Aspiration Session Notes

Allied Media Conference, Detroit, Michigan, June 19-21 2015
"How to do Online Communications as an Organizer" — **j.mp/aspiration_AMC2015_comms**

Community Organizing Tips

DO	DON'T
Put inter-personal connections first-- connecting with people is the most important thing	Don't enter a new community thinking you're an expert
Use the voices of community in describing the work	Don't place academic/policy "experts" over experts with lived experience
involving real community issues (data, narrative) when seeking/working for change	Don't make assumptions (NOPE)
Make things inclusive and accessible from the very beginning (not after the fact)	Don't place limits/boundaries on what's possible
Consider community needs, not just the agenda	Don't follow the rules too closely
Listen	Don't enter a space without making sure the community wants you in the space
Be transparent with your mission	Dont' delegate omms to one person
Build leadership and capacity to do own work	Don't be comfusing
Tell a story and be authentic	Do not assume anyone's motivation for showing up
Connect local events to nationwide movements and national movements to local organizing	Don't procrastinate
Be timely	Don't attack without a strategy
Create partnerships	Do not do an action without an ask
Create space for youth to contribute and become education. This creates sustainability	Do not limit spokespeople, reducing access to process by naming or branding projects
Take notes from our ancestors	Do not mansplain/assuming authority
Invite people to participate	Don't implement solutions on your own – make sure your idea is needed by other people and groups
Always seek to listen to those around you, no matter what their role is	Do not use language/terms that may exclude audiences (e.g. Aspie, high vs low fuctioning)
Understand your power and privilege	Do not dismiss anyone (any one could be an agent of assistance)
Give youth meaningful inclusion	Do not talk at audience
Choose the tone of your message	Create generic messaging
Create space for reflection	Don't move without critical reflection. Critique creates revolutionary communities
Always strive to make connections between entities in the community in a visible way	Don't rely on others to do what you can do
Connect with people (issue is important, connection is key)	Do not exclude people of certain identities (ex. Trans women of color social justices issues affect people of all identities)
Ask people how they define their organizing role	Do not use materials that aren't authentic to you
Provide a platform for community input	Do not think your approach is the most valuable or correct approach
Listen to the voices of young people	Be careful of valuing "security culture over clarity/personal safety evaluations
Build a lot of partnerships	Do not do work without involving the afected community
Listen first to understand first, not only to reply	Do not use excessive terminology/jargon
Be more accountable	Do not presume
Everyone shared	Do not communicate with, not for the community
Invite people into conversation before defining goals	Do not assume
Leave the power with the grassroots	Do not identif people for them (i.e. youth or volunteer)
Have a space, place, or process for inclusion	Tokenizing youth
Let the community lead	Do not speak over those affected by the issue
Active listening	Dont' plan with too short timellines
Collectively-define decision making	Do less online more face-to-face
Add content outside of your primary causes to draw in diverse audience	Do not be condescending/insensitive to local knowledge
Invite members into communications strategy	
Train people to do more than just tweet	