



# Should we change the way we communicate about homelessness?

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**Together**  
we will end  
homelessness



Public attitudes to  
homelessness can and  
must change

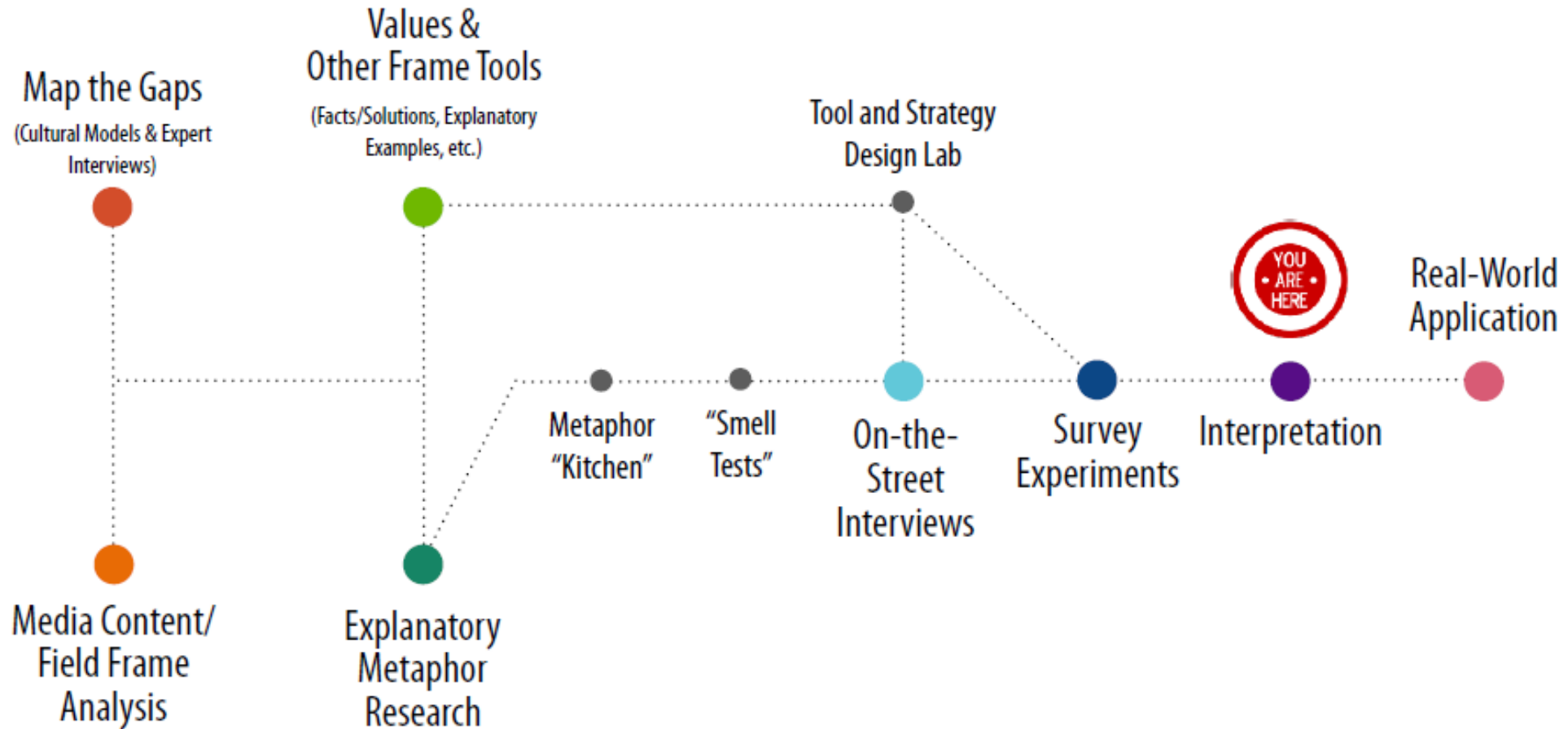


We can change the way we frame  
homelessness to build public  
support and political commitment  
for action and change



But this means doing things differently  
to standard campaigning or awareness  
raising

# REFRAMING STRATEGY



# You Say ... They Think

"Some people who are experiencing homelessness have complex needs, and require a combination of long-term housing solutions and support services that addresses their needs, like strong mental health and addiction services."



**Expert/Advocate**

"Exactly! The men sleeping in doorways are there because they are addicted to drugs, and now they do drugs to forget they are homeless. They are in a downward spiral, you just can't help people like that."



