



hyaets
inspire, enrich & embody community

When Helping Hurts

2013 CBFNC Workshop

<http://hyaets.org>

What is Poverty?

For a poor person everything is terrible - illness, humiliation, shame. We are cripples; we are afraid of everything; we depend on everyone. No one needs us. We are like garbage that everyone wants to get rid of.

- Woman from Moldova

When one is poor, she has no say in public, she feels inferior. She has no food, so there is famine in her house, no clothing, and no progress in her family.

- Woman from Uganda

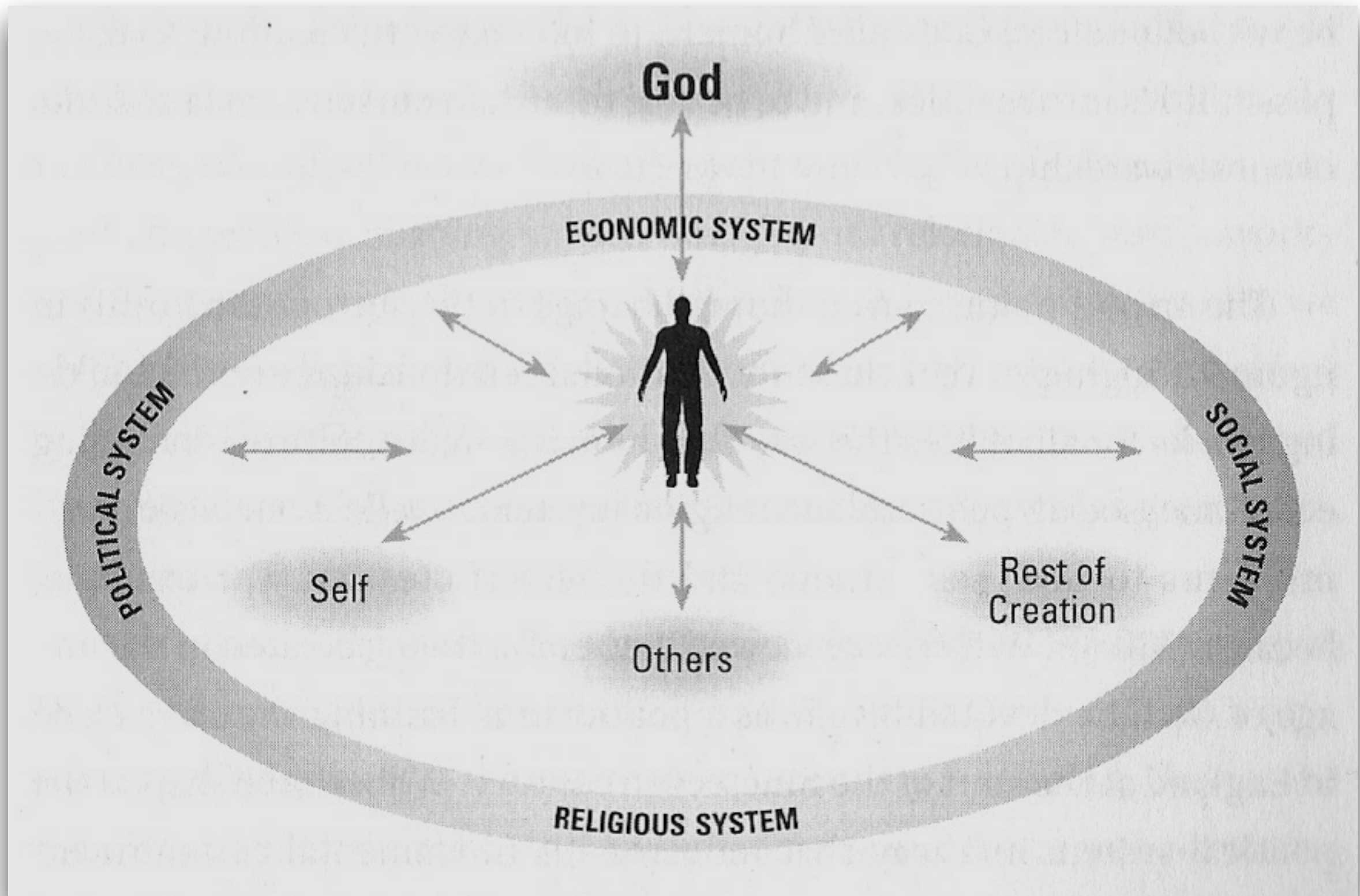
When I don't have any food to bring my family, I borrow, mainly from neighbors and friends. I feel ashamed standing before my children when I have nothing to help feed the family. I'm not well when I'm unemployed. It's terrible.

