A. When we become the victims of war and natural disasters or live in persistent poverty, we are impacted in these ways:

1. We are forced into the tyranny of the moment.
   a. Living in a broken world, we spend our time solving immediate, concrete problems.
   b. We lose our future orientation and, if the conditions persist, we lose our future stories.

2. We use reactive skills to survive. We are problem solvers.
   a. Reactive, problem-solving skills are needed in unstable and unpredictable environments.
   b. Proactive planning skills are possible when the environment is stabilized and the time horizon is months and years into the future.

3. We are taken advantage of.
   a. Stunned and preoccupied, we are unable to resist those who gather around disasters with the intent of profiting from the situation.
   b. We need immediate and concrete solutions and fall prey to those offering quick and easy answers. In this way we fall into debt and lose what property we may have.
   c. We seek relief from stress and will spend some of what little money we have to lighten the day.

4. We are disconnected from our social structures.
   a. Our roles in society are disrupted.
   b. When others step in to make decisions without our input, we cannot rebuild our social structures.

5. We who are in poverty are hit hardest.
   a. We live in impoverished and vulnerable areas.
   b. We don’t have the resources to escape.
   c. We are not at the planning table when disaster plans are being made.
   d. We are not at the planning table when recovery plans are being made.
   e. We aren’t likely to take ownership of the plans created by others or feel accountable for them when we had no hand in making them.
   f. When we don’t respond to the directions and suggestions of those who made the plans, we are accused of being dependent, unmotivated, and undeserving.
   g. We have learned that it is very hard to break out of poverty and build communities where everyone does well.

B. aha! Process, Inc. can help build a community where everyone can do well. We can:

1. Assist people to break out of the tyranny of the moment and create their own future stories by:
   a. Engaging people in examining the impact of the disaster on their community and themselves.
   b. Assisting people to move from concrete thinking and reactive problem solving to abstract thinking and proactive problem solving.
   c. Assisting people to make their own arguments for change and to find their own motivation.

2. Engage people at the planning table with all sectors: government, business, civic, social services, investors, builders, and community-based organizations by:
   a. Utilizing the concrete knowledge of those
impacted by war, natural disaster and poverty.

b. Inviting those impacted to join others in solving community problems and building prosperous communities.

3. **Provide a common language and shared constructs for all parties to use by:**

   a. Developing a mental model for the community as it exists; define the reality.

   b. Developing a mental model for the community’s future story.

   c. Defining the different environments in which community members live and the hidden rules of survival that arise from those environments.

   d. Utilizing the hidden rules of survival to develop relationships of mutual respect and to resolve conflicts.

4. **Assist community-based organizations to develop sophisticated service-delivery models to help people stabilize their home environments by:**

   a. Assisting local service providers to develop a single plan with renters/homeowners for their personal housing, counseling, treatment, and safety needs.

   b. Assisting the community to develop systemic approaches to overcome barriers to employment and stability, such as inadequate childcare, transportation, education, workforce skills, and safety.

   c. Assisting educators to apply aha! Process constructs so children are provided with the best education possible.

5. **Assist the private sector to improve the retention rate of employees by:**

   a. Providing workshops for employers on aha! Process constructs.

   b. Providing training and consulting from community organizations that have applied aha! Process constructs to improve outcomes.

   c. Providing training and consulting from employers who have applied aha! Process constructs to improve retention rates.

6. **Assist in the development of a high-impact, community engagement model to create a prosperous and sustainable community by:**

   a. Creating a Steering Committee in the community to address all causes of poverty, including:

      i. Strategies to assist individuals in making good choices.

      ii. Strategies for the community to offer good-paying jobs, good healthcare, good education, and fair credit.

      iii. Strategies to protect renters/homeowners from predators and to develop alternatives to the “services” and products of predators.

      iv. Strategies that promote political and economic structures for wealth creation for all.

   b. Introducing the Circles Initiative that brings people together across class and race lines in “circles” to assist renter/homeowner families to realize their dreams.

C. **aha! Process has the products, processes, consultants, and partners including:**

1. **Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin’-By World**

   a. For those impacted, a 20-session, facilitator-led investigation into the impact of poverty/disasters on the individual and community using a workbook of the same title.

   b. Working in groups of 10–12, people will use the *Getting Ahead* workbook to:

      i. Do a self-assessment of their resources.

      ii. Do an assessment of their community.

      iii. Investigate economic realities, the hidden rules of class, and the change process as it applies to them.

      iv. Develop personal plans for their future stories.

      v. Prepare themselves to join the other community leaders at the planning table.
2. *Bridges Out of Poverty* workshops are based on the book of the same title. The workshops provide the same constructs and language to community partners that *Getting Ahead* provides to those who have been impacted.

3. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, the seminal work of the innovator, Dr. Ruby K. Payne, and all the workshops and trainings associated with it, are available to educators.

4. The Circles Campaign, a high-impact strategy of Move the Mountain and aha! Process, has the goal of ending poverty in our communities.
   a. It builds social capital across class and race lines by forming a circle of middle-class allies around the renter/homeowner family who have been through *Getting Ahead*.
   b. Together they support the goals of the family in poverty and work together to overcome barriers to a stable and prosperous life.
   c. Communities support as many circles as possible and bring everyone together for monthly Big View Meetings, during which they address community- and systemic-level change.

5. aha! Process champions, organizations, and communities that have applied aha! Process constructs successfully are available to assist employers, community-based organizations, and those who have been impacted to improve on-the-job performance, retention rates, and outcomes. These champions are from:
   a. Manufacturing
   b. Workforce development
   c. Family courts
   d. Schools
   e. Community colleges
   f. Communities at large

D. aha! Process has the capacity to begin working on Phase I of a pilot project within four weeks.

1. aha! Process would name a Team Leader for the initiative and would be available to participate in planning activities immediately.

2. aha! Process would work through a local contact to coordinate local resources and activities.

3. aha! Process will turn over the training and facilitator roles to local leaders as quickly as possible so they can conduct *Bridges* and *Getting Ahead* workshops.

4. *Bridges Out of Poverty* consultants and trainers can be scheduled to be in place as soon as four weeks.

5. Facilitators can be trained to conduct *Getting Ahead* workshops within six weeks.

6. A Steering Committee would be developed from people who have been through *Getting Ahead* and *Bridges* workshops who want to be part of the work.

7. Phase II of the pilot would include:
   a. Community-based organizations, service-delivery model development
   b. Workforce development training and consulting
   c. Employer-based training and consulting
   d. Start-up of the Circles Initiative.

###

To learn more contact:
aha! Process, Inc.
P.O. Box 727
Highlands, TX 77562
Tel: (800) 424-9484
www.ahaprocess.com