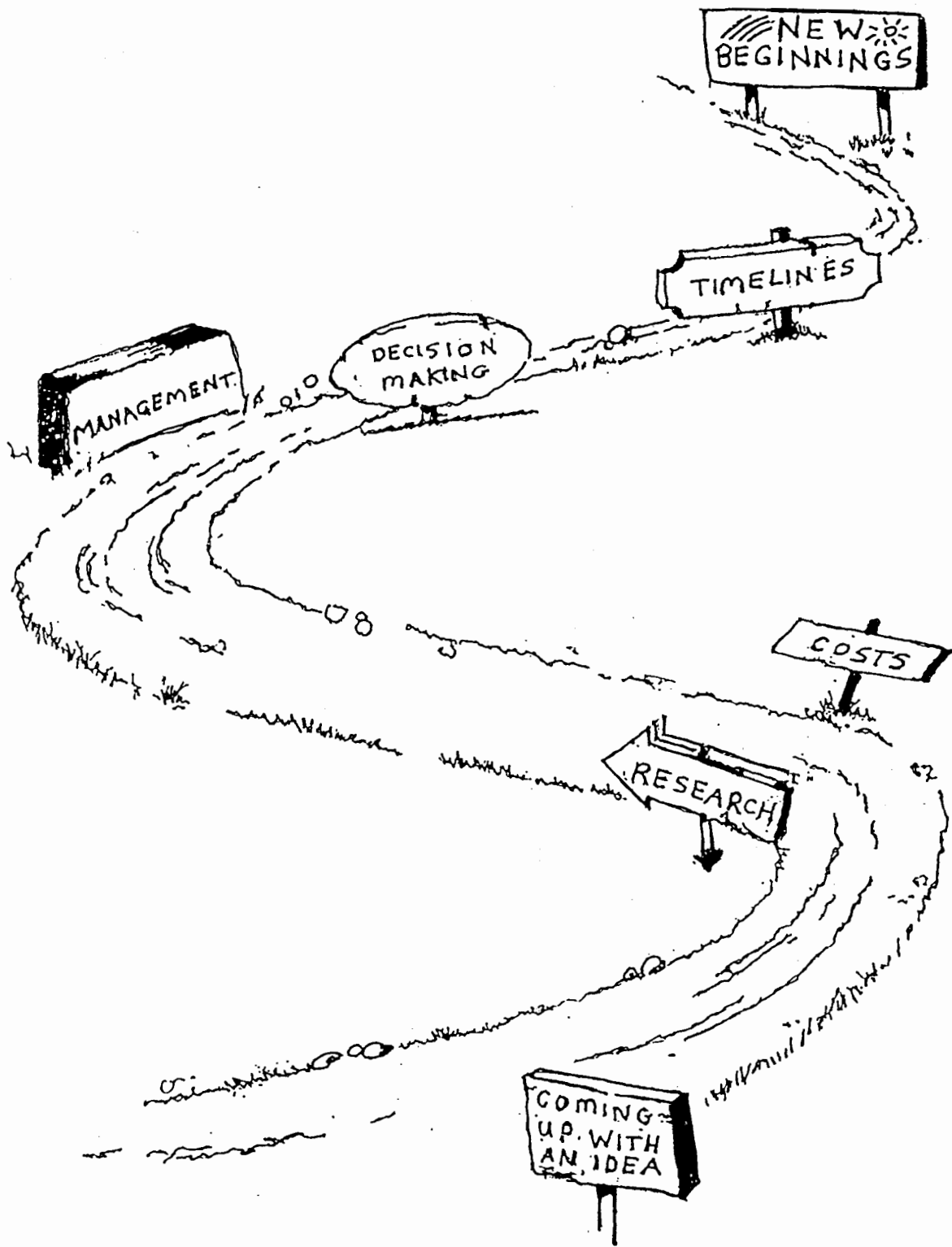


THE ROAD WELL TRAVELED

(Project Planning)



