



Open
Space
Halifax

13th International OSonOS

Conference Proceedings

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Canada

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The following topics were posted but no report was submitted:

- Opening Space for High Performing Systems
- The how of OST as an organization CEO (Story share)
- Design of OST trainings and learning exchanges
- An exploration into career/life: The transition to and building of consulting business offering OST + other OST value-compatible large group intervention services; what has worked? What hasn't?
- Conscious Open Space organization – a testimonial and a discussion
- Possibilities of intentional community
- What calls us to OST? And beyond.....
- Cultivating four practices for OST facilitators – Opening, Inviting, Holding, Grounding

The final non-convergence session reports are in digital picture format and are contained in a separate addendum (due to size) entitled:

**13th International OSonOS Conference Proceedings
Addendum - Final Day Non-Convergence (Digital Images)**

Topic 1 Exploring the use of OST in applied research

Convener

Debra Rosser

Participants

Silvana, Denise O'Connor, Evan, Donna, Michael, Harrison, Gabriela, John V, Rory B.

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion

Why is this a good idea? Well, even when using traditional social research methods of literature review leading to structured interview, for example, I have had the experience that we end up chatting! And the chatting has always given me real insight into the research topic – often in tangents that I hadn't anticipated. So, going on from this...maybe there is some value in not only allowing (and encouraging!) people to speak with you about the questions they have in this area. Maybe there's even greater value in letting them ask and answer these questions in their own groups!!!! Without you!!!

So...some wisdom from the group:

- Generate the broad research question (from the literature review, from discussions with people 'in the know around here' etc) and tell people what it is you want to know/find out about.
- The questions can thus be phrased in a way the *participants* (the subjects!) understand; they understand 'what works around here'.
- The goal can be the answer to the research question (or broad parameters of such a thing!) but a 'collateral' goal can be the research process – ie the research process as a positive experience for the people involved.
- In a multidisciplinary project, people from different backgrounds can bring different ideas/approaches to bear on the area of interest.
- The challenge is documenting the data! Everyone has a wonderful idea! It is more like a story than a study!
- The "backroom" is the place to identify the themes, correlate the data, etc. Have "two sets of books" in the backroom. The books you want to use for letting the world know what you've really learned...in the language you learned it (ie the passionate/subjective language of the participants!). And the books you want to use to communicate the information to the mainstream world (using the dispassionate/the 'objective' language of the mainstream discourse). BUT! Dare to be subversive through case studies; gently introducing the human through the language you use, the way you talk about what happened/what was discovered.
- When using OST for research, maybe the best role for you is not as facilitator; you maybe need space to observe or even participate.
- And you may seek to concentrate on observing the very rich space of the non-verbal.

Where from here?

- Read some critical discourse analysis – maybe Fairclough, Gee.
- Read the work of Diane Vaughan – a sociologist who is introducing the idea that the subjective is ok to speak about/from in research.

- Aim for a situation where you can say of your research, “The clients came! The kids came! We would never have thought of asking that!”
- SHUT UP!! Try some of these exercises to keep people really engaging at non-verbal levels:
 - “Shut your eyes and your mouth and smell....what does it smell like here?”
 - “Shut your eyes and mouth and hear....groups resonate with their own ‘music’ ...what is the music here?”
 - “What is the dance here? How are people going about?”
 - “Shut your eyes and mouth and think about the colours....what are the colours here?”

Who could assist?

- Evan will forward some info re critical discourse analysis.
- We could have an email group to discuss research (this was not discussed by the group today).

Topic 2 Capturing and telling the story of the ripple effect of a large OST event.

Convener

Christine Whitney Sanchez

Participants:

Bob Sullens, Becky Peterson, Tree Fitzpatric, Karen Black, Daniel Gigras, Larry Peterson, Brian Bainbridge, Diane Gibeault

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion

BACKGROUND:

In October 2005 at the Girl Scouts of the United States of America National Convention, Christine Whitney Sanchez and her business partner Claudia Haack will open the space for 2,000 National Delegates on the topic of governance. In addition, Strategy Cafés will invite the 12,000 convention attendees to share their food for thought on the Girl Scout's strategic priorities for transforming their organization and revitalizing the Girl Scout Movement. Christine would like to capture the ripple effect before, during and after the event of working with Open Space and World Cafe.

KEY IDEAS:

- Collaborate with a doctoral student interested in social change (in anthropology, sociology, OD or film) to document the process using narrative, photos and film.
- Web storytelling could be used to invite participants at the event to talk about how the event touched them and what they have experienced since the event.
- Follow-up AI interviews with the CEO and Board Chair, volunteers and girls about the changes they've seen
- Create a practice within Girl Scouting (maybe create a badge for this) where GS tell their stories – constantly self-renewing. Stories coming in after the event could have a holographic effect.
- Ask children for their ideas about how the ripple effect could be captured.
- Set up a camera in Story Rooms where an interviewer asks 2 or 3 generative questions. ("Tell me a story about a highlight from this day...") Get their contact info for post event follow-up.
- Check with Atlanta universities re: their partnership for using this type of documentation in teaching
- This should be the Girl Scout's project – or partner with them
- Ask participants to submit their digital photos with captions – could submit them to the web.
- Ask people if they want to find out what happens – they will say yes, of course, but it generates a different kind of interest.
- 45 minute video for teaching in universities – 15 min. planning, 15 min. event, 15 min. ripple effect.
- Look at what parts of the US West video can inform one you want to make

- Check with Dannemiller folks about their video on Whole Scale change
- Late in the day, have big paper on wall for participants to write how this event affected them.
- Volunteers who have been trained in OST and WC could hold OS events around the country to ask what the results have been in their local areas – this could also catalyze local action.
- Poise delegates to make amendments from the floor during their business session to activate the suggestions from the OS and Strategy Cafes.
- Pitch the video as a piece for
 - Marketing
 - Generating excitement
 - Case study – large scale change
 - “How we began to transform” for the next convention delegates to watch ahead

Topic 3 Coaching/mentoring with leaders of an organization before/during &after an OS-meeting

Convener

Thomas Herrmann

Participants

Many – about 30

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

We talked about different issues regarding this. There were experiences in the group of leaders in panic just before the event and also of leaders closing down after.

We discussed having conversations before the actual pre-work in order to give the leaders the possibility of making an informed choice to use OST or not. One thing is to understand whole systems approaches/LargeGroupInterventions in respect to more linear approaches. Martin Leith has excellent info on his homepage. Other resources: A whole new mind (Daniel Pink) – describing the need for access to the right hemisphere/brain-thinking. 8th Habit, by Steven Covey where he describes the new paradigm / the whole person paradigm. This can lead into interesting conversations with the leadership team.

Having access to the senior leader who is accountable to the results is important. May be written in the contract.

Often leaders also wish to have some info about how OST works. Many of us think that it has to be experienced to understand. We discussed the possibility to have a pilot OS-meeting in the organization, or giving out the User's Guide and talk about it. Other options may be using a video or having some of the leaders attending another OS-meeting. The deeper essence can take a long time, if ever, to grasp.

The state of being of the facilitator is an important aspect to be able to support the sponsor in an organization. What are my inner beliefs regarding different aspects in an organization/org. change, my role as a facilitator etc.

Is it possible to assess if the organization/leader is ready? A process of mentoring all through the process can be one way to follow up continuously if we think we don't have the wisdom to make that judgement.

One part of the mentoring process is the planning meeting as well as the follow-up meeting. Using participative processes for these meeting gives a whole experience of working with the wisdom of the group.

Givens or non-negotiables may be worked out to define the space that is open for the participants. This may e g be financial issues/issues regarding decision-making etc.

We also touched the question: When is OST appropriate?

Importance of giving leadership time and space to slow down and reflect.

Language can be adjusted according to which organization we meet. A new vocabulary will often evolve when deeper work is done within an org.

Topic 4 What are the questions I/we have? The conversations I/we would like to have? What I/we wish for

Convener

Raffi Aftandelian

Name of Participants:

Ward Williams, John V., Tree Fitzpatrick, Andre Chiasson

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Participants had difficulty understanding the session, the point.

A Whole Person Process Facilitation transfer-in was used in the beginning as a focusing activity. Its use did not seem appropriate according to the co-creator of the program.

The intention was simply to create a catalog of questions, conversations, and things we wish for to return to later. It was not clear why this was important. There was a desire to find answers to questions.

Raffi did generate a number of questions:

1. What are the limitations of the Genuine Contact Program?
2. What other programs are there out there that are similar to the Genuine Contact Program?
3. How can self-organizing be made to be self-organizing?
4. How might it be possible to facilitate the process by which OST clients write the marketing materials of an OST consulting company for free (precedents for this in OST meetings exist).
5. What is a good, reliable electronic discussion list resource?
6. A wish for: a Future Search meeting on the future of creation of an OST Facilitator Community (I feel that we are not yet an intentional community of OST facilitators)
7. Wish for a retreat center near Moscow.
8. Which other (human) resources exist out there for a global picture of Large Group Intervention Toys?
9. Is there a LGIT journal?
10. How can one attract workshop participants to events?
11. What will the LGIT landscape look like 20 years from now?
12. What would be the steps to building a model English as a Second Language course program (study in OST)? A first step for this is conceived in Moscow. Tentatively a Study of English and Teaching English Conference is scheduled...
13. What other approaches similar to Whole Person Process Facilitation exist?

There are many more questions, wishes I have. But since the whole point of creating a “meta-marketplace” was lost. The momentum, and desire for creative work of the convenor plummeted. Whatever happens happens...

Where from here?

Try holding this session some other time...(this format has worked previously)

Who could assist?

Those willing to experiment with something even when the format was not entirely clear!!

Topic 5 How can OS help with the integration of immigrants in our countries?

Convener

Barbara Schneider

Name of Participants:

Sheila, Masud, Thomas Herrmann, Michelle, Bill

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

In order to attract and retain immigrants we have to reduce fear and ignorance about other cultures by opening up a space for communication between locals and immigrants. In this space people can learn about each other's culture, religion and customs. We feel that many world religions have similar traits, but that most of us are insufficiently informed about these other religions. In the Toronto area Masud explained that World Religion is supposed to be offered in a Catholic school, but is not available in practice. Masud explained why he left his country. Although he had had a good life, he was concerned that his children would not be able to have the same quality of life.

Michelle told us of a Centre in Ontario which has used OS in Health Care. This has given a voice to immigrants with low levels of English, who felt that they were finally being heard. The questions posed in the OS sessions were very authentic. OS was part of the strategic planning of the Centre.

Another successful OS session was held on elder abuse with 4 different Asian cultures. The participants could put up the questions in their own languages and there were plenty of translators present. This seemed to be a key way for looking at age-old traditions which may be inappropriate in Canada.

I (Barbara) explained that I had just co-designed and taught a course for Medical Interpreters in Halifax. This was an incredibly rewarding and moving experience, as each of the 20 participants had space during the 60 hour course to tell their own story. The group bonded very well and each and every one of them explained how rewarding it was to be able to help people coming to Canada, unable to get the medical care they required because they had little or no knowledge of English. We, the facilitators, felt we had learned so much by the end of the course.

Where from here?

.Envision" is a movement in Halifax which is trying to work on establishing meeting spaces for different groups of people to have conversations about their needs. So far there is one group meeting regularly in the South End and hopefully more will start up soon.

Who could assist?

Each individual, schools, universities, community groups, etc.

Topic 6 Moving Communities and their citizens from Powerlessness to Pride Using OST.

Convener

Chris Robertson

Participants:

Esther	Wendy	Brian	Rory
Judy	Brian	Kerry	Ronit
Sonya	Allie	Silvano	Michael
Carolyn	Doug	Tracy	Debra

...and others.

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- Important to undertake process of healing first then engage in the planning process.
- Identify what is already working well in the marginalized community and work with it.
- Engage those who have been successful in the community in the OS discussions and its implementation.
- Story telling an important component of dealing with a community's social issues and ills.
- Unlocking emotional baggage requires bringing together and using the "experts of experience".
- People who survive and overcome traumatic experiences tend to flourish personally. They can be active participants as well as facilitators in an OS t hat addresses sensitive issues.
- Communities can the same way.
- The quality of listening on behalf of the facilitator(s) is critical.
- Anger needs to be spent, let out, released by those who hold it inn. It can invoke a powerful emotion that helps people receive and process information that liberates them from the stress of anger, pain and marginalization.
- Marginalization is a persona emotion. Os allows people to see their own power.
- When people talk about their experiences with other it validates what they have gone through.

Topic 7 The Conscious Open Space Organization: leader, leadership, manager, management

Convener :

Birgitt Williams

Participants:

Many...and thank you all for being there and offering your insights and experience

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Birgitt briefly described what a Conscious Open Space Organization (COSO) is (see www.genuinecontact.net). She then outlined that within the COSO, there are opportunities to be explored and worked through including understanding what the following are: leader and leader development, leadership development, manager, management.

- Leader development does not equal leadership development.
- Leadership is about leading people.
- Management is about managing processes, systems, ‘things’ but one does not manage people. People self manage. There is no need for managers of people in an organization. There is no need of supervision. It can be replaced by mentoring.

