



HARD TO REACH FAMILIES OR HARD TO REACH SERVICES

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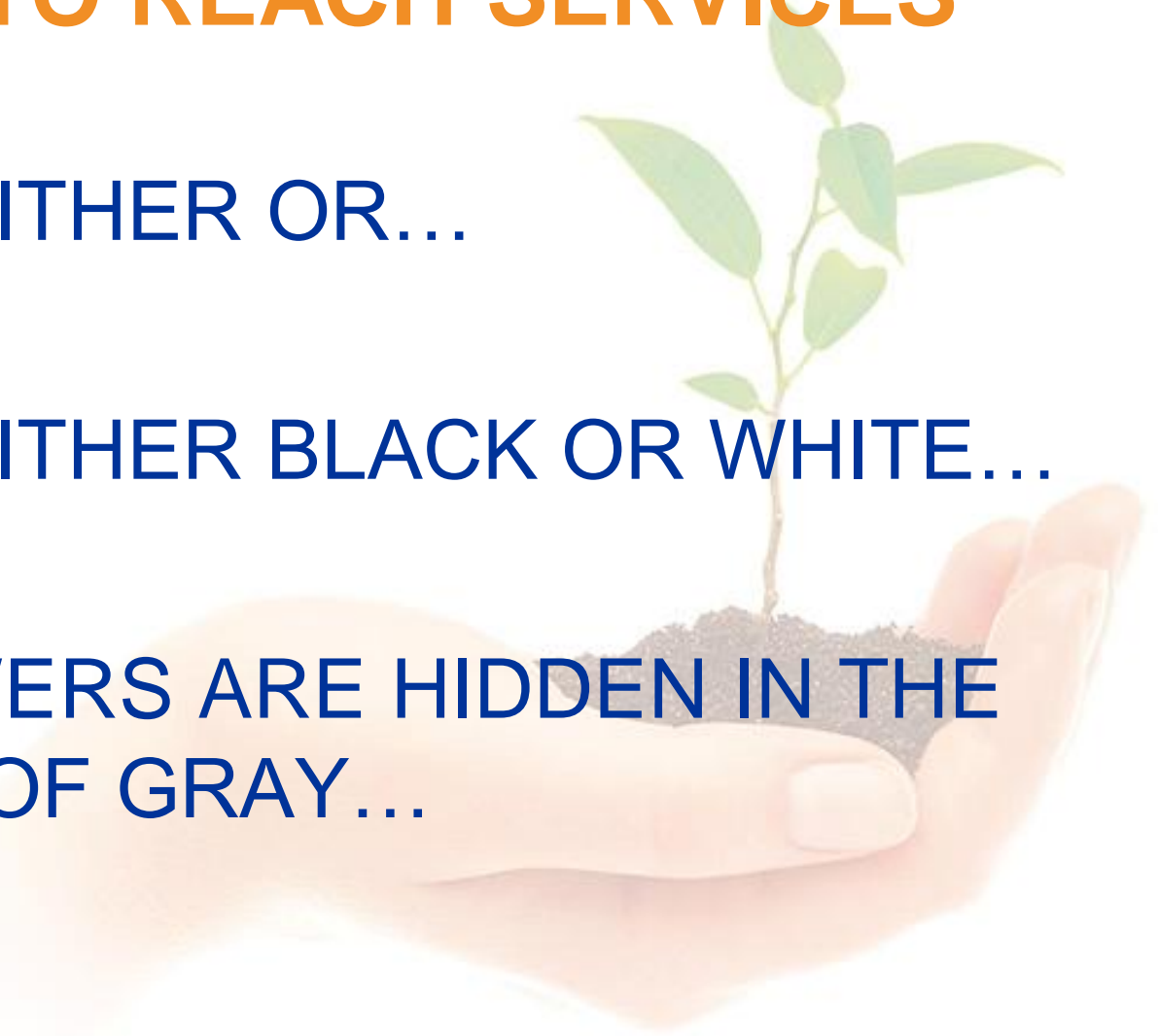


HARD TO REACH FAMILIES OR HARD TO REACH SERVICES

IT IS NOT EITHER OR...

IT IS NOT EITHER BLACK OR WHITE...

THE ANSWERS ARE HIDDEN IN THE
SHADES OF GRAY...





INTERNATIONAL STEP BY STEP ASSOCIATION ISSA

- An international membership association of NGOs united around a common mission to promote equal access to quality care and education for every young child.
- Today ISSA's members are NGOs with a special focus on early education and care coming from 31 countries, primarily from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), the Balkans, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with some members also from other parts of the world: Haiti, Mongolia and Turkey.





Let's share some values ...

- Inclusion is not about including people in the system/society, it is about transformation of the system/society so that everybody has his/her place in it...
- Inclusion represents the way to resist any kind of discrimination
- Education is more than schooling...

For Quality inclusive practice more than knowledge and skills is needed...

Only adults with open minds and open hearts can do it...

