



Outreach AND Engagement: How to Make Space for Both
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Our Presenter



Laura Damon-Moore

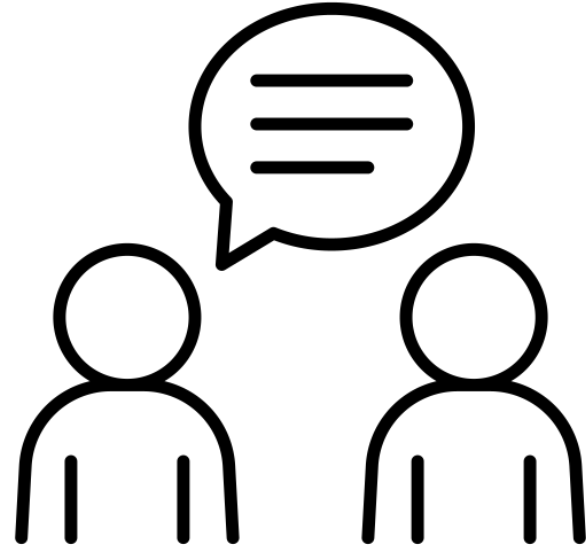
WiLS

(former youth & community
engagement librarian)

Introductions

If you can, share in chat:

1. Who you are
2. Any organization or institution you're representing today
3. A sentence about your context (organization/institution type, your position, what brings you here today)



Created by Teewars western
from the Noun Project

Table-setting: defining outreach and engagement

Community Outreach	Community Engagement
Short-Term	Long-Term
Marketing	Relationship Building
What can A do for B?	What can A and B do together?
One Group Benefits Most	Community Benefits
Transactional	Connecting
Directional	Cyclical

Graphic from [LeadingDifferently.com](https://www.leadingdifferently.com)

My context

- Assistant Director/Youth Services Librarian
- Community of ~5,000, south central Wisconsin
- 80% FTE
- Programming, outreach, desk and collection work



Photo from City of Evansville website:

https://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/life_in_evansville/library/

My context | outreach examples

- Tabling w/ activities at community events
- Visits to schools promoting summer library program
- Promoting county and system libraries at county fair
- Strategic planning surveys
- Programs offsite (visits to childcare centers, summer camps, etc)



Summer camp story time visit, 2013. Photo by Jim Burling.

My context | outreach examples & our definition

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My context | community-led youth literacy initiative

Components:

- Physical infrastructure (Little Free Libraries)
- Resources from partners (space, logistics support)
- Sweat equity from community members
- Informational materials for families



Photo from littlefreelibrary.org

My context | looking back...

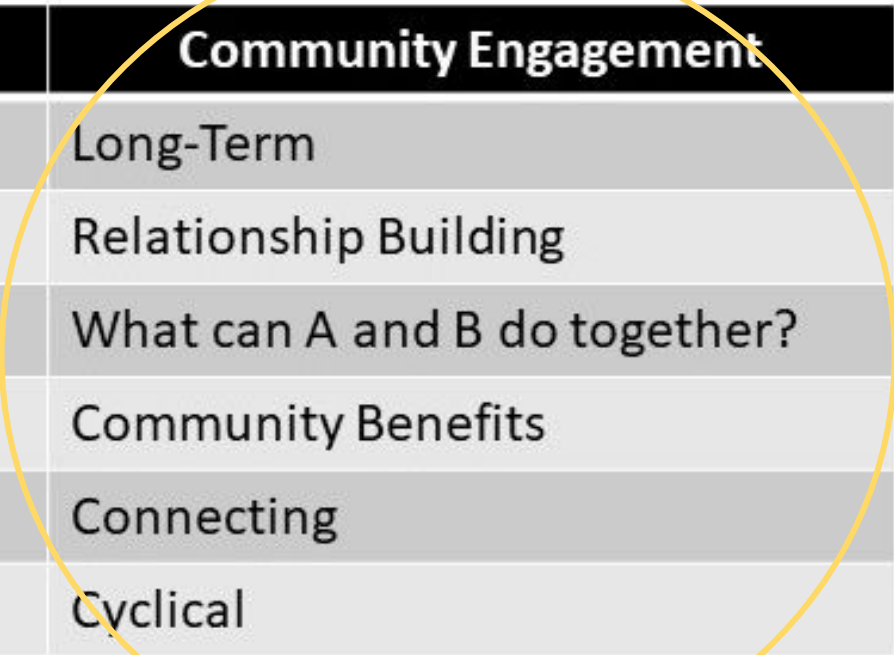
- Community members drove the idea and how resources to support the idea would be distributed and shared
- I, and the library, was there in a supporting role but not a driving role
- My ongoing relationships and personal connections with people made it easy for them to see the library as a natural and straightforward partner