- Man from Guinea-Bissau

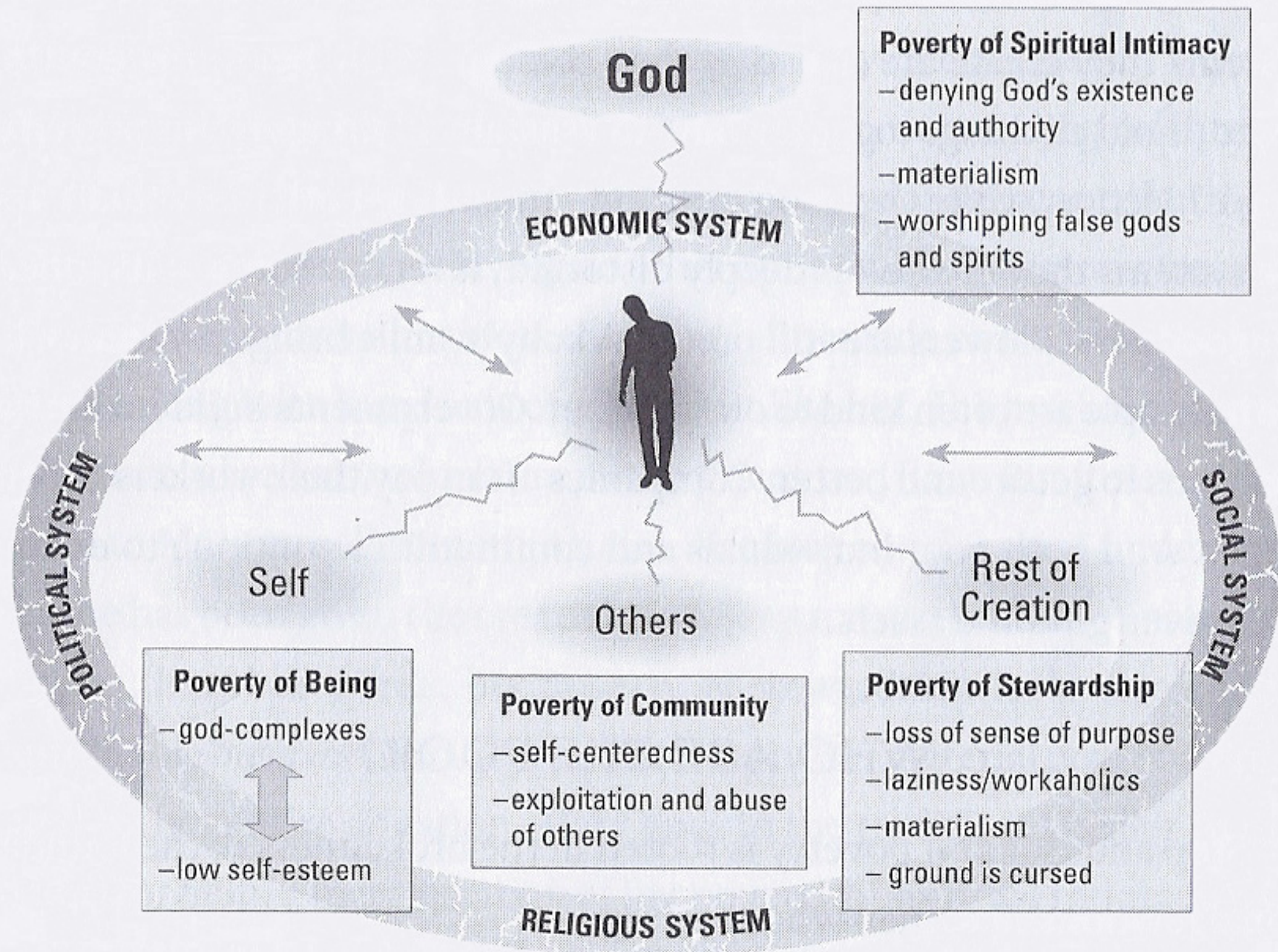
If we believe the primary cause of poverty is...	Then we will primarily try to...
A Lack of Knowledge	Educate the Poor
Oppression by Powerful People	Work for Social Justice
The Personal Sins of the Poor	Evangelize and Disciple the Poor
A Lack of Material Resources	Give Material Resources to the Poor

- What we see on the surface is rarely the entire picture
- Sound diagnoses is critical to helping others without hurting them or yourself

A Model



A Model



Poverty is...

