

## Pioneering Peace: A Community Journey

My entry point

Origins

Milestones

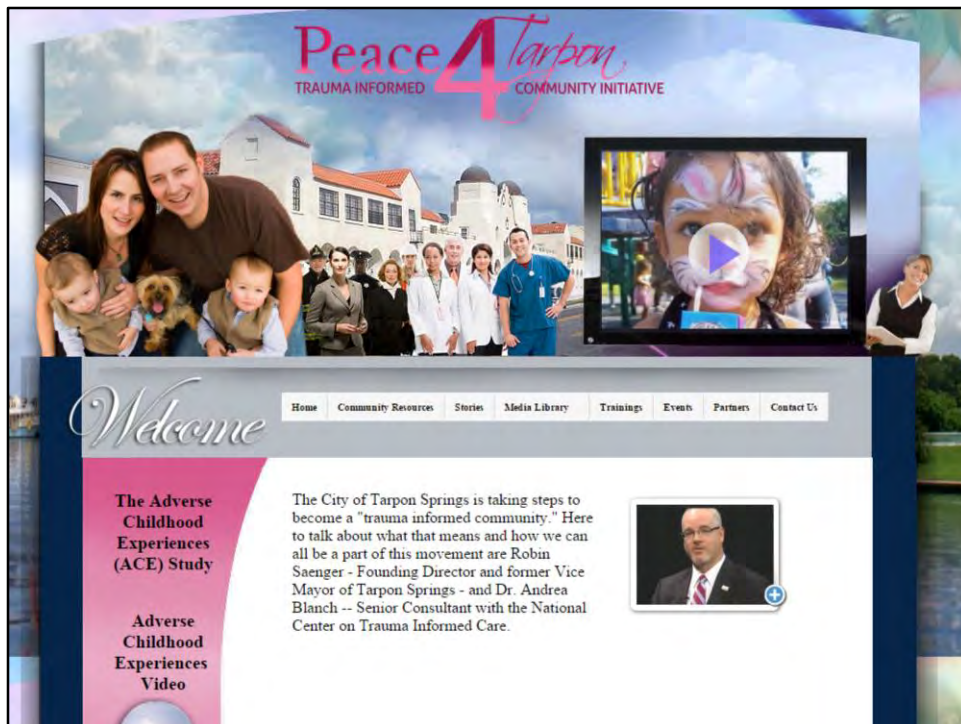
Key Ingredients

Community Asset

Moving Ahead







The Peace4Tarpon web site was my first introduction to the organization and efforts



I contacted Robin Saenger, Founding Director and we met along with Mary Sharrow at Eco Bean. Just another tidbit about Tarpon Springs; there are a lot more locally owned businesses than chains – like this one, you can get Starbucks if you really want but you have to go away from the “heart” of Tarpon Springs





The Trauma Informed Initiative has not only taken root but also is gaining energy and growing quickly. As we reach out into the community, we will have greater numbers of community members and partners join us.

*Please offer what peace/piece you can.*

*Robin Saenger  
Founding Director  
Peace4Tarpon TICI*



Robin told me some of the history of how Peace4Tarpon came to be and its ongoing purpose. She talked about bringing awareness and having capacity to grow new ideas and offer compassion. I was invited to bring my “piece” to add to the peace.



hu·man·ize

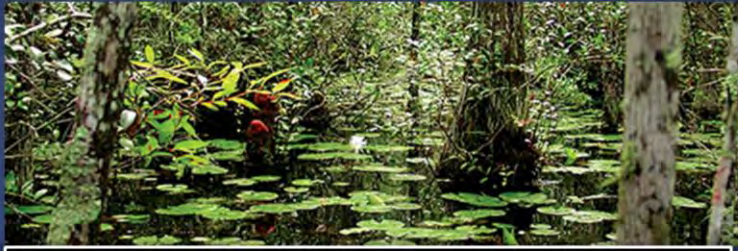
verb

1. make (something) more humane or civilized.

