

Appendix 4: Excerpts from Transcriptions of Post-Session Reflective Dialogues

Play for Change! led by Amy Lin

Sunday, October 4, 2015, 11 - 3 pm

What does the word Play mean to you? What have you learned about life, the world or yourself through play? Why is it so delightful and how can you bring the general public into that sense of play? These are some of the questions we will ponder as we look for fresh new ways to engage our creativity through designing and model building. You will be limited only by your imagination - please come out and PLAY!

Transcription: Reflective Dialogue

Female: Amy had a multidisciplinary approach. There was writing, there was conversation, there was pictures from other places where I would say that ladder gave me a big sense of possibility, unended possibility, and an uninterrupted sense of time.

Female: Unrushed time allows more space for you to go deeper.

Facilitator: I can speak from the other end of that, as the facilitator. I think it is important in future workshops to be able to improvise with the schedule, and not be super strict with the timeline. I mean, I wrote out a very clear timeline, but of course we did not get time, we did not have time to do everything and it was great, I was telling X that I appreciated the note that we ended on. Having the conversation and sharing our thoughts about it. That was just as valuable as the exercise that I had planned, maybe even more so, but I just appreciated having the freedom to be flexible.

Female: I really appreciated the feeling of the invitation. You know, we talk a lot about participatory experiences. Some of them are not actually. So I felt that from the start, and I also felt at ease and free.I sort of felt it was a very gracious space, so I did not feel like I had to perform, I feel like I have to be on a lot, so even though it is not a performance of that kind so I appreciated that. It was actually quite relaxing, I found it very relaxing. Meditative you used the word from earlier, and I found it kind of meditative not to have to produce something that was good, you know.

Female: I think I want to mention that there is space to not follow directions, that there was space where we could just pause, where I could just sort of circumnavigate and take a look at what I was not doing, and then have a snack. I think that actually invites some more, -to constantly refresh whatever we are doing.

Unearthing the Hidden Stories led by Chrissie Orr and Michelle Otero

Saturday, October 10, 2015, 1:30 – 4pm

How much do we really know about the place where we live? What memories and stories inhabit the ground we walk? What lies beneath it? How do we uncover the essence of a place? How does this place influence our creative practice? This experience will be a guided walk and journaling through known and unknown territories to open us experience the land we live on in a new way.

Transcription: Reflective Dialogue

Female: So I was just wondering if any of you could imagine how you could use an experience like what you have just gone through, of this intentional walking around a place outside as part of your practice.

Male: I think something that came up for me, and it is not a complete thought but just the difference between the whole not -maintaining silence, that really stood out throughout the entire process. I feel like it was a really good thing to use with adults, and then working with youth it is a different story for me, I feel. Because I feel ... we are always trying to keep kids quiet, you know, and contained, so thinking of a strategy like that where there is still this level of personal investment in that silence. If anybody has, -this is just to start a conversation. How do you create that kind of introspectiveness as opposed to silence and being quiet.

Female: This is something that we do every, every new project. You have to walk it, you have to, you know, -you are sitting in the corner, you are sitting in the center and you are trying to imagine all the different ways that space is going to feel after it has been designed.

Female: Yeah, I am going to relate to that. The first few years that we did the Learning Institute with the youth here at the Cultural Center, and they would be here for a month. Most of them came from all over the city, and some of them came from outside the city. One of the things we would do in the first two or three days is we would take a walk, and there is a poet that lives around the Center, and she would give them a walk, like she would walk them from here through the neighborhood, down and back through the Bosque, and it would take them all morning. She would have them walk the space and have them talk about the history and the place, not just this place but this whole place. This bridge being the first crossing of the Rio Grande in this part, you know, here. It is interesting. I had forgotten that we did that. They felt very differently about "the place" after they... and some of them were afraid too. [inaudible] an evolution... and some kids were like, "we are going to go walk where?" you know, "we are going to walk in that neighborhood?", but they totally shifted when they walked around and actually walked, and they were being led there by somebody who had lived there 65 years.

Female: I wonder about the idea of bringing us back to our bodies. We started off in a circle on the stumps, and then we got up and we began the process, which was an awareness of our feet on the ground. There might have been a way to do that as a partial transition of being back together, of putting awareness, connecting with each other. That is what I think about it. I am so enjoying not being in charge that my brain is not working. I am having one of those moments.

Female: Even in this moment now where you are asking for suggestions, and my natural impulse, of course, is to problem solve and support that question, but there is this other part of me that says that maybe I should just listen and not worry about trying to fix or help. There is so much time that we spend as leaders and facilitators, puzzling these things out and trying to look at it from all angles. Certainly for me as a facilitator, sitting around the Center at Okamora or whatever I am doing, I am the facilitator that is constantly tweaking and trying to stay alive with the process so that I can make a shift or adjustment in a hair's breath. Turn on a dime. But

anyway, to release into a process and just experience is such a gift. The word surrender comes to mind.

Female: ...I was surprised by this idea of just being. Being and not saying anything and just doing as part of a process, and teaching students that that is part of the artistic process. So this idea that sometimes it is just a lot of being and thinking and doing nothing, and then you do something as an act, as a creative act, whether it is write a poem or create a piece of art. And that may be quick but you needed all that time, you needed all that thinking before you could do that creative gesture. I think that is part of my artistic practices. I am not into making art that takes a lot of time to make, but that maybe takes a lot of reflection and then just doing it as an act. So it was an experiential, concrete way of thinking how I could really integrate this into a class and that it is okay to have a day where they just walk and think.

Female: ...it was good to have that space, a nothing space and to step out of not having to make meaning out of things.

Female: A lot of times these big flashes of creativity come out of that, and yet we often get so focused more trying to design a creative day for people, that we just jump right into what it is we want them to make, like "okay, we have been here for enough now let us create something brilliant together", instead of saying, "we are actually not going to do anything for two hours."

Female: It can be very risky to put two hours of simply having people be and walk. You have to be pretty strong and confident to say if you had a day long session to some kind of group, to say we are spending two hours of it walking and reflecting and seeing what comes. That is risky, I feel like "really, that is what you planned? Do you have anything else?" Even though we know that major things come out of that, so it is interesting.

Female: Because we are so geared to, especially all of us that work so hard and have a lot of deadlines and we start something and there is a beginning, middle and an end. We are producing something. Just to take that time out where in fact you are going back into the essence of how we create, which I feel I know for myself that it is absolutely essential I do now before I start a new project.

F: Being able to create also means being able to be still and to go in, to pay attention to what your body wants to do right now and to go to your imagination. It is an interesting process.

Chrissie: My feeling is too, if you were going to work with a community say, and you had never been in that community before, often in our practice we say we will find a cultural adviser. So you go immediately to the human, but I think there exists a form actually which is going to the place, which is going to inform you how you then to interact with that cultural adviser. So, I want to just keep stepping back with this practice that we have and teasing it out.

Female: In facilitation in terms of partnership building, and looking at relationship first over task, that is a practice I always maintain whenever possible. I visit, of course I also invite, but depending on the situation when possible, it is not a phone call, it is taking the time to visit the site and to meet the person on his or her own terms and space. Just being aware of maybe

different power issues that come into play, and sometimes also maybe meeting in a more neutral space, but certainly getting to see the place and the place that they represent I find very informative.

Female: I know it sounds silly, I try to schedule as many meetings as possible at breakfast, but I think sharing a meal together, sharing, breaking bread together, sharing food. That just feels like a very important thing to do with people, especially if you are engaged over a long period of time. Especially if it is with [inaudible].

Lost + Found in Translation Led by Edie Tsong

Wednesday, October 14, 6 - 9 pm

This session is grounded in creative and collaborative writing. We will explore the spaces and gaps between words and language presented to us, and our personal path to understanding. By beginning with a Chinese poem from the Tang Dynasty, participants will explore translation, iteration, and what happens as we construct meaning from someone else's intent.

Transcription: Reflective Dialogue

Female: But it that not what a translation is? That is what I was thinking. If you think of so many of the poets that have been translated from a million different languages, for me an obvious one is Aroka. Do we know if they are response poems? And then it makes me think of music, and how we have these chords that get recycled and create these melodies which are just some recycled version of some other song that everybody has heard and that is why somehow they are gravitationally pulled towards that song.

Female: I think for me translation, because we were also talking about how we communicate, translation verses interpretation. In translation, when you are truly translating, you are trying to preserve the voice of that person. Whereas if you are interpreting it, you might be trying to preserve the message, and bring it into a different voice, and not lose the message.

