

## THROUGH THE ART OF HOSTING & HARVESTING CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PARTICIPANTS LEARN ABOUT WORLD CAFE

Primary Care in the community

On the 11th, 12th and 13th of March 2013, participants from eleven agencies came together to discuss better ways for them to engage the community in dialogue about better health outcomes for all.



### ART OF HOSTING & HARVESTING CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

#### The Methodologies

#### Circle

##### Listen deeply

Circle is a pattern known to humans for thousands of years. The practice of circle calls us to listen carefully, without judgement.



#### World Cafe

##### Create intimate conversations

World cafe takes the pattern of Circle and shifts it into small groups. World Cafe allows groups to mix and is ideal for groups who don't know each other well.

#### Open Space

##### A Self organising conference!

Open the marketplace and see what emerges from the room! Open Space offers the structure for large groups to self organise to create and participate in the conversations we want to have.

#### Appreciative Inquiry

##### Do more of what works more of the time!

Appreciative Inquiry asks us to resist our usual deficit focus to concentrate on exploring stories of what is working well. How can we do more of works well, more of the time?

#### Pro-Action Cafe

##### Where the rubber hits the road!

Use the collective wisdom to plan your next projects. A blend of Open Space and World Cafe helps the group gets practical.

### WHAT IS THE ART OF HOSTING?

**T**he Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter (AoH) is a global movement using patterns to gather the collective wisdom of

groups: a set of processes designed to increase engagement at a deep level. The participants of this three day conference came to learn how to use these patterns to increase community engagement in health issues in the Townsville-Mackay region. One of the calling questions for the conference was: "What are the strategic conversations we, as leaders in the community, need to engage in to enable the community to meet their health challenges in the future?"



Participants met at the Chifley Plaza Hotel in Townsville, to explore new ways of engaging the community in dialogue using the tools available

from the Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter.



Participants talked together; having conversations that matter, using the AoH tools in an experiential workshop format. Participants 'stepped up' to learn and use the methodologies. The event was recorded by the hard working volunteers of the harvesting team onto a landscape you will find at the end of this document.

For more information about the Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter see:

<http://www.artofhosting.org/home/>

and:

<http://artofhosting.ning.com>

or watch here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPimdjSEh0Q>

# The importance of Circle as the fundamental pattern of all the methodologies.

**A**n acknowledgement of Country; the recognition that we were meeting on the traditional lands of the Bindal and Walgurukulba Peoples, opened the proceedings of, what was to become, three big days of learning for participants who had gathered together to learn about the Art of Community Engagement.

Stephen Duns, one of the 'Hosting Team,' framed the forthcoming three days, spoke about the increasing complexity we find ourselves working in and how no one person can carry all the answers. How might we use the collective intelligence in the room? How do we generate and capture that collective intelligence?



**We were invited to shift gear** and encouraged to understand **conversation is action**. Stephen spoke of the Divergence, Emergence and Convergence pattern we would follow over the three days and, in particular, he made mention of the 'groan zone' we were likely to experience on our second day together.



Stephen introduced the rest of the hosting team: Debbie Bennett, Ann Linnea, Christina Baldwin, Alana Smith, Jed Gilbert and Linette Harriott.

Christina talked about Circle and reminded us the indigenous root of every culture used Circle to come together and make big decisions. To read more about Ann and Christina's work go to:

<http://www.peerspirit.com>



## Four Circle Agreements:

Confidentiality

Listening to each other with curiosity and compassion

Ask for what we need, offer what we can

Observe the pause, letting the bell call us to silence and a breath

## CIRCLE

### PRINCIPLES

Rotate leadership

Take Responsibility

Have a higher purpose that you gather around

### PRACTICES

Speak with intention

Listening with attention

Tend to the well-being of the group

## DAY ONE CHECK-IN:



***“What do you hope to get out of these three days?”***

TMML doing community engagement well  
 Networks – managers out into the community  
 Not just tick the box community engagement – REAL  
 Spending time with you all and engaging better  
 Sharing knowledge  
 Supporting you all  
 Hope you are inspired to change the civic dialogue about health  
 Learning how to engage community  
 3 days of skills and change  
 Harvest what we find  
 Representing needs of rural  
 Watching people change  
 No role play  
 Getting skills in working in culturally diverse communities  
 3 day break from the usual  
 New ways of doing my job  
 I'll take whatever it gives me  
 Who's who and what people think  
 Learn more effective communication as a leader

Understand what people are thinking  
 Improve  
 Remain curious  
 Open and honest  
 Encourage others to be good communicators  
 Teach and enable me to learn  
 Don't fall asleep  
 Listening creating dialogue re health  
 Skills knowledge and confidence in art of engagement and conversation  
 Listening skills  
 Developing key messages  
 Glad to have the opportunity to come  
 Learn the bigger picture of TMML  
 Learning how to do our work better together  
 Meeting lots of people  
 Unlocking hidden skills  
 Move from my comfort zone to my terror zone to a learning zone  
 I am a puzzlemaker, I will work out this puzzle  
 Get to know everyone  
 Learn how to communicate with the broader community and improve our community engagement  
 Bring these skills back to our community  
 Network  
 Confidence in talking in public / with strangers

