NCDD Coffee Hour

This Week's Theme: Connecting our Dialogue and Deliberation Processes to Governance (i.e our elected representatives)

Thursday, September 5, 2013 at 12pm EDT

Dial-in number: 1-213-342-3000

Access code: 444839

Welcome! You can edit this document anytime before or during the call.

Timeline

- 5 min - Small talk as we wait for everyone to join the call.
- 5 min- Very brief intros (Name, organization, and location in one sentence. The question/topic that you'd like to discuss on the call in one sentence, if any.)
- 50 min- Free form discussion. The facilitator (Lucas Cioffi) will provide very light facilitation to periodically bring up the questions that the group raised at the beginning of the call. If there are late-comers, the facilitator will ask them to introduce themselves when the conversation comes to a natural break.

Here's the table of contents for all past and future NCDD Coffee Hour calls.

Name (plus optional contact info) of people who plan on participating

- Lucas Cioffi, AthenaBridge.com, lucas@athenabridge.org, NCDD Board Member, Charlottesville, VA.
- Tomas Spath, the Institute for Civility in Government, www.instituteforcivility.org, Co-Founder, Houston, TX
- Terry Steichen, TopicCentral.com, Founder
- Arjun Singh, Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation - www.c2d2.ca. City Councillor, City of Kamloops - www.kamloops.ca
- Courtney Breese, NCDD Board Member, MA Office of Public Collaboration, Richmond, CA
- Michael Maxsenti, Rebellious Truths, www.rebellioustruths.org/ Newport Coast, CA
- Ben Roberts, The Conversation Collaborative, www.conversationcollaborative.com, ben@conversationcollaborative.com
- Stephen Buckley, OpenGovMetrics.com, Collaboration Engineer, sbuckley@igc.org
- Shimon Waldfogel, www.citizens4health.org , shimonw@comcast.net, Philly

Collaboratively Edited Notes from the Conversation:

- Well, I know we're supposed to be talking about "Connecting our Dialogue and Deliberation Processes to Governance" but I'm also very interested in **Syria** and ways we might bring some good process to the "national conversation" that is underway. It's related, of course, but not all dialogue we might convene would be targeted at influencing our elected reps per se.

    - Of course it's worth noting that there has been a lively exchange (started by Lucas) on how we might frame such conversations via the listserve over the past few days.
    - We've got some great questions up on the listserve--I might be interested in partnering to bring this conversation forward using some of these framings.
    - We could set up another line if the group is split between these topics.
    - (this is Ben Roberts, btw)

- White House Open Government Initiative looking for input (much like 4 yrs prior): http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/09/03/we-want-your-input-building-more-open-government . Why haven't they gotten better with collaborating? Would like to see other people's ideas and comments.
- There is a broadly felt sense of disempowerment--of people not having a voice.
    - "advisory" output from D&D falls short of having a "direct linkage" that could generate impact.
- This conversation is a source of hope--at least we're talking about this and there is a growing movement (that wasn't true in 1998).
- Where have we seen D&D have influence on policy makers?
    - South/Central America. Laws to block military aid to El Salvador (in 1990s).
    - A local land use issue where an advisory committee used extensive public engagement that was probably key to a policy decision not to develop housing on the property in question.

- Think it's a key point that we need both good process as well as good relationships. A relationship in a bad process not worth as much.
- If we don't dramatically reduce the influence of money in politics (both campaign finance and lobbying), it's hard to see how the voice of "We the People," no matter how wise or loud, will have much influence. A Syria conversation might not prevent military action, but it might highlight the disconnect that money is creating between the will of the people and the decision-making in DC.
- Please, President Obama. Not another 'national conversation.' (Wash. Post 2/1/13)
    - http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/please-president-obama-not-another-national-conversation/2013/02/01/4a7b914c-5e5b-11e2-a389-ee565c81c565_story.html
    - Interesting that this piece doesn't even mention the one case where Obama "officially" called for a national convo: mental health! (Ben, the article was written in February, so there have been subsequent so-called "national conversations": Mental Health, National Security/domestic surveillance, etc.).
- What would a quantum leap forward look like and how would we get there?