...the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of shalom in all its meanings.

Bryant Myers, Walking with the Poor

Until we embrace our mutual brokenness, our work with low-income people is likely to do far more harm than good.

Material
Definition
of Poverty

+

God
Complexes
of the
Affluent

+

Feelings of
Inferiority &
Shame of
the Poor

=

Harm to
Both

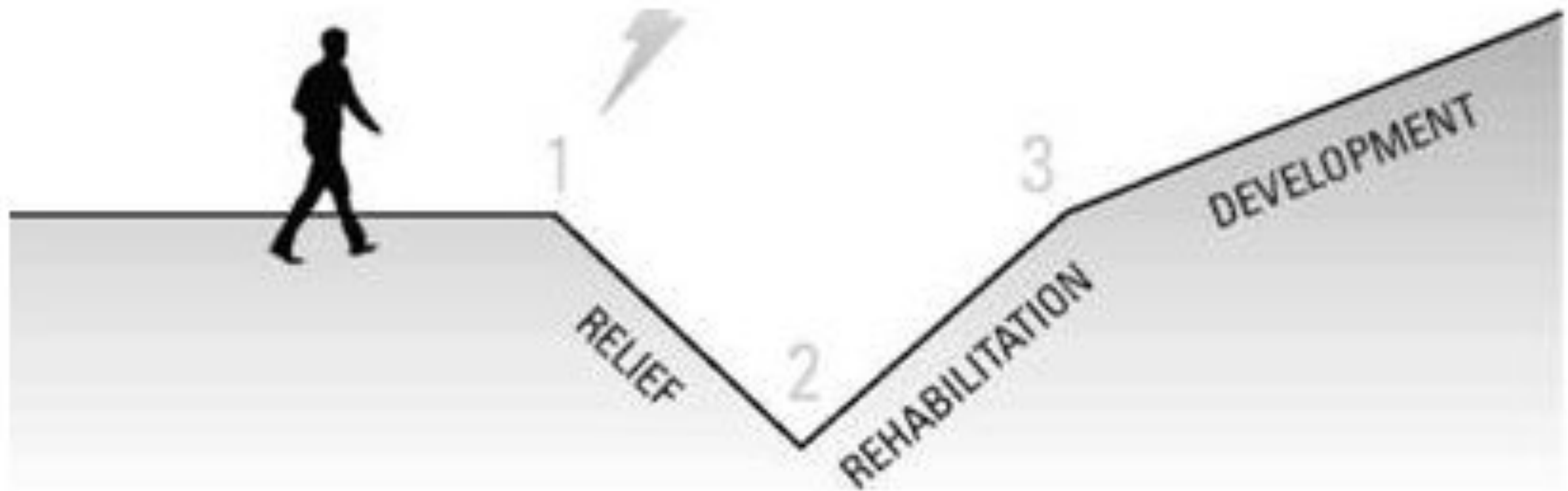
Poverty Alleviation is...

- the ministry of reconciliation
- moving people closer to glorifying God by living in right relationship with God, with self, with others, and with the rest of creation
- restoration of people to a full expression of humanness, to being what God created us all to be

Implications

- We must walk humbly with the materially poor
--> Christ is transforming both of us
- both people AND systems must be address
- cannot be product-focused, success-focused, or efficiency-focused
- must be people-focused

Relief, Rehab, Development Model



Beware

- Big Mistake: we apply relief when rehab or development are appropriate
- Paternalism - habitually supplying resources and assuming responsibility for persons (and their relationships) when they could be doing so themselves

Do relief and rehab as developmentally as possible

- Ensure participation of the affected population
- Always assess first
- Respond when needs are not met by local people or organizations
- Consider vulnerability and need
- Work through a relationship, not a pre-packaged program
- Maintain appropriate attitudes, qualifications and experience

The Goal is...

not to produce houses of other material goods, but to pursue a process of walking with the materially poor that create right relationship between us all and sustainable lifestyles

