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# aha! Process Inc.

## Disaster Recovery Plan

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### **A. When we become the victims of war and natural disasters or live in persistent poverty, we are impacted in these ways:**

- 1. We are forced into the tyranny of the moment.**
  - a. Living in a broken world, we spend our time solving immediate, concrete problems.
  - b. We lose our future orientation and, if the conditions persist, we lose our future stories.
- 2. We use reactive skills to survive. We are problem solvers.**
  - a. Reactive, problem-solving skills are needed in unstable and unpredictable environments.
  - b. Proactive planning skills are possible when the environment is stabilized and the time horizon is months and years into the future.
- 3. We are taken advantage of.**
  - a. Stunned and preoccupied, we are unable to resist those who gather around disasters with the intent of profiting from the situation.
  - b. We need immediate and concrete solutions and fall prey to those offering quick and easy answers. In this way we fall into debt and lose what property we may have.
  - c. We seek relief from stress and will spend some of what little money we have to lighten the day.
- 4. We are disconnected from our social structures.**
  - a. Our roles in society are disrupted.
  - b. When others step in to make decisions without our input, we cannot rebuild our social structures.
- 5. We who are in poverty are hit hardest.**
  - a. We live in impoverished and vulnerable areas.

- b. We don't have the resources to escape.
- c. We are not at the planning table when disaster plans are being made.
- d. We are not at the planning table when recovery plans are being made.
- e. We aren't likely to take ownership of the plans created by others or feel accountable for them when we had no hand in making them.
- f. When we don't respond to the directions and suggestions of those who made the plans, we are accused of being dependent, unmotivated, and undeserving.
- g. We have learned that it is very hard to break out of poverty and build communities where everyone does well.

### **B. aha! Process, Inc. can help build a community where everyone can do well. We can:**

- 1. Assist people to break out of the tyranny of the moment and create their own future stories by:**
  - a. Engaging people in examining the impact of the disaster on their community and themselves.
  - b. Assisting people to move from concrete thinking and reactive problem solving to abstract thinking and proactive problem solving.
  - c. Assisting people to make their own arguments for change and to find their own motivation.
- 2. Engage people at the planning table with all sectors: government, business, civic, social services, investors, builders, and community-based organizations by:**
  - a. Utilizing the concrete knowledge of those

impacted by war, natural disaster and poverty.

- b. Inviting those impacted to join others in solving community problems and building prosperous communities.

**3. Provide a common language and shared constructs for all parties to use by:**

- a. Developing a mental model for the community as it exists; define the reality.
- b. Developing a mental model for the community's future story.
- c. Defining the different environments in which community members live and the hidden rules of survival that arise from those environments.
- d. Utilizing the hidden rules of survival to develop relationships of mutual respect and to resolve conflicts.

**4. Assist community-based organizations to develop sophisticated service-delivery models to help people stabilize their home environments by:**

- a. Assisting local service providers to develop a single plan with renters/homeowners for their personal housing, counseling, treatment, and safety needs.
- b. Assisting the community to develop systemic approaches to overcome barriers to employment and stability, such as inadequate childcare, transportation, education, workforce skills, and safety.
- c. Assisting educators to apply aha! Process constructs so children are provided with the best education possible.

**5. Assist the private sector to improve the retention rate of employees by:**

- a. Providing workshops for employers on aha! Process constructs.
- b. Providing training and consulting from community organizations that have applied aha! Process constructs to improve outcomes.
- c. Providing training and consulting from

employers who have applied aha! Process constructs to improve retention rates.

**6. Assist in the development of a high-impact, community engagement model to create a prosperous and sustainable community by:**

- a. Creating a Steering Committee in the community to address all causes of poverty, including:
  - i. Strategies to assist individuals in making good choices.
  - ii. Strategies for the community to offer good-paying jobs, good healthcare, good education, and fair credit.
  - iii. Strategies to protect renters/homeowners from predators and to develop alternatives to the "services" and products of predators.
  - iv. Strategies that promote political and economic structures for wealth creation for all.
- b. Introducing the Circles Initiative that brings people together across class and race lines in "circles" to assist renter/homeowner families to realize their dreams.

**C. aha! Process has the products, processes, consultants, and partners including:**

**1. *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World***

- a. For those impacted, a 20-session, facilitator-led investigation into the impact of poverty/disasters on the individual and community using a workbook of the same title.
- b. Working in groups of 10–12, people will use the *Getting Ahead* workbook to:
  - i. Do a self-assessment of their resources.
  - ii. Do an assessment of their community.
  - iii. Investigate economic realities, the hidden rules of class, and the change process as it applies to them.
  - iv. Develop personal plans for their future stories.
  - v. Prepare themselves to join the other community leaders at the planning table.

2. ***Bridges Out of Poverty* workshops are based on the book of the same title. The workshops provide the same constructs and language to community partners that *Getting Ahead* provides to those who have been impacted.**
3. ***A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, the seminal work of the innovator, Dr. Ruby K. Payne, and all the workshops and trainings associated with it, are available to educators.**
4. **The Circles Campaign, a high-impact strategy of Move the Mountain and aha! Process, has the goal of ending poverty in our communities.**
  - a. It builds social capital across class and race lines by forming a circle of middle-class allies around the renter/homeowner family who have been through *Getting Ahead*.
  - b. Together they support the goals of the family in poverty and work together to overcome barriers to a stable and prosperous life.
  - c. Communities support as many circles as possible and bring everyone together for monthly Big View Meetings, during which they address community- and systemic-level change.
5. **aha! Process champions, organizations, and communities that have applied aha! Process constructs successfully are available to assist employers, community-based organizations, and those who have been impacted to improve on-the-job performance, retention rates, and outcomes. These champions are from:**
  - a. Manufacturing
  - b. Workforce development
  - c. Family courts
  - d. Schools
  - e. Community colleges
  - f. Communities at large
- D. **aha! Process has the capacity to begin working on Phase I of a pilot project within four weeks.**
  1. aha! Process would name a Team Leader for the initiative and would be available to participate in planning activities immediately.
  2. aha! Process would work through a local contact to coordinate local resources and activities.
  3. aha! Process will turn over the training and facilitator roles to local leaders as quickly as possible so they can conduct *Bridges* and *Getting Ahead* workshops.
  4. *Bridges Out of Poverty* consultants and trainers can be scheduled to be in place as soon as four weeks.
  5. Facilitators can be trained to conduct *Getting Ahead* workshops within six weeks.
  6. A Steering Committee would be developed from people who have been through *Getting Ahead* and *Bridges* workshops who want to be part of the work.
  7. Phase II of the pilot would include:
    - a. Community-based organizations, service-delivery model development
    - b. Workforce development training and consulting
    - c. Employer-based training and consulting
    - d. Start-up of the Circles Initiative.

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**To learn more contact:**

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