2012

Practicing the Art of Hosting:

Exploring what Art of Hosting and Harvesting workshop participants understand and do

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July 2012

Acknowledgements

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Purpose of this Report

To many in the Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter (hereafter, Art of Hosting (AofH)) community of practitioners, their first encounter with this practice came in a three-day workshop. This intensive training experience focuses on a number of engagement techniques, practical design frameworks, and theories (which many call the "worldview"). Most significantly, this practicum invites participants into deeper engagement with the Art of Hosting *practice*.

In this report, we explore practicing the practice because, in our research, we have found significant and nuanced dimensions to Art of Hosting stewards' use of the concept of "practice." The Art of Hosting training workshop emphasizes the importance of doing the work routinely (i.e., like doctors practice medicine) *and*, doing it repeatedly in order to build skill (i.e., like practicing the piano). Yet, the workshop is also an invitation to engage more deeply in practice, viewing it as an ongoing stance (i.e., the way yoga is a lifelong practice for people). The invitation to practice in the Art of Hosting is not merely just to try out things and build skills in the workshop, but to enter into new relations by actively seeking opportunities to practice and by building relationships with others involved in cultivating it. This ambition is articulated clearly in the four-fold path, which is increasingly recognized as a key framework differentiating Art of Hosting from other deliberative processes.

This report focuses on exploring how this intention is experienced by a group of workshop participants. We draw upon interviews with sixty-four people, six to eight months after they attended workshops in Minnesota, USA in 2011, and interviews with the five community stewards or trainers involved in those sessions. It also is informed by the authors' own deep engagement with the AofH practitioner community which has emerged in Minnesota since 2011; all three of us have participated in the training and incorporated the practice into our teaching and community engagement work, including one of us apprenticing and core hosting at subsequent training workshops. Through our engagement, we have kept detailed notes and used the relationships built to inform the account of this ethnography.

The structure of the report is that we first explain more fully this research setting. We then consider what training participants say about how they are practicing the Art of Hosting practice. We include their articulated barriers and sources of inspiration and engagement. To frame this analysis, we rely heavily on what stewards and hosting team members articulate is the intent of the workshop. At the

Stewards

Individuals at the local and global levels who cultivate and advance the Art of Hosting practice and community by offering their insight, resources, and experience.

Hosting Team

A group of people previously trained in the Art of Hosting that is called on to design and carry out training workshops.

conclusion of the report, we share two kinds of harvest from our research. The first are suggestions about how to support learning about the Art of Hosting through the workshops and

other training or practice opportunities. The second are observations about sustaining and strengthening the Art of Hosting practices and community of practice.

Because international stewards seek cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences to create an emerging understanding within our community, we hope this account can provide insights to help us all continue to refine and improve the growth of the international Art of Hosting community.

Introduction to the Art of Hosting

The Art of Hosting contains a range of engagement techniques well recognized in the field of facilitation and participatory democracy. Explicitly, the *Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter* focuses on engaging the resources and intelligence of diverse groups of stakeholders to make progress on shared challenges. It is based on the assumption that we humans have enormous untapped wisdom and resilience; and that sustainable solutions can be created when we share that wisdom with each other. While Art of Hosting resembles other approaches to whole systems change (Holman, Devane & Cady, 2007; Wheatley & Frieze, 2011; Block, 2009), there are a few unique dimensions which differentiates this approach from others.

First, while many community engagement processes focus on producing equal social relations among diverse participants, the Art of Hosting brings together a range of group process techniques: Peer Circle Process (Baldwin & Linnea, 2010; Baldwin, 1998), Open Space Technology (Owen, 1997), World Café (Brown & Isaacs, 2005), Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), and others, like Storytelling, Proaction Café, and Harvesting developed within the community of practitioners (See Appendix I).

Secondly, these techniques are applied through practical frameworks that help support the actual implementation in larger community engagement processes. For example, holistic design processes, such as the 6-Breaths and Chaordic Stepping Stones, which include attention to needs, purpose & principles, invitation, limiting beliefs, and implementation support, in addition to mere meeting logistics and agendas are featured in the workshop. Importantly, the techniques and practical frameworks are not owned by an institution or copyrighted. Rather, they come from our international community of practitioners committed to sharing them. Like open source computer engineers who collaborate freely and share intellectual property to improve the internet programmers who share code (Lerner & Tirole, 2001), Art of Hosting practitioners freely share the process techniques and framework which effectively supports change within complex human systems.

Hosting Conversations
Contribute

Community of Practitioners
Co-create

Practice Conversation
Participating

To be Present
Pre-sensing

This open source approach is consistent with the third distinguishing feature of the Art of Hosting, the worldview. Most broadly, this theory assumes an individual's knowledge and way of knowing is shaped directly by their social position (Mann & Kelley, 1997). It also stresses that systems' abilities to develop new capacities or properties are created through an unpredictable, yet structured process called emergence (Holman 2010; Hazy, Goldstein & Lichtenstein, 2007). This worldview is grounded in the articulation and development of the Four-Fold Practice.

Finally, it is also further developed by our emphasis on a larger community of practitioners. Regardless of experience, we try to cultivate a novice-mind set. We work with others to co-create and blend experience in the workshop design. While each covers similar topics, the design is unique and crafted the day before the three-day session begins. In the workshop, there are no explicit leaders who command authority; rather it focuses on creating learning experiences. Invited immediately into a community, workshop participants teach techniques to the larger group, with coaching and support from hosting team members. Hosts and participants experiment and reflect on what happens to deepen our practice, improve it and our understanding of it.

Research Setting, Methods & Sample

This report grows out of a larger study of Art of Hosting practice. It emerged out of a unique state-wide initiative, InCommons, jointly developed and implemented by Minnesota's land grant university, statewide media, religious, and cultural institutions, and regional foundations (Sandfort & Bloomberg, 2012). Art of Hosting training is one of the ways in which InCommons is encouraging and supporting courageous leadership to engage communities and solve problems across diverse geographic areas, socioeconomic groups, and issues. While the training is free to participants, they were asked to donate three days of their time to work in supporting community gatherings that are consistent with InCommons' goals.

During the summer of 2010, a working group of staff from the InCommons partner-institutions identified needs for capacity building around community engagement and facilitation. Because of the statewide scope and content of InCommons, the group wanted to identify a robust core of simple facilitation practices easily applied and adapted to changing circumstances. The Art of Hosting model emerged as a potent approach because its open source, international collection of techniques. During the fall of 2010, working group members sampled their own networks to identify potential applicants for a three day Art of Hosting workshop. While the training was free

to participants, each was asked to donating three *pro-bono* days to doing gatherings consistent with the InCommons principles: agendas shaped with a clear purpose but no predetermined outcomes; discussion of significant social issues; use of evocative tools (art, metaphor, physical movement) to inspire creativity and engagement; hospitality demonstrated by removing barriers to participation; and attending to quality space and refreshment.

