Documentation of Our Learning Together: Leadership and Social Justice

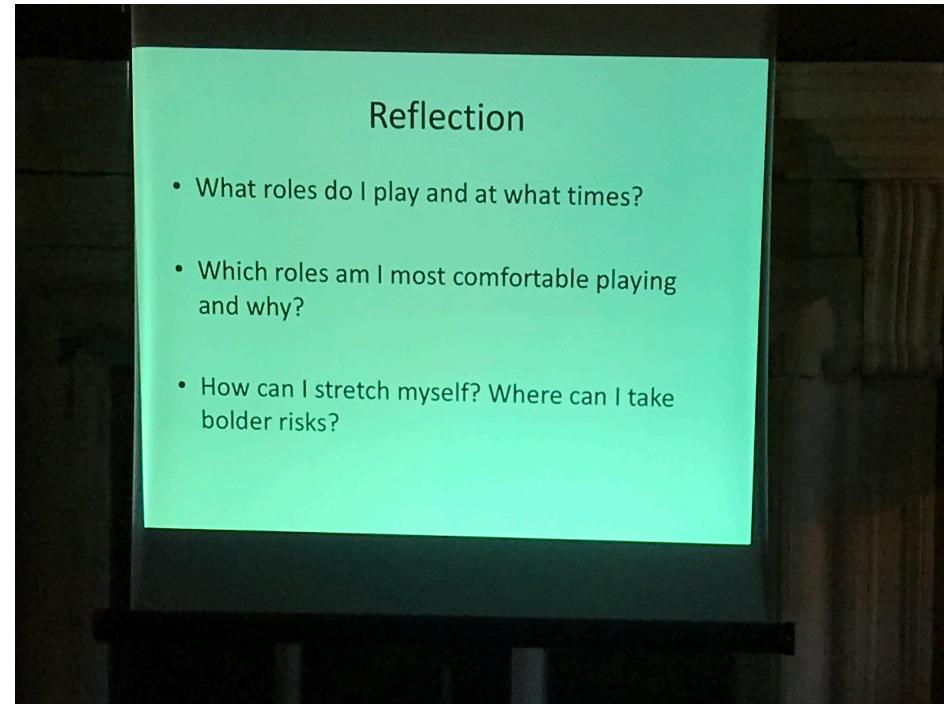Mercatello sul Metauro, Italy-June 29-July 4, 2019

Session 1 Identity and Culture : What did we learn?

- Everyone's voice is important and valuable to be heard.

- Collaboration adds space and opportunities for meaningful connection. The length of connections is harvested in the journey.

- My social identities play a large role in my teaching and engaging with others.

- Identity is about maintaining and sustaining.

- Listen without responding.

- Sometimes you have to do(act) as if things are meant to turn out positively even though you know they may not. Take a risk.

- Notice the working dynamics of this group; notice how our identities and experiences are brought into conversations.

- Making creativity a core part of the process is generative. (like metaphor/photo project).

Session 1: Our questions

- In thinking about sitting and listening for the differences, how do you adjust yourself without blowing others off, especially when there are deep political differences between you and your co-workers/parents?

- What other social identities impact my teaching that I did not highlight today?

- How do I do this work in a not so diverse, open—minded environment/group where people are primarily white/privileged and not in a place of recognizing /owning that?

- How do we hold each other accountable in a way that sustains trust?

Reflection

- What roles do I play and at what times?

- Which roles am I most comfortable playing and why?

- How can I stretch myself? Where can I take bolder risks?

Session 2 Being a Strategic Leader: What did we learn?

- Each setting I am in requires I play a different social change role

- There are several ways to integrate an anti-bias approach and make change in my organization.