**Public**



# 'We still have hearts': homeless on the streets of Kettering

A look at the impact of one council's crackdown on begging, loitering and alcohol use



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## Britain's socially excluded '10 times more likely to die early'

Lead author of analysis of inequality says findings are toxic and 'an affront to our values'



Drug users are among the socially excluded groups the researchers say need quicker intervention to save lives. Photograph: Janine Wiedel/Rex

Britain's most socially excluded groups are 10 times more likely to die early than the general population, according to analysis showing inequality is more pronounced than is documented. Its lead author said the disparity exposed "something toxic in our society".

Recommendation 1 – Understand  
public thinking to change it



**Home as  
Refuge**

**Individualism**

- Self-Makingness
- Rational Actor
- Services Already Available
- Charity

**Some Sit at the  
Brink**

**Universal Social Forces**

**Homelessness  
= Rough  
Sleeping**

*What's in the Swamp of...*

**Homelessness**

**Fatalism**

- Bad Break
- Modern Life is Hard
- Vicious Cycle
- Game is Rigged

**Prototypes**

- Middle-Aged Men
- Young People
- Abused Women

**Government as  
Protector**

**Prevention Black  
Box**

**Solution: Crisis  
Intervention**

# Recommendation 2

## *Moral Human Rights*



In our society, we believe in treating people with dignity and humanity and upholding everyone's basic human rights. All of us, as human beings, have a moral right to decent housing, yet right now, many people in our country are homeless. Treating all people with dignity and humanity means making sure everyone can afford a safe and stable home.

### **Key components of this value:**

- All people have a *moral* right to housing (this is a *moral* frame—not a legal one).
- We aren't currently treating everyone with dignity and humanity.
- We are all human beings (highlight commonality).

### **Use the value to:**

- Help people see addressing homelessness as a moral imperative
- Boost people's personal engagement on the issue and motivate support for policy



# Recommendation 3

## *Interdependence*



In our society, what affects one of us affects all of us. When some people are struggling, it hurts everyone. Right now, many people in our country are homeless, and this affects us all. Making sure that everyone has safe, stable housing benefits us all by creating a stronger society.

