



## COUNTRY STRONG

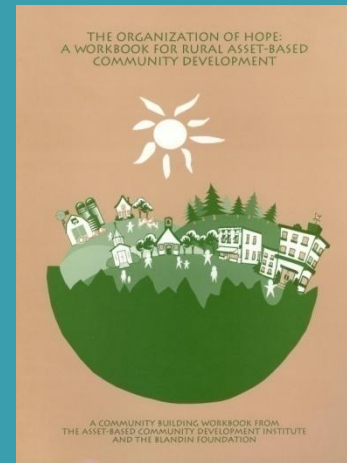
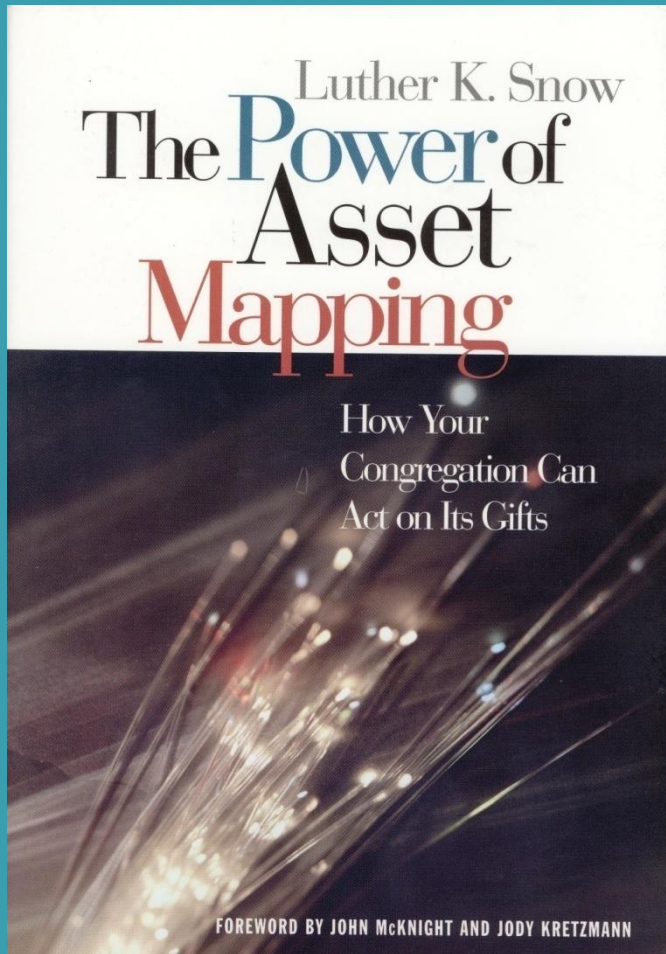
*TAPPING HIDDEN STRENGTHS FOR  
RURAL AND FRONTIER  
DEVELOPMENT*

OCTOBER, 2012

[www.luthersnow.com](http://www.luthersnow.com)

563-382-6386

# PUBLICATIONS



## The Organization of Hope:

A Workbook for  
**Rural**  
Asset-based  
Community  
Development



## Community Transformation:

Turning Threats into  
Opportunities

# **SERVICES: *EXTRAORDINARY*** ***RESULTS FROM SIMPLE TOOLS***

- **PUBLIC SPEAKING: THE GOOD GROUPS GURU**  
Powerful presentations with Practical Take-Home Tools for your Event Participants
- **FACILITATION: THE SNOWBALL EFFECT**  
How to Get Your Group Going, and Growing, in the right direction
- **CONSULTING: BREAKTHROUGH SOLUTIONS**  
Projects and plans that are energizing, practical, and fundable

# **SPECIAL TOPICS AND TRAINING:** ***NEW THINKING, MAKING A DIFFERENCE***

- ***ASSET MAPPING***
- ***POSITIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT***
- ***EMPOWERING CONGREGATIONS***
- ***SMART PARTNERSHIPS***
- ***FINANCIAL STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION***
- ***UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT***

# Who are we?

## *Using the webinar tools*

Poll number 1

- Experience with webinars?