THE ROAD *WELL* TRAVELED

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The Road *Well* Traveled (Project Planning)

Developed For:

The Vancouver Woman's Health Collective

by:

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TIMELINE

See back of book

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INTRODUCTION

The most important task (and indeed, the most tedious), with any project is to **clearly** define it. This means having a clear understanding of the **intent** of the project and **all the costs** associated with it, from money to womanpower and everything in-between. How well this task is handled will determine the success of the project. The clearer the view of where you are going, the easier it will be to get there. Keep this in mind when the phrase "that's close enough" comes to mind (as it will - numerous times), as you try to complete this task. The following is intended to assist you.

It is best to write everything out **completely**. This helps with clarity and clarity is what will keep you from getting overwhelmed and experiencing that "bogged down" feeling once your project is underway. You may very well experience that "bogged down" feeling as you work your way through this guidebook. We would be surprised if you didn't! If it is indeed inevitable, might as well get it out of the way now! Having a written, clear vision to refer to as to **why** you are doing **what** you are doing on those "tough days," will help to keep your motivation up.

This initial stage is a lot of work. But if done thoroughly, it will make your overall task **much** easier, and you'll be very glad you did it.

We have tried to break this process down in a way that will make it as easy as possible to complete, but there is no getting around the fact that it is going to take a great deal of "thinking" on your part. Keep in mind that each section you complete in this guidebook will act as a prelude to the next and following sections. So take one section at a time and don't move onto the next section until you are truly satisfied with the results so far. (OK, you can *peek* ahead. That might even help you to relax. But that's **all**. Just a peek!)

How will you know when you are satisfied? When there are no little *niggling*s in the back of your head or in your chest or your stomach or your toes or any other part of your body that are trying to say to you "it doesn't quite **feel right** yet."

Areas that you will be looking at include:

- Coming up with an idea
- Defining your goals
- Market Research
- Marketing
- Monetary Costs
- Looking at Risks
- Managing the Project
- Drawing up a Timeline

Good luck and don't forget to have a lot of fun!

COMING UP WITH AN IDEA

Sometimes ideas come with ease. Other times, they are shy and tentative to be seen. Coax them out. A group brainstorm is especially good for this. Let your imagination run wild. Don't judge the ideas at this point as unrealistic or unsuitable. Let those ideas roll!!! It can help to write them down on a flip chart.

Some things to brainstorm about:

What things do you like to do?

What things are you good at doing?

What do people (your identified group) need?

What is the womondate here at the collective? (What is our purpose? Our reason of being? Our philosophy? Etc.)

Project Ideas (based on the above brainstorming)

Now let's "sift"

After you have a host of ideas, sift through them to find the one with the most potential. How does it fit in with the collective's values and objectives?

Once you have chosen an idea to explore, put the rest of those marvelous ideas on a shelf for safe keeping; they may want to be born into reality later. With an idea in hand, you are ready to start your journey full steam ahead!!

DEFINE THE GOAL(S) OF THE PROJECT

Don't panic! On second thought, go ahead and panic. This is often an initial reflex when someone says "define your goal," so we might as well just let it have its room and then we can get on with the task. Scrunch up your face, pull at your hair, groan, think thoughts like "how did I get myself into this."



Once you've done what it is you need to do to get this *initial panic* out of your system, take a deep breath or two or three, decide to relax, and **think small**. The big picture will develop itself. This is an area where each committee member might want to take some time to do some thinking on their own and jot down some notes. Answering the following questions (and others that **you** will think of), will help to bring things into focus and your **goal(s)** will appear right there on the paper in front of you. The more clearly you are able to define the goals of the project, the easier the rest of this process will go, so don't be afraid to spend some time here.

Why do I think this project is a good idea? (The assumption here, of course, is that you **do** think it's a good idea. If you don't believe this, now is the time to say so.)