Participants contributed the following:

- this work in a COSO is about raising consciousness
- the work of being in a COSO is leadership development
- it is about changing culture and challenging oneself ‘can I let go of control?’ or ‘can I let go of my perception that I am in control?’
- how I am currently leading and managing won’t take our organization to the next level of effectiveness so I must do this differently
- when we work within a COSO, we end up finding new words to describe our emerging concepts. Our language mirrors how we look at things.
- shift from ‘leader’ to ‘leadership’ is a shift from “I am a leader” (solid) to something flexible/fluid
- leader development is about skills development and self awareness enhancement
- leadership development is about learning to be in relationship in a way that opens
- leadership is constantly moving and noticing ‘what is up?’ and drawing it to attention to be explored
- leadership does not exist outside of relationship
- organize around what needs to be done rather than by organizational chart
- everyone seeing themselves as leaders. One participant reported about the freedom of being in a matrixed organization in which there is constant assessment and adjustment to situations (Birgitt’s note: one part of the dictionary definition of matrix is ‘womb’ and thus reflects the possibility of ‘life nurturing’)
- in the COSO, even performance reviews and other standard organizational/HR functions must be explored so that ‘form follows function’. A participant offered

- that in her organization, performance reviews that are about the past have been replaced with regular meetings that are future oriented
- the structure does not define what is happening in the organization
 - even a single OST meeting, when the frame for it is set well, is authentic, and human and it is carried out with leadership being really behind a change/transformation can bring about organizational transformation....of course this needs to be supported by leadership post-OST meeting
 - there is a distinction between an OST meeting and OS and it is important to pay attention to this distinction. An organization might have an OST meeting and an OS way of being on an ongoing basis. In fact, in a COSO, there are frequent OST meetings and the balance of worklife needs to be in an Open Space spirit so that it is congruent with what is experienced in OST meetings.
 - when there is frequent use of OST in an organization, change happens, a different dynamic emerges. When this is recognized, and worked with consciously, a COSO emerges. This requires changes to structure, system, and so on. This change is from within the organization and the organization is therefore not usually resistant to it because it is driving its own change and it is doing so because it is organic and makes sense. This type of change has a different feel to it than change that is imposed from the outside. In between OST meetings, there is the 'Spirit of Open Space'.
 - When there is frequent use of OST and the organization in between OST meetings is unwilling to change, there is a real shut down, often employees quit, and in such cases the organization stops its use of OST meetings.

Topic 8 What are the possibilities of using Open Space Technology in the elementary school classroom?

Convener

Evan Throop Robinson

Participants:

Vanessa, Michelle, Sonya, Henri, Bill, Raffi

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion

Empowering Students

- A new and wonderful way of using OST – students are open to new learnings
- Students given a chance to speak – given their voice to be heard because they want to be heard!
- Students hear too often it's not the time – so when *is* the time?

Learning is social interaction

- Free from the stifling atmosphere of the traditional classroom environment
- Students lack interaction because of media entertainment – they can develop communication skills with OST

Modifications for children

- What age should we start? Age 10? Is it too late already? Age 6? Already capable of understanding their own learning processes.
- Some might need help getting their ideas down on paper – oral traditions in other countries – an oral process of communication

Self-organized school curriculum

- Students will learn what they need to learn in the context of their own interests

Curriculum Purpose

- What would be the theme of a classroom OST meeting?
- What would participants bring to the question?
- Need to have the right question
- Is it voluntary?
- Structure of teaching intertwined with OS

First Steps

- Start with classroom level with one classroom teacher
- Allows for a bigger space to open for children to express their interests
- Some time allocated for OS – Some time for instruction too
- Start with small learning circle

- Six year olds are very capable – they see and hear everything

ESL teaching with OST

- Learning happens despite teachers efforts
- “sleeping teacher”
- Pre-work – children would design course
- Teacher is out of the way
- OS principles used in language classroom
- What are the steps to taking an entirely OST course in ESL?
- What are the tools we use?
- How do we learn/study a language?

Creating a learning environment

- Students become teachers and teachers become students
- How do we change the dynamics of the students with the teacher?
- Children need to be interacting ‘differently’ with each other
- Hold a ‘pointed’ discussion – media issues, social studies
- Counseling environment
- Montessori methodology – Parents use OST as well

Learning from pre-school age children

- Observe a one-year old playing – learning
- Start early rather than late in school
- Build on Montessori methods
- When it’s over it’s over for children
- Pay attention to their energy as they shift their focus
- Images before words
- Playing is learning – how open is open?
- Look at how much children learn before school – compare with what they ‘learn’ after

Topic 9 Variations on a Theme – Is Open Space Finished or Can it Change?

Convener

Andre Chiasson

Participants

Tova, Erich, Jacqueline, Daniel, Donna, Karen, Christine, Brunhild, Christopher, Deirdre, Gernot

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion

The question related to what is the essence of Open Space – is it the rules, processes, principles? Or is it the Opening of Space the where are the edges?

1. The idea of being a purist vs. the idea of not using Open Space.
2. In order to change what you are doing, you have to be a professional who knows what s/he is changing.
3. We need to maintain the essence of opening space.
4. Work from the essence not the form.
5. There is an interest in creating/sustaining more depth in conversations – one approach to this is the evening news which could be added at an appropriate time even if it wasn't the end of the day. The overnight often creates a change in atmosphere which will affect the depth of conversations.
6. What is the future? What will OST be like in 2025? What rituals will we still be using?
7. Open Space is an inherent human capacity. The process we use is one way to open space for participants – it works but probably is not the only way. OST invokes this capacity that we inherently possess.
8. Current instructions are great at divergence but we don't have good instructions for the convergence phase.
9. Open Space vs. Open Space Technology. There is a difference. OST is a way to open space.
10. A different quality to the space once it's opened.
11. The success or one measure of the value of OST is that many other processes i.e. AI use OST as a back end.
12. We have the instructions (rituals) as a process for removing barriers.
13. If we are coming from a place of wholeness we can't be derogatory.
14. Key elements include inviting (a sense of being), including (ongoing) and transparency.
15. Space opens in the heart of the sponsor.
16. It is a challenge to be a sponsor! The sponsor is the one left with the responsibility not the facilitator. Compassion for the sponsor.
17. Pre-work is critical. Many of the issues which we face can be lessened by dialogue prior to the session. If we need different perceptions in the room, we should invite them into the room.

Topic 10 Growing the Spirit Of Open Space

Convener

Fr Brian S Bainbridge

Participants

Kairi, Ronit, Brunhild, Wendy, Diane, Masud, Erich, Christine, Paul, Doug, Joelle, Gabriela, Denise, Sheila, Michelle, Jacqueline, Deirdre, Lisa, Gernot, Carolyn.

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Brian outlined a Bit of the importance of SPIRIT as to do with INSPIRATION, as needed beyond the PROCESS of OST, and that spirit is often carried by story – perhaps always. And the need to have sharing of stories and part of training and continuing training and development of OST people.

He used a story from The World Bank about the gradual working together of delegates from Japan and Timor L'Este as a direct result of the Open Space Planning and program.

Gabriela shared a story about young Berliners gathered together by the Berlin Philharmonic and a choreographer, working to develop a sense of community, and then discovering – after a time – that the choreographer had become very sick, recovered somewhat, and then wanted – in the closing Open Space – to raise a question and share his difficulty. But he found this very awkward, and was encouraged by Gabriela to raise the matter and then see what the group (without him) would do about it. The matter was to do with exhaustion and the depleted finances he had which prevented him from doing some of the things he was invited to do. The group chose to work on this and, when he returned later, he found a new energy and anew support for his work - and felt so much stronger for having shared the matter and so grateful for the support that the group was able to arrange.

Lisa : a major Diocesan consultation in California, an old Monsignor who dozed and woke up at all the right time – trying to develop strategies for the future of the Church in that Diocese. They came up with 425 strategies, and need to get that down to 9?? Lisa found herself reminding them of their FAITH, of the SPIRIT and of the need to trust God as the drive for the decisions they had to reach. They used dots (God dots) and one of the priests got everyone to deep breathe and then move to the wall. IT all worked marvelously.

Joelle : Volunteers scared of cuts to their organization – an imposed downsize; a 2-day OST; end of Day 1, team had to be encouraged to trust the process, even though the members thought that the decisions had been made already; young man at start of Day 2 simply set up a Q & A session, and Director undertook to answer whatever could be answered; in a little while, questions stopped – young man asked the group if they had any other questions – and when no one answered said then all the questions must have been answered, so now they could get on with what mattered. The mood changed to positive and the results were marvelous.

Esther talked about her very first OST with hospital finance group – all accountants. At end of Day 1, getting nowhere, reminded them to trust the process; next day people said these aren't the right topics, invited them to put up the right topics now, they did, the results were again amazing. Manager stated that he had learnt to trust the process – and the facilitator!

Michelle : Training new OST practitioners – invites other experienced OST people to be there – and they shared this connection – and spirit shows up in the stories they then share – valuable to trainees AND to the experienced persons, as well.

Book mentioned called THE HOLY INTIMACY OF STRANGERS – suggesting that often the OST environment allows total strangers to share in a special way that really matters.

Michelle : topics in an OST can change as the program develops – and should be allowed for; in fact, it is the responsibility of those present to do just that. Underlines the importance of “letting go”. One sponsor seemed unprepared, after an excellent OST experience, to use OST again – but then explained that the subsequent important decisions could not have been made without the discussions in OST which actually determined what the group could then do.

Topic 11 Open Space Institute (US) Annual Member Meeting

Convener

Peggy Holman

Participants

Patsy Murray, Tree Fitzpatrick, Kerry Napuk*, Karen Davis*, Doug Germann*, Lisa Heft *, Joelle Lyons Everett, Chris Corrigan, Brian Rogers

[* = current Board members attending; absent Board members = Gabriel Shirley, Mikk Sarv, John Engle, Michael Herman]

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

The Open Space Institute of the US [OSI(US)] is a not for profit organization whose purpose is to promote and support the use and practice of Open Space Technology [OST] in the world. Members of OSI(US) live in many countries, and the Board of Directors of OSI(US) is also international. Our purpose is to be of service to the world.

OSI(US) holds space for Open Space – through providing access to resources on Open Space (such as funding and administrating the <http://www.openspaceworld.org> and <http://www.openspaceworld.net> worldwide Open Space sites and establishing the OSLIST); through connecting individuals and groups to inform, inspire, mentor and sustain each other in opening and holding space; and through being an inclusive learning community.

The Bylaws of the Open Space Institute will tell you more about OSI(US) – you can find these at <http://www.openspaceworld.net> – [Lisa says: I was the notestaker for this session – I do not have the exact address but you can go to <http://www.openspaceworld.net> and go I think to Open Space Institute (US) then Bylaws then Sandbox and at the bottom of the sandbox is the latest version of the Bylaws. If I'm wrong or if you have trouble, you can contact any member of the Board (see above) and together we will find them for you]

See the chart Peggy has attached (at end of proceedings) to see the accomplishments of the OSI(US) in this and past years. Among other things, in the past year or so, OSI(US) has funded 60 Haitians for an OS on leadership, peace and democracy; with the assistance of our worldwide colleagues has added French & Turkish pages to the wiki (osworld) website; joined the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (US); donated copies of Harrison's Practice of Peace book to prison libraries...and more.

(of course, your membership is always welcome to support these efforts – and if you are already a member, we welcome your membership renewals – see

<http://www.openspaceworld.org> and click on OpenSpaceInstitutes, then Open Space Institute of the US to learn more.)

We discussed the financials for OSI(US) – if and when the need arises we are a potential energy –plus- a legal entity so we can raise funds as need and energy invite.

The Board meets via one conference call a month and conducts its business in Open Space – indeed, OSI(US) is a fully Open Space organization.

If you wish to be a Board member, simply let a current Board member know and we welcome you to join us. *[see Board members' names above and remember, you can be from any country and be a Board member]*

One of the orders of business was to vote on the current, updated version of the OSI(US) Bylaws. Many heartfelt thanks to Karen Davis, and a huge big bow of gratitude to Kerry Napuk and Douglas Germann for their hard work updating, collecting comments and feedback from fellow Board members and putting together the updated Bylaws. A vote was taken – a majority of Board members were present *[see above]* – “Aye” votes to accept the new Bylaws: Peggy Holman, Kerry Napuk, Lisa Heft, Doug Germann. “Aye” later from John Engle, who arrived for Day 2 of this conference. “Abstain” until she can read them: Karen Davis.

Where from here?

Coming up: the Open Space World Service Market – a virtual bulletin board / invitation for / marketplace of Open Space project / idea / event / resource needs and people interested in serving those needs. Michael Herman is creating the online site and will administer it. You will all be invited to post OS-oriented projects in need of support. OSI(US) is not sponsoring these requests or projects – though OSI(US) will continue to sponsor projects and people as it has been doing. This is a world community-held bulletin board that the world community – you – can post and respond to.

Who could assist?

Several OSI(US) Board members agreed to chat with representatives of the various OSIs around the world + the Open Space world map who are physically here at this OSONOS, to share about the OS World Service Market and discuss how to co-promote and help everyone use and find the OS World Service Market for mutual support.