In January 2011, three Art of Hosting stewards were joined by apprentices in developing the first InCommons AofH workshop, involving 34 people. A second workshop was held, with the same core and apprentice hosts, in April 2011 with another 30 participants.[1] This report draws upon semi-structured interviews, 100% of the participants from these two trainings, a total of 64 persons, plus interviews with the five stewards and hosts involved in creating these workshops. The interviews were audio recorded and conducted by multiple investigators six-to-eight months after the training workshops. The interviews explore how participants understand the Art of Hosting Practices in relation to the rest of their facilitation and leadership experiences. They also probe practitioners' understanding of specific practices, investigate how they apply their learning in diverse local contexts, and ask them to articulate the results they observe. Interviews with core hosts and apprentices also explore their theories about how training participants would take up the practices and utilize them. To supplement the interview data, participants took a brief survey to document their demographic characteristics and current facilitation projects.

> ## Study Participation
>
> The thoughts and opinions of 64 individuals who went through Art of Hosting training workshops were collected for this report.

As active members of the emerging Art of Hosting community of practitioners in Minnesota, we also drew upon participant observation. All three of us have been trained in the Art of Hosting and participated in community gatherings where practice is discussed and used: Jodi Sandfort has participated in planning and hosting Art of Hosting trainings and community of practice events in Minnesota, as well as using the approach in teaching and community engagement projects; Nick Stuber has actively participated in the community of practice, sharing his skills through hosting numerous community-based events; and Kathy Quick has incorporated parts of the Art of Hosting training practices into classes she teaches on public engagement methods. We have used our experience in the Art of Hosting community to help us identify and interrogate the taken-for-granted aspects of learning the practices and enhance the validity of our findings by collectively sustaining some distance from its claims and disciplined consideration of alternative accounts. We have compiled extensive fieldnotes on these experiences, intentionally using our positioning as participants in and researchers of the field setting to generate ethnographic knowledge.

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[1] Since these initial offerings, additional Art of Hosting trainings have been held in the state, including three at the University of Minnesota (July 2011, January 2012, June 2012), three for a broad cross section of state-wide participants (October 2011, March 2012, April 2012) and others focused on particular professional or geographic communities (May 2012, June 2012, and three during the fall of 2012).

Using NVivo, a qualitative analysis software program, we summarized the audio recorded data and applied inductive coding to all of the information. We analyzed the data by exploring initial themes and areas of congruence and divergence. Through multiple, iterative rounds of analysis, major themes were fleshed out, including how years of experience influenced understanding and use of the Art of Hosting techniques; barriers to practicing; conditions surrounding application in community engagement projects.

Study participants were active in a variety of professional fields in the nonprofit, public, and private sectors, including: education, social services, youth, community organizing, intercultural dialogue, and economic development. The sample contained a seasoned group of individuals with over a third indicating that they had 21 years or more of facilitation experience. In addition, the sample was largely white (80%), female (70%), and highly educated (80% had a graduate degree or higher). Subsequent groups trained in the Art of Hosting in Minnesota during 2011 and 2012 are more diverse, with fewer seasoned facilitators and more racial, gender, and education background variation.

Our methodology in this study allows us to frame this report in relation to views articulated by the Art of Hosting stewards and other hosting team members we interviewed. We do so to make more explicit the tacit knowledge about the practice held by Art of Hosting trainers. We also think it is helpful to explore the degrees to which these espoused values are understood, integrated and applied by workshop participants. This will enable us to continue to refine our practicing of the Art of Hosting practice.

Understanding the Practice: Learnings from the workshop

Unlike many traditional facilitation trainings, Art of Hosting workshops are not oriented to a method of set of "best practices." Instead, it provides an introduction to skills, practical frameworks, and worldview. When asked what they most remembered from the training six to eight months later, many workshop participants referenced the techniques (Pro-action Café, Appreciative Inquiry, Open Space Technology, World Café, and Circle). The practicum element of the workshop—where participants learn engagement techniques through hosting and bringing real-life concerns as topics in Open Space Technology or Proaction Café—creates ability for participants to provide more concrete learning. Those who hosted a session in which a technique was introduced and practiced clearly recollected the specific technique from the session. As one participant said, "I remember doing the Proaction Café because I volunteered to head the demonstration up." Another participant recalled that during an Open Space Technology session he "…was able to have an issue of [his] own concern and passion and bring a group together around that [issue]; [it] was very helpful." Another individual recollected a World Café conversation with fellow young professionals about "leadership" and "succession planning," two issues that he cared about and enjoyed exploring in the workshop setting. Actively working with the techniques, either as hosts or beneficiaries, enabled people to remember specifically how they are structured and what results.

Designing the Workshops

The core team's practice of designing the activity flow for the Art of Hosting workshop immediately before implementation provides opportunity for customization and creativity. Yet, it also increases risk. In one of the workshops examined here, the first day's opening—a check in circle—lasted considerably longer than originally planned. It was notable to participants, even six to eight months after the training, and was something many mentioned when queried about their recollections. Some were frustrated by the sheer length of the circle and questioned why the hosts did not shorten it or pause it and break for lunch. As one participant said, "[The opening circle] went on and on and on […] It felt like we were so married to the process that nobody could say, hey lets just take a break and do our thing. And nobody called that question and it felt really weird." While voicing frustration with the duration of the circle, others also recognized its importance in establishing the tone for the training. Another recalled, "[I remember] how long [the circle] took, but also how exciting it was to be there with all those people who had so much experience facilitating. It was very much the creating of a community with that initial exercise. I really liked that." Another participant recollected that "the circle that was created and the community that resulted from that [were] collegial around content, learning, and support. That set the stage for the work   Thus, while there are many benefits of immediate design and flexibility, participants' accounts of this experience suggest workshop hosts should be explicit in sharing the rationale for their judgments about activity flow when unusual experiences unfold.

Additionally, some participants did not walk away with concrete ideas of how they could incorporate the techniques into daily work. One person, struggling with this integration, concluded the techniques only were appropriate for bringing groups together for the first time; another thought it was best for "long-term engagement" but could not see the connection between his "task oriented" daily meetings. Overall, the design flexibility of the various techniques, and the foundational principle that engagement techniques can be assembled to match need and purpose was difficult for many participants to understand. Many spoke evocatively about the overall session, the skill of the hosts, and appreciation for the experience. However, few understood how the session was designed or that techniques should be applied nimbly to presenting situations. When confusion over workshop design was expressed, some participants attributed it to limitations in the training materials; as one seasoned facilitator, used to more conventional curriculum-based trainings said, there was a "lack of clearly laying out the array of different methods and how to apply which one to different situations." Other more novice facilitators described themselves as "concrete" and "practical" thinkers (thereby distinguishing themselves from the "touchy-feely" experiential learning process) desired a flow chart or other schematic tool to help them make choices among techniques when designing participation events.

As noted earlier, a significant portion of this sample was seasoned facilitators, in terms of years of experience, formal education, and age. Many of these participants were aware of the techniques in the Art of Hosting found it quite helpful, "a nice package" and good "refresher" in the variety of tools which can work in different environments.