What personal rewards do I hope to gain from this project? (It's **OK!** Better still! It's **important** that you experience some personal rewards in the doing of this project. Firstly, you deserve to. Secondly, your personal rewards will go a long way in keeping you motivated on those tough days. So don't be shy. Name **all** the personal rewards you can think of, no matter how small or big they may seem to be. And if keeping some of them to yourself will help you to *get in touch* with them that's OK too! What's important is to get in touch with what they are. Then you can share the ones you're comfortable sharing with the rest of the committee.)

Who (else) would I like to see benefit from this project? (This can be more than one person/group.)

In what way would I like to see each person/group benefit?

What is the desired end result(s) of this project?

The Goals of the project are

Note: If you find yourselves unable to define the goals clearly, work needs to be done in this area before you continue.

Are the goal(s) congruent with the VWHC womondate and policies?

If yes, continue journey.

If no, look for another trip.

Will there be an impact on current/future Collective work?

Do the goals of the project connect in any way with anything else going on at the Collective at the present time? If so, in what way?

Will the connection(s) help/hinder your project, help/hinder what your project is connected to? You probably only need to look at any "hindrances" if they exist. What can be done about them?

Will the community served by the VWHC be wanting information as to your research etc. long after you finished doing the research?

MARKET RESEARCH*

It is critical to research the market. No matter how marvelous your service or product is, it won't be in demand unless there is a market for it. You need to get a very clear and focused vision of the market and those you hope to serve.



If you are doing research in the downtown eastside, add an extra margin of at least 3 - 5 days per person you're getting ideas from. Unless you have the experience of having lived **houseless** for years, it would be wise to **not** get ideas from houseless people in the middle of the night or in secluded places; keep your physical well being in mind.

* For further information on this topic see "Research For Change." This can *presently* be found on the bookshelf, southwest corner in the "flow room."

What is the need for the service/product within the community that the VWHC serves?

Who will identify with your goals?

What do they want - and why?

Why do (or would) they buy the service/product?

Is this service already provided in the community? Where & when?

How much do they pay for the service now?

Is there a particular "time" that would be most appropriate?

Evaluate the results of your research - do these results affirm your pre-defined goals?

MARKETING (Advertising and Promotion)

Who is the **identified market**? (The people you wish to reach with this project?)

What is the message you want to deliver in your advertising/promotion?

What kinds of advertising/promotion will be needed/used to reach the identified market?

MONETARY COSTS

Now let's get down to the money! How much is this project going to cost?

Physical space:

How much space do you need?

What facilities does the space need to have?

How many people does it need to hold?

Wheelchair accessible?

Washrooms?

Room for daycare?

Kitchen facilities needed?

Once the needed space has been defined:

Where can the space be found

What will it cost (rent, utilities,
telephone, janitorial etc.)

COST

Chosen Space

Paid Personnel

Are there any elements/aspects of the project that may require paying someone to do a specific job? (If so, a job description may need to be developed.)

Cost of personnel

Office Supplies

How much computer time is needed ("How the *#@\$% am I supposed to figure **that** out?" asks she. Just give it your best guess!!)

Computer/laser printing

Pens, pencils, colored markers

Erasers, typewriter correction fluid

Paper clips, staples, elastic bands

Note paper, colored paper, poster board

Filing cards and filing card holders

File folders, duo tongs, clip boards, binders

Stationery and envelopes with or without VWHC letterhead

Art supplies, Letraset lettering

Flip charts, flip chart stands

Glue, scotch tape, wax for the Lectro - stik hot wax machine

Photocopy costs

Printing and Binding

Receipt books, ticket coupons

Postage costs

Telephone costs if there are long distance calls

Fax machine costs if there are long distance faxes

Equipment rental (i.e. overhead projector, chairs, dishes, flip chart stands, etc.)

Extension cord(s), garbage bags

Any equipment that the collective doesn't have that would be needed

Anything else you can possibly think of - **leave nothing out, no matter how trivial it may seem to be.**

Office Supplies Total: _____

Researching Your Idea

The kinds of research costs depends on how you are going to do your research, and who you are going to research.