Female: That actually makes me think a lot too about how we facilitate, just to bring it into that discussion. Even by speaking English, how that is translated when you are working with a group of diverse people. That you maybe are speaking in the same language, but the way that you are phrasing things. How is that picked up by someone else in the room, and how we actually have to be very, very aware of that. I think that is what came up for me with this a lot is how I phrase things, how I phrase my prompts or phrase... to bring people into an experience. So how is that translated by each single person in the room, even though we have the same language?

Male: I think this is one of the core questions for me in the work that I am doing as a filmmaker, that we will go and spend two years meeting people all over the state. We will compile hundred and hundreds and hundreds of interviews, and we will convert them into things, we will find common threads, and then we will make a twenty minute film out of it. So we are in essence translating this complex set of experiences into a linear film. I am so uncomfortable with that process. I feel like there is some degree of inequity and power dynamics that we as editors have over our collaborators. I mean, for so many of us are people who work at community context when people come forward with this rich material, and we linearize it into something that we can put into a final piece at the end.

Male: Right, so editing and translation are similar kinds of things, and from a post-colonial perspective, and particularly in the context of New Mexico, it is a very interesting and complex thing to do.

Female: I just want to say that this is very naturally going into the reflection process, the analysis. It is actually really important, this conversation. I just want to check in with you as a facilitator and everybody. Is there a way that we could transition naturally into the reflection process, do people need a break? Are there other things people need to do to complete this? Because I just think these questions are going right there.

Female: I am very clear that I am not trying to do that. When I work with elders, I bring in different versions of things that they have shared with me. It is their language, but I bring it back to them with a certain kind of musical quality or rhythm or whatever, and ask what they think of it. That creates a new layer to the story or to the sharing, right? So I think that that is the co-creation, I guess is what I am saying. That as much as I really feel like there are certain text which I hope to aspire to, and [inaudible: do not] have aspired to this quality of essence from the originator. I do not believe that exists, I just do not believe it. I do not believe that of the Bible, I do not believe that so many texts that we take as verbatim exist. I think there has always been an interpreter. I would rather name the interpretation and say, I am an anthropologist of sorts, this is my lens, this is my voice, this is my collaborative partner, and this is what we have than to say maybe this is perfect or accurate or representative, because I just do not believe that exists anymore.

Male: And I think that whether it is poetry or songwriting or making a film or whatever or art, that really what you are trying to do is essentialize something. You are trying to get to this nugget. Then you are playing it back to the person and say, "is this a fair representation, does this actually convey what you were trying to get me to understand and if I sing this, will people get what you were trying to convey?" and I just think about the work I do with communities and working on a Story as a Place. It is always a draft, and it is always put out as like, and what I am always looking for are people going, "oh yeah" and they tell me a story. Or they go, "yeah, that is right on, but it is actually a little bit more like this", or that collaborative pieces is really that we are working toward an essentialization, knowing that it has got to be alive and be able to move and change.

Female: I would like to speak to essence for a second, because it seems this is something I was thinking about earlier, before we started the workshop, or maybe right in the beginning of the reflection. I feel like we get a little bit, circling this idea of understanding, but I actually think a lot of what we do around this thing of essence is beyond mental processing or understanding. That can be included in it, but I certainly do not see that as really happening a lot. I actually think there are a lot of spaces where there is actually just more direct, what do we mean by connection, there is direct transmission from one person to another, or from something else to us. So that direct experience, someone was saying, or a quote by Amachi about how God was direct experience. This kind of work, there is this guy in the UK who writes a lot about arts and health, and he wrote about a project we did in Ireland. He talked about this I did called MOMENT that he puts under the term "unity project" where people experience unconditional love, temporarily maybe, but there is a direct experience of that and there are other kinds of

arts and health projects that are more educational... but there are certain artists who work to create spaces where there is direct experience. I really think it is about this thing of essence. When we are creating living expressions in collaboration, I feel like there is actually so much going on with that then, so we are not just documenting -well, sometimes you are just documenting something, sure, that can be part of it. Somebody might write or do a piece, or you might do a piece and we really need to present what is going on here in a way that we can feel this differently and we can understand it. We go back and forth with people all the time because we care about agency and relationship and all that stuff, but we are also making decisions as collaborators who are part of the process. Without question. So I think that is so different from the process of just documenting. Which is colonial. Where we take ourselves out of the story. That does not mean that we are not making discerning decisions as people who are leading the facilitation, or something like that. Anyway, I just wanted to offer this whole thing about essence, because I think it is actually hugely a part of what we do.

Female: I actually call it distilling, in a way. It is like a distillation. I think what happens is that that connection with the other person, and that relationship building that happens with that other person, that transmission actually begins to evolve the story, and so the person sees the story in a new way, so you are actually working it. That transmission is happening as the story evolves and the person can see the story and you can see the story in a new way, so it does not get stuck there. It transforms. I have had people come up to me and say, "Chrissie, you have made us see things, or you have allowed us to see things that we had forgotten."

Male: Well, what I love about what you are saying is that if you take understanding as an image, instead of this rational thing of "no, I am standing under this story", so there is a humility to it, but there is also, -you are standing you are not bowing, but it is a kind of, -as a poetic image, it is valuable to me about this thing. What I want is to understand you, right? I want to understand its essence, or I want us to understand the story, or this story to bring understanding to us, which could it be a kind of unconditional love, feeling understood, that we are standing under the same thing that is sheltering us, that we are able to look up to?

Male: So, I feel like one of the important things is the capability of creating a space where there can be great difference of perspective, of paradigm, of language, of personality, of everything else, but somehow or another we have a shared experience, and there is not a single person in that room that can tell you what that shared experience is on a common basis. When we started Littlelobe, we talked about common ground, as one of our core elements, and I do not think we ever defined what that really was, but we had a sense of it, and other people will have a sense as well.

Male: I absolutely think these questions are generational because I do think that the notion of a common ground is a baby boom idea coming out of their parents as World War II generation folks, or World War I generation folks, and I think that the hip-hop generation is very much about this notion of multi-partiality or the only common ground is the fact that everybody has been rejected for some reason, based on something they believe in, but everybody believes in something slightly different with a slightly different flavor and a slightly different soundtrack. And yet, there is unity in that disunity. But there is not a huge conversation about unity, there is more, -I find at least in the spaces which, again there is not one hip-hop, but in the spaces in

which I operate and I travel, I find that there is a suspicion of unity. That if there were not multiple voices and multiple perspectives and battles, that it would seem like a very fake, plastic, contrived space. So even things like what we are here to do, or what we are all doing in our work. I do not necessarily take it as a given that we are all doing the same thing, because I do not even think I know what I am doing on a day to day basis. I think it changes based on any number of things. So I just do think that this notion of, that this interpretation of “essential” or “unity” where it sits on a spectrum of desirability is, I would argue is generational.

Male: The constant is that I am attempting to challenge myself to constantly ask questions and to constantly not know anything. And to constantly let the people with whom I am working be my guide. So in relationship to the earlier conversation, I would be fascinated to hear, because I think I heard you talk about in the past, how much the folks that you are working with are actually creators on the project. I was so surprised to hear you talk about this editing process and this product delivery. I had never heard you talk that way before, so that just made me want to add to our list of things that we are going to talk about. At what point does it become a grassroots structured project to actually someone making decisions, and why does that happen, and under what conditions? Because I have never actually heard you talk about that part of what you do before. I am mostly here to talk about all of the amazing generative, yeah...

Female: I am starting to use this language, but it is like the kind of radiant, I called it a radiant thread or radiant moment, but I actually do not know how to talk about it, but we know it when we feel it. There is something of resonance, it is alive, we feel it. Also, I just want to say, and I would also love to hear from people who have not spoken,... you guys can get mad at me for this, I actually think there are a lot of things operating in our work that we are not transparent about. I actually think that we are making more decisions about things than we are often letting on...-and I am just saying that because I have had the opportunity to watch a lot more work, and just be in a room for the last two years instead of just constantly doing it. And I see people making decisions all the time, based on really deep things that are not on the surface.

Female: ..it is that radiant moment sometimes that you just make that decision because it is like in your gut, you go for it, and that is part of who we are.

