

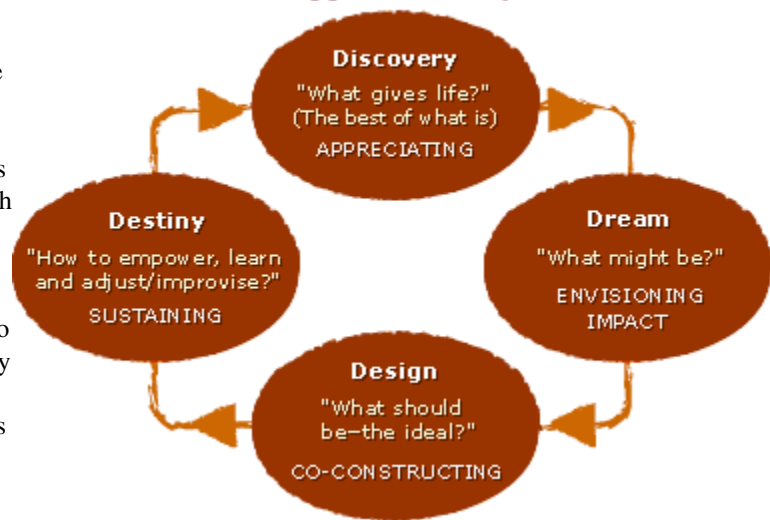


Need2Talk is an organization with a strong vision that reads, “To provide a means for people who need to talk, to find someone who is willing to listen.” Our mission statement is as follows:

To provide a means for people who are dealing with life's challenges. To find a person whom they feel comfortable talking to at any skill level. Our services will whenever possible make a special effort to help those who can't afford professional guidance. By providing this service we hope to increase the well-being of everyone using our service. Thus making the world a better place.

As believer's and practicer's of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) development methodology. The founders of Need2Talk have focused our organization around AI's core which states, “Focusing on community strengths has the greatest potential to advance sustainable development at the community level” (1). In our case the community is defined as anyone who has access or can obtain access to the Internet. Which makes the organization global and diverse by its very nature. Our roots are in using open source technologies developed buy thousands who practice Appreciative Inquiry daily. Our ability to relate and integrate with this technical community will allow us to fulfill our mission of helping those seeking mental assistance with barriers. As our website consume from this technical community, we will produce an application core called the “Request Flow Service (RFS)” which we will contribute back to the technical community for non commercial use. The RFS core is the enabler which allows the facilitation of anonymous interaction and clean work flows for it's users. So when all is said and done, those needing help dealing with life's issues feel comfortable.

The Appreciative Cycle



That said we'll need to clarify the two different types of Need2Talk website users. The first type of user is referred to as a “Talker”. A Talker is the person who has an issue and needs to talk. The system allows the user to remain anonymous while creating requests, approving “Listeners” by reviewing feedback, confirm meeting times and talk via private chat, private email or phone with different levels of “Listeners”. Talkers also have the ability to leave feedback on there experience with the “Listener” which keeps things on the level. Just like Ebay, feedback keeps those who are not honest and trustworthy accountable for their actions.

The second type of Need2Talk website user is referred to as the “Listener”. This is the person who through their own life experiences or schooling feels they can help a “Talker”. The “Listener” has the ability to select who they listen to, set meeting times, while listening via private chat, private email or phone. Just like “Talkers”, “Listeners” leave feedback, to keep the “Talkers” accountable for their actions during the request process. Listeners can ask to have their site user status “promoted” to one of these three levels or classifications:



- **Friend:** This is a classification for anyone willing to help others. This is the default that every account created on the site receives. Because everyone has participated in the community called life. Everyone can help someone.
- **Semi-Professional:** This classification is for those willing to provide verifiable university credentials to Need2Talk. Which must prove the individual achieved or is pursuing a 4 yrs. degree in the area of Behavioral Sciences including but not limited to: BS Psychology, BS Sociology, BS Social Work.
- **Professional:** The last classification is for those willing to do what is required for Semi-Professional classification plus verification of employment (past or present) as a counselor.

This concept is unique because a physical entity is responsible for verifying the credentials of “Listeners” whom the “Talkers” can trust. While allowing “Listeners” to choose who they help. The fact that the “Talker” has the ability to request modes of communication they are comfortable with. This also makes this concept unique. The community effort assumes every talker can be a listener and has something to contribute. This makes the community self helping and self healing. Which is a proven model when looking at open source technology movement. Because the source is open and relatively easy for those skilled, to change defects are fixed faster with better support than in closed source projects. Thus, the Need2Talk organization we will follow the same model for the RFS software, business models and work-flows to help those in need. The final similarity that would like to bring to your attention between the open source movement and Need2Talk is the fact that the organization will be self governed by the Need2Talk community who will create enhancements, fix defects, offer site support, become talkers, become listeners, and control site abuse via the feedback feature. The Need2Talk community will be a diverse group of individuals who benefit others by living AI.

As the organization transitions from the Discovery phase of AI to the Dream phase we can only begin to “envision the impact”. We at Need2Talk see many individuals needing mental help but constantly running into what we call “Help Barriers”. Help barrier are things like: Admitting that you need help, Finding someone who you can relate to, Contacting a person who can help, Trusting the person trying to help, Generational stereotypes, Gender stereotypes, Racial stereotypes, Wading through health care channels, Paying for help, Eye contact, Wondering if the help will make a difference. This organization purpose is to breakdown these “Help Barriers”. Because electronic communication by its nature is less personal than other forms of communication and the Internet is more ubiquitous than ever. We start breaking down the “Help Barriers” from the day we launch the site. The RFS software core has been designed so users both “Talkers” and “Listeners” can remain anonymous and use the service without fees. This reduces even more “Help Barriers”. Finally the one of the organization primary roles it to “verify” the credentials of listeners. The global nature of the Internet and the community process will create possibilities as endless as the Internet itself.