# Who are we?

## *Using the webinar tools*

Poll number 2

- Type of work?

# Who are we?

## *Using the webinar tools*

Poll number 3

- Familiarity with  
Asset Approach  
Positive Development and/or  
Luther Snow?

# Who are we?

## *Using the webinar tools*

Poll number 4

- Should Maury be allowed to retire?



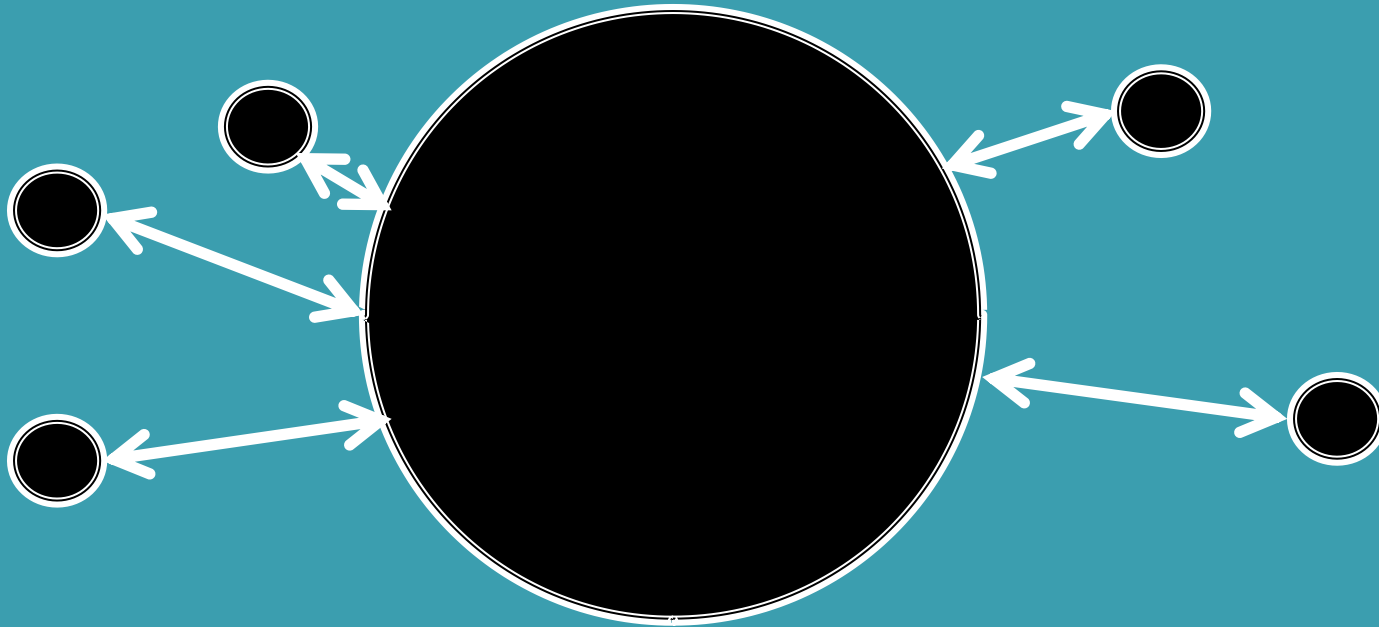
# Urban Bias and Rural Strength



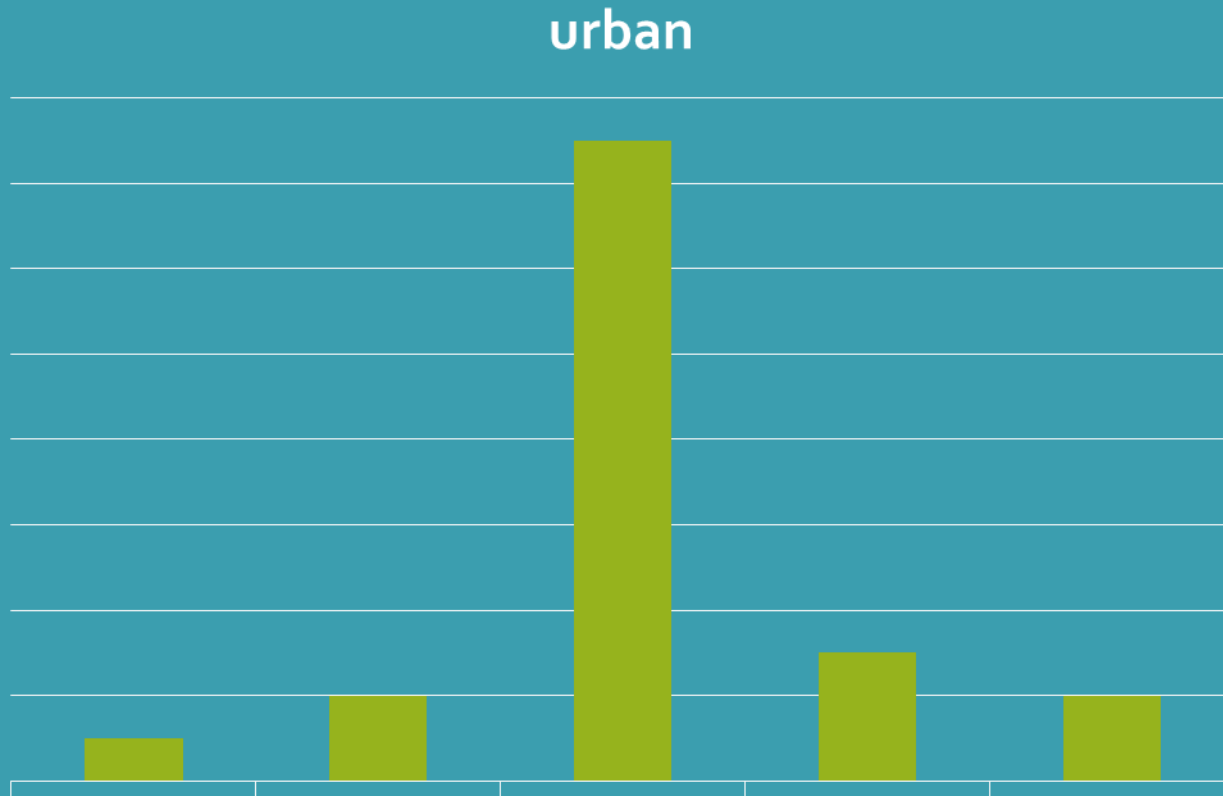
# Urban Bias

- Urban means “concentrated”
- Urban bias means assuming that the way things happen in the concentrated center is what matters everywhere

# Concentrated: a map in mind



# Concentrated: a map in mind



# Urban Bias

*Things like:*

- Centralized meetings
- Traditional land economics (high price = high value)
- Poverty rate (measures concentration)
- Place targeting
- Preference for institutional and professional effort
- Economies of Scale

# Examples from group?

# Rural adoption of urban bias

- We're "small"
- We're isolated
- We don't have much
- We're just volunteers

# Perspective for the good

- I love the city
- Not city-bashing, not a competition
- In fact, strong cities and rural areas complement each other
- There is another way of looking at things, a perspective that is associated with rural
- And that can be valuable



# Flip thinking

An Asset-based Approach and Positive Development Strategy start with this idea:

We can choose how to look at it



# What do we see?





copyright 2012 by Luther K. Snow, contact for permission to use or share



copyright 2012 by Luther K. Snow, contact for permission to use or share

# Rural Strength

- Ruralness means we are

spread out



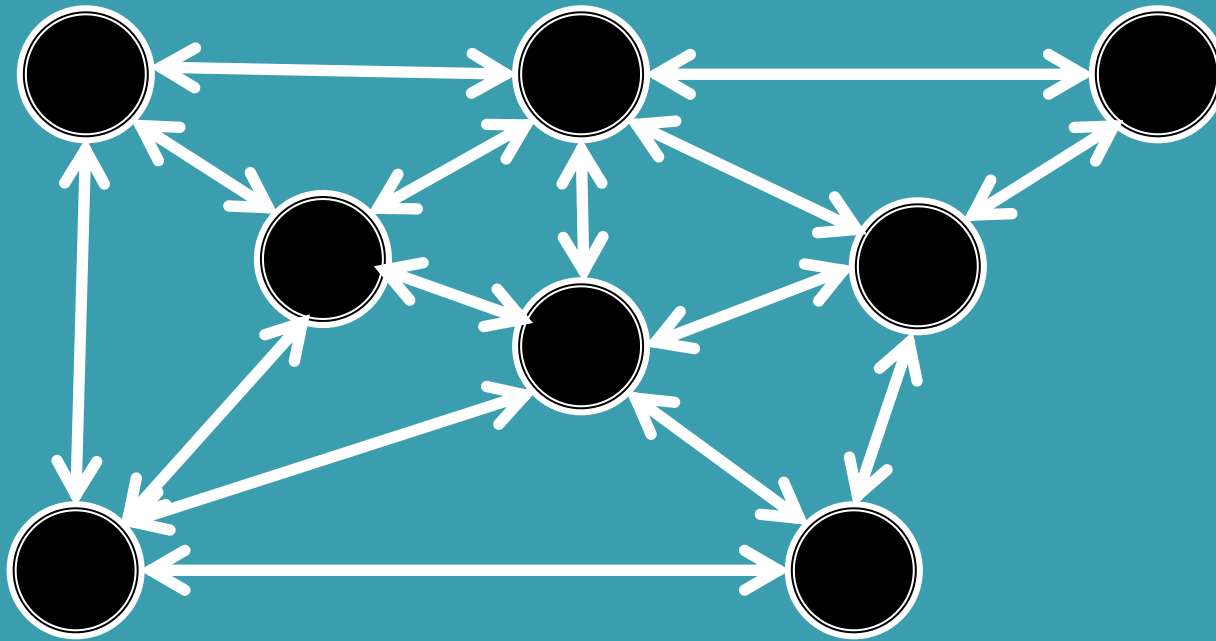
# Because we are spread out

- We are INDEPENDENT and resourceful
- We figure out ways to use what we've got to get things done -- ourselves, in our family, or in our community.
- Entrepreneurial, creative, innovative

# Because we are spread out

- We are INTERDEPENDENT
- We recognize that we have to rely on our neighbors in a pinch
- Collaborative, networked

# Independent + Interdependent = Networked





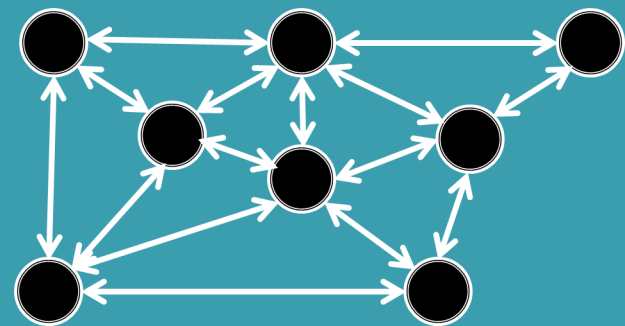
So how does this work?

# Building on rural strengths



# Network Building

- Independent and interdependent
- Hubs and connectors
- Entrepreneurs and industries
- Groups and collaborations
- Recognizing assets and joining forces around larger interests



