

Persuasive Messaging for Effective Communications

Community Legal Centres
Australia
May 2017

Voices for
Civil Justice

Today :

1. Core principles of persuasive social justice messaging
2. “VPSA” messaging model
3. Craft your own message using the VPSA model

Core Principles of Persuasive Social Justice Messaging

- ❖ Lead with shared values
- ❖ Tell a systemic story
- ❖ Promote positive solutions

First principle:

Lead with shared values

Shared Values

Equal Opportunity Community
Fairness
Family Justice

Issues

Domestic Violence Elder Abuse
Affordable Housing
Education Health Care

Policies

Community Development Funding
Affordable Care Act Living Wage
Fair Housing Laws

Why lead with shared values?



Why lead with shared values?



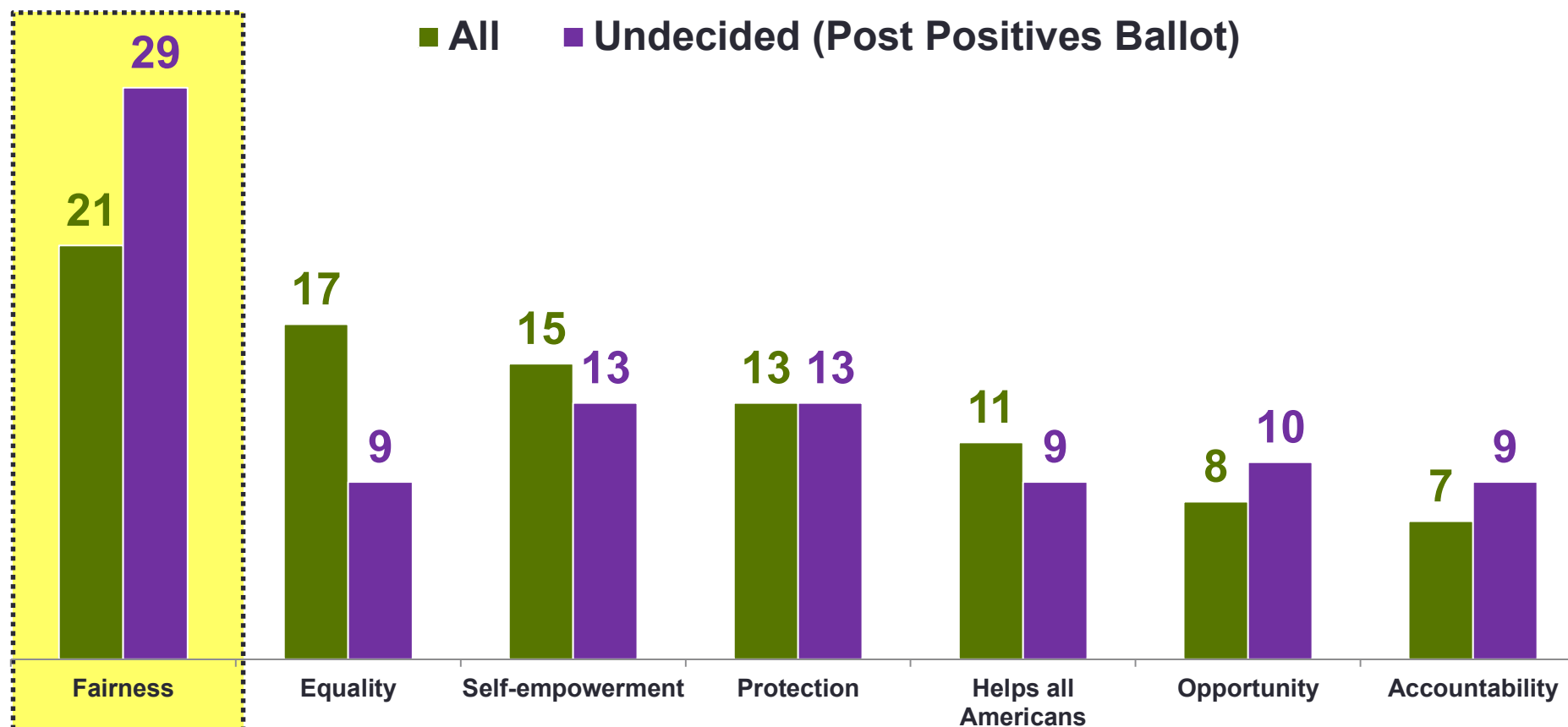
Access to legal help in civil matters has strong support because of the shared values of fairness and equality.