As we have found from the feasibility testing of the organization concept, RFS software during the proof of concept. The features are near completion but RFS lacks some key features for it to reach it's full potential. In our first three years we plan to focus on these key features: Incorporation, Obtain 501c3 status with the IRS, Risk analysis to mitigate legal liabilities to the organization (User agreements, Insurance, etc), Scalable high availability servers, Scalable high availability networks, RFS tuning and refactoring for increase efficiencies, portability and maintainability, extensive recruitment of semi-professional and professional listeners, fund raisers, grant seeking and extensive national branding. RFS enhancements like multi-language support will not come in the first 3 years unless the community desires it. We currently feel multi-language support fits more as exposure to the site broadens and we shift from a national presents to a global presents.

Our tangibles to date include but are not limited to:

- Created and documented the mission, vision and objective of the organization while conveying the idea to others.
- Setup key organizational infrastructure like: Registered Internet domain name, Telephone setup, Email server, Email aliases, Web servers, Application servers, Hardware monitors, Site usage statistics and Filed for a trademark from the United States Patent and Trademark Office.
- Discussed with a small group of lawyers (one specializing in 501c3's) the legal issues the organization might face and how the organization should be structured. The group suggested we perform feasibility testing not only for the software but also for the concept around the software, which we have completed.
- Built the site while evaluating and implementing technologies that would allow the organization to remain fluid, agile and open. The core site functionality includes: User agreement acceptance with digital signatures, Historical user agreement tracking, Creating requests, Viewing request details, View user feedback, Scheduling the request, Email alerts before meeting times, Request approvals, Details on how and where to meet, Private email accounts, Private chat rooms, Site help, Emergency information, Submit user feedback and the ability to remove or

- reschedule the request. All of this while allowing both the talker and the listener to remain anonymous.
- Recruited members for the board of directors and others who will help support the organization going forward. Our skill sets are very diverse from a counselor in a psych ward, to a social work case manager, accounts receivables specialists, senior web publishers focused on content, process engineers, quality experts, graphics specialists, artists, previous secretary of a board of directors and a couple serious software gurus. Currently we have a total of 8-10 active on the team and growing as you read this.
- Implemented an organizational wide issue tracking, version control and documentation repository system. This system was integrated with the feasibility testing performed by the University of North Carolina for tracking feedback and software defects. The systems allows the delegation and management of tasks to individuals active in the organization. This will be the primary repository for all organization documentation. The tool is also integrated with the source code version control system which allows us to close the loop on quality issues.
- Created, presented and executed a detailed test plan on would be semi-professional or professional listeners of site from a University of North Carolina (Social Work course titled “Research and Methods”). The test plan included these 5 scenarios: Email request, Phone request, Chat request, Emergency case and System abuse case. The feedback on the concept and software was very good. We had ~30% participation from the class and found the more the users used the site (by scenario 3-5) the more they where comfortable with it. Which is typical of something unique and new, however we plan on improving documentation to make users more comfortable.
- Made the decision to place the “Request Flow Service (RFS)” core under a for-profit company named Helps2Talk. Then put the RFS source code under a non-commercial use without explicit permission license. The for profit company will then grant the unrestricted use of it's (RFS) software to the non-profit Need2Talk organization. This allows open source development on the RFS product and opens up potential revenue streams that will be for the sole purpose of befitting the Need2Talk non-profit organization. This decision was made on my own with input from all including our lawyers.

The measurements of our success will be simple:

- The number of user accounts. This will show valid interest as the user will care enough to create an account.
- The number of requests created per month. This will show how many people who use the site need help.
- The number of requests marked by the talker or listener as completed per month. This will show how many people we helped.
- The average site feedback level per month and annually. This will be calculated based on the total number of accounts and the average feedback rating. The higher the feedback the more affective we are over all.
- The average site feedback for listener for who we have validated credentials for annually. This will show if the validation process is adding value to the talkers experience when compared to the overall feedback rating.
- Our ability to remain operationally sustainable with regards to our books.

Financial support over time will come from:

- Need2Talk private tax-deductible donations.
- Need2Talk corporate tax-deductible donations. (This can also be seen as a type of advertising on the site as donors will get simple name/company recognition on the site).
- Need2Talk will promote itself through the “Google Grants Program” which is available to all 501c3's.
- Need2Talk will spin up “god.need2talk.org” (which will verify clergy as listeners of God – non denominational for talkers wanting a religious perspective to there problems).
- Need2Talk plans to partner with [Geriatric Mental Health Foundation](#)
- Need2Talk will seek operation grants from [The Social Psychology Program at NSF](#)
- Need2Talk will hold national fund raising events and mental health awareness programs on an annual basis.
- Helps2Talk plans to provide licensing and support of the RFS software to the health care industry like: [Aetna](#), [Aetna Foundation](#), [BlueCross](#) whose revenue will be directed to the Need2Talk organization.
- Helps2Talk plans to create the concept of a virtual office for counselors, life coaches, etc with a subscription fee which will be directed to the Need2Talk organization.
- Helps2Talk plans to provide licensing and support of the RFS software to philanthropist like [Dr Phil](#), [Oprah](#), etc. which will be directed to the Need2Talk organization.
- Helps2Talk plans to provide licensing and support of the RFS software to churches for local missionary work in their congregations, which will be directed to the Need2Talk organization.

(1) [International Institute for Sustainable Development](http://www.iisd.org/ai/) (http://www.iisd.org/ai/)

(2) How quick do they patch – Carnegie Mellon Univ. (http://www.heinz.cmu.edu/~rtelang/discosure_jan_06.pdf)