"his purpose was to humanize prison conditions"

synonyms: civilize, improve, better;

I quickly saw what a humanizing force trauma informed care and community can be. I've been attracted to humanizing forces for many years and this one seemed to have vast potential

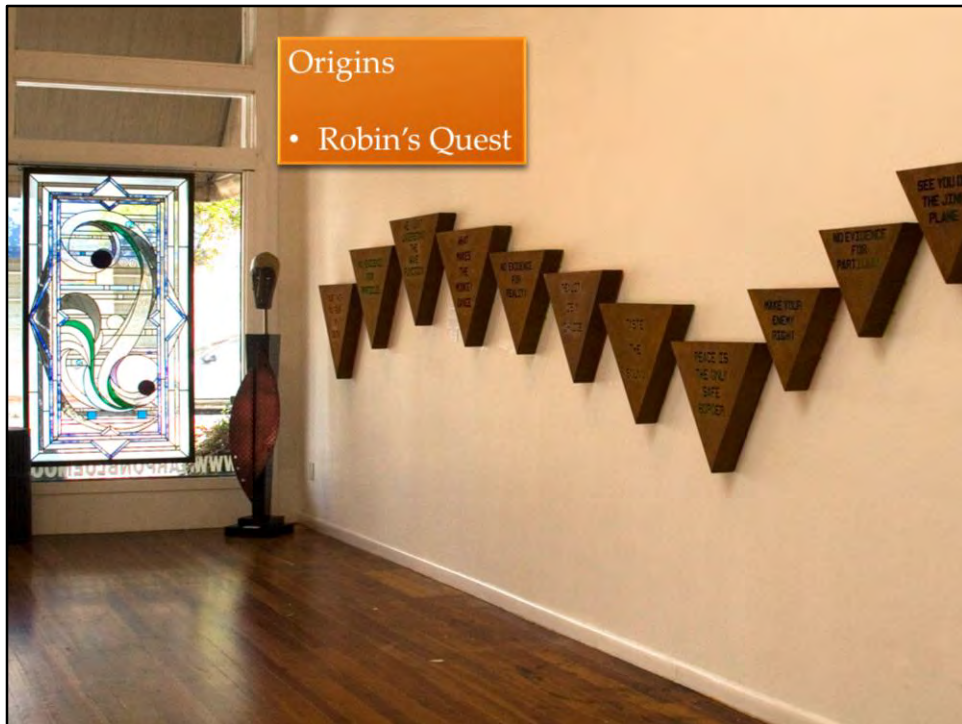


re·sil·ience  
*noun*  
the power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc.,  
After being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity.  
ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the  
like; buoyancy.



Brooker Creek Preserve  
3940 Keystone Road,  
Tarpon Springs 34688

I also saw a chance to add to the resiliency of people and organizations. Like wetlands buffer, absorb, filter and aid the cycle of life.



Robin began by asking what could be done for the community especially to take care of those less able and to curb violence. Her friend Andy Blanch introduced Trauma Informed care. As Robin's understanding grew she gathered others, and gained momentum





About the origins. Tarpon Springs is a unique community. About 25,000 population sitting on the edge of a major metropolis.



