

ART OF HOSTING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

RESOURCE 2.6

Case Development & Investment: How to Harvest Longings

In her new book, *Daring Greatly*, Brene Brown argues that a group of leaders who solicit, accept, and incorporate feedback inevitably nurture an engaged, tenacious group of people who are both innovative and creative.

Allowing our congregation to come together to express their hopes and dreams for the church mission and life inspires us to be vulnerable, to share openly, and to persevere together during times of hardship; whereas not gathering to express our longings openly together keeps us small, resentful, and afraid. Authoritarian cultures inspire disengagement, blame, gossip, stagnation, withheld financial and volunteer investment, favoritism, a dearth of creativity, and a stifling of innovation.

Quoting writer and leader Peter Block, Chris Corrigan writes, “Far from being about control, leaders exercising the convening capacity set boundaries for action and then invite within them.”

Peter Block says: “We hold leadership to three tasks:

1. Create a context that nurtures an alternative future, one based on gifts, generosity, accountability, and commitment.
2. Initiate and convene conversations that shift people’s experience, which occurs through the way people are brought together and the nature of the questions used to engage them.
3. Listen and pay attention.

Convening leaders create and manage the social space within which citizens get deeply engaged. Through this engagement, citizens discover that it is in their power to resolve something or at least move the action forward.”

The Art of Hosting Meaningful Conversation can be a subversive act against power and control. It will not be received well in churches led by leaders bent on control. It will only work and thrive in places in which the views and opinions of the congregation are welcome and encouraged. Regardless it is the only way forward to achieve inclusion which leverages giving to a full potential.

Why is this material inserted into teaching on raising money and people?

One of the primary issues we are noticing in philanthropy at the beginning of the 21st Century is that a donor will only invest his/her money and membership into an agency which has invited his/her opinion. Nonprofit agencies which lead with order or control will not invite opinions or mission-longings from their constituents. The only way to effectively raise money or people in the 21st Century is to allow them to physically and relationally engage in mission-formation by hosting a safe place and structure in which their longings may manifest and be heard as equals; even equals with bishops and clergy.



The Art of Hosting is a secular, effective series of tools used to engage congregations in the harvesting of their longings so that they feel heard and can see some of their collective, harvested longings for mission evident in the case into which they are being invited to make financial pledges and membership choices.

What is The Art of Hosting?

- a. Limiting Beliefs.
- b. Conversation Tools.
- c. Chaordic (the overlap space between chaos and order) Space: The value of losing control and order for creativity.