

Coffee Chat: Collaboration 4.5

September 25, 2019

Notes

Recap from August's Coffee Chat ([notes here](#))

- What does collaboration mean to us?
- Relationships based in transparency, equity
- Great vision for what collaboration can be, but roadblocks are common
 - How to maintain connection across orgs when there's turnover?
 - How to move from talk to action?
 - Many roadblocks come back to food systems leaders having tight facilitation skills, esp as a food systems leaders must bring people together
 - Building trust in groups
 - Building shared vision, strategy
- Effective collaboration led by a great facilitator - bringing folks in. Difficult to develop a process and skills to bring multiple people, perspectives, etc. together
 - Trust early on in the convo is key. Creating connection to group.
 - Multiple ways that people relate and connect
- Disconnect between collaboration and funding -- collaboration inhibited by lack of resources available for it

How to create the conditions for collaboration?

- How to go into grants together? Accountability, mutuality, financial mgmt, etc.

Trust, Vulnerability, & Transparency - what techniques are you using for collaborating with folks and building trust?

- Getting to know *people* - who they are. Building relations on the personal level vs only the professional level
- Networking and connection games in the beginning
 - Pairing activities - key questions to ask that may or may not be connected to content of the meeting
 - Not saying title - can be a leveling tool
 - Wackiest food you've ever eaten? -- memorable
 - Dialogue walks in pairs- walk out for 8 minutes, only one person can talk, after 8 minutes turn around and other person talks. Good prompt can make this juicy!
- Connection before Content

Shifting meeting culture to include the people connections?

- Consider having a separate meeting around personal connection framed as a tool for more effective collaboration
- Suggest adding 10 mins to the beginning of a meeting for connection > content



- Data and research around importance of human connection
 - Core Theory of Success:
<https://thesystemsthinker.com/what-is-your-organizations-core-theory-of-success/>

Some folks on a grant, some are off a grant - how to manage?

- Be honest!
- Agreements around what it means to not participate

Tools:

- Johari Window - <https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-johari-window-model/>

Building relationships across racial lines, different neighborhoods, organizations, etc.

- Making time and space for relationship development, listening
- Transparency around what we're working on, continual updates, illustrate how the different sides are connected
- Showing up for other people

How to collaborate well in a space when you're not the one leading it? Facilitate when you're not the facilitator

- You can guide the meeting as a participant but you need to read the room
- Asking good questions and redirecting
- Good collaborator can help from the sidelines to move the convo forward - if a convo is going sideways, facilitator may already be nervous it's getting thrown off.
 - Anchor the convo back in
- Meeting design: bring communities, attendees into the design process - you're part of the meeting up front so you feel more part of holding the group accountable for moving forward and achieving the outcomes
 - What are you hoping to get out of our time together?
 - Sharing agenda before hand and soliciting feedback
 - Rotating facilitation
 - Community agreements - within collaborations - how do we want to show up?
What's the type of container we're trying to make? Step up, step back