82%

Believe it is important to ensure everyone has access to legal help or legal representation for civil matters

Voices' 2013 Opinion Research

Value Most Associated with Civil Legal Aid

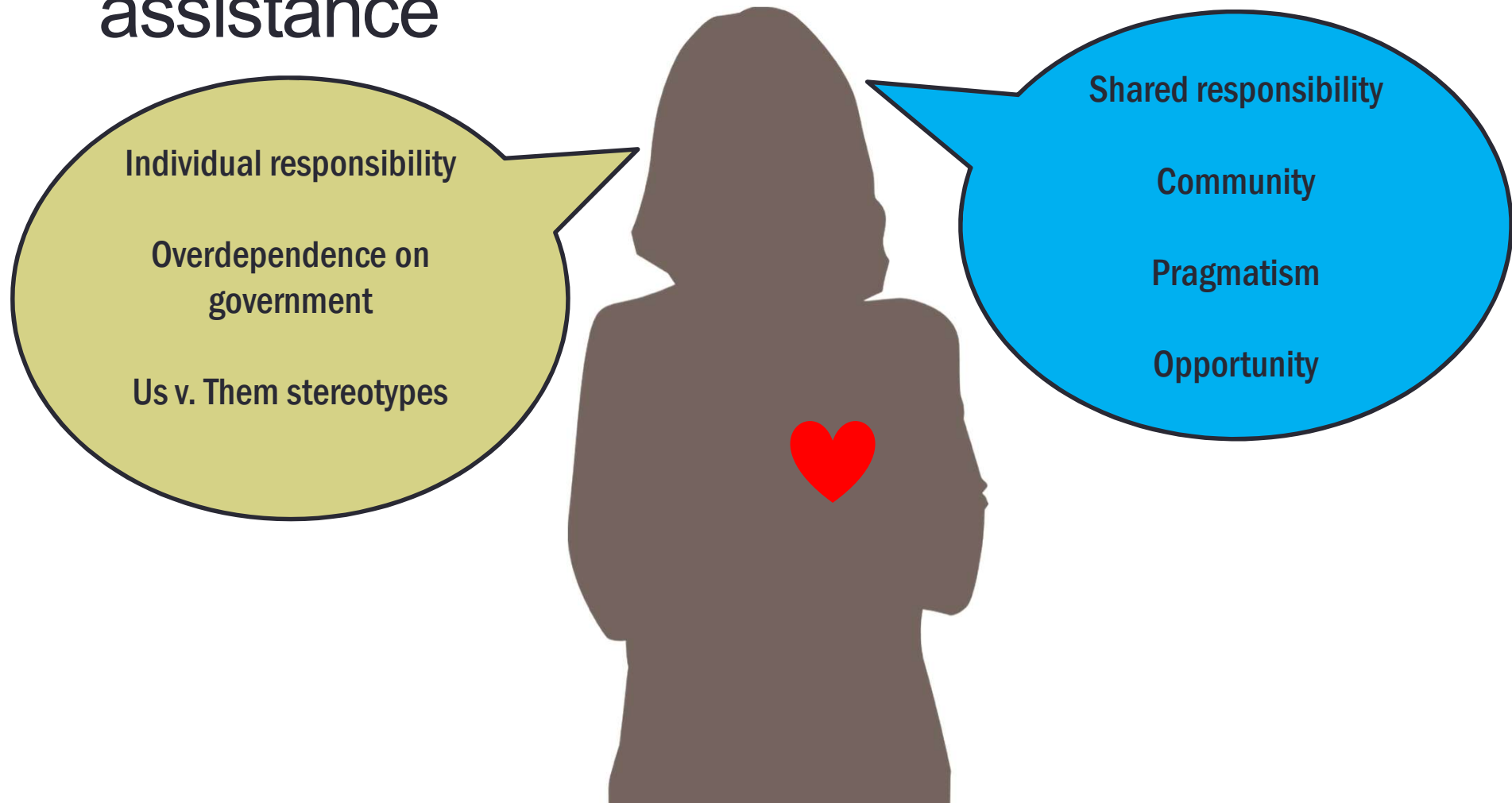


After hearing all of this information about civil legal aid, what do you most associate with the program?

Second principle:

Tell a systemic story

The persuadable public is of two minds about people who need assistance



Example: Highlighting Systemic Barriers



Third principle: Offer positive solutions



Voices' 2013 Opinion Research: National telephone poll
by Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group

Civil Legal Aid Provides...

Provide easy-to-understand forms, including online forms, that people can use in civil legal proceedings

Provide legal assistance, including legal self-help centers, so people can know their rights

Provide legal representation to those who cannot afford it—because justice should not depend on how much money you have

**Let's Brainstorm:
What are some examples of positive
solutions to systemic problems?**

V+P+S+A – a message formula that works

- Value
- Problem
- Solution
- Action

V+P+S+A – A message formula that works

- Value Fairness Equality Opportunity
Justice for all
- Problem
- Solution
- Action

V+P+S+A – A message formula that works

- Value Fairness Equality Opportunity
- Problem Payday/Title Lending, Threats to
Voting Rights, Domestic Violence
- Solution
- Action

V+P+S+A – A message formula that works

- **Value** Fairness Equality Opportunity
- **Problem** Payday/Title Lending, Threats to Voting Rights, Domestic Violence
- **Solution** **Civil Legal Aid** **Policy Change**
- **Action**

V+P+S+A – A message formula that works

- **Value** Fairness Equality Opportunity
- **Problem** Payday/Title Lending, Threats to Voting Rights, Domestic Violence
- **Solution** Civil Legal Aid Policy Change
- **Action** **Donate, Volunteer, Introduce or support a particular piece of legislation**



