



# PATHFINDING OUTFITTERS

## Pattern **Awareness Based Collective Action**



This summarizes the practice of **Awareness Based Collective Action**.

- I. Begin the journey with the choice to **step into discovery**. Form the intention to explore what more is possible in a person's life or an organization's capacities or a community's development. Claim time & space for the journey & invite a small, diverse group to join. Let go of downloading, & tame the urge to jump to solutions.
- II. **Sense Possibility**., Connect with people & places that make new perspectives & possibilities available. Open mind & heart to different ways of knowing, different thinking, different structures, & different practices. Welcome disruption of settled assumptions.
- III. Be still & discern the highest purpose the journey can serve. **What is the Work** that will generate the greatest benefit?, **What wants to be born with our help?**
- IV. To do the Work, what has to be **let go** & what possibilities **let come**?
- V. What cycles of **action + learning** will develop our capacities to discover what more is possible. for people & for our organization?
- VI. What **accommodations to the new** will sustain & build on our discoveries?

**Learn more:** Find *Leading Change in Times of Disruption: an Introduction to Theory U*, a free, 90 minute self-paced course at [www.u-school.org/offering/ulab-0x/pages/home](http://www.u-school.org/offering/ulab-0x/pages/home)



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## Practice Learning Journey

We have so much to learn from one another. We have found ideas that guide our thinking & express what we value, structures that work to organize good support, practices that translate our values into action.

Among other things, we have learned ways to discover & act with people on what really matters to them; ways to increase people's control of their lives; ways to heal some of the effects of structural violence; ways to bring & sustain good people to support those who count on us; ways to engage with communities & open up opportunities for employment, housing, learning, & civic contribution; ways to deal with the conditions imposed by the systems that finance & govern us.

People's diversity & changing environments mean that there is always more to learn & that few if any final answers or perfect solutions are available.

**A Learning Journey**, in person or virtually, brings people searching for what more is possible to visit a place of potential. It may be an organization that does similar work or one that serves a very different mission. Sometimes it can be another part of the same organization. Guest & hosts work out a way for both to learn from the experience.

**The purpose of this conversation** is for each group member to briefly describe something their organization has to share & for each member to notice what particularly excites their curiosity.

- Divide the time equally & choose a timekeeper.
- Each imagines: ***If you were visiting my organization, something I would want you to know about is...*** Take your share of the time to describe. Remember you are not claiming perfection.
- As you listen notice what most attracts your curiosity. Each would be good to know about; what stands out as something you especially want to learn more about?

## Practice

# Dialogue Walk

Use a timer to divide the available time in half so that partners have equal time to practice listening. Each takes a turn holding these questions for their partner & listening carefully to the answers.

- **Share two or three experiences that have brought you to where you are in your work. (Start with an experience in childhood or adolescence if you can recall one.)**
- **Talk about one or two “angels” —helpers & mentors on your work journey so far. What have you learned from each of them?**
- **Where do you feel the future in your work right now?**

Honor silences, they are as worthy of holding attention as speech is.

Observe the discipline of avoiding typical conversation patterns: sharing a similar experience, commiserating, interpreting, offering advice.

Take two minutes at the end of the walk to journal: *What I want to remember from my dialogue walk?*

When you repeat this, make it a real walk outdoors if you can.

Some people find silence awkward. They feel urged to respond to what their partner has said, affirming, sharing a related experience, offers interpretation or advice.

It can help to think of letting silence be & not speaking in response as **holding space** for a person's thoughts & reflections.

*To hold space means that we are willing to walk alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without judging them, making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome. When we hold space for other people, we open our hearts & let go of judgment & control.*

—Heather Plett