



PARTNERS FOR YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT

Live Forum - April 18, 2019

THE DANCE OF CO-FACILITATION

WELCOME

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Hello 3rd Thursday Assemblers!

Welcome back, or, if it's your first time WELCOME! This is an exciting monthly online forum where people all over the world can gather to share ideas and good practice about different aspects of group facilitation.

I'm one of the PYE lead facilitators from the UK, I've been working with the Creative Empowerment model since 2009, including running a series of e-courses as part of a European project about Music in Recovery from addiction. I'm excited to learn from you all today and to co-facilitate with Nadia! I know there's a lot of knowledge and experience out there in the PYE network, and it's powerful and simple to share together here.

Below you will find: A Check-in Question (please answer!); Goals and Agreements for today's session (please add anything you need/want to the agreements, and hit "like" to agree to uphold these agreements during the session); 4 discussion questions and 4 case studies (posted approximately every ten minutes; answer in any order). I will be facilitating this experience for 90 minutes. There will be a pdf transcript posted on the <http://www.partnersforyouth.org/> website, as well as the files of this facebook page, in a short while. These transcripts are so great we're thinking of making a book out of them!

Remember to keep refreshing the page to read the latest comments, and scroll down the page to read all threads. The threads will appear in order of most active, which can be confusing!

This month we are discussing THE DANCE OF CO-FACILITATION...

As facilitators we often work in pairs or teams to 'hold' a space and support a group through a process. We might know our co-facilitators well, or they might be new to us. Many factors influence the dynamic

between co-facilitators. The quality of this dynamic between co-facilitators is certainly key to creating a positive experience for your group, as well as for yourself! This dynamic can either add to the group experience, or detract from it. Facilitators embody the qualities of the group experience, and need to demonstrate these qualities in their interactions with their co-facilitators as well as their group. The relationship between co-facilitators sets the tone for how you would like the group to interact with each other. If co-facilitation is a dance, it can be beautiful to witness, communicate a lot of wisdom, even be improvised and work brilliantly, with the right partner who has a complimentary style and energetically complements and responds to your own. Or it can be a disaster, treading on each other's toes in full view of your audience!

This brings us to today! Together we will be exploring how to maximise the potential of the co-facilitation relationship, in service to our groups?



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50 PARTNERS

Nadia Chaney





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Kathy Butt-Ellwand Abdu Magdy here is the information....check in question above and more questions posted in the next 90 minutes. Enjoy!

CHECK-IN

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Check-in Question for 18th April 2019: If the way you feel today was a dance, what kind of dance would it be? Describe the dance... the movements, are there costumes? The feel of the dance?....are you alone or with other dancers? Post a picture if you prefer!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand This is me today, a crazy happy slightly manic too much coffee jumping round dance with my family



Nadia Chaney me today!! a little overhappy with the Spring finally here in Montreal



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Kathy Butt-Ellwand Happy Springtime Nadia Chaney! Nice dance moves.

Nadia Chaney Teehee, Tom and Jerry are so cuuute

Sunshine Turner Hello! I'd like bright bold bird feather costume and My dance is graceful, big but gentle movements, it's delicate and powerful and everything

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Woah I can just picture that Sunshine Turner!

Aida Gadallah A quiet ballet dance : with my hands are raising up and standing on my fingers . wearing light white clothes. I feel peace and quiet. i dance Alone surrounds me a large collection of white flowers and i dance on the sound of colorful birds stand on a tree branch nearby



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Nadia Chaney How beautiful, Aida! Lovely to see you here!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Welcome Aida Gadallah! That sounds like a peaceful and very creative mood. Lovely

Aida Gadallah happy to be with you both 🥰

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Aida Gadallah grateful to be able to connect with you from across the world!

Hatty Sappaday Hello! I'm feeling free now I've left the city for a few days and my dance would be a dance with the wind on the sand dunes!

Nadia Chaney Oooh nice one Hatty Sappaday!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Wooh beautiful Hatty Sappaday! Welcome!



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Voula Samara I would be a dance with many moves followed by stillness and then moves again. My costume would be springlike but with a jacket because it is still cold and I would be wearing a headband of flowers and plants 🌱 because I am terribly concerned about the future of our planet 🌍

Soma Ragab ارقص في صحراء بلا حدود مع الحصان والنسيم (Dance in a desert without borders with horse and breeze)



Abdu Magdy طيب؛ هم لم يفهموا شيئاً (Ok; they didn't understand anything!)

Soma Ragab عايزه اكتب عربي 😄 فكتبت مساحه آمنه (I want to write arabic 😄 I wrote a space from him)

GOALS AND AGREEMENTS



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KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Goals and Agreements for this session on 18th April 2019:

- 1) To understand more about the co-facilitation relationship
 - There is a lot of nuance in these relationships! The more we focus on the nature of the relationship with the co-facilitator, the more scope there is for the group to mirror a healthy working relationship
- 2) To share good practice in working with a co-facilitator or team of co-facilitators
 - Sharing our diverse experiences can help us to anticipate some of the problem areas and also to set in place some foundational practices and become more skilled in working with different co-facilitators. The more skilled we become at working together with consciousness and understanding, the more we can create a supportive and environment for our groups, and for each co-facilitator, to feel safe and shine!
- 3) To increase our options and choices as co-facilitators
 - the more we dig into some of these specific issues in facilitation the more deeply present we can be with our group's relationship. Our own facilitation experience becomes easier and more fun when we create a strong and supportive dynamic with our co-facilitator.
- 4) to have meaningful fun in an international online community
 - because we like fun 😊

In order to achieve these, here are some suggestions for COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS to make our time together flow really well. Be sure to add what you need or want AT ANY TIME DURING THE PROCESS. Let the group know or privately message the facilitator if you are concerned that an agreement is being broken.

