



Become a Facilitator for the Getting Ahead program!

Getting Ahead Overview

People in poverty need a safe space to analyze how poverty impacts individuals and communities and the opportunity to explore economic realities. This is a starting point both for reasoning and developing plans for transition.

The Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World curriculum, that One Body Collaboratives (OBC) has implemented in our community, allows group participants to analyze their own resources in a safe and supportive environment, identify the strongest resources, and create a plan that uses those strongest resources to build other resources.

The workbook curriculum is designed to allow adults in generational poverty to co-investigate the information, analyze their personal resources and those of the community, and create personal and community plans for building resources to achieve economic and other stability.

Individuals leave poverty for one of four reasons:

- A goal or vision of something they want to be or have
- A situation that is so painful that anything would be better
- Someone who 'sponsors' them (an educator, spouse, mentor) showing them a different way, or convincing them they could live differently
- A specific talent or ability that provides an opportunity for them

Our participants (referred to as investigators) will complete a ten-week Getting Ahead in-a-Just-Gettin by World curriculum series led by certificated facilitators.

The classes are comprised of up to eight participants and two co-facilitators. Each class runs about 2.5 hours in length. The classes are held at various locations in the community such as agencies, nonprofits and churches.

There is an additional curriculum that we have begun offering, Getting Ahead in the Workplace, which is held at employer locations. These employers typically have a high number of low-wage, entry-level workers. The benefit of the program is two-fold, it allows the under resourced worker to build their resources which in turn benefits the employer by having a more productive employee on the job site.

Getting Ahead Facilitators

Being a Facilitator for a Getting Ahead class will require a time commitment and will be a rewarding experience. The primary role of the Facilitator is to facilitate the weekly class content as well as the conversation that occurs as a part of the learnings. They also empower the participant to build personal resources and implement his or her personal plan. The Facilitator's role is **not** one of a teacher but instead as a lead organizer in working with the group through each session. The best Getting Ahead classes are those in which you walk in the room and cannot easily point out who is the Facilitator and who is a participant!

Getting Ahead participants will develop personal plans to guide them as they build their resources to become self-sufficient. Through this process the Facilitator is to act as a coach and a connector to community resources, and to provide a positive role model and relationship for the participant.

Qualities of good Facilitators include compassion, patience, a desire to help under resourced individuals in our community (without creating an enabling environment) and an understanding of systemic poverty.

New Facilitators are always matched up with a Facilitator who as already led one full ten-week session of classes, who then co-facilitate a class together.

Facilitator Training

- The completion of the Getting Ahead Facilitator Training is mandatory and is provided via webinar by the aha!Process, the organization who created the curriculum. The training sessions are six hours in length and are provided on two days, typically on a Friday from 11am to 2pm and the following Monday from 11am to 2pm. The training sessions are offered on a quarterly basis in March, June, September and December.
- For individuals who will be Facilitating the Workplace curriculum, an additional hour of training is provided by the aha!Process. The additional hour of training is also provided via webinar and is typically held in January, April, July and October.
- Additionally, One Body Collaboratives offers a quarterly event, "Understanding the Complexities of Poverty." Attending one of these sessions is also helpful to gain an understanding of the fundamentals of the Bridges Out of Poverty program.

Partnering with OBC Bridges Out of Poverty (OBC)

- A Facilitator Application must be completed.
- A signed Good Faith Agreement must be completed. This agreement outlines the expectations for both OBC and its mentors.

Time Commitment

In addition to the Facilitator training, the expectation is that our Certified Facilitators will lead at least one ten-week session of the Getting Ahead curriculum. Each session is approximately 2.5 hours in length, and additional prep time may be needed prior to each class session.

Boundaries

One of the important resources we are providing to our participants throughout the sessions is positive relationships with appropriate boundaries. The expectation is that a Facilitator is there to assist the participant who may have an urgent need that arises during a class session however the Facilitator is not meant to be a problem solver each time the participant faces a crisis.

One Body Collaboratives operates a Resource Coordination Center of which the Facilitator is always encouraged to refer class participants with any needs they may have.

Facilitators will need to set their own boundaries regarding their participants. The participant will need latitude to choose their own course and make their own mistakes. The Facilitator's job is to share what he/she knows and respect the rights of the participant.

It is better to offer possible solutions than to give direct advice. A facilitator who gives advice such as "If I were you, I would move on" or "Go in tomorrow and tell your boss you deserve a raise" is setting up an environment in which he/she may "own" the participant's problem. What the participant needs is someone who is adept at questioning techniques and can offer personal experience and/or assists in helping reframe potential power struggles. Leading the participant in a discussion of options and potential consequences is the optimal strategy.

Next Steps

If you are interested in becoming a Getting Ahead Facilitator, please contact Mary Cacioppi by email at: Mary.Cacioppi@OneBodyCollaboratives.org.

For More Information

For more information on our local Bridges Out of Poverty Initiative, visit www.OneBodyCollaboratives.org.

For more information about the national Bridges Out of Poverty organization, visit www.ahaprocess.com.