For open minds – Quality principles

For open hearts – ESJ programs

In both cases we are talking about personal and professional transformation journey and the need for dialogue





Importance of attitudes

Recent research in Serbia

1. Power of the attitudes of public servants towards most marginalized groups
2. Power of the attitudes of parents from low income and marginalized groups...

This is usually overlooked...

More attention is paid to

“hardware” then to “software”

NOTE: Maybe we will dare to explore the power of attitudes of policy makers and experts one day?

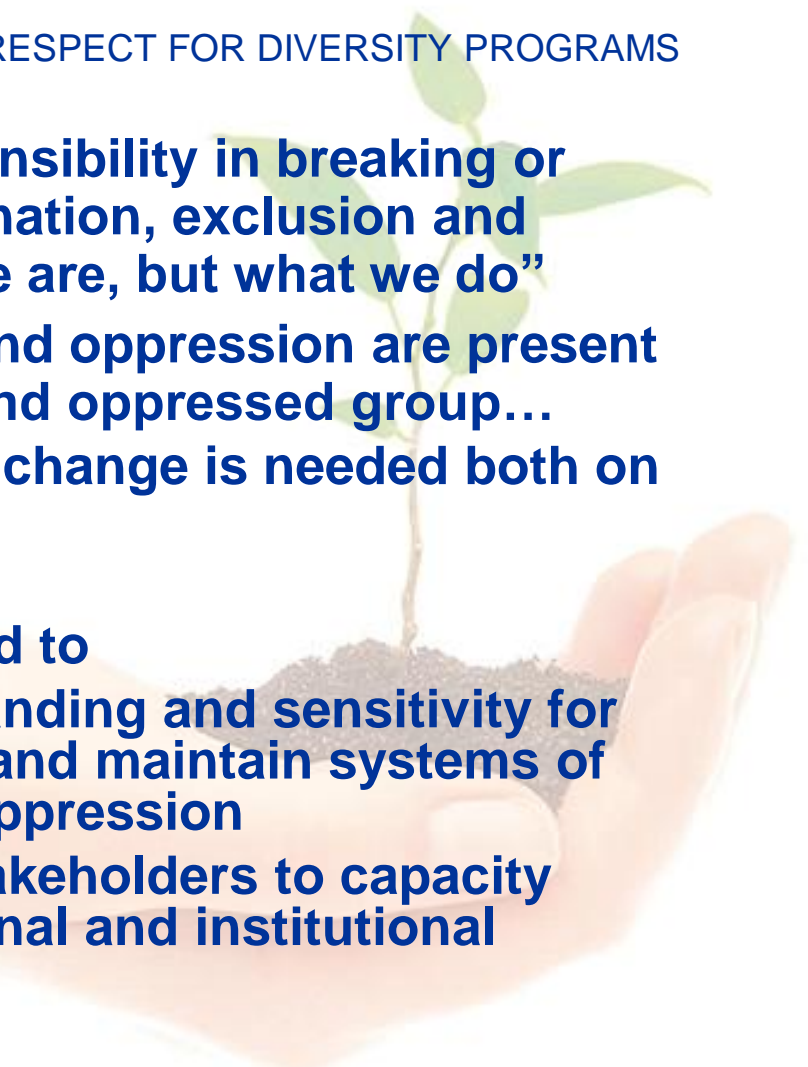




LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER, THE CHALLENGE TO LEARN ABOUT OURSELVES/OTHERS AND TAKE A STAND AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