- I need to start challenging myself to try new roles

- There are useful tools to make organizational change

- I need to be more of a visionary leader

- The "shift of the center" is making me think more

My Role in a Social Change Ecosystem

Healers, Artists, Builders, Storytellers, Visionaries, Equity Inclusion Liberation Justice Solidarity Resiliency Interdependency, Bridge-Builders, Disrupters, Frontline Responders, Caregivers
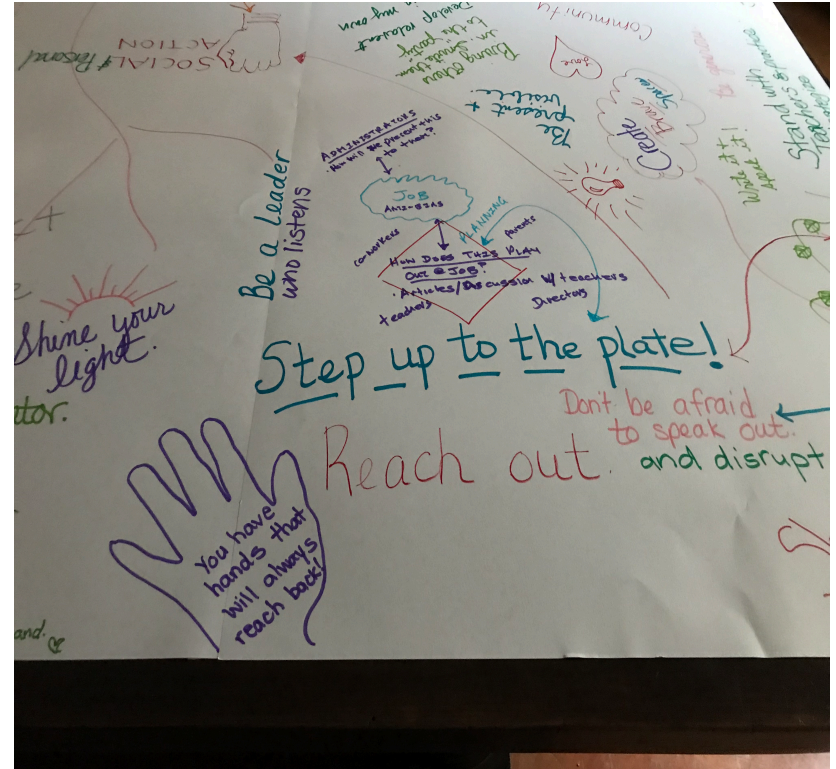
Session 2: Our questions

- How do I do this with my colleagues across organizations?

- How do I get off the merry-go-round, where I feel caught in the middle, that continues to perpetuate oppressive behaviors.

- What do I do about a leader in diversity work who is too overpowering and a gatekeeper?

- How do I influence more people in China to focus on anti-bias education and other areas around us?
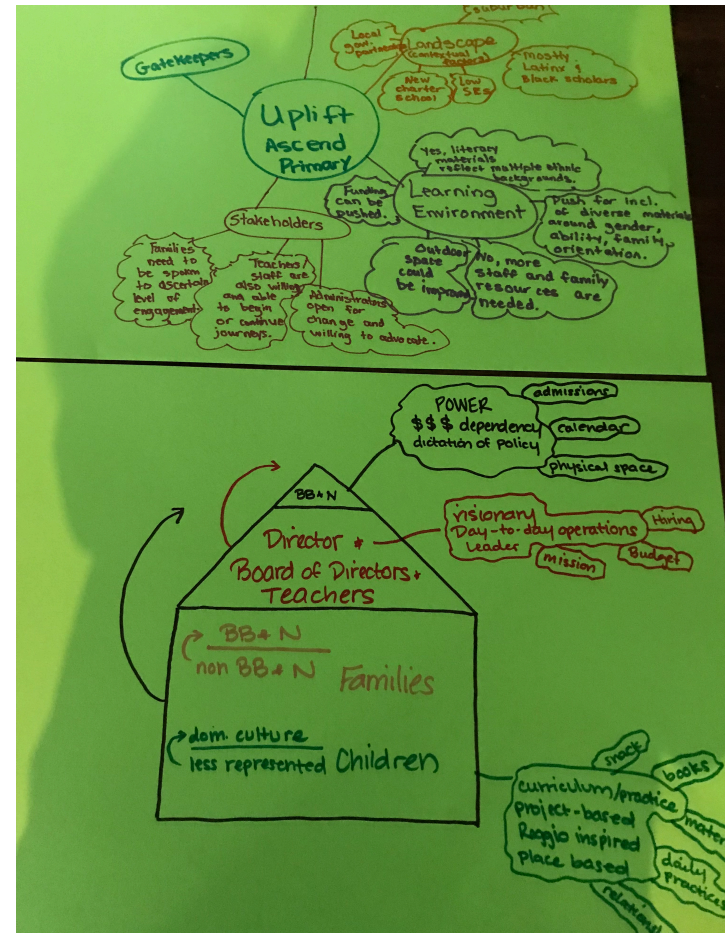
Session 3: Creating an Inclusive Community: Being Visible and Heard. What did we learn?

