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And the Next Building Bridges Step is Follow Up: Planning Based on Feedback

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Preface:

One of the ways we follow up after an Inclusive Leadership event is to plan and develop upcoming events based on the feedback we receive from participants and co-facilitators. Thank you to everyone who has provided input so far. If you haven't filled out a feedback form yet, we hope you will take time to send an email about what you appreciated, learned, found challenging/stressful/difficult and your suggestions for improving Experiential Education in Facilitating and Mentoring Inclusive Leadership. The email address for the Inclusive Leadership Co-operative is: inclusiveleaders@gmail.com

Peeling Back the Curtain On How to Sort and Summarize Feedback:

Qualitative Research Sorting (or Q-Sorting) is an efficient and effective way to sort and summarize responses to any questionnaire that asks open-ended questions. We routinely use Q-sorting to sort and summarize responses to our Feedback questionnaire.

- Open a new spreadsheet document
- Enter each comment into a separate line in Column A of a spreadsheet. For example, at the end of the Feb 19 to 21, 2016 event, there were 236 comments provided by 27 people (about two thirds of the participants).
- In Column B sort each comment as either: (1) an appreciation about what was enjoyed and learned or (2) a comment about a challenge or difficulty or (3) a suggestion.
- Then, click on the upper left corner to highlight the entire spreadsheet; Now, use the data tool to sort your data: Column B first, then Column A.
- Now, read through each appreciative comment, each challenge and each suggestion, sorting these comments into themes (Column C) and possibly sub-themes (Column D).
- Click on the upper left corner to highlight the entire spreadsheet, and use the data tool again to sort your data: Column B first, then Column C, then Column D, then Column A.
- Now open a text document and use your “cut and paste” editing tools and your counting skills to write a report. You may want to use our report below as a model for your report.
- The next step is to take time to relax, open up your heart and brain to learning and then read and reflect on the themes and the comments. The appreciative themes are usually affirmations of what to continue doing. The challenges and suggestions are gifts of growth that will help you plan your next event.

Report from Feb 19 to 21, 2016

A. Comments about what was appreciated and learned (165/236 comments = 70%)

Seventy percent (165/236) of the total comments were about what participants appreciated and learned. Participants expressed appreciation for learning and practicing Inclusive Leadership skills, co-creating a culture of inclusion, the facilitators, the experiential education methodology, and opportunities for personal development and self care. Participants were also positive about how the whole weekend went, the diversity of people in our learning community, and the venue. These comments are listed below according to their themes and sub-themes.

Theme 1. Comments about learning and practicing Inclusive Leadership (45/165 appreciative comments = 27%)

Sub-theme 1: Building skills for communicating with compassion (16/45 skill-building comments = 35%)

- *Building on communications that are inclusive and respectful*
- *I learned communication skills*
- *Developed more ways to express oneself and express gratitude*
- *I learned about speaking with intention.*
- *I learned how to listen and active listening*
- *For me, engaging in conversations with people of all ages was stressful but I am working on improving my abilities to start a conversation with someone I do not know*
- *I learned how to talk to people better.*
- *I learned to take pauses, give pauses.*
- *I learned virtues based communication (I hear, I see....)*
- *Virtues project*
- *Raj Gill and the opportunities to learn more about NVC*
- *The many wonderful rich conversations*
- *Heart to heart groups – so special*
- *Heart to heart groups!*
- *Heart, heart, heart, heart 9/10 smiley face*
- *The heart to heart groups*

Sub-theme 2: Building skills for connecting with differences (11/45 skill-building comments = 24%)

- *I learned respect*
- *I learned that active listening and being open to newness and uncomfortableness is freeing.*
- *Emotional connection*
- *I felt common ground and made many connections as was my goal*
- *On Common Ground!*
- *I learned that through listening and appreciating, each story gave me a reflection of spirit and determination*
- *In connecting and learning about others, I was able to connect with myself on a deeper level than I was ever expecting*
- *Inter-connectivity*
- *Re-framing*

- *Safe environment to dare to be different*
- *Saturday morning skill building presentations – so fun, creative and delightful*
- *I appreciated the skill building exercises*

Sub-theme 3: General Comments about learning and practicing skills (10/45 skill-building comments = 22 %)

