HEARTWOOD'S CIRCLE OF AWESOMENESS

Youth

Community Resources

Community Resources

TOOLS FOR GROWTH

Supportive Peers

Meaningful Contribution

CORE VALUES

Passion
Contribute
Act
Connect
Having Fun

Community Web

Innovators
Initiators
Connectors

Empowering Culture

Youth/Adult Partnerships
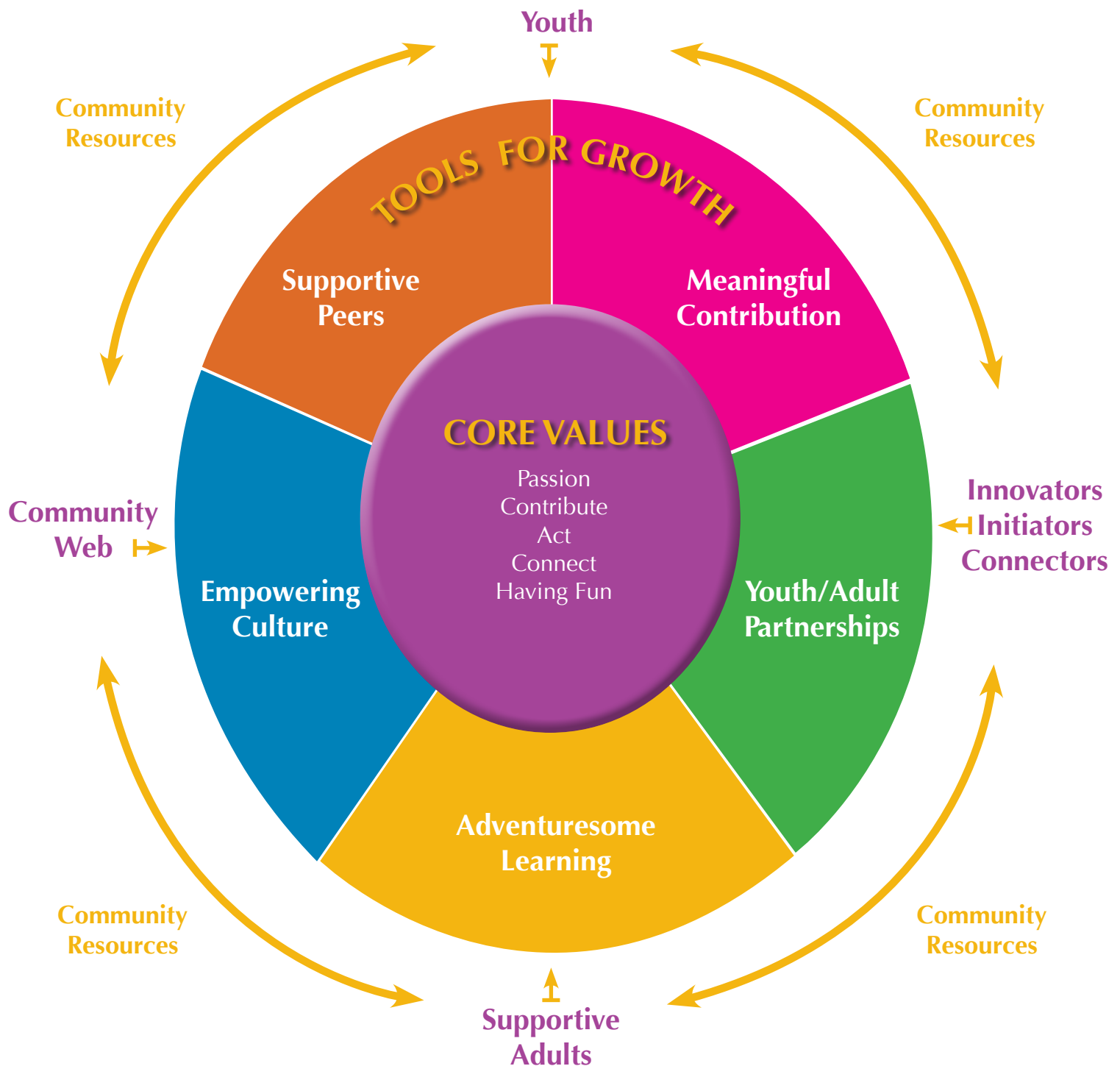
Community Resources

Adventuresome Learning

Community Resources

Supportive Adults

HeartWood's Framework for Community Youth Development (i.e. renamed the 'Circle of Awesomeness' by youth) was developed based on our research with young people and our work linking youth and communities. The inner circle describes the *Core Values* young people identified that encourage their own engagement. These core values have proven to be helpful touchstones by which to assess youth programs and services.

The middle circle, *Tools for Growth*, describes those tools HeartWood has found to be effective in putting the *core values* into practice. Like any tools there are a number of different ways in which to apply them depending on the job at hand, the available material, and skill level and experience of those handling these tools. HeartWood is constantly exploring the many diverse ways to apply the following tools:

- **Meaningful Contribution:** Taking action to meet a genuine need.

- **Adventuresome Learning:** Engaging, real life experiences that challenge individuals to step outside of their comfort zones to learn and grow.

- **Supportive Peers:** Creating the atmosphere that fosters a strong peer team where individuals feel connected, appreciated and supported by others.

- **Youth-Adult Partnerships:** Gaining inspiration, support and guidance through a relationship of mutual caring and respect.

- **Empowering Culture:** Providing opportunities for youth to initiate, commit, plan and choose paths to work together with peers and the community as active citizens.

The outer circle, *Community Resources*, describes the components of the systems-wide approach that fosters youth engagement. The *system* may be an organization, institution, government agency, or community. The community resources include:

- **Initiators, Innovators, Connectors:** can be an individual, a group of people (youth and/or adults), or an organization that has a specific interest or motivation and is a bright light or energy source to see increased youth engagement in the defined system.

- **Youth:** meaningful roles for youth participation in the system.

- **Supportive Adults:** meaningful roles for supportive adults to help young people navigate the system.

- **Community Web:** linking other youth serving and/or community based organizations, government agencies and individuals who can play a role towards increased youth engagement in the system.