- We can abide by norms and have a civil discourse (wish my staff could to that)

- The ABE scenarios helped me see different perspectives on the same issues

- The ABE goals were new and helpful to me

- Identity development for POC in asking *who I am* is always ongoing.

- Zip Zap Zop

- How difficult it is to address the various points of intersection with identity

- Reflect on my assumptions and biases. Listen for understanding rather than respond with my instant feelings/reactions.

- Adult identity work is never ending and keeps evolving /changing

- Class is something people feel but do not like to talk about, but it affects everyone.

- No matter how long I do this work, there is always more to learn.

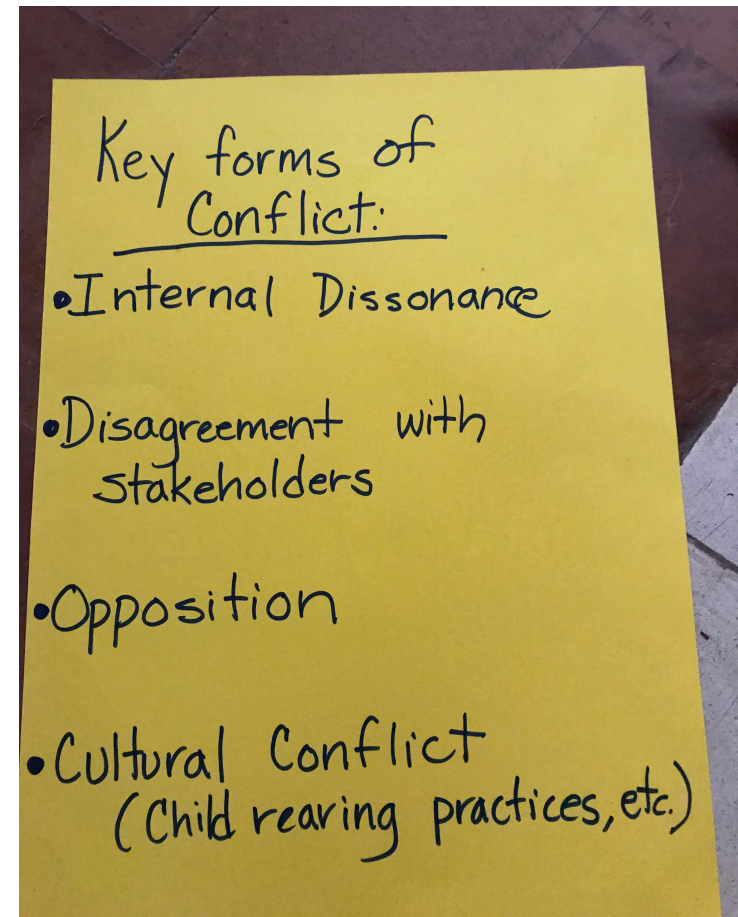- Courage is critical for a 'brave space" conversation to be fruitful.