- *I also enjoyed all of the information I have gathered to bring back to my community*
- *Awareness**
- *Consciousness*
- *I learned the value of mindfulness in the context of leadership*
- *I appreciate all the knowledge that everyone has shared*
- *I appreciate that the content was clear*
- *I have learned about certain workshops in more detail*
- *Workshops!*
- *I came with the intention to practice skills I've learned before. I came to give and be supported within this practice, and this did happen.*
- *I learned skills I can't summarize.*

Sub-theme 4: How to respond to situations of discrimination and other conflicts (5/45 skill-building comments = 11%)

- *A useful way to translate and move forward through triangulation*
- *I learned how easily I can get discouraged and shut down – but this time I found a way to step up and get my needs met – twice!*
- *How to not make racist jokes.*
- *I learned that nobody actually hates or judges in this space.*
- *Judgelessness*

Sub-theme 5: Building Bridges within and between groups (3/45 skill building comments= 7%)

- *Networking skills*
- *I have gathered tons of information to help build bridges in my community and school*
- *PATH Action Planning*

Theme 2. Comments appreciating various aspects of the process of co-creating a culture of inclusion (32/165 appreciative comments = 19%)

- *Feeling safe*
- *Safe*
- *I loved the open and safe atmosphere which welcomed unique connections to be formed and for people to be themselves and embrace the uniqueness of others*
- *The safe, supportive, inviting space that was created*
- *I feel so welcome in this group.*
- *I loved the warm and welcoming environment*
- *Kindness*
- *Warmth*
- *Positive energy*
- *The openness!*
- *Openness*
- *A space that allowed me to be myself, be expressive*

- *Affirmation of my personal convictions developed from a lifetime of being excluded.*
- *Appreciated the inclusive and safe environment where I could relax and lay down my guard*
- *Availability of a listening ear; of reiteration and of space*
- *Choice*
- *My right to say no or to pass*
- *Flexibility*
- *Autonomy*
- *Equanimity*
- *Feeling loved*
- *I appreciate how everyone was so caring*
- *Appreciated efforts to encourage mingling and mixing during meals.*
- *How it was encouraged to bring out our personal strengths in leadership*
- *Everyone is a leader*
- *How we have created our own community of Inclusive Leaders*
- *I learned inclusiveness and saw it's benefits*
- *I learned that everyone has a voice no matter the way it is expressed*
- *Time for sharing*
- *Strategies to encourage inclusion*
- *The Inclusive philosophy was very helpful. I will include it in my project*
- *(We need) more people doing it (being inclusive) more often – there was a yearning for connection.*

Theme 3: Appreciation for the facilitating (20/165 appreciative comments =12%)

- *Appreciated the leaders dedication to ensuring every voice was heard or seen*
- *All the facilitators and mentors*
- *Clear plan*
- *The agenda/plan worked really well.*
- *Great facilitation*
- *How the leaders and facilitators have been so inclusive of all learning styles and abilities*
- *I appreciate this environment that each and every facilitator has provided us.*
- *I really appreciated the people who hosted us*
- *I've learned that “facilitating groups is valuing and balancing energy” (a quote from Raj)*
- *Leaders modelling inclusivity and compassionate communication*
- *Pulling back the curtain*
- *Quick answers to all questions*
- *The community of inclusion that is fostered by Linda, Linda, Kix and Raj*
- *The experience and wisdom shared by the facilitators*
- *The leadership and seamlessness with which everything happened*
- *The organization that goes into this gathering*
- *The time keeping*
- *Welcoming and generous leaders*
- *You live your philosophy. Inclusivity was rampant. I get it.*

Theme 4: Appreciation for experiential education (17/165 appreciative comments = 10%)

- *Activities!*
- *Fun education*

- *Games!*
- *Games!*
- *Openers*
- *Inclusive group icebreakers*
- *Laughter/fun/fun activities*
- *Holding space*
- *I appreciate the opportunity to come here and create new experiences with everyone.*
- *Debrief techniques*
- *I learned how to help people learn and understand.*
- *I think I learned about the methodology but I'm not sure*
- *Learning by interaction and participation*
- *Lots of variety – small groups, big groups, pairs, breaks fun etc – GREAT*
- *The methodology: This is a really different style of imparting knowledge. I have no other reference for this in my life. It is so different. Its a learning opportunity.*
- *Sat night Inclusive Community Celebration – Wow! Beautiful special time*
- *The moon looks cool in a telescope.*
- *The variety of activities*

