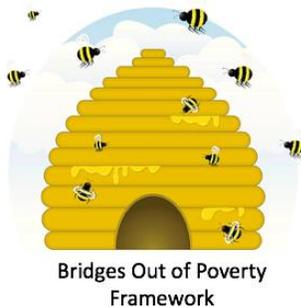


# Celebrating Graduates at the Neighbour Network

Wednesday May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

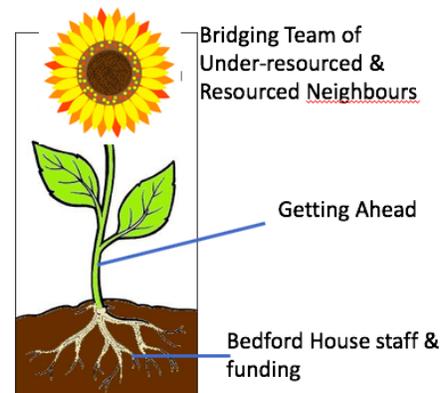
We gathered for food, fun, and storytelling. The story of the day was about the graduation of a new batch of Getting Ahead investigators and mentors.

Bedford House board members, reps from Greenwood and Trinity churches, and members of our pilot Bridging Team were in attendance to celebrate this new group of folks journeying onto the “bridge out of poverty”.



Five participants hosted the weekly study group at the Mount where they live. They were joined by a group of ten Mentors about a third of the way into the Getting Ahead study. This group is now ready to become a Bridging Team.

The Getting Ahead study process involves sixteen sessions where participants engage in group discussions and self-reflection exercises. It offers a systemic view of poverty’s four causes (personal, social, corporate-exploitive, and political-policies). The study also grounds us in basic concepts such as – the 11 Essential Resources for a stable life – and the Hidden Rules of class.



Wednesday’s party involved the usual uproarious doses of laughter and heart-felt sentiments shared. The potluck table was overflowing and there was lots of time for meeting new friends. This gathering represents the first-time folks from different teams have come together for the cross-fertilization of relationships.



It was an inauguration of what we’re calling the Neighbour Network.

Graduates were handed a certificate by facilitators Kat and Todd. These two led the study after experiencing the pilot Bridging Team in 2018 – and wanted to share the process with new folks.

“It’s contagious...” says Kat. “the sharing, the learning, the laughter, and the deepening of relationships – all as part of a global social

movement to end poverty – you just want more!”

To find out more go to [www.bedfordhouse.ca](http://www.bedfordhouse.ca) or email us at [bedfordhouse551@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordhouse551@gmail.com)

To support the participation of under-resourced folks in Bridging Teams go to: <https://www.gofundme.com/bedford-house-Building-bridges-Out-of-Povertyteams>

### **Feedback comments from the grads:**

#### **What might you hope could happen for yourself – and others -in the long term as a result of this program?**

- \* I hope to acquire some knowledge/skills to help me attain my goal in the wisest and simplest way. For others, I hope we all maintain the connection we have created.
- \* I hope this leads to sustained relationships between myself and some of the mentors.
- \* I would like to become the new Todd and gain employment with the organization 😊

#### **What were the most significant and/or valuable ideas and concepts you learned from the Getting Ahead Curriculum/Philosophy?**

- \* Planning backwards! It really works to prevent defeatism- shows how easy each step actually is to accomplish.
- \* The abstract/concrete dichotomy
- \* 11 resources
- \* I'm much more at ease socializing with people in other economic "classes"!

#### **What would you tell someone who might be interested in this work?**

- \* Go into the program open minded.
- \* It's fun and important to think about how we live our lives.
- \* I would say "go for it!" It will increase your self-esteem and your social capital."

### **Feedback comments from the mentors:**

#### **What were the most significant and/or valuable ideas and concepts you learned from the Getting Ahead Curriculum/Philosophy?**

- \* 11 essential resources-multidimensionality of life. Backwards planning. Case studies- insights into the complexity of the problems for people
- \* The language we use is distinct in our own lives
- \* Assess current resource level. Establish goals. Foster improved resource levels.
- \* Working backwards, social capital, in some cases, the systems are designed to hold people back.

#### **What would you tell someone who might be interested in this work?**

- \* It's valuable work!
- \* Put your opinions on hold and open your minds to possibilities.
- \* It's mind-expanding and life-enriching!
- \* Do it! It's an amazingly positive experience. If you are heart centered and want to feel part of something important – you will share in an amazing experience!