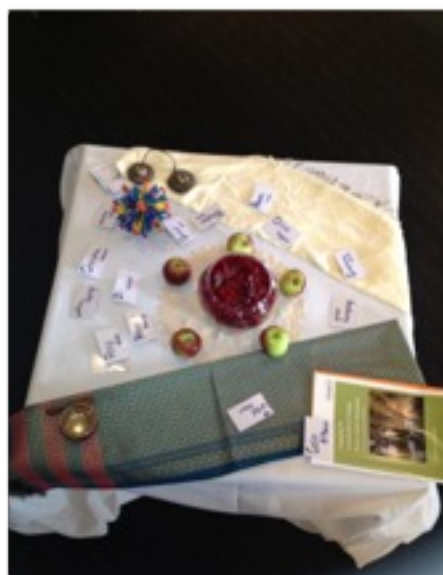
## Participating Agencies

**Ozcare, TMML, Queensland Department of Health, Headspace Mackay, Burdekin Centre for Rural Health, Centacare, Charters Towers Neighbourhood Centre**

## Participants names:

Sue Collier  
 Anthony Elliott  
 Judy Rabbitt  
 Gabrielle Cooper  
 Judy Paton  
 Roxanne Ross  
 Kylie Murphy  
 Fran Keeble-Buckle  
 Val Bielenberg  
 Cherie Miller  
 Carlene Hutton  
 Grant Allott  
 Carolyn Lucas  
 Di Hatfield  
 Gretchen Smith  
 Jean Rogers  
 Smita Gupta  
 Tracy Jewell  
 Tracey Jones  
 Leigh-Anne Metcalfe  
 Lyn Melrose  
 Helen Archibald  
 Julie Scheuber  
 Penny Guazzo  
 Alison Berigan  
 Brett Judge  
 Christine Richards  
 Joanne Stou  
 Di Knight  
 Kerrie Rankin  
 Mariana van Niekerk  
 Liz Blake  
 Andy Froggatt  
 Meghann Salmon  
 Aileen Colley  
 Olivia Playford  
 Wilb Couchman  
 Steve Joslin  
 Johanne McKoy  
 Grant Stephens  
 Colin Mc Pherson  
 Karin Barron

Anyone can send out an invitation and run a community consultation. The *art* is in getting the right people in the room, and hosting the group, using the most helpful structure to assist them to hear every voice, decide upon, and act on, wise action(s)





# World Cafe: What is burning within you to create better community engagement?

**W**orld Cafe was conceived by Juanita Brown and David Issacs and uses the pattern of Circle to allow large groups to meet together in intimate conversations.

## World Cafe Etiquette:

**Focus** on what matters

**Contribute** your thinking

**Speak** your mind and heart

**Listen** to understand

**Link** and connect ideas

**Listen together** for insights and deeper questions

**Play, doodle, draw** on materials supplied

## HAVE FUN!

This World Cafe used one question for three rounds: Table hosts were elected for each table.

## World Cafe Golden Nuggets:

Engage community at an entry point, rather than as a whole – more easily managed, less daunting, more targeted/focused, more rapid, self propagating

“Listening” will lead to “understanding” which leads to “solutions” that work

“Reform” funding models for Primary Health Care – breakdown barriers to access services

A sense of ownership for their own health and that of the community

What does TMML actually do?



In a rich learning environment, participants learnt about World Cafe by doing a World Cafe. Hosts were nominated at each table. The host's role is to welcome newcomers, ensure every voice is heard and share key insights from the table.

Respect for individual needs  
Indigenous health and remote and rural isolated community  
(socially as well) – disadvantaged in current funding – need for review for rural and remote workforce distribution  
We would like to engage with the community to improve clarity around health services and systems

Non political co-ordinated nationwide response to health Community solutions – individual versus collective approaches  
Understanding gaps in the system and community services – with the knowledge that health is only one part of the jigsaw – e.g. other parts may be individual responsibility / social determinants  
For more info in World Cafe go to: <http://www.theworldcafe.com>



Engage with community to ensure that health services match the communities' needs

Move from reactive to proactive

Life span health care – birth to death

Education – responsibility – intervention – Circle of Life

A shared definition and understanding of what community engagement means

Youth engagement.

Allocate own workforce and funding to address issues.