Theme 5: Opportunities for personal development and self care (17/165 appreciative comments = 10%)

- *I learned that limits and boundaries around connections are healthy and lead to a better sense of self*
- *I have learned how to be more comfortable with myself and others*
- *Although I found it stressful when I had to talk about myself, it did take a weight off me.*
- *I have learned more about myself*
- *I learned about myself – strengths and weaknesses.*
- *I learned don't be afraid*
- *I learned that I can branch out more*
- *I learned that I have a lot to offer*
- *I think I feel satisfied.*
- *I've learned that my feelings are connected to my needs, I want to understand both better.*
- *Learning a lot that is more to life. There are more things to look forward to and I don't need to always worry about my troubles.*
- *Being empathetic to my own self care*
- *I could take time for self care.*
- *I learned more about self care and have come to the understanding that it's okay to take time for yourself.*
- *I learned that it is alright not to feel alright.*
- *I learned to be open, honest and outspoken about self needs and discomforts.*
- *Self care breaks*
- *I learned that self care is more important than I thought*

Theme 6: Everything was great (14/165 appreciative comments = 9%)

- *I am so appreciative and thankful.*
- *I can't tell which one was the best workshop because I really enjoyed learning everything.*
- *I have thoroughly enjoyed this weekend.*
- *Everything went pretty well!*

- *Everything else was wonderful*
- *I leaned to many, many things. Too much to write.*
- *I learned a lot!*
- *It was all perfect just as it was.*
- *Please don't change anything*
- *Thank you*
- *The richness of the learning*
- *Very good*
- *Wow*
- *I hope to come again*

Theme 7: Appreciating the diversity of our learning community (11/165 appreciative comments = 7%)

- *Amazing diversity of skills, cultures, stories and heritage*
- *I appreciated – yet again – all the diverse people in the community*
- *I'd like to say thank you to everyone for being yourselves so beautifully and truthfully which makes the world colourful and meaningful*
- *Learned a lot about people older, younger, more and less abled than me.*
- *The ASL group were amazing*
- *The beautiful people that exist in this world*
- *The diversity of the community.*
- *The participants!*
- *Familiar faces*
- *Friends*
- *Youth being present and what they brought to the dynamics of the weekend*

Theme 8: Comments appreciating Cowichan Lake Education Centre (8/165 appreciative comments = 5%)

- *Appreciated the accommodations*
- *Bedding*
- *Beds – warm, cozy, clean*
- *Food*
- *Food – Great*
- *I have appreciated the food*
- *The food (gluten free)*
- *The space at the CLEC*

B. Challenges, difficulties and stressors (41/236 comments = 17%)

Theme 1. Conflicts. Crossing of Boundaries, and Diversity Issues (14/41 comments about challenges = 31%)

- *Not enough male energy. This is not a criticism, just a suggestion that male energy be included more. Female energy and spirituality was highly visible. Male energy not so much.*
- *Sickness (not from my family)*
- *Snoring (not from my husband)*
- *I interpreted some invitations to be manipulative*
- *If you're going to open a can of worms, then open it in a container or have a worm worshipper*

near by.

- *It was challenging remembering that rules aren't rules – just guidelines*
- *The predominant ideas about archetype*
- *I found translators distracting and would appreciate some consideration of this.*
- *There was a moment where people shared songs from their Faith and that was triggering for me. I felt threatened and excluded but I ended up having a good conversation about it with a facilitator I trust. I suggest no religion.*
- *Age differences – communicating with younger entities took a lot more effort to strike up relatable conversations.*
- *Lots of conversations were so intense they did not widen to include others*
- *Mixing with people I don't know even when their intention is to be inclusive.*
- *The seriousness of certain issues that were shared with me over the weekend*
- *Sharing at times was a little too much*

Theme 3: Being overwhelmed at times 12/41 comments about challenges= 30%)