We invite you to contact any of us to ask us about the OSI(US), its activities and potential, and the Board.

Topic 12 Real time coaching & learning in Open Space

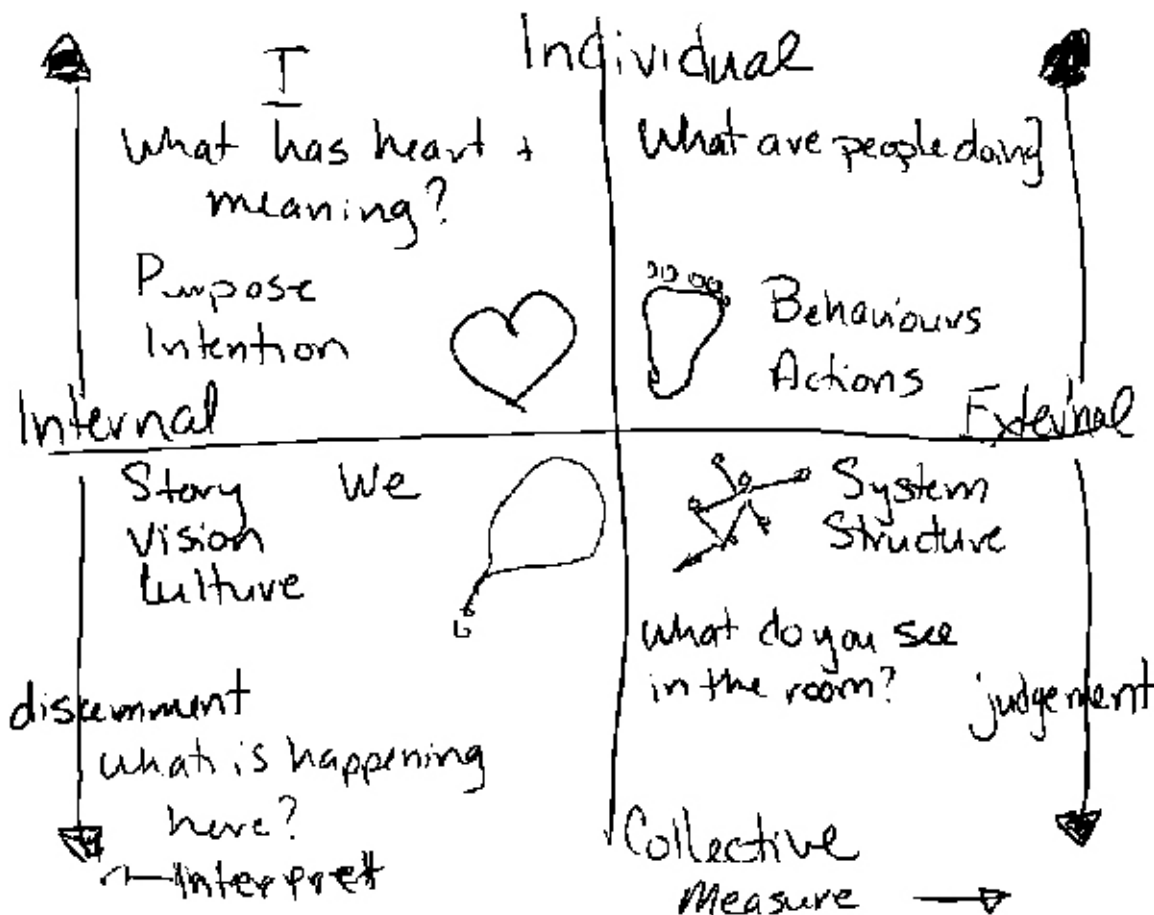
Convener

Chris Corrigan

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Chris shared an exercise that he did with a sponsor during an Open Space event. He asked the sponsor what he was seeing in the event and made a list of observations. The sponsor was invited to look at the event from inside and outside conversations and to record his personal impressions as well as his observations about how the group in the event was working. The list of observations – of a group working optimally – became a list of desired characteristics for the sponsor's organization.

The diagram below is the map of this coaching model which helps to frame questions for this process. It is based on four quadrants model by Ken Wilber with additional material by Angeles Arrien and Michael Herman.



Ken Wilber's model: the relevant thing is to understand right side quadrants through observation and left side through reflection and interpretation. Systems and behaviours can be observed and to understand culture and intention one needs to engage in

interpretive practices. This means that seeing a system, organization or event through these lenses means deliberately seeing with different modalities.

Questions for triggering this seeing:

System – what do you see?

Behaviors – what are people doing?

Culture – what is happening in the groups?

Intention – what has heart & meaning for you? (reflective)

When you are a leader holding space, it's difficult to know if an event is going well. One must enter the process, be less reliant on measurement, more involved in conversation.

Many leaders say they want to continue the spirit of OS – to do that they need to do more than observe, they need to participate in the groups.

To use the matrix, observe in real time – list the observations, capturing it as you see it – observe first externally, then move to the internal quadrants.

The group went out into the rest of the event to practice these modalities of seeing and gathered again to share reflections on the process.

For more information on this process, or to share your reflections on it, contact Chris at chris@chriscorrigan.com or phone +1 604 947 9236

Topic 13 Research on Open Space: Topics and Methods.

What research about Open Space would be useful for the Open Space community? How could one do useful research?

Convenor:

Bob Sullens

Participants:

Gernot, Rory, Peggy, Evan, Harris, Debra

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- What causes the sponsor to say yes to Open Space?
 - What are the conditions/ characteristics that encourage the sponsor to step out and accept Open Space.
- What happens when groups internalize Open Space principles:
 - Can we understand what it does in the organization?
 - What is the effect on individuals?
 - A longitudinal study would be useful. Look at changes over time.
- When the leaders or leadership group welcomes OS, what are the factors that that lead to acceptance?
 - What gives it longevity in an organization?
- We could hold a Open Space among sponsors of Open Space. What are we learning?
- Use a model (7S) to investigate how Open Space affects the various systems in an organization.
- Check out a master's thesis on line. Locate through openspaceworld site (Richard Morris?) May look at effects of doing OS on the group and individuals.
- Gernot described his current research for his PhD. His core questions are:
 - What is the difference between a "learning organization" and a conscious Open Space Organization.
 - What is the deeper essence of "learning organization" , Future Search, Open Space? Are their common elements.
 - He has developed a questionnaire to be used with organizations that have participated in Open Space which will generate data for qualitative analysis
 - He hopes to translate the questionnaire into English and include some organizations in the US in his research. He raised the question of whether cultural differences between the US and the German speaking world result in differences in practice or perception of Open Space.
- Are there well known effects of Open Space, positive, very positive or negative? The OS community is optimistic and may not address possible negative impacts of OS.

- Peggy commented that labeling impacts as positive or negative was not good or useful since the answer might well depend on the time the question was asked. What initially appears negative may ultimately be perceived as positive.
 - Debra suggested that it is still a good question to ask. Research (and OS) has an impact on the participants and as a facilitator we need to consider our responsibility to participants. The answer seemed to be that ultimately people are responsible for themselves.
- Peggy reported on some research with which she was involved. All individuals invited to an Open Space were interviewed before and after the Open Space. Additional interviews were planned for 6 months after the event but did not happen. Some of the invitees did not attend and so became the control group. The research found statistically significant differences between the groups in attitudes about the quality of communication in the organization and the individual's ability to have an impact on the organization.
- Other research ideas were suggested.
 - Use a narrative interview with one or two open ended questions and apply qualitative analysis to the responses.
 - Gather quantitative data about an organization's health and performance before an intervention. Apply different intervention methods and then look at the changes in the health and performance indicators over time. Controlling for other variables would be a significant problem with this approach.
- Beginning to understand the effect of OS outcomes on an organization would be useful for the community.

Where from here?

Convenor's note: I will be looking for one or more opportunities to study the impact of OS on an organization for my Master's Project.

Topic 14 Opening Space in challenging environments

Convener:

Filiz Telek

Participants:

Eddie Palmer, Allison Hewett, Bob Sullens, Karen Fish, Michelle Dunphy, Christopher Comeau, Lisa Heft, Donna Clark, Joelle Everett

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Filiz defined ‘challenging’ as a mindset, cultural context that would resist the self-organizing, trusting, letting go of control qualities of open space and asked for the wisdom of the group. Participants shared their experiences of opening space in challenging environments and offered their learnings and ways they dealt with their particular situations. Following is the wisdom of the group for opening space in challenging environments:

- Going slowly and patiently in the face of big challenges and dealing with tangible parts of the big issue
- Going larger than the conceived challenge and identifying something larger than the immediate conflict yet something tangible and achievable
- Removing the group from their immediate environment and opening space in mutual ground. Taking people out of the territory they defend.
- Bringing diverse group of people/conflicted parties around a practical issue that matters to all of them rather than the conflict itself
- Breathing through the process, letting go of attachment to results and letting things take their natural course.
- Letting go of fear and insecurity (of what might happen) and holding space with faith and clear intention
- Invitation – from the very beginning all through the event. How can we make sure that everyone invited feel comfortable and equal in our circle? How can we fully welcome who needs to be there?
- Pre-work with the hosting team and getting the ‘core question’ is crucial. A committed hosting team to follow up is necessary.
- Working with illiterate groups, don’t be afraid to tweak the methodology a little bit, for example using storytelling instead of written reports.

Where from here?

From assumptions into exploration and action!

Who could assist?

Anyone and everyone, but mostly myself! ☺

Topic 15 Where does the energy go? Post-event implementation

Convener

Kerry Napuk and Eddie Palmer

Name of Participants

Barbara, Vanessa, Newell, Bill M, Brunhid, Ronit, Donna, Chris, Kairi, Daniel, Judy R., Tracey, Allie, Brian R., Larry P.

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion

As groups develop actions, people talk about sustainability, and individuals are asked to commit (accountability)

Experience of inclusivity (what does it feel like in my body when I'm connected in a group? Outcome, not output.

Equal voice, level playing field

Different ways to deal with givens

Sponsors never deny any priority

Recognition of time as a resource – v. important

Skills – train people around the event so that can do this in an ongoing way

Capacity-building

Large group dynamics – issues of collective importance

Small group dynamics – sustaining those groups

Where from here?

Discussion on training

Who could assist?

Everybody!

Topic 16 www.openspaceworldmap.org - A tool for even more interaction.

Convener

Michael Pannwitz jr.

Participants:

Eddie, John, Tracy, (Kerry) and some bumblebees

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Wonderful resource to find open space practitioners in countries around the world, with their contact details, websites etc. pp. and links to local and regional open space resources.

- Useful information that could be added in the form of new categories would be:
- Publications, a list that is continuously updated,
- Open space trainings around the world,
- Open space learning exchanges around the world,
- Success stories from open space,
- a link to the open space world service market (w3.osw.net/OSWorldService)

Where from here?

Suggestions will be relayed to the host of the map.

Who could assist?

YOU are welcome to include yourself in the www.openspaceworldmap.org

For free courier service of inclusion fees please contact Michael Pannwitz jr.

Topic 17 Reality through the arts.

Convener:

Harris Becker

Participants:

Kairi, Alir, Bob Sullen, Nancy, Dehlia

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- What is Art?
- What is the function of Art?
- Art in Society
 - Passive focus
 - Active focus
- Arts and Bridges
- Connecting the Arts to the bigger population
- The ability to enhance life experience – reaching deeper understanding of human interaction and life is through the arts.

Where from here?

In our own way to try to bring to various situations our desire for a more relevant and meaningful existence with the help of great painters, musicians etc.

Who could assist?

All

Topic 18 Opening Space in Universities: Opportunities and Barriers

Convener

Becky Peterson (Rebecca@yorku.ca)

Participants:

Denise O'Connor, Evan Throop Robinson, Rosemary Nichols, Henri Lipnanowicz, Chris Robertson, Harris Becker, Karen Fish, Brian Rogers, Michelle Dunphy, Harrison Owen,

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

We shared our motivation for being in this group. There were a variety of backgrounds, including university professors, consultants working with academia, and groups seeking partnerships in universities, and others with an interest in linking their understanding of universities to the concept of open space.

The discussion included the sharing of stories about open space use in the classroom, in student organizations, in faculty unions, in research institutes, and in other cross organization initiatives. There were some stories of success, more common in the classroom, and stories of successful events within some limited situations, and one story of extensive use of open space throughout an entire college.

A common assumption was that the hierarchical structure of universities, combined with an increasing scarcity of resources has led to a more closed feeling within many universities. However, member of the group shared many stories of successful use of open space in the classroom setting, indicating that students are eager to become engaged in open space opportunities, when given the chance.