Early Intervention, prevention and education to be a focus

Good conversations and engagement with community is to “humanise the language”

Education and Choices; Lead by example

Early education to make informed choices (starting young), ownership and accountability

“Being healthy” is a fundamental need that impacts on every part of life

Access to healthy programs with motivational points to make sustainable change

Choice and person centres - focused in a non-judgemental way - non-authoritarian modus operandi

Develop “true” pathways leading from education to personal responsibilities and using the opportunities

Communication and relationships – F2F works best

Create firm foundation – needs assessment – awareness of who to ask – how to listen

Sustainability and consolidation of funding

# Chaordic Path, Sabotage Spectrum and Chaordic Stepping Stones

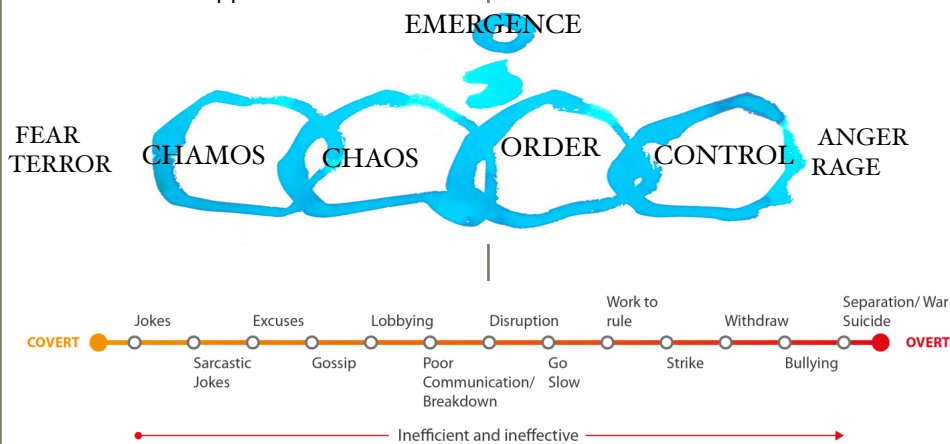
Dee Hock was charged with the task of creating the Visa card and was given the deadline of nine months to complete the project. What he discovered about leadership during that time is articulated in his article "The Art of Chaordic Leadership." and is illustrated in the 'Chaordic Path' below. The Sabotage Spectrum (based on work by Myrna Lewis) articulates what happens when

people experience a sense of disempowerment and injustice. Read more about Dee Hock's ideas here: [http://books.google.com.au/books/about/Birth\\_of\\_the\\_Chaordic\\_Age.html?id=osgYgo\\_IHp4C&redir\\_esc=y](http://books.google.com.au/books/about/Birth_of_the_Chaordic_Age.html?id=osgYgo_IHp4C&redir_esc=y) and this article which you can download here: <http://ebookbrowse.com/the-art-of-chaordic-leadership-hock-doc-d92536393>



## The Chaordic Stepping Stones:

Need	Practices
Purpose	Product
Principles	People
Beliefs that limit	Structure
	Sense making



## THE SABOTAGE SPECTRUM

When too much CONTROL is imposed, the group experiences a sense of disempowerment, disenfranchisement, and injustice. Individuals and groups can drop onto the Sabotage spectrum. The longer an organisation or individual stays on the sabotage Spectrum, the more inefficient and unhealthy the individuals and group becomes.



## OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY TOPICS

What would our reaction be if the feedback was contrary to our (TMML) beliefs/values? – Julie S

Expectations versus Resources  
– How do we find the balance?  
– Brett

Does it matter how we model health in engagement?  
Helen A

Capacity for change against a broader social/environmental context – Carolyn

What would REAL community engagement look like to you? – Anthony

Can we shift healthcare resources to those most in need? Tracy C

How do we know when we've engaged enough to reach or make decisions? – Di H

Who in the community do we engage with? Dianne M

Could we remove the stigma associated with mental illness? Andy

Funding the health task – Sherry  
Where do we see health in 2020? – Leigh-Anne

What are the possibilities if we have the confidence for REAL community engagement?

K.I.S.S. – Joh / Lyn

Who needs to be involved to work with those most in need? – Di K

How do we increase collaborative project development, implementation and resource sharing to benefit our health communities? – Colin

Engaging GP's WELL! What does this look like? – Kar

Free Health Care For All – Pam

For more info on Open Space go to:  
<http://www.openspaceworld.org>

## PRINCIPLES OF

# Open Space

**Whenever it starts is the right time**

**Whoever comes are the right people**

**What ever happens is the only thing that could have happened**

**When it is over...it's over!**

## Roles in Open Space

### Host:

*Step up and Host a discussion. Ensure all voices are heard.*

### Participant:

*Attend a discussion and have your say.*

### Bumblebee:

*Visit several discussions...  
cross-pollinate ideas*

### Butterfly:

*Take time out to reflect...  
look beautiful...  
Think deeply*

**Harrison Owen: "Some people say: 'trust the process'... I say: 'trust the people!'"**

Open Space rests on the two supporting ideas of Passion and Responsibility: If you feel passionate about the topic, Open Space invites you to 'step up' and take responsibility for leading a discussion.