- *I found it overwhelming being around the large group for a long time*
- *Sometimes overwhelming social aspects got to me.*
- *Loud noises in the large group during certain activities*
- *Noise, echo-y rooms made verbal communication more difficult, especially when people stepped on each other during discussions*
- *I found it challenging to fully engage myself because I was feeling ill.*
- *Participating despite stressful personal circumstances*
- *Not enough self care re walking and diet (too many cookies!)*
- *Not enough alone times*
- *Processing so much information and interacting on a heart to heart level with so many people sometimes left me exhausted (not unhappily)*
- *Put myself out of my comfort zone*
- *Became emotionally tired*
- *Breaks are good but there's so much else to do. I feel like I both wanted and didn't want more breaks*

Theme 4: Facilitating Challenges (8/41 comments about challenges = 20%)

- *The explanation (on the poster) for the experiential education in Facilitating and Mentoring Inclusive Leadership was vague so although I had an excellent experience, I didn't know as much as I would have liked before coming to my first Inclusive Leadership experience*
- *Nice to have visual/written information, although this was not consistent.*
- *Some of the vocabulary or concepts were stressful to grasp it all. But mostly I understood everything.*
- *My skill-building group (leaving out losing) struggled. I think the facilitators were not adequately prepared*
- *Something that was challenging but not stressful for me was trying to figure out during jigsaw learning how we were learning/practicing the skills. It was vague and felt like re-inventing the wheel. I decided that my gift would come in handy (I facilitate creativity and play) so if we were inventing a mechanism for a defined purpose we need to engage in a creative process in the end. There was not much time allowed and so the mechanism was only partially effective in fulfilling it's purpose to teach "Leaving Out Losing"*

Theme 5: Time Management (6/41 comments about challenges = 14%)

- *Program was pretty fast paced*
- *Sitting still for a long time*
- *Staying on time sometimes was a challenge*
- *The amount of content/time was difficult to manage*
- *The time went too fast. There wasn't enough chance to sit, eat and relax a bit.*
- *Getting going on Sunday (for action planning) seemed to take longer than was needed*

3. Suggestions (30/236 comments = 13%)

Theme 1: Activity suggestions (13/30 suggestions = 43%)

- *I would love to have had a few mini workshops discovering the basics of new concepts and models of communication and leadership – basically a round robin of stations where new games, concepts, role playing activities are taught and facilitated.*
- *Include some guided meditations that could explore deeper realms.*
- *Story-telling with a male focus*
- *Get more youth involved.*
- *Just keep encouraging us to look around and include people.*
- *Maybe more time and action in free time for people to bring forth or share something special about themselves or what their group has done or is doing*
- *Incorporating acknowledging territories into every circle*
- *More knowledge/history of local area and first nations*
- *More movement*
- *More pulling back the curtain would be okay*
- *More working in small groups so the setting is more intimate and approachable.*
- *Offer the break out workshops more than once.*
- *Offer workshops twice if possible to get it all in*

Theme 2: Facilitating Suggestions (6/30 suggestions = 20%)

- *Facilitators have a meeting (that includes interns and volunteers) prior to the gathering to go over ground rules*
- *Having more down time at the beginning to get settled and get to know people*
- *A gender pronoun go around and/or include preferred pronoun on name tags (she/he/they)*
- *Encouragement at the beginning to jot down feedback as we go along – put the feedback form in the very front of the binder*
- *I went to the wrong workshop (couldn't remember) and there were no attendance/sign up sheets to confirm. I would have preferred attending the one I signed up for. Perhaps lists of participants in workshops for next time?*
- *Identify ways to continue to connect after the weekend*

Timing suggestions (8/30 suggestions = 27%)

- *Allowing more time for heart to heart circles*
- *Longer heart to heart groups.*
- *If possible, introduce short times in the morning and afternoon (15 to 30 minutes for reflection*
- *Keep down time on the second day (the same) for pacing and cognitive overload.*
- *Less sitting (too long)*
- *More opportunity for outside breaks or walks.*

- *More smaller breaks rather than on big one.*
- *More time and more breaks*

Food suggestions (3/30 suggestions = 10%)

- *Food could have been more nourishing/health conscious – for example, less processed cookies, breads and pastas*
- *I would have liked to have been more involved in what is being cooked as I have a food related condition which is much easier to control when I know what's to eat.*
- *More snacks in between the meals.*