

# AAUW CA Members Creators of “Volunteers First”



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**AAUW of California**

*Leadership for Member Engagement*

# An AAUW Woman's "Ah Ha" Journey





# Business Leadership Model Adopted by Volunteer Organizations



# AAUW: Research-based Since 1881





## AAUW CA Researched: Former Members Contacted

### Reasons for Leaving: “I felt...:

- Unwelcome.
- Disconnected.
- Disinterested in engaging even for the cause.
- Not doing enough for the cause.

# “Engaging the Head, Heart and Hands of Volunteers”



**Barry Altland, Author**

# Theory of Volunteer Motivators

Personal satisfaction replaces money.

Personal satisfaction is the “payoff” for serving.



**Maslow's  
Hierarchy of Needs**

# “The Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI): Adaptation and Psychometric Properties of a Portuguese Sample of Volunteers”



From: The European Journal Investigative Health,  
Psyc, Ed, 2024



# Volunteerism is an Affair of the Heart

## Motivators: Intrinsic & Personal

- **Altruize**
- **Socialize**
- **Learn**
- **Self-actualize**



# “Leading Volunteer Motivation: How Leader Behaviour can Trigger and Fulfil Volunteers’ Motivations”



From: ISTR Research Paper, June 2023



# An AAUW Leader's PRIORITY: Facilitate & Build Relationships



Tasks





**CARE**

**CONNECT**

**SUPPORT**

**RECOGNIZE**



# CARE like a friend. Knowing what is in a member's heart is key to engagement



GETTING TO KNOW YOU



# CONNECT members to each other and to activities of THEIR interests



# Circles of Engagement

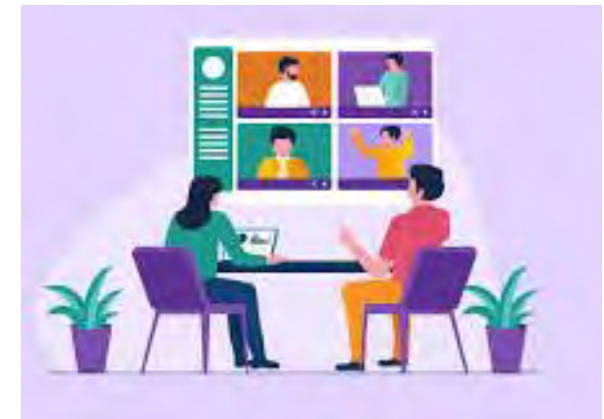
## Satisfying for Members; Valuable for Connecting