Session 3: Our questions

- How can I learn to effectively facilitate discussions about issues that cause extreme discomfort?

- Are there frameworks or theories for working on the socio-economic class issues?
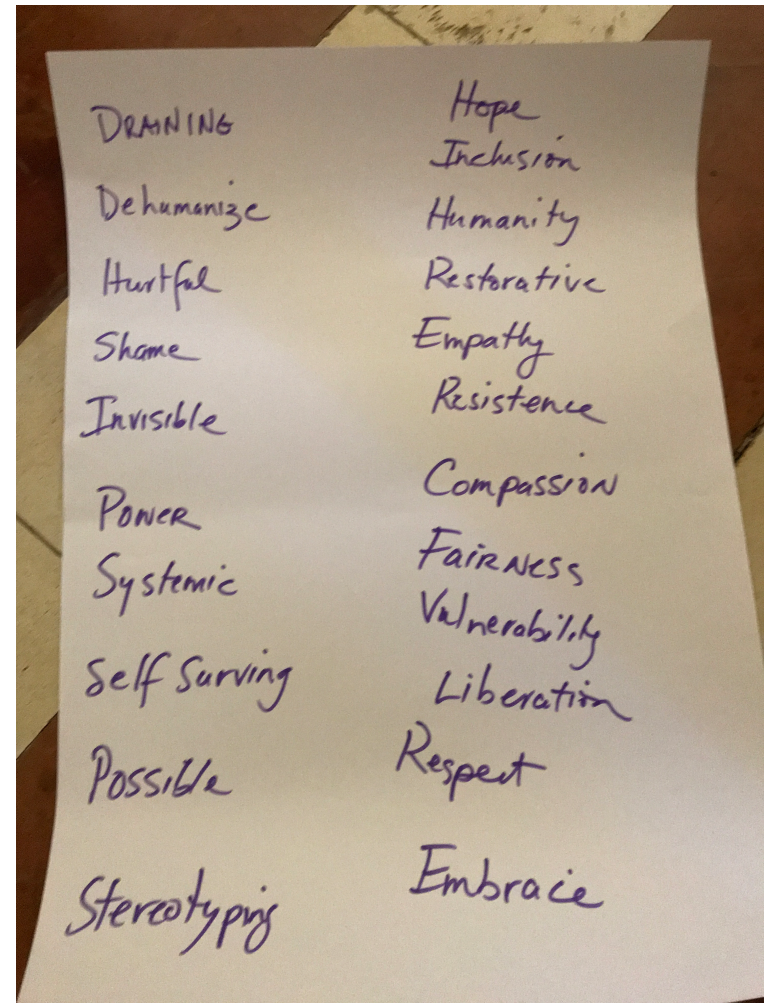
Session 4 Role of Conflict: Finding the Third Space- What did we learn?

- Shifting the power dynamic can be and often is uncomfortable

- Being vulnerable with colleagues and trusting the process is a way to try out new possibilities

- Oppression can be shifted in moments of conflict

- I can stand up in front of a group and act out another person's story

- Bias could happen any time, to anybody. We can shift roles in a good way to help experience another person's feelings.

- I learned how to visually reflect on oppressive acts and strategies to change the events.

Key forms of Conflict:
- Internal Dissonance

- Disagreement with Stakeholders

- Opposition

- Cultural Conflict (Child rearing practices, etc.)

Session 4: Our questions

- How can I practice more scenarios during times when I experience oppression?

- How do I find the confidence and strategy to combat oppression.

- How do I keep myself positive in a world of bias?

- What would some of the other scenarios look like?

