

Design for Belonging Discussion Questions

Meeting 2: Feeling Belonging (pages 1-29)

What is an example of you “be(ing) a leader who hosts by bringing people together to begin conversations and launch critical actions?”

Where do you feel belonging? What aspects of that environment contribute to your sense of belonging?

What is one small but meaningful change you would like to make to increase belonging in your sphere of influence?

Share out: What were some metaphors that you thought of for belonging and othering?

- Belonging is like/looks like/feels like.... Because...
- Othering is like/looks like/feels like.... Because...

P24 - When a place of belonging changes over time— bell hooks and her choice to reclaim elements of a place and work for needed change. Related to this, I just wanted to share an interesting interactive here that I think relates to our broad discussion of belonging:

<https://ncase.me/polygons/>

Resources discussed:

Street Data

Dear Data

Utrecht

The Art of Gathering

Bittersweet by Susan Cain

Meeting 3: Seeing Belonging (pages 32-79)

I really enjoyed the section on dissenting and would love to discuss one or more of the questions on p. 70

- When was a time you wish you had spoken up? And what enables you to be brave in your home, workplace, or community?
- In what ways do you use dissent productively? (or have seen others use dissent productively?) What does productive dissent look like, feel like, sound like, etc.?
- Can your group hold differing opinions of varying sizes or levels of concern without othering?
- What would it look like to build in more opportunities to hear and learn from dissenting views?

I'm really intrigued by planning for exits... feels the opposite of belonging, but so important!

- Any stories of successful exits? Maintained sense of belonging while moving on to new things... either as the leaver or the stayer 😊
- What does it feel like to contemplate designing for an exit? (p 77)

Meeting 4: Shaping Belonging (pages 84-142)

Nia: What levers of design do you tend to notice first/the most when you enter a space? Were there any levers that were new / you've never considered before? If so, what's a way you can explore/ play with that new lever in your organization/ personal life/ etc...

- I'm genuinely curious to hear about any specific ways you plan on designing belonging within your group/organization/work etc.

Jentry: I'm throwing my friend a small birthday party next Friday. Pizza and games at her house, only 5 of us will be in attendance. How can I make it special, and help people show up in a new way? What levers can I pull? Also, trying something new has blown up in my face before and made people feel othered, so I don't want to repeat past mistakes.

Erin: I really enjoyed reading about Roles as a lever of design. When I was in my elementary education program, the students I worked with often had roles like "line leader", "meteorologist", "attendance taker", "librarian", etc. I keep thinking about how much students loved having ownership over some part of the school day and how that increased belonging. How did others see this as a relevant lever of design in your current work environment? What's a role that you could try out, even briefly, to shift the dynamics of belonging in your team, large or small?