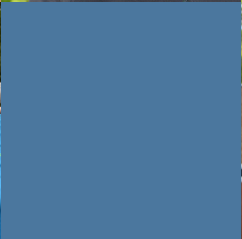
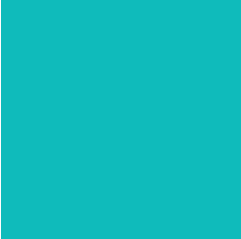
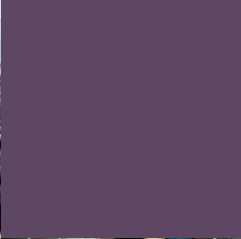


FRAMING DIRECTION



incourage™



The “Love, Share and Grow” artwork was created by Wisconsin Rapids artist, Jeanne Weymouth.

Although the language has evolved, the promises made by Incourage 15-years ago to *love* each other and the community; *share* in the reasonable and fair development and stewarding of community resources; and *grow* the knowledge, skills, and capacity of local residents and institutions; still govern decision making today. The ongoing, systematic organizational, and community change taking place is guided by a promise to co-create an inclusive, adaptive and sustainable community that advances values of equity and justice while nurturing a sense of community ownership, pride, and responsibility for each other, our collective resources, and our shared future. The future work of Incourage prioritizes:

1. Leveraging Resources for Community Prosperity
2. Ownership, Growth, and the Common Good

Leveraging Resources for Community Prosperity

Research conducted by Cornelia and Jan Flora in 2008 suggests that the lifeblood of any community can be linked to the presence and strength of seven different kinds of resources, which they refer to as community capitals. The Floras assert that community capitals are resources that already exist in communities and can be invested to create strategies focused on promoting the long-term well-being of communities. They name seven community capitals: natural (the environment), cultural (the way of life), human (the people), social (the relationships), political (the power), financial (the money), and built (the infrastructure). At Incourage, our strategies align with three of these capitals (social, human, and financial); additionally, we refined the Floras capitals to include moral (leading with values), intellectual (promoting continual learning and reflective practice), and reputational (forging bonds of trust and reciprocity) capital.

Strong and resilient communities strive for balanced investments in all capitals, whether those investments come from inside the community or are offered to the community from an external entity. Moreover, because the community capitals are interconnected, it is important to understand how the dependency and impact on one can help you to understand the dependency and impact on others. Too much attention on one or two of the capitals could suppress the growth of others and potentially

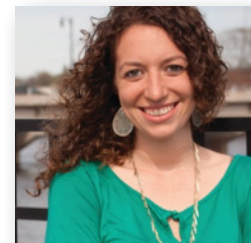


damage the overall health of the community (e.g., over investment in built capital could compromise a community's natural or cultural capital). When investments come from outside the community, decision makers must assure that these partnerships produce mutual benefits and do not deplete community assets. For example, local and political assets used to attract industry can often lead to the depletion of natural resources and the deterioration of human and financial capital, particularly when profits flow primarily to corporate shareholders and are not also reinvested in the local community in ways that directly benefit workers or the residents at large.

The core purpose of Incourage is to co-create an inclusive, adaptive and sustainable community that advances the values of social justice and equity while nurturing a sense of community ownership, pride, and responsibility for each other, our collective resources, and our shared future.

To do so requires intentional effort to not only be attentive to how targeted investments in each leads to community prosperity but also to recognize the interaction among these seven capitals and how investments in one capital can build assets in others. To that end our future work must:

- Grow human capital by paying attention to what voices are heard and listened to; which voices have influence in what areas; and how creativity, innovation, and influence emerge and are nurtured; and by honoring the experiences of people in our community with courageous acceptance of diverse perceptions
- Reinforce the bonds of reciprocity by forging mutually beneficial and trusting partnerships focused on shared goals, in appreciation of the networks of relationships that create social capital while building reputational capital between and among people
- Assure that our community is rich in intellectual capital by continuing to develop the adaptive skills that our residents, community leaders, and public officials need to be successful leaders; foster trust; competently manage





change; and deploy a variety of negotiation tools and conflict resolution techniques designed to achieve optimal results for all who are involved

- Leverage financial capital and philanthropic dollars in ways that assure a balanced investment in all capitals so that the entirety of the community can prosper
- Build a rich stock of moral capital by creating safe spaces where residents can develop a deep understanding of community dynamics; knowledge of and organizing skills to access available resources; and the ability to think and act strategically so they are empowered to create personal and community change in furtherance of shared values