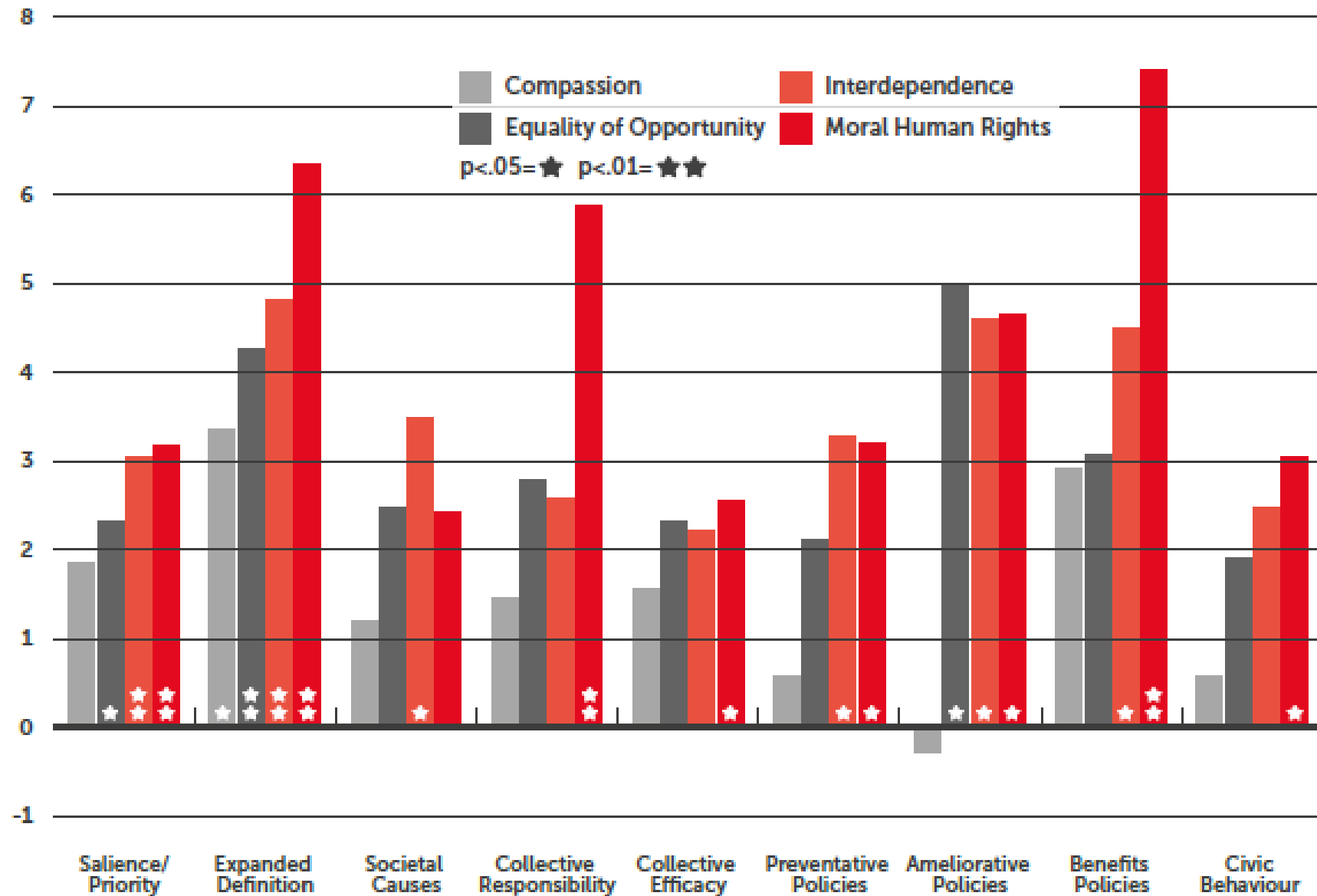
### **Key components of this value:**

- We are common members of an interconnected society—we depend on each other (we're all in the same boat)
- Homelessness affects all of us
- Addressing homelessness strengthens our society as a whole

### **Use the value to:**

- Help people see homelessness from a societal perspective
- Generate support for collective action

Figure 4.2: Effects of Values



Source:FrameWorks Institute 2018

# Recommendation 4

## ***Constant Pressure***



Poverty puts pressure on people, like water pushing against a dam—it's constant and strong. If the pressure builds up, people can be pushed into homelessness. We can decrease the pressure on people's lives by creating affordable housing and helping people get good, stable jobs. We can reinforce the dam that protects us from homelessness by strengthening the social welfare system.

### **Key components of this metaphor:**

- *Poverty* puts pressure on people (take people upstream and evoke the feeling).
- Pressure builds up over time and makes people susceptible to homelessness.
- We can work upstream to prevent homelessness.

