

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

