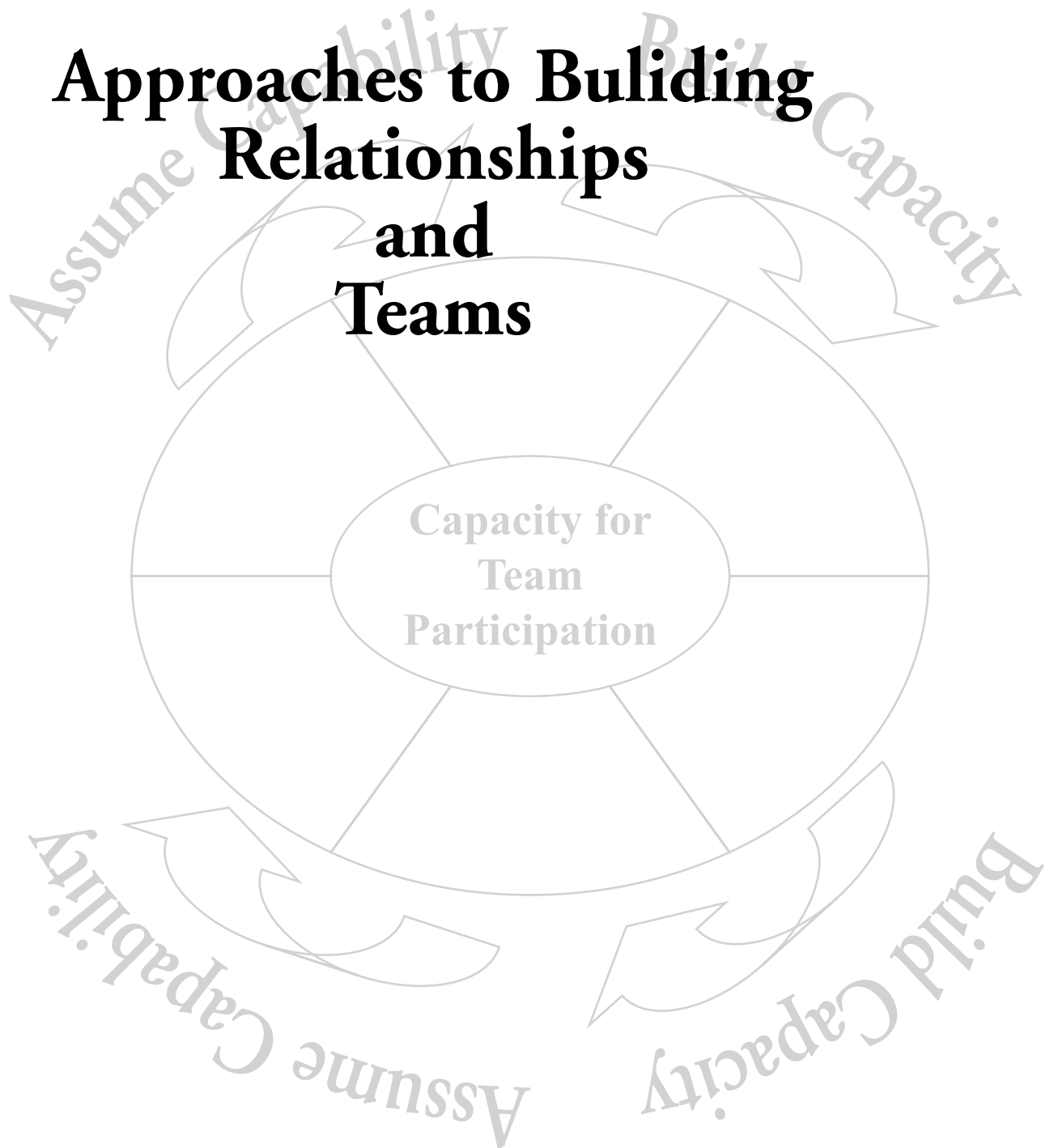
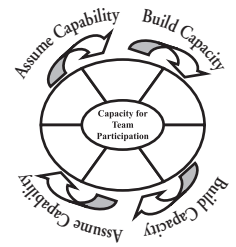


# PART FIVE:

## Approaches to Building Relationships and Teams





CRN Teams offer the following thoughts about the principles of inclusion, meaningful participation, power sharing, and assuming capability/building capacity – the essential interrelated elements of team and relationship building.

▶▶ **Community Development is a Process, not a Task - West Kootenay, North Shore, Peachland**

Community Development is not something to be done and crossed off a checklist. It is a way of working together requiring patience, commitment and vision. Only when the groundwork has been laid and the community is truly involved does “ownership” begin to occur.

