



Cohousing Now! Community Gardens



What is your Community Garden like?

For some cohousing communities, the produce from the garden is what is used in community meals. There is nothing quite as tasty as homegrown tomatoes. Try this simple recipe for salad dressing:

1/2 cup quality olive oil
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup honey
1 tablespoon stone ground dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper



Riley, Ronan and Linda in the community kitchen

Some communities maintain a successful CSA farm, such as [North Field Farm](#) or [Little River Community Farm](#), or have a healthy relationship with a neighboring farm such as [Blueberry Hill Cohousing](#) and [Potomac Vegetable Farms](#)



Nyland Cohousing North Field Farm CSA

For others it is an opportunity to get your hands in the soil, to nurture, to grow, to create beautiful edible arrangements. Check out R. Creasy's [Edible Landscaping books](#).



Pamela from Wild Sage Cohousing with a bouquet of rainbow chard.

And then there are those who simply desire a quiet place



Puget Ridge Cohousing



Brian, the Wild Sage beekeeper

or a home for bees and chickens



Columbia Eco Village chickens

There are communities with land to grow



Gardens at WindSong



Gardens at Songia

and communities that have deck space



Quayside Village

or rooftops



Capital Hill Urban Cohousing rooftop farm

When forming your community, spend some time discussing the vision of the grounds. Do you want it to be wild or manicured? To gaze at and/or to eat? Is water conservation a concern and are there options such as rain catchment systems? Will you have master gardeners making recommendations and/or choices? Will the land be worked as a community or as individual households or a hybrid of both?





Oh, and pay attention to the things that grow wild and free, as they are the future!



Conferences & Events

In This Issue

[Conferences & Events](#)
[Cohousing Blogs](#)
[Cohousing Map & Metrics](#)
[Classified Ads](#)
[Cohousing Professionals](#)
[In the News](#)
[Resources](#)
[Directory Listings](#)

Classified Ads

Homes for Sale



September 21-23, 2018

[Northeast Cohousing Summit](#)
[Regional Cohousing Conference](#)
[more information to come!](#)



[National Cohousing Conference](#)
[May 30th - June 2nd, 2019 Portland Oregon](#)
[more information to come!](#)



Beautiful Home in Stunning Prescott Arizona

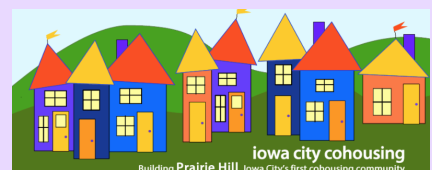


Wolf Creek Lodge, CA - two bedroom home now available - now in escrow

Seeking Members



Fair Oaks EcoHousing:
Intergenerational Cohousing
near Sacramento!



New homes available in Summer 2018



Join us in Harrisonburg, VA for our upcoming site design workshop!

Cohousing Blogs

Marketing for Cohousing - no car salesman techniques needed!

by Shelly Parks, CoVision Consulting

"I don't want to be a used car salesman." This is the response I most often hear when I ask forming cohousing groups to describe their feelings around using sales techniques in their membership recruitment.



And I get it. We tend to stereotype sales people as sleazy movie car salesman: they pounce aggressively and they don't listen. They leave us feeling coerced. We picture the guy on the left.

But this salesman only exists in the movies, and we aren't peddling snake oil. In cohousing, we have a 'product' that helps people live better lives in very real ways. Brian Tracy, an author of more than 70 self-development books, reminds

us that sales, at its best, is about helping people. When we misunderstand the sales process, or worse, reject it, we miss critical opportunities to improve our membership recruitment. And in cohousing, the best sales and spokesperson for your community is:
...You!

Approach Each Customer With The Idea Of Helping Him Or Her To Solve A Problem Or Achieve A Goal, Not Of Selling A Product Or Service. - Brian Tracy

After a career leading sales and marketing teams in the Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) world, I've thought a lot about ways to embrace basic sales techniques to better grow cohousing. While there are countless books and trainings on honing sales skills, there are three basic principles to always keep in mind, regardless of your sales experience:

1) Listen More, Talk Less

This seems obvious but I'm always surprised at how often we break this rule when we are passionate about something, myself included. Slow down and take the time to truly listen to a prospective member. I recently ran a workshop for Village Hearth Cohousing in North Carolina on how to use active listening and questions as a tool for member recruitment. My friend Tami, a member of this community, wisely observed that "when we ask questions we pull someone to us, when we talk we push someone away."