If you are going to use a survey approach by having people fill out questionnaires include the cost of pencils and pens that go missing, along with questionnaires that aren't returned. And the cost of making those questionnaires. Postage if you are mailing out the questionnaires.

Questionnaires

How much computer time is needed

Computer/laser printing

Pens, pencils, colored markers

Erasers, typewriter correction fluid

Paper clips, staples, elastic bands

Note paper, colored paper, poster board

Filing cards and filing card holders

File folders, duo tangs, clip boards, binders

Stationery and envelopes with or without VWHC letterhead

Art supplies, Letraset lettering

Flip chart, flip chart stands

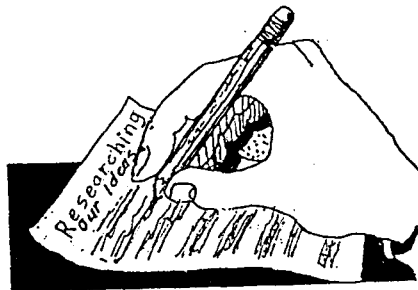
Photocopy costs

Postage costs

Telephone rental

Long distance charges - telephone

Long distance charges - faxes



"Outside" research costs (i.e. someone charges to look through their material)

If you are researching lower income people it is important to be sensitive and compassionate around their situation. This may involve the following costs:

coffee/tea _____

snacks/food _____

cigarettes, matches/lighter _____

money for them telephoning you _____

bus fare, and unexpected things _____

like cab fare _____

other _____

Your own expenses while out in the field doing research:

Food and beverages

Travel costs (bus, car mileage, taxi)

Telephone costs from a pay phone

If the research material is to be "produced" for future reference,
what costs will be associated with this?

Paper

Photocopying

Printing

Bindery

Other

Research Total: _____

Advertising/Promotion (Marketing)

Cost

Radio

Television

Newspapers

Posters

Other

Advertising/Promotion Total:

Ticketed or non-ticketed event?

If ticketed:

What will the **identified market** "bear" with respect to the cost of a ticket?

How many tickets must be sold to break even? _____

If a profit is intended, how many tickets must be sold to reach intended profit?

Can this number of tickets be realistically sold (whether to break even or make a profit).

Once you've determined the number of tickets that **need** to be sold, add on a few extra just for the heck of it!

Number of tickets needed!!! _____

Cost of producing tickets:

Paper

Printing Services

Bindery Services

Other

Total cost of producing tickets: _____

Refreshments

What are you going to serve? Define and calculate the costs.

Beverages: (Coffee, tea, fruit juice, pop,)

Snacks/meals: (Muffins, pastries, cheese, sliced meats, crackers, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables & vegetable dip, sandwiches, salads, pizza,.....)

Remember to count in those hidden little things hiding on the edges, like sugar, milk/cream, margarine, mayonnaise, mustard, salt, pepper, napkins, ..

Food preparation costs

Dishes and utensils (Are you going to use paper plates/cups, plastic knives & forks? If so count in the costs. If not, count in the cost of dish soap.)

Total cost of Refreshments

Daycare

Who is going to keep an eye on all those little tykes? Is one of you going to volunteer for this? Or will you pay someone to tend to the needs of the children? Will someone else be needed to step in so the caregiver can get some time out? What kind of refreshments are you going to serve the little ones? In your tallying, count in the cost of crayons, paper, toys, and entertainment.



Paid help

Refreshments

Toys and Entertainment

Sleeping Equipment

Total Cost of Daycare

Transportation

Prior to the event:

Transportation costs of volunteers doing errands prior to the event.

Car mileage

Bus

Courier services

Other

During the event:

Will any kind of transportation costs be provided to volunteers or participants during the event?

Car mileage

Bus

Other

Total Cost of Transportation _____

If this is to be an outdoor event would it be appropriate to have a "plan B" *just in case* the weather is not cooperative?