Female: I think that it is the hardest stuff about this work because we are working in non-verbal ways. We are all coming from who we are, spiritually, emotionally and physically, so I actually think there is such a self selection process of who does this work. I do not see it as a values thing, I think it is really beautiful, but I think there is an opportunity to make it more visible, give it a little more form. I will tell you why. I am sitting at tables with people who are actually incredibly powerful in doing work that transforms, actually, so I think it is super powerful, and I think that it is hidden from popular view a lot. I mean we talk about this stuff all the time, but community engagement work, I mean what is that? The ugly little step-sister that is limping around, looking for crumbs. It is powerful work, so that is my interest in talking about this a lot. Just to lift what you guys are doing, what we are doing, and make it more accessible. Does that make sense?

Male: Well, what I hear behind what you are saying, I think, and this is clearly my interpretation, is I always think because... That push-back, or those actions, or whatever the community does, I see as a flowering or a fruiting, and I think that is what I mean when I talk about essentialization. It is all those things coming together that bloom, create these various sweetnesses and

brilliances and expressions. Whether that is the song or the community coming together to do whatever, whether that is a performance or feeding everybody or making a garden or a gathering or a happening, or ... and that it is part of what I am hearing is very much, and maybe I use this word because of how I think about, but it is almost like gardening. It is not like we are going to make this place into this garden. It is how do we help this being bloom, whether those are students or whatever, and I think that is what is directing all of our decisions that is in our guts.

Female: And I feel we have to create the edge to do the work. It cannot all be sweet and love. It cannot, because the edge is the diverse place. It is where things happen, and sometimes you need that edgy place to move something, and that I think needs to get talked more about. It cannot all be sweet and love.

Male: It is not all Kumbaya that we are working with.

Female: this work actually makes change and transformation, it is f---ing hard work, and it is tough. It is tough for all of us. That I think is a place that needs to be a little more transparent but you are coming into this work, it is not Kumbaya, it is going to be some tough stuff.

Male: One of the things I always tell people is if it is the fabric of the landscape or the fabric of your shirt, it only holds together because the tension between all the fibers.

Male: I am sitting here thinking about the Democratic Debate. For real, because I am thinking about translation and it is useful lens to look at the entire mediatized and social mediatized world that we are in, where everyone, pre-digital, we are all translators of our experience. But with the presence of social media and the ways that we make meaning now, we are really essentializing in tweets and all kinds of little spiffy ways, we are translating all the time. This has been a fruitful lens to think about what I experienced last night as I watched the Democratic Debate, watched the pundits, then translate that. Watched the people, translate that. Watched the press the next day, carrying stories that are translated so differently. There was this thing today, the whole media says Clinton won, and all of the polls after the debate last night say that Bernie Sanders won. So, the decisions made at so many levels, at so many board tables, at so many places of power and not power to translate these shared experiences, because millions of people tuned into that show experienced. So I am so uneasy with the way that we are invited to translate, to experience, because it is a scrolling Facebook feed, or it is a scrolling Twitter feed. I am hearing this whole conversation as such the necessary counterpart to that. I am always to overwhelmed by how limited we are able to do this work because it is by nature in very intimate, crafted, careful spaces, that is how that works. But the radiant thread takes so much work, and there are so many people and spaces that need it. I am thinking also about what it means in those in person spaces just to continue to use the translation thing, what does it mean to look at everyone who walks into the room as a translator? And the part of our work is to hold space so that we can interrogate our translations together in real time. Sometimes in non-verbal ways. Otherwise it is the Facebook feed, and we lose an arch of our passage to connect.

Male: I think the funny thing about being a person who works in this field, it is so rare to actually converse with oneself, and actually be the recipient of this work. I am always grateful for that. What is funny is that artists do not have the practice except for when it happens, so I am very grateful for the hour spent immersed in this, and I just always love the writing process. I think

like so many others, I would not do it if somebody did not sit me down and said, “here is the assignment”, so the framer is a very important person in my world, because I will go on Facebook instead. I am grateful for all of that stuff, and it is also knowing one another as practitioners, but actually experience one another's work is a whole other thing, so I am grateful for this program for being able to pull that off.

Male: The conversation is always fascinating and interesting and I always love the challenges. I love the discomforts I feel, and the places where maybe I got that wrong, and it is true, I find myself so much in the frame of product. Always [inaudible] challenge and the very things in a good way, it is challenging in the best of ways to remind me that the process for myself is an essential quality of what I am doing and how I work. I think it may be the non-profit, the necessity to survive that sometimes drives a product minded project. And the necessity for balance sometimes comes into play. I am grateful for all of that, and I am just grateful to sit in a room with all of you guys, and walk in tonight and say, “I cannot believe my luck”, so thank you everybody for making this happen.

Male: I have earned my share of gratitude, and as always these conversations make me feel unequal to the task and very struck by, I wrote down this thing “guided by observation” and as you were speaking, I added to that “and questions or questioning”, and it is this constant looking, questioning, “oh, is that the right...” because we are such creatures of habit. There is something really important about, and I am reminded again, to work in ways I am constantly aware of my world view and the ways that that is unconsciously guiding me. How valuable it is I think for all of us to make that conscious so we can look at it, and at least be aware of how we are being guided. If not, as you are saying, “oh, how the f--- would I do a film...” right? There are these serious questions, and us knowing that is so important, and I think that is that translator thing, or the mediatedness of reality.

Female: I feel like a lot of what I am interested in is our capacity to refine our beauty. My beauty, my beauty with you, the beauty I feel in the world, because it makes me feel like life is possible and good. And I do not mean beauty in terms of, I know with you guys -I do not need to say it, like it could be the most intense expression of death-metal in the world and it could be beautiful, right? You know that. So for me right now, I am just primarily interested in what are the conditions for building that to express in me, between us in the world. That is what I have got going on right now. That is what I have got, I am finally finding that I do not have much else, so it is making a lot of this work a lot harder for me when there is a lot of adaptation. When I am doing tons of adaptation as a facilitator, I am just not interested in it anymore, so it is making me more direct and more real about sh--. It is not so pretty, and I am not a very good facilitator... I do not want to try to skip over things, I do not want to make it into something we think we need it to be. This is a real opportunity, and I just want it to be real for all...all I know is I love all of you and I admire you all, and I feel it when I am with you.

Male: So, respectfully I would like to offer a different perspective on something. [sings] “Come by here my lord, come by here. Come by here my lord, come by here. Come by here my lord, come by here... oh lord, come by here. Someone's crying my lord, kumbaya. Someone's crying my lord, kumbaya. Someone's crying my lord, kumbaya. Oh lord, kumbaya.” *Come by here*. It is a prayer for those who need help. It is not a prayer for ourselves. It is a prayer for the people around us, for the community around us. While I do know that there is a long tradition of believing that performance and theater and other things are generated by conflict, my

perspective is that we have lots of models for conflict in the world, all you had to do was turn on the debate last night... What we do not have a lot of models for is how to get back to closeness. How to get back to what I really want to be is close to you, but I do not know how to say it, so I am going to push you away, or hit you, or cuss at you, or... so the kinds of conflict that some types of this work generate I think are not actually, what was your word?...The radiant thread. I think to me, and again this is just my personal approach to the work is the radiant thread is how do we get close again. Part of it is actually "Come by here", whatever you believe in, whatever power, mother Earth, father sky -whatever you believe in, that you have the capacity to sit with someone in need and call upon the powers of the universe to bring healing to that person. So I just offer a different narrative about the possibilities of this work. That is not to say that we do not have to negotiate conflicts and tensions within the work, but to me it is not about amplifying those to get somewhere, it is more about -people already know how to do that, so I just bring us back to the origin of something as simple as "Kumbaya", which has now been translated into something that it is not.

Female: This idea of translation, and I think recently I have been thinking a lot about place and space, I think to me that is really important. How we understand the place where we are actually about to facilitate something, so how do we translate, even before we do anything, when we are invited into a community. How do we really begin to understand or, it is not even understanding, how can we find that radiant thread to that community? To me it is not through talking, it is through this experience that we have to take ourselves into this other place to be able to feel into, not only the landscape, but the community -and this could be in this room. How do we feel into the landscape of who is in this room, and the landscape of this place before we even start? I feel that that is something that we as practitioners do not really talk about, that entry point. I think that that is a place that we skip over, and I think also we skip over the exit point. How we exit, and I think those are two really key places that I am looking at. Because I find it personally, a really difficult thing to exit. Like, personally, when do I finish. In a situation like this, you know 9 o'clock, but if you are working in community, what happens is more and more emerges. What I suppose we are hoping for is that the community then continues or the Earth continues or the garden continues, and there is a cycle, but our egos get tied up in that. How do we look at that? So anyway. That is all the things that have come up for me, and it is just such an honor to sit in this room with everyone, a real honor. analyze so much, because it is through the play that we really learn what the essential questions are.

