

ECHO Learning Community Notes: April 21, 2020

9:00 – 9:15 Welcome and Introductions/Reminders.

Members from several organizations were present, including from NM Legal Aid, All Faiths CAC, Tobosa Developmental Services, Enlace Comunitario, NMPCA, NM Appleseed, and Albuquerque Healthcare for the Homeless

9:15 – 9:45 Discussion:

What is it like to lead in times of crisis?

- Information overload - It's a struggle being bombarded everyday with lots of information (memos, emails) and finding out what information is relevant to people, what should be left out and what shouldn't
- Others agreed that they feel overwhelmed with information and one person mentioned she has been ignoring some information, which is scary because she doesn't want to miss anything important
- Focus is important. Need to gather everyone often and make goals clear. Tasks need to be more repetitive, so everyone knows what to do
- Frequent meetings are important
- Organization is important – a “parking lot” or place to store information that you can retrieve later

How do you maintain your mission and values in a time of crisis?

- Maintain sense of well-being among staff, keeping them safe and calm. Leadership should prioritize employee care, health, and positivity
- Home and work life used to be separate, but now they're the same
- Preparation - build staff mission and values ahead of time so they stay strong during crisis
- Have not struggled to maintain mission. Needs for homeless have been the same, just happening much faster. Must now think a week ahead as opposed to a month ahead.
- Mission is the same, just shifting the focus to looking closer ahead in the future
- More meetings and emails to stay in touch
- “We do the best that we can, just ride the wave until things settle down then take it from there”
- Concern with how we go back and whether some employees will need to be made part-time rather than full-time
- Thing that works best right now is going with the flow
- Hope that this illuminates areas where we need change, a path forward

How do you cut through the noise of crisis to do the work that matters?

- Weekly email from CEO with relevant information to agency on what's happening locally. It helps with information overload because it has all the information you need in one place
- 30-minute morning huddles with staff on updates. They keep it very short to avoid information overload
- Reminder of inequities - people of color are getting sick at high rates because many are essential workers
- Blessing in disguise – meetings are richer, teamwork is more effective, quality of work and productivity has improved because there are fewer outside distractions and staff has more time to spend on each case. Staff has benefitted from having more time to research

How does your organization care for its staff while recognizing that the situation is not normal?

- Ensure that employees have everything they need to do their job
- Responsibility to keep employees out of harms way with personal protective equipment
- Leadership has stepped up and focused on staff first. Now not only are clients in crisis, but staff is in crisis, and they must be helped as well
- Providing information to staff on mental health resources. Organizational and individual self-care is important because of the stress that comes with Coronavirus

9:45 – 10:15 Didactic: The Art of Hosting – Presenter: Anita Cordova

- Methodology for facilitating conversation in groups of all sizes
- Supported by principles that help maximize collective intelligence, integrate and utilize diversity and minimize conflict
- Leadership should be inspiring and engaging
- A way of pulling out natural leadership qualities from everyone in the room
- Convening strategic dialogue and conversations as drivers for development and change
- Assumptions: new solutions are needed, new solutions grow between chaos and order, conversations matter
- Learn and explore practices for authentic leadership, engagement, and reflection
- Methodologies for engaging yourself and others in making community change: world café, open space, circle, appreciative inquiry, harvesting (page 24 of document)
- Level of focus can be individual (strengthen courage to lead as host), team (practice co-deciding and co-hosting), community/organization (co-creating relationships that serve deeper needs), or global (bigger context that you are a part of)
- Four-fold practice: community of practitioners (co-create) hosting conversations (contribute) to be present (pre-sensing) and practice conversation (participating)
- Anita said open space is her favorite methodology

10:15 – 10:30 Questions, reflections, announcements

- How do you balance hosting without being driving or manufacturing consent?
 - Its hard. That's why it's best to practice hosting methodologies. Trust the process and be okay with being imperfect
- Thanks to everyone for joining and sharing thoughts
- Summer institute will hopefully still be hosted in-person at UNM Main Campus
 - July 27th-31st
 - Full refunds are available if it is canceled
- Another ECHO meeting will be taking place in May