**What’s Next for Creating the Future:**

***Common Themes: Questions 1, 2, and 3***

*November 14, 2022*

**Question 1: What has Creating the Future made possible for YOU?**

**Jackie:**

A lot of people seem to have come to Creating the Future through their work (often nonprofits, philanthropy, or consultation) and have applied the lessons WAY beyond that. People are using what they learn to change the way they interact with people and improve their relationships - not just at work, but with their families, friends, and communities.

**Madeline:**

* Catalytic Thinking is for everyone, in all kinds of situations and contexts. Many folks came to Creating the Future through work and have since applied it to all facets of our lives. How we use Catalytic Thinking grows and changes as we do.
* Catalytic Thinking pushes us to be our best selves and find new ways of thinking about, approaching, and doing the work to create a better future. Asking the right questions is key.
* Catalytic Thinking has brought us social connection and belonging. We make friends, learn from, and find ways to share new thoughts and ideas with each other in meaningful ways.

**Barry:**

- Applying the PROCESS:  20 responses (e.g., "re-designed my organization's approach to planning and project development, and am able to change the kind of conversations I  have..."

- Sparked fresh VISION:  5 responses   (e.g., "helps me and my organization see beyond ourselves...")

- Expanded NETWORK:  5 responses  (e.g., "I've built meaningful relationships with people from around the work who share a similar passion of change...")

- Encouraged NEW THINKING:  6 responses   (e.g., :"you pose good questions and [have] interesting articles..."

- Triggered PERSONAL GROWTH:  4 responses  (e.g., "continue to grow my consciousness and awareness around my actions....")

**Hildy:**

* Serve as an example / modeling / experimenting out loud
* Connect people
* Deepen my impact
* Learn
* Inspiration / expanded thinking / see possibility / clarity / get unstuck / self-reflection
* Repeatable methodology / roadmap for planning for impact / finding common ground / finding resources

**Karl:**

Catalytic Thinking / Creating the Future helps in the following three ways:

**1. Inspiration and discovery:** coming together we learn new things from outside our normal field of vision, though encounters with inspiring people and ideas

**2. Connection and exploration:** the habits and practices of connecting and exploring are expanded and honed when we come together, facilitated by an environment where it's OK to fumble along or stumble, safe in the knowledge that solutions emerge - slow solutions instead of quick wins

**3. Understanding, and new ways of looking at things:** our process facilitates genuine understanding though testing ideas and views, even if it does mean we can take our time and repeat ourselves. At any one time, someone is looking at a problem in a new way, through a new lens.

These three benefits of our work are of course underpinned by involvement (which I think I prefer to engagement). We're involved in several ways - administratively, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

**Angie:**

* Helps us see beyond ourselves & our organizations; connects macro to micro (“a model for how everything can be different”)
* Empowerment—shows anyone can be a catalyst
* More joy/fulfillment at work and in personal lives
* Community of people who are working toward change
* Focus on conversations (help manage difficulty convos)
* Challenge thinking/taken-for-granted
* Lays groundwork to imagine that there are alternative/better futures

**Questions 2 & 3: What could Creating the Future make possible – and for whom?**

**Jackie:**

Anyone who wants to see change happen would be impacted and Creating the Future could make that change possible (and even easy!).

**Barry:**

Any individual or group who is committed to being thoughtful and receptive to new thoughts would be affected.

I found the social and emotional learning lens useful for categorizing these far-reaching responses. The three major domains of SEL (for both youth and adults) are Being, Doing, and Relating. I suspect if respondents were encouraged to elaborate further on their responses, all three domains would have been touched. However, based on what was provided:

Being: reflected in 11 responses (new sense of self and others, values deepened, optimism about future, etc.)

Doing: reflected in 26 responses (capacity to get things done, attempt new things, push the boundaries, etc.)

Relating reflected in 11 responses (trusting relationships, collaboration within and across differences, sense of We, etc.)

**Hildy:**

Ultimately the highest potential outcome noted has been this:

Change actually happening – a healthy, humane, equitable world.

Conditions folks noted, that would lead to that change:

* Actionable plans for transformational change
* Expand mindsets / see possibilities
* Build trust / listen more effectively / focus on values / create common ground
* Change default from “solving and fixing” to “asking, listening, and creating”
* Change default focus from means to ends / from stuff to people / from scarcity to enoughness
* A sense of calm / a pathway to hope in uncertain times

**Karl:**

Catalytic Thinking / Creating The Future can help anyone: that's sort of the point, it's an inclusive process that recognises social change is emergent, messy and the result of not just our actions, but of those people all around a system. So if your system is the whole country Catalytic Thinking / Creating The Future can help these stakeholders in three ways - these overlap with and supplement the list above:

1. **It facilitates mindset change:** the process is useful in shifting people from their default scenario or obvious solution by providing a mechanism to broaden thinking. I wonder if the implication here is that its not a process that is trying to change someone's mind (and there's evidence from campaigning that this is hard to do), but that it offers a means for people to change their own mind.
2. **It puts values at the heart of decisions and decision making:** it's a process that encourages us to ask why throughout, one where we question why we are doing things, and whether the doing reflects how we want to be.
3. **It helps us transition from vision and values to action:** it's simply a better, more effective way of designing activities that seek to involve and benefit communities. By involving people and giving them a say, we are designing more resilient activities and organisations that wont fail at first contact with the problems they are seeking to address.

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**Some stand-out quotes:**

“It makes possible so many things. Here are my immediate thoughts...

* Systemic change
* Empowered voices
* Better listening
* Better engagement
* An understanding of impact
* Conceptualizing "reverse engineering" as a concrete tool
* Reframing discussions to get out of the weeds and consider highest potential
* Highlights commonalities rather than differences
* And, if we take this list and apply catalytic thinking further, it makes everything possible!!”

“One more thought: it is about realizing and internalizing that we are all in this together, that we are more connected than what we might think, that if we don't start thinking in those collective terms, none of us is going to thrive. Catalytic Thinking set us in that spot. That's why I am in awe with this work, and it has accompanied me through all my decisions, to make sure we can create the future that we want. Catalytic Thinking has been life changing.”