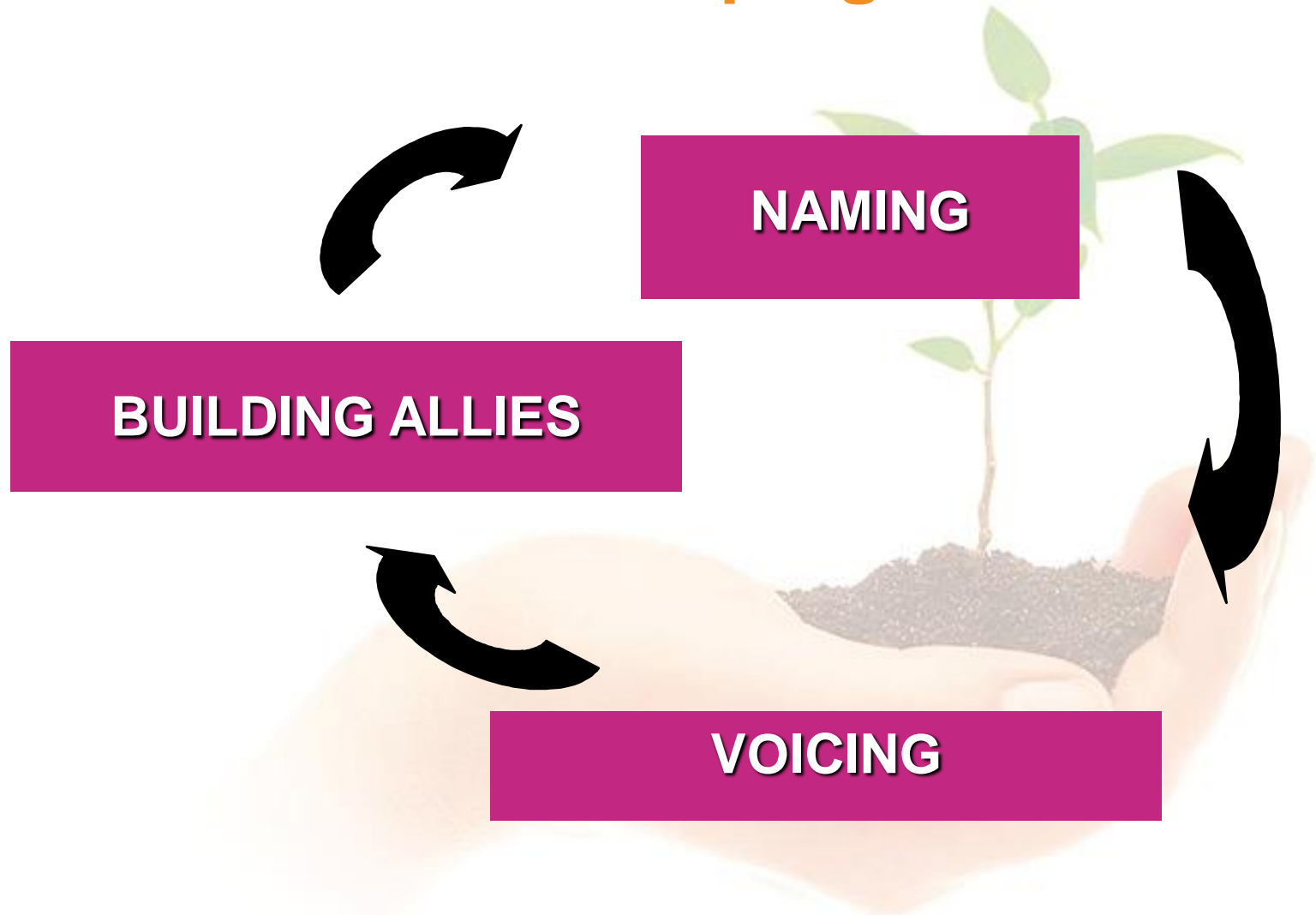
ISSA EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

- Each person has a role and responsibility in breaking or perpetuating the chains of discrimination, exclusion and oppression “ It is not about who we are, but what we do”
- When discrimination, exclusion and oppression are present everybody hurts – both dominant and oppressed group...
- Educators are agents of change - change is needed both on personal and on professional level
- Parents are agents of change
- For change to happen it is needed to
 - ❖ increase knowledge, understanding and sensitivity for mechanisms which perpetuate and maintain systems of discrimination, exclusion and oppression
 - ❖ Develop commitment in all stakeholders to capacity building for personal, professional and institutional transformation





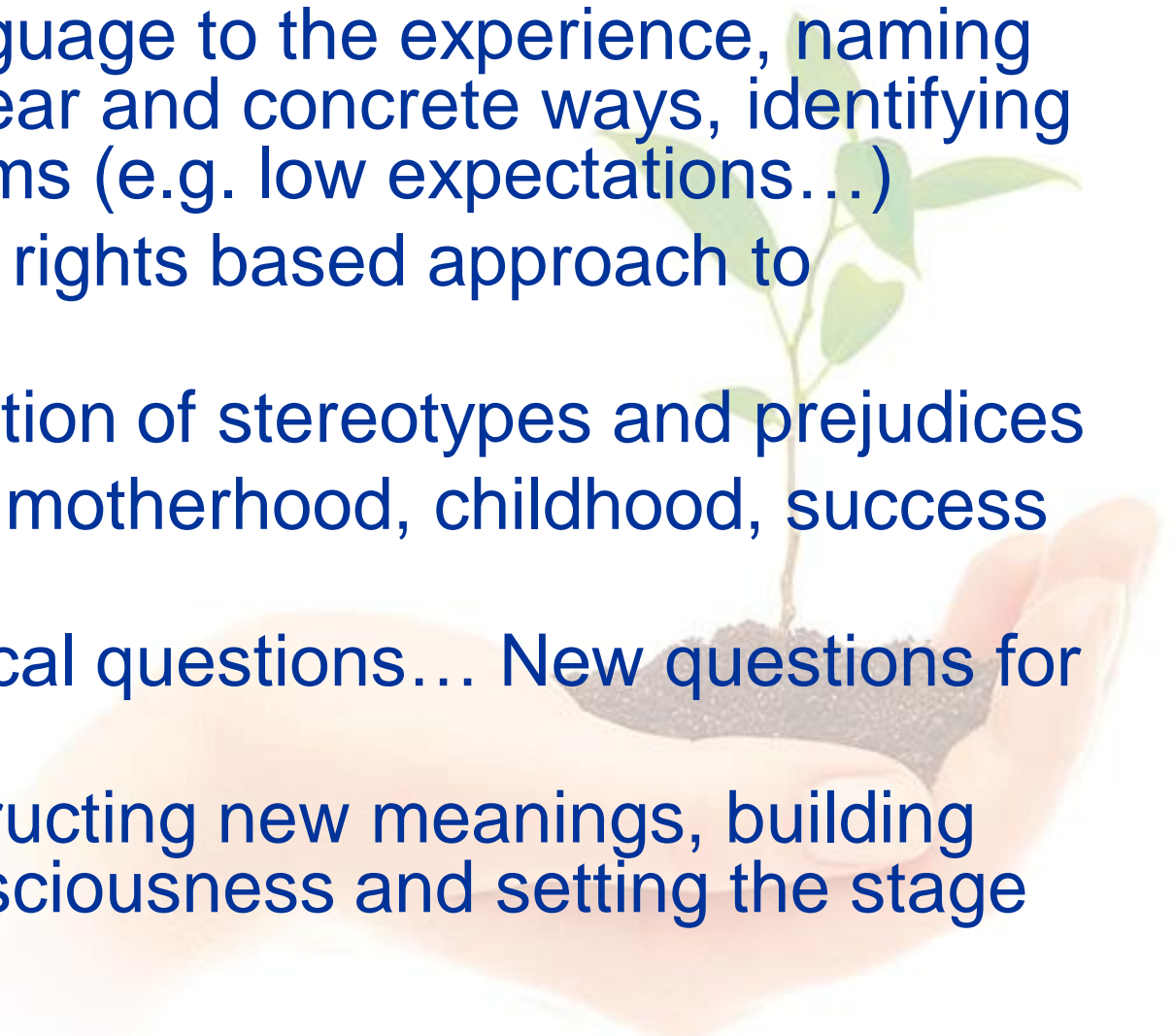
Areas of Intervention: Structure of the program