# Open Space Harvest: What are the possibilities if we have the confidence for real community engagement?

**A** Vision of health for 2020: Successful outcome from "Alma Charter": Health for all by 2020. Model focus shifts from illness to health (includes social determinants) Change of perceptions: community shift (smoking took about 20 years) this can apply to mental health. 2020 is only 7 years away! Cultural awareness: breaking down the barriers both ways. Awareness of CTG, Education and housing: they are all related. Health literacy: educate the population. Ehealth opportunity (streamlined, seamless, simple, co-ordinated, single data base and software links, mandatory) Telehealth: more opportunities, allied health, assessment, health broker (nurse in a general practice)

What would an effective service look like?

1. Provider goes closer to the needy.
2. Service responsive to individuals.
3. innovative services would be encouraged.
4. Use of simple and more verbal language.
5. Community Engagement: "eyes" & "Ears" in the community



Participants in an Open Space discussion listening carefully to each other

**Can we remove the stigma from Mental Illness via Community Engagement?** Stories are vital: Mental Illness does not define you! Mental health is just health. Strong communities are needed: not just disconnected ones.

**Expectations Vs Resources: how do we find the balance?** Innovative services are needed to respond to

individual needs (don't be scared). Community Engagement needs to be multilayered and continuous.

**When have we consulted enough to reach a decision?** Funding sources are out of touch: consultation refocusses them. Standardisation of data collection. TMML needs to push back!



**Who needs to be involved to work with those people most in need?**

Everyone: Primary Care givers have insight into what could be provided. Funding and reporting outcome/output based, needs of the individual, competing needs/competing stakeholders, how do you prioritise needs? stakeholder overlap. Involve everyone who 'touches' that person. Bring all the stakeholders together.

**KISS! Keep it simple stupid sweetheart!**

Language needs to be understood by all: environment (physical) Understanding community, empowering community/people.

Unable to communicate if you don't know who you are speaking to and what they represent: encourage community participation: whether they are Medicare Locals or individuals

Language was too high for everyone to understand. TMML need a basic proforma for staff when speaking to community/ health professionals as to what we do and how. There is confusion around funding/billing. It is not just about the spoken communication: it is also the environment. Terminology disengages people. We can't assume everybody knows what "Primary Health Care" is and who and what is involved. How do we move from TMML to Local? How do we engage people on a level playing field? We are all people: consumers, GPs and Professionals



## MORE OPEN SPACE FEEDBACK

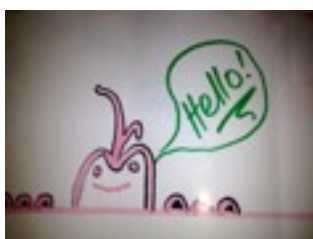
**Funding the Health Task.** There's a lot of money out there-should the money go with the client? Tell us how this could work. Foundation \$\$\$ Philanthropy \$\$\$ Corporate \$\$\$ Men's sheds are an example: What is needed is genuine ownership of the health of our communities. How do you shift the focus for health towards wellness? Attitudes will change culture towards healthy. How do you join State and Federal money with Foundation money? Strict outcomes for funding guidelines: people get bounced in and out. The stop start is tokenistic. \$\$\$ filter sometimes blocks getting to the needy. Choose your corporate wisely (ethical). Corporate/private input: philanthropy? eg: Renal accommodation? Prizes? Incentives? Some ideas are really small: good ideas access and mobilise.



### How to reach the hard to engage

Jim Cavaye model of community engagement: Multilayered, letterbox drops, group discussions, committees, "kitchen tables," School P&F groups, Radio.

Measure the target group's attendance.



### Mental Health

Friends and families

Complexity-? GP, Clinicians, psychs, social workers, youth workers

Lot of people: schools, peers, church

Any other service providers, significant in their lives.

### Resources Most in need:

"Policy" does not necessarily match the "need"

How to reach the community?

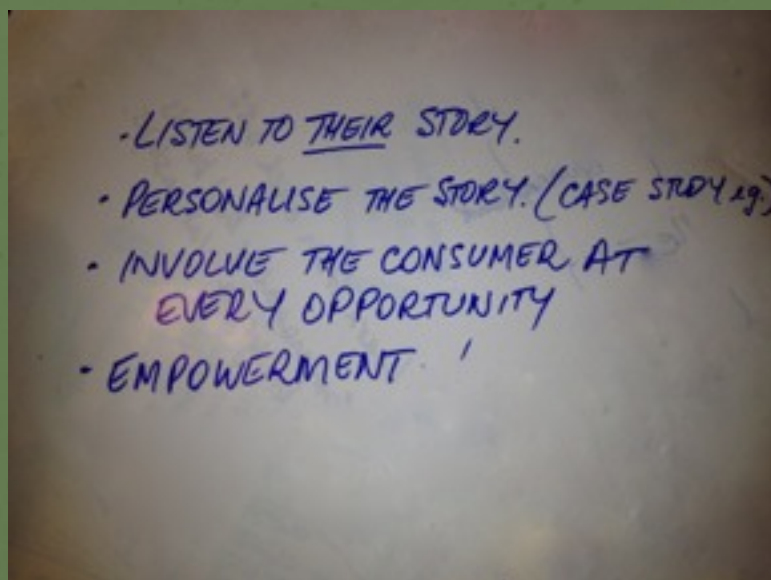
Is targeting the providers the best way?