Techniques

The stewards and trainers interviewed in this study expected that workshop participants would be able to recount and describe the engagement techniques. All agreed that the techniques were a relatively easy place to start one's engagement with the Art of Hosting approach. The appeal is the straight-forward description (available in the book), and low barriers in terms of technical description or specialized tools for implementation. Yet, stewards and trainers all agree the techniques—in and of themselves—were only the tip of the Art of Hosting iceberg. As Kerry said:

> *There's a big difference between implementing a tool with a group and having a deeper understanding of the tool. Like level one is, I can go out and do a world café or an open space. Level two is, I know how to design a world café or open space into a project. Then I think there's even another level, which is, I have enough understanding of group process and of how communities work that I can start to adapt, meet people where they're at, take them through a journey, and hold energy. Maybe another level is I can actually be teaching as I do that or actually making practices transparent, so you understand what I'm doing so that you can actually go do it.*

Patterns

The stewards and trainers also felt the patterns of group dynamics taught at the workshop—the chaordic path, divergence and convergence, community of practice model—would be impactful. As one steward, Jerry said, "People can see themselves in [the patterns] pretty quickly if they had some personal experience…I used to think that participants would grasp the techniques more quickly, that they would say, 'I can do world café' or 'I can do circle,' but I think those practices are far more nuanced and require far greater care to do well, and they're harder than you think to do well."

Interview participants did recall patterns, most specifically the chaordic path, but to a lesser extent than the techniques. After learning about the chaordic path in the training, a participant described a challenging project she was working on with a group of youth in which she struggled to keep focused and complete tasks on time. The chaordic path language, in her account, provided her a way to better understand the group dynamics, allowed her to describe the "dance between chaos and order" to participants and enable her to be more intentional in her interventions. Similarly, a seasoned facilitator said, "I love the chaordic path. It is an elegant summary of so much of what I've been looking at over the course of my career." Another participant discussed how she sees a connection between her work as a consultant and chaordic path because she works to bring some order, but not destroy the creative chaos,

to leaders at a major organization. She drew upon the chaordic path to demonstrate that the group needed to embrace the emergent space between chaos and order.

Worldview

More experienced participants could engage in elaborate discussions about the practical frameworks and potency of the worldview in our interviews. They understood Art of Hosting as an integrative, impactful approach that offers a way of understanding common themes among the disparate techniques of conventional facilitation trainings. One person remarked that the Art of Hosting is "spiritual because the [hosts] talk about a sacred intent that lasts a lifetime." While some discussed it in relation to other models they knew, they also generally expressed appreciation for the accessibility and openness of the Art of Hosting model. Quite a few express indebtedness because the whole package gave them a way to better understand the practice they had intuitively done for many years, without a particular language or overall worldview to enable them to communicate effectively with other practitioners.

However, the less experienced facilitators did not express this appreciation or understanding of the Art of Hosting worldview. While the practical frameworks offered some insight in helping them to name and more effectively navigate group dynamics as they unfolded in practice, the larger concepts of complex adaptive systems seemed largely incomprehensible; instead, they focused on trying to understand the concrete techniques and struggled to grasp event design through an Art of Hosting approach, or how any one techniques could be useful in a particular situations. A veteran facilitator hypothesized that the Art of Hosting's "circular [or holistic] worldview" makes it difficult for some people to understand, as many are familiar with a "linear worldview" in which "one method or approach is always [considered] the best." People are used to focusing on using a correct method rather than the more intuitive assessment of what is happening in a group setting.

A handful of workshop participants also were explicit that their worldview differed significantly from that promoted by Art of Hosting. Because they see through the lens of identity intersections (race, class, gender, sexual orientation) and the accompanying power relations, they did not feel the workshop addressed these issues as directly as needed. More explicitly, they thought more dialogue about identity, power, and privilege inherent in the hosting role could deepen the impact of the workshop directly. While acknowledging the need for more dialogue around difference, Tuesday, a steward of the Art of Hosting community, also felt that more had to be done to bridge the "activist" worldview with working together for the betterment of the whole. She said, "we haven't figured out racism, we haven't figured out sexism, so as

you go forward that's going to happen [...] so we need to figure out a way to stay together across that and through it and learn from each other." A number also questioned whether Art of Hosting deals with conflict in participatory situations, especially those with a high level of diversity, suggesting that it places a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of hosts without much overt guidance.

Emphasis on Practice

A key message in Art of Hosting workshops focuses on the importance of practice. As noted earlier, the invitation to practice is multi-layered. The workshops invite people to learn techniques through practice, and suggest that one's mastery and understanding of them will only improve with practice. As Toke, a steward involved in these trainings said:

> As a basic premise, these are arts that you can spend a lifetime in learning. If you've gone to 1-2 trainings, you are still learning. I am still a student of this even though I have been doing this constantly for 20 years. I want to temper the perfectionist in us all, saying we go to a training and then we need to be able to do everything. Impossible! It's like that with everything: practice makes the master, or makes mastery.

Throughout the workshop, hosts communicate through their words and actions the sentiment that Art of Hosting practicing and learning are continuous, for the participants and themselves. When confronted with participant nervousness or fear about standing in front of the group or applying the techniques in new settings, they stress that repeated practice builds courage. As Rene, an apprentice host shared, "If people come out of the training…feeling inadequately prepared to really use these tools, what helps is a framework of, 'we're practicing.' I think that helps." In this way, the training is not merely a model of facilitation, but in itself an authentic enactment of hosting.

Yet, our interviews with workshop participants reveal this emphasis on practice was difficult to embrace, particularly the open invitation to join the community of practitioners. Instead, a number of participants recounting much of their attention during the session focused on trying to ascertain how they were similar or different from others. Sometimes, they focused on professional identities, differentiating themselves from the "consultants" who attended. Other times, they discussed their difference in terms of sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or politics. This discomfort, and constant questioning about the composition of training groups, suggests that trainers might try to find subtle ways of naming and reinforcing the strength gleaned from diversity in both training and the larger Art of Hosting community.

Doing the Practice: Describing the application

Workshop participants appreciated the active learning model of the session and, as noted earlier, recalled particular techniques when they were involved as hosts or callers. However, a telling result of the workshop is in the stories told by training participants about using Art of Hosting as community leaders. In our interviews, more experienced facilitators found it easier

than newcomers to call out particular facilitation techniques introduced in the training and recount how they had used them in their work. The applications were broad: community meetings about educational improvement, public health, rural sustainable development; organizational strategic planning sessions; and staff meetings. They had theories about how well particular techniques would or did work in different real or imagined settings. For example, they recognized ProAction Café as a "tangible" and "action-oriented" approach that could help individuals develop solutions to specific problems in ways that some other techniques, more focused on conversation for its own sake, did not.

The practical frameworks shared in the workshop provide design considerations rather than providing step-by-step processes. For example, the design principle of "beginning with the harvest in mind" focuses hosts' attention on artifacts that support collective meaning-making, rather than particular content or procedural outcomes. Similarly, the significance of clear purpose and powerful questions in shaping events is an invitation into a creative, interactive process of design. As one participant, reflecting upon training usefulness noted, "A well packed question acts as a strange attractor….It attracts resources and energy into a system, field or organization."

Nearly all workshop participants integrated some aspect of the Art of Hosting into their professional or personal lives. Those who did not directly apply a technique or framework discussed bringing them to future work. The three most popular techniques people employed included World Café, Open Space Technology, and Circle, while harvesting was the most highly referenced framework. The application of the techniques was exceedingly varied. Some individuals used the "textbook" version of World Café or Open Space Technology, while others assimilated aspects of the techniques to align with the purpose and context of an engagement. Participants also detailed the dynamic process of adjusting techniques in anticipation of or in response to the context they were working within. Some encountered space or time constraints, such as the way a room was organized or running out of time during a World Café.

