

**TIMES™**

Transformation  
Integrated  
Measurement  
Evaluation  
System



## What is TIMES™?

TIMES™ is a custom-built measurement and evaluation system that captures data in real time as community members use YSM programs. It measures program success on an individual basis along a five-point scale; there are 18 indicators to be measured, such as shelter, mental health, and economic stability.

By using TIMES™, we quantify the qualitative experiences that we witness every day. We're able to visualize how our programs are being used or customized so that we can better support our community members and create better outcomes.

# PATHWAYS TO MEANINGFUL INCOME: SYSTEMS NAVIGATION

Toronto is home to 500,000 residents struggling with poverty. Since 1896, YSM has supported vulnerable populations with grassroots services, including food security, housing, education, and employment [support](#).

Over the past six years, we've been analyzing our approach to wraparound services by capturing data using TIMES™, our custom-built measurement framework. **Pathways To Meaningful Income** is a three-part series that examines the data behind our community members' journeys toward income creation. In part three, we will see the impact of Systems Navigation on meaningful income.

# THE PATH TO GENERATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

As a single father and owner of a struggling roofing business, Steve was lost in a maze of debt, overdue taxes, illiteracy, health concerns, and social anxiety. This led to isolation, hoarding, and alcoholism to cope. Steve's physical health also waned as arthritis and fibromyalgia left him in debilitating pain. The physical, emotional, and mental toll weighed on him and began affecting his relationship with his two daughters.

Steve wanted to change his life but didn't know where to begin or how to navigate the available supports. His 20-year-old daughter, Alice, introduced him to YSM as she was seeking her own support programs. At the time, Alice was carrying the burden of caring for the family, and was the primary caregiver to her younger sister who was struggling with addiction.

We tailored a suite of services that reflected Steve's needs and walked with him every step of the way. This process saw us connecting him to health practitioners, social assistance programs, addiction services, and professionals, such as lawyers and accountants.

Steve has since decluttered his home, filed his taxes, folded his business, enrolled in financial support, and connected with physiotherapists. At 60 years old, and given his health challenges, this is what made sense for Steve and his family at this time. It has also given Alice the chance to focus on her own financial goals and dreams, creating an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty for future generations.

## Why Meaningful Income Matters

We use the term "meaningful income" because income comes in many forms and the journey is not always a straightforward one.

Poverty reduction is a concerted effort between multiple community agencies, organizations, and government bodies, as well as a reflection of an individual's goals. Often the pathway toward meaningful income does not begin directly with employment; instead, it involves deep listening to understand the complex social barriers that affect people on a personal basis.

TIMES™ helps to keep us accountable to the communities and families that we serve and puts sovereignty back into their hands on the journey toward meaningful income.

## Systems Navigation: Connecting The Dots

A vast majority of YSM community members require assistance navigating the various supports and resources available to them. By supporting them in Systems Navigation, we refer community members to the resources they need while offering guidance throughout the process.

For Steve, nearly **a third of the support we provided to him was dedicated to Systems Navigation**, such as applying for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, and assisting with meetings and paperwork.

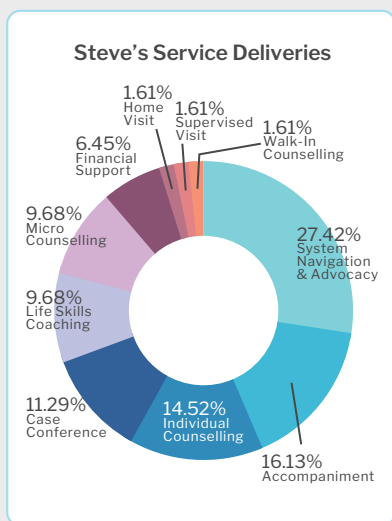
**But for many, these social assistance programs are often not enough to end the aggressive cycle of poverty — over 60% of Ontario Works recipients live below the poverty line.** This means that additional supports are frequently needed to help them make ends meet. Without these, a single mother, for example, may have to choose between paying for rent, groceries, or the daycare that enables her to work. TIMES™ helps us to connect the dots between community needs and services.

## Ending Poverty Transforms Families, Friends, and Communities

TIMES™ guides YSM toward one of our goals: to empower individuals to self-sufficiently navigate the system. After a year and a half of Systems Navigation, Steve has seen a marked increase in his Sense of Power and Mental Health (TIMES™ indicators), both of which gauge confidence and self-worth, two factors necessary to achieving long-term meaningful income.

**Data focuses your poverty-reduction strategy, moving it toward measurable and sustainable outcomes.**

**Call us at 416-929-9614**



**When someone is able to access the supports they need to bring their life to a more stable and predictable place, they feel, for the first time, empowered.**

— Leah Katerberg,  
VP of Programs and Partnerships