



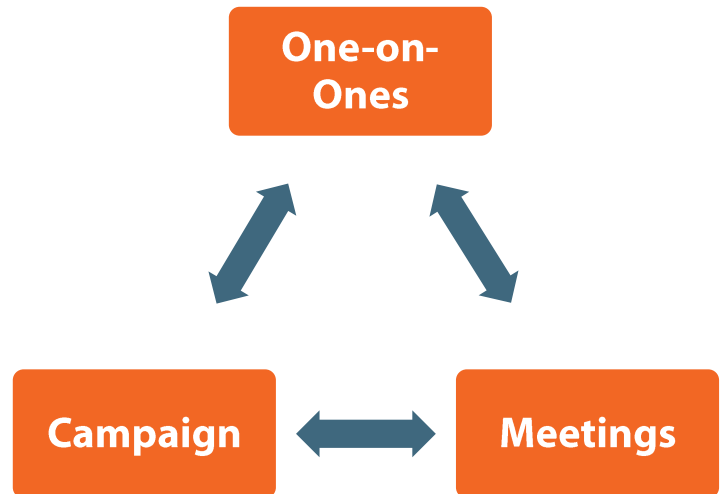
## NETWORK Advocates Training and Gala

April 21-23, 2022 • Washington, D.C.

# Organizing 101

**Community organizing focuses on bringing power to a community and empowers communities to create change.**  
(Center for Popular Democracy)

**Building principled and ordered sustained relationships around self-interest and shared values in order to build power.**  
(Jobs with Justice)



## Self-Interest

Self-interest is about recognizing your own needs and desires amidst the needs and desires of the others alongside whom you are working.

- ☀ Why are you here?
- ☀ What ties you to this work?
- ☀ How are you going to benefit from this work?

selfishness <----- **self-interest** -----> selflessness

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*"If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."*  
-Lilla Watson

*"Until we are all free, we are none of us free."*  
-Emma Lazarus

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## One-on-Ones

One-on-ones are where the real work of organizing happens. They have four goals:

- ☀ **Building relationships:** Relationships cultivate possibilities. When people are in relationship they can share, plan, create, and get things done. In community organizing, building relationships is the key to building power. Once you build a relationship with someone, they are more likely to respond to an invitation to attend a meeting or work on a campaign.
- ☀ **Uncovering self-interest:** Self-interest is what a person is passionate about and what motivates them. People will get involved in things that reflect their self-interest.
- ☀ **Developing clarity:** One-on-ones allow people to express their feelings about important issues, which helps make those things clearer to them. When someone develops clarity about what is important to them, they are more likely to act on it.
- ☀ **Gathering information:** One-on-ones are an opportunity for you to gain information about a community, neighborhood, organization, or campaign. You will find out what is going on, where there are overlaps in your work and interests, and most importantly, how people are thinking and feeling about important issues.

*Adapted from National People's Action*

## Tips for Active Listening

Remember that you are seeking to build trust and empathy as you build this relationship. It is important for you to acknowledge the emotional content and understand how they are feeling. It is also crucial for you to practice “holy curiosity,” to ask courageous questions, and not to be judgmental or psycho-analytical.

- ☀ Make eye contact
- ☀ Be curious
- ☀ Respond intentionally and supportively
- ☀ Acknowledge how the speaker seems to be feeling
- ☀ Encourage them to illustrate with personal stories
- ☀ Paraphrase and/or repeat important points to make sure that you are understanding them correctly

## After the One-on-One

- ☀ Thank them for their time
- ☀ Ask them who else you should talk to
- ☀ Establish a follow-up if needed/appropriate
- ☀ Reflect and evaluate

**Reflect** First, spend a few minutes reflecting on your own self-interest and grounding yourself in your experiences.

What are some issues that you care about or challenges you witness that you want to address?

What are some experiences you've had that have informed your awareness?

How has your upbringing or other early experiences informed your perspective?

What are your hopes or dreams?

What are you angry or concerned about?

What people or groups are you involved with or connected to?

What skills do you bring with you? What skills are you interested in developing?

What else does this reflecting bring up or reveal?

**Ask** Bring your self-awareness into conversation with others. The following questions can help to get your conversation started, but don't read through them like a script; use them to guide a genuine conversation.

Who are you talking to?

What are some issues that they care about or challenges they witness that they want to address?

What are some experiences they've had that have informed their awareness?

How has their upbringing or other early experiences informed their perspective?

What are their hopes or dreams?

What are they angry or concerned about?

What people or groups are they involved with or connected to?

What skills do they bring with them? What skills are they interested in developing?

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What else does this conversation bring up or reveal?

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**Reflect** Always reflect on what you learned. Remember: "What's said here stays here; what's learned here leaves here."

What is this person's self-interest? Does it align with mine? If so, how?

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What skills do they have or want to develop?

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What connections/relationships do they have?

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What role might they be able to play in a campaign?

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How does this shape my campaign strategy?

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Who do I need to talk to next?

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