Some of the barriers mentioned included the following:

- Ideology driven agendas, may mean that minds are not as open as one would hope
- Highly entrenched bureaucracy in centralized control is the dominant paradigm in administration
- Difficult to get buy-in and find receptive sponsors
- The need for clarity of course expectations in grading situations may pose a problem for some faculty members

Topic 19 Crafting the Effective Invitation

Convener

Carolynn Coburn

Participants

Daniel, Patsy, Allison, Michelle, Bob

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- It is really important to spend time and energy on this in advance.
- Do research: who really is the sponsor; is there an executive team to work with as well as a CEO; why does the organization think it wants to have an OS meeting; is OS the right technique for the job; what does the client really want to accomplish.
- The answers will lead to more questions: who should be invited; what will be done with the outcomes from the process; who has the authority to make decisions as to implementation
- After you have acquired the background information, you will be in a better position to create an effective invitation
- Work with the client/client team to draft the invitation
- You want the invitation to be authentic, not overreaching.
- The invitation can be the Theme followed by text that will explain a bit about the process and give the invitees an idea of sub-topics that might arise.
- The theme should be forward-looking/positive. "What is the future you want to create?" rather than "What are you unhappy about now?"
- Try to keep the theme focused. "What are the essential elements that will have to be considered when...?"
- If available, use wordsmiths/ marketing resources/ to refine the wording (easily done by e-mail)
- A great invitation will make people want to come "You don't want to miss.." or, "This is your opportunity to shape...."
- Some leaders are uncomfortable with no "agenda". You may have to disguise the lack of same with generic scheduling
- Let people know it will be different from most meetings: "Are you tired of pointless PowerPoint presentations?"... "A townhall meeting with a difference"

Aside: Open Space could be useful for a student doing community-based research, as a means to reach a large number of people in a community – putting an ad in the local paper, inviting people to meet to tell stories about a particular topic.

Topic 20 Beliefs Create Reality

How can we create the reality we want by consciously working on our beliefs?

Convener:

Marei

Participants:

Esther, Robyn, Michael, Diane, Eric, Audrey, Newell, Sabine, Eva, Filiz, Cathy, Ward, Michelle, Carolynne, Allie, Ronit, Masud, Thomas, Bill, Gernot, and two others who's names escaped me – sorry!

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

a) Our beliefs, our assumptions, our view of the world create our reality.

Beliefs can be supportive or blocking.

Many of our beliefs are culturally conditioned and not yet deliberately chosen.

To raise the personal awareness of our lenses and filters and choosing consciously what we want to believe most of us saw as very helpful and necessary.

Evolution: Go to a higher level of consciousness – includes higher level of consciously building beliefs.

Reality is individually – many single realities build our mass reality.

b) Working on beliefs with the management team as pre-work of an OST event was very helpful – and asking: “Who do we have the potential to become – if we believed we could?”

Difference between living a life as ‘effected’ or as ‘cause’ – in every situation there is a choice – and these choice are made out of our beliefs - even staying victimized is a choice.

c) We shared personal beliefs we hold which make us get up in the morning and do what we do.

Where from here? And who could assist?

Resources we shared with each other:

- 7 logical levels of thinking / Gregory Bateson and R. Dilts / ask Cathy C.
- 7 languages of transformation / for more ask Esther Ewing
- biology of perception; Psych-K / for more ask Ward Williams
- Avatar –a course for learning tools which enable us to choose and create our beliefs and by that deliberately create our reality / more at www.avatarEPC.com or ask Marei (am an Avatar-Master)

Topic 21 The Use of Coaching in OS

Convener:

Esther Ewing

Participants:

Vanessa Hammond, Michelle Murphy, Debra Rosser, Rosemary Nichols, Audrey Coward, Marei Kiele, Henri Lipmanowicz, Joseph

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- One of the questions was how to improve capacity in someone for success
- We discussed zone coaching (Debra)
- The importance of an appreciative approach in creating the space for the exploration to be successful
- The importance of being aware of the space between me and the person I'm coaching and the space that I create within me
- How to open the space with a person
- What is the open space mindset?
- What is the space within me?
- The importance of going wherever the client wants to take me (whatever happens...)
- Could/should one formally open the space using the principles of OS and explicitly referring to them – perhaps in the first meeting?
- To be open to whether the client needs and aware of our own beliefs and how our beliefs might limit our effectiveness with the client
- The impact of working with the client's metaphor and running with that metaphor
 - Esther's story: One client had the frame or metaphor that he needed an agenda for every coaching session while his "issue" or reason for coaching was that others felt that he tried to control everything – until he demanded that I provide an agenda – I said that if I had to provide an agenda, there would be no agenda – that would be the agenda – but if he wanted a formal agenda, he could provide one and he could choose which he wanted, an agenda or no agenda and he could come to the next session and let me know which he wanted – he chose to risk having no agenda and the sky didn't fall in! He learned that the session could be good without one.
 - The guy with the agenda was also a guy with a really strong defense mechanism that perhaps he'd outgrown the need for
- In OS you create a minimalist container and without it you wouldn't have OS – how do you create sufficient container for coaching?
 - Using an appreciative approach – if the client feels appreciated then they will trust you have their best interests at heart
 - Body language
 - Being aware of one's own approach and the impact on the client
- Working over the phone has benefits
 - Can be very intimate

- Smaller space is created
 - Helps with global organizations – saves travel expenses
 - No substitute for face-to-face, some might say, but can be very effective especially when enough face time has been achieved
- Whoever comes...
 - The client needs to be able to say “no” to a coach and find someone else or even say “no” to coaching – Esther – I always offer the client a chance to not coach with me and I offer to help them find someone else if they prefer
- The law of two feet
 - Esther – I have withdrawn from a coaching relationship that wasn’t working or where their needs were beyond my skills – and the client needs to be able, similarly, to withdraw
- When it starts...
 - The coach needs to have patience for the teaching moment or the moment where the client is ready to make a shift, even a tiny one
- When it’s over...
 - Coaching doesn’t go on forever and we need to be aware of that
 - Esther – I do a closing mini-ceremony with the client (alone) in saying good-bye and closing the process when it seems right
- Transparency – the term that describes that which someone is so used to that they are unaware of its existence – the water in the goldfish bowl that the fish doesn’t recognize the importance of until it’s out of the bowl
 - We are often operating at a number of different levels (or transparencies) at once
 - Transparencies can be things from our own background that have formed us or are baggage that we are not even aware that we have
- The role of the coach – should be approached with humility as we are no sacred ground but not so much humility that we are not participating at our most helpful – we may be an instrument of peace but we are a particular instrument and perhaps there are forces at work beyond our knowing that have put us together with the coachee

Topic 22 How can OpenSpace-Online optimize ongoing Open Space?

Convener:

Gabriela Ender

Participants:

Thomas Herrmann, Barbara Schneider, Daniel Gingsas, Birgitt Williams, Michelle Cooper, Michelle Langille,

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

The OpenSpace-Online Real-time Conferencing Method was developed by Gabriela and her team from Germany to especially promote self-organized, result-oriented, and respectful online collaboration around the world -- based on the philosophy and principles of Open Space Technology. Moreover it was created to bridge gaps between the “online and offline world”, to create new synergies between different kinds of methods and approaches, and to enable complete new participatory communication architectures and change processes, and it was develop to make event organizers and their participants as independent as possible from third parties. Therefore every interest or working group is able to set up and to held such real-time online open space meetings very fast and easy. At the website www.OpenSpace-Online.com there is a comfortable “Online Booking Service”, a User-Guide for Organizers and all information and tools, which are helpful in order to work with OpenSpace-Online independently.

Gabriela shared a few experiences about the last three years of providing this service worldwide. The system is used for a wide range of different goals, and in different settings, and within and for many different companies, networks or organizations.

Four persons of session group -- Michelle, Birgitt, Thomas and Barbara – has already used the software once or very often – as participants, as organizers and as “Meta-Facilitators”. Michelle mentioned, that as a consultant, she do the same pre-work as she usually do as if she is preparing an OST meeting (e.g. OS givens and invitation) with her clients – except during the online-event, because of the virtual facilitation, which is part of the software.

Birgitt Williams shared some of her experiences: Based on her work on the Genuine Contact Program and on her concept of “Conscious Open Space Organizations” her company is offering “Blended Open Space Settings”. For example if an organization want to organize an face-to-face meeting with participants from different parts of the country or the world, the opportunity of having an online follow-up with OpenSpace-Online is every time part of the proposal. Birgitt shared her experience, that each Open Space Technology Meeting ends with at least 5 new topics, which needs to be work further. This creates a good process frame for further open space work and for

maintaining the co-creative energy across distances (Ongoing OS Walking and Talking). One of Birgitts customers is an International Health Care Organizations. This company has staff in many different countries. The online methodology gives them the opportunity to do their Organizational Transformation Work and to create a special Corporate Culture across distances and in an ongoing way based on the principles of Open Space. Additionally Birgitt shared, that the International Genuine Contact Trainer Group is using OpenSpace-Online a few times in the year for maintaining the trainer community.

Michelle Cooper spoke about her experience, when she and other colleagues facilitated an ongoing facilitation process with RNAO, a large Health Care Organization in Canada. This organization had to deal with lots of challenges after the illness SARS were especially in Canada. Michelle helped RNAO to set up an OpenSpace-Online Conference. They wanted to give their staff the opportunity to learn from each another, to share stories, and to think about needs regarding future internal training programs. The 4,5 hour conference was amazing success. RNAO could use the conference documentation as well very good for their SARS research project.

Topic 23 Exploring the Fool: High Play and Transformation in Open Space

Convener:

Wendy Farmer-O'Neil

Participants:

Michael, Lisa, Bob, Tree, Newell, John, Ali, Marei, Feliz, Masud, Vanessa, Michelle

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Began the discussion with the following quote from K. Louise Vincent as illustrative of the power of the Fool, fool energy and high play to transform difficult or dark places:

There were many crowded into a large cattle truck, being taken away from the barracks of the concentration camp where they had all been held as prisoners. Leaving the barracks the mood was unspeakably sober. Everyone knew the truck was headed for the gas chambers. When the truck arrived, no one could speak at all. Even the guards were silent as they lined up the men. But the silence was soon interrupted by an energetic man, Robert Desnos, who jumped out of the line and took the hand of one of the condemned. Improbable as the moment was, he read the man's palm. "Oh", he said, "I see you have a very long lifeline. And you are going to have three children." He was exuberant for the man. His excitement was contagious. First one man, then another offered up his hand. Each time the prediction was for longevity and joy. As Desnos read more palms, not only the mood of the prisoners changed but that of the guards, too. How can one explain it? Perhaps the element of surprise planted a seed of doubt in their minds. They were in any case so disoriented by this sudden change of mood among those they were about to kill, they were unable to go through with the executions. So all the men were packed into the truck and returned to the barracks. What a leap of faith in the mouth of the gas chamber—to imagine a long life, to connect with the possibility still alive in that moment they jumped outside the world as it was created by the SS.

(...from soon to be published manuscript of poetry)

Question: How can we grow/access this quality in our OS work as facilitators?

Become present in the moment.

Give self permission. Model permission.

Spend time with children.

Create 'structured' or 'dedicated' play time.

Read Dilbert.

There are ways to play the fool in a fierce way--using a combination of fearlessness, playfulness and love to name the elephants. (e.g.: the unexpressed conflict present in the room).

One exercise of play/fun/foolishness can change the energy of the whole day/event.

Play connects us and gets us out of the mind and out of the ego.

Opens us to deep, often unseen diversity present in the group.

Games we played:

Hum a song that describes how you feel.

Tell us a weather condition that describes how you feel (good to use at the beginning of a day)

How many hours of sleep did you have?

The wind blows...like musical chairs...one person starts... "The wind blows for everyone who....*tell something true about yourself...*" Everyone for whom this is true jumps up and has to change chairs...one left standing continues...then shift to second stage that connects to the work of the group/event..(the true thing should relate to the work or theme...)

Count to ten...everyone looks down at the floor and using a loud voice, as the spirit moves them, shouts out a number in a round of counting to ten. If two people speak the same number at the same time, the round must begin again at 1. Brings the group in tune with itself.

Making situations physical...create a physical (body) sculpture that represents the situation. With a count of three movement changes...shift position to represent the desired future.

Wear something playful (brooch, pin, hat, scarf, clothing) that is surprising, pushes a boundary, creates conversation, reminds to be playful.

Emotional symphony: segment the group. Have each one make the sound of a particular emotion. Then conduct using the emotion sounds.

Where from here?

Next available sandbox or playground.

Who could assist?

Everybody who wants to come play...

Topic 24 “OS on OS-Moskva 2006”: Putin’s Promise?

Note: report notes also reflect thoughts that arose in a wide-ranging uber-useful butterfly conversation with Judi Richardson

Convener:

Raffi Aftandelian

Participants:

Peggy Holman

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Importance of orienting participants physically and culturally as much as possible beforehand and during the event

What to do so that participants feel welcomed and supported?

For Moscow we have a space that we (Intertraining, a professional association of trainers and consultants of the former Soviet Union) has used for many years to conduct the OSonOS. It is a space near Moscow (in Sovkhoz Moskovski, 15 min. drive from the Vnukovo Airport), a training center belonging to the the Ministry of Agriculture. This location has both good (while not luxurious) hotel rooms and a good conference space. Each year this location gets better and better.

Michael Pannewitz and Jo Toepfer offered their OST facilitator workshop there for Intertraining in 2000. Other internationally-known workshop leaders, George Lakey (www.trainingforchange.org), Kit Coats have led workshops here, too.