Rights Vs. Responsibilities for the Community.

Community Engagement needs to be CQI Approach.

We "cut off" the most needy.

*A note from the harvesting team: not all sheets were handed in at the end of the Open Space!*



## TIPS FROM THE

## Harvesting team

The following tips were discussed by the harvesting team as we carried out our work:

### Design!

#### Design the activity with the harvest in mind.

Think about the need of the group and design the harvest with this in mind.

#### Only harvest what you want

Don't make the group give you information you have no intention of using!



### Use small paper and large textas!

#### Using smaller paper and larger textas will allow the group to read from further away as the harvest is put up on the wall

The smaller paper/larger textas trick reduces the number of words that can be put up.

#### Use the participants words

A careful attention to recording the language used by participants will ensure a sense of being heard and taken seriously in any consultation.



### Clear instructions!

#### As Alana mentioned in her introduction:

Be very clear with your instructions about what is to be the harvest. Always repeat the instructions. Give enough time for the group to carry out the instructions.

#### Gather up the Harvest, label and store it carefully.

This will allow you to return to it, at a later date, and know what response goes with what question.



## OPEN SPACE LEARNINGS AND CHECKOUT

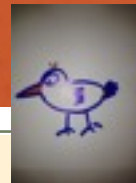


# LISTENING TO OPEN SPACE

FEEDBACK

Open space Harvest

To ensure the harvest is representative and respectful, design feedback sheets to direct the hosts with their feedback



## CHECK IN AND CHECK OUT

**T**he check in ensures participants are present. It encourages them to leave the last meeting or their work back at their desks and brings them into this meeting so they are able to be fully present and listening.



The check out allows participants to 'close off the space,' say any last words, remind them of what they have learnt during this time together and leave this meeting with all business finished.



## Day one Checkout:

**Delights;** Personal awareness, listening, conquering nerves with public speaking, delight at energy ramped up and not leaving on a high, fruitful discussions, new

techniques, people stepped in with both feet, playing with the centre piece, networking, faces to names, engaging with TMML, delighted I am here, the day moved quickly, shift in attitudes, I didn't think I could take 3 days out, energy and passion, being united, sharing a learning space, watching the processes at work

**Dissent:** Siberia! Car-parking, sometimes a bit too much TMML, humour in the ineffective and inefficient box, overcooked biscuits, me for being reluctant to attend!



## LEARNINGS FROM THE HOSTS:

## Open Space

## Questions



The question matters! Closed (yes or no) questions are not helpful. Use a question that forces you to ask more questions.

## Braintrust

We have a fantastic braintrust at our fingertips... we should use it. "More minds make more progress!"

## Host remaining inquisitive



It is a real and genuine challenge to remain inquisitive.

## We are in safe hands people!

Anthony reported that his group used a talking piece: an apple, to help the flow of talking and to make sure every voice was heard. Participants threw it back and forth 30 times and the apple was not dropped once!

## Bumblebees

Stay when the topic is great. Butterflies found it difficult to enter conversations.

# Divergence, Emergence and Convergence, 8 little Helpers, The Power of Story and a World Cafe

**W**hen the power of story comes into the room it creates a social field that activates the heart to inform the mind. We are the only species that will decide to love or hate/ include or exclude based on the power of words alone.

Words are how we think: story is how we link. Narrative is how we link one human experience to another, first creating a chain-link of our own life experiences and then noticing commonality and differences that link our varieties of life experience to one another. We become real to each other through story, not data.

**“The pace of Story is slower than the pace of Data. Story brings meaning to Data.”**

Remember the tale of the homeless boy whose story was told on national television. In the following three hours, the network received 10,000 calls to adopt this child.



Christina told a family story that asked the question: “Who put honey in your heart?” and discussed the idea that “Words help us think. Stories help us link.”

## Story has four elements:

**Character** (to whom is the story happening?)  
**Event** (what is happening)  
**Scene** (where it's happening)  
**Insight** (the outcome, learning, reason for sharing--where the link comes in.)

**“Story is a map; the story that gets one person through provides a way to help the next person through.”**



Participants were reminded of the pattern of Divergence, Emergence and Convergence. Allowing a long divergent phase and resisting the urge to converge will allow the group to enter the groan zone (or growin' zone) and ensure the group reaches a state where new ways of thinking are likely to emerge. Only then can the group converge on a path of action.

## Eight Little Helpers: so simple and yet so important!

1. Be Present
2. Work together with mates
3. Have a good-‘wicked’-question
4. Invite intentional listening and speaking  
eg: use a talking piece, a centre and the guardian role with bells
5. Harvest something useful
6. Make a wise collective decision
7. Act wisely and follow up
8. Plan the next harvest: feed forward

# World Cafe: Round one: How is my personal story a map for our Collective Story?

**S**ystem change requires resilience, flexibility, patience and the long view.

Life is a tapestry & we can drop the thread sometimes. It's OK.