Ask open-ended questions. What are they looking for in a community? What are their goals for the future? What are their concerns? What do they picture for themselves as they grow older?

2) Avoid Mismatching

Mismatching happens when we assume we know what someone wants to hear. This can stop a sales process in its tracks. Let's say I'm personally really excited about the planned community garden. I gush about the herb section, the state-of-the-art compost system, and how many zucchinis I think I can grow next summer. But I haven't asked good questions and actually listened to this prospective member; unbeknownst to me, they hate working outside and the idea of maintaining a garden sounds awful. The prospective member is already thinking this may not be the right place for them.

So, ask! Your prospective member may not be excited about the garden, but it turns out they're very excited about cooking community meals and helping to manage the kitchen. Asking questions finds the common ground between your community and the prospective member.

3) Be a Guide Through the Sales Process

Just as we use maps to get from point A to point B, we guide someone to cohousing membership using the same principles. The destination and the path to get there must be clearly communicated. And just like visiting any new place, it's all a lot easier with a helpful, local guide. Being an effective salesperson means being this guide, and helping people to get to where they want to go.

Cohousing Policies



Village Hearth: LGBTQs, Straight Friends & Allies in Durham, NC

Cohousing Professionals

[Caddis Architecture](#)

[CoHousing Solutions | Sustainable Neighborhood Consultants](#)

[Fitch Architecture & Community Design | Home - Community - Planet](#)

[Linda Herman Consulting](#)

[Mary Kraus, Architect](#)

[McCamant & Durrett Architects: The Cohousing Co](#)

[schemata workshop | architecture & planning](#)

In the News

GOODBYE NURSING HOMES! THE NEW TREND IS COHOUSING WITH FRIENDS



I'm proactively taking care of my health and longevity. I've been researching longevity for a while now.

In October I have a new book coming out with all of the longevity tools I'm using - called LIFE IS LONG - which I'm excited to share.

In my new longevity book I mention how important it is to stay actively social.

What shall we discuss as we are forming our communities? Every forming community (I hope!) asks this question and communities that have already moved in give lots of different answers. Many of those answers are in the form of "I wish we'd resolved this" and "we decided x which was irrelevant and should have decided y which was important." All of those reflections are completely true, of course, but I don't think they get at the purpose for deciding things prior to move-in.



The purpose of discussing policies before move-in is to resolve as much as you can about your values before getting so many new members you can never agree on values.

So, for example, if you decide birds are more important than outdoor cats and make a policy for no outdoor cats, people who sign-on later in the process agree to that value rather than after move-in having a battle between the birds and the cats.

If you decide no one is allowed to store guns on your property, police officers, active duty military, and gun collectors know that those are the values of this community and they need another strategy for storing their weapons.

If you believe in full nudity for children until puberty, the community's clothing policy allows folk to know whether they want to live there or not.

While developing Mosaic-Commons Cohousing in Berlin, MA, we had scent sensitive folk from the very beginning, and a number of folk with allergies, so there was no question that we would use all no-VOC paint. But more than that, when we got to deciding about a fireplace and I said I was allergic to the smoke, and to the wood, we'd already self-selected to be a community that would prioritize no wood burning due to allergies, rather than environmental benefit of wood over a gas fire. We take allergies seriously here because we early on said that was one of our values.

While I'm glad we discussed how to do things, because it identified important values, it turned out the decisions we made how things would work was mostly based in fantasy. Who knew you have to shovel a path in the snow to the pump head? Not any of us until the water couldn't get tested. And the rules about the dog run? We never built a dog run. What are the criteria for an exception to the outdoor cat policy? The values decisions, where we successfully made them, can be helpful in letting those who are not yet members decide if they want to be in this group.

So what topics should you discuss?

Dog leashes, Outdoor cats, Chickens, other Farm animals.

Work expectations, meal frequency, involvement in decision making

Nudity in public spaces, hot tubs, pools

Smoking area, where will it be? What, no one will have guests who smoke?

Community or individual garden plots?

Gun storage, gun privacy

Backyards, front yards, who owns? who mows? who shovels?

Numbers of parking spaces and cars per home. Will teens get cars? Will people who rent rooms get cars?