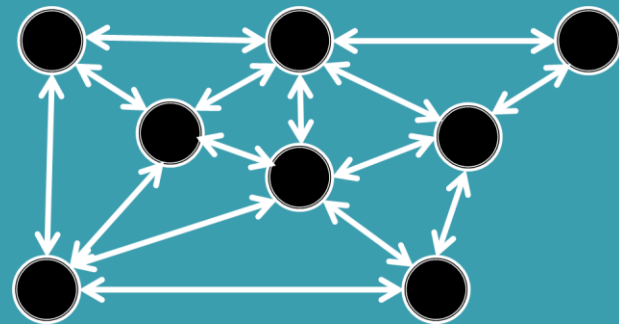
# Another way of thinking and acting

## CONCENTRATED

- Central meeting location

## NETWORKED

- Rotating meeting location



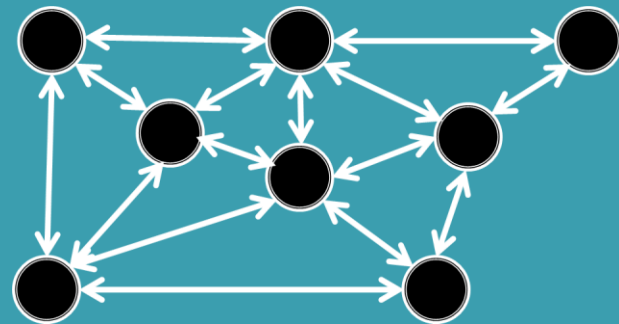
# Another way of thinking and acting

## CONCENTRATED

- Big Industrial Firm

## NETWORKED

- Industrial Corridor



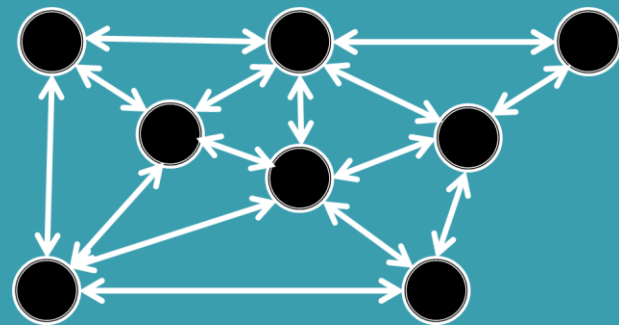
# Another way of thinking and acting

## CONCENTRATED

- Tourism Destination

## NETWORKED

- Tourism Trail



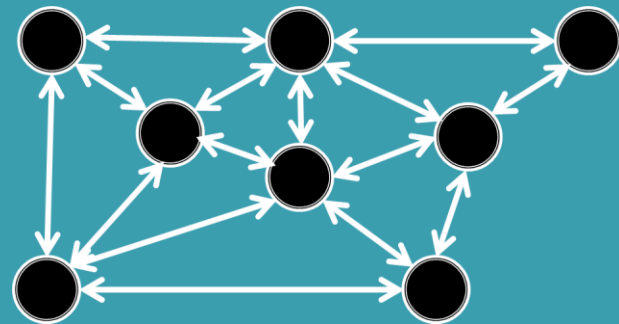
# Another way of thinking and acting

## CONCENTRATED

- Poverty concentration

## NETWORKED

- Poverty awareness and accessibility



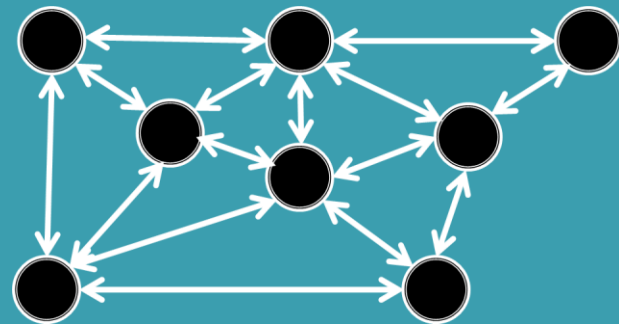
# Another way of thinking and acting

## CONCENTRATED

- Economies of scale

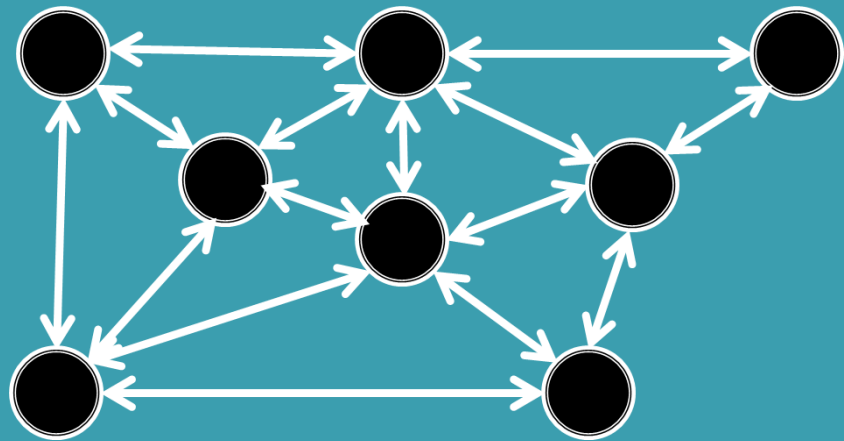
## NETWORKED

- Economies of networks



# Independent + Interdependent = Networked

- Strengthen hubs
- Strengthen connections between hubs





# The key to hub building

- Recognizing assets



# The key to connections

- Finding affinities
- *Overlapping interests to get things done together we could not get done on our own*



Pt. Lay and the North Slope Arctic region

# Example: Arctic Villages



# North Slope Villages



- About 9,500 people on size of Oregon (95,000 square miles)
- 10 square miles per person
- 8 villages at least 300 miles from each other

# Pt. Lay, Alaska



# Downtown Pt Lay



copyright 2012 by Luther K. Snow, contact for permission to use or share

# Negative assumptions

- Villagers are “stuck” there
- Dependent on oil money and Western economy
- There are “no” businesses
- Declining
- Need to be taught Asset Approach and Positive Development

# What I actually learned



- Villagers choose to live here, because “we love it here”



# What I actually learned



- Manage a sophisticated “hybrid” of commercial and “sustenance” economies
- Everybody wants to start a business!