All of our personal experiences influence the workplace: we recruit for our values and beliefs. We are involved in the decisions that map and influence TMML: (Planning, Reporting and Delivering)

Awareness of the process: validation  
of everyone's story/  
thoughts=collective empowerment.

It helps us find a way forward, or backward, or sideways: there are many sides to our stories.

## What is Community?

When we talk and listen effectively we can learn from each other's stories and the common ground shared.

The collective “journey” is a macro version of our “micro” individual journeys.

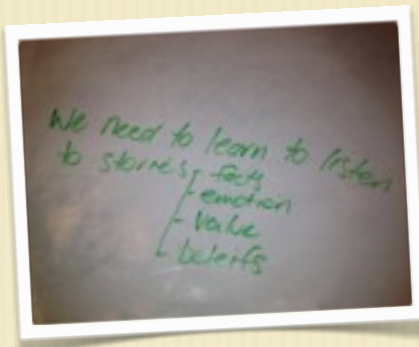
Individual stories create collective strength.

Use the work “map” literally: story is a journey. The collective story is a Rubicks cube=3D.

Sharing information, engaging people and storytelling are inherent, intrinsic skills that groups possess. Use what is already there. Don't create complex systems to harvest information.

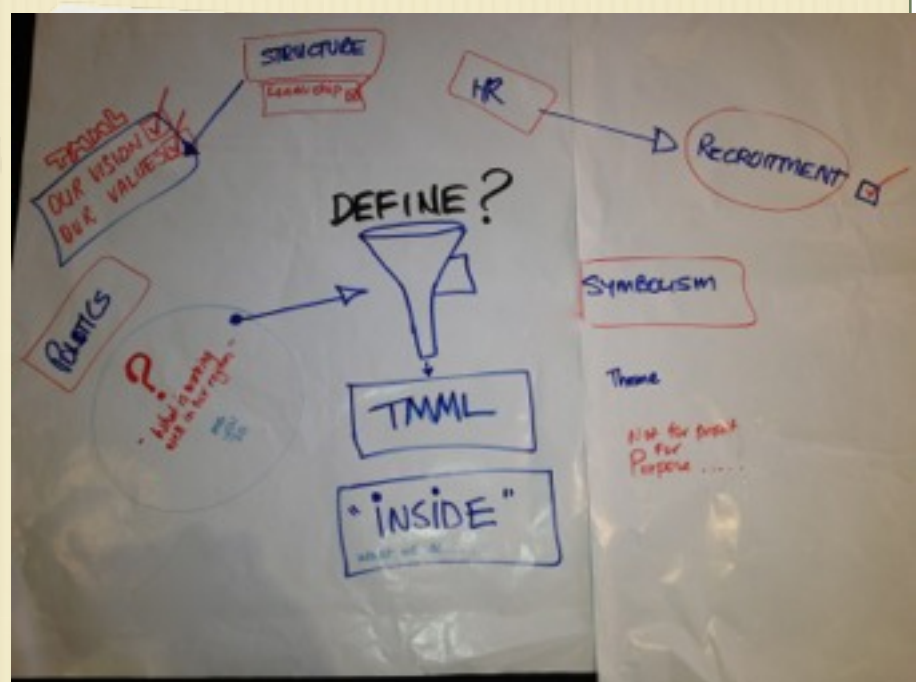


*The Harvest was gathered together and themed by participants*



The use of doodles, writing and notes from the tables at the World Cafe can provide powerful insights into the thinking of the group and prompt people to remember some of the early parts of the discussions they engaged in.

## DOODLES FROM THE WORLD CAFE





# World Cafe: Round two: What is working well in the Region?

**O**ur capacity to build relationships with workers, teams, GPs, patients, hospitals, community.

Valuing a collaborative approach.

Increased collaboration with consumer/client centred focus: cross sectoral services and organisations.

A strong foundation of willingness to collaborate.

Growing services benefit each community in this region.

"For purpose""not for profit": keeping purpose alive through collaborative work.

Current growth is creating opportunities to improve the health of our community.

Pockets of innovation: Men's Health Shed: Abergowrie.

Inside TMML: Strong Leadership, good recruitment and Vision and Values.

Systems changing quickly: Health providers/organisations are embracing opportunities for flexibility, innovation and co-operation.

There is room for improvement...but overall access to hospitals, GPs and allied health is working well.

Midwifery access as well. Diversity of workforce: eg: age, cultural backgrounds etc.



Harvesting the World cafe into themes of Connections, Language, Listening and Empowerment.

Team approach/attitude/staff/ networking/training days.



## Round three: How do we use story to engage community?

We need to learn how to listen to stories: values, beliefs, emotions and facts.

Sharing our personal story learnings contributes to the chapters of our collective story...life is a series of our unique events.



Our connective stories influence how we engage the community. Story is powerful and helps us make a connection.

Stories help fit us into the kaleidoscope of community: stories are powerful. Stories are common ground. Stories develop relationships. Stories make it real.

Stories are the engagement: they create rapport and build connection.