The 3 As

Acknowledge

Ask

Adapt
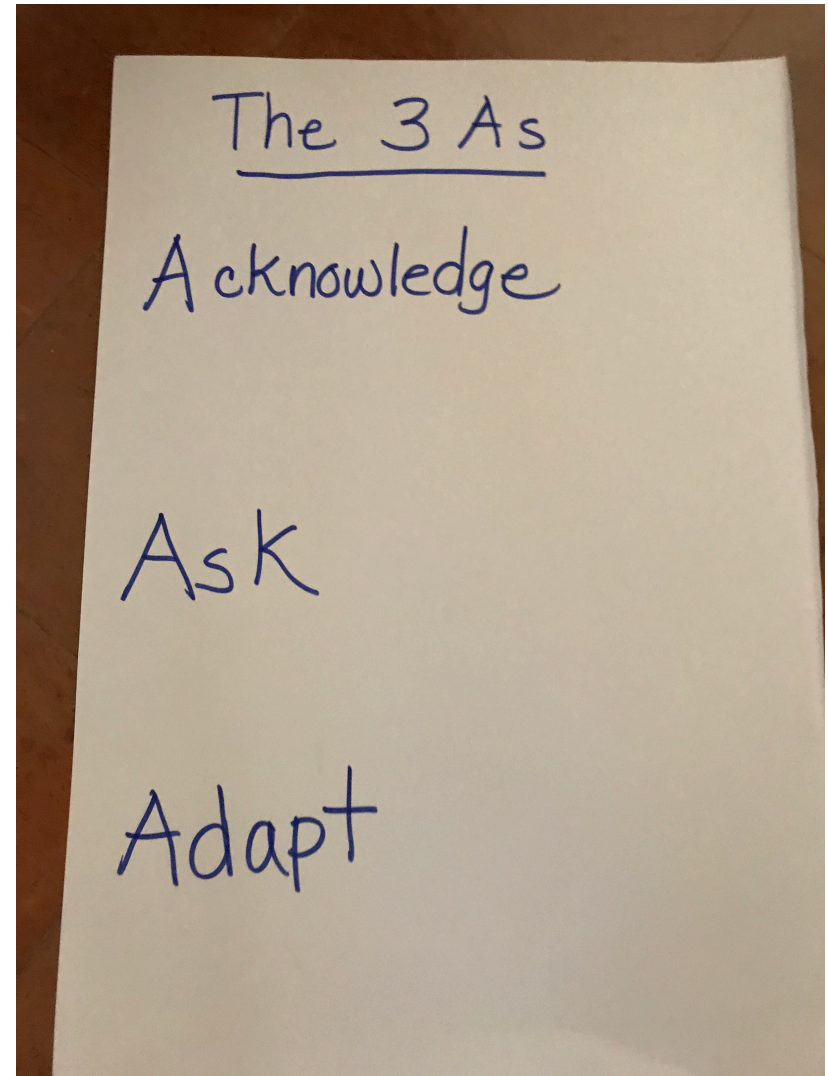
Session 5/6: Anti-bias Education during Changing and Challenging Times: Religious Literacy. Leaning into Action. What did we learn?

- Religion/spirituality is a part of children's social identity that should not be ignored or pushed aside.

- Connect identity/culture with religious literacy and anti-bias ideas.

- It is possible to talk about these complex ideas with young children.

- Debbie's example of Beliefs project was inspiring. Seeing the articles and theories come to life in practice really sticks.

- Have intentional and well thought out plans/strategies; initiate baby steps of ABE work in a year long series

- Listening and getting feedback from other people on their ideas and experiences will expand our horizons and creativity in action.

Session 5/6: Our questions

- How might we use the rich resources for this work within culturally diverse communities that are often tightly regulated? How do we impose "readiness goals" or priorities that aren't aligned with emergent curriculum?

- How do we create the balance of different beliefs? Do some beliefs get talked about more than others? Is that OK?

- Why is it so hard to get the administration to really implement ideas like antibias goals?

- How will the spirit and work for this group be continued..and of course, that includes friendships.

- How do we overcome political power to continue /implement this work from top to bottom in programs/centers?