# What I actually learned

Growing community  
with many young  
families and children

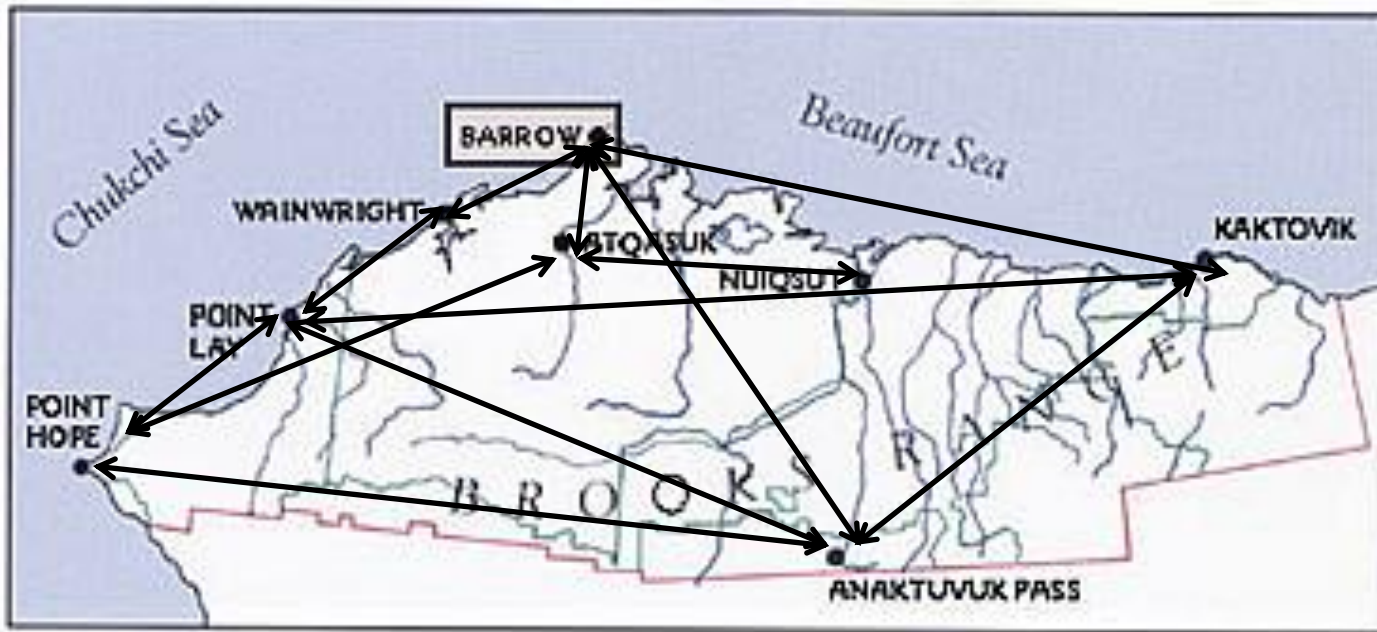


# What I actually learned

Experts at collaboration  
and networking



# North Slope: Networked



# What would you do?

- Strengthen hubs
- Strengthen connectors

# What would you do?

## Short-term examples

- Entrepreneur Club, and Regional Network
- Local cultural services (wedding programs) and Regional culture initiative (speaker's bureau)
- Whale camera streaming enterprise (regional cooperative)

# What would you do?

## Long-term examples:

- Build on transportation and communication infrastructure
- School-based, church-based, and clinic-based community development
- Peer learning exchange

What about you?

# Building on rural strengths in your context





# What can you do back home?

- You are a hub: Recognize rural assets and opportunities
- You are a connector: Help connect people across distance and groups

# You are a hub

Simple everyday examples:

- **Make a list of 5 ways your community is stronger because it is rural. Share it.**
- **Go a week without saying the word “need”**
- **Appreciate someone you don't like**

# You are a hub

Strategic examples:

- **Support a group of “outsiders” in the area**
- **Offer business training to workers**
- **Start a community foundation or loan fund**

# You are a connector

Simple everyday examples

- **Have coffee with 2 new people / week**
- **Find 5 regional “networks” that already exist (league? churches? recreational?), and ask how they get things done**
- **Host a happy hour for entrepreneurs**

# You are a connector

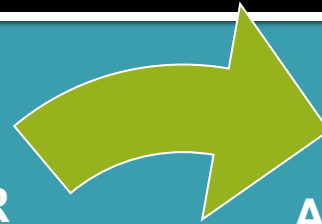
Strategic examples:

- Exchange Board members with another organization
- Lead a Community Campaign
- Facilitate a business-to-business marketplace

# Assets Approach Leads to Action, Positive Relations, and a Larger Whole



**LARGER  
WHOLE**  
A Snowball Effect



**ABUNDANCE**  
Recognizing our  
assets



**AFFINITY**  
Connecting the  
Dots



# What can you do going home?

Can you do something new to be a hub and a connector in your community?

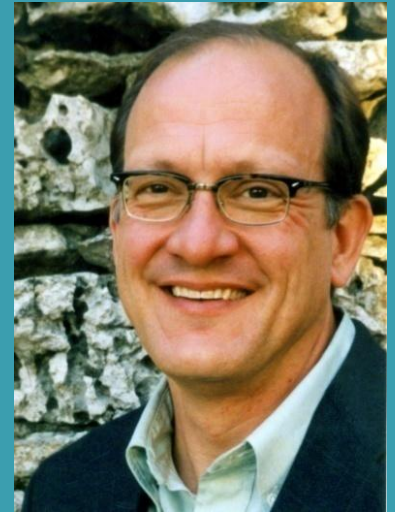
- **Make a green check next to your name on the participants list**

# Questions? Ideas?

Let's talk:

Luther K. Snow

- [luthersnow@hotmail.com](mailto:luthersnow@hotmail.com)
- 563-382 6386
- [www.luthersnow.com](http://www.luthersnow.com)



Slides will be available to participants for a short period – please do not circulate or use. Contact me instead!



Sincerely!

**Thank you for all you do**



[www.luthersnow.com](http://www.luthersnow.com)

copyright 2012 by Luther K. Snow, contact for permission to use or share