Reflect: Innovate: Act led by Sheryl Chard

Thursday, October 15, 2015, 4 pm - 7:30 pm

Reflect: Innovate: Act is a monthly gathering open to all educators interested in rich conversation, reflective practice, shared expertise, and community connection. If you are in need of a deep breath, reconnection with your calling, and inspirational conversation, please join us. Topics for each gathering vary, and all gatherings offer great food and coffee.

Transcription: Reflective Dialogue

Female: It is one thing that is super simple that I think we throw away in terms of terminology all the time, or that we just throw out there, that creating and holding the space. That is one thing just by saying this is something important and saying, "I am going to create this space and I am

going to hold it and it is going to be here every month, and it is going to be here every year". It is essential and basic, and I think it takes people that are invested in this kind of work to step in and say that. "I am going to create this space and I am going to hold it, and it is going to be here." and people show up.

Female: Just think about that too, the establishing of what the thing is and then the consistency and reinforcing the establishment of having created the space, and the holding is the consistency. We think about that a lot when we invite teachers in particular, for the reasons we have been talking about, when we invite them to professional development experiences. One, that the experience will be something of value to them, and that they are going to take things away that feed them, and we are not imposing content upon them.

Female: Time is one of the most precious commodities, and I talk about when we go into the classroom because I get a lot of push-back about how we do not charge for our programs, and I say, from an ordinary person, I say, "they are giving us their time, they are giving us instructional time" but I am saying is when a human being walks away from all that other stuff, demanding their attention and saying okay, you have my attention, you have my time, I think that there should be... It necessitates an honoring and acknowledgment without, "look what we did for you," it is like, of course you did.

Male: I was just thinking that the way you put the materials together, the materials that there were is very much for an academic audience, right. They are very much, and they are beautiful materials, and it is meeting them kind of where they are. I was thinking of this question about what attracted them. That is is not just that it is beautiful and they are being treated well, and the content is good, but they can also go to their principles and say "look". It is recognizable within their world as well as they can then potentially see what can they do with it. It is one of these questions I am holding throughout this series is, because someone brought it up the first night, right? In different cultures within our culture, or our communities, there are going to be some things that are going to be selective, they are going to select, people are going to opt in or opt out based upon what they perceive it to be regardless of what it is. Even it being here at Bosque School or all of those things.

Female: Yeah, I mean, I felt it was a really intentional session. I mean, it is very clear, who it was for and the setting of the place and all the materials you had I think really made everyone feel at home, I mean who were there. I think it is something that I am particularly looking at is how we reach those people that are not here, and I know Michelle talks a lot about that. We were just talking Michelle, about language and messaging, because that came up last night at our session. We did this thing with translation. So it brought up this whole thing where even though we are speaking in English, how is someone translating that if you are sitting in a diverse group, so we are putting a message out, an invite out to come and join this group. Do we always put the same message out, or do we shift it sometimes depending on the people that we would like to come?

Female: People were acknowledged when they came into the space. It did not matter when they came, someone stopped, got up and talked to them. I find, I go to a lot of things where I am like, where am I going, where do I check in, and I feel adrift, and I am a relatively confident,

self-possessed human being, and if I feel adrift. I think it is critical to welcome, I think welcoming is so important, saying hello. That to me sets the tone for the entire rest of the experience.

Living Patterns: Organisms & Organizations, Ecosystems & Economic systems led by Joel Glanzberg

Sunday, October 18, 2015, 9 am - 3 pm

Living systems work differently than mechanical ones, yet we often treat them the same. This is the source of many of our problems. This session will grow our understanding of living systems and help us move beyond the stagnant dualistic debates that characterize so much of our public conversation. By broadening our perspective to a more inclusive and holistic view we will engage in exploratory dialog to encourage the emergence of creative ideas that can shift patterns and lead to systemic change.

Transcription Reflective Dialogue

Male: One thing that struck me during the walk, and there was other things like, this almost feels like rehab. The return to direct experience when that is so cut out from my day to day life. It was such a refreshing kind of return over there, and then watching you do this. I eat chocolate for my anxiety, because this kind of hands on mechanics, to me, is such high technology and almost magic. Whereas computers and other things are just sort of obvious and givens. It is inverted that, or helped me realize how skewed my sense of technology is. The return to direct experience is so woven throughout this whole thing, that is what I really appreciate.

Female: I just really appreciated the time that we spent. The opportunity to interface with all the things that we rely on like warmth and nature and beauty, and just being in touch with, -I kind of live my life in a similar fashion where I am thinking about how food is going to be preserved for winter, and working constantly with that, but I have never done anything with fire. It is just a great experience to be reminded that there is still so much more that we can connect to. It just gives all of the comforts that we enjoy everyday, that we take for granted, a little bit more meaning.

Male: So it was really great that so many people came and dropped in, and for me it is always really enjoyable. Things like fire that we so much take for granted or water or if you did this. Think about every time a spark plug goes off in your engine, fire is created, every time we cook something, and we just assume it. If you had to do this every time you wanted fire, we would prize it. So all of this for me is just about being aware, bringing consciousness to things that we do not bring consciousness to, and dropping in to being human beings. The incredible power of being mammalian, big brained creatures with thumbs. Even the level of technology of this fire kit is astounding. My hope, and this is why I do this, is if we could actually see ourselves as a part of nature, and work and think like nature, then a lot of things that are problems for us just sort of go away, or they are material for transformation.

Female: My thing is, I have been really perplexed by -pretty much most people I work with have a very deep grounding in the natural field, the natural world really deeply. I am still really struck, weirdly, by how the creative work we do and the languaging gets separated out from our natural world. Like, we are going to do a creative workshop in nature or something. This artificial separation is so maintained by the languaging and the way things are done and how things are done, and I am really tired of it, actually. One of the things that I think connects us all is sensuality, the senses, and I just think if I focused a bit more on that, somehow, it naturally is a bridge between those worlds. Those artificial separations. Also I was thinking about spaciousness. Just watching, it was at Amy's workshop too, there was a lot of space and time for people to work together and connect quietly. I that for me, I flourish in that environment. I am so used to being directed every minute of the way, and I know people feel, I know a lot of people I work with feel more comfortable with a highly structured situation because they get anxiety not knowing. There is a lot of repetition of like, "it is okay not to know, really". I do feel like if I can continue to build in more time and space, that that alone is very healing for pretty much everybody I work with now. Even at the nursing homes where there is a lot of time and space. But somehow when you are with somebody else and or connecting, or there is music playing, or there is something to touch, but probably even more importantly than that, there is an energy of people feeling that you matter. It is not an activity that is being taught, but as a community that is being invoked, of dignified awareness. Does that make sense? Dignifying awareness.

Female: I was most struck by time and space also today. I just felt it, that there needs to be a lot more time. I am grateful Joel, it feels like such a gift to have, -that it is not just direct experience, that it is time and direct experience and body. It has got to be this somatic piece. I felt like that was the doorway, like the bodywork, like being deeply rooted in the body feels like the doorway to a more wondrous sense of expression or or creativity community. It feels like time and space are the essentials for that to happen.

Female: The other thing that just occurred to me, this other thing that I am working is, when something is natural, really natural, it is effortless.

Female: Some of the things that I think about, like I have always loved sports because the rules of engagement are clear, and there is a clear goal. It is so different doing the kind of community work that we do. It makes me just more conscious of, well what are the goals. Usually I have a goal in mind, but the other people do not. If it is this larger project, that has planted itself in me, but working as an organism, there has to be a common goal, but then when you are an artist and you have an idea and you want to do it, there is playing around.

I think there was a little bit of a conversation on Wednesday about if you are pushing people to do something that they do not want to do, or if you are pushing too hard. I remember you saying there needs to be a push so you can, almost so that you can feel yourself, that you are there, if you are being pushed. But it is that interesting point of tension. I find I work with a lot of women with a lot of cut and paste, and I tend to have the ideas I want to do, most people tend to be so afraid to make themselves vulnerable, so I am constantly letting out my hand, you know, putting my hand out and realizing that if people are not ready for it, then that is not useful, or it is not relevant to what the group is, so that is really interesting. That is a point of interest for me.

