

Housing Program Model

2009

*“Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.”*
Psalm 85:11

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Housing Program Model



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About the Model

It is said that people are a result of their environment. If this is the case, then what is the environment a result of? At Truth Spring, we believe people's actions and thus the environment of North Highland are a result of sin. Any attempt to negate the overwhelming effects of sin on people and the community, we feel, undermines the integrity of individuals as well as the community while at the same time building up a system that coddles unacceptable behavior. While we do believe an environment has a profound effect on people, we also believe in the individual's capability to overcome an environment with the help of the Lord Jesus Christ. We also believe such individuals, if properly motivated and trained, can make a profound change on the environment and have a tremendous impact on others.

The intention of the housing program model is to graphically show the basic premises of the program in a way that conveys the overall functions of the program. The program is designed around three key concepts: responsibility, sustainability, and adaptability. We have chosen to use an equilateral triangle to show that each of the three concepts presented have equal weight and value in the success of the program. No one concept is more important than the others and each concept depends on the successful implementation of the others in order for the program to function properly and achieve its goals.

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About the Model

By implementing these three core concepts into the design of the program, Truth Spring intends to greatly alleviate the need for traditional “charity” in the North Highland area by helping to build a community that develops itself. Ultimately, community development is people development. We believe Jesus Christ was the perfect person, and therefore we develop the community, the people, around His person. By allowing the Lord Jesus to transform individuals in the North Highland community, the community itself will inevitably undergo a drastic transformation as well.

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Responsibility

Truth Spring believes every man is responsible for himself, as well as everyone else. While we are our brother's keeper, we are not his enabler. Just as every child must learn to walk, every man must learn to be responsible for his actions. Responsibility is crucial in developing an individual and, ultimately, a community. One of the pillars of the Truth Spring housing program is to encourage and foster an attitude of individual as well as communal responsibility.

On the individual level, the housing program encourages responsibility by having our tenants meet with one of our volunteers / staff members at least once a week. During these times, tenants will develop a healthy Christian relationship with another believer. These times will allow them to be accountable to the other believer as well as themselves. These meetings are not intended to be a formality, but to actually help the believer grow in Christ. This is individual responsibility.

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Responsibility

On the communal level, the housing program builds communal responsibility by causing all tenants to make an investment of themselves into the North Highland community. We require all tenants to actively be a part of a local Christian congregation, participate in regular local community service, and also highly recommend they open the home to community-led Bible studies. We want North Highland to help North Highland. We desire individuals from the community to help build the community. This is communal responsibility.

Someone from outside the North Highland community cannot be expected to adequately gauge and overcome the needs of North Highland. By building up individual and communal responsibility with our housing program, this allows the North Highland community to do what only they, with the help of the Lord, can do: develop North Highland. This is responsibility.

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Sustainability

The intention of Truth Spring with its housing program is not to create another long-term charity within the North Highland area. One of the premises of the housing program is to provide maximum assistance in the short-term, while allowing individuals to grow in their walk with Christ and be able to provide for themselves over the long-term. In other words: we look forward to the day when we no longer have to offer the housing program.

In order for this vision to become a reality, the program itself must be sustainable. The houses we place people in must be of an acceptable quality so that tenants do not become burdened with repairs. The cost of living in the area must be reasonable so that tenants, who may only be making at or slightly above minimum wage, can live decently. Also, the program must be financially sustainable over the course of the years it will take to operate successfully.

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Sustainability

In addition to this, the houses themselves must be affordable to tenants after Truth Spring turns the houses over to them. If clients are unable to sustain themselves in the house then the cycle of homelessness and poverty would merely begin all over again. This issue of sustainability is the responsibility of both Truth Spring and its clients. It is the clients' responsibility to adequately budget and provide for themselves, while it is Truth Spring's responsibility to make sure they have the tools necessary to do so.

For many of our potential tenants, poverty is habitual and prosperity is sporadic, and often nonexistent. The poverty we speak of is not merely financial, but also spiritual. The lives of our potential tenants are plagued with depression, abuse, and hopelessness. The stability our housing program seeks to foster is not merely economic, but personal as well. Our intention is for our clients, through successful implementation of our housing program, to be productive and sustainable members of the North Highland community who are able to provide to others in need. This is sustainability.

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Adaptability

Truth Spring believes a “one size fits all” approach to community development is not only unrealistic, but also potentially damaging when it comes to communities such as North Highland. While there are basic foundational principles we adhere to, such as our desire to focus all programs on the Lord Jesus, we understand that programmatic plans have to be adjusted to fit targeted clients. This is adaptability.

Truth Spring understands that people and communities are prone to change. Unfortunately, constant, unhealthy change is an all-too-prevalent factor in the North Highland community. This sort of change is due to instability in people’s lives. Truth Spring’s housing program is not intended to change when times become unstable, but to adapt as the needs present themselves. As a variety of factors come into play, such as local economics, certain aspects of our housing program may need to be modified to properly meet the needs of our tenants. We believe in evaluating our programs regularly and adapting them when necessary. Our intention is to meet people where they are, but not to be content with leaving them there.

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Adaptability

When major events happen, such economic recessions or natural disasters, programs have to be modified to meet changing needs. The Truth Spring housing program has been developed to meet the needs of the North Highland community as they currently exist. If those needs should shift, or if the program should prove to be ineffective, then adaptation and modification need to occur. Truth Spring is not bent on maintaining ineffective programs simply for the sake of consistency, but is focused on making necessary programmatic changes when the need arises in order to meet its mission.

Truth Spring believes those best equipped to change the North Highland community are those who are a part of the North Highland community. Because of this, we seek constant input from the community on how to best meet their needs. We believe any program that does not effectively meet the needs of the people it is trying to target is poor program by default. With this mindset, we are open to adapting programs as the community requires without compromising the core component of being Christ-centered.

The willingness to adapt as needs change is a crucial element to any successful organization, and Truth Spring and its housing program are no different. While we strive for consistency, we also strive for effectiveness. We believe stability and consistency produces effectiveness and that effectiveness should be consistent and stable. Being willing and able to change in order to meet the needs of the people is one of the primary facets of Truth Spring's housing program. This is adaptability.

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Gospel Partners

One of the major shortcomings we at Truth Spring see in various charitable initiatives and social service agencies is a lack of qualified case workers relative to the number of clients they see. If one case worker is responsible for fifty or more individuals, it seems quite unlikely that case worker, no matter how talented and dedicated, could possibly cultivate any meaningful relationship with their client base.

At Truth Spring, we do not see our tenants / clients as “cases” that need to be “worked”. Hence, we do not have case workers, but gospel partners. Gospel partners are volunteers, or paid staff, whose responsibility is to engage in and develop a substantial, Christian relationship with our tenants based on the Word of God (the Holy Bible). Gospel partners are, as their name implies, partners with our clients in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our clients meet with their gospel partner at least once a week to fellowship, pray, study the Bible, and develop their walk in the Lord. In such a setting, both the tenant and their gospel partner are built up into Christ.

A gospel partner assists with various functions such as mentorship, discipleship, counseling, as well as other functions such as helping a tenant to find a job or enter a work-training program. Although, perhaps the most important function a gospel partner provides is the function of friendship. By establishing and building a healthy Christian relationship, our tenants have a person they can look to for advice as well as be accountable to for their actions.

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