Others tweaked techniques in response to the input or reactions of stakeholder participants. The use of techniques or frameworks in designing a process was not only contingent upon an engagement's contextual factors or goals, but also an individual's own degree of deep learning, what we have represented elsewhere as "metabolizing" (Quick, Sandfort, & Stuber, 2012). Those who deeply metabolized the learning, often were more seasoned facilitators, displayed a level of comfort and faith in bringing the Art of Hosting to their work.

Cases of Application

An interviewee, Bridget, highlighted the use of a participatory process which combined elements of two techniques taught in the Art of Hosting workshop. The content focused on foot and mouth disease and involved public health, veterinarians, and food producers to explore U.S. current response systems.

Conference planners had wanted to craft a meeting which allowed participants to go more deeply into content than conventional meetings. Bridget suggested Art of Hosting techniques because of the planners' goals of allowing participants to share responsibility for generating ideas and make the conference more inclusive. The design created more uncertainty and created worries in some planners that "vested interests would hijack the conversation." Yet, she recounted that she had pushed back, encouraging the planning team to "trust the wisdom of the group."

The conference began with a keynote address about outbreak and response to foot and mouth disease in England in the 1980s. Then, participants were asked in small groups to identify what they had heard that would be most significant now, if we confronted the same challenge. People who identified the first eight issues hosted small table dialogues probing more about the issues. Participants moved to another table to delve more deeply into the topic, exploring how the challenge could be addressed and assessing champions and dissenters. There was a third, "spontaneous round" organized by the planners over the lunch hour because of the quality conversation occurring. In reflecting on this conference, and comparing it to a

Kyle

Kyle described a project in a small town where a network of human service agencies wanted to engage different ethnic and racial group in annual planning. Traditionally, the meeting ran conventionally, with a pre-established agenda, yet the leaders wanted more robust engagement in crafting the new strategic plan. Unlike Bridget, Kyle worked with one leader rather than a whole planning committee. He noted the trust they shared enabled him to feel comfortable suggesting a new approach, World Café. In his mind, Art of Hosting techniques were appropriate because "they pull people into an experience… rather than kind of pushing them away." He spent time engaging the leader during the design to create a really good question. About fifty people attended the session and engaged in three rounds of questions, each exploring a new dimension to the planning process. Afterwards, the leader felt she got more information than in the past, and a formal evaluation revealed that the process established a sense of ownership and more social connection among participants when compared with prior approaches.

Robin

Robin described using Open Space, but with a twist, in her work with a private sector client. Her client had liked the general approach when she'd suggested it, but decided to discard some of its features. They omitted the discussion of ground rules and limited the overall duration due to time constraints, so that while she began with Open Space, they ended up with something with a rather different shape. Observing, "You have to figure out how much you are going to sacrifice of the method and carving out the time and space," she noted that what they did implement had worked well i in this context, but wondered aloud how much can be "trimmed" from a method before it is no longer that method.

similar one focused on antibiotics six month earlier in a conventional format, Bridget reflected, "The foot and mouth disease forum had a higher level of energy and engagement. They leaned

into the conversation more in the spring." Indeed, the evaluations she had done of both conferences found that participants expressed a higher level of commitment to moving the decisions forward from the meeting using Art of Hosting techniques.

In this account and those highlighted in the side boxes, participants discuss the iterative nature of engagement design. Planning occurs. But it is shaped significantly by the facilitator's own comfort with the techniques and ability to adapt them to the setting, and navigate the relationship among people. Another training participant, Dana, had a contrasting experience when she tried to bring Art of Hosting techniques to a strategic planning session of one of her community organizations' volunteers program. This particular group, focusing on tree planting, was comprised of individuals who loved to do the work and were resistant to forward-looking planning. She tried to introduce a few Art of Hosting techniques during the design phase, and even went to the full strategic planning meeting intending to use Open Space Technology. But at the meeting, it became clear this was not going to work. So she scaled back and resorted to a more conventional process with post-it notes. When asked about this, she attributed it to participants who do not like "process." "It just goes back to these forestry guys who are more comfortable being out in trees than sitting around a board table." Their reactions surprised her because "we all dig in the dirt together" and have good relationships. Despite the strong relationships she had with them, she was unwilling to push them to engage in a more participatory process because it would go against the prevailing norms of interaction.

The experiences of Dana, Bridget, Robin, and Kyle suggest the importance of the facilitator's own comfort with participatory processes. Facilitators must be willing to assert their judgments about appropriate processes. Our analysis suggests that presenting issues, relationships with others, and ultimately the facilitator's own assessment of the approach iteratively shape this judgment. In interviews, participants shared assessments of when Art of Hosting approach would not work citing limitations in working with diverse groups, low-income rural people, politically conservative audiences, or in projects focused on quick products. And yet, other interviewees shared examples of successful Art of Hosting-inspired projects sharing these same characteristics. This discrepancy highlights the significance of facilitator's own worldview about whether or not the approach is worthwhile.

Without fundamentally understanding and accepting the techniques, patterns, worldview, and iterative nature of design, it is difficult for people to actually practice the Art of Hosting approach. This is a baseline condition. Then, as the examples above suggest, practitioners must develop judgment about how to use that knowledge in particular settings. The differing experiences of Bridget and Dana in trying to apply and adapt the practices point to the voluntary aspect of hosting, hinge upon the facilitator's own comfort with participatory processes. Bridget highlights the iterative nature of engagement design, describing planning, adjustment, and ultimately success in implementing hosting approaches. Her account—as she describes pushing back against her colleagues' skepticism about hosting, encouraging them to "trust the wisdom of the group"—is not an assertion about what she knows will happen, or her post hoc analysis of what did happen, but rather a statement of belief—trust—in the practices. Dana, on the other hand, had similarly strong interpersonal relationships with the people with whom she was working, but was unwilling to push through their discomfort with "process."

Employing the Knowledge of Hosting

Thus, using hosting knowledge is not just a matter of belief in the techniques or the courage to use them. Reading the features of the presenting context for facilitation—including whether people in the room do or don't like "process," as well as the timing, professional norms, and the openness of supervisors or work settings described by the study participants—is critical. For example, in negotiating with her client and helping to host a meeting, Robin "figured out" how to move from implementing Open Space Technology as she had been trained, to modifying it so much that it had a "totally different shape." She went on to evaluate positively the effectiveness of the facilitation design they had used, even as she questioned whether they had "trimmed" so much from the method that it could no longer properly be called Open Space. Her vivid account suggests that experiencing facilitation serves not just as a way to use the skills or support retention of the knowledge acquired in training. It is also an opportunity for ongoing learning and reflection about what the techniques do.

When applying the workshop training, participants drew upon their knowledge of a setting, integrated it into the context, and in so doing transformed or modified the technique. This active adjustment is illustrated in many other accounts of how they chose a particular techniques or approaches in response to a context, their evaluative statements about how it worked, and their stories of adjusting, hybridizing, borrowing from, discarding, mashing up, and inventing techniques from the training, previous knowledge, and the presenting context. While the workshop format reinforces the legitimacy of this, by its own just-in-time creation of the hosting team and emergent experiences, making this explicit could benefit some participants who do not see or understand these dimensions the first time they experience them.

