



Gathering of Changmakers

Thursday, July 11, 2013

The Lakeview
Hamilton, Ontario

HOSTED BY:

Alternatives for Youth
Community Child Abuse Council
Hamilton Food Share

Reflections of Participants



Creating the Future

During the week of July 8, 2013, Creating the Future was invited to convene community conversations across southern Ontario.

Hamilton was part of that tour, with people participating from a cross-section of interests and backgrounds.

The session began by participants sharing the stories of their own lives, that have led them to care so deeply about their communities.

The group then shared their answers to these questions:

- What would your community look like if your efforts were 100% successful?
- What cause-and-effect path would lead to those results?
- What will it take to create that path? What actions can we take right now?

The session ended by asking people to share what stood out for them in those conversations.

This document contains those closing reflections, stated just as people wrote them.

These reflections provide deep insights by ordinary people, connecting what is possible to the practicality of our immense (and often underestimated) human capability.

We hope these observations inspire you to begin creating the favourable conditions for creating the future of your community!



Reflections

What stood out for you? What surprised you? What was an 'aha'?

Liked causality driven strategy! ... if you are stuck your thinking is too narrow – expand the scope!

Interconnectedness of people, systems, issues and outcomes

Questions that help move the conversation - What is important about that? What will it take? What if (that barrier) was not true?

Getting to the airport is a great image ... Focus on: What will it take to make good happen? – Focus on causality driven strategy, not reaction ... “if only” → a downward spiral

What stood out? - Importance of language ... What did I notice? - willingness of people at the table to share personal stories ... Surprised me? – it remains hard for people to suspend judgement

“When we are frustrated we feel we’ve tried everything and nothing works → your plan is too narrow”

No one said “I’m with XYZ agency and ...” – very rarely were words “I” or “me” used ...

BE able to take those two questions – “What’s important about that?” and “What will it take to make it possible?”

Relationship building at the beginning of the meeting – intend to implement immediately ... emphasis on the positive outcomes rather than negative approaches ... Human Cultural Story opened my eyes

The issue that personal connection was the underlying theme in every discussion ... the reinforcement that even though we know how to take the steps to achieve basics things in our live (i.e. getting to the airport) – that we don’t applying those to the larger challenges – but it really is simple



Reflections

What stood out for you? What surprised you? What was an 'aha'?

Need to consciously shift my attitude to what's possible and what will it take to change begins with me

Always ask "what would it take?" ... this helps to overlook the barriers that stand in your way of reaching highest potential outcome

Struggle: Getting from vision to reality!

Collectively we are responsible for making a difference ... trust and respect are key ingredients to success

The two questions "what's important about that?" and "What will it make possible?"

The positive and hopeful "vibe" in the room

More we, less me → everyone in the room was focused and had energy to do the work

Love the #6 principle – Individuals will go where the systems lead them – so let's change the systems ... I hope Hamilton forms a Changemaker group – what a great model we can be for other communities ... love the dog that sees the rainbow because nobody believes him ... I start my staff meeting with a team building piece where we get to know one another but, we don't do this at community meetings and I am sure it will make a difference ... How do I sit on your board?

Assumptions – we don't stop and question and reflect AND assumptions based on stories – whose stories? And what was the intention? – really made me reflect ... possibilities

My board talks about: What's ours to own? ... What's ours to share? ... What's ours to give away?