▶▶ **Always Talk about Values - North Shore**

It is easy to fall into historical ways of operating. Unless we constantly and consciously revisit the values and principles by which we are guided in this process, we may create something which is not based on those values.

▶▶ **Approach to Learn, not to Teach - South Surrey/White Rock**

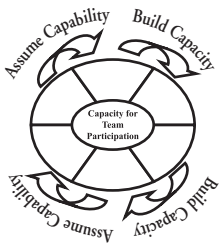
Approaching the process with the idea that you are all there to learn together works very well.

▶▶ **Do not Expect People to “Represent” their Entire Peer Group - West Kootenay**

No one person can represent an entire group of people. For example, a senior can not represent the perspectives and experiences of all seniors, but only her own. When we include everyone who has an interest in participating, we bring in a variety of experiences and perspectives. That way the diversity within the CRN more accurately reflects the diversity of the community.

▶▶ **Importance of Support for the Process Coming From the Agency and the Participating Staff Person - Castlegar, Quesnel, South Fraser**

Participation in the CRN has, in many organizations, been the “responsibility” of one person. When a number of people left their jobs at the same time, and there was not an agency-based understanding of the process or commitment to it, the CRN almost collapsed.



▶▶ **Acknowledgement of Power and Power Sharing Vancouver/ Richmond, West Kootenay**

Whether we are comfortable with it or not, power is an element of any group dynamic. It may have to do with jobs, economic security, accessibility, understanding of language, understanding of concepts etc. It does not have to be overt and obvious to interfere with the development of a strong, cohesive team. Power, whether real or imagined, must be acknowledged to create a level playing field.

▶▶ **Focus on Commonalities, not Differences - North Shore/ Sea-to-Sky/Powell River**

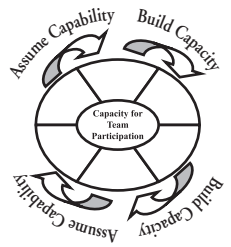
A key strategy to success is focussing on common ground. As soon as you identify shared vision and goals, everyone is part of the same team. While we may be more accustomed to seeing differences, it is more effective to focus on similarities.

▶▶ **Get Rid of “Us and Them” - North Island, West Kootenay**

Sometimes, when we describe people or organizations, we tend to put them into categories. We talk about “service providers”, for example, or ‘clients’ and ‘consumers.’ Or we talk about government agencies, non-governmental agencies and volunteer groups. When we categorize people and organizations, it’s easy to get focused on their differences, rather than what they might have in common. Sometimes we can assume that we have more in common with the people or organizations that are ‘like us’. In communities, this can sometimes lead to a sense of ‘us’ and “them’. Within the CRN team, it’s important that there is no ‘us’ and ‘them’, but only an ‘us.’

▶▶ **Keep it Informal - Vancouver/Richmond**

Informal approaches to meetings and information sharing help to get new people involved and keep them involved. For example, formal meeting rules may seem very complicated to someone who is not accustomed to speaking in groups. But an informal round of discussion, where everyone gets a turn to speak, can encourage idea sharing among a broader group of people.



▶▶ **Redefine Participation - Vancouver/Richmond, West Kootenay, Tri-Cities**

We may tend to define participation in CRN development as the act of attending meetings. However, there are many other ways that people can be involved and participate in this process, whether it is telling their story, acting as an advisor to the process, hosting or facilitating an event, phoning, organizing refreshments, word processing, etc.

▶▶ **Create Options for Meaningful Participation - North Shore/Sea-to -Sky/Powell River**

Ensure that everyone can choose how they'll be involved, and what kind of participation will be meaningful for them. This can mean providing a range of options for participation, so people can decide which activities they'll participate in, and how often. Meaningful participation also means that every member has equal opportunity to influence both the process and outcome.

▶▶ **Listen - North Okanagan**

In order to ensure that each person is heard, we must be willing to really listen to each other.

▶▶ **Respect for People's Limits and Boundaries - North/Central Surrey**

If someone is saying they are unable to do something we want done, we must respect that. If a person cannot do as much as others, it does not make them a less valuable team member.

▶▶ **Build a Sense of "Community" - North Island**

Even if your CRN members are from different geographic locations, it is still possible to form one community of people.

▶▶ **Opportunities to Learn About the WHOLE Community**

The CRN development process is intended to encompass the whole community, not just the parts with which we may already be familiar. It creates the chance to become familiar with the community in its entirety.