Naming

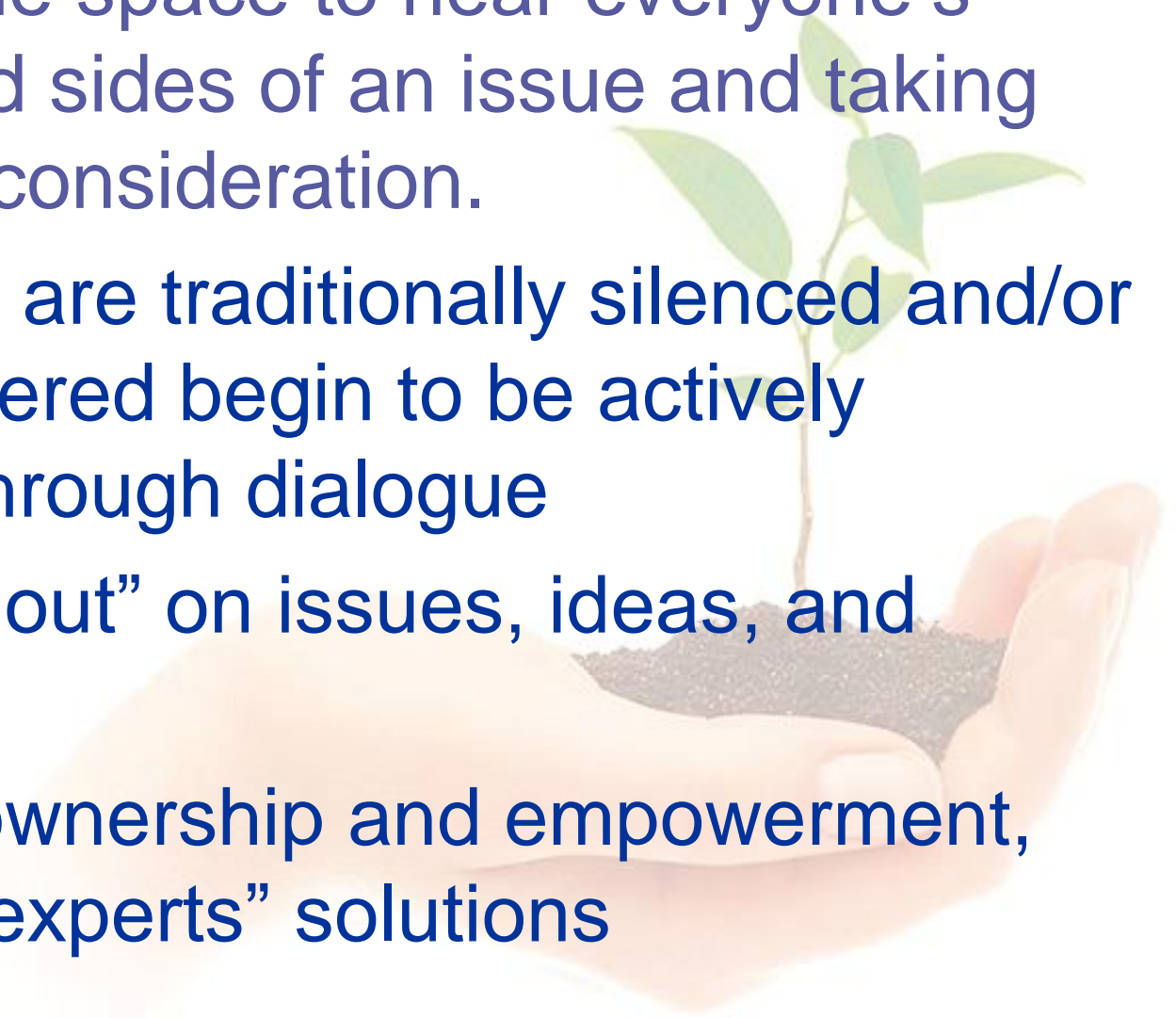
- Putting language to the experience, naming reality in clear and concrete ways, identifying real problems (e.g. low expectations...)
- Introducing rights based approach to education
- Deconstruction of stereotypes and prejudices (e.g. poverty, motherhood, childhood, success in life...)
- Asking critical questions... New questions for new time...
- Co - Constructing new meanings, building critical consciousness and setting the stage for action