A working waterfront



A diverse population



## Origins

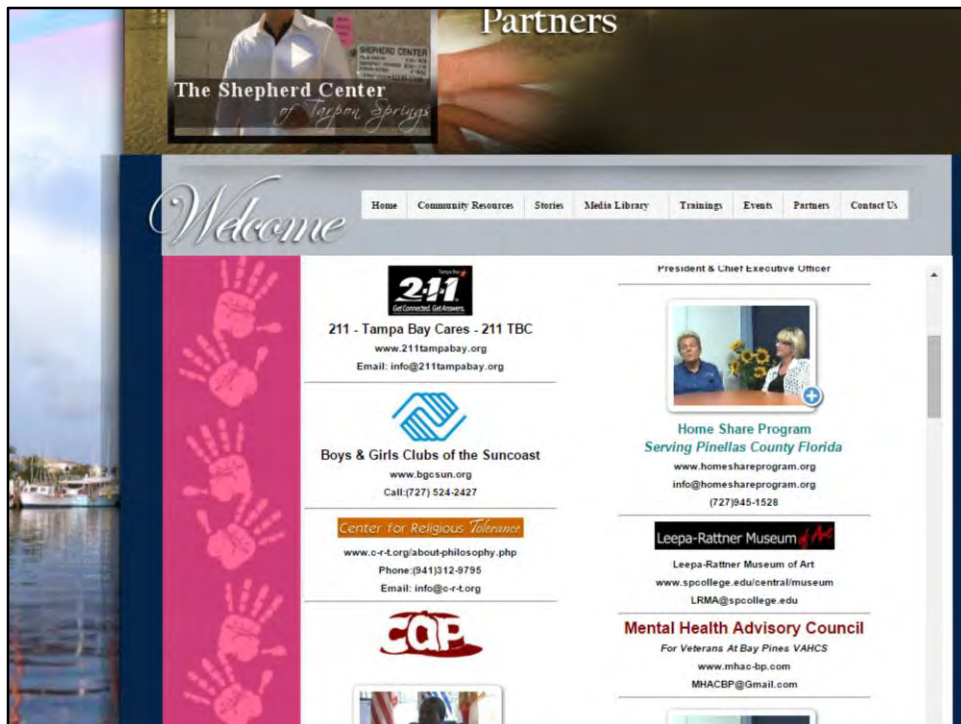
- Amazing Partners

Among the many amazing partners is Mayor David Archie whose support and encouragement has been instrumental



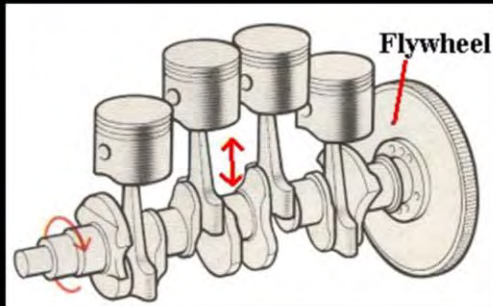


Monthly steering committee meetings are comprised of a cross section of citizens, service agencies, government, business and education



The web page lists many of the major partnering organizations

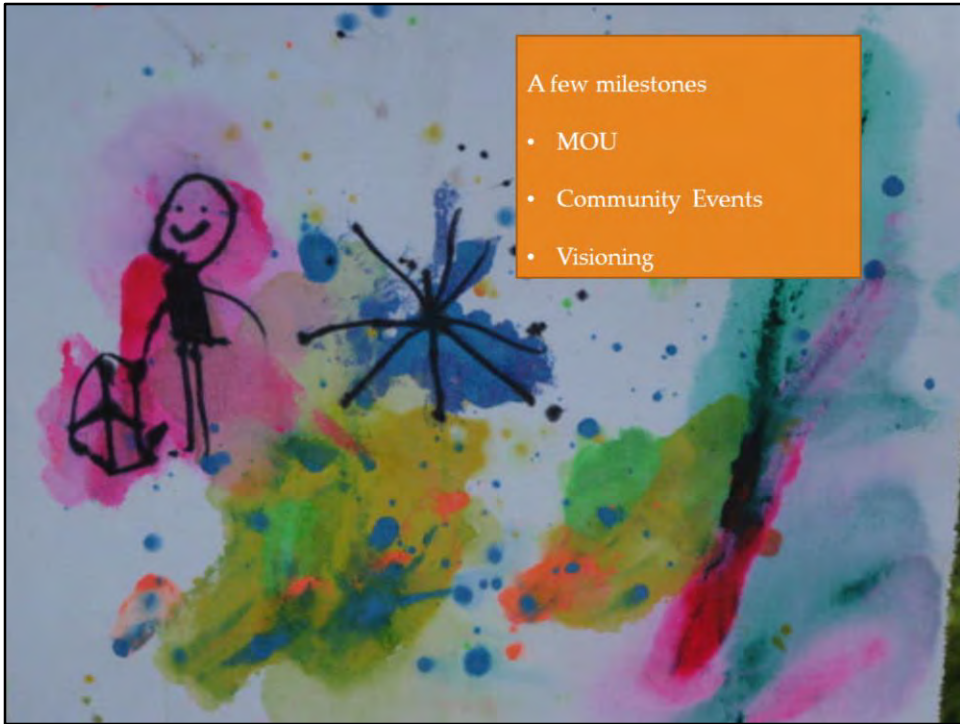
Robin's Quest +  
Unique Community +  
Amazing Partners =











