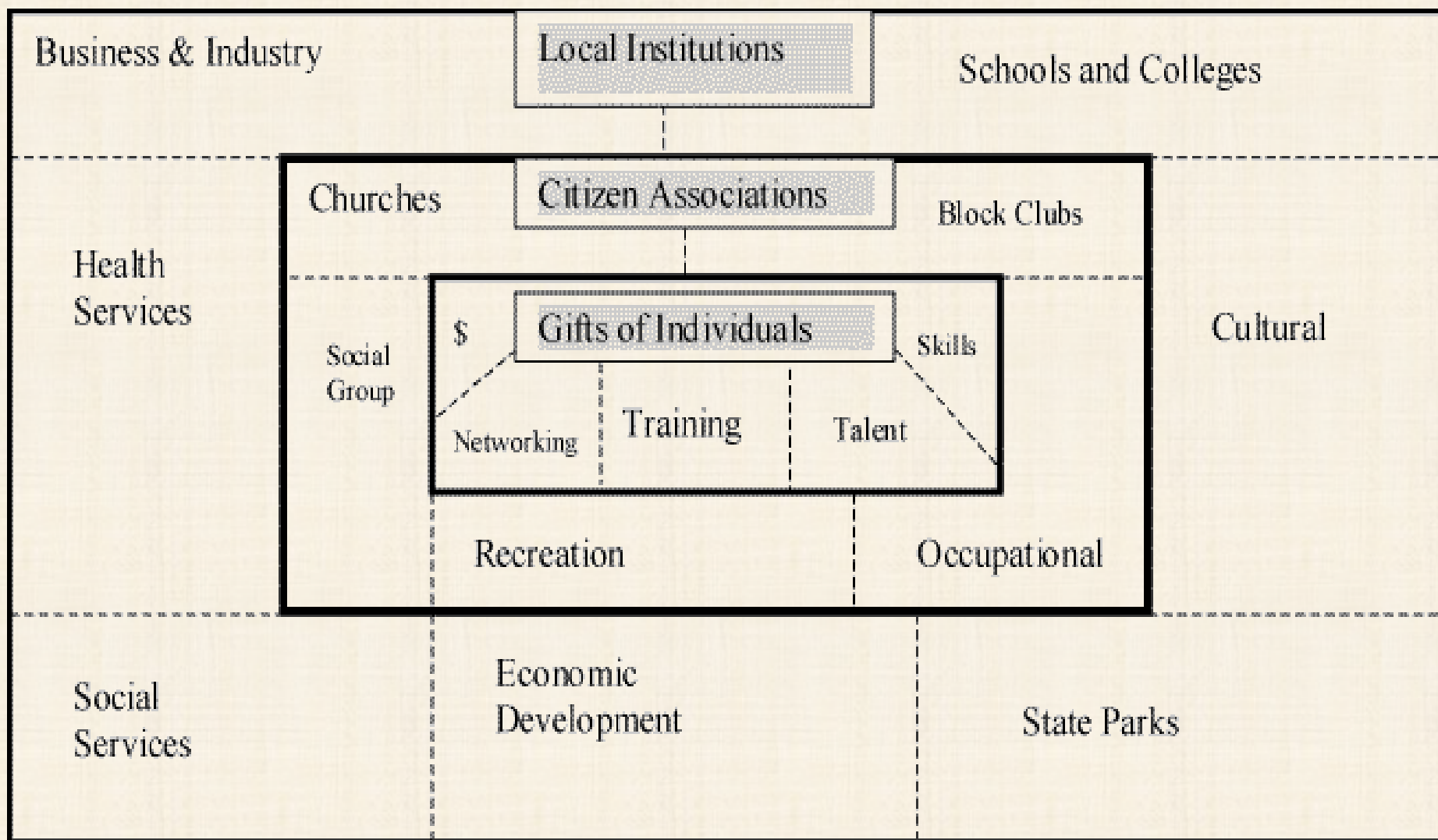
And if you are now interested in ABCD, here are a few basics

# 12 Guiding Principles for ABCD

Source:

