

THREE ASPECTS OF A HEALTHY, THRIVING COMMUNITY

By Diana Leafe Christian <https://youtu.be/kwSI3I99-Rk>

I thought this article / video was worthwhile sharing.

Summary

There are three mutually reinforcing aspects that help communities to become healthy and thrive.

1. Community Glue

Taking the time to do shared enjoyable activities generates feelings of gratitude and trust, creating the feel good “*pleasure hormone*” oxytocin. It helps create a sense of ‘us’ or ‘community spirit’.

Our community already does this – community meals, working bees, playing games and sport, playing music, yoga, interest groups, social Friday nights....

“The more trust and good will a community has, the more effectively its members can respond to and resolve conflict when it comes up. When a community draws on abundant community glue, it may be easier to just talk to each other simply and figure out how to resolve things.”

2. Good Process and Communication Skills

Communication skills are the way we speak to each other, in groups, meetings and one on one.

Process skills are the “*ways members gather together specifically to get to know each other better, consider ideas, understand each others’ emotions or upsets, or discuss and resolve conflicts.*”

3. Effective Project Management

This is the way a community creates, organises and maintains its legal entity, finances, purchases, and physically develops its property e.g. design or construction work, website, bookkeeping, membership process, community documents, policies and decisions, work claims, DA and so on. “*Sooner or later members of new communities learn that clear, thorough, well-organised management is necessary not only to found their new community but also to successfully maintain it.*”

Diana Leafe Christian believes these three aspects of community mutually reinforce each other.

“If a group has abundant community glue, for example, people will tend to feel connected enough and harmonious enough so that most of the time they’ll get along well and not need to speak so carefully and will probably need less conflict resolution as well. But if a group’s reserve of community glue is low — perhaps because they don’t yet realise how important it is or don’t have enough time to schedule enjoyable group activities often enough — they may have to choose their words more carefully and may need to resolve conflicts more formally and more frequently. Similarly, if a group has effective project management, the sense of accomplishment they’ll feel when people experience the community moving towards its goals can create more community glue — increasing their feelings of trust and gratitude and thus reducing their need for super-careful ways of speaking and more frequent conflict resolution sessions. But if a community is managed poorly — for example, if they miss important opportunities; experience unexpected or un-prepared-for legal problems, bookkeeping snafus, or financial shortfalls; lose documents or records of meeting decisions — this can create anger, resentment, blame, shame, and demoralisation, which of course erodes the group’s sense of trust and connection. A group in this situation will, once again, need to speak to one another more carefully and will probably need to resolve conflicts more often too. I advise groups to go for all three, of course.”

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CREATING A LIFE TOGETHER PRACTICAL TOOLS TO GROW ECOVILLAGES AND INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

by Diana Leafe Christian

Chapter 7 AGREEMENTS AND POLICIES – GOOD DOCUMENTS MAKE GOOD FRIENDS

This chapter clarifies why it is important for communities to have policies and agreements.

Goolawah Co-operative has achieved so much in 22 years.

Visit our Policies page for a refresher. <https://goolawahmembers.com/policies/>

Why not consider nominating to be a Director at the August AGM?

There will always be a member with experience to offer support and guidance 😊

Denise Cobourn