This training center has regularly offered vegetarian food and with work could accommodate other dietary options too. This year it offered vegan food by accident during Intertraining’s annual conference as it happened at the same time as Lent...(we have the technology).

Importance of visiting the OSonOS convenor reflection notes.

Hold an OS-online gathering to harvest the wisdom of past OSonOS convenors and also to include participatory design in the OSonOS.

The spiritual aspect of OSonOS organizing—the convenor(s) should do as little of the work as possible, but rather just be holding the space for the event to happen. Part of that is to stay in the realm of the possible, not get hooked into getting annoyed, tap into the brilliance of those interested in making the event possible.

Where from here?

Just ring, breathe it into taking place!

An OSonOSonOS will take place in October. We would like it to happen so that IP-telephony/free-conferencing/skype/OS-online-type participation would be possible.

Who could assist?

Anybody who cares to!

Just contact Galina Tsarkova (gala_tsar_kova_@mail.ru), Mikhail Pronin (virtus@mail.ru), or Raffi Aftandelian (raffi@bk.ru) and experience the magic.

Topic 25 How do we find movement, improv.isational activities and kinesthetic experiences in Open Space?

Convener:

Allie Middleton

Participants:

Karen Fish, Ali rose, Ronit Kurz, Becky Pedersen, Lisa Heft

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Background offered by convener regarding the use of improv. and other experiential activities that help create a sense of ease and familiarity with our bodies, thus opening to our somatic selves. These kinesthetic techniques may serve to release static energies, perhaps invite greater alignment and access to our higher selves, thus assist the ascending energies, open more creative channels. Otherwise, we remain in the energetically in the gravitation pull downwards. So, it's all about inviting, opening to the 'new', or even just simply imprinting what 'IS'.

Of course, all this is possible only in accord with the rhythm and energy available in the group. Does the sponsor even want this, can you sell it? Or do you sneak it in, as you are 'moved'....and what is it that 'moves...'???

Circumstances are always different, imposed movement may not be welcome, spontaneous movement may be just right. How to know? Does music help bodies move? Can we use it to accelerate the process of a deeper, more authentic level of communication. Even a mild gesture may help shift the energetics in a room, help diffuse or accelerate an emotionally charged interaction. (Is this a controlling move, contrary to OST?) And what about moving just to explore what the expression might bring. Drums were not mentioned, nor types of dance, although these are also very fine to experiment with. PS Thanks to Karen Davis for re-introducing the Cherokee Alignment dance =right after this session...

Some questions posed:

How can we "BE" in our bodies as we practice OST?

What personal centering practices help OST practitioners remain still in their Selves during turbulent times?

Do experiential activities help OST? What are they?

Can exercises in groups help "weaken the ego"?

Does movement heal us?

Do non-verbal exercises help deepen thinking?

Does movement help create a sense of community?

Is the autopoietic self invited through movement; can that help OST connect to something different as we all connect in the collective?

Resources shared:

Otto Scharmer's use of self in his new work. Still place within, of Presence, as we are also moving 'in action' together....

Meg Wheatley

Outdoor experiential activities (wilderness based...)

Improvisational tools are wonderful, freeing, fun and engaging...loosen up folks

Get the humor bone working, also the sense of absurdity....

BE SILLY

Activities shared:

1. Stop exercise. Objective: To explore the interaction of surprise and time, and our reactions/responses. On a large carpet or other well defined space, ask participants to crowd in and walk fast around in the space, instructing them at times to 'go faster, faster still'. Speak with urgency. Then ask them to reverse direction. Ask them to take care not to bump one another. Have them 'travel' as long as you feel 'right.' Five minutes is good. Then say STOP, ask them to pair up, find a partner, then ask them to respond to the following question in the dyad: 'How do you wish to die?'

Debrief relates to experience of shock, surprise, opening of emotions, use of nurturing techniques, such as touch, during the conversations. Did you foresee your future, someone else's, something from the past...present...other?

2. Improv activity: Create a human sculpture: Objective: to imprint kinesthetically the somatic experience of conflict, then of harmony. Begin with one person, then add others: body movements make a kinetic sculpture; first with conflictual movements, second with harmonious movement.

Debrief: ??? What was your experience...???

3. Talking Buddha: One person is the questioner, others gather, standing close together to form the talking Buddha head. When responding, the individuals comprising the Buddha answer the question by saying one word each in sequence (R to L of q'er) to form a sentence. When the response is complete the last person says 'period.' Make sure the questioner scribes the response, as the 'answer' can move on.....

One of the questions posed today was: What is OS? Part of the Buddha's answer was

....*Prairie grass moves dancingly along, with light creating spirals.....*

Where from here?

How might we continue to explore the story of the OST circle process through the use of the body and movement techniques?

Who could assist?

Any Body, somatic practitioners.

Topic 26 OST & Complexity Science/Networks

Convener:

Jacqueline Throop-Robinson

Participants:

Henri, Paul, Ronit, Tova, Denise, Elizabeth

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Amazing emergence/productivity comes from following simple rules (ant hill analogy, OST, Boids)

What are you/we doing to make things simple?

Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) are about parts interacting with each other, non-linear, organic, self-organizing systems VERSUS mechanistic view

Plexis Institute has many resources for conducting workshops on this
“Society of Learning” holding a conference on this topic in Vienna in September
“Becoming Interactive” in Budapest in October

Self-organization is happening all the time. It’s how everything gets done anyway.

Problem with leaders and OD people is they try to find something we can apply to the whole. Healthy CAS need the parts to adopt a certain way of making sense of the emergent process. And the results are unique each time.

Alternative currencies also operate in networks.

How do we include our interior selves if we are following even minimal rules? Perhaps don’t worry about the rules and where they come from but worry about people participating and agreeing willingly to the rules. Follow minimal specifications and justify each additional rule by ensuring there is no way in the world you can’t live without it.

Distinguish between rules and permissions

LA Paper company and the Story of the Outrageous Goal – Set the outrageous goal (get something fixed that had been broken for two years in 2 weeks) and open the space (“People can work with anyone on anything at anytime they want to but everyone needs to take 8 hours off every 24 hours and tick off things off the master to do list as you get things done.”) The goal was met!

Where from here?

- Henri and Jacqueline will connect about the network in which Henri participates
- Jacqueline and Tova will connect on designing experiential activities on this topic and other things
- Jacqueline and Elizabeth will connect regarding her insights on her most successful self-organizing sessions

Who could assist?

Anyone who has passion and a sense of responsibility

Topic 27 What is the next space? Where is open space going to?

Convener:

Piret Jeedas

Participants:

Piret, Tracy, Ward, John, Peggy, Fremy

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- next level: consciously living in an open space both individually and collectively
- labels or titles are disappearing and people ask from themselves: what does it mean to live in the community?
- When open space emerged it was more like a bowl that we could hold: now we look into the field of open space that is much more looser. And on the field we are more connected to each other – we live in the web of connections.
- We need to constantly notice the open space that has always been here – we need to unfold it so that leadership, creativity and passion can be nurtured.

Topic 28 Ghost Walk & ‘telling...in the graveyard across the street

Convener:

judy robertson, (Rene the Storyteller)

Participants:

Alison Rose, Bob Sullens, Karen Davis

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Engaging stories about the past of Halifax, reflecting some tragic occurrences, including ‘hangings’, ‘fires’, ‘explosions’ and the by-products of some lucrative ‘rum running’ and ‘shipping’ businesses.

Several of the stories focused on sightings within the oldest cemetery in Halifax, St. Paul’s Anglican Church Cemetery, all recorded stories were during day time hours.

A record of the many sightings within the city limits and on MacNab’s Island (at the entrance of the Halifax Harbour) are kept in a ‘ghost file’ at the public library in downtown Halifax.

Where from here?

Take the full HALIFAX GHOST TOURS with Rene (incredible, fabulous storyteller), he takes people on a 2.5 hour walking tour of the downtown area nightly.

Who could assist?

Ghosts....

Topic 29 The Tao of Conversation

Convener:

Doug Germann

Participants:

Andre Chiasson; Bruinhild Hofmann; Masud Sheikh; Eric Lilius; Denise; Harris Becker; Nancy

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

1. Persons are brought forth
2. An extra person in the group
3. Intention is necessary
4. Get slower and slower—talking stick—gets beyond thinking
5. Creates something greater than/different from any one person in the group
6. Difference: I and Me (I is more essential; me is the little person)
7. You are seen for your future—strangers help because they do not see your past
8. Most conversations are not authentic
 - a. I try to get authentic conversation by telling of myself
 - b. “Pause of politeness”—to give time for what another says to soak in
9. Difficult to do in my family
 - a. It is dangerous to be authentic
 - b. What is authentic? The conversations people are having are authentic for their now.
 - c. Authentic can be connective or divisive.
 - d. We need to challenge ourselves to step back from our stories—individually and as people in this relationship
10. Have to meet people at their place—emotion.
11. It is a commitment you make to people
12. Rapport—meet at emotional level—people recognize that you recognize their state of the moment—you are focusing your attention to them.
13. People want you to meet them where they want to be met—sometimes you have to “up the amperage” or turn it down.
14. You can oppose another
 - a. you sometimes have a duty to do so
 - b. go to where they are to bring them elsewhere.
15. Stay present
16. Changes conversation—changes you
17. Indra’s Web
18. The touch points of life co-exist

Topic 30 Beginning with Images Not Words

Convener:

Lisa Heft

Participants:

Tree Fitzpatrick, Douglas Germann Jr., Michael Pannwitz Jr., Esther Ewing, Sherry Modrow, Allison Rose, Brunhild Hofmann, Sabine Herrmann, Kurt Connelly, Vanessa Hummod (*spelling?*), Fremy Cesar, Sonya Vaschel, John Engle, Judy Robertson, Marei Kiele, Eric Lilius, Ronit Kurz, Wendy Farmer O'Neill

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Lisa shared how she has observed and felt that often some groups are very 'heady' / in their heads / intellectualizing and she feels it would be great to perhaps unleash a deeper body (literally and figuratively) of knowledge *first*, to seed the conversation to follow in a session. She tried something in a facilitation she did – a board of directors meeting (and the task was also to help a board that was having problems getting along / working with each other).

Materials: everyone gets a large sheet of flip chart paper and an assortment of markers.

Directions: Each participant is invited to fold their paper in ½ and in ½ again, then open it up. In other words, to create one sheet that shows you 4 quadrants (to draw in).

The instructions: "I would like you to draw a picture, a symbol, lines, whatever (this is not an art contest, there will be no awards given, squiggles are good, too, draw whatever comes out) to answer this question:

What in your personal style can help a team / group?

Give them all time to draw, and when everyone is finished:

Now, in the 2nd box (let us say, clockwise), draw:

What is the unsure place you learn the most from?

Give them time, then:

In the 3rd box: What makes you laugh at yourself?

In the 4th box: What would you like to be remembered for?

Then, when everyone is finished, invite whomever feels like it to stand, show us their drawings and tell us what they have drawn. You may wish to repeat the 4 questions to remind them as they go through telling about themselves/their drawings.

Participants stood in turn to share about themselves, using their drawings and talking about them. It was really marvelous to hear what this brought out of people and brought to the group.

- - - -

In the particular instance Lisa used this, these were fairly formal Chief Executive Officer types (suits and ties) on a retreat for the environmental organization they volunteer for (as Board Directors). They handled this very well and they would not have considered themselves people who can draw.

Reflections from the group:

In the first quadrant, I decided to draw what I knew how to draw. As I moved to the next questions / quadrants, I felt more fluid, more relaxed with my drawing. And I realized that I could be really free even though I felt a lack of artistic abilities, because I could explain what it was.

I was in a work group where they were kind of stuck – and we did something like this – first individually...and then we covered a large table with a big roll of paper and they all drew something together.

The second question goes very deep...but the thing about it is that each person can choose their own level of depth.

I like this exercise because it adds counterbalance to the conversation that follows – it seeds nutrition into the group – it brings the group to a deeper place, where people's thinking can come from below the head.

And perhaps there is also the aspect that the group is doing something that they are not familiar with – something new – and they are doing it together.

I heard you say it was fine to scribble...and actually I was drawn to this session because of my fear of doing anything in graphic form. I still felt the need to be representational in the first quadrant...and then I felt freer as I moved into the next quadrants.

It might be interesting to invite people to draw some other picture before this exercise – just to 'prime the pump'. Or you could say 'you have only 30 seconds – quickly, draw whatever comes out'.

Yes, but some people could feel panicky.

Yes, and a few of these questions took some time for reflection, so I could really think about them and then draw. I could not have done that in 30 seconds.

Lisa: One of the things I really appreciate is that it takes time, that there is silence. And that is just fine. Waiting for other people to complete their quadrant before moving on is

just fine. The silence is good, and the time allows for both quick responders and ‘percolators’.

Lisa’s question – so: these questions can be good for a generic exercise – to help as an intro for any group. However, I am wondering how I might adjust the questions for, for example, the way to begin a session that you *know* will be very intellectual...such as something among academics about an author’s works...or in a “Turtles” Open Space some of us had about envisioning a world where everything – business, countries, whatever...was self-organizing.

