



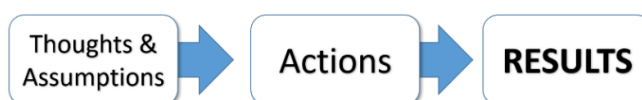
What is Catalytic Thinking?

If you are working to create a more humane, healthy, equitable world, you deserve to have approaches that actually change things.

Real systemic change isn't about changing a government policy or two. True change is about changing the way things are - the whole situation, the whole field.

That requires that we FIRST change how we're THINKING about the situation.

Because only when we change the way we see things do things really change.



Catalytic Thinking:

Catalytic Thinking is a framework rooted in QUESTIONS that accelerate mindset shifts, helping changemakers get beyond “stuck”...

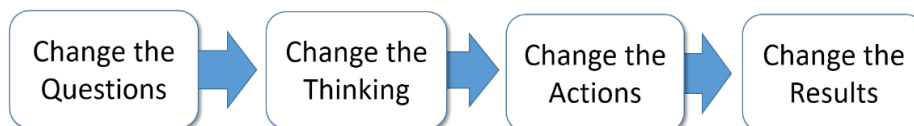
- Shifting from incrementally reacting to what's wrong, ***making visionary change an achievable goal, to create what is possible - a future different from our past***
- Shifting from thinking we know best and competing ***to building trust and relationship, to accomplish together what none of us can accomplish on our own***
- Shifting from going it alone ***to the power of Collective Enoughness, sharing and building upon each other's strengths***

The result of these shifts is a ***radically inclusive, radically strength-based, and radically visionary*** approach to creating real change, aimed at creating a future different from our past.

Why questions:

Catalytic Thinking focuses on the questions social change efforts are answering. That is because everything we do in life – including all the systems we are seeking to change – is the answer to a question. *“What will accomplish X?” or “What will keep people from Y?”*

When we change the questions we are answering, everything downstream shifts as well. Those questions are the key to accelerating shifts in the mental models that keep folks stuck. Hence our tagline: ***Change the questions, change the world.***



The questions of Catalytic Thinking are rooted in science. Brain science. Math and physics (the sciences of possibility and causality). Economics. As a result, while the questions of Catalytic Thinking are disruptive, they feel safe and inclusive.

Which questions:

There are three sets of questions in the Catalytic Thinking framework - 3 legs of the stool upon which all change efforts rest. **People, Purpose, and Resources.**

While asking any one of these questions is powerful on its own, ***the catalytic effect can only happen when we ask all the questions, addressing all 3 key aspects to any change effort.*** That is because, like that 3-legged stool, if only one of those 3 functions is strong, the effort will wobble and likely collapse.

Questions about People:

- Who will be affected by what we are considering? What would it take for them to lead / make decisions about the direction we take? (*Radical inclusion / who gets to decide?*)
- What are we listening for? For all those people who will be affected, what do they aspire to? What strengths do they have to build upon? What are their core values? (*Shifting from problem-focus to possibility focus*)

Questions about Purpose:

- What is the best possible ultimate result of what we are considering doing – the highest potential outcome? (*Radical possibility. Creating what is possible vs. reacting to what is wrong*)
- What conditions need to be in place for that high potential outcome to be reality? (*Causality-driven strategy*)
- What actions will create those conditions? (*Causality-driven vs. idea-driven actions*)

Questions about Resources:

- What needs to be in place internally, within our group, in order to take those actions? (*Internal conditions for success*)
- What strengths do we have to build upon? Who in our community already has / is doing what we need? (*Radical strength. Asset-based. Collective Enoughness: Together we have everything we need*)



The results:

The only path to creating a future different from our past is to change the assumptions and beliefs that led to our present state – the mindsets that keep us stuck.

When we ask questions rooted in possibility (vs. reactivity), radical connection and inclusion (vs. suspicion and exclusion), and enoughness (vs. scarcity), those mindsets change.

And when we change the way we see things, things change.

**For more information about Catalytic Thinking,
head to <http://creatingthefuture.org/>**