A few milestones

- MOU
- Community Events
- Visioning

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING</b>  <b>Between Peace4Tarpon – Initiative for a Trauma Informed Community</b>  <b>And Community Partners/Members</b></p> <p><b>PREAMBLE:</b>  <b>VISION:</b> The vision for Peace4Tarpon is for Tarpon Springs to be a trauma informed community.  <b>MISSION:</b> To promote a trauma-sensitive community and foster healing.</p> <p><b><u>THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING</u></b>  This Memorandum of Understanding (or “MOU”) is entered into this day by and between the designated Community Partner/Member and Peace4Tarpon – Initiative for a Trauma Informed Community:</p> <p><b>Because</b> there is a definite correlation between the experience of trauma and resulting behavioral and health problems when the effects of trauma are unrecognized and unaddressed;</p> <p><b>Because</b> the community recognizes that the cumulative effects of trauma over the lifespan are detrimental to individuals and society, and the costly consequences of ignoring trauma for the individual and society;</p> <p><b>Because</b> Tarpon Springs has made a commitment to address the causes and consequences of trauma through a coordinated comprehensive community effort; and</p> <p><b>Because</b> the parties involved desire Tarpon Springs to be a trauma informed community that cares for its citizens by providing trauma information, education, prevention, resources, treatment and assistance.</p> <p><b>THEREFORE</b>, the parties agree as follows:</p> <p><b>Open Forums:</b> The parties or designated representatives will attend the monthly Open Forum meeting, to share efforts and programs which seek to address the mission of Peace4Tarpon. Each community partner/member will serve on at least one of the related Work Groups, Ad Hoc Committees, and Projects or will assign a designee, in order to implement the work plan. <b>The Board of Directors:</b> will have an overarching role guiding inter-related efforts.</p> <p><b>All Partners &amp; Members –</b> Are asked to: 1. Complete the ACE and Resilience questionnaires to gain understanding of our own trauma history. (<a href="http://www.peace4tarpon.org">www.peace4tarpon.org</a>) 2. Join the online ACEs Connection to expand our education. 3. Bring a trauma-sensitive approach into our daily lives.</p> <p><b>Duration: Termination:</b> This MOU will remain in effect for an indeterminate period. Either party may terminate this MOU upon written notice to the other party.</p> <p><b><u>SIGNATURE OF COMMITMENT:</u></b></p>	
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A memorandum of understanding serves as a reminder and a bond to all partners of the importance of the work we are undertaking and the common core of principles that drives the work



A event that symbolizes the sprit and community nature was Peace Flags, created and flown ALL OVER Tarpon Srprings













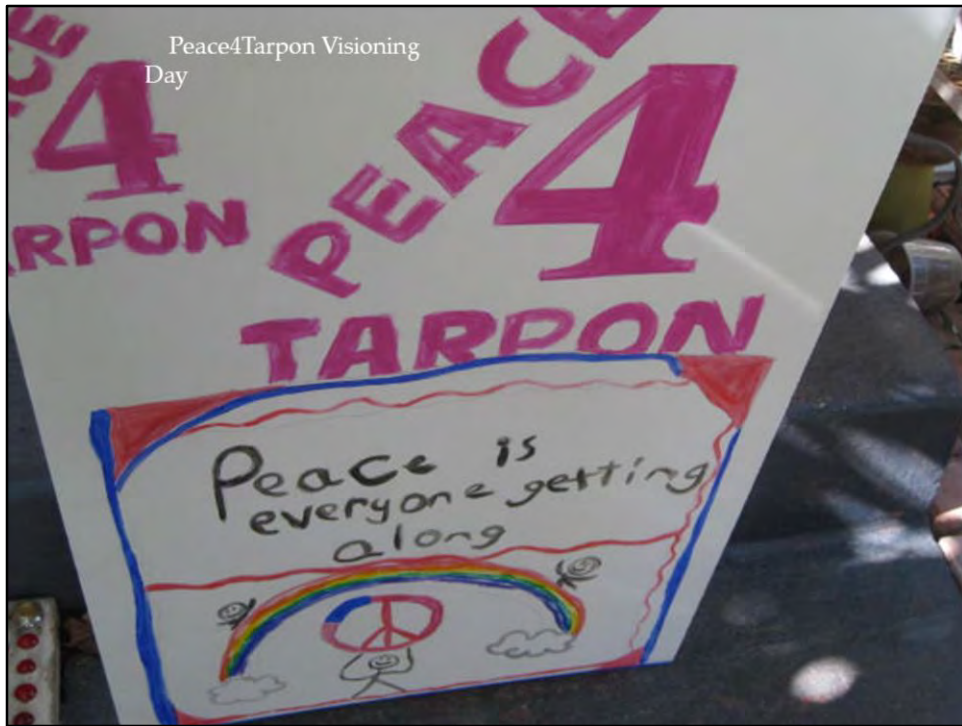


Many organizations exist independent of Peace4Tarpon but add enrichment to and enriched by partnering. One such organization is Tarpon Women's Interfaith Network (TWIN)