Will there be other costs associated with this if needed?

step! This can be inspiring, motivational, and provide you with information as to any "gaps" that may have been overlooked in the planning stages. Perhaps one person could be describing what is happening as you visualize the event. While this is happening, everyone could keep their "minds eye" on the lookout for what might need more attention.



If the money needed is available, continue on the adventure.

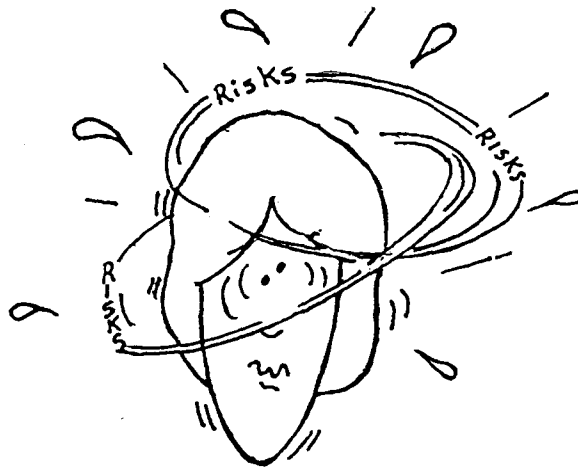
If the money is not available, where do you go from here?

i.e. Scratch the project? Come up with another project to raise the funds for this project?

LOOKING AT RISKS AND OTHER IMPORTANT FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What are the risks?

What are we hoping to gain?



What are we ready to lose?

How much have we overstated our case to build our sense of morale, optimism, and courage?

Are we understating our case? Why?

How can we minimize the risks?

What is our motive for doing this project?

Who is responsible for whatever success or failure that occurs?

Why are we taking these risks?

Who is offering a similar service/product? How have they done?

What are their mistakes?

What are our weak points? How can we fix them?

What are our product/service's weak points? Can they be fixed?

How good is our communication with each other? How can we improve it?

Will the going be rough at times? When, where, and why? What can we do to make it easier?

Do we have the cohesive teamwork needed to do this project? If not, how can we build and maintain this?

The risks are worth it - continue.

The risks are not worth it - do not pass go, do not collect \$200, and do not continue on this path.

ESTABLISH HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE MANAGED

Special Note

Appropriately establishing "who will be responsible for what" is an area that can "make or break" a project, and the time needs to be taken to do this wisely. The skills, time, etc. needed to complete **each** task needs to be written down and only a woman who has these skills would qualify for the task. (This includes those acting as "backups.") It is the responsibility of each woman to **not take on** tasks she does not have the skills/time to complete. It is also the responsibility of each woman to notify her "backup" and the "area coordinator" if she is running into any kind of difficulty completing a task. (i.e. lack of time/energy or suddenly your life is in the toilet.) It is the responsibility of the "area coordinator" to facilitate success in this area with respect to the tasks needed to be done in her area. It is the responsibility of the "overall coordinator" to facilitate success in this area with respect to the job needed to be done by an "area coordinator."

Decision Making

Decisions, decisions, decisions! How the decision making process is going to work needs to be established right at the beginning. Each woman needs to be responsible in recognizing her own strengths and weaknesses. If a woman has taken on the responsibility of doing a particular task, it is reasonable to assume that she has the skills and knowledge to make the decisions relevant to that task. This does not mean that she should not seek assistance if she would like other input from collective members, only that she is not **required** to do so. This also means that any decision she **does** make **needs to be** accepted as such unless it will actually cause difficulties for the project or the health collective. In other words, a decision made by a woman who

has taken on a task should not be questioned simply because someone else might have done it differently. Decision making abilities are a vital factor to consider when figuring out who will do what tasks. The point is that if **every** decision has to be taken to a meeting talked about, and voted on, the project will creep along at a snail's pace and may never get done. We need to be able to trust each other. That is a vital part of a cooperative effort that leads to success.

