



CREATING THE FUTURE
Change the Questions, Change the World!

Demonstration Projects: 2011 to 2024

Creating the Future is a 10-year project in systems change.

Founded in 2011, in 2017 Creating the Future determined that its mission would be limited to 10 years. In that time, we would

- a) experiment with the questions of Catalytic Thinking, applying those questions in demonstration projects with a variety of issues and situations.
- b) share what we've learned from those experiments

Phase 1 of the project focused primarily on demonstrating the power of Catalytic Thinking, then sharing what we learned through our existing educational programs - from our immersion classes to our self-paced classes, from our newsletters to articles written for publications like Nonprofit Quarterly and Stanford Social Innovation Review. Those education programs brought all our students into the project as well, as they began to experiment with the framework in their own work.

Phases 2 and 3 of this project will focus more on the second part of our mission, to more broadly share what we've learned from those demonstration projects. Phase 2 will start that process, creating resource documents for each of the demonstration projects we've done, to serve as case studies of the framework in action.

From those resource documents, Phase 3 will build a resource library that will be our legacy at the end of the project – a library that will remain for anyone to learn from. That library will include documents and recorded classes on the theory (What is Catalytic Thinking? How does it work?), case studies (which will come from the work in Phase 2), and pedagogy (What we've learned about teaching this framework). In addition, Phase 3 will include a significant community engagement effort, to bring people to those resources, and especially to encourage teachers in the social change arena to share these approaches with their own students and partners.

The following projects were part of Phase 1, to be documented in Phase 2.

Demonstration Projects: External Partners

- **Tucson Community Food Bank** (Community Impact Planning)
- **Nevada Department of Education** (culture)
- **University of Nebraska, Omaha:** (designing a grad level fundraising course)
- **Columbia College:** (design Catalytic Thinking class for students and faculty involved in community projects)
- **Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations and Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement:** (conference planning and content)
- **Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement:** (Program development)
- **Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations:** (Community-wide systems change)
- **ARNOVA:** (Hiring process for CEO)
- **Community Share and Tucson Museum of Art** (messaging via Catalytic Thinking)

Demonstration Projects: Creating the Future's Students

- **Lenawee Community Mental Health Authority - Jackie Bradley:** (Strategic plan for mental health quasi-governmental org)
- **Centre for Family Literacy – Kim Chung:** (Community impact plan)
- **North Fork Environmental Council, Mattituck, New York – Mark Haubner:** (General strategy work for community change)
- **DC Moves, Dufferin County, Ontario, CA – Elaine Capes:** (Strategic plan)
- **PRISM Australia:** (Variety of planning efforts)

Demonstration Projects: Creating the Future's Own Systems

- **10-year clock:** Setting a deadline for our mission work
- **“Pay what you can”** model for all class: (2020 to present)
- **Meeting format emphasizing PEOPLE:** (Taking time for connection, 100% generative conversation, taking time to allow best possible outcomes to emerge)
- **Bylaws:** Applying Catalytic Thinking to the structure and content of our bylaws
- **Integrity Board:** Decision-making by those closest / Board = integrity
- **Radical Inclusion** as a way of being:
 - **Engaging our community** to determine what's next for our mission
 - **Open meetings:** Since 2013, all board and strategy meetings open to anyone to participate
 - **Experimenting out loud** as an experiment itself: “You muddle through out loud, and that encourages me to try things.”
- **Employee hiring and evaluation policies** (2014 and 2024)
- **Succession planning** as continuity planning
- **Pedagogy:** What we learned about transformative learning, practice cohorts, faculty development as preparation vs. qualification
- **Asset-based Resource Development:** Building on our mtgs / discussions as assets (learning cohorts)
- **Communication strategy** and eJournal strategy
- **Final documentation of demonstration projects:** Activating our community to lead participatory evaluation efforts as our final project.