Individually inspired efforts also gain momentum and sustainability through our connections. Annie Dabbs (on the left) is a retired educator who brings books into lives and homes that otherwise would be lacking with her Reader's Choice Program



Peace4Tarpon's first community wide visioning day was held in December of 2013. Bringing together more than 70 people to create a map to our future

## Peace4Tarpon

### Visioning Highlights

- We're on the right track
- We're making a positive difference
- Energy is soaring
- We're still in the early stages of growth as an organization
- What we're doing is working well; so do more
- Fundamental Trauma Informed awareness should be our main focus for now (it isn't time to branch out or move on, there's still basic work to be done)
- Some gaps need to be closed to make sure we stay on track
- To grow our capacity we must bolster our infrastructure, it worked well for start-up; time to get ready for increased opportunities
- To stay forward-looking we must cultivate to our own trauma informed awareness and practices
- Visioning day was a success worth repeating!

### Focus Areas

- **Expand Awareness of Trauma Informed Care**
  - Pay special attention to front line care providers
  - Pay special attention to parents and families
  - Pay special attention to neighborhood involvement
  - Generate broader community recognition of Peace4Tarpon's purpose and presence
- **Build capacity**
  - Place emphasis on partners' ongoing learning
  - Boost our own Trauma Informed practices
  - Attract new collaborative partners
  - Help collaborative partners see the imperative and benefits of Trauma Informed Care and Community (a.k.a. "nickel drop")
- **Bolster infrastructure**
  - Distribute some requests that funnel to Robin
  - Complete 501C3
  - Initiate project teams to compliment committee work

An encapsulation of Visioning



Peace4Tarpon has emerged as a major community asset. It contributes to the ongoing well-being and preparedness to handle whatever might come our way



We are all well aware of much of the infrastructure that connects a city such as ours. Streets and highways, electricity and other utilities, storm water drainage and sewage to name a few. There's another essential connective element – person to person





We might see on the surface a health fair, a block party, or a community day to build a playground. What's going on at a deeper level is vastly important too. We are building protective factors and resilience.