Multiple opportunities to practice this type of situated learning through trying out and observing the consequences of applying the knowledge in different settings was critical to our study participants' learning. Their memory of different techniques from the workshop was much more acute if they had tried them out in a project or issue they were grappling with in their work or other aspects of their lives. This outcome is reinforced by stewards' commitment to ongoing practice, exemplified by Toke's describing himself as "still a student even though I have been doing this constantly for 20 years." Seeing oneself as a continuous student, not only cultivates humility, but also keeps the learning and application fresh.

Active engagement in situated learning was particularly visible among veteran practitioners. They recounted using knowledge acquired through the training in the variety of issue areas and did not just recall the technique; they also had developed theories, or sometimes questions, about how it would work for particular conditions or purposes. They might attribute success or failure to features of the context or how well suited their approaches ended up being to it, or attest that they had not yet used a technique introduced through the training because it did not suit the contexts in which they work. For example, several practitioners were intrigued by Open Space Technology or ProAction Café and eager to try these techniques, but had not yet found "the right setting" for it. In these cases, the barrier to using their knowledge is not whether they metabolized it; they understand and accept it. Rather, they have not judged it appropriate for the problems they have faced.

Stewards and hosts interviewed for this project expect this type of variation, stressing their sense that "one Art of Hosting [training] not a practitioner make" and that not everyone is "ready." Jerry asserted that making "little changes" in a familiar environment and in their "personal" practices is fairly easy, a step that is "nonthreatening" for the individual and for the people with whom they interact. It also reflects the essential belief in the need for individuals to change, as he said, "if you're not different, you can't ask others."

Participants with less experience understood intellectually the ideas of ongoing learning, of continually practicing, and of renewing practices, but they found it challenging to enact. Although they seemed prepared to learn the discrete techniques or practical frameworks presented during the training, when interviewed months later, few said they were hosting as an ongoing practice or discipline. Most attributed their lack of implementing hosting techniques to external constraints, such as an unsupportive boss, a hierarchical organization, decision-oriented professional norms, or pressure to default to familiar approaches due to urgency. Yet, notably, the veteran practitioners discounted the centrality of these factors as explanations for why people do or do not use Art of Hosting. They pointed, instead, to the individual's internal willingness to take the risk and try. As a steward, Tuesday, said:

> [The workshop] is just a kick-off to the practice. The practice had to come….Some people are willing to go experiment and practice. Not everyone has that nature. This practice is built on personal courage and stepping into the fire, and people need different things in order to be able to do that, readiness being one of them. But it really is about putting your big girl panties on and giving it a shot."

They were in agreement that one source of that courage to put on your "big girl panties" is working with others in a co-generated community of practice.

Deepening the Practice: Experiencing the invitation into community
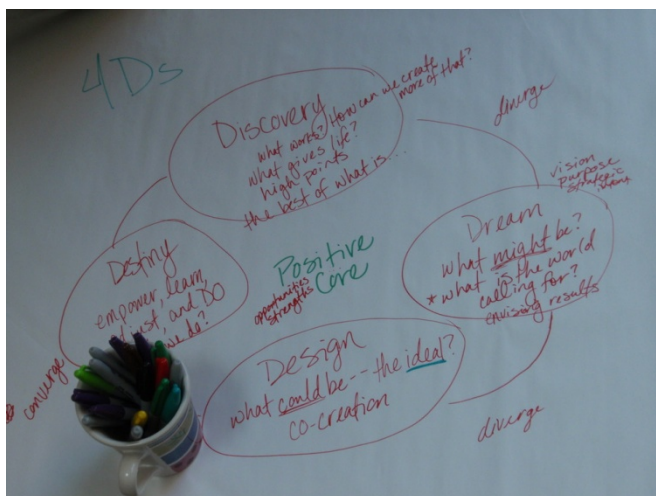
At the Art of Hosting workshop, participants are introduced to the community of practice. Many recounted meeting people with whom they subsequently built relationships and collaborated to enhance ongoing projects or one-time events, such as meetings or conferences. Once they had started with a face-to-face interaction, many found it easy to make subsequent connections. For example, two participants followed up and started an interfaith dialogue circle, bringing together Muslim and Catholic immigrant and refugee women,

after their training workshop. A number of young professionals used the workshop to initiate an effort to engage their generation in state-wide policy leadership. Others used an email listserv to recruit people to assist in emerging projects or study groups. Many participants appreciated the opportunity to have meaningful conversation with others and remembered insights they gleaned from those interactions at the workshop long after the event. As one individual recounted, "from participating in the training, I have connected with people who I am still maintaining relationships with today and who are doing really fascinating and interesting projects where they have asked me to engage on it using Art of Hosting." They also were willing to use technology-enhanced communications when they build off of the relationships first established face-to-face. They wanted to stay connected to members of the community by having periodic opportunities to practice the methods and engage with one another.

Yet at the same time, not everyone felt themselves "at home" in the community. One individual felt disconnected from the participants at a workshop because the majority of people were fulltime, "professional facilitators," while he identified himself as a practitioner in a specific policy field. Because of the size of the workshops, not everyone can interact. Some recounted that at later meetings of the community of practitioners they found it difficult to remember whether or not they actually had a meaningful connection with a particular person. Numerous new practitioners felt intimidated, disoriented, or envious about how to become a community "insider."

Stewards recognized some of the feelings of unease, confusion, and disorientation felt by the newcomers to the Art of Hosting unfamiliar with how the community of practice constitutes and sustains itself. Tuesday said:

> One of the limitations of the AofH is that if you don't have strong boundaries and you have permeability that lets people in sometimes that's hard to figure out how to access. It's like there's no clear doorway in. I continue to hear that about AofH. So for me, it's very permeable: 'Come on in, you're welcome? Want to be part of the community? Great, you're part of the community!' But I've heard other people say, 'But how do I interact with AofH? You don't have an organization, you don't have an info@artofhosting, right? I don't get it.' It's kind of hard to get. That is a major limitation. In can be hard to get, because you're looking to get your arms around something that doesn't necessarily have these boundaries. Sometimes it's actually a barrier to accessing.

Art of Hosting Language

The particular language used to describe the Art of Hosting approach is part of what makes this distinction. Some participants made a direct connection between using the language and being "part of the club." In fact, when asked to identify weaknesses in the Art of Hosting, both newcomers and stewards identified the community's rarefied language, as a problem or potential problem. Workshop participants described it as "new agey," "flowery," "academic," "hippie," or "touchy feely." Some expressed impatience with finding new words for familiar ideas, but more were concerned that the people they might host would find the language off-putting or confusing. One participant noted, "I don't really think it's helpful to use language that

isn't going to be commonly understood by someone who's going to be with you just once or twice." Commenting about "harvesting"—the term that our study participants most frequently mentioned as a potential problem—several people remarked that they might do it, but would never describe it to others that way because they perceived people would be uncomfortable with the word or not understand it. To a lesser extent, participants identified discomfit with the term "mate." There was some discomfort with the term because it is not commonly used in American English to describe a friend or companion (even though it was explained to originate with Australian Art of Hosting practitioners). At the January 2011 cohort workshop, some of the participants engaged in an extended riff of puns and jokes on the sexual connotations of mate and mating, which may also be a reason for some people's discomfort with the term. Regardless of their discomfort with the term, participants readily acknowledged the importance and benefits of working with a co-facilitator. Yet, even the training hosts and stewards recognized that the language can be a barrier to communicating with people who are unfamiliar with the practice. Yet, at the same time, they stressed, as said by one, "creating a new language can also be powerful in terms of helping people get a new concept." Some training participants agreed, recognizing that language helps to establish means of communication within a community that can help increase insight and deepen awareness.

