



emerging**voices**

A Framework for Community Action



INTEGRITY
COMPASSION
INFLUENCE



What is Emerging Voices?

“When people feel their voice is being listened to, anything is possible.”

In our society many people feel powerless, like their voices don't matter.

Emerging Voices helps people understand their own power and gives them the tools they need to create the change they want to see.

It helps communities understand what is important to them, and work out what they can do together to make things better.

Emerging Voices is about having the confidence to speak up about the good and not-so-good things that affect your community.

It's about knowing how to take an idea or a problem and turn it into something positive - something that matters to your community.

It's also about telling your community's story to people who can help you create the change you want to see.

Emerging Voices starts with helping you work out your part in the change. What sort of future do you want to see? What are your values? What are you good at?

Then it helps you work out where others are coming from so you can get them on board.

There are two parts to Emerging Voices:

- *Workshops* – Where you can get to know a bit more about yourself, the people around you, and your community, and learn how to bring them together to create the change you want to see.
- *A 'How To' Guide* – Made up of tools and templates that help you make changes step by step. These include – building relationships, growing your team, crafting your story, designing a campaign, preparing a business proposal.

Emerging Voices is designed for community and not-for-profit organisations, boards, communities and individuals, and those who find themselves in the position of unintentional leader. It is for those times when communities need to work together to protect what they have or to advocate for something new.

Emerging Voices is grounded in place-based and collective impact approaches. It draws on change models like Theory U and Cultural Transformation Tools (Barrett Values), and community organising models like Wellstone. It also embraces 'adaptive leadership' which is about mobilising people to tackle tough challenges and thrive.

WHY DO WE NEED IT?

Have you noticed how the people who yell the loudest tend to get the most attention? It's also true that people who are better connected tend to get their needs met more easily. That leaves the people who are quieter, who aren't as well connected, struggling to make the change they want to see.

The conditions in which we are born, grow, work and age have an impact on our health and wellbeing, and our ability to be part of our community. Things like our education, how much we earn, our access to transport and technology, and other people's attitudes, can lift us up or hold us down.

All of these things exist within, and are shaped by, systems like economies and politics. These systems are so big that no one person can change them alone. This leaves many people feeling like they have no power, or are not even allowed to have power.

Emerging Voices evens up the ledger. It takes on this imbalance of power by giving people the confidence, skills and knowledge to make a difference for their community. When people are empowered to change things in their communities, then whole systems can change.

Tasmania

In Tasmania some people are benefitting from the recent successes in tourism and our growing reputation in culture, food and wine. But many are not.

Almost one in five households with children are jobless. In a rate above the national average, half of Tasmanian adults struggle to read and write. Less than half of our young people between 15 and 24 are in full time education. One in six people try to get by on \$37 a day in a place where the number of jobs has shrunk by 2500 since September 2015.

These figures are worse for people who are marginalised – because they live in rural or remote parts of Tasmania or because they are experiencing poverty.

Despite many people working very hard over many years to tackle these issues, change is slow.

Local people know their communities best and care the most about their own future, but they do not always have the resources to make the changes they want. Rather than people from outside coming in and telling them what to do, communities need to have the power to make the change themselves.

Through workshops and the 'How To' guide, Emerging Voices helps people better understand themselves and the world around them. It gives them the knowledge and confidence so they can make real change that lasts for their communities.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Two Levels

The Emerging Voices workshops and tools work on two levels, combining what we do with who we are:

1. **Doing** - at the surface on the behaviours and tasks we can see and control like plans and strategies; and
2. **Being** - below the surface on the things we cannot see or control like people's motivations, values and the culture of organisations.



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The two must go together if we are to create real and lasting change. Without the power to act, people know things need to change but don't know how to do it. They can be left feeling cynical and disheartened. Without understanding the way we are, people can take action that doesn't make a real difference. This can create outcomes that nobody wants.

Emerging Voices deepens our understanding of who we are and provides practical tools for taking action. This model is called awareness-based collective action.

Awareness

Emerging Voices recognises that self-awareness is a key strength for anyone trying to make change. Understanding ourselves better helps to build our confidence. Through workshops, participants learn to be more aware of their own motivations, why they do things, think things and feel things a certain way.