We talked about how the designing of the questions – though these 4 particular questions might work for many circumstances – perhaps you would change the first one to reflect the purpose of each different specific group meeting? -- and that the thoughtfulness and intention of designing the right questions...is just like working on the focusing question / theme for Open Space – part of it is the pure intention you put into it – the thoughtfulness you put into it ...and part is the words you eventually find to come as close as you can to what feels like the right questions.

Where from here?

Try it yourself, stretch it a little, let Lisa know what you did...

Who could assist?

Anyone who cares to play. Enjoy...

Topic 31 Words of Healing – Words of Power

Convener:

Joelle Lyons Everett

Participants:

Doug Germann, Esther Ewing, Brunhild Hofmann, Chris Corrigan

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- Sharing favorite poems
- Poetry as healing energy
- Offering (and asking for) blessings
- A song, arising from the conversation, written by Esther
- Poets, healers and OS facilitators use presence, words and inspiration to move energy and power. In opening an OS conference, I use carefully-chosen words and ritual to open and hold a space for Spirit—a shamanic act.

Where from here?

- Online sharing of favorite poems
- Listen for a new song!!!

Who could assist?

Topic 32 What does it mean to take responsibility for what we love across generations of practitioners in the Open Space “Community”?

Convener:

Peggy Holman, Tova Averbuch

Participants:

Paul Everett, Carmen Overall, Filiz Telek, Fr. Brian S. Bainbridge, Marei Kiele, Joelle Everett, Tracy Boyer, Piret Jeedas, Eddie Palmer, Erich Kolensky, Marilon Manning, Ward Williams, Elizabeth Amiss, Birgitt Williams, Kairi Birk, Eva P. Svensson

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- Are we a community, a society, a network of practitioners?
- We need conversations about what makes OS a magic community.
- How to include the young and new folks in an old community that just wants to hang out and be with old friends.
- The OS principles themselves set the values of the community. Openness, inclusion, invitation, responsibility, etc.
- Issue of collaborative organization brought forth, what is the likely outcome of what we call ourselves.
- Have OS institutes in four different countries.
- OS is like a faith work, a healthy place that isn't very quantifiable but rather is 'qualifiable'.
- Need new people for their contributions, diversity, and generativity
- OSonOs is an opportunity for connecting in context of OS, can't really do that on the Listserv. Growth in spirit from community and connections.
- WHAT WE CHERISH: OS brings life, a 'society' of shared life, vitality and flow (labels take away from the experience) that draws me to it.
 - Inclusion and Invitation
 - Generosity of spirit
 - Attention to essence—minimalist enough in form.
 - Simplicity of design---what's one less thing to do and still have a whole.
- Creates in me a sense of abundance.
- Take responsibility for what I love, can I speak up for that?
- Becoming comfortable with the unknown.

Topic 33 The Use of OS in One-on-One Relationships

Convener:

Esther Ewing

Name of Participants:

Chris Robertson, Thomas Hermann, Doug German, Karen Fish, Sonya Vaschel, Cathy Carmody, Masud Sheikh

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

- Chris R. wanted to determine whether there would be a methodology you could apply potential host or sponsor when they were considering whether to use open space or not – don't want to "sell it" but invite them to consider it
- Sonya – intrigued with the notion of OS and one-on-one
- Cathy – whatever happens... means being open to whatever shows up – letting go of outcomes, being who you are rather than what you do
- Thomas H – working with OS and developing my skills – starting with myself and OS with family members – also how to build closer relationships with my sponsor/host – being invited to take their organization deeper and how to do that
- Doug G. – difficulty in getting to an open conversation with someone you care about deeply – family members – being open to hearing others' answers
- Karen F – how to practice this in my family – my own level of self-awareness and self-discipline impacts my practice and our own discipline
- Esther E – peripheral vision about what is possible – telling and in listening

Other ideas:

- Can't change the conversation you have with others unless and until you change the conversation with yourself
- And through conversations with others we see the conversations with ourselves more clearly
- Conversations are happening on several levels – with ourself, with the other, about the other in our own heads, etc.
- The importance of Angeles Arrien's Four Fold Way:
 - Show up and be present
 - Tell your truth without blame or judgement
 - Follow what has heart and meaning for you
 - Be open rather than attached to specific outcomes
- When is the conversation just about dinner or about something else?
- Getting the wisdom to know when is a time to go deep and when not?
- Having permission about conversations – is it okay with you that I speak with you about...
- Recognize that it takes courage to raise tough issues
- Helping an individual client learn their way into OS – approaching the notion of OS as the form of facilitation I might use – learned to hold back with sponsor till they are ready
 - Don't sell it

- Encourage learning
 - OS can be intimidating – recognize that and support them
- A great question for a client:
 - Three years from now if we were looking back on this work we might do together, for you to consider it to be a success, what would have had to have happened?
 - If they don't want to consider that question, then red flags should go up – they're ambivalent in some key ways

Topic 34 Open Space in Canada ...What's happening? / Forum Ouvert au Canada. Qu'est-ce qui se passe?

Convener:

Diane Gibeault, Larry Peterson

Participants:

Allison Hewlett, Michelle Cooper, Becky Peterson, Joe Szostak, Evan Throop Robinson, Barbara Schnerder, Michelle Dunphy, Tracy Boyer, Andre Chiasson, Daniel Gingras, Larry Peterson, Karen Fish, Rosemary Nichols, Donna Clark, Karen Davis, Audrey Coward, Fremy Cesar, Christopher Comeau, Diane Gibeault.

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

A brief presentation and exchange on the history of Open Space Institute of Canada (OSIC) and how it operates.

Each was invited to talk about what is happening around them with OST and what they wished for in the future regarding OST:

- Offers OST to international partners and soon internally to own organization.
- Sensing a readiness from organizations to try OST, e.g. in health. More people are “getting it”, have a greater consciousness of OS helping them. Ontario government is integrating OST as its participatory structure. *Wish: more OS on Line and more training and collaboration opportunities to work on larger projects together.*
- Facilitates with OST and is committed to continue to work on integrating it in the university despite the resistance at the higher levels.
- Facilitates using OST.
- Brings OST in classroom and wants to research how to bring it even more in schools.
- Uses principles of OST in her teaching.
- Uses OST for structural change in the corporation at work.
- Works with a community group that uses OST on different themes, e.g. youth. Used not just for process but for culture change. *Wish: have a regular OS event, e.g. every 3 months.*
- Facilitates OST as a consultant. *Wish: make OS known to the community and organizations.*
- Consultant using OST for e.g. in strategic planning.
- More people see the value of OST for change and for project acceleration. The Ontario government has a better understanding of OST now but younger managers don't know about it and want to micro manage, especially in an environment that is very filled with fear. Teachers, non-profit groups and others are using OS. There are centres of excellence developing in various parts of Canada: Halifax, Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary. *Wish: opportunities to continue to grow, ie, people want to go beyond the event, see how OS can inform how to operate in their organization.*

- Doing many little OS events. Integrated OS in a conference of 350 people – it was wonderfully exciting! *Wish: More work with OS. Just love how the agenda arises from the group.*
- Am a mediator-facilitator. So many people in Halifax are using OST in different ways.
- Took training, facilitated about 40 events (federal gvt & non-profit). Working with OS in education, business and unions, on a big project with an employment equity federal program and with the Neighborhood Work Program which is training internal facilitators to use OS in the workplace. Is documenting organizational transformation. Training facilitators on OST in Halifax – next workshop in September. *Wish: develop local practice community with the 100 (approximately) trained facilitators in Nova Scotia and area*
- Teaching OS in university. Lives in US and in Quebec. Sees OS used in communities in Canada and on national vision work. *Wish: see more done in communities on community, regional and national issues.*
- Trained in OS many years ago. Enjoys participating in OSIC meetings and in the virtual leadership. *Wish: More opportunities to work together. Work on a collective vision for the OS Canada Institute- see where've been and where we want to go.*
- Is from Haiti where works using OST. Is happy and grateful to be part of the discussions to learn more about OST and to learn about how we share ideas and function together.
- Been doing facilitation and training on OST in English and French for many years and sees an increased demand for it and from varied types of organizations and from new places (e.g. France). *Wish: an On Line OS for next OSIC meeting in the fall. A face to face Canada OsonOS in 06 somewhere in Canada. More new Canadian OST practitioners and supporters connecting and being active in the Canada OST community.*
- Facilitates in a private sector corporation which has adopted OST as its preferred method. Focus is result oriented, not cultural change. Opening space is what people do. OST is a set of instructions to help people do that. Interested in research – finding ways to open space with other tools/instructions, how OST can be used in various circumstances, after the event.

Other discussions:

- Appreciate the openness and collaboration of the OS community-OSIC (versus competitiveness like in some other professional org.s)
- This network is an opportunity for mentoring. We can just call each other.
- Need to find ways to connect more regularly.
- Our next topic of discussion could be the future of OSIC.
- Organizations go in life cycles: flourish, decline and flourish again.
- We should hold the next OsonOS Canada in Calgary to bring together geographical extremities of the country.
- Use that opportunity to do outreach to former members.
- Consider using *Civic Space*, a free software to include people who can't travel. Search for it with Google.

Where from here?

- Michelle and Larry, with the help of Raymonde Lemire who does part-time work for OSIC, will organize an OSonLine for the fall OSIC meeting.
- Everyone is invited to see the OSIC website: www.openspacecanada.org and to hopefully join this OST community that offers among other things mutual support.
- Diane will ensure that notes of this meeting will be shared with other OSIC members asap.

Topic 35 Extreme Open Space – Very large or otherwise extreme

Convener:

Diane Gibeault, Peggy Holman

Participants:

Daniel Gingras, Piret Jeedas, Sherry Modrow, Michael Pannwitz, Paul Everett, Marei Kiele, Christine Whitney Sanchee, Tree, Lieli K., Peggy Holman, Diane Gibeault

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

What is a large OS event? It could be 800, 1000, 2000 + or a few hundreds with little time (less than a day) or ...

Peggy showed pictures and told the story of the OS she facilitated with 2000 street youth of Columbia. See her website for full story (including work with sponsor and teachers) and pictures: www.peggy@pencirclecompany.com

For the pictures, video and notes on the 2000 + participants' OS Michael Pannwitz and Harrison Owen facilitated in Germany, see Michael's web: www.michaelmpannwitz.de

A large OS event is the same as a small OS. Only a few logistical details vary. These are a few examples of logistical adjustments Peggy made - some were based on the German OS and others, from advice offered by the OS List members.

- Circular rows for people to sit on the floor and 6 aisles were created with masking tape. The aisles were for participants to move to the center to announce topics but they didn't line up in Columbia – they all went into the centre.
- There was one distinct topic wall per day.
- Instead of Post-Its for time and place: within each of those big walls (1/day), one section is allocated for each session *time*. Each session time section takes the form of a matrix with a number of boxes that corresponds to the number of expected topics (in this case, 80 for each of the six sessions – approximately 400 or one fifth of participants.) Each box has at the top a number under which participants will post their topics in a way that the number remains visible as an indicator for where the discussion will take place.
- One volunteer at each session wall to help orient participants if needed
- In Germany, balloons identified the discussion sites.
- Center was smaller (approximately 20 feet in diameter). Participants come to the center to announce their topic.

- Paper and markers were distributed by volunteers clearly identified who stood in the aisles.
- Facilitator held microphone (versus giving it to participants) for topic announcements (340 in 40 minutes).
- Reports: participants could enter reports in 40 computers or give their notes to teachers who did the entry. Many did graphics – drawings as a report. The report ended being 1200 pages.
- Closing circle: an invitation to those who feel they have something valuable to the group in the next 45 minutes. Began with a moment a silence for people to reflect.

Pictures really help in getting a feeling of the experience. Do visit the websites mentioned above.

Topic 36 Beyond Ego Mind

Convener:

Christine Whitney Sanchez

Participants:

Deirdre Knowles, Eddie Palmer, Allie Middleton, Cathy Carmody, Michael Spencer, Eva P. Svensson, John Engle, Kerry Napuk, Eric Lilius, Robyn S. Berkesiel, Bill Mahoney

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Have you had the experience of transcending ego mind in open space or another group setting?

- In and out as a child – a matter of getting out of the way
- On Having No Head, Douglas Harding, www.headless.org
 - Boundless original face – when I'm looking at you, it's face to no face. If we are all no face at the same time we could have the experience of collective transcendence.

Has anyone had the experience of collective transcendence?

- In Zen Enlightenment Intensive
 - Koan after koan – Who am I? What is another?
 - As soon as student has the answer, she/he is given another koan. All students came up with the same answer.
- When we keep trying to answer with intellect, it eventually shuts down and then the answer comes. (Like the quote from this morning – “I used to think the brain was the most wonderful organ in the body. Then I realized who was telling me this.” Emo Philips)
- In Open Space we are reminded of the quality of unity consciousness – much like the state that can be induced when we cross our eyes.
- Like wilderness work where people experience vast amounts of physical space around them, OST can dislodge the familiar.
- Concern about maintaining the vastness as we shift from large to small spaces in OST.

How can we frame an invitation poetically to maintain the sense of vastness and one eye?

