



# Creating Circles

## A Model to Revitalize Your Village



# Presenters



Lisa Budlow  
CHAI VP Aging in Community



Esther Weiner  
NNC President



Erika Rief  
Graduate Student - JHU & MICA <sub>2</sub>

# Agenda

- Background
- Research Process
- Solution
- Implementation
- How to Implement in Your Village
- Q&A

# Background

# History of NNC



Founded  
in 2012



Supported  
by CHAI



Diverse  
Community



# NNC's Challenge

- Lack of meaningful engagement
- Passive membership
- Service focused

# Graduate Work

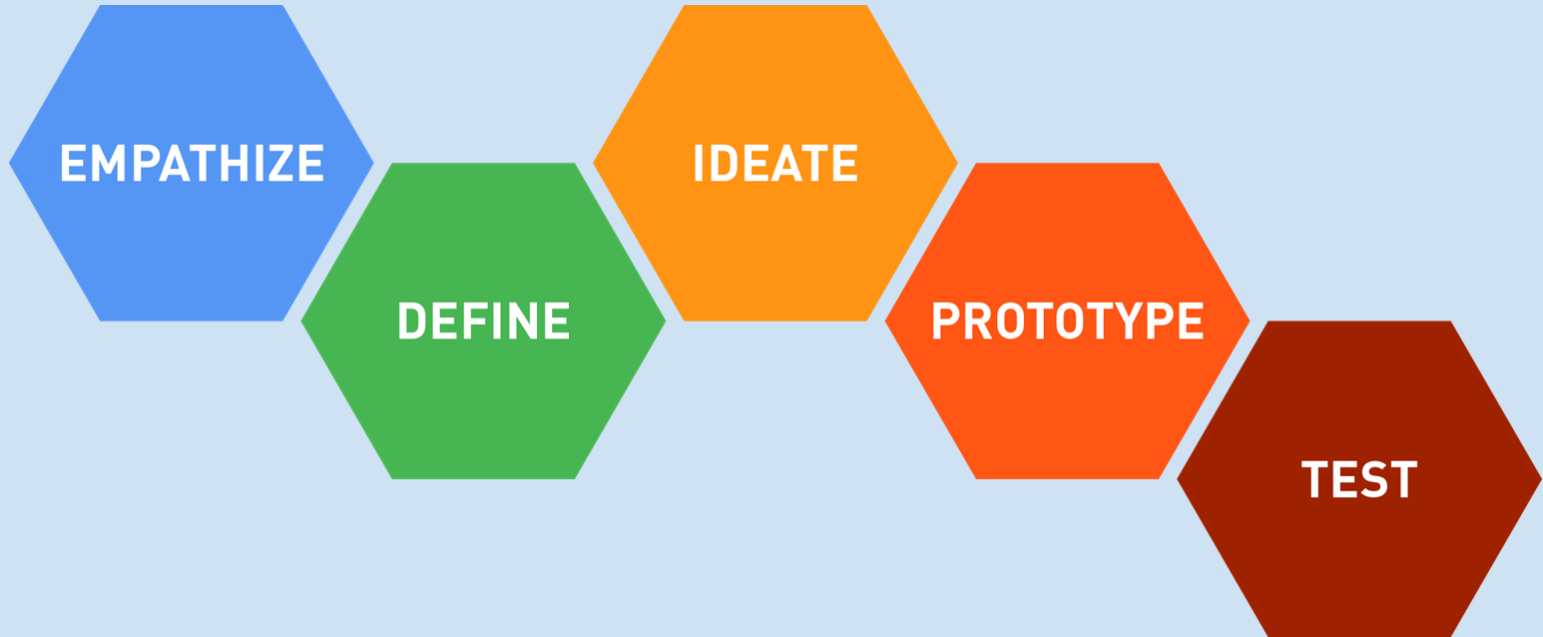
- Graduate Coursework
- Community Project
- Interest in aging





# Research Process

# Process Overview



# e 1) interviews

**Ruth Saperstein**  
 NNC Founder & Current Member

**Background**  
 Ruth is a 92 year old widow living in the Windsor, an unassisted building.

**Main points**  
 "To me, NNC is still very important because we do a lot of good things. And we have to"

**Insights**

- Socializing is the number one priority for seniors.
- Used to plan things, now she wants to benefit from the fruit of someone else's labor.
- NNC has nothing to offer people who drive. Only thing that you can offer them are discount tickets to certain places.
- Buddy system works. "She called Joyce to let her know there was a bus. Joyce came with her side. Joyce said to her "You so glad that you called and had me. At least I got dressed and got on makeup and got out of the house."
- "I don't want inspiration, I want something that going to take my mind off my size knee."

**Fran Block**  
 Non-NNC member, active senior

**Chava Ball**  
 Director of NNC

**Lisa Budlow**  
 CHAI VP, Aging in Community

**Time Besse**  
 Retired; UMBC Masters student

**Esther Weiner**  
 NNC Founding Member and Board President

**Caroline Wayner**  
 Village at Home, Director

# 2) observations



# 3) Secondary research

**Connection**  
 young adults

**Men's**  
 Sorority parties

**Retention**  
 Hillel (Shabbat dinner example)

**Prospect/Member Profile**  
 Categorization

# d VISION + PURPOSE

# CHALLENGES

# ASSETS, IDEAS, + OPPORTUNITIES

**member driven activities**  
 members helping members  
 Feel like they have purpose  
 Keep seniors occupied  
 Feel loved  
 cared for

**CHAI provides overhead**  
 organic groups  
 socialization  
 sense of belonging  
 connections  
 prevention of isolation

**Don't offer anything to people who drive**  
 benefit from fruit of someone else's labor  
 some people are not motivated  
 no matter how much  
 members afraid to drive  
 others' perception is 'service centered'