Voicing

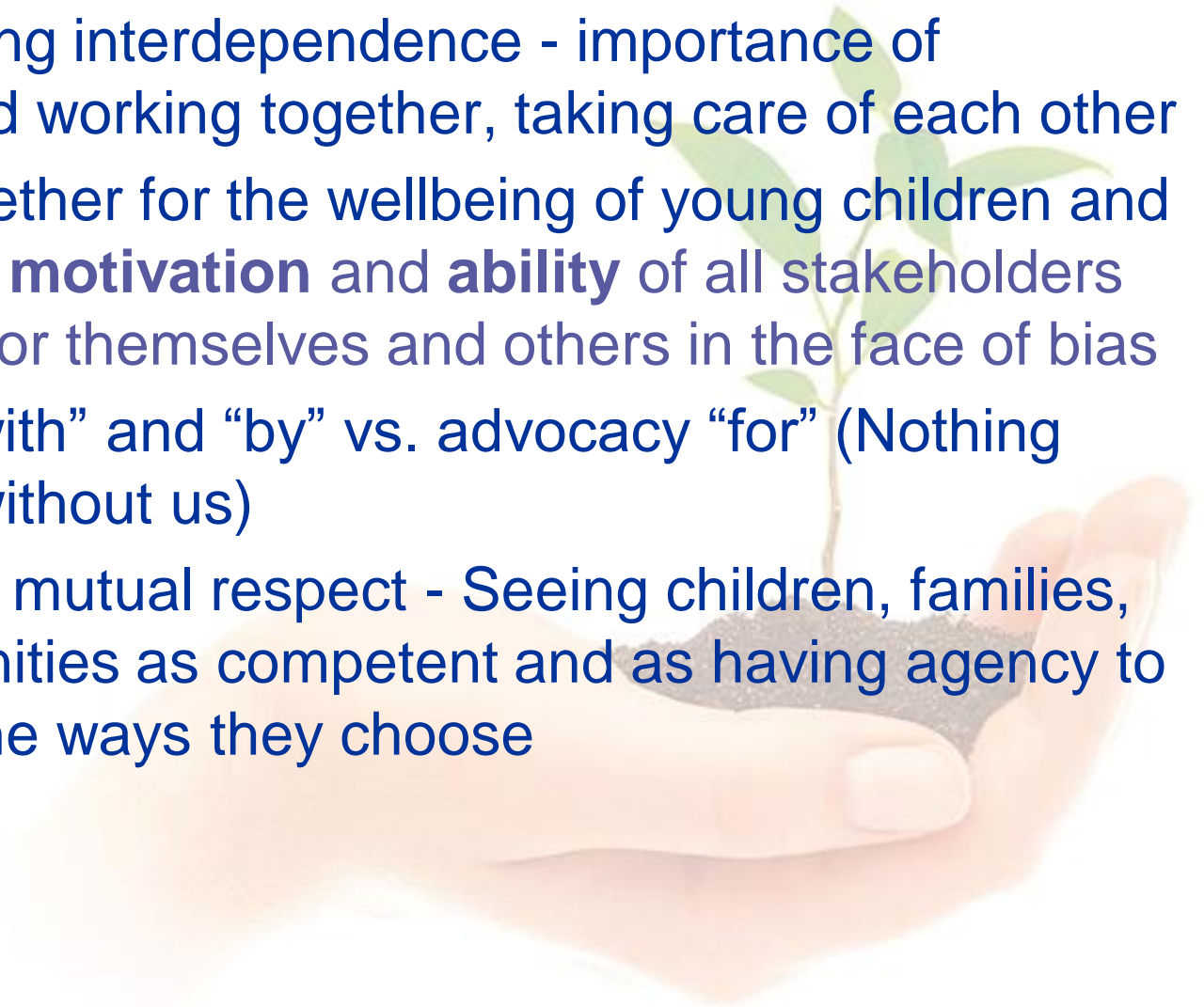
- creating the space to hear everyone's stories and sides of an issue and taking them into consideration.
- those who are traditionally silenced and/or disempowered begin to be actively involved through dialogue
- “speaking out” on issues, ideas, and feelings
- sense of ownership and empowerment, avoiding “experts” solutions