Quiet hours, do you want them? Mornings or nights?

How are you allowed to get rid of rats?

Note that you don't need to solve all of these, each of them points a direction for the type of community you will be, and its the direction you need, more than the details, so that you end up with members who share enough common values you can find consensus.

I thereby became very excited when I read about a new trend for seniors- something called "Senior Cohousing" - where you live in an "intentional neighborhood" - surrounded by your friends - and you share in things like the same dining area, library, fitness center, garden, TV room etc.

"Senior Cohousing" is trending right now. [read more here](#)

COHOUSING: A GROWING TREND IN SENIOR LIVING



By Karen D'Souza / The Mercury News (TNS)

The skyrocketing cost of Bay Area housing almost forced Marietta Borgel to leave San Jose, the place she's called home for six decades. Then she discovered home-sharing and, for the first time in her 75 years, Ms. Borgel moved in with a roommate.

Life in a traditional retirement home didn't appeal to Angela Hunkler, a 73-year-old artist, so she and her wife, Kate Murphy, sold their Berkeley house and bought a small condominium in a senior cohousing community on the waterfront in Oakland. It's an easy walk to her studio and the views of the water just won't quit.

Ms. Borgel and Ms. Hunkler are part of a burgeoning trend in communal living among seniors, who are banding together to share resources and camaraderie. Whether they're finding roommates or living in a modern cohousing development - private homes clustered around shared spaces that residents manage together - these seniors are finding a new way of thinking about retirement, one that revolves around creating a community where you can age in place with others. Some say living-together options are the future of aging.

"These folks are really pioneering a new way of living," says Anne Glass, a professor of gerontology at University of North Carolina Wilmington. "So many older people endure a crippling sense of isolation.

(Of course, you also have to make sure folk understand when they chose to move-in that those are the values they are agreeing to. That's a different challenge.)

Why not live in a village where you know all of your neighbors?" Companionship is a key reason seniors are turning to shared housing. Loneliness is a huge health risk for older Americans, bigger than smoking or obesity, according to a 2015 Brigham Young University study. The desire for independence is another factor fueling the trend. [read more here](#)

Coho/US Notes

Why I Contribute to Cohousing.Org Every Year



By Marty Maskall, Founder, Fair Oaks EcoHousing

I just made my annual contribution of \$100 to Cohousing.org. I do this every year because of the many benefits the organization has provided me: support, friendship, resources, and inspiration. Each year I choose ten organizations that are important to my life and my community, and I make a donation. To me, it's a privilege and an obligation to give back to organizations I support.

In 2005 I stumbled on cohousing in Sacramento and decided I wanted to create a second cohousing community in the Sacramento area. My friend Don, who lives in Sacramento's Southside Park Cohousing, encouraged me and told me about Cohousing.org. I contacted Chuck Durrett and Katie McCamant to help me get started. In 2006, I went to my first National Conference, and I was totally inspired. I have been to every National Conference since then, and also to many regional conferences. I'm looking forward to the Conference next year in Portland, Oregon. The conferences have provided "emotional fuel" to keep me going despite obstacles.

I'm grateful that Fair Oaks EcoHousing is now under construction, with move-in expected in Spring 2019. We still have several homes available, so please visit our website at www.FairOaksEcoHousing.org and help us spread the word. Even after our community is built, I plan to keep going to cohousing conferences and supporting the National organization, to help other fledgling communities find their wings.

I know how much work goes on behind the scenes to create the conferences and the resources we all benefit from. I'm inspired to give back to the organization to help it continue with its mission - creating community, one neighborhood at a time. I hope you'll join me. Every contribution helps!

P.S You too can also invest (contribute) to the work of Cohousing.org and help spread the word about how to build and live in cohousing!!
<https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/cohousing?code=home>

Cohousing Directory Metrics

Established Communities = 166

---Completed = 149

---Building = 17

Forming = 143



Resources

[Coho/US Conference Presentations](#)

[Policy Database](#)

[Cohousing-L List Serve](#)

The Cohousing Directory

New or Updated listings:

[Flagstaff Cohousing in Flagstaff, AZ](#)

[Common Ground Community Knoxville, TN](#)

[Green Country Cohousing in Tulsa, OK](#)

[Edit your Community Profile here..](#)

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