Male: Having a meal. That it was, it is going to sound awful, but the clients I work with, we have lunch, but cost is always a thing. There is always this sense of feeding them with a certain budget, but also to get through the meal so that you can do something. This felt like the meal, it was a part of what we were doing. It reminded me of how important it is. And just all the little conversations that were happening, and family time and community time, that was the interesting part, for me, of the day. And that the food was simple. It was a reflection of the day. [inaudible] Somehow I feel that all these items are pure.

Female: It was something about the meal, and no real time keeping, yet we kept on time. It seems spacious and the fact that the meal was in the area where we were working. This space. I talk about this a lot in reflection, but it keeps coming up for me every time we are doing these facilitation pieces, how space -where we are actually facilitating, where we are actually holding these experiences is so vital to the intent. I feel coming into your home, and the food that was grown here, and walking the land here was really, added to the impact of today. Also Joel, the way you held it, in a very gracious, unrushed manor. You are very centered. I think that allowed us to go to places where we maybe would not have. So thank you for that.

Male: While you guys were talking, I thought of a couple of things. All day, and even before we did this, I was thinking of the work I have done with Regenesys these years, in rooms, people talking, flip charts. A lot of good stuff as well, and for me, if I can actually embody it and experience it, then all of that stuff is not just abstract. It actually gives me, it is like a map. It is something that I can refer back to, to see where I am, and that is why "the brush holds thread" stuff for me is so important because all this energy is coming in, and even with our global warming stuff. We are all preparing to take a hit well. That is the whole resiliency movement, and whatever, and Transition Town, right? That that is the lowest level of any martial art, is to take that hit well. It really, up a step, is to see that force, that stroke coming, and redirect it into something else. And even not be there, or even to get to the source of the force, right? How do we change it there instead of trying to get people to stop doing drugs, or get out of prison, or graduate high school. Where did that come from? I think we need to get out of rooms to really learn to see and converse in those ways. We need to be a community, doing work together, eating together, experience being in places together, and take all of those things, like the abstract thinking is essential, but how do we ground it? The doing stuff in community is essential, but how do we give it a broad view so that it actually is aimed toward something. How do we be whole human beings maybe?

Female: I think that is probably what we are all working towards, how can we activate human beings to embody being a whole human being in connection to the place where they are. I think this whole process is bringing us to thinking. What are the values and the way that we are caring to activate that? Maybe values in relationship to ethics too. If you take a step back, people need to be ready for that, and how do we know, and do they? I do not know, I am just posing that as a question ethically.

Female: Well, I think Joel gave us an invitation at the very beginning, when you said something about the discomfort is a sign that we are learning and growing. Just naming it put something to ease for me. I am terrified at trying to make a fire, but you named it and put it in a context, I guess. So I was willing to step into learning.

Male: I think there is something in your facilitation style, Joel. Before one might even resist, you are already doing it. It is not elaborate instructions, it is like “and this is the next gesture”, and we are all doing it at that moment. It reminds that...

Male: I tricked you.

Male: It reminds me of, I will never forget that doctor when I was a kid, who was like, “okay, a shot, just so you know, it feels something like this, are you ready for the shot? Oh, we already did it”. It is a trick.

Female: We have something in common that we can lift and amplify and develop, so we create those spaces in so many different ways. How do we create common experience? All the ways that we do, and what is the quality of it too? What other values do you see at work here?

Female: As a facilitator, I think having the ability to be in the moment, and be just as vulnerable as the people who you have invited to come. The invitation needs to go both ways. There is a safety that can happen in that. We are all sitting here with knives, carving sticks, and there several moment I thought, “I hope I do not cut myself” and I hope nobody else cuts themselves. I had to just kind of breathe into that and look around, and it is like, no it is cool, it is good. I think safety is really important. My work is not in big groups, thinking and talking, I am a body worker and a therapist, so a lot of one-on-one, creating safe space, and that vulnerability. I know as a teacher there are these magical teaching moments that arise when students can see me be vulnerable, and how I step into that and get taken into it and then expanded from it. What is my inner working with that piece. I know when I am in a class, and I am listening to an instructor, that is what I am really sniffing out, are they in the moment with their work?

Female: That resonates with me too, it just makes me think that you have invited us to your home to basically share for a day how you live and your lifestyle, and the things that you choose to do instead of conventional living, I guess. When you were giving instruction, I did not think of it as instruction, I thought of it as you sharing something that you care about.

Male: There was a pattern that I was fairly conscious about, which is this one of disturbance mixed with -safe is maybe not quiet the right word, but secure enough container or whatever, where the disturbance, whether it is “I do not know how to do this” or “please bring a knife” or people carving, or “I do not know how to do fire” or whatever it is. Because I really do think those disturbances are where we can grow, where there is space for creativity, but I think appropriate scale is really important. If that gap is too big we are going to say “no way”, and if it is too small it is just not interesting.

Female: I wonder if it would have changed things. I am thinking how we can hold that idea of not feeling like we are giving instructions, not feeling like we are giving instructions, but that we are sharing. How we can do that. If Joel had done this somewhere else, I mean outside but not at the home. Again, I do not need an answer, but I think that is a question that I think would be a really great one to sit with as facilitators or as creative facilitators, how to really embody that.

Male: I just want to share a thought. Often I am playing with little ones or adults we are often playing games. I get a sense that sometimes explaining the rules, not to tell them the rules, but to share the rules so that I can play the game. So that I can have fun. So it is like fire making too. I love it so much, I want to share this, all the little parts, because I love it so much. I like watching you make. I like being a part of it, I love all the little pieces, I love all the important things we take for granted. Sometimes when I either experience someone doing it, or I am doing it, describe something like an activity, that really I would never do myself, there is no need, but we do it because it is a good activity that you read somewhere or you saw somewhere, and it just does not quite... There is some kind of difference there, sometimes we try to share things to get somewhere, but it is really not that it does not fit, it is just not what I would do in my real life. It is kind of like somebody else's experience that I try to translate that into something, and try to get that thing. So then it comes off as instructions as opposed to trying to get us all there so I can play with you, because it is a really amazing experience like how that time goes.

Male: And if it is not yours, you almost have to read it off a paper, right? Instead of just...

Female: I am just imagining a scenario where instead of saving the date for a workshop that you have signed up for on a weekend sometime in the future, that this is just a way of life. We actually take interest in our friends' interests and we are interested in sharing what we love too, and it just becomes this normal way to interact. Like eating and sleeping, like "hey, I am doing this thing", or "I see you doing something" and I am like "what are you doing". I am just there right with you. I want to learn what you seem so enthralled in.

Male: [inaudible] maybe some of these things are [inaudible] practice, and that you can never really get good at, you always need to come back to it. So I can make fire, and I always love making it more in groups of people. Whenever I can go to a workshop where someone is making fire, I will go because I just love being around ten other people making fire. It is just better. Over any kind of martial practice or medical practice, and we all know that. [inaudible] ...there is something, I do not know whatever community name you want to put on it, that it is often just better together. So we [inaudible] together, it becomes a practice if you allow it to be. You will never master [inaudible], if someone is a master for a moment, maybe you are the master for the moment, and then someone else is for another time. Rolling some of those things into what we do, into what I do. I guess that is the part that I love, I guess that is what I am trying to say, is these things are like practices and not just things I am learning and checking off. Like, fire learning got that, and will never go to another fire making workshop. I know people like that, they are like "yeah, I did that and I know how to do that". I feel like you missed it, I feel like you missed the point of it. [inaudible]

Female: I want to field one more thing out into this group. I just overheard some conversation about leadership today, and I hear that word come up a lot. All this stuff about leadership, and learn to be better leaders. Being a body worker and a body worker instructor, in certain of my circles, the word is not leadership, it is healer. I am not quite certain why, but I am struggling with the word leader and I am struggling with the word healer. It seems to me that they are closed, that stop the whole process of healing or coming together in a community. The singleness of it takes away the holistic movement that is happening, or something. I do not know. I just wanted to throw that out there. This idea of leaders and healers and "woow" is like, I do not know, I am struggling with that.

Female: I think in the past, the tendency was to project your power outward onto a leader or onto a healer, and I think that evolutionarily, that is not what we are being asked to do. So the word leader or healer suggests something outside that has been [inaudible] something. I do not know if that is what is being asked of us?