Building Allies

- Understanding interdependence - importance of solidarity and working together, taking care of each other
- Working together for the wellbeing of young children and community - **motivation** and **ability** of all stakeholders to stand up for themselves and others in the face of bias
- Advocacy “with” and “by” vs. advocacy “for” (Nothing about us – without us)
- Equality and mutual respect - Seeing children, families, and communities as competent and as having agency to develop in the ways they choose

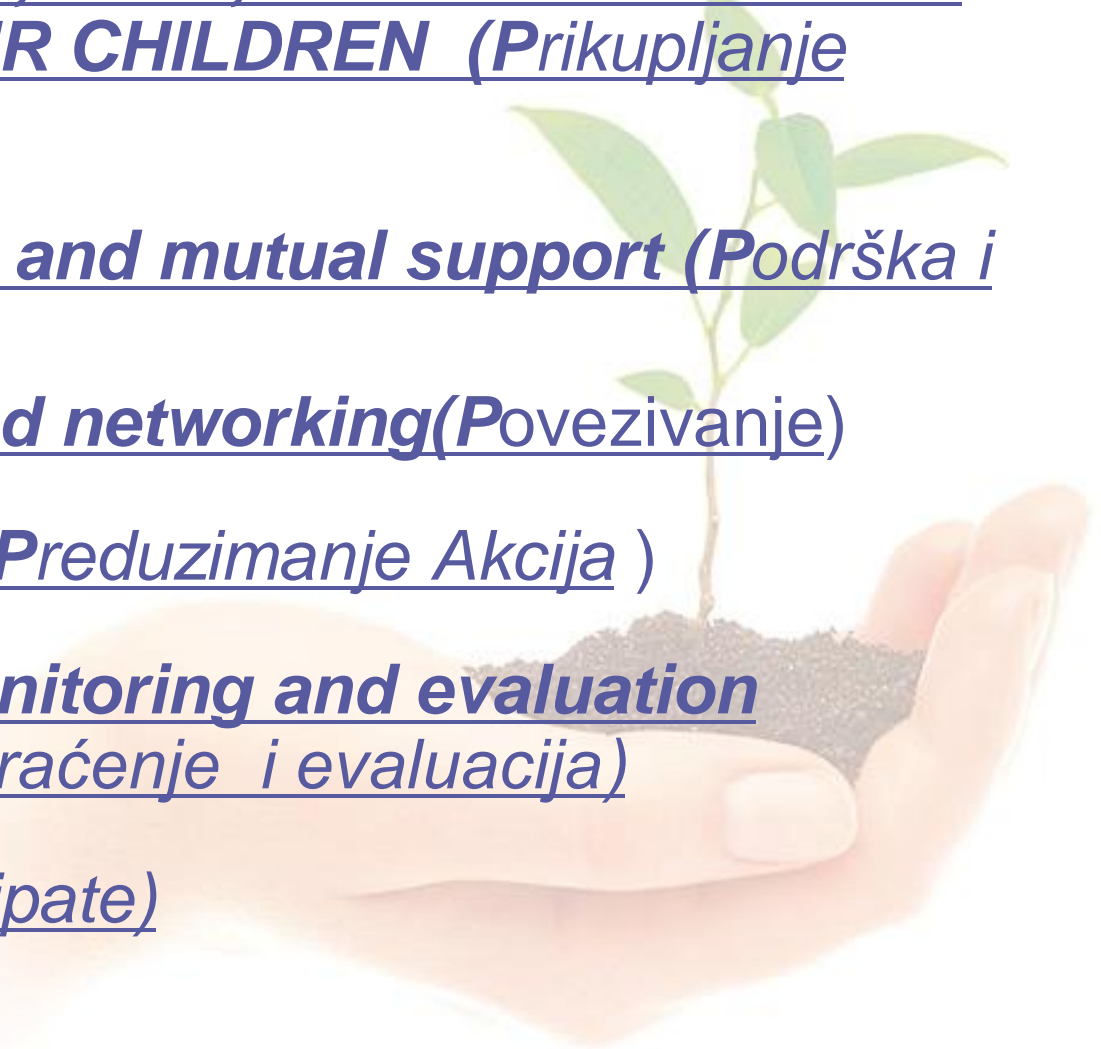




Model 5 P (in Serbian)

- Collecting data, ideas, needs - DREAMS WE HAVE FOR OUR CHILDREN (Prikupljanje podataka)
- Empowerment and mutual support (Podrška i osnaživanje)
- Connecting and networking (Povezivanje)
- Joint actions (Preduzimanje Akcija)
- Reflection, monitoring and evaluation (Promišljanje, praćenje i evaluacija)

(Everybody participate)



What have we learned /hints...