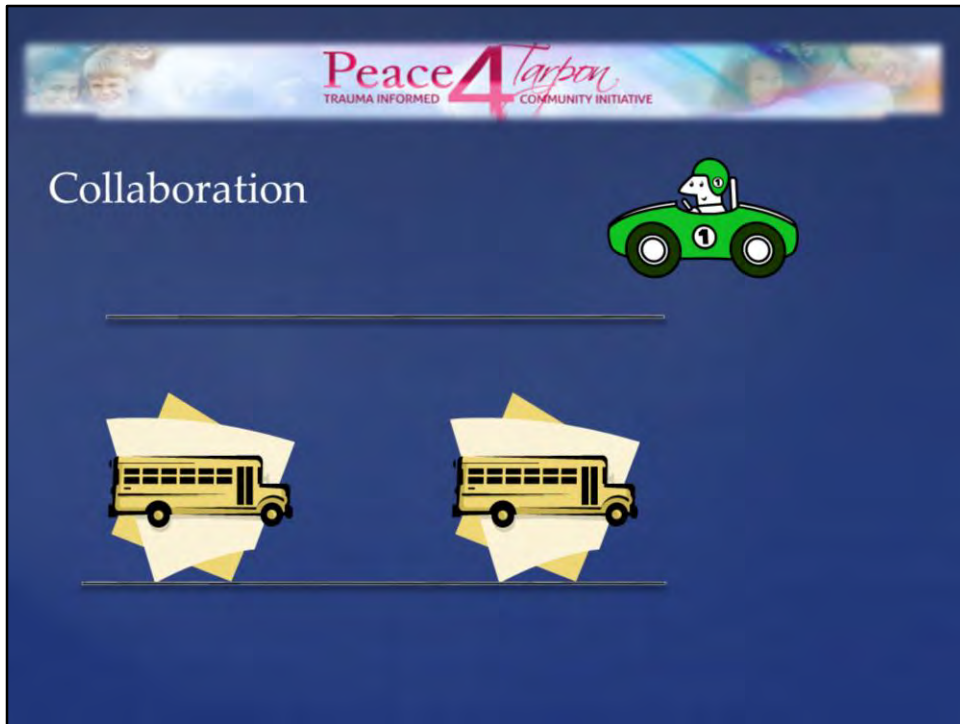
## Center for Public Affairs Research



Trevor Thompson, Jennifer Benz, Jennifer Agiesta, Kate Cagne

<http://SuperstormSandy-friends-kin-key-to-sandy-survival-517832263>

across the neighborhoods covered by individuals sampled for our survey, our data do point to signs that neighborhoods lacking in social cohesion and trust more generally have had a more difficult time in recovering from Sandy. Individuals in slowly recovering neighborhoods are less likely to believe that, generally speaking, most people can be trusted (31 percent vs. 44 percent) and are more likely to believe that you can't be too careful in dealing with people (68 percent vs. 53 percent) compared to neighborhoods reporting greater levels of recovery. Individuals in slowly recovering neighborhoods are also less likely to say that Sandy brought out the best in people than individuals in neighborhoods reporting greater levels of recovery (63 percent vs. 81 percent).



A second asset base that Peace4Tarpon enhances is collaboration. It's a word that has lost a little of its true meaning as we often "settle" for just getting along and getting by. Peace4Tarpon adheres to values and principles and finds the true collaboration point where resourcefulness is at its highest.

Collaboration



**Commitment**

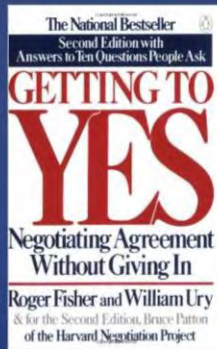
**Safe Transportation  
of Children**

**Responsibility**



# Collaboration

## Starting at Yes, We Can

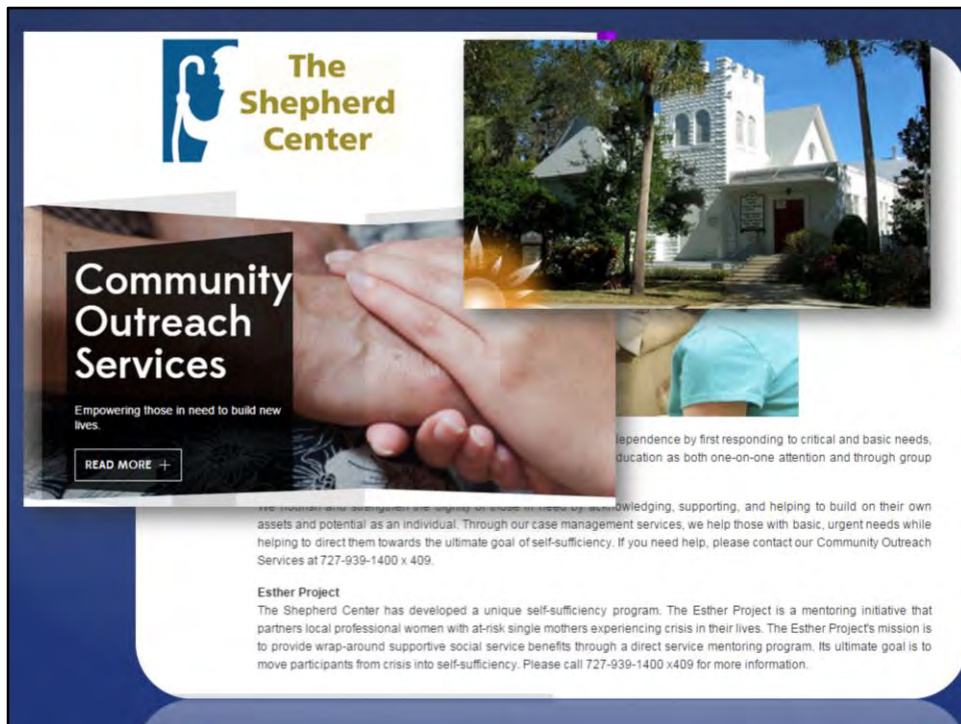


With this form of collaboration, partners start at an advanced level, with focus and coherence around shared commitments.