The Community of Practice

In the Art of Hosting workshop, people also are first introduced to the international community of practitioners. Reflecting upon it in our interviews, many participants felt this international community was positive, and helping them to understand the larger potential of the practices. Notably, however, only a small fraction actually reported participating in these international on-line conversations. Having the state-wide effort in Minnesota symbolically connected to a larger, international "movement" helped legitimate it in some participant's minds without requiring them to engage, themselves, at that level.

Instead, relationships with members of the state and local communities felt more rewarding, less risky, and very tangible. Beginning in January 2012, a local steward and other trainers began convening a group interested in developing and nurturing a regional community of practice, involving people trained in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Over the first three meetings, approximately 50 participants co-created their understanding of the purpose, principles, etc., drawing upon the Chaordic Stepping Stones to guide the community formation process.

These gatherings and relationships emerging through them among training participants have, to date, yielded a few things. First, they created a working, regional list of people actively interested in building a community focused on intersections of the Art of Hosting practice, important citizen projects, and authentic relationships. This list is a valuable resource. As part of InCommons, workshop participants are invited to practice hosting at numerous large-scale gatherings, including regional meetings on resolving state-budget, state-wide conversations about local government innovation, regional discussions of water quality, and nonprofit leadership. Individual community members, themselves, use the list to request hosting assistance; for example, people volunteered to host table conversations at an annual

conference between the University and County government, at community gatherings about tax policy because they were asked by others in the community of practice.

Secondly, the group began to create trainings and opportunities for practicing hosting techniques. Two seasoned practitioners offered retreats focused on hosting one's self, through circles and deep listening. Others called Proaction and World Café sessions to enable community members to bring and get input on projects or experiences using Art of Hosting techniques in their work.

Finally, community members have crafted a formal process for developing Art of Hosting trainers in the region, responding to the growing demand for training since the first sessions in 2011. In the tradition of the international community, trainings cannot be labeled Art of Hosting unless a steward is on the hosting team. Yet, as the practice continues to grow, and demand increases, there is reason to ask some workshop participants to consider whether or not they would like to take another step in this community, learning the practices, practical frameworks, and worldview more deeply to enable them to become workshop trainers. The process for this was developed by a local steward in deep consultation with others in the international community of practice to assure integrity in the call to participate.

Yet, the process of building a community of practice takes time. It is also not linear and may be confusing. If someone wants to continue to be involved, but somehow missed some meetings, it can result in them not being included in subsequent email invitations. This dynamic is inherent in a self-organizing community and requires attention and care.

Harvesting from the Research: Supporting learning to host

One of the purposes of our research has been to support learning of and about AofH. The previous accounts describe what participants in Art of Hosting and Harvesting workshops understand and do. In this section, we share our harvest about our study's implications for making the AofH workshops and other learning opportunities more productive. A premise of these observations is that hosting is not a straightforward task. There are multiple techniques or specific capacities that individuals might acquire, but hosting skillfully involves much more complex work than just applying facilitation techniques. As John Forester has said of skilled deliberative facilitation practitioners, they are:
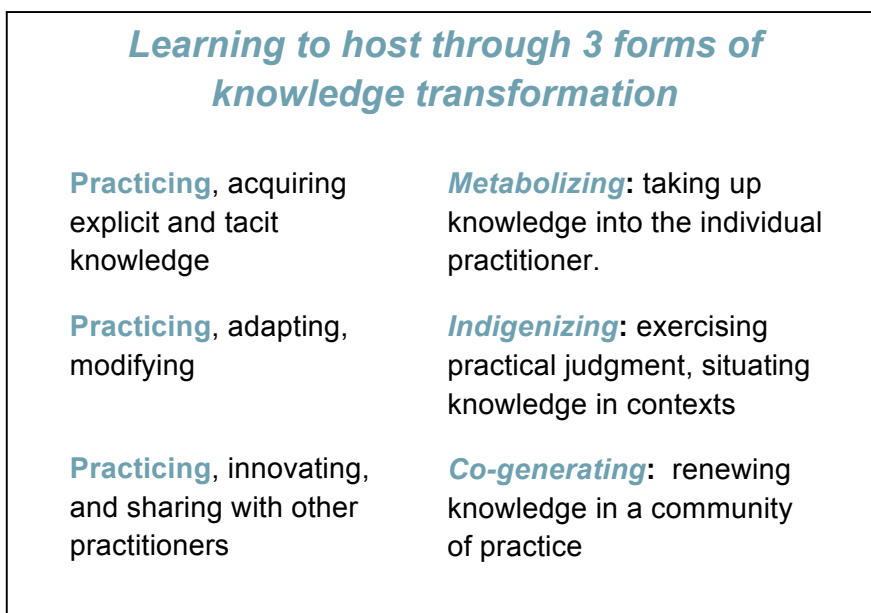
> ….doing <u>not just</u> the pragmatic work of facilitating a discussion, but the critical pragmatic work of thinking through the procedural design, thinking through the politics and ethics, the normative structuring, of that discussion in the first place…. (Forester, 2012: 14, emphasis in original)

The Art of Hosting community is, itself, very oriented to learning, identifying it as both an ongoing means *and* ends of hosting. This is encapsulated in the idea of *practice being both object and action*. In our research, stewards of the community often referred to hosting as a "practice," a life-long journey of exploration and commitment. From this perspective, to understand and deepen the practice you have to take action through continued learning and

improvement; the act of practicing is simultaneously the act of learning. Through this process, individuals take up the knowledge of the Art of Hosting.

In our analysis of the research data (Quick, Sandfort, & Stuber, 2012), we identified three processes through which learning is occurring: *metabolizing*, *indigenizing*, and *co-generating.* Each involves a type of transformation of knowledge, encapsulated in the adjacent diagram.

We use the word *metabolizing* to describe the types of knowledge transformation within individuals that is embodied, in which the person takes in and transforms, absorbs, or discards knowledge. Metabolizing involves acquiring explicit and implicit knowledge through a variety of mechanisms, including formal training, assimilation of new knowledge with previous

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Learning to host through 3 forms of knowledge transformation

Practicing, acquiring explicit and tacit knowledge

Practicing, adapting, modifying

Practicing, innovating, and sharing with other practitioners

Metabolizing: taking up knowledge into the individual practitioner.

Indigenizing: exercising practical judgment, situating knowledge in contexts

Co-generating: renewing knowledge in a community of practice

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knowledge, and learning through practicing. It is not merely a cognitive process but also an evaluative one: as individuals are introduced to and try on new practices, they consider whether they work for their own personal style or needs. These processes are revealed in accounts in which people recall learning through training, their evaluative statements about whether or not they like or feel prepared to use different parts of the material, or their observations about what is hard, easy, or familiar to them about learning or using the approach. Metabolizing appears to be foundational in the sense that it is a baseline for other transformations of knowledge. Practitioners cannot facilitate without taking on—sufficiently understanding *and* accepting— explicit and tacit knowledge about particular techniques and frameworks.