- People are strong and resilient...
- Services need to follow children and families, in every sense... do not wait for them to come to us... ask parents and children what they want to do, when and where...
- More networking and cooperation between NGOs, state institutions, community formal and informal leaders
- Changing traditional roles – who is the owner of the knowledge, expertise, power
- Changing existing practice... professionals, policy level, paraprofessionals and parents sharing joint space for learning and dialogue ...having trainings/meetings together, learning together as equals ...





Bottom line are our commitment, passion
and believes

”There must be a reason why M. Luther King
used to say I have a dream, instead of I
have 5 years business plan”

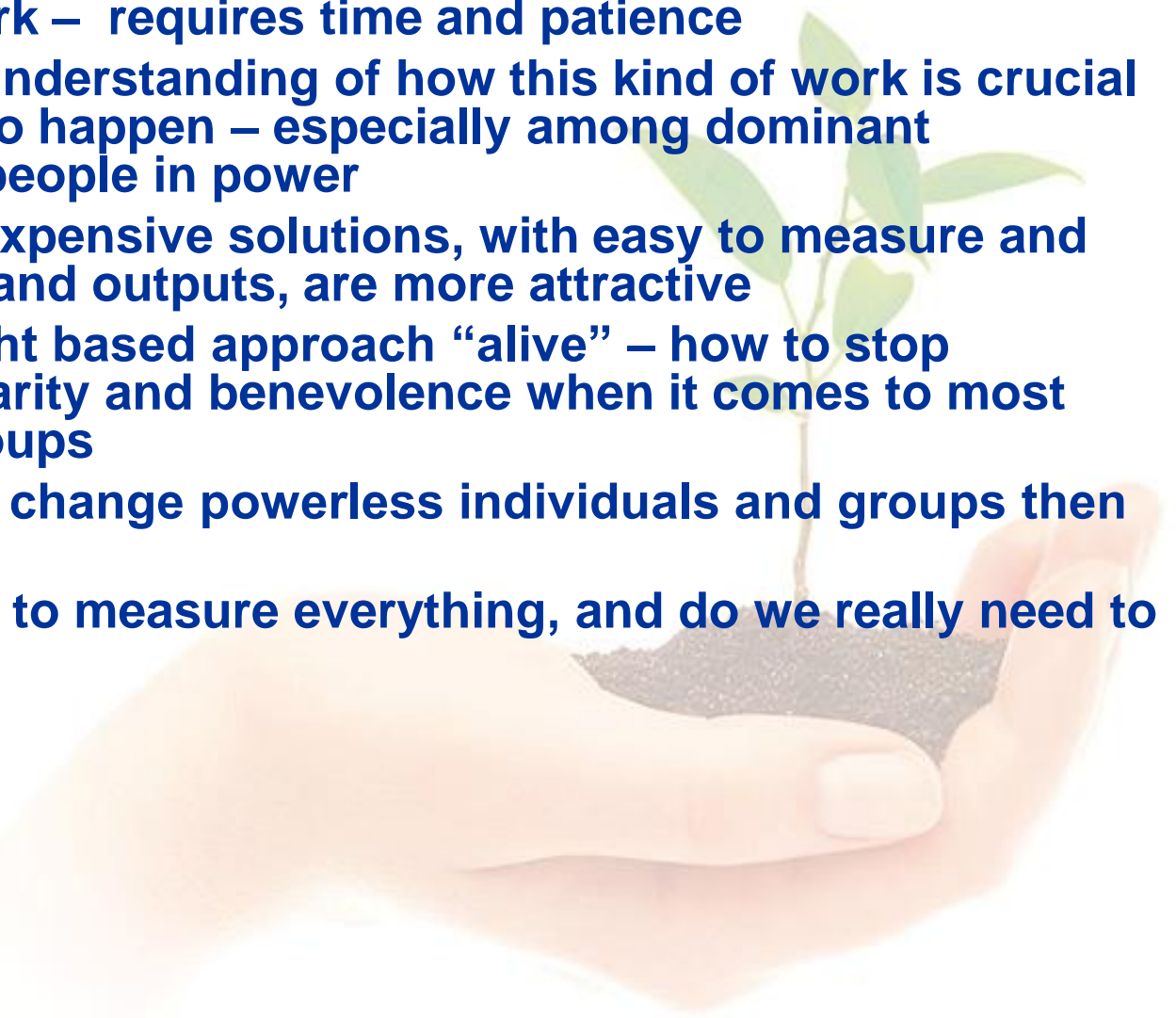
(Dr Jonas Riderstrejl, Karaoke Capitalism)