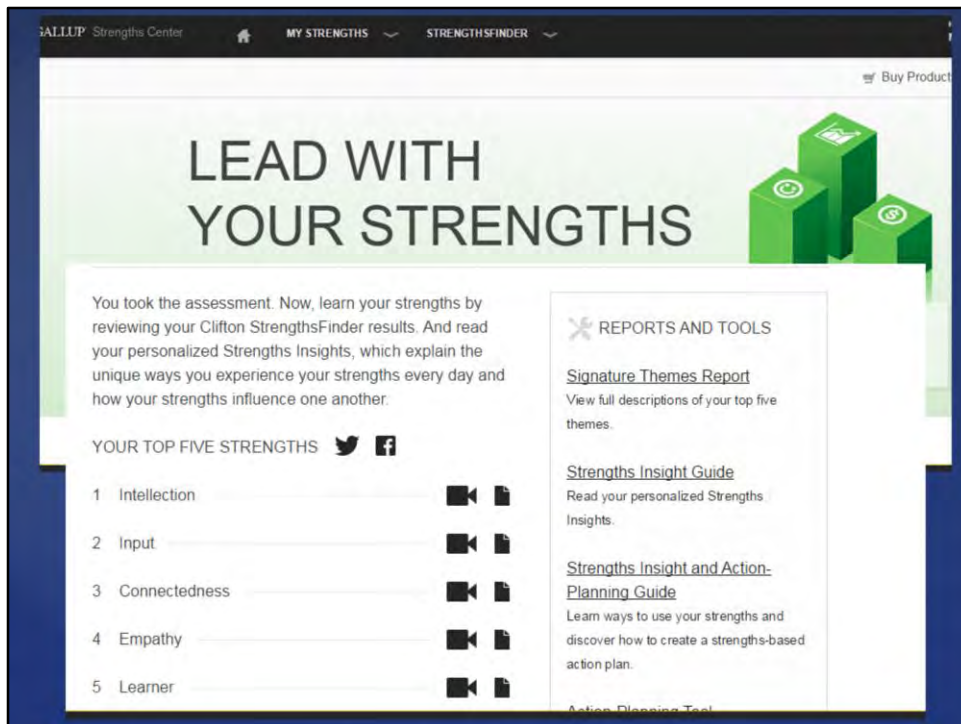




Connectivity and collaboration are a fine recipe for creativity. Innovative solutions and “out of the box” problem solving are par for the course. Pat Weber, Exec. Dir. Of Tarpon Housing Authority saw a need for accessible mental health counseling for her clients. She collaborated to Suncoast Center, offering them free use of space in a vacant housing unit. They now provide counseling to many who otherwise would not be able to take advantage.



The story of How Peace4Tarpon serves as a community connector that I'm most personally familiar with involves The Shepherd Center, a local interfaith outreach of compassion, education, assistance, and support for those in need within our community. I met their Executive Director at a Peace4Tarpon meeting and subsequently invited him to speak at our church. When he spoke my wife was intrigued by a new program they were starting called The Esther Program and she volunteered to mentor one of the "at-risk" women engaged in developing self-sufficiency.



My wife had experienced Strength Finders as part of professional development with her employer Wells Fargo and arranged for the mentees and mentors to complete the profile and discuss their strengths. Several of the women spoke about what an affirming experience it was to have their strength validated in such a manner

## **At risk...**

**Rent or Tuition?**

**Food or Gas?**

**Medicine? Deductible?**

**Christmas**

**Job vs Child Care**

**Field Trip or Car Repair?**

**Birthdays**

**Medical Forms – School Testing**

**Utilities or Insurance**

**Books or Clothes**


**Taxes, Vacations, Savings, Debt, Housing, Allowances**

**Dreams, Hopes, Aspirations**

While the mentee's were learning about themselves my wife tells me she has learned even more. She learned that "at-risk" means daily issues, hard choices, and for anyone with unresolved trauma an almost limitless source of stress triggers.

## Ingredients

- Mindset
- Discipline
- Attending



**Peace4Tarpon**  
A Trauma Informed Community Initiative

This Tarpon Springs initiative will provide resources to help prevent and heal the many forms of trauma.

It will engage and inspire us to offer what peace/piece we can to help heal the pain of trauma. We all bear witness to trauma issues during daily life, there is no "trauma-free-zone" in the world. We can ask "what happened to you?" not "what's wrong with you?"

