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May 20, 2015

**Michael Jacoby Brown**  
training & coaching

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

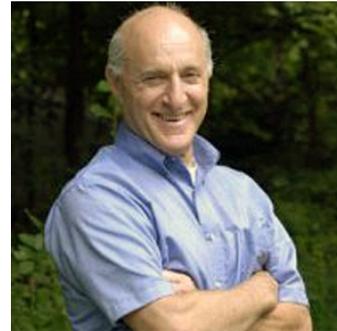
**Organizer's Edge** ▶

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### From Michael Jacoby Brown **Strange Gift**

I received a strange gift this week: a look into someone's soul I did not know. A friend asked me to donate a couple of my books to her organization. Normally, I would go down to my basement, pick up a couple books and mail them. This time I had run out. So I ordered some clean used copies from Amazon. One arrived all marked up. Many of the worksheets were filled with handwritten answers. I have no idea who wrote them, although they are honest and personal -- the sort of reflection and plans the worksheets were designed to elicit. I felt both oddly voyeuristic and satisfied that the exercises worked for this reader - whoever she was. They had helped her move forward on her journey.

This motivates me to ask other organizers to publish: your stories, lessons learned and the exercises you have, so they can be used as widely as possible. You may not see how people use your material, like I did when I got back my book all marked up, but, rest assured, your work will hit its mark.



### **Some of the big challenges in the field, by Mary Ochs**

## **Funding**

How do we build organizations in which at least the core funding of the organization is coming from the community it serves and not primarily from foundations? This is not a new issue but I am seeing another cycle of

organizations in crisis because they were awash in foundation funding for 8, to 10 years and now that money is being significantly cut back.

Some of the faith based networks have dues from institutions as some percentage of their money. And a few such as Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement began to take this to heart about 10 years ago and have been doing the hard work of building large number of members who give well above the membership fee and they have build a large and growing donor base. But many community organizations are so dependent on outside money that it is a crisis.

In a past issue of the *Organizers Edge* (June, 2013) **Fred Azcarate** raised this as well. He said something to the effect that if we are not able gain sufficient buy-in and support for the communities we are organizing in then we are doing something wrong. I think that's exactly right. We know what to do. We need to do the hard work. The bottom line is that we have to raise more of "our own" money. We have to challenge and agitate our communities and institutions to pay for work they value.

**Mary Ochs** has worked as a community organizer and founder/executive director of numerous grass roots, social justice organizations. She worked in the field for over 35 years. She first became involved with community organizing when she volunteered on a campaign to organize welfare recipients. In the recent past, Mary worked as a Field Organizer and as Organizing Director for the Center for Community Change (CCC), a national technical assistance organization to grassroots social justice organizations.

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

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## Michael Jacoby Brown Story

### 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,

Linda Honold, of Wisconsin Voices

Attica Scott, now an elected official in Louisville, KY,formerly with Jobs with Justice,

Quinn Rallings in Alabama with the PICO Network,

Bob Van Meter with the Local Initiative Support Corporation in Boston,

Walter Davis, in Tennessee, of the National Organizers Alliance,

Deb 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,

Claudia Horwitz, of Stone Circles in North Carolina,

Mary Ochs, long time organizer in Los Angeles

and others, hopefully, including YOU

### Other Useful Links

<http://michaeljacobybrown.com/>

[National Organizers Alliance](#)

[Road Map Consulting](#)

[Visions-Inc](#)

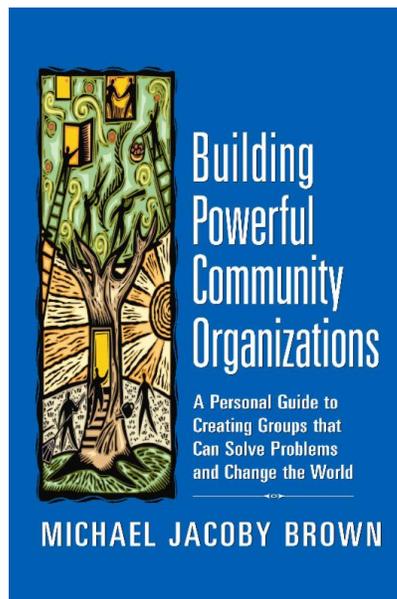
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