

Michael Jacoby Brown
training & coaching

*Helping organizations achieve their goals
through recruiting and motivating others*

Organizer's Edge ▶

Heather Booth

It starts with having love at the center –

sustaining this work as an organizer requires that you love people and hate injustice. And I also find it helpful to consider the three principles of the [Mid West Academy](#).

1. We organize on the basis of our values. We work to win improvements in people's lives, concrete improvements in people lives: so there is more money in their pockets, there is air they can breathe.
2. Give people a sense of their own power – so you are not doing for them, they are finding their own power and voice and thru their own power, coming together with others in shared struggles for shared victories
3. Change the relationships of power with structural reform. You build organizations to fight for another day and re-create greater limits on those in power and holding those in power more accountable.



And some reforms are not structural reforms. Like body cameras on police is a good reform. A police accountability board is a structural reform. Re-enfranchising the formerly convicted is a structural reform – if we enlarge and encourage them to vote. Immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship is a structural reform.

It all depends on organizing. If we organize we can change the future, but only if we organize.

There are 3 approaches that are central to organizing.

- **Understanding relationships**
- **Self interest**
- **Power**

Relationships: Letting people know you actually care about them, listening to them. You send them a get well card. When they miss a meeting you say we missed you, **not**, “Why didn’t you come?” We care about the whole person.

Self-interest: Understand what they care about. We recruit people not to get them to do what we want them to do, but what they want to do, so we can do it together. If someone doesn’t do what you want them to do, we often say they are “apathetic. But they want to do what they want to do. An organizer identifies their self-interest and finds ways to build on shared interest for collaborative action.

Power: To achieve what people want to do they need to understand how to build their own power and build our collective power -- against those who have power over us. These are some of the things that give an organizer an edge. And when we organize we have changed the world and if we organize we will change the world.

Bio: Heather Booth is one of the leading strategists about progressive issue and electoral campaigns.

She has been an organizer starting in the civil rights, anti-Vietnam war and women's movements of the 1960s and continuing through today. She created JANE, an underground abortion service started before Roe. She Directed the Action Committee for Decent Childcare which helped lead the fight to win \$1 million for childcare in Chicago and revision of childcare licensing laws.

She was the founding Director and is now President of the Midwest Academy, training social change leaders and organizers (www.midwestacademy.com). She has been involved in and managed political campaigns including for Mayor Washington and Carol Mosely Braun, and was the Training Director of the Democratic National Committee. In 2000, she was the Director of the NAACP National Voter Fund, which helped to increase African American election turnout by nearly 2 million voters. She was the lead consultant, directing the founding of the Campaign for Comprehensive Immigration Reform in 2005. In 2008, she was the director of the Health Care Campaign for the AFL-CIO. In 2009, she directed the campaign passing President Obama's first budget. In 2010 she was the founding director of Americans for Financial Reform, fighting to regulate the financial industry. She was the national coordinator for the coalition around marriage equality and the 2013 Supreme Court decision. She was strategic advisor to the Alliance for Citizenship (the largest coalition of the immigration reform campaign). She was Field Director for Americans for Tax Fairness to stop the tax cuts for millionaires that will lead to cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education.

There is a movie about her life: "*Heather Booth: Changing the World.*" www.heatherbooththefilm.com

Feedback Welcome

We want to hear from you, your reactions, ideas, what is at the edge YOUR "envelope." Just go to...

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Who else you will hear from.....

We are just starting, but so far you can expect to hear what the following people are thinking:

Jessica Tang: Boston Teachers Union, AFT
George Luse of the Mass Teachers Assn,

Scott Reed with the PICO Network, ,
Cathy Howell, in Oregon and El Salvador, formerly with the AFL-CIO,
Caesar McDowell of the Interaction Institute for Social Justice,
Diana Bell of Community and Labor United,
David Hernandez of the California Education Assn,
Attica Scott, State Rep Louisville, Kentucky
Bob Van Meter with the Local Initiative Support Corporation in Boston,
Walter Davis, of the Tennessee, Health Care Coalition.
Debra Askenase, of Community Organizing 2.0,
Deb Fastino, of the Coalition for Social Justice in New Bedford, MA,
Rebecca Gutman, with SEIU-1199,
Tim Dean, of SEIU-1199,
Mary Ochs, long time organizer in Los Angeles
and others, hopefully, including YOU

Other Useful Links

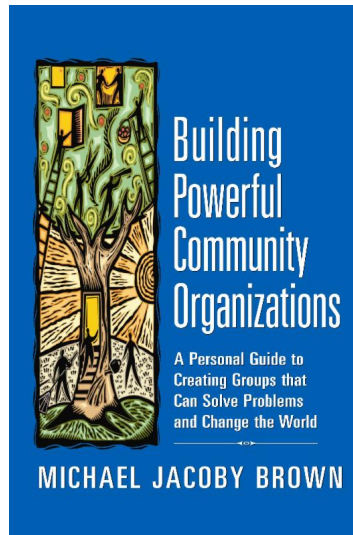
<http://michaeljacobybrown.com/>

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