In teaching self-awareness Emerging Voices draws on personality typing models like the Enneagram, as well as the Barrett Values Centre's Cultural Transformation Tools. It also teaches participants the skills of listening, conversation, influencing and lobbying.

Action

Emerging Voices recognises that we make the biggest difference in communities when we work together. But working together can be difficult when we don't have a good understanding of where others are coming from. We can be so busy getting things done that we don't take the time to get to know each other.

Emerging Voices teaches participants how to organise themselves to achieve real, lasting change. It looks at the culture of teams, communication styles and leadership. It trains people in the skills of building relationships, networking, growing teams, storytelling and campaigning. It helps teams in a practical way with templates for communication plans, business proposals and project plans.

Evidence

Emerging Voices promotes changemaking that is informed by evidence. It teaches participants how to find, collect and use data. Before setting out on the change journey it is important to know where you are starting from. The data can take the form of statistics that are available through sources like the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), or as stories told by members of the community. It can then be used to craft the story of your community and set out the case for change.

Innovation

The model also encourages participants to sense what is emerging in their community right now, and consider what is possible for the future. This way they are not always looking back for the answers but are trying new ways of doing things, learning from the experience and applying what they learn.

Four Circles

Emerging Voices workshops and tools operate in four circles.

In the individual circle the focus is on self-awareness, accepting that if you want to change the world around you, you must first change yourself. In the relationships circle the awareness is expanded out to others, with a focus on understanding what motivates them. The focus at the team circle is on organising groups towards a common goal through shared values. At the community circle the focus is on motivating and inspiring the community around you.



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In more detail, the workshops and tools cover:

1. Individual (me)

Aims: To lift the levels of self-awareness of individuals.

Teaches: Emotional intelligence, personal values.

Asks: What are your values and motivations? What habits are you holding on to? Where are you stuck? What gives you energy? What frustrates and challenges you?

2. Relationships (us)

Aims: To lift awareness and understanding of others.

Teaches: Listening, lobbying, influencing.

Asks: How does your behaviour impact on those around you? How well do you understand the people around you? What assumptions and judgments do you hold about people? What is the quality of your conversations?

3. Team

Aims: To organise groups of people around common goals.

Teaches: Values, communication, leadership.

Asks: What is your style of communication? How are you organised? Do your skills complement each other? What is your team culture like - 'how do we do things round here'?

4. Community

Aims: To motivate and inspire your community.

Teaches: Storytelling, building relationships, planning, campaigning.

Asks: How are you using the story of your community – the narrative and the statistics? Do you have networks with the right people? What are the power relationships you need to understand?

Five Community Participation Principles

Emerging Voices is founded on five community participation principles. These principles are like a map that we use to guide us through the many challenges of the modern era, such as rapid changes in technology, social media, and shifts in government policy. The principles are:

1. Empowerment

We encourage individuals to believe in themselves and their ability to bring about change. As individuals or as members of organisations, people can develop their abilities to influence change on issues that are important to them.

2. Inclusion

We support strong, inclusive societies that encourage participation, no matter who you are or what your background.

3. Equality of opportunity

We aim to remove the barriers to opportunity so that all community members, no matter their age, social status or background, can participate fully in their life and their community.

4. Self-determination

We support the human rights of individuals and communities to make their own choices. We believe that community participation must be driven by the needs and desires of communities and not from outside parties.

5. Partnership

We encourage individuals and organisations to work together to bring about real and lasting change in communities. Partnerships between organisations is also an good way of tackling complex problems when resources are limited.



Ten 'How Tos'

Emerging Voices has a range of tools and templates to help individuals and organisations advocate for change for their community. They include How To:

- Plan for Sustainability
- Live By Your Values
- Expand Your Influence
- Build Relationships
- Grow Your Team
- Craft Your Story
- Design a Campaign
- Write a Communication Plan
- Prepare a Business Proposal
- Write a Project Plan

To find them go to the TasCOSS library at www.tascosslibrary.org.au.

We are adding to our 'How To' guide all the time. If you have suggestions please contact us at admin@tascoss.org.au

Your feedback on Emerging Voices is welcome too, we are all learning as we grow and adapt to the changes around us.