### **Use the metaphor to:**

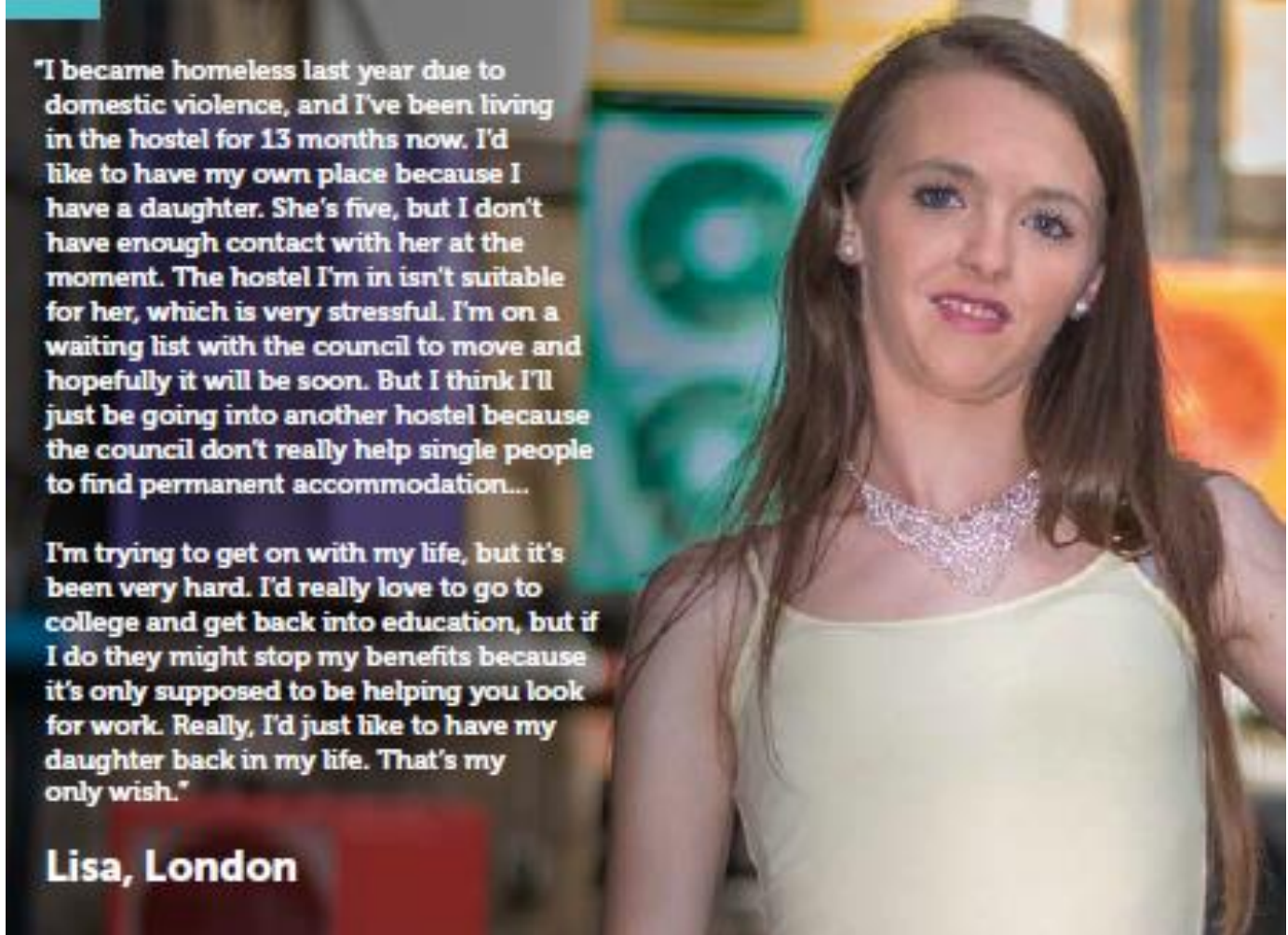
- Connect people to the lived experience of poverty and homelessness
- Link that lived experience to a broader social context—to the systems at stake





5. Use different types of experiential stories to tell a **wider range of lived experience of homelessness** - widen people's mental image and open up the debate for policy solutions

6. Cement understanding of what can be done by offering **concrete solutions** at every possible opportunity



Find different ways to repeat and re-imagine across all communications:

- Fundraising appeals
- Press releases
- Policy reports
- Marketing materials

 **Jeff Olivet, Contributor**  
activist, advocate,  
writer, teacher, CEO of  
the Center for Social  
Innovation

## 4 Simple Ways to End Homelessness

02/15/2017 09:25 am ET

# ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS TOGETHER

In the UK each year, 83,000 young people find themselves homeless. End Youth Homelessness is a UK wide movement, bringing together local charities to tackle youth homelessness on a national scale.

**SCROLL FOR MORE**

# In summary

## Building support to end homelessness – what works?

What works	What to watch out for
Use the value of Moral Human Rights to connect and drive policy support	Presenting homeless people as “different” or “other”
Use the value of Interdependence to place the issue of homelessness in a social context	Leading with the economic and financial costs of homelessness
Explain the causes of homelessness by using the Constant Pressure metaphor	Talking about the choices people make which lead to homelessness
Tell a wide range of stories about the different lived experiences of homelessness	Only tapping into people’s existing mental picture of homelessness – i.e. rough sleeping
Show people’s lives in context, connecting them with how our society functions.	Treating and talking about homeless people as “those” that need help.
Seal the story by directing people to concrete solutions	Telling stories and delivering messages without a clear solution or policy ask.
Find different ways to repeat and re-imagine this ‘big idea’ across all communications including fundraising appeals	Solely deploying depictions of rough sleeping and a dire tone to cultivate a sense of urgency in fundraising
Focus on the connections between us as human beings and the moral rights we share.	Suggesting that we are all only a few pay days away from homelessness

Reports available at: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/>

Phase 1: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/services-and-interventions/finding-a-better-frame-how-to-create-more-effective-messages-on-homelessness-in-the-united-kingdom-2017/>

Phase 2: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/services-and-interventions/reframing-homelessness-in-the-united-kingdom-a-frameworks-messagememo-2018/>