

# ***The Rutland Belonging Collective***

## ***Purpose, Strategy, and Framework***

**The Purpose** of the Rutland Belonging Collective is to build and foster a sustainable, regenerative, and equitable community-wide network to coordinate resources, experiences, and skills to identify and reduce the barriers to meaningful social connection.



### **Strategy**

1. Led by people with lived experiences of the complex causes and impacts of isolation and loneliness, guiding work that reduces the barriers to connection.

#### Objectives:

- Establish Connection Advocates group to facilitate an advocacy peer network for consistent connection & support, learning, and coordination around opportunities for advocacy.
  - Advocacy members request any skill-building/training needed to feel ready to advocate and RBC coordinates to host training and development opportunities.
  - Connect to opportunities for advocacy throughout the region.
2. Build and regenerate equitable and brave spaces for listening, learning, connecting, and growing compassionate belonging together throughout Rutland County.

#### Objectives:

- Establish Connection Partners group to coordinate work.
  - Strategically grow and maintain the Rutland Belonging Collective with partners, advocates, and stakeholders to collaboratively achieve these goals and objectives.
  - Identify and work with local stakeholders to help support projects and coordination.
  - Coordinate on community engagement, marketing/outreach, and social connection activities that increase connection and belonging.
  - Deepen understanding and practice connection together as a Collective.
3. Identify and remove barriers to connection through collaborative projects.

#### Objectives:

- Gather qualitative and quantitative data to clarify, support, and prioritize actions that identify and reduce barriers to social connection.
- Inventory current community connection gaps and opportunities.
- Utilize national social connection recommendations to measure and evaluate our impact.
- Build and maintain an accessible online Rutland Belonging Collective hub of social connection based resources such as: communication forums for RBC members, offerings of services for hire, advocacy opportunities, and research and educational resources.

### **Vision of the Rutland Belonging Collective Framework**

**Administration and Lead Facilitation by Social Tinkering:** Includes meeting and communications coordination, social connection data project leadership, expertise on social connection/isolation/loneliness, backbone organization for funding of collaborative projects, lead for marketing coordination and fundraising/development for projects.

#### **Co-Facilitation Team - representatives from Advocates, Partners, and Stakeholders**

- Co-facilitation of meetings, communication support, strategy and development of the RBC (Stipend where needed)

#### **Connection Advocates**

- A peer advocacy network for people interested in advocating from their lived experiences of the impacts of isolation and loneliness to find peers, learning and skill-building, and coordinated advocacy opportunities.

### Connection Partners

- Organizations, businesses, and individuals who are working on the impacts of social isolation and loneliness and who want to coordinate efforts to increase community connection.
- Sharing of knowledge, skills, and resources towards social connection project work such as: funding, advocacy, community activities, and measurement/evaluation coordination.
- Established and facilitated to sustain and strengthen our collective interventions and to strategically address the barriers to meaningful social connection and belonging in Rutland County.



### Connection Stakeholders

- A coordinated stakeholder effort to efficiently and effectively support projects and the RBC administration.
- A commitment to partner with service organizations and advocates to increase social connection and belonging, reducing social isolation and loneliness and their impacts on local businesses, our economy, and our broader community to help us all to thrive.

### Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Celebrating diversity, empowering inclusion, and increasing equity are at the heart and soul of the Rutland Belonging Collective. Inequity, lack of accessibility and inclusion, discrimination, bias, and stigma are all some of the most complex impacts and barriers driving loneliness that many people face on a daily basis. We honor the wisdom and resiliency that so many people have gained through lived experience. We center this wisdom in leading our collective work to create regenerative solutions. We commit to reducing and healing social isolation and loneliness, and to strategically grow a Rutland County where everyone has the opportunity to feel seen, valued, and experience belonging.

### Community Guidelines

- Platinum Rule - treat others how they want to be treated
- Be present & listen with curiosity
- Everyone Gets to be Human
- Foster Strength Through Vulnerability and Authenticity

Honoring that we are all human, we commit to learning and growth and know that working through challenges with respect and dignity builds trust and sustainable relationships. All Rutland Belonging Collective participants are responsible for upholding these *Community Guidelines*.

\*The Rutland Belonging Collective is a project administered by *Social Tinkering: A Human Connection Project*. For more information contact Jeanette Langston (she/her), Director, at [director@socialtinkering.org](mailto:director@socialtinkering.org) or 802-342-5811. To learn more about Social Tinkering, visit our website at: [www.socialtinkering.org](http://www.socialtinkering.org).