**Lack of drivers**  
 # of homebound adults  
 Lack of volunteers  
 currently at bottom of pool  
 reliance on staff to plan  
 no commitment

**confidence**  
 diversity  
 Personality issues  
 initial formation was case management  
 low income  
 didn't invest in foundation

**always asked by others to take leaders**  
 buying power  
 jewels of people who make other villages ready to buy  
 overheard support  
 Space

**Health benefits of staying active**  
 "I need..."  
 Buddy system  
 discount vendor  
 Activities like white elephant

**"Have to keep yourself wide open"**  
 IF someone calls, why would you say no?  
 Honor volunteers! members + then they bring in a...  
 success @ one event -> inspiration -> others

**continuation of connection to causes/orgs previously involved in**  
 Diversity dialogue  
 sign up process  
 about to hire someone in hopes of...  
 buddy curators are interesting. people will know a skill  
 You hold NEVER stop teaching

# NNC's Vision

“Members helping members”

“Allow members to feel that they have  
purpose”

“Member driven activities”

# NNC's Challenges

Services oriented perception

Taking vs. giving expectations

Shortage of leaders, volunteers & drivers

# NNC's Opportunities

Overhead provided by CHAI

Handful of committed volunteers

Leadership ready for change

# Define

How might we **restructure** in order to  
**generate meaningful engagement**  
**throughout NNC?**

# Goals for Solution

- Passive to active membership
- Create cohesive environment
- Reduce intimidation of leadership roles



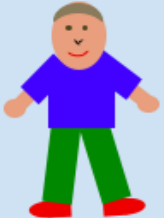
# Solution

# Circle Concept

AMBASSADOR

LEADER

MEMBER



MEMBER

MEMBER

NEW MEMBER

# Revisions of Concept

**P Membership Lifecycle Storyboard**

**Recruitment**

One Ambassador Per Circle - all should feel growth

Ethel Ida

**Registration**

NRC Member Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Consent: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Community Involvement: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to drive?  
 If I do not you will be driving alone?  
 If I do not you may call you for  
 when we get started (circle #) \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following NRC events  
 would interest you?  
 [ ] Driving [ ] Social [ ] Coffee  
 [ ] Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Spiky Output: \_\_\_\_\_  
 By joining NRC, I agree to follow the following  
 guidelines: \_\_\_\_\_

**New Member Coffee Chat**

Welcome!

**Assign to Circle**

engage members for circle creation

Can go to another circle - not stuck

(see board + membership structure)

Small cohesive groups

**Ambassador program**

**Redesign of application**  
 Commitment required

**Circle Touchpoints**

Phonecall check-ins + reminders

Shopping outings + get-togethers

plan ~~with~~ assignments breaks

still need committees

**Participation in Regular Events**

MARCH				
	1	2	3	4
5	Exercise		Circle	Circle Meeting
6				
7	Circle			
8	Exercise	NRC Trip	Circle Meeting	Phone Meeting

(see event execution)

**New member engagement**  
 Welcome celebration in circle

Circle helps new member find purpose in bigger role

**Membership Role**

**Health Decline But Continued Participation**

Thanks for showing up and being here!

Thanks for too late!

contribution throughout

△ → ▽

# Implementation

# Initial Buy-In



# Pilot Circles



1. Couples

2. Foodie-Fun

3. Encounters

# Sample Circle Events



- Potluck
- Restaurants
- Museum visits
- Cinema Sundays
- Art with a Heart

# Positive Member Feedback

- Enjoy being with others

Small group setting

Diversity of circle

Creating new relationships

Participating in the activity





# Opportunities for Improvement

- Finding the right circle

Incorporating feedback from  
entire circle

Finding the right circle size

# Benefits to Larger Village

- Increase in board enthusiasm
- Potential leaders have been identified
- Circle members have been more active in Village programs



# Reflections on Process



“All of my best friends  
are in NNC and I didn’t  
even know them before  
I joined”

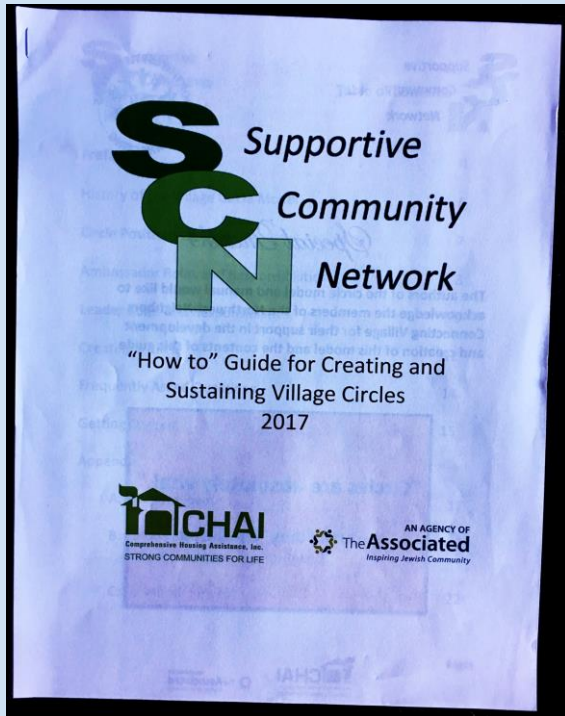
# Next Steps

- New circles
- Open House for Circle Matching
- Continued improvement of model



# How to Implement in Your Village

# Circles Guideline Toolkit



- Step by Step implementation process
- Program ideas
- Sample forms & surveys

# Q&A

# FAQ

But CHAI supports NNC financially, what about my Village that doesn't have an organization's support?



# FAQ

How do you find the right circle leaders?

How do you match Village members to the right circles?