

# Knowns of Working in the Art of Hosting Pattern

January 2009

Tenneson Woolf

[www.tennesonwoolf.com](http://www.tennesonwoolf.com)

Many of us working in the Art of Hosting pattern have been talking with each other to name some experiences that show up regularly. We are talking in part to help ourselves get more clear. We are also talking in part to help describe to our clients some of what they can expect by meeting in this way. We are also talking so that we can all improve the depth of our co-creations. Below is a working list of some that I know.

## Knowns of Working in the Art of Hosting Pattern

- we will move deliberately between energy of the whole and energy of the small group and energy of the individual.
- each day will have a theme
- each day will include a checkin process (coming present) and a checkout process (seal our time and release us to other spaces)
- we will offer some models, methods and maps to support a world view of participatory leadership
- there are many ways to inspiration – play, music, meditation, prayer, stillness, dreams, methodologies, art, song, dance. We use them as inspired.
- we open and diverge so that we can choose how we converge
- as time passes we move from arrival into deepening our understanding / dreaming, into work and action, and into taking what we have created back to local communities
- the space together will work in us, sometimes to the point of creating much confusion. When held well, this can be the very conditions we need for new insights.
- we will meet each other at our respective learning edges
- we will tell stories and listen to stories as a simple way to surface what we know. Containers for stories are powerful ways to witness and learn together.
- there are many good entry points to get to the resonance we need to work at new levels.
- we will mostly hold to time boundaries. Sometimes it will feel like we are moving very fast. Sometimes very slow.
- we will depend on our diversity. Trust in human goodness. Rely on self-organization.
- we're going to have some fun.
- we will welcome and witness with each other.
- we will co-create in friendship and partnership
- the quality of what we do is influenced much by the quality of team that we create and the quality of field we support in the room
- we will welcome emergence, what wants to live into existence through us, when together
- we will stay grounded in purpose

## One Final Known – Broccoli is Good For You!

Broccoli is an example of a fractal, something that is quite complex as a whole, yet is created from the reiteration of a simple pattern. The shape of a broccoli head is that of an individual broccoli spear. Just as a fern leaf, complex and intricate as a whole, is created from a simple pattern evident in each part of the leaf. In fractals, the same simple pattern is evident at all levels of scale.

There are fractals in the Art of Hosting, simple patterns evident in any part or exercise, and in the whole of two, three, or four days together. One that I know, and developed among several of my colleagues is the following:

1) Be Present -- we will be deliberate about coming present (showing up, shifting energy from social space to working space).

2) Have a Good Question -- we will be deliberate about naming the question we are giving our attention too (what we think matters, what deepens our learning and relationship and work with each other, this will help us collectively move into shared purpose).

3) Choose a Listening Tool -- we will be deliberate about choosing listening tools (so that we can work in the beauty of our diversity of experience and viewpoint. To work in this way is to invite hearing more, not less, and trust that meaning emerges from our relationship with each other rather than just creating a lot of stuff. Transformation comes from this. Social technologies (cafes, open space, circles, appreciative interviews, etc.) and participative methods are listening tools.

4) Harvest -- we will also be deliberate about harvesting – content, process, relationships, and energy. About moving any of these into simple first next steps that make a difference in Disciples communities.