- Resonance/field/energetic connection is charged with ritual and invitation
- The expectation of this carrying over to the small groups – this has not been explicitly addressed in the OST community.

What forms can we offer for progression?

- As facilitators, our passion is about the process
- Change begins at the level of the individual.
- It's not how good you are, it's about how inviting you can be.
- “OS Online was more powerful because I was faceless – I felt strengthened and egoless.”

Do people become disinhibited because they are not face-to-face?

- “In a similar experience, not OS, in a group that I did know face-to-face, being online gave me time to form my words.
- Disinhibition produces a flurry of feeling and thought that gets documented.
- OS exists on many levels.
- When a group sets the intentions/expectations/fantasies, everyone is set up for disappointment.
- When we are looking for “respect” or “transformation,” ect., there are different movies in people’s heads rather than true shared meaning.
- Be open to outcomes

What would happen if we just stop?

- It’s hard for us to stop. People think that only talking leads to action.
- “I’m interested in hope.”

What if we just stop, right now and open to five minutes of silence?

- Five minutes? Is that negotiable? (laughter -----then silence)

“How many cultures before us were comfortable sitting in silence in circles and being okay with whatever emerges?”

“We don’t have to talk to feel/be aware of our connection.”

“I’m grateful for the suggestion” (to stop, to sit in silence)

“Can we set aside time in large groups to have people greet each other non-verbally?”

- Anything like that is best when it comes from someone within the circle.

How can we invite the quality of listening to silence?

- In Native circles, the pipe might go around several times before anyone speaks. Whatever is spoken after the silence is met with the respect of silence.
- If there are many real levels and we can find an attunement, we might get a chance of experimenting with another movement.
- Otto Sharmer is a good model for how to retain a sense of stillness.
- Back to one less thing to do so that we can be attentive, listen to the silence and hold the space.
- Picture the circle as a psychic cauldron.
- Reflections on the shamanistic aspects of OST
- Hawaiian spirit “Huna” has the lower self which executes everything on this level, the middle self and the High Self which is connected to all other High Selves. The middle self communicates with the low self first.
- What time is it? Where are we? How can we remain here?

Where from here?

- Higher aspects are always available – we must remember to invite them in, not necessarily in words.

Who could assist?

- Each of us can ask for help from a no one at home, no face place.

Topic 37 Spiral Dynamics, Collective Consciousness & OS

Convener:

Larry Peterson

Participants:

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Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

The focus of the session was on using the perspective of Spiral Dynamics Integral (Don Beck and Ken Wilber) to look at our experience with OST, the response of organizations to OST and what happens after an OST event in an organization. It was stimulated by Larry’s experience with many OST events and the differing responses of organizations.

About 2/3 of the group has some experience with Spiral Dynamics concepts and so we began with some brief description of a few “vMememes” – blue, orange, green – which are the “centers of gravity” of most organizations these day. We recognized that it is a perspective on the evolution of consciousness (there are others). Organizations (or their leaders) seem to have a dominant perspective. We did not go deeply into the perspective but began to apply it to OST.

Some people after an OST event will say “this was great networking” or others will say “this was a deeply spiritual experience”. This may reflect their perspective on what they just experience. Some organizations primarily focus on pleasing the boss (blue), others may focus on evidence of results (orange), and others on the relationships that have emerged and ideas constructed. This may reflect their dominant perspective or value meme.

Why might this understanding be useful? When a client approaches, it can help in finding the language that works to help them understand OST and to help explore what they want to happen after.

OST creates a focus and a space/time (container) within which all levels of consciousness are valued and can emerge. People can take their next steps and experience (peak) another level. Collectives can experience another level of awareness, of being and working together. Sustaining that perspective, if it is beyond where they have been, is an evolutionary process. Shifting (transforming) to the next level is a process of transcending and including.

OST may be a green “technology” that creates a space/time for all to emerge with a second tier (yellow or turquoise) understanding. It often requires facilitators to move to the second tier to “hold the space” for enable emergence of all levels in a healthy way.

Some initiatives in addition to OST may help the learning and growth that leads to transformation. However, in two days we can't "transform" an organization we can only help their journey along. Knowing that is humbling.

Event if the OST does not lead to visible change, projects ongoing initiative or more OST. It may seed surprising things – individual action, groups who leave and go to another organization to take it further, CEO's resigning. There are fascinating possibilities that make it worth the journey even if the client organization seems far from shifting to the next level.

Some comments:

-This helps me better understand what is happening in some organizations I've worked with.

-It is another useful language for the evolution I already know about.

Topic 38 The Dynamics of Conscious Emergence

Convener:

Peggy Holman

Participants:

Andre Chiasson, Eric Lilius, Eva P. Svensson, Marei Viele, Erich Kolensky, Kairi Birk, Joelle Everett, Chris Corrigan, Audrey Coward, Christopher Comeau, Paul Everett, Deirdre Knowles, Brunhild Hofmann, Robyn S. Berkessel, Alison Rose, Jacqueline Throop Robinson, Alan Chilton, Masud Sheika, Wendy Farmer-O'Neil, Ward Williams, Nancy Weatherhead, Ronit Kurz, Feliz Telek, Allison Hewitt, Larry Peterson, Doug Germann, Sherry Modrow

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Model of conscious emergence – particularly useful when people are starting with fear, anger, conflict – brings an opportunity to ask powerful, appreciative questions

People in fear bring with them hope and possibility

Asking open questions that set conditions for divergence, rather than boundaries of form and structure – power, attraction, appreciation

In conflict, people tend to be frozen because the fear of chaos means losing control

From the personal I: follow your heart

Weaving within and creating a sense of connection

To We and reflection

Use silence

Moving to Discovery~Personal~Universal~Emergence (part of a larger whole)

 Action -- Coherence -- Convergence

When we discover that we all care about the same things we move into a place of coherence

Essence of Open Space = taking responsibility for what I/We love

Capacity to step into unknown comes through caring for ourselves, caring for the whole

Consider implications of questions that close space and of questions that open space

 What do you care about?

 What if ...?

 I/We: what actions will we take as a group?

 What is more important than staying in the fear?

Conversation needs to reflect the process

Open Space makes community visible to itself

Fabric of relationship and community – a place of letting go – recreate places in which to explore not knowing

Emergence – a way to facilitate working with people who have different pieces of the whole – different parts of the view – we all have different pieces – the whole – the hole – perspectives

Conscious emergence can provide a tangible framework, especially in topics of long-standing conflict within a group/community –

The ordinary folks – people doing the work in an organization – don't need a model or “words” to describe emergence – they are happy when management “gets out of the way” and lets it happen

Consciously shifting the nature of the question = appreciative inquiry

Peggy's website has description of this model

Also see: U.S. West video re: union/management negotiations

Quotes:

“In any organization, when the fabric of connection is lost, things start to fall apart.” – Peggy Holman?

“We have the experience of growing our (w)holes.” –Chris Corrigan

It is the edge of the earth—but it's okay.” C. Corrigan

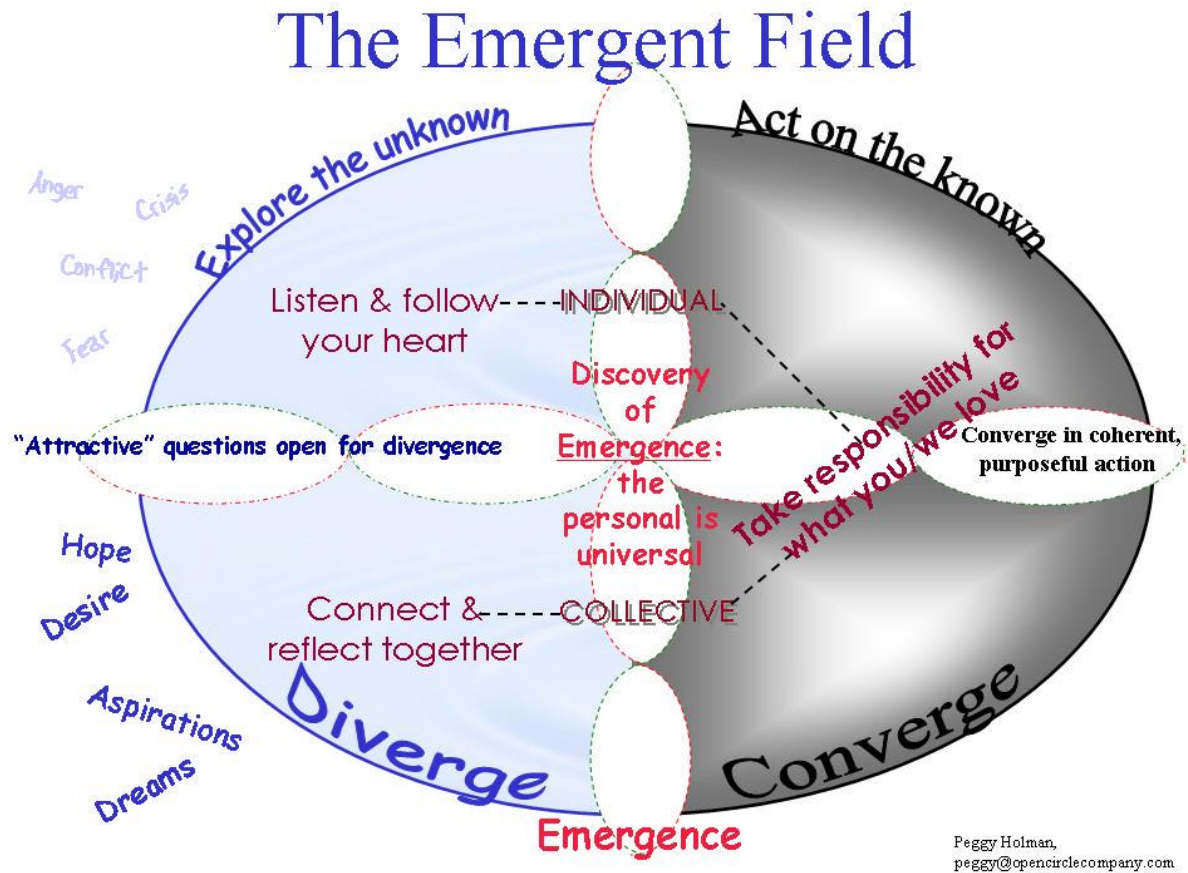
“Nobody sees the whole—that's why we need multiple viewpoints.” –Paul Everett

“You need two eyes to measure parallax—then you can measure depth.” C. Corrigan

The Dynamics of Emergence

I have now shared the model that follows with graduate students in the midst of a conflict with their institute, business people at a multinational corporation, members of the Israeli school system, teachers in Ramallah, and Executive MBA students and faculty in Colombia. With each of these very different audiences, it seems to provide a perspective that makes that oh-so-unnerving step into chaos just a wee bit easier.

The model:



When people feel the need for change, it is generally because they are experiencing a “disturbance,” such as fear, conflict, crisis as well as hope, aspiration, or desire.

While stepping into disturbances may feel like a crazy act of asking for time spent in chaos, in truth it is the gateway to creativity. To find something new requires time in the unknown, in mystery. That said, the “space” is not limitless; rather it is bounded by a powerful question – a theme that focuses, always expressed in terms of possibilities (not problems). This question acts as the attractor, something that people coming care about enough to show up for the work.

Thus, the work begins with an invitation into exploring the unknown together. The greater the diversity of the participants, the more likely the divergence of that exploration. The wider the divergence, the more likely something new will surface.

Inviting people to follow what has heart and meaning, to take responsibility for what they love, often brings out the unexpected in people. It is a remarkable invitation for each person to look within, to truly ask themselves what is important to them. It takes each of us into our own place of mystery. When that invitation comes in a form in which the collective is gathered together (e.g., processes such as Open Space, World Café, Appreciative Inquiry, Dialogue), through their reflections, people often experience a new sense of connection to each other and the whole.

Through attractive questions, participant explored what calls them from many, many angles. Remarkably, the same conversations begin to show up in many places. These are the threads of emergence. We begin to recognize these threads because they resonate so clearly with many people. Reflection among the whole group often makes these emergent threads even more visible.

For example, in a recent OS on work-life balance, the same themes surfaced many times in the closing circle: take responsibility for oneself; the power to say no. Participants experienced these ideas more than intellectually; they sensed them physically, in their heart and in their gut. We discussed the visceral sense that signals emergence because it is experienced at all levels (e.g., head, heart, body and spirit) and by many people.

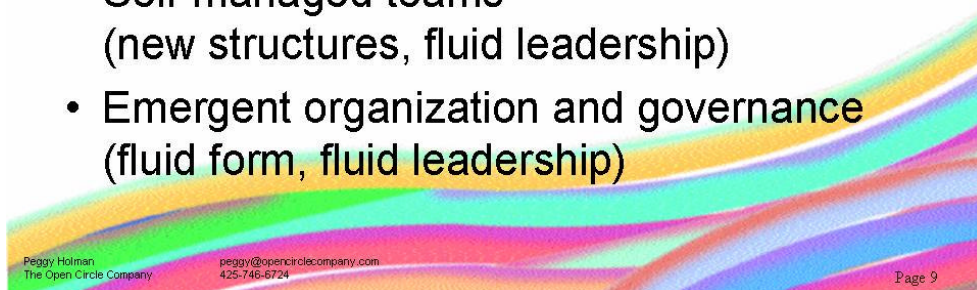
This place of emergence is the magic that we feel when a gathering is at its best. I believe it is because we discover that is what most deeply personal, what means most to us as an individual is also most universal. In that discovery, we begin to experience our connection to the “whole.” This feeling of connection fills us with excitement and energy that stirs us into action. This is the ground of spirit.

