

EXAMPLES OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHIFTING NARRATIVE IN YOUR WORK

Developing new muscles and practices

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- training leaders in the concepts of public narratives, shifting narratives and power (e.g. 3 faces)
- engaging leaders to develop their skills at shifting narratives
- introducing your new narrative to a broader audience (e.g. leading narrative conversations)
- integrate public narrative consciousness into all relevant trainings and meetings
- expanding volunteer base by developing or modifying outreach communications that connect to and attract people at a narrative level

COMMUNICATIONS

- audit existing communications (e.g. website, brochures, communications with volunteers, etc) to identify where you may be reinforcing the dominant public narrative along with opportunities for shifting narrative
- upgrading your trainings and practice of generating letters to the editor and op-eds to include shifting narrative as an integral element

POLICY AND PROGRAM

- add a new set of questions to your current process and criteria for selecting public policy work and designing programs (see below)
- develop strategy, tactics and communications with elements of public narrative shifting in mind including goals to measure progress on public narrative shifting
- consider parallel policy efforts or programs (within or across states) that have similar elements of public narrative shifting so that they are re-enforcing each other even if the specifics of are different

BUILDING EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS/STRATEGIC ALLIES

- modify your current practice of meetings with important community and political players to draw out their own worldview as it relates to your issues (not just where they stand but why) and invite them to see it through a different lens (your narrative)
- work with people/groups you want to have long-term relationships with to develop a common understanding and work to shift the public narrative – even when the role you are playing in your state or across states may be different

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER ALONG THE WAY

- how is the dominant public narrative at play in the specific situation/issue we are addressing
- what is the vulnerability in that dominant public narrative (note: vulnerabilities are not where you can argue a different point but where some component of the dominant narrative is losing resonance in the public realm)
- how (words and actions) can we unmask what is really being said to take advantage of the vulnerabilities
- where are there opportunities for advancing our narrative? where is there an openness to a new way of thinking about the situation?
- how (words and actions) can we elevate our narrative?
- how (words and actions) can we offer a choice – not just in policy but in what beliefs should shape policies
- how can we work today in small ways that make bigger shifts possible in the future?