Coordinators and their Jobs

Each project should have an **overall** coordinator as well as a coordinator for each **area**. Each project will have its own uniqueness and hence its own specific needs with respect to the job of each coordinator. For this reason, a **complete** job description should be developed for each coordinator. However, there are some general requirements that go with any coordinating position.

The main responsibility of the overall coordinator will be to track "timelines" for the overall project and assist the area coordinators as needed. This does not mean waiting for an area coordinator to come seeking help. The overall coordinator should be in constant communication with each of the area coordinators.

The main responsibility of an area coordinator is to track "timelines" in her area and assist wimmin who are working in her area as needed. As with the overall coordinator, this is an "active" roll.

The four most important skills for any coordinator are:

1. Organizational skills
2. The ability to communicate both effectively and sensitively
3. Comfort with taking responsibility and making decisions
4. The ability to recognize when a more collective decision is needed (and when it is **not** needed).

Overall Coordinator - Job Description

Establish one woman to coordinate each area and one woman to act as back-up coordinator to each area. (It's possible a woman would be involved in more than one area.)

Area	Coordinator	Backup

Break each "area" down to as many different "tasks" as possible, and establish who will be responsible for each task. Again, it would be a good idea to have "backups."

See "Timeline Sheet"

Drawing Up a Timeline

Timelines are those important tools that help turn a wonderful idea into reality. They help us set priorities, communicate, organize our efforts, keep track of our progress, measure our successes, break the job into manageable pieces, getting a view of the big picture, and create a herstory, year end report, and give others the opportunity to learn from our process/flow. Sound great? Ah! Yes!! Now, how to create a timeline.

Surprise, Surprise!

There is good news! You have **already** defined your goal(s), broken your project down into "areas", and then further broken it down into "tasks." You have also already established who will be responsible for each task. All of this is the "core material" for your timeline(s). All that is left to do is:

1. Prioritize the tasks.
2. Assess the resources needed other than womonpower (i.e. time on a computer) so the resources can be arranged for (i.e. "book computer time in advance).
3. Assess how much time will be needed to complete each task.
4. Fill in the timeline forms provided.

How to go about this:

1. **Prioritizing the tasks**

This could be done in "areas". However, there may be situations where a task in one area may need to be completed before a task in another area can be started. For this reason, it may be best to "prioritize" as a whole group. Another possibility is for each "area" to prioritize individually and then the group come together as a whole to work out the "kinks." Whichever method is best suited to the group will get the job done.

2. **Assessing the resources**

This can be done by the "area" group or by the woman doing the task. Assessing the resources needed will be very "task specific." Basically, this entails "thinking through" the task step by step and jotting down things needed to get the task done. (Again, computer time is a good example. Another example is how long it would take a Print Shop to get a completed job back to you once you have given them the material to print.)

3. **Assessing how much time is needed**

This is best done by the woman who is doing the task as one of **the** prime elements in assessing the time needed is the woman herself and how much time is available to her. Questions only she can answer. Time needed should initially be described in "number of hours." It can then be assessed as to what **date** it can be done by, given the woman's own schedule etc.

4. **Filling in the timeline form**

The form pretty much speaks for itself. Each woman should have a copy of her own timeline. Each area coordinator should have a copy of the timeline of each woman in her area. The overall coordinator should have a copy of all timelines. Also, anyone acting as "back-up" should have a copy of the timeline for the person (or task) they are acting as back-up to.

Note:

It is absolutely **essential** that these timelines be **used**. Try to make it a habit to look at the ones you are responsible for on a regular basis. How you do this is in a way that best suits you. (Personally, with my tendency to forget things these days, I would be tempted to hang it from my forehead.)

ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT THE PROJECT?

YES???

Then don't forget to have a good time!



NO????



**Then something is wrong!
Do not continue. Go back
and reassess, take
another look, **get a
clearer picture.** (Take a
break first though!)**

THE BEGINNING . . .