Empower the consumer at every opportunity to tell their personal story and Listen to them.

Use stories to humanise and galvanise our communities.

Stories are our common language

Storytelling is the one that gets the results out of all the methodologies used in communication

Narrative can accentuate reports.

Capturing stories would provide a qualitative impact to what we do or are attempting to do: stories provide the human side of data.

Individual stories create collective strength.

Story is powerful and helps us make a connection.

Narrative can really accentuate reports.

Use story purposefully to create synergistic engagement=linkage: meaningful and respectful.

## METASKILLS, LISTENING VICES, METHODOLOGY/KNOWLEDGE

## CAFE, 20 QUESTIONS, PRO-ACTION CAFE AND CLOSE



Self and group awareness

## METASKILLS

AND LISTENING VICES!

Use these Facilitation Metaskills and Listening Vices to improve your hosting and your participation in your next conversation

## METASKILLS ARE THE ATTITUDE YOU BRING TO HOSTING

Neutrality, Compassion, Curiosity and Humour are four of the most important practices you can use to ensure your hosting is most useful to the group.



The Listening vices:

- Not being present
  - Interruptions
  - "Radio Broadcasting"
  - Angel Winging"
  - Sliding...rather than Deciding
- can all be impediments to group discussions and decision making.

It is good 'meeting hygiene' to become aware of these listening and speaking vices so your meetings are most effective.

Antidotes to these listening/speaking vices are to use a check-in and check-out and thumb voting to ensure everyone is present.

Clear meeting agreements can include an agreement that we welcome a gentle reminder from the host and guardian if we 'slip-up.'

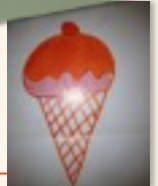
The host and Guardian roles are acting to protect the space and ensure it is safe for everyone to speak.

Anyone can call for the bells to be rung. Remember, you might be host or guardian at next weeks meeting!

EACH SESSION WAS RUN TWICE

Methodology and knowledge cafe!

## Social Patterns



## Christina

explored the patterns we use: hierarchy, networks, organisational charts and Circle to examine the gifts and barriers they provide. She proposed a 5th pattern which uses these four in a flexible way following the idea of 'fit for purpose.'

## Living Systems

## Stephen

discussed some of the theory behind these processes and ideas: quantum science, fractal patterns,

## 8 little helpers

## Deb

took a closer look at each of the helpers to understand what they offer as a deceptively simple framework to support the design and execution of processes and projects.

## Design

## Linette

explored the DEC, Chaordic Stepping Stones and Harvesting as frameworks for designing small and large projects.

## The methodologies

## Ann and Jed

held a Q&A to discuss the methodologies in-depth and explore practical application.



# Powerful Questions from the Group

## **T**he Art of Powerful Questions requires practice!

A powerful question:

- attracts and holds energy and focusses attention on what matters
- is open ended
- invites inquiry and curiosity
- promotes good ideas and possibilities

At the tail of a powerful question is the beginning of action.

### **Powerful questions from the Group:**

"What synergies exist between our groups to meet our obligations?"

"How will we know if we are making a difference in the community?"

"What difference will this workshop make in our working lives?"

How do we share and demonstrate the skills learnt to fellow employees and new employees who haven't heard of these concepts?"

"How do we manage in uncertain times?"



Listening to Powerful Questions. Composing Powerful Questions: not as easy as it seems!

"What do you feel leadership looks like in nursing?"

"What does recovery in mental health look like to you?"

"TMML: what's in a name?"

"How does TMML keep focus on its vision in coordinated health care in our community?"

"What would it look like if we were using stories to inform practice?"

"Where has the training received added value to your knowledge and skills? "What would you like me to change to enhance your knowledge?" "New outreach service! If implemented, what would this service look like to you? To your team?"



This process is a great planning tool and involves gathering questions from your colleagues

Complete the statement: "I leave here committed to..."

Ask yourself 20 questions about this statement. Read your statement out to as many people in the room as you can find and write down their

## **Twenty Questions Exercise**

responses as they offer you questions.

Which questions grabbed you and made you wonder? Find a person to discuss your plans to answer these questions. How many questions did you gather? Some participants got to 55!





# Proaction Cafe; a methodology for planning and action

**P**ro-Action Cafe (sometimes thought of as a hybrid of World Cafe and Open Space) blends the best of those methodologies to create a tool for planning that utilises the wisdom in the room and creates action. Ria Baeck and Rainer v.Leoprechting created this methodology in 2008.

**An Open Space opening** provides a “first in, first served” approach to deciding the topics. This requires a powerful question which provokes people to step up and take responsibility. Divide the number of people in your meeting by 4 to determine how many projects can be accepted into the marketplace. A minimum of 15 people who are motivated to take action are required for this methodology.

Arrange your tables and chairs into fours. Use two hosts for best results.

