

An Overview of the Book

This book has three main purposes:

- 1 To introduce the readers to health promotion practice as a political activity, one that attempts to get at the underlying social determinants of disease.
- 2 To help the readers understand the importance of power relations, and their transformation in health promotion practice.
- 3 To introduce the readers to a new methodology for planning, implementing and evaluating empowering health promotion programmes.

Chapter 1 Health Promotion in Context

In Chapter 1 I define and discuss two key concepts: health promotion and community empowerment in the context of political activism. I also identify practice tensions that underpin health promotion's efforts to be 'empowering'.

Chapter 2 Promoting Health: it all Depends on What we Mean by 'Health'

Health promotion is about improving people's lives and health. But what do we mean by 'health' and how do our interpretations influence the way we approach different health promotion strategies? Chapter 2 discusses three main discourses of health, provides a simple framework of health determinants and explains their implication for an empowering health promotion practice.

Chapter 3 Power Transformation and Health Promotion Practice

Chapter 3 moves the reader into the territory of power, a concept that is central to the 'new' health promotion. But what does power look like and

how can health promoters act to transform unhealthy into healthy personal and social power relationships? Chapter 3 addresses these questions and this allows conclusions to be reached about power and empowerment within health promotion practice in a programme context.

Chapter 4 Community Empowerment and Health Promotion Practice

In Chapter 4 I continue the discussion of power transformation and discuss the concept of community empowerment and how it can be successfully applied to health promotion practice to provide a more empowering approach.

Chapter 5 Addressing the Tensions in Health Promotion Programming

Chapter 5 extends the discussion of power and empowerment into the territory of health promotion programming. One of the basic tensions in an empowering health promotion practice is between 'top-down' approaches (in which experts decide what is best for communities) and 'bottom-up' approaches (in which communities work with experts on issues they both believe are important). I argue that these two approaches, and the power 'tensions' that they create, are not, or at least do not have to be, mutually exclusive.

Chapter 6 'Parallel-tracking' Community Empowerment into Health Promotion Programming

All health promotion work involves 'programmes', but not all ways of planning, implementing and evaluating programmes are empowering. Chapter 6 identifies the key differences and presents a framework for the systematic accommodation of community empowerment ('bottom-up' approaches) into 'top-down' health promotion programming.

Chapter 7 The Domains of Community Empowerment

Chapter 7 defines and describes the nine operational domains of community empowerment: participation; leadership; organizational structures;

problem assessment; resource mobilization; asking why; links with others; the role of outside agents; and programme management. These domains represent those aspects of the process of community empowerment that allow individuals and groups to organize and mobilize themselves toward social and political change, and they can be used to promote and evaluate this concept; discussed further in Chapters 8 and 9.

Chapter 8 Building Community Empowerment Approaches in Health Promotion

Chapter 8 provides two case study examples of empowering health promotion approaches that use the empowerment domains discussed in Chapter 7. A new methodology for building community empowerment is discussed and a case study of its successful implementation in Fiji is examined.

Chapter 9 Evaluating Community Empowerment Approaches

Chapter 9 addresses how we plan our health promotion programmes so that they will succeed in the evaluation of empowerment. These are important aspects of our work, not only for our employers (who need results to keep us employed), but also for our communities (is our work helpful to them?) and ourselves (how can we improve our efforts?). I discuss what to look for, and what evaluation methods to choose that are both rigorous and that fit with contemporary health promotion practice.

Chapter 10 Implications for an Empowering Health Promotion Practice

In the final chapter I discuss the broader implications and limitations for an empowering professional practice and examine the influence that the external context can place on practice, in particular the political, economic and socio-cultural contexts. I draw hope from the optimism that exists in health promotion practice, and examine how the organizational context in which health promotion practitioners work can provide more scope and opportunity to embrace empowerment.