



SPARKING IMAGINATION: A PROOF OF CONCEPT

Wisdom for Practitioners & Organizers

Providing insights into the creative and organizing processes of Hip Hop Caucus Think 100%'s Hampton Roads Organizing Project (HROP) is helpful for further understanding how a creative and cultural organizing project was initiated, implemented, and continues to grow. However, providing direct wisdom may be valuable as imagination is sparked and you work to create a proof of concept through creative and cultural organizing work for climate justice. The wisdom is for practitioners and organizers who range from having years of experience to those who may just be beginning to explore doing the work necessary to further climate justice.

1. Draw on something greater than yourself before you become cynical—create healthy coping mechanisms—root yourself.
2. As organizers of color, we must be true to ourselves and not recreate what we are fighting against by thinking we must follow other's approaches.
3. Talk with people in communities and not at them—no one wants to be talked down to.
4. If you are not a youth organizer, include them in all phases of your organizing work.
5. Engage people of color and have people from the community involved in your organizing projects from the very beginning—not just on camera.
6. There is always something for you to do!
7. Keep organizing—don't start, and then just stop.
8. Be genuine and stay connected with the community.
9. There will not be a savior that will drop down—you are a solution builder as a community member.
10. People may not understand or say environmental justice or climate change, but they know their worth.
11. Never assume that community members do not care. Communities are fighting but often living through traumatic experiences and balancing a plethora of challenges such as poverty, police brutality, food scarcity, the pandemic, and pollution. Be responsive to the communities being engaged.