**Round one: What is the Quest behind the quest?**

**Round two: What am I missing?**

**Round Three: What am I learning? What steps do I need to take? What help do I need?**

Once topics have been nominated and hosts are settled at their tables, provide three rounds of talking for twenty to thirty minutes, using the questions above, with time in between each round for the hosts to reflect on what they are learning.

Pro-Action Cafe harvest is done in circle, with hosts answering the questions:

**What am I grateful for?**

**What are my next steps?**

Watch more about Pro-Action Cafe here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sWHCLWYa8o>



Hosts from each table in the World Cafe were asked to bring their table's best idea to the board to synthesise the harvest. This process allows the group to see itself in a new light and makes the group more intelligent.



# The final check-out Circle: participant comments.

## “What will you take away from these three days?”

**T**hanks to everyone for taking the risk. I will be applying this to the rest of my life. The focus of the Circle is the Centre. The workbook is fantastic. The new faces. Wholehearted participation. I learnt to listen to people. I understand people better. It was challenging. Enlightening. Being in community. Sharing stories. It started out chaotic, but came into focus. I am grateful for connections and stories. It was enlightening and enjoyable. Thanks to TMML. I feel empowered personally and professionally. The end of my first five days in a new job. It has been a learning journey. Thinking differently.



I am excited about the skills I can take away. This will affect me for a long time. The importance of the check-in and the check-out. Storytelling. The level of engagement. Energy. Humour. Everyone's input. When you are close to the edge you can see much further. Flexible learning style. Now we know better we must do better. A joyous journey. I can feel it has made a profound difference in my life. I can change my terror zone into the groan zone. Sharing knowledge. Meeting all the other stakeholders. Power to the people. I learnt how to ask questions well. I hope I'll be a good ambassador. There is a feeling like we are a team. I want to build on that.



Storytelling will be the way we engage young indigenous women. It was fantastic to be meeting people you don't know. I am Switzerland and will stay neutral. It was enriching and challenging. This will benefit the people I work for. There is the challenge of how we will grow from this. Shared understanding.



This is an antidote to disconnection. I think about how we and the community are represented in the media... This is the real story. “No role-plays!” It was out of my comfort zone. I will be talking to my children in circle. I feel a clear benefit from it. I am thankful. I enjoyed the three days. My faith has been restored. The last three days have all been Golden Nuggets. My curiosity about what Julie's answers will be is high.



It has been great to get to know everyone. I will take it away. It has been inspiring to me. I have appreciated the openness with each other. Gratitude.

How will we take the responsibility out? Watching people. Learning new skills. Generating deep thinking. Wonderful. Inspired you are all still open to learning. Patient. I am thinking about the enormous possibilities for the community.



Teaching in an easy way. Very deep, very meaningful. I love life and life's journey. My life won't be the same after these three days. I enjoyed participating. Thanks to the hosting team. Thanks to TMML. Thanks to the Management. I am grateful for the learning I received. I received friendship and I am growing my skills. My first week has been an amazing experience. It has been a team building exercise. I really know the real meaning of the word passion. I see I have a future here at TMML.



I have support everywhere I look. We can create the world we need in the middle of the world we have. I have new skills to take back to my organisation. Sharing stories. I will practice. A tapestry of learning. It is common ground and common sense.



## HOSTING AND HARVESTING



In this Art of Hosting, the Australian team was joined by two Americans, principals of PeerSpirit, Inc. a small educational company from Seattle, WA, that works globally in facilitation training. Ann and Christina wrote the Circle book that supports this work: *The Circle Way, A Leader in Every Chair*, and Christina also wrote, *Storycatcher, Making Sense of our Lives through the Power and Practice of Story*. The full list of their titles and range of work available on their website: [www.peerspirit.com](http://www.peerspirit.com)

Deb Bennett works as a private consultant. Her business is called *Intrepid relationships*.



**The Harvest team hard at work on Day one.**

### The Hosting Team:

Ann Linnea, Jed Gilbert, Alana Smith, Christina Baldwin, Stephen Duns, Deb Bennett, Linette Harriott



Jed, Alana, Stephen and Linette work in a company based in Melbourne called Synergistiq. If you would like to read more about us and the work we do, click here:

<http://www.synergistiq.com>



We hope this newsletter will act as a reminder and a resource for you to hold the memory of these three days and share with colleagues and friends to help you explain this event.



THANKS TO THOSE WHO  
STEPPED UP:

## Space and Beauty

The importance of having a hospitable, comfortable, welcoming and aesthetically pleasing space in which to meet is vital to creating conditions conducive to learning and thinking creatively.

Thanks to those who rearranged chairs, picked up coffee cups, collected papers and made the space tidy and welcoming after each break.



## Methodologies

From our evaluations of these workshops, we know that 'stepping up' and participating in the running of a World Cafe, check-in, check-out, open space or any other processes we used, enhances participants learning. We also know it requires courage and a willingness to challenge yourself! So to all those who took up the challenge of speaking in front of the group (with or without the microphone!) we say congratulations! And we would also like to offer our heartfelt thanks. Your willing participation has made this event a pleasure to host.