Indigenizing describes the types of transformation of knowledge in which practitioners develop situated judgment, which involves learning and exercising practical judgment about how to use their knowledge in particular contexts. The word draws attention to placing knowledge in a setting, integrating it into the context, and in so doing perhaps transforming or modifying the knowledge. These processes involve evaluating the context in which they will be facilitating and the likely consequences of different techniques, frameworks, or concepts. A form of learning in and on practice through reflection (Schön, 1983; Forester, 1999), indigenizing is done in anticipation of, during, or following facilitating, and frequently involves adapting knowledge. These processes are revealed in accounts of how practitioners have chosen particular techniques or approaches in response to a context, their evaluative statements about how it worked, and their stories of adjusting, hybridizing, borrowing from, discarding, mashing up, and

inventing techniques, frameworks, and concepts from the training, previous knowledge, and the presenting context.

Co-generating encapsulates the types of transformation of knowledge in which facilitators acquire, test, and co-generate new and renewed facilitation practices through participation in a community of practice. It is closely related to but slightly different from the "co-learning" term evoked by the study participants when they invite one another into training and into practicing together. Co-generating draws our attention to the renewal of the practices, not just of individuals' learning. For many veteran or core practitioners of the Art of Hosting, learning *is* the practice and product, as reflected in Toke's characterization of the work done in the community of practice as "practicing, practicing learning." Co-generating processes are revealed in accounts of how people are learning through training or subsequently working together, innovations or shifts in practices discovered through the community, and by explicit talk of "co-learning" and the community of practice.

Recognizing these three aspects of learning to host can help the AofH community to enhance and sustain learning to host and harvest. Several implications for training and other opportunities to learn are notable:

- *Practicing* **is key in all three types of learning.** The repeated statements of a wide variety of people about the anticipated and observed value of learning through practice, combined with novices' expressed thirst for more opportunities to practice, suggest that all need ongoing opportunities to host in order to sustain and develop the craft. Indeed, the dictionary definition of a "seasoned" practitioner emphasizes acquiring competence through action, trial, and habit, in other words through practicing.[2]

- **The thirst for opportunities to practice in the AofH community is likely not just about skill development. Rather, in the Art of Hosting model,** *learning* <u>*is*</u> *practicing democracy***.** The ideals of getting together as a community to practice, to continue to acquire skills, to help one another, and to "practice learning," as one steward put it, speak to the practitioners' intense desire to continue to learn, marked by an active cultivation of a beginners' stance through the philosophy that "practice makes the master." In addition, however, it reflects what good hosting does, which is to support and sustain learning among the people being hosted. AofH does not have set of evaluative criteria for good hosting, but its practices and frameworks clearly imply that one of the motivations for hosting gatherings is to support learning, the creation of new understandings. At the moment, however, this is implied rather than explicit. Explaining that hosting is meant to facilitate learning—the discovery of new ideas, relationships, or resources—could be helpful for orienting hosts, hosting trainees, and participants alike to the work they will be doing together.

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[2] Seasoned, adj.: Fortified by habit; acclimatized; familiarized with a certain mode of life or occupation; trained, disciplined. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd edition, 1989; consulted online at oed.com on June 27, 2012)
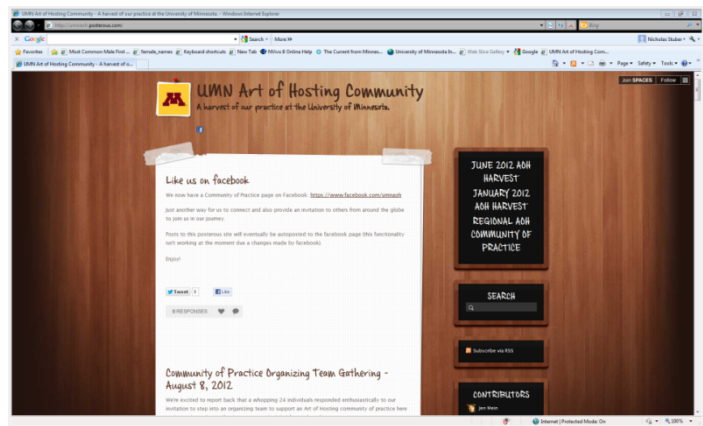
- **More thoroughly narrating how the AofH workshops are organized, by design and in real time, could enhance learning.** Our interviews show not everyone participating in the workshops understands the intent of a learning workshop and practicum. This likely contributes to confusion or reticence that some people experience in stepping up to learn by doing. Secondly, when training hosts or stewards need to improvise and adjust in real time, talking through that with the participants can help everyone to recognize how practitioners can and must "indigenize" hosting knowledge to suit emerging contexts. It can also diminish some of the sense that some people are hosting "experts" or that there is a "right" way to do things, which are barriers that numerous novice practitioners mentioned as standing in their way of learning hosting.

- **Many people who contributed to this study have acknowledged that the AofH language is simultaneously alienating and meaning-making, pointing most frequently to "harvesting" and "mates."** Acknowledging this in the training and community of practice could dispel the off-putting effect the language has on some potential practitioners, and also make visible the important meanings of the language that has been chosen. Good places to start would be with describing the purpose of the term "hosting" and how it is different from "facilitating," and with introducing the multiple meanings of "practice" for this community.

Harvesting from the Research: Strengthening the practice and community

This section is informed by both our research and personal experiences as members of the community of practice. These observations are not specifically about learning to host, but about cultivating and deepening the vitality of the community of practice and the hosting and harvesting practices themselves. They are meant to be starting points to spark further conversation and idea exchange to benefit the community.

- **Continue to practice the practice. Be consistent in our actions and seek to live, with humility, the four-fold practice.** A key theme in our research has been the identification of practice as both object and action. Many research participants expressed their desire for more opportunities to continue practicing the practice with members of the community. The four-fold practice offers guidance on how to purposefully and deeply engage as a hosting practitioner through being present, practicing conversation, hosting conversation, and co-creating with the community of practice.

- **Keep the invitation for engagement open to participants, reaching out broadly when developing and living in the community of practice. Create open harvests.** From events, integrative pieces of activity over time (like emerging CofP), and analytical pieces (like this report) allow others to understand and trust the invitation to engagement.

- **Share openly the stories of practice and community of practice.** Stories serve as key learning sources for the community. Yet, currently, stories are not sufficiently organized or accessible, especially to new training participants. Locally, in Minnesota, the emerging community of practice has attempted to organize the harvests and stories of workshops and hosted engagements. A growing community of practice at the University of Minnesota has created an online presence (umnaoh.posterous.com) using Posterous, a blogging platform. The generators of the U of M space sought to "create something to send out post-training that would keep individuals inspired to deepen their practice." The site also contains the harvest of other workshop trainings held over the last year, including photographs, written posts, documents, and videos. The site contains links to other communities of practice around Minnesota and Art of Hosting resources. Members of the community are encouraged to engage with the site by blogging their thoughts or posting information. The site is not only a repository for information, but also a living and breathing entity with consistent information sharing.