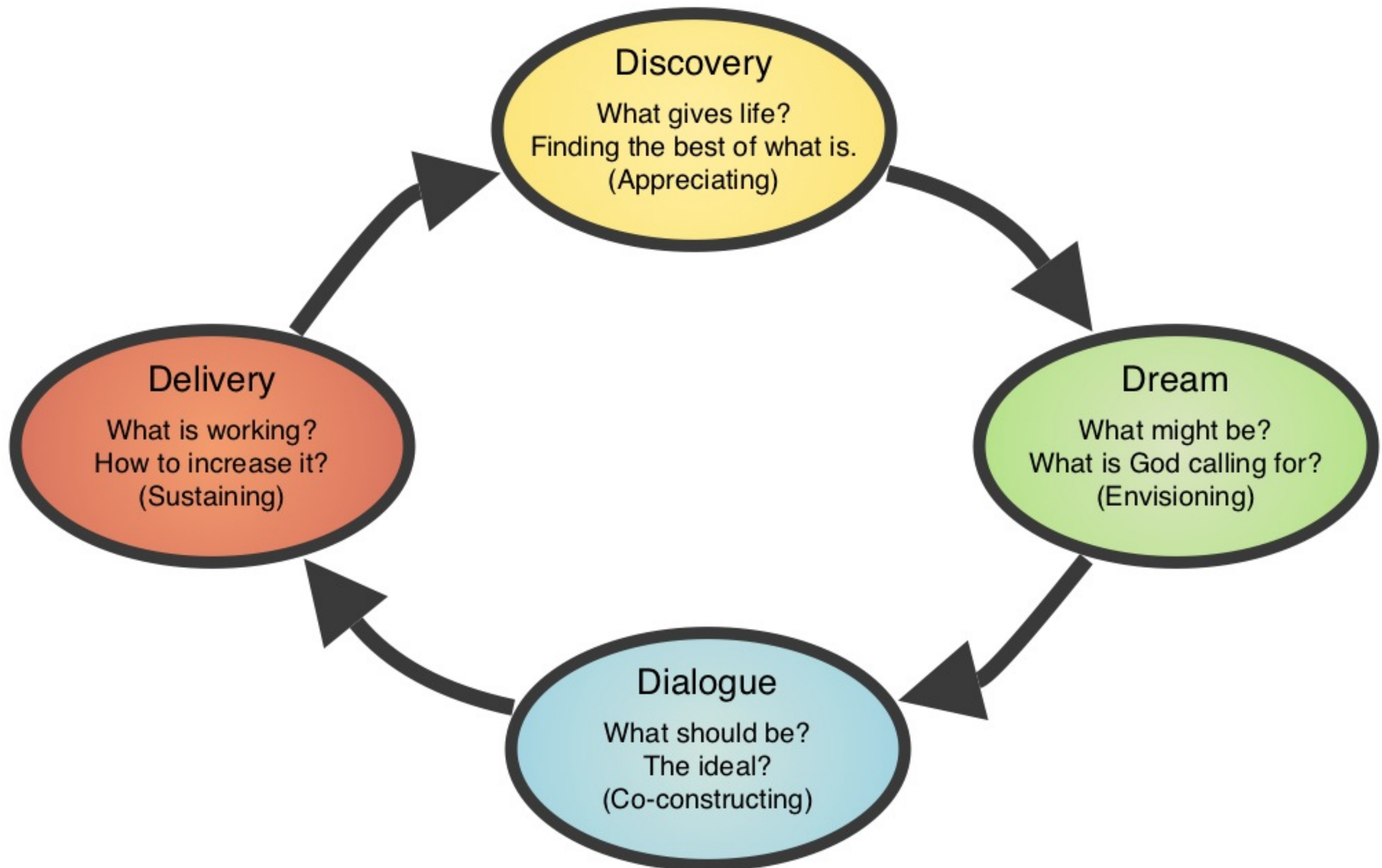
Asset-Based vs. Needs-Based

- Needs-based - focus on deficits and shortcomings of a person or community
- Asset-based - focus on strengths, capabilities, skills, and resource of the person and/or community

Asset-Based Strategies

- Asset Mapping - what skills, capabilities and resources exist within individuals and community communities
- Appreciative Inquiry - learn from what has worked well, discover history, assets, survival skills, goals

Appreciative Inquiry



Blueprint vs. Participatory Development

- Blueprint Development - Pre-packaged solutions imposed upon poor people
- Participatory Development - Learning approach; Work with, include in, participate in all process of program

Short-Term Missions

Problems & Concerns

- Emanate from a material understanding of poverty
- Tend to apply relief efforts in contexts that need development
- Are typically needs-based, not asset based
- Are rarely participatory
- Sum: can easily cause harm to all involved

Short-Term Missions

Solutions

- Go as Learners and Observers
- Work with folks involved in RRD models
- Pre- and Post-trip reflection over a long time

Some Examples

Processes for Working with the Poor

- Assess and Mobilize
- Learn
- Adopt asset-based, participatory models
- Explore options