Ownership, Growth, and the Common Good

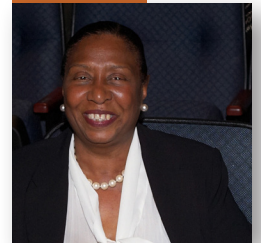
Over the past twenty years, our community has weathered fairly devastating economic shocks—the sale and subsequent changes in ownership of a number of paper companies, dramatic shifts in agriculture, disruptions in the newspaper industry, and business turnover in our downtown and in our shopping mall. These disruptions have resulted in job loss, youth out-migration, vast differences in wealth among our friends and neighbors, and business turnover in the form of not only ownership changes, but also closings. Communities across the nation are facing similar challenges stimulating economic activity and growing jobs. As a result, it is becoming even more clear that gone are the days of business attraction strategies and other industrial location incentives that hold out hope for the external corporate savior that will reinvigorate our economy and restore our local workforce to their once prosperous years. **It is time that we explicitly recognize that we have what we need to grow our economy in ways that are equitable, just, and sustainable**—in ways that protect and nurture all of our various community capitals rather than allowing those external to the community to extract and exploit local assets for private gain. Against this backdrop, our charge is clear. The future work of Incourage must leverage assets and advocate for growth strategies that embed equity, community wealth, and sustainability into local economic development planning. That is, our work must support and grow an inclusive economy so that all residents have what they need to maximize opportunities and meaningfully participate in job creation and wealth building.



“People support what they help create.”

Therefore, benefit is realized by involving those with a stake in the outcome in decision-making and change processes that affect their lives. If Incourage is in the business to serve our community, then what we do and how we help must flow from the residents in all areas of their lives, including where and how they work. One way Incourage can facilitate economic growth and promote the common good while simultaneously addressing income inequality, sustainability, and long-term prosperity is by investing in broad-based employee ownership models. Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOP); worker cooperatives; social and municipal enterprise; and hybrids such as low-profit limited liability companies (L3Cs) are not new ideas. The concept of employee ownership has a long and robust tradition in American history; and as communities across the country wrestle with the growing challenges of deindustrialization, globalization, and wealth inequality, more and more leaders are looking to these kinds of ownership models as tools to create jobs and build community wealth.

At Incourage, we must also pay attention to the ways in which we embrace the value of shared ownership in our own work. In reflecting on our efforts to create an inclusive economy in ways that remediate income inequality as well as how we talked about the centrality of values-led work, we recognized that perhaps the most powerful way for us to live our values was to assure that 100% of our assets (and our own capitals) reflected our dedication to our community. Our work in this area combines an explicit commitment to investing financial capital in local businesses, farms, and development organizations, with an impact-investing strategy that provides loans to local businesses and nonprofits that align with the community’s economic growth and social development goals. Additionally, we must continue to make active ownership and strategic investments in regional, national and global companies that employ workers in our region. As an owner, we not only support good corporate practice that value all stakeholders, but also engage directly with corporate management to advocate for balanced decision-making/strategies and, when necessary, responsible restructuring that safeguards the long-term interests of local workers and our community.





Realizing the full potential of co-creation involves intentional efforts to invite residents to co-own a vision for the future and share the responsibility for translating that vision into meaningful change.

Moreover, local investment creates the conditions under which new ideas can emerge and new leadership can step forward; where practices that value generosity, accountability, and commitment can flourish; where there is renewed and focused attention on individual gifts and community assets; and where feedback loops assure that exploration and learning are connected to action focused on a common goal. Working with people who live and work in our community not only forges but also requires strong personal connections among and between people to make the work easier and more satisfying. To that end our future work must:

- Promote, develop, and nurture broad-based ownership models as a way to address economic inequality
- Continue efforts to assure that 100% of Incourage's assets are mission-aligned
- Support and grow local businesses
- Monitor and partner with national and global corporate investment in the region to assure that we maintain the integrity of our natural and built environments and that our residents prosper



The Way Forward

If we have learned nothing else over the past 25 years, we have learned that change is inevitable. And, in embracing that change, we have also learned that we are a strong, resilient community capable of overcoming economic hardships and challenging the status quo in ways that have allowed us to forge a path toward building a resilient community that works for all residents. Over the years, alongside our neighbors and friends, we have demonstrated our ability to not only collectively decide a way forward, but also our dexterity in responding to the unanticipated challenges we have encountered in our quest for equity, sustainability, and long-term prosperity. Our work to leverage and



safeguard our various community capitals through the ongoing transformation of the riverfront serves as an exemplar of our commitment and our adaptability.

The purchase of the Tribune Building in 2012 was a powerful values-infused statement of Incourage's commitment to bring together human, intellectual and financial capital with moral, social and reputational capital to advance a shared vision of what is possible through a project that is about so much more than the building. Over the past six years, we have been inspired by more than 2,000 people who have participated in creating fresh narratives and new cultural norms grounded in hope, trust, and a shared vision for a new economy. We have been grateful for the intellectual, financial, and political support we have received from our strategic partners throughout the state and the nation. And, we have been humbled by the resourcefulness, creativity, and tenacity of local residents who have collectively sought solutions to obstacles and roadblocks we have faced in pursuit of goals that were developed by the very people who are expected to benefit.

While none of us can know what the future holds, we do know that at Incourage, everything we have done has been grounded in our founding purpose to meet the changing needs of our community in ways that are "by the people and for the people." In doing this we have participated in and witnessed those around us build trusting relationships based in *love* for each other and our community, so that we could *share* what we have with others, and *grow* mutually beneficial, sustainable partnerships between and among organizations and institutions in our region. We will continue to work alongside of the people in our community in ways that are rooted in a set of core values and motivated by a sincere desire to bring out the very best in us all. This was our purpose then, it remains our commitment today, and it is our promise for the future.





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