- **Formalization and rigidity of the community of practice**. The emphasis on "co-learning" in the AofH community, in combination with the emphasis on lifelong learning and cultivating a novice stance, helps to de-center the authority of both more senior practitioners and of any particular canon of practices. However, study participants also clearly conveyed that there are hierarchies of power in this community of practice, arising both from broader societal dynamics (e.g., racism) and from dynamics peculiar to this community (e.g., the greater experience and investment of longtime members of the community relative to novices). Numerous study participants suggested the training needed to make more explicit how facilitation and learning—both generally and in the Art of Hosting specifically—are part and parcel of power relations. Helping facilitators to problematize these dynamics in their own practice and in the community may alleviate some of the barriers to identifying with the Art of Hosting community and practices, described above.

Ideally, the community of practice is an environment through which metabolizing and indigenizing of knowledge can both occur, not a third or higher stage of development of facilitation or facilitators. However, in our study, some senior practitioners distinguished between those who wanted to "just" get good at particular techniques and others who want to transform themselves more fully by "step[ping] into the path…shifting how they behave in the world." Layered with others' emphasis on committing to the community of practice, and the placement of the community of practice as the fourth fold in the four-fold way, suggest it is the "ultimate" or final step. At the same time, the invitation to enter

the community is so open-ended that, as Tuesday pointed out, the lack of a "clear doorway in" can make it "hard to figure out how to access" the community.

Indeed, for some newcomers, these messages evoked feelings of inadequacy about being a "real" practitioner or full member of the community of practice, or confusion or envy about how to become an "insider." Their feelings are a potent reminder that reification of the community of practice and membership may make individuals feel unworthy to identify with it.

- **The importance of co-revelation**. In our research, we discovered, unsurprisingly, that people brought an array of worldviews to the Art of Hosting workshop. One common worldview is grounded in "activism," in which identity intersections and power dynamics inform people's understanding of social interaction. This worldview is potent in targeting the corrosive oppression and inequity that is ever present in human society. It often leads to an unleashing of energy to challenge power dynamics, breakdown systems of inequity, and seek justice. At its core, the activism worldview is predicated on the "truth of difference." A differing worldview stems from the idea of aspiration, in that it focuses on commonality among people. It is rooted in the "truth of common humanity" and seeks to collectively work with all for the betterment of society. These two worldviews are often at odds with one another. This clash can, in some cases, lead to disruption or even destruction of beneficial work in our families, communities, and world.

Tuesday Ryan-Hart spoke to this issue as we were concluding our research. At a community conference of nonprofit leaders held in June 2012, she called for the need to bridge these worldviews. She termed this bridging the process of "co-revelation," a "practice that would allow us to realize the potential of working in a way that both honors and yet transcends the 'truth of difference' and 'truth of common humanity' realities." To illustrate her point, she drew on the metaphor of a river, in which the two different worldviews are situated on opposite banks. Co-revelation invites people to "jump into the river" and create a new way of working together. In particular, she highlighted what can be learned from not essentializing others,' inviting people to bring their whole selves and identities while engaging in work and relationships. We also can strive to recognize grace, and acknowledge that we and others are human beings who will make mistakes. We can move away from traditional models of power and experience power among. Finally, we can share work, jump into action and figure things out as it evolves rather than setting rigid preconditions.
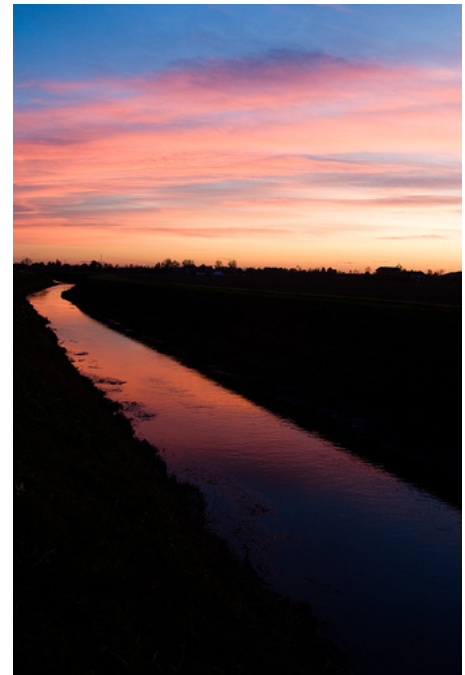
The Art of Hosting workshops and community could benefit from actively integrating co-revelation as an idea to be discussed and an action to be practiced. This is especially critical as people use hosting to engage one another in deep, often complex work that invites a range of worldviews. The mixture of worldviews will inevitably lead to difference of opinion and in some cases conflict. However, we have to find a way to keep working together. Co-revelation pushes us to connect in a way that harnesses the best of difference and commonality, while also moving us beyond these two realities to a new level of engagement in the pursuit of developing relationships and achieving meaningful work.

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Appendix I: Art of Hosting Practices and Patterns

Engagement Practices	Explanation
Circle	An ancient form of meeting that has gathered human beings into respectful conversations for thousands of years. Circle helps people gather in conversations that fulfill their potential for dialogue, replenishment, and wisdom-based change.
Appreciative Inquiry	An approach to group processes that focuses on discovering what gives "life" to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI emphasizes the use of positive questions in order to achieve a strong vision for the future.
World Café	A method for creating a living network of collaborative dialogue around questions that matter in real life situations through a series of table conversations.
Open Space Technology	A meeting process in which the agenda is created by the participants with their passion and responsibility. Those who want to call sessions on the basis of questions, issues, or opportunity they wish to explore with others. They become the hosts of their sessions. The other participants decide with their feet where they feel called to participate.
ProAction Café	A method that generates a space for creative and action oriented conversation where participants are invited to bring their call, project, ideas, questions or whatever they feel called by and need help to manifest in the world. ProAction Café is a blend of World Café and Open Space technologies.

Patterns: Practical Frameworks & Theories	Explanation
Harvest	The process or product of collecting the insights, ideas, or themes during a conversation or meeting. Harvesting may be conveyed verbally, in text, visually, or kinesthetically.
Invitation	The intentional process of bringing people together to engage in dialogue and discussion around issues that really matter to them.
Design	How a facilitated process is organized, including the different tools, techniques, or methods that are used.
Mating	The process of forming a professional, supportive relationship with other individual(s) focused on discussing, supporting, and practicing the Art of Hosting.
Community of Practitioners	A group focused on work, co-learning, and relationships to move to a deeper community. These domains generate conditions for a group to become more cohesive and to discover new learning and emergent solutions to issues.

Patterns: Practical Frameworks & Theories	Explanation
Living Systems Paradigm	The idea that organizations and groups are self-organizing, living units that interact with and respond to their environments.
Four-Fold Path	The practices that are central to the Art of Hosting: being present or hosting yourself (pre-sensing), practicing conversations (participating), hosting conversations (contributing), and engaging in the community of practice (co-creating).
Chaordic Path	A process that follows the story of our natural world in which form arises out of nonlinear, complex, diverse systems. The Chaordic Path helps us discover innovative, new solutions to challenges in the place between chaos and order. In this place we access the collective intelligence and wisdom of everyone.
Cynefin Framework	A model used to describe problems, situations, and systems. The model provides a typology of contexts for description, which include: simple, complicated, complex, and chaotic.
Worldview	The conceptual frameworks/theories (e.g., Chaordic path, Cynefin Framework) shared in the Art of Hosting training about living systems, systems dynamics, and change and implications for facilitation.

Source: InCommons Art of Hosting Facilitation Workbook (April 2011).