One-on-One  
Care  
Connect



Small Group  
Discussions  
Connecting  
Learning  
Including

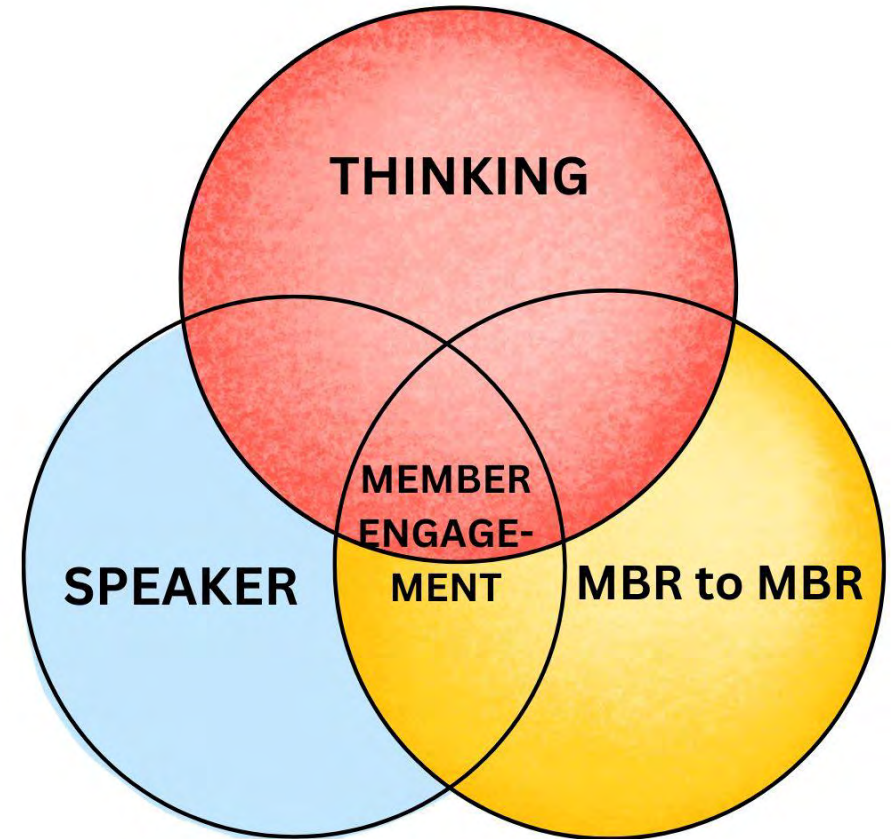


Zoom Group Discussion  
Learning  
Connecting  
Substitutes for in-  
person

# Less “Air Time” for Leaders & Speakers Separate from Social Time

**LEADER/SPEAKER = 50%**

**MEMBER  
ENGAGEMENT = 50%**



# CIRCLES...Getting to Know You Idea-Generation, Meaningful Discussions

## WORDS FOR THOUGHT



# CIRCLES... Fundraising Personal Stories of a Special Hat

**HATS OFF!**

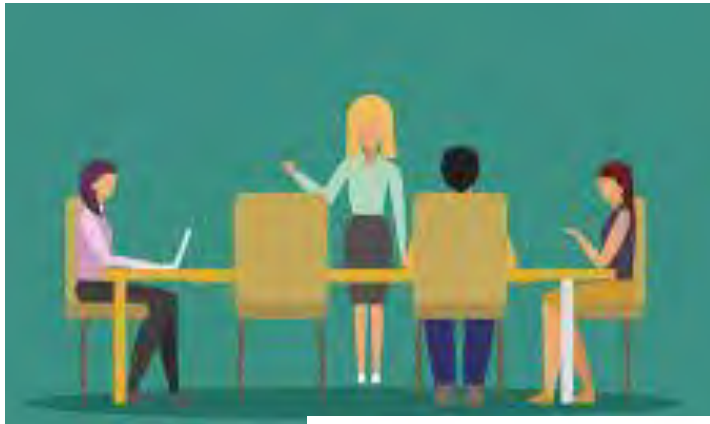


# CIRCLES ...Cultural Awareness: Generational and Ethnic



- What makes your culture unique in history?
- What assumptions have been made about your culture?
- How does your cultural background impact your life?
- How do cultural differences of others impact your life?

# SUPPORT...personally and in-person



# Observe & Confirm: members are connected, included, and feel joy and satisfaction





# Touching Base

**“TOUCHING BASE” is the single most critical, proactive, effective and caring way a leader can take to sustain a member’s passion for volunteering”**



# Apply Volunteers First Principles Reach Out to Diverse Communities





# RECOGNITION from the heart brings joy and satisfaction

- ❖ People want to know they **MATTER**
- ❖ Recognize **WHAT** they did
- ❖ Describe how they **MADE A DIFFERENCE**
- ❖ Celebrate in ways joyful to **THEM**



# “Otherliness”

Intentionally Placing the Needs of Others  
Before One’s Own



# AAUW of California Philosophy



- ❖ We recognize volunteers are the backbone of our organization.
- ❖ We strive to ensure every volunteer experience is meaningful and empowering.
- ❖ We embrace the “volunteers first” philosophy of discovery and care, connection, mutual support and recognition.

# Volunteering is an *Affair of the Heart*

**Fulfilling the member's  
volunteer motivators touches  
their heart, drives their  
choices for volunteering and  
sustains their passion for  
serving.**



# Volunteers First Leaders Put Volunteers First