Lifesongs led by Molly Sturges and Acushla Bastible

Tuesday, October 27, 2015, 2 pm - 5 pm

Lifesongs is an intergenerational arts project promoting social inclusion and dignity for elders and people in hospice care. Lifesongs engages youth and community members in the interactive creative process and hosts public events to increase awareness and engagement with aging and dying.

Transcription Reflective Dialogue

Female: I appreciate how consistent you are with opening the space and closing the space, because that requires discipline to not rush it. I think that, I know you are sitting here, but it never ceases to amaze me how masterfully you do that, Molly, because that is something that I, -I do not struggle with it, I think that I am aware of it. Whether it is a meeting, or just coming to the space, the office at the start of the day and my staff are not unlike you. How do we come together and how do we separate? And go forth. Today was different. To weave that other huge thing into something that some people had a relationship to, and some people did not. So I appreciated how you all did that, and how you came together, your co-facilitators as well in that process. Again, the discipline of holding the space and letting it be what it needs to be.

Female: I was really struck by the spaciousness, the pace was just such a relief. I have been in a lot of circles where it is like, one does not even punctuate or comment, and the other ones are on top of it, so it was very, that slowing down really...it was amazing how that felt to me. It is not something that I often experience. I am probably talking really fast here.

Female: Well, for me, I am not around young kids much and I love young kids, I love them. I just want to get into the pool, so it just brings a freshness[inaudible], and it almost made me fall over. Next time I am going to ask you what I should say, so anyway. Simple and sort of poignant. And fifty years ago it was a given, maybe in other cultures but not in ours, so.

Male: I am not sure what I am going to say that is much different than what Joel said earlier, beautifully. I was about to burst into tears so many times. From the opening, just how you guys held the opening space, I think. The welcoming, that transitioning of people coming in and just holding that space, maybe that is just normal for your groups, and sometimes that can be challenging. There are so many things so far, outside of what I do, so I am also equally impressed by the music and the ability to pull a song and poem and music out of other people. You said we were going to sing, and it was so freeing just to not really say singing, we are going to talk through this, and it might sound like song, but it is not song, it is okay. I thought, oh thank god, I am not going to sing. That is good. I had such a good time. I felt so much joy. It has been tough for a while, and it is really great to feel that. Also I think in my own way, to feel the beginning of this space in acknowledging and not knowing Blanche, not having any idea or relationship, and

the song and the process. I do not know how to say it, it was such a beautiful transitioning. It really was a ceremony, it really was magic, and things could not have aligned in a more profound way. And the mix, just the diverse group. When I think about why that is good or important, it is that yeah it creates context. Instant, visual context, and presence of the breath of life and what is around us. When you are working with teenagers, sometimes those teenagers are on the edge of death. That is also true, but it is a very different, life unlived death. Or that they are coming into life, at the same time that they are coming into life, in a brand new way, they are finding their way for the first time, they are having children being born from them, and they are children themselves. And there is a certain beauty because that is saving their life while that is happening. So it is a very different kind of energy and space, and it was beautiful to have this context right in this circle without trying to hold it. There was nothing to be held, it just was. Maybe this is normal and natural for you guys. Then to have Jenky show up, it was perfect timing, like the other end. It sealed it in this really beautiful, poetic way. I am not sure what that says about facilitation, but just the space. I was so amazed and so impressed, then it really felt like magic. I know that Blanche has a relationship that I do not have, so I am speaking from an observation place, but it really was special to be a part of this moment. So thank you. Thank you for holding it and just doing what you guys do, it is really magical.

Female: Well, one thing I really felt today was, it has started to come up a lot with this circle of people, having you all here because you are people of such depth, and particularly listening and heartfelt that it expended the space and fortified it, not in this way, but strengthened the essence of it. I actually think that we are all listening to very similar things in the world, and giving our attention to similar things, so there is kind of potency and fortification of what I felt. ..I just struck by the very deep trust that I have. To the point where if I said nothing, the rest of a session, it would be fine with my co-facilitators. I know the same things are cared for. Partly that speaks to a cultivation of practices actually and space, not just between us but in the whole ensemble. I really feel very strongly that most things are transmitted non-verbally. I have very much come to feel that way. I think it is secondary, and I think that music is a close second, actually. But, I actually think the verbal part of it, it though the verbal cues, it is okay we are not making a mistake or we are not singing, to really set the nervous system to calmness, and to be able to feel where the nervous systems are activating. I do not usually talk about it that way, but I am just going to speak about how I experience it. So in a room, we can feel agitation. There is some agitation that just has to be there, and just has to be included, and there are certain ones that we can actually speak to very simply right up front or in the middle, and they are simple words. I know that I cannot see all of them. That is one of the reasons I like to co-facilitate, the joint holding of that and seeing of that.

Just to the point of ceremony. I do not think internally I have seen this work as any thing other than that. I just do not speak about it that way, I do not put myself in that context usually, but I do not think I have ever, really deep in my heart I cannot say that this work would be any different than that. Sometimes it is more educational, or there is some quality that is a little different than that, but I feel that the spaciousness is something we have learned, for one, we have cultivated both internally and collectively learned it from the people in the room. I was very touched recently by seeing teenagers and this age group together. I have never ever felt such a potency of ages together, really for me, in this program yet. That was the strongest. But playing music today, there was a time with the drumming where I feel like we made a connection, and that is the kind of thing I am listening for. I cannot explain what it is, it is a very non-verbal thing, but I know when I feel it. So I am looking musically to make that connection, and it is not just with each other, it is a lot of other things going on, a lot of other forces,

including Blanche. There was a point where I felt that, and even though I was not trying to make it happen, you cannot make it happen, like you cannot make safety happen, we can make conditions. So musically it is more shifting things so we come into some kind of alignment where something is possible, but cannot make it happen, cannot ask the mystery to do something when it does not want to.

Female: I think it would be good to go around again, Molly, just to see, while you are trying to think, to see if there are a few thing that have come up with what you are saying.

Female: I just want to say also slowing down, tempo. There is a lot of stuff about tempo. We have just been working with Gary Glazner, who moves at a pace of like [snap, snap] repeat after me, and it is all rhythm, and it is all slow down, and you get loud and you get soft and you get fast, and people love his sessions. I think they are very dependent on him, this is not a criticism, I just think they are very dependent on his conduction, all the way through, all the way through, all the way through. I do not know, I think that Lights On sessions are different, and I do feel like one thing we have cared a lot about, I think Akushna has taught me a lot about this too is, emptying out. Come to that empty space together, there is something there that is always there, that wants to be known. I am fairly sure that something is trying to express all the time, if we could just quiet out enough to let it have it have its own say, in its own way. So I feel like that is something that has been cultivated, and it feels risky, it feels scary. Even today I was like, I feel it in myself the goodness to quiet down but you are looking around the room, and it is like...there is still agitation in you, facilitating sometimes.

Female: I do know know, so I stay on. So when I came in it was how I came into Amy Lin's play workshop where I have a to-do list that is so long, I cannot believe I signed up for this, this was a stupid idea...

Female: Yeah, so the second point around that is usually also with high emotions, because then I am thinking about my dad this whole past year I am like, everyday is a gift, is when I am in my higher self with it, and then there is a lot of fear where -I hate saying that, but I think is today the day that my dad is going to die. That is all I can just keep... as well as my son being on a college trip, and I pray for my black boy and my black girl, and even though all this stuff, and high emotion. Normally high emotion means, ooh to hot the touch, but instead here, just crying -I could not even hold it back, I was just crying the whole time. I felt back holding the people's hands, holding my tears, but they were good. You were good. Thank you, I appreciate that....About the seamless facilitation, I do not know how long you all have worked together, even with that said, this is what I have constantly had as a criticism around diversity when I see it as an ad on. If you could just, whatever you may have felt, being seamless facilitators together is the polar opposite of what I witness when people try to be inclusive, and it is not coming from any genuine, authentic place. That is what I have got to say.

Female: I do not know if I have a whole bunch of words, I have all of the feelings in the witnessing around it. It was a complimentary, I do not see you three as having the exact same ways of being, perspective or even gifts and talents. You all were doing music, however you had this beautiful way of doing intuitive movement that was accessible to everybody, you brought out your guitar, you are scribing and facilitating and drumming. At no point did I feel like it was clunky, divisive, weird, Santa Fe weird, non of that [laughter], because sometimes I do come to

the Academy and I am like, “did I sign up for a Santa Fe weird day?” [laughter]. I do not know, maybe I did, you know. Usually not, sometimes though, sometimes... and it was not any of that, it was all very complimentary and seamless.