Challenges

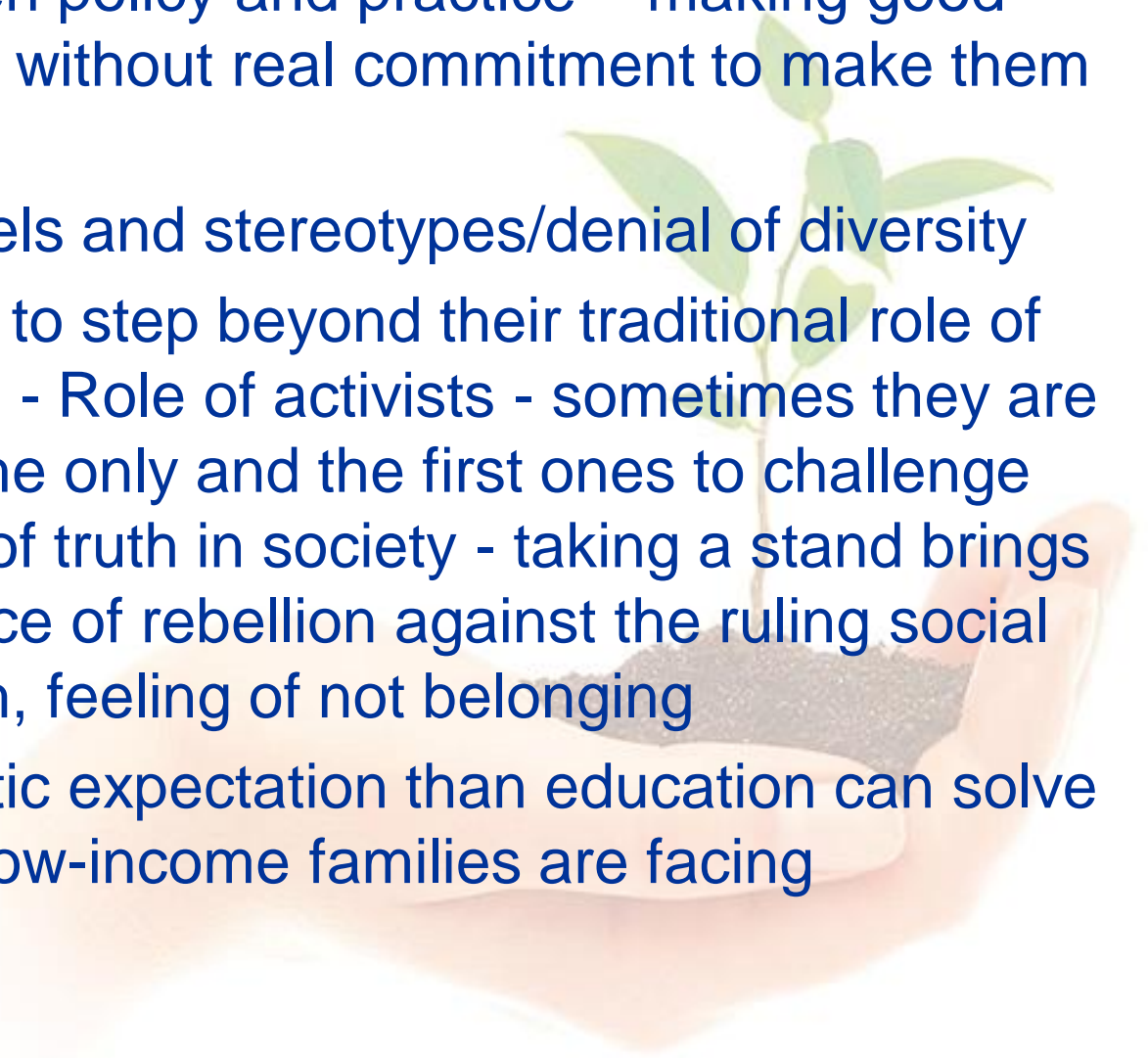
- **Very difficult work – requires time and patience**
- **Lack of deeper understanding of how this kind of work is crucial for real change to happen – especially among dominant population and people in power**
- **Quick and less expensive solutions, with easy to measure and track outcomes and outputs, are more attractive**
- **How to make right based approach “alive” – how to stop promotion of charity and benevolence when it comes to most marginalized groups**
- **It’s still easier to change powerless individuals and groups than system**
- **It is not possible to measure everything, and do we really need to do that?**





Challenges (cont.)

- Huge gap between policy and practice – making good policy documents without real commitment to make them “alive” ...
- Creating new labels and stereotypes/denial of diversity
- Asking educators to step beyond their traditional role of teacher/educator - Role of activists - sometimes they are supposed to be the only and the first ones to challenge existing regimes of truth in society - taking a stand brings sanctions, the price of rebellion against the ruling social consensus is high, feeling of not belonging
- Creating unrealistic expectation that education can solve all the problems low-income families are facing





Thank you for inviting us to share our story with you...

Every situation in which human beings meet each other , start to build trust and critically examine the world is the situation when the world starts to change.

(Freire, 1984)

In this case, let us hope... for the benefit of young children and their families...