Listen without judgement as listening is an act of love. Compassion is important and powerful. You don't have to offer an ultimate "solution." Build trust and have real conversations. Do not blame yourself, you are not alone.

[www.facebook.com/Peace4Tarpon](http://www.facebook.com/Peace4Tarpon)

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## Mindset

- Compassion
- Possibilities
- Interconnectedness



Many partners refer to the mindset growth as having the “nickel drop” My experience has been that understanding the impact of trauma takes us to a new edge of compassion and enables us to see possibilities anew. It is a growth vs. fixed mindset in Carol Dweck’s framework. The Arbinger Institute would call it an Outward Mindset vs. Inward, calling into focus the essence of others. Robert Kegan offers a framework of complexity and those for whom the nickel drops do grasp more complexity.



## Discipline to act according to the principles of

- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Voice and Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment

Peace4Tarpon lives, to a very great extent, the very conditions it wishes to create. Great focus is place on these principles. At almost every juncture someone will ask "What does the community really want? Have we asked them"



The other very noticeable practice that Peace4Tarpon members employ is a special brand of attentiveness to the life stream of the community. I'll call it attending

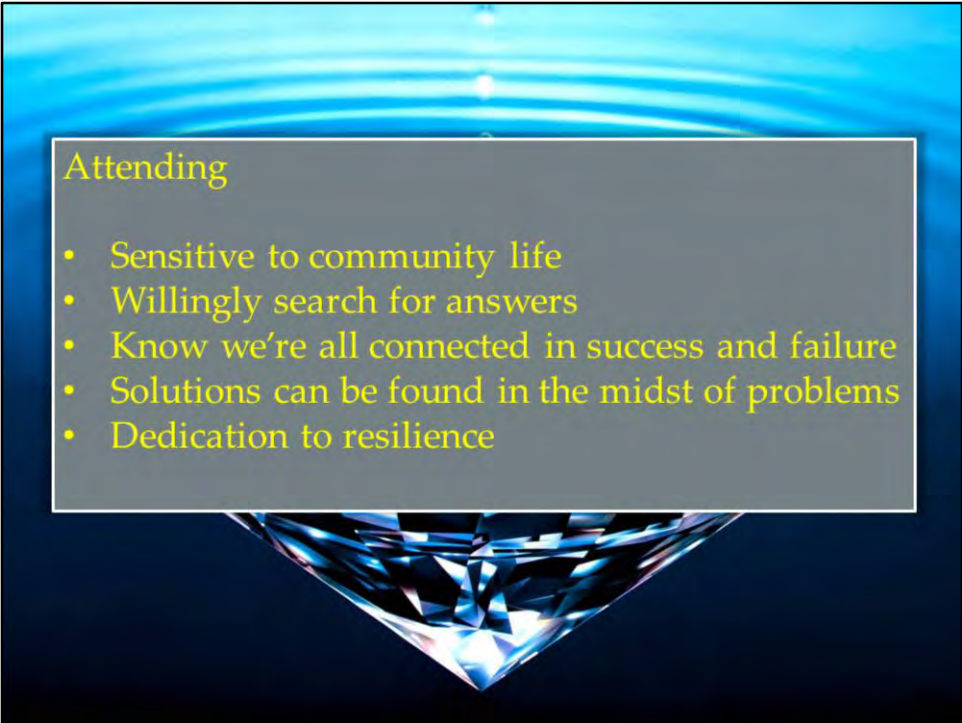
# Lessons from High Reliability Organizations



It reminds me of the lessons learned from observing HROs. Organizations with a lot at stake, a dynamic environment, and a set of skills and practices that enable it to succeed even when unexpected events occur.

## 5 characteristics of HRO

- Preoccupation with failure
- Reluctance to simplify interpretations
- Sensitivity to operations
- Commitment to resilience
- Deference to expertise



## Attending

- Sensitive to community life
- Willingly search for answers
- Know we're all connected in success and failure
- Solutions can be found in the midst of problems
- Dedication to resilience





Carl Vom Eigen has identified 4 key elements in our Peace4 formula

These serve as our mission, inspiration, and vision for the future.

On the practical front Peace4Tarpon is completing an application for 501c3 status, planning a Peace4Communities summit, and continuing to reach out to people and refine our own practices



"The light always beckons."

C. Terry Warner

Bonds That Make Us Free

Founder, The Arbinger Institute