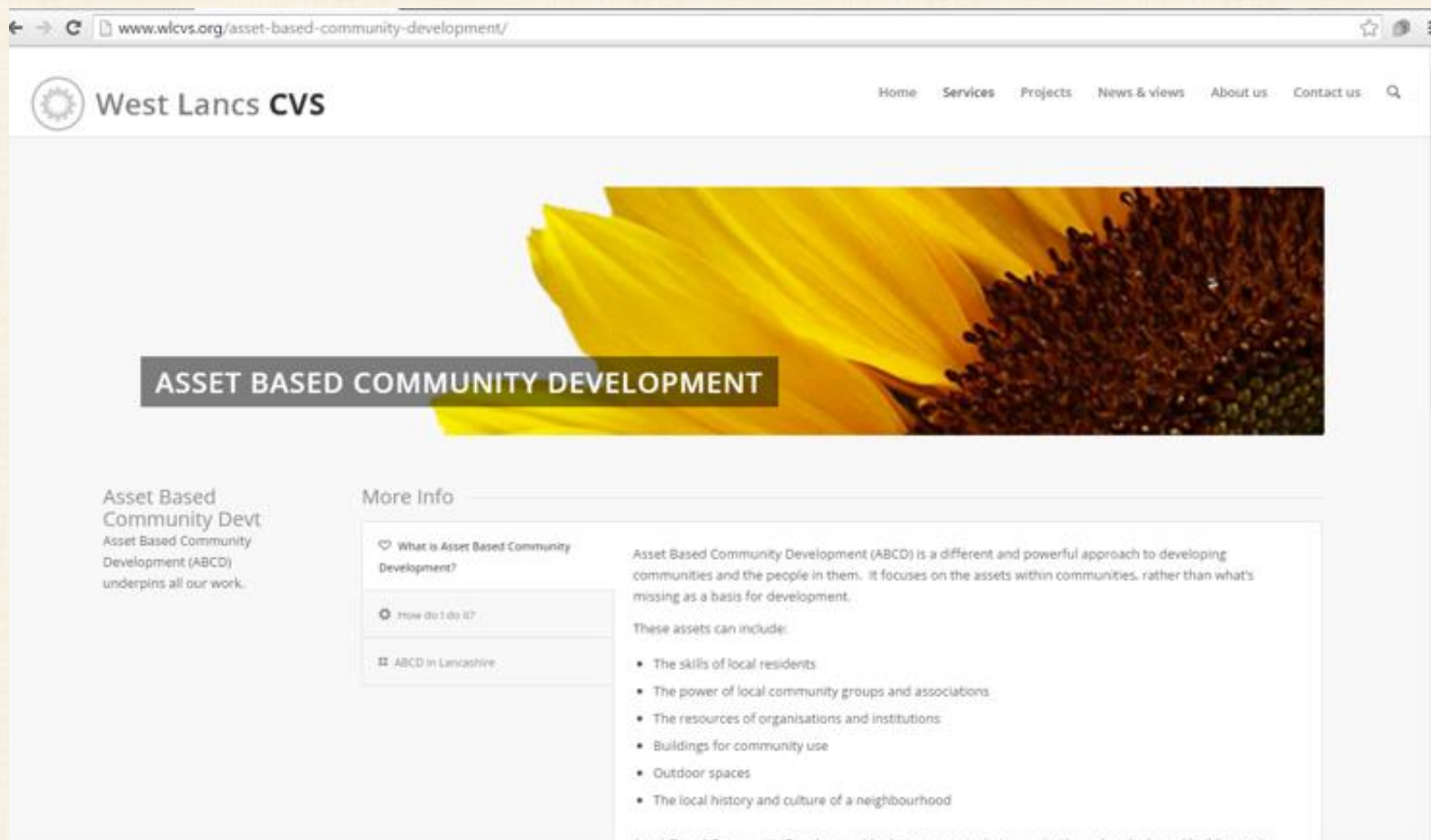
<https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>: from 'What is Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)', n.d. – *USA spelling retained*

- Everyone Has Gifts
- Relationships Build a Community
- Citizens at the Centre
- Leaders Involve Others as Active Members of the Community
- People Care About Something
- Motivation to Act
- Listening Conversation
- Ask, Ask, Ask
- Asking Questions Rather Than Giving Answers Invites Stronger Participation
- A Citizen-Centered “Inside-Out” Organization is the Key to Community Engagement
- Institutions Have Reached Their Limits in Problem-Solving
- Institutions as Servants



Kretzmann & McKnight *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (1993)





<http://www.wlcvcs.org/>

Click on 'Asset Based Community Development' for tips and resources





**Greg Mitten**  
@GregMitten FOLLOWS YOU

Working within the charitable sector I am motivated around social justice and equality. I believe in the power of individuals and connected communities.

📍 West Lancashire, NW England  
📅 Joined June 2015



**West Lincs Buzz**  
@westlincsbuzz FOLLOWS YOU

Connecting local West Lincs communities, businesses and services.  
#GetTheBuzz

TWEETS	FOLLOWING	FOLLOWERS	LIKES
1,724	1,515	1,835	664

Tweets   Tweets & replies   Media

West Lincs Buzz Retweeted  
Amanda Boulton @amanda\_boulton · May 8  
It's #MentalHealthAwareness week, why not go along to this walk & talk event tomorrow? @westlincsbuzz @well\_skern @Westlincsbc



**Level Crossing**  
@LevelCrossingWL

A local community space for self-care tips for those with Type 2 Diabetes within and beyond West Lancashire who are seeking to cross over to improved health.

📍 West Lancashire, England



**Helen**  
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I am currently active in the UK's Third Sector, and have over 20 years' higher education experience. I support a network for friends and families of alcoholics.

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📅 Joined January 2010

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and connectors!