

Reflective discussion guide

Introduction

As Jill Cornforth perfectly articulates in the film:

“Sometimes people see the success of a programme that's working really well in a flexible, relational way, and they want to adopt some of that. Sometimes there's a sense of, we really like what you're doing, how do we do it, but fast? And the answer is you can't. So I think it's maybe that growing appreciation that it's all right for stuff to take time. Sometimes that means you need to specifically invest in the time as distinct from the work.”

As the University of Bath's Public Engagement Unit, we have been exploring relational practice over time, investing in understanding what it means in our context. Through reflective practice and incremental change, we have been able to test what works and build towards more purposeful relational ways of working, to recognise and understand when this approach is appropriate and when it is not.

We cannot say how this will work for you. What we can offer are prompts to support discussion, particularly if you are using the video in workshops or meetings to help you explore relational practice, begin designing and implementing changes in your own context, and advocate for them.

The prompts below are designed to help you think and feel your way through the film. They are grouped into four types of questions; Objective, Reflective, Interpretative, and Decisional, to support you in connecting the ideas in the film to your own context and identifying possible actions.

We recommend watching the film and working through the prompts individually first. You don't have to answer them all, start with the ones that immediately spark a response. You can then use your reflections to consider who you might want to engage next, selecting a few prompts to help structure that conversation.

Prompts

Objective: Senses (the facts, the reality of it)

- What words or phrases caught your attention?
- What do you already know about this topic?
- What are you already doing?
- Where are you already aligned?

Reflective (what did you experience - feel)

- Where did you really start paying attention?
- What feelings did you have as you watched?
- Where part did you most identify with?
- Where did the film go beyond your comfort zone?
- What associations did you make with the film?
- What situations were you reminded of?
- What part left you the most excited?
- What parts left you skeptical or frustrated?
- What is the biggest challenge here?
- What ideas made you say, “I wish we could try that out”?

Interpretive (meaning - how does this relate to you)

- What were some of the key points made?
- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- What questions does this raise for you?

- What felt new and really significant?
- What are the implications for your current work?
- Why is this important?
- Which ideas didn't feel relevant?
- What were the limitations and gaps?
- What do I need to stop doing?

Decisional (approaching a resolution)

- Who do you feel needs to hear this and why?
- What does it suggest we need to change?
- What is your first step?
- Who needs to take responsibility and accountability for those steps?
- How can we help each other learn about this topic?
- What do we need to do to put this into practice?
- What changes do you want to recommend and to whom?
- What difference will it make to how you work with people?
- How would you write this as a mission statement?