Female: I just feel, honestly really lucky every time I am here. I feel like Molly and Acushla, their facilitation is in all the work and the years of creating the space, not the Academy, but the space of the circle and all that. All of that is a part of it, and it is not about doing anything, it is more about being. I am still figuring out where to be in that, and mostly I am just struck by what is already happening. I am just feeling all of the emotion.

Female: I was sitting with, I wrote a lot of notes that were just coming up for me about certain values that I had been thinking of, and that were all coming up for me that I felt were being held. I think it is, for me, the absolute intentionality of who you are working with, that I just really felt at the core of the work that you were doing Molly, Acushla and Vanessa, that you are holding has really come from working with the elders, it is not being put on top, so the spaciousness. Everything that you have talked about has actually arisen from the intent of bringing together this transitional time for elders. To me actually that is such a core of what we all do that needs to be held, that I could see you three working in a very different way, holding some of the values, but it might be a different pace if it were a different group of people, and you would develop it over the years of working with those people. It made me think a lot about the impact that we can have if we are working with a group of people over a length of time. That just was very obvious to me today, that it was so intentional, right down to large font.

Female: I felt saddened. I am comfortable with sadness. I am actually taught that by, and I felt grateful for it, I felt grateful for you guys being here actually, because the sessions are not always like that, they can be wildly different. Last week's session was really quite different. There was a different feel, usually there is spaciousness is -I cannot say that there is always spaciousness because we cultivate that space as we are facilitating, and sometimes if you do not feel that space inside yourself, it is not always as spacious as you want it to be. I felt there was a lot of breath in the room today, I was so happy to see your son, really I was. I feel the elders that we work with are always my teachers, and we are really grateful for them. We often talk about it like this, but it is true, we do not do the work for people. We do it with, and if it is for anyone, it is for me. I feel really grateful, I feel really at home in this group, and it is a group that always changes shape, it is the back and the forth as James would say. I think it was you who said there is sort of a breath to the lyrics, well they were not quite lyrics, but in the poem or whatever it is.

Female: There was a loud quietness to today which I really liked, and I was really grateful that people did not get uncomfortable with that, because you can get uncomfortable with that. I did not see that, I did not see people agitating. I think there was a sadness, but it was not heavy. It was that acceptance of both the joy and the sadness, so I felt that contained. I think this was my first time combined with you two, and that feels easy and right. A lot of you noticed the spaciousness, but you also create that. I am very conscious of that. It is multi-sourced. Very nice.

Female: It is very normal, in a circle like this, so trying to find a unified experience for everybody is not really an important activity for me. It might be for other people, it is nothing I really try to do. In fact, the opposite. I am really interested that people can have their own experiences, and I want to go to what Acushla said, this is a very important thing, we do not do it for... I honestly

want to say, in doing it with, and that is not to say that we do not have power, privilege, decision making things. All that stuff is happening, and it is very important to be transparent about that and help each other be accountable and transparent about that. I think we have been aware in the past when it has become formulaic, overly formulaic. Template, fine, okay, good, as long as we can toss it out. Helpful. We like to have that, a google doc called template, you know, it is fine. I can barely adhere to them, some of us do better challenged that way, but it is really really important because that is fundamental difference as to how the program is perceived. The program is perceived as helping the elders. Okay, we tolerate that, we seek to have opportunities to say, "actually when we say that, we take ourselves out of the story, so when we put ourselves back in, we are changed. Change is everything". It may sound like a small thing, but it is actually a huge thing. Huge. The other thing I wanted to say to take your point about what happened [inaudible: in namaste?] one of the really important parts of the creative part of facilitation stuff is getting out of habitual ways of relating to each other, and I would say coming into a metaphorical, non-linear, imaginal, I do not know what words we want to call this, I do not want to analyze it, it is just a magical space. For me it is magic, it is how I feel it, it is what I like to call it, but there are other big fancy words for how we might think about it. The minute we can leave habitual ways of relating to each other, and so Vanessa just playing the guitar, or had she played a guitar in the background while we were talking, that changes everything. Just that, just that. I just want to say that is one of the reasons it is so important for us to move through different creative modalities. And also in our community, linear memory is not that important. And it turns out we can be very present with each other, and so this notion of story, it is very important that is not a linear notion, it upsets me actually when it is perceived that way. I am Molly and this is my story. It is a linear way, as opposed to the sky is blue and that leaf is beautiful, and that is my story. So, there is that, and I believe we are starting to see more and more that that kind of has an advocacy role in helping families to connect with, and care-givers connect with people who are struggling through memory loss who get scared when the linear memory is gone. It is scary, and that is a very big loss, but there are in fact incredibly other ways to connect with each other. So in that way I think in the work, -we do have this intention of building capacity, but the capacity is through the direct experience of being together and doing this. It is not so much saying what it is. It is practicing being together actually, you know, spaces.

Female: I know I have kept going first this, today, it was always like "oh my god, I forgot to say..." I am really thinking how to bring this into other contexts, like how do you actually... Because my experience, and there could be many factors but I am often in a group it is not necessarily programs, but where I feel like I am not heard, or that my experience is while someone is already talking, people are calculating what they are going to say next, so they are not really responding, they are just -I have to say this, so I am kind of curious. I kept thinking after I said what I said, what did it feel like, and I felt like I was being heard without having to say anything, and how do you actually cultivate that? And it has to do with disrupting the pattern, like what patterns do we get into, because I feel like in different contexts there is this dynamic, or this pattern that I keep re-experiencing, like how can you be creative about disrupting those patterns, not in this context but in other contexts. So I want Vanessa to come play the guitar, and I want to have a couple drums to kind of beat, just to shift the rhythm because I am very aware of how we get into this rut. It was in the poem, it is like we get into this rut, and what is the impact of the rut on everybody? I think some people might benefit more from the rut that in. So I kept thinking "why does this feel different from a lot of the circles I have been in recently", and that was it, I felt heard without really saying anything, and how can we cultivate that in other contexts?

Female: A number of things come to me when you say that. One is I notice something that is, everybody is always invited to the circle, like you said when people came in, there was kind of a pause, and for the most part. There is always this curiosity I feel with the elders we work with, like they are really curious to interact with us, and I am really curious to interact with them, and it just feels that we feed that with each other, and I do not know where that comes from but I feel it. It is like, "oh, you are here again" and I am here. I just feel this sweetness of, okay we are together again and this is our time. Then there is the intentionality of giving everybody a chance to say something, but then also the opportunity to not say something, which is also really important. So those things come to mind about just the intentionality of the space.

Female: The turn is what makes the circle, it is the turning and taking turns, just to amplify that metaphor. If everyone gets a turn, the circle keeps moving. Otherwise people are shut out, and I have to work on that thing that you talked about Patty, because I am a pouncer. Like, I want to talk and I want to share, but then I come here and I do not feel like a pouncer, I feel like I am listening, and I process and I think about what everyone says. I do want to say this quick, this is very important.

Crowdsourcing Change led by Daniel Banks and Adam McKinney

Thursday, November 5th, 6:30 - 9:30pm

"Crowdsourcing Change" is a process to encourage productive, honest conversations about key issues of identity, equity, access, representation, and the language that surrounds these issues. In addition, the process is meant to move from open and courageous conversation into identifying action-steps.

Transcription Reflective Dialogue

Male: I wish this was the first workshop for everybody. I feel like this is something, especially just thinking about this idea of collaborative, collective whatever. Everyone talking about knowing one another, and how we all do know each other, or we want to work with each other more... it is Albuquerque, it is Santa Fe, they are connected, it is small, and having worked with people too, it is so great to feel that. Going into this work, it seems so important. I also feel us wanting a little bit more now. ... The idea of sitting in a circle has almost become a normative of this work. I felt like this really shook it up, so I appreciated that. For me to be in a space where I was feeling nervous or a little vulnerable, at the end almost -not in complete control over my emotions was kind of exciting. It was not just, you know ...because this work is not always just-. It kind of takes me back, and I will stop talking, but it takes me back to work in a classroom when we used to do **Theater of the Oppressed** work. You are in an f---ing room for six hours and people are pouring their hearts out, and people are getting angry, they are really diving deep. That was when I was a teenager, a middle-schooler, and now I am working with people who are adults and we are all doing this work, but sometimes I feel like I am not getting there and I felt that, -I am almost going back to feeling that, so it was something, you know..... You are doing acting exercises, and there is circles and people are talking and taking from personal experience, acting out personal experience. Being really vulnerable with each other, and so often I find

myself in a position where it is almost industrialized social action. I feel, where the f---- is the time to dig in with people. So that is just where I am with it right now, so you just used your time effectively. Because you just questioned, and I think [inaudible,name?] hit it, you hit some questions that were big but they were well thought out.