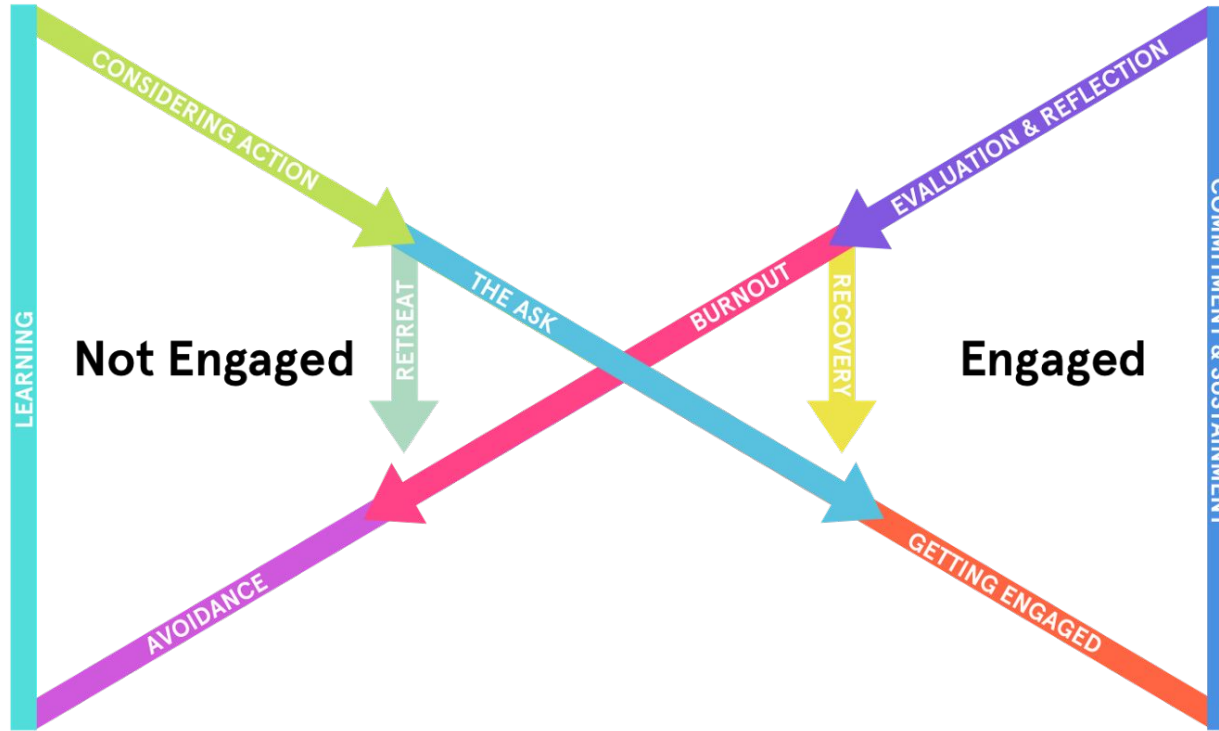
Upon reflection...

...this was engagement leading to collective action

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Looking at it through the cycle of engagement



From the New Data Project's Annotations blog

Practicalities | planning your time

Outreach = a sprint

- What can be routinized?
- Planning
- Prep and packing up
- Doing the thing
- Unpacking and any follow-up

Engagement = a daily walk

- Incorporating time for it into your daily or weekly routine
- “100 cups of coffee”
- Harder to plan for up front
- Follow-up can still happen

Practicalities | prioritization

Prioritizing your outreach work:

- Where and how could you scale things differently?
- If you could only choose three outreach opportunities to attend or do, what would they be?
- Are there strategic goals or directives in place at your organization that can aid with decision making?

Prioritizing your engagement work:

- Advocating for internal support and permission
- Support for staff to be a presence generally in the community
- Recognition that outcomes and results might be hazy, or not fully understood right away

About multi-type libraries and organizations

- Prioritization of outreach work and engagement work is important
- Informed by your organization's strategic goals or directives
- Ongoing community engagement – what does that look like in your context?



Measuring what you do and its impact

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Takeaways

- Outreach work and engagement work both have places within organizations. While there may be overlap from time to time, they are different approaches with different outcomes.
- Time scales have to be different. Outreach is pre-planned with short bursts of energy, engagement is a slow burn, literally think about having 100 cups of coffee with people plus holding spaces for collective community discovery.
- Prioritization is critical to both of these approaches.
- Consider how you'll first establish a baseline and then what you'll measure in order to understand if and how the needle is moving due to your outreach work and your engagement work.

Resource round-up

- Leading Differently: <https://leadingdifferently.com/>
- Tamarack Institute: <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/100-cups-of-coffee>
- Asset-Based, Community-Led Development (ABCD):
<https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2016/04/11/abcd-reading-list/>
- The Cycle of Engagement: A New Framework for Understanding Civic Life in America:
<https://medium.com/ndp-annotations/the-cycle-of-engagement-c19a9788ba17>
- Community Engagement Assessment Tool, Nexus:
<https://www.nexuscp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/05-CE-Assessment-Tool.pdf>

Questions or Comments?

Final words I share in chat

*What's an idea, pondering, concept that
you're taking away from today?*

Thank you!

laura@wils.org for questions