Reweaving Local: Transition Towns & Timebanking

A new way of thinking about time, wealth, and community
What is Timebanking?

- At its most basic level, a Timebank is a community of people who support each other.
- Time Banking is a system that connects unmet needs with untapped resources that creates a circle of giving.
- Timebanking acknowledges what we do everyday for friends & family
- Timebanking is an important way to reward volunteerism and pro-bono work.
How Does It Work?

- 1 hour = 1 hour
- Both individuals as well as business/non-profits can be members
- You volunteer, record your hours, and timedollars are added (or subtracted) from your account
- Communication happens within the Timebanking software through messaging
- You can’t cheat
- The Timebank Organization creates the currency by giving away timedollars for volunteer work in the timebank, joining, community work, etc.
What Do People Do For Each Other?

Time Bank Marketplace

Transportation
- Errands / Shopping
- Local
- Long Distance
- Medical
- Train / Bus / Airport
- Worship
- Miscellaneous
- All

Help At Home
- Child Care
- Cooking & Sewing
- Hair & Beauty
- Housekeeping / Chores
- Pet Care
- Respite Care
- Miscellaneous
- All

Companionship
- Clubs
- Dining Out
- E-mail / IM
- Home Visits
- Medical Errands
- Telephone Calls
- Miscellaneous
- All

Community Activities
- Clean-up / Recycling
- Community Service
- Fund-raising
- Help Our TimeBank!
- Special Projects
- Work For Social Change
- Miscellaneous
- All

Wellness
- Complementary Therapies
- Counseling
- Diet & Nutrition
- Fitness & Exercise
- Medical Services
- Yoga / Meditation
- Miscellaneous
- All

Recreation
- Books & Videos
- Dancing
- Events
- Games
- Sports
- Travel
- Miscellaneous
- All

Education
- Advocacy
- Classes / Workshops
- Computers / Technology
- Languages / Translation
- Personal Finances
- Tutoring / Mentoring
- Miscellaneous
- All

Arts, Crafts & Music
- Classes
- Crafts
- Entertainment
- Lessons
- Photo & Video
- Theater
- Miscellaneous
- All

Home Repair
- Car Care
- Carpentry / Construction
- Electrical
- Garden & Yard Work
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Miscellaneous
- All

Business Services
- Clerical
- Computer Support
- Financial
- Legal
- Marketing
- Research
- Miscellaneous
- All

Misc. (Not Above)
- Freecycling
- For Sale
- Wanted
- All Other Services
What Kinds of Community Partners Use a Timebank?
What Timebanking Does...

- Levels the playing field
- Everyone is included, even economically and socially marginalized communities
- Gathers people around a common cause
- Fulfills needs, great & small
- Removes money from areas of our economy that were traditionally “gifts” to friends, family, and community

And doesn’t do...

- Allow you to purchase things disassociated from the work/time put into them
- Work (well) over long-distances
- Allow for anonymity in your transactions
- Make you a socialist
Five Core Values of Timebanking

1. We all have gifts to give
2. Community means relying on one another
3. Some work is beyond price
4. Work is more fun when it is a two-way street
5. Every human being matters
Why is Timebanking better than other alternative currencies?

• Not taxable!
• Doesn’t rely on the $
• Can’t inflate or deflate
• Is based on gifting
• Removes the impersonal “transaction” of money
• Builds community based on co-creating not co-consuming
Transition Town Media &
Timebank Media:
Co-creating Community

- Aligning Goals: TBM focuses on community resilience
- Aligning Governance: TT steering manages the TBM
- Aligning Projects and Gatherings: all TT projects utilize the TBM; all gatherings are co-sponsored.
- Aligning Finances: same 501c3, not just fiscal agency
Some Extra Considerations...

When Timebanking and Transition work together, both organizations have an easier time getting non-profit status, if that is a goal.

- 501c3 hinges on “public education” or “public service”
- With the merger between the two, an organization is both
What the Tax Code Says

Exempt Purposes Code: 501(c)3

The exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3) are charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition, and preventing cruelty to children or animals. The term charitable is used in its generally accepted legal sense and includes relief of the poor, the distressed, or the underprivileged; advancement of religion; advancement of education or science; erecting or maintaining public buildings, monuments, or works; lessening the burdens of government; lessening neighborhood tensions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination; defending human and civil rights secured by law; and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.
Funding & Fluidity

...the never-ending problem

TTI's have no revenue stream other than donations. Utilizing a timebank with membership fees gives a small income stream to the TTI/Timebank, allowing for both to more broadly apply their joint mission in the community.
Transition: Visible Community Projects

Income streams can be created through the use of these projects, thus providing for the long-term viability of both Transition and the Timebank in the community.
Increased Membership

for both organizations

- Timebank membership fueled through the visible, community projects of Transition.

- Transition-thinking and interest stimulated by volunteer efforts in the community

- Community Partnerships (local businesses and non-profits) through the Timebank become involved in Transition work.

- Subversive work: People begin doing the work of Transition/Timebanking without really even knowing they are doing it.
Adding Social Justice to TTI's  
...walking the talk

Timebanks' traditional focus on social justice issues: poverty, racism, at-risk-youth, supporting families, etc. engages TTI's in this work.

There is no resilience in a community without engaging in these problems.

TTI's and diversity: Transition struggles with bringing in voices from all areas of the community, not just the affluent and those with environmental leanings.
How to Start a Timebank

• Gather “heroes” and other supporters

• Define your mission, timeframe to launch, and goals

• Write out your goals and due dates, and stick to them
  – Website, logo & printed material first
  – Plan launch party and fundraising
  – Test Timebanking software
  – Identify a few community partners.
  – Talk about it with everyone you meet