Male:...realizing that there are probably going to be people at very polar ends of feelings about racial equity, and other kinds of equity and access, and even bringing up white privilege, not everyone is going to come into a space like this is even going to necessarily have a bachelor's in white privilege, you know, talking about white privilege. It is hard. I do not want anyone to be left behind. I do not want people to be bored and feel like, why are we here just to help other people think this through, but at the same time I do not want people to walk away and be like, "I am done, that is it, that is not my responsibility". So I appreciate what you are saying, and yes I almost envision a part 2 of this workshop where the second two hours in a longer day where it does start to, where the heat does get turned up even more. But thank you, it does give me a lot to think about what can be accomplished in two hours.

Male: Definitely.

Male: And then you would go afterwards and they would say, "come to the gig tonight" and you would watch them play, and then afterwards you would just hang out and you would see them in their professional, public mode delivering the goods. I think that for me as a young artist at that point, I could not put any of it into words, but I felt like it informed me as a human being. I think that these kinds of things are the same thing. We could talk techniques, and we could break it down into curriculum and things like that, but I think it is really about modeling and there is something about that, where it is almost empathetic somehow. I can see where for me as a facilitator, there are places I struggle and there are places I do well. To be in a room with people who hold a really excellent space it is great because it makes me even more aware that I have to work that much harder, and work harder by being softer and more vulnerable as a facilitator and you guys did a great job tonight. Like Michael said, it was good poetry. Simple, concise, effective. We did most of the talking and that was great, so thank you for that.

Female: There was something nice that in this, everyone came to this very personal point that you let us unleash on that page. That was really, you know when you say, "what is the difficult question?" and of course you do not know what it is because you bury it underneath everything else. So we need everyone's difficult question to let it surface. So that was quite beautiful. And I still do not want to talk about it, but I will.

Male: I feel like that old school apprenticeship model of learning how to be a blacksmith, that is how we are learning how to do this thing here, is by watching other people do it and borrowing from their style and adding from our style and so that is more of a met-up on this whole process of living story collective, that is what I think is valuable about this way of learning, learning by doing, instead of lectures and pamphlets and books and PowerPoints and workshops, because the text is us. We are the text. As a poet I will teach a text, but today the text was Adam and Daniel, and I got to see them doing it and see the care with which they took care of us. That is what I got to learn. I got to learn how you cared for the group, regardless of what you are teaching, I need to do more of that and be careful about where people are landing and whether they feel unraveled or where we are ending at, where are we starting at, is everybody at the table? Who is disengaged, who is reengaged? That level of care. It could be choreography, it

could be poetry, performing arts, it could be whatever you want. But those are actual, tangible things that I can learn, so.

Female: It felt so important to have that inner energetic space open. It felt really precise and really right to me. It is a question that holds a lot in this kind of work because there is so much energy activated or so much pushed down.

Female: It sort of brings the attention inward. When you are first sitting down in circle, you may not know everyone, and there may be a sense of self consciousness moving our body the way you are asking us to. Then to start doing it, you start to bring your awareness into how good it feels to be moving and to be paying attention to those certain parts of your spine and your muscles that you have been ignoring all day. Then all of a sudden it washes away the self consciousness because you are focusing inward. I think that is a really important component in this work is bringing exercises and allowing for that and then also, there was one thing I wanted to say... Sitting in circle like this always, I have never been to a twelve step program, but I kind of imagine that it is like this, and it feels really good to be in circle like this. I will not use the word "community" but it does always feel, when I sit down, that I am sitting down with family. This work is kind of like proactive twelve step, where we are not trying to work out issues that we all have that are forcing us to be here, but that we are creating the space and opportunity to proactively ask ourselves or pay attention to the things that are important to us, so asking questions. What is really important to us? And the prompts, the questions that you provide. The biggest thing that they serve is that they allow us to ask those questions to ourselves, and then to create more questions and to go deeper. I am a little tired, so ... something like that.

Female: I think I have talked about it before in these reflections, that to me one of the essential qualities of facilitating groups or communities or whatever are really powerful, -sensitively powerful beginnings and closures are to me so important and I think we sometimes kind of forget that and even just stepping back a little from the beginning, like how we are in the room when people enter or how the room is set up. I think the beginning was really great with the movement, and also how you two are very at ease actually. It felt, and I know a lot of us know each other, but you were just at ease, which I think puts the room, the group at ease in a way. It was dealing with a difficult subject, so that ease helped I think. It did not feel forced. So it felt held in a beautiful way, even though we were dealing with a difficult subject. And I think the closing too, I mean, you had to stand up. Again there was just that little moment of here where it was just changed, a moment, which is really important. I also really appreciated that even with that short time, that you brought us to an action point, because I think that sometimes what we do not do, because we do not feel like we have enough time or that it will come next time. But I think again, with something that is as important as this subject that to go away without that action can leave you even more frustrated, more anxious, because you are delving into a subject and you are leaving the room and agghh... So I really appreciated that.

Male: ...to throw something else in. I thought it was irony, maybe it is irony. It was an effective use of irony that you started with these words of these trainings that we are all sometimes forced to go to, like diversity trainings, and we were all like "ahhgg". The problem with those trainings, besides what they are called is that you do that and your company says, "you do this" and then in three hours [slaps] great, we have solved the diversity problem, check here. We all took the class, we are good, right? That leaves often people who find themselves in the margin feeling like that was a slap in the face, that was an insult. This was actually the opposite of that,

that was the irony in that. We could have called it a diversity training if we wanted to be snide, but then you actually leave with an action item, you leave with actually a thing to do, leaving with a solution. I think that that was... and I do poetry workshops, and maybe we write a poem, and maybe they read the poem at the end of the thing and everybody goes home. I do not know if they are ever going to write another poem again, I do not even ask them to. I have never charged them with saying, "okay, meet someone in the class in two weeks you all check in with each other and see how many poems you have written. Just that. Being able to widen the circle beyond my time in a room because either I am getting evaluated or I am getting paid for my time there, so that is all I care about, but not what are they going to do with this after they leave, so I think that is what unique and ironic, considering the subject.

Male: So I think we keep trying to figure out ways to hack the system and plant seeds and maybe just water them for the first time before the workshop is over so that the hope is is that people will want to keep watering them. So thanks, and then the other part of it that was a conscious design piece in this workshop is that instead of it, and somebody else mentioned that, instead of it being the facilitator should do all the talking about the topic, that usually they are not even necessarily affected by on a daily basis, that it is actually, -you know that I use the C word a lot, community, because I do actually believe in the power of that word if it is properly sourced and resourced. So the idea is that the community gets to know about itself.

Female:....the things that were mentioned really contained my experience and I moving into, because of the power of this sort of idea, can templates, because you are going to unleash this template out to the world, can they transcend the facilitators?Because I feel like there is so much, like you are a master at what you do. People can be like, "okay, the head goes this way" but there is something that happens from mastery, and I do not know, like maybe people just tweak it and it will be good enough, it will be good enough to make things happen. So I am just curious about that.

Male: Well, the idea of the template is to leave spaces for community based knowledge, so it would not necessarily be "start with this exercise". It would be, have someone from your community lead an exercise that engages breath, spine, movement in some way, that can be done by people of all abilities.

Female: I wanted just to say one thing, and this is not a recap. I just wanted to say my personal gratitude to both of you and also say for me, the word mastery is used a lot about presence and the transmission of presence, like the quality of listening, and also that we can perhaps feel what work we have done in ourselves, and I feel such spaciousness in both of you in terms of the work, and the deep investigation you have done, and courageous. So to hold a circle with such grace, I just want to recognize all the things that go into that, and the quality of heart too, that just for me just permeates and just makes the space, so I just wanted to acknowledge that and thank you. I really feel that.