Values Brainstorm

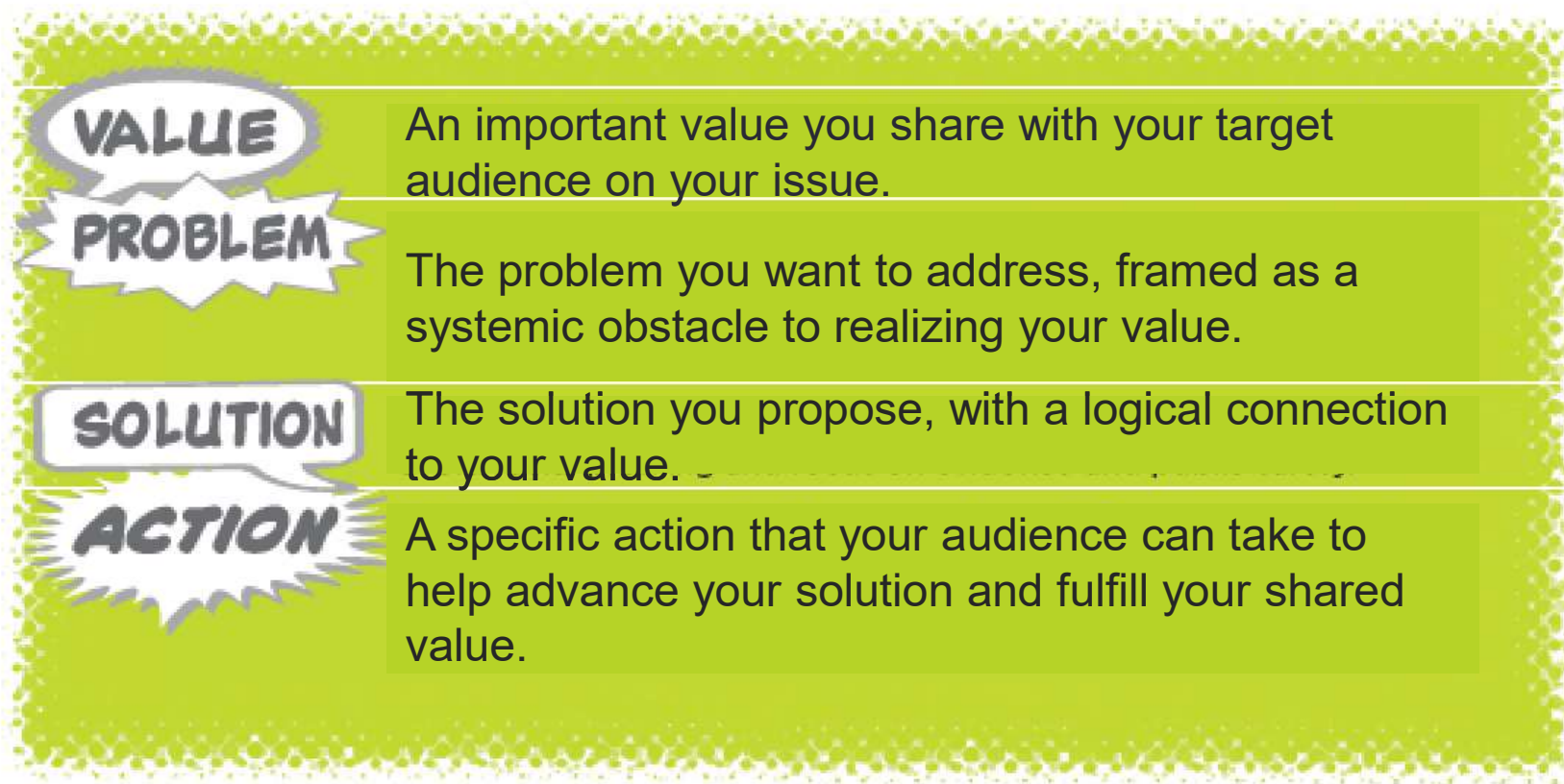
Identify the Value

- Veterans can't get benefits they need because of long wait times in the application process.
- Most domestic violence survivors don't get legal assistance when they seek protective orders or child custody and support.
- Children who act out in school are subjected to harsh discipline instead of getting educational plans suited to their needs.
- Low-income renters have no meaningful way to force landlords to meet habitability standards.

YOUR TURN

VPSA Exercise:

Value, Problem, Solution, Action



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VPSA FLASHCARD – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Access to an affordable home in a good neighborhood is critical to the American promise of opportunity and to our nation's economic security. [But misconduct by the lending industry and inadequate rules and enforcement helped to wreck our economy and deny that promise to millions of families.] (Fortunately, solutions exist that can prevent further foreclosures and restore the American Dream. They include steps like mandatory mediation, reducing loan principal to fair market rates, and ensuring that reforms of the mortgage industry keep sustainable homeownership available to working Americans.) <Tell the White House to endorse and implement the Compact for Home Opportunity.>

WHAT MESSAGE FITS YOUR OBJECTIVE?

VALUE

An important value you share with your target audience on your issue.

PROBLEM

The problem you want to address, framed as a systemic obstacle to realizing your value.

SOLUTION

The solution you propose, with a logical connection to your value.

ACTION

A specific action that your audience can take to help advance your solution and fulfill your shared value.

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POP QUIZ

- 1. Good VPSA messaging leads with _____;
-
- 2. Follows up with a pithy statement of the _____;
-
- 3. Pivots quickly to _____; and
-
- 4. Closes with suggesting appropriate _____.



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