



# **The Spirit and Biology of Community:**

## **14 years of Community Conferencing in Inner-city Baltimore**

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**[CommunityConferencing.org](http://CommunityConferencing.org)**



# 15,000

Baltimore residents safely resolved  
their own crimes/conflicts  
using Community Conferencing

95%

result in effective Agreements

60%

less re-offending

# 1/10<sup>th</sup>

the cost of court

After 18 months of calling  
the police about kids  
playing in the street...

(See video @ [www.communityconferencing.org](http://www.communityconferencing.org))



# Dealing with cultural and racial tensions

“I haven’t seen you riding them like you’re riding us!”

Collectively establish  
norms for behavior

Teaching each other how  
they'd like to be treated

# Building accountability

Children *and* adults

Appreciating and supporting  
each other

Malik and Mr. Willie

Residents take  
responsibility for positive outcomes

(instead of feeding a  
culture of complainers)

# Points of interest about neighborhood CC's

- Focus on an incident, end up uncovering and addressing many underlying issues
- Pot-stirrers

# Process

- Turbo prep
- Everyone speaks for only themselves – no representatives

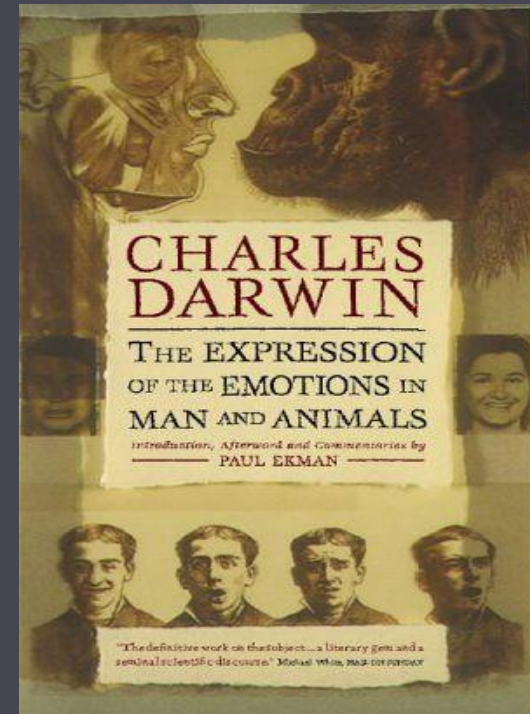
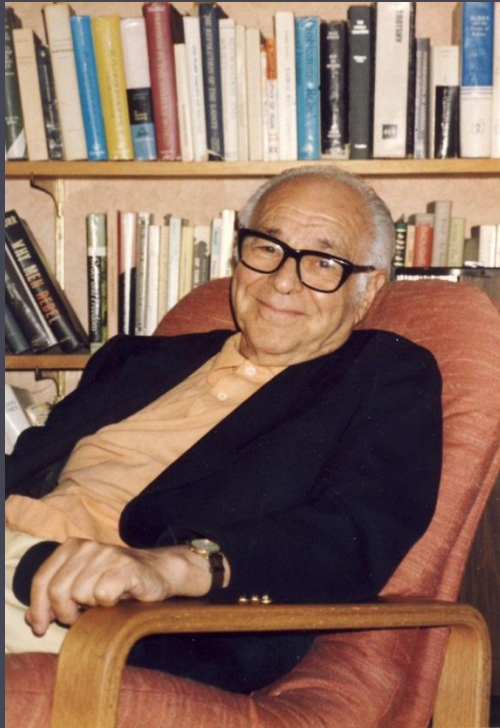
# Working in Neighborhoods

## Facilitators

- **Use experienced facilitators**
- **Key facilitator skills**
  - Being genuine
  - X-treme listening
  - Improvise...using principles
  - Watch a lot of Jerry Springer

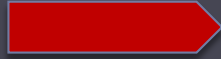


What's the Special Sauce?



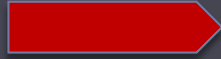
Silvan Tomkins, PhD  
1911- 1991

Affect is the primary motivator in humans



Affect	Motivation
<b>Dissmell</b>	
<b>Disgust</b>	
<b>Anger</b>	
<b>Fear</b>	
Sadness	
Shame	
Surprise	
Interest	
Joy	





Affect	Motivation
<b>Dissmell</b>	<b>Stay away!</b>
<b>Disgust</b>	<b>Get rid of it</b>
<b>Anger</b>	<b>Attack</b>
<b>Fear</b>	<b>Run</b>
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Surprise	
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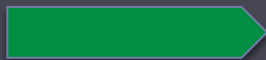
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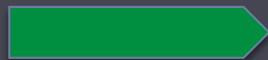
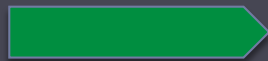


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<b>Interest</b>	<b>Engage</b>
<b>Joy</b>	<b>Affiliate</b>



Transforming the **NEGATIVE EMOTIONS**  
associated with **CONFLICT**

into the **POSITIVE EMOTIONS**  
associated with **COOPERATION**

Transformative Justice

- Let there be affect!
- Principles v. recipe
- Peer learning
- Don't forget to have fun

# We are built to live in community

- Our communities are everywhere in our lives
- They help us survive, thrive, and be resilient when things go awry
- Engage with all of your communities