As new ideas, insights, leaders, and forms emerge, action is often swift and effective. How could this not occur when personal and collective meaning and ideas for action are in harmony? We are in convergence, where the resonant areas that emerged from our divergent exploration coalesce. There is no need to “enroll” others; we’ve enrolled ourselves through our direct experience. There is no need for consensus; we have all internalized the threads that connect us, providing responsible boundaries for action. Parenthetically, this frequently extends to those who didn’t attend the event, who somehow “catch” the spirit of the experience from those who were there.

Understanding this pattern – that stepping into the unknown of divergence, while it may seem chaotic, when bounded by a compelling question, leads to emergence – may provide some confidence to a sponsor who is fearful of losing control or that things will get out of hand. It is a predictable pattern that we have all experienced in the open space of life. It is also a chance to experience a new form of organization in a “learning laboratory” of sorts.

Evolution of Emergence

- Emergent ideas and relationships
(new connections)
- Special projects
(temporary structures and leaders)
- Self-managed teams
(new structures, fluid leadership)
- Emergent organization and governance
(fluid form, fluid leadership)



As people experience processes of different sizes or diversity or length, over time, what typically emerges evolves. Even in short, fairly homogenous events, there is the possibility of new ideas and relationships, new connections. The likelihood of this increases with time and diversity. With more time, generally two days, projects are likely to surface, complete with temporary teams and leaders. As the experience is internalized, self-managed teams, with leaders shifting according to the needs of the group may come into being. With frequent use, an organization may even begin to function with both leadership and form emerging to fit the context.

As embracing emergence becomes the conscious way of working, disturbances often begin as butterfly conversations in the hallways. Eventually they make it into the marketplace of ideas, with an invitation by someone(s) taking responsibility to convene a session and invite whoever cares about the issue to address it on behalf of the whole.

My working definition of an emergent organization offers an answer to the oft asked but rarely answered question about change or transformation: “change to what?” What it is that we wish to become? This is my answer:

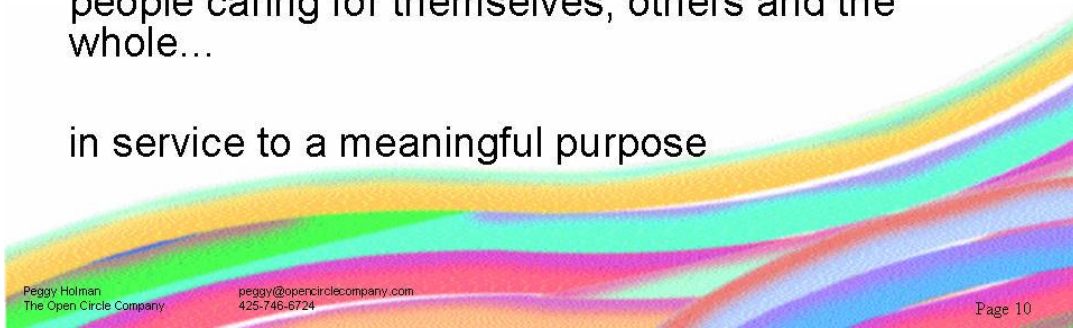
Change to what?

A system that consistently achieves what is most important to it, individually and collectively by...

continually increasing its capacity for emergence through...

people caring for themselves, others and the whole...

in service to a meaningful purpose

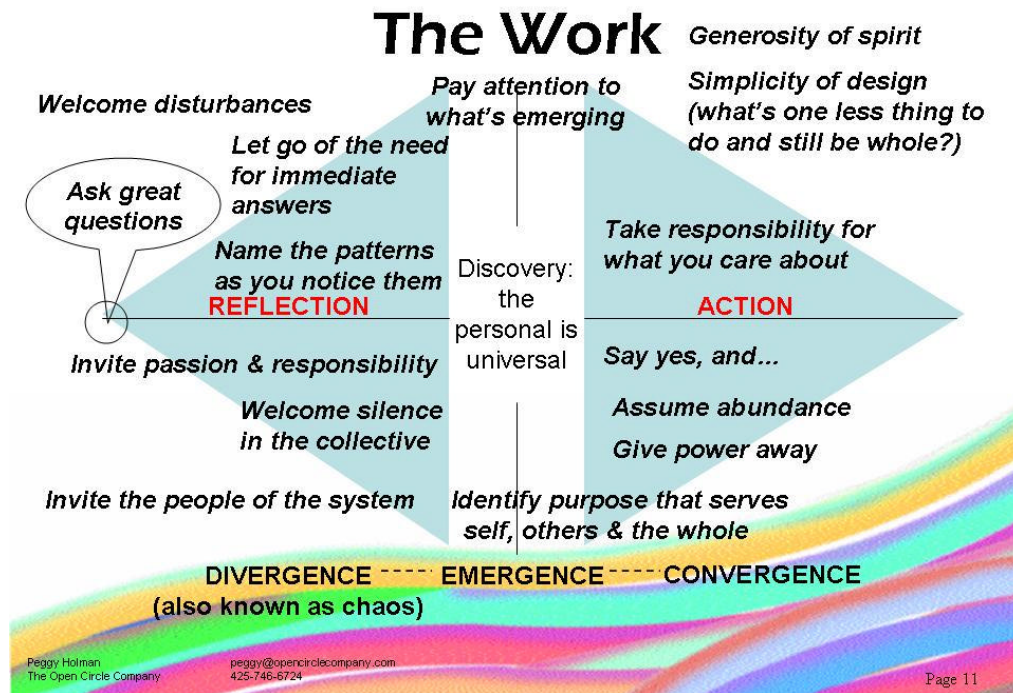


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If this is the work, what, in addition to opening lots of space, grows this capacity for emergence? My answer needs refining to what is most essential. Here's what I know of the territory:



As I narrow these ideas to what is most essential, I know it begins with welcoming disturbances, asking powerful questions, inviting people who care, including diversity – particularly the unlikely participants, and inviting people to take responsibility for what they love. I think the rest of the practices mentioned reinforce and nurture the capacity for emergence.

And that, so far, is my story.

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Topic 39 “I once opened a Space...” - Storytelling on Open Space

Convener:

Erich Kolenaty

Participants:

Tova, Christine, Newell, Tree, Carolynn

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

We had a great time telling stories and discuss our learning.

Where from here?

Share more stories

Who could assist?

All of us

Topic 40 A short conversation consisting only of questions & No such thing as a space invader?

Convener:

Lisa Heft

Participants:

Lisa Heft, Stefan Sargent, Nancy Weatherhead, Allison Hewlitt, Chris Corrigan, Feliz Telek, Eric Lilius, Donna Clarke, Michael Pannwitz Jr., Michelle Cooper, Audrey Coward, Father Brian Bainbridge, Gabriela Ender, Larry Peterson, and others...

Highlights of Brilliant Discussion:

Lisa gave a short background of a dialogue conference (the 2004 National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation Conference) where the conference organizers designed different dialogic processes into the conference. One evening there was what in a 'traditional' conference would have been a 'panel of experts'. At this conference these were 5 authors who had written marvelous thoughtful books on something like the future of dialogue. So instead of a traditional panel, the facilitator for the evening asked the first speaker a question about the future of dialogue. The first speaker would consider, and then thoughtfully answer that question, and continue and share some of their experience; their truth that that question inspired. Then they would end by 'gifting' a rich and juicy question to the next person. Who would consider that question and bring a thoughtful answer to it, share their experience/truth, and gift the next person with a question, and so on. After the panel shared, the audience, which was seated in tables of 5, continued – they received the last question from the stage, then passed thoughtful questions and sharing one to one around their small circle.

We decided to combine the two topics and use the question of 'no such thing as a space invader?' as the focus for deeper inquiry. Lisa began with an experience she had where she realized that – whereas years before she would identify certain people in a facilitation (Open Space or otherwise) 'sucking the air out of the room' or as other people might describe it, 'holding the group hostage'. And she used to feel her job as facilitator was to protect the group from this. Maybe even by taking the arm of that person (let us say they are the company president who is going around to all the groups to 'lead' them) and going for a walk with them (steering them out of the room). Now she has found that her experience is different, that these people who she would have formerly thought of as space invaders are actually gifts to the group – their difference is a gift to the group – and of course, the OS process can be the container and the expansion to include this and honor everyone.

Everybody listened deeply as one person would receive a question, share their thoughts, and then gift the next person in the circle with another question.

Some of the questions offered to each other included:

I have come to find that those whom I would have formerly thought were space invaders...are actually gifts to the group...how do you experience it?
Where is the opportunity?

How do we open ourselves up even further – to turn ‘negative’ to ‘positive’?
How can we hold space that is both contained and yet big enough that it doesn’t
break?
How does Spirit work through you?
What is it?
Can you get it wrong?
Is there such a thing as a space invader?
What would you have done?

Common threads included that a number of us have come to see that everyone in the Open Space is a true member of that event’s community and therefore there is a place for everyone, in any form they show up – therefore there are perhaps no space invaders – only our own feelings that someone is one. And that the process...and the space...can handle it, even when sometimes we as individuals struggle around it.

The last question asked – and left unanswered – to savor....

Can you remember a moment in your life when you were a space invader?

Topic 41 Group Poem shared in Closing Circle

Closed space.

whatthefuckwuzthat?

The wind we see not

blows where we know not,

yet we see its effects

just so, Open Space

Prairie grass moves dancing

with light

s p i r a l i n g

Going on an authentic journey

into new territories,

beginning with an invitation,

bounded by passion and responsibility,

ending when it's over – if ever.

They learn to “hear” not just to listen,

to understand not just learn.

they experience the feeling of

f r e e d o m

increase f r e e d o m

to be heard

to heal to share to bond

to feel to create

p o s i t i v e c h a n g e

Eliminate chaos and create peace

through meaningful engagement

to breathe

t o f e e l

to continue

The circle equalizes power

transformative harmonic

We all come from the same place

delightful connection

We sing and dance in a realm of

p o s s i b i l i t y

e x h i l a r a t i n g

To become: t o b r e a t h e

to live

to emerge anew.

An unending spiral of complexity,

chaos,

and opportunity...

-- by *Chris Robertson, Filiz Telek, Henri Lipmanowicz, Erich Kolenaty, Sonya Vaschel, Ali Rose, Becky Peterson, Karen Fish, Ronit Kurz, Allie Middleton, Lisa Heft, Paul Everett, Raffi Aftandelian, Gabriela Ender, Thomas Herrmann, Stephan Sargent, Tova Averbach, Masud Sheikh, Nancy Weatherhead, Wendy Farmer-O'Neil, Masud Sheikh, Frémy Cesar*

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Part of OSI US Annual Member Meeting
Topic 11

	Q3-96	Q4-96	Q1-97	Q2-97	Q3-97	Q4-97	Q1-98	Q2-98	Q3-98	Q4-98	Q1-99	Q2-99	Q3-99	Q4-99	Q1-00	Q2-00
Admin	OSI (US) Incorporated July, 96				OSI (US) Non-profit status July, 97		* Make sure information about Open Space Technology is easy to get. (web site, online newsletter) * Make sure there are ways to connect with the Open Space community. (OS list, OSonOS) * Gather and report the Open Space stories and supporting research.		OSI(US) Member Survey Conducted July - Oct, 98	OSI(US) Annual Plan Established Oct, 98					New arena: Contributions to spreading OS in the world Mar, 00	* To support underserved * To provide support that reach multiple people * To match recipients' act resources with OSI-US at * To have a commitment t to share the story of their
Events		OSONOS IV (DC) OSI(US) Mission Established Oct, 96	* Mutual Support and Connection * Mentoring and Being Mentored * Learning and Research			OSONOS V (Toronto) Vision Established Oct, 97				OSONOS VI (Monterey) Plan Presented Nov, 98			OSONOS VII (Chicago) Sept, 99			
		Mass Mailing to OS practitioners Nov, 96	OSonOSI(US) Meeting (Seattle) Dec, 96		Mass Mailing to OS practitioners June, 97	Expanding Our Now Book Tour Aug-Nov, 97		Seattle Womens OS Event Sponsored May, 98								
Contributions												Contribution to Beyond Borders for OS work in Haiti May, 00				
Technology		OS List Established Dec, 96	Web Site V1 Jan, 97					Web Site V2 June, 98					Web Site V3 July, 99			
Publications			At Work, OS Issue sent to members Mar, 97									Stories, the on-line OSI(US) newsletter introduced June, 99	OST Booklets sent to OSI(US) members Aug, 99		Stories, the on-line OSI(US) newsletter #3 Mar, 00	
													Understanding OS CDs produced Sept, 99			
													Stories, the on-line OSI(US) newsletter #2 Sep, 99			
Other																