- 1) No put downs of self or others. Keep a positive, lift-up vibe. If the facilitator finds your comments aggressive or inappropriate in any way you will receive a personal message.
- 2) Be willing to entertain simultaneous truths. Rather than proving a point, try to listen to understand, and be willing to agree to disagree. At the same time, if you have a strong belief be willing to stand up for it. This will make our conversations rich!
- 3) Show your presence, by LIKING and by responding to keep the flow. Ask questions, make comments, connect. The technical trick for this format is to REFRESH your browser fairly often. The questions move



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around depending on how many people are answering, so please scan the whole page for new questions now and then.

4) Maintain CONFIDENTIALITY by not sharing names or personal information about the participants in your groups, sharing from your own perspective, and asking permission before sharing someone else's story.

5) Answer any questions in the COMMENTS below the question to keep the conversation organized and readable. Only open NEW questions in new threads.

6) You can come and go as you please, take as long as you like to respond, and basically enjoy the text-format to make this work no matter whether you are just waking up, just going to bed, or on your lunch break (time zones unite!!) A pdf transcript of the conversation will be provided. Feel free to continue the conversation even after the 90 minute period has ended.

DISCUSSION QUESTION #1

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Discussion Question #1: Please share a short story of a co-facilitation experiences you have had in the past, either positive or negative.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand



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Nadia Chaney Haha it's just you and me so far Kathy :) I'll get us started. I'm thinking of working in Egypt at Funtasia with Sunshine Turner and Gani Naylor.

We had two long sessions, one in Sept one in Jan. And I'm just remembering how precious and important all the inbetween time was. We had so much fun and sweetness on those trips...meal times, adventures, lots of card games, music, laughter. It kept me feeling really juicy and alive and grateful

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Thanks for sharing this Nadia! Sounds like the fun times in between sessions were important, lovely and creative...how did this affect your facilitation relationship?

Nadia Chaney Come to think of it, it's been a long time since I had a bad experience with a cofac...and I certainly used to...I remember I used to feel offended or slighted quite easily...if someone took up "my" space or seemed to put me down in front of the group...haven't felt that in a while.



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Nadia Chaney Oh wait. Yes I have. I just remembered. I won't name the person of course, but sudden changes in the plan without checking in DO irritate me!

Nadia Chaney In terms of the effect of fun times...I think it really helps us stay connected and close. So you can communicate with a look or a word...you kind of get into each other's flow and can follow easily. That warmth means a lot of easiness and readiness for decision making and flexibility

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Nadia Chaney thanks very much for these reflections...I feel like I learn a lot from 'bad' experiences...what do you do now if your co-facilitator changes something without checking in, or takes up your space?

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Nadia Chaney yes totally agree, fun with your co-facilitator = flow

Nadia Chaney I don't mind as much about space-taking. I think as I've aged I don't NEED the space for my voice like I did before. I feel like I have a lot of the support and acknowledgement I needed then so it doesn't harm me. That's an aspect of Power I think, that's shifted for me.

Nadia Chaney In terms of the changing of the plan I really like to keep each other informed. I'll definitely try to check in as soon as possible as to why a plan changed...and express how I like to be informed so I can stay present...

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Nadia Chaney love this! Powerful reflection about Power. Also agree with you about communication in the moment, helps your co-facilitator or team feel informed and able to be present.

Hatty Sappaday I definitely need space for my voice, or at least space for my intention and contribution. For me it helps to be super-clear about who is doing what and when it's whose turn. I

have to admit I feel annoyed if my co facilitator "takes over" from me.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Hatty Sappaday YES. Love this. Honesty and clarity about your needs is really important to share.

Hatty Sappaday It helps me to hold the intention with my c-f of what we are trying to put across, and the value of that. I find that that helps me to know when and how to use my voice, and that also it's less important who says what when, and feels more like a team doing something meaningful together.

Nadia Chaney What about you Kathy? How do you react to plan changes? I'd like to get smoother at it.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand I'm a terrible plan changer! I love to improvise - depending on what's happening with the group, and I have learned from my mistakes that this needs really great communication with my co-facilitators. I also love to have a session plan with timings and activities and who is leading which piece...and I call it a 'plan that we plan to change' and like to have it printed out as a communication tool, so when I'm working with others we have regular quick check ins about changes to the plan, and a quick glance at the paper and a discussion about what to cut/add etc while the group is busy with the next activity. When this works well it can seem to the group like there has been no changes! If my co-facilitator changes plans I appreciate a quick check in, so I can keep on track with the bigger arc of the session.

Nadia Chaney Yes! We're on the same page here! I love the Plan We Plan To Change!

Aida Gadallah nearly month ago , i experienced the most smoothed co-facilitation until now- as i only have an experience of 2 years- we were leading an after -school program preparation day with teachers . me and my co-facilitator decided that our goal is helping



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those teacher to understand the program as much as we can because they will deliver this for kids so we will sit beside each other and can ask each other

we had a full respect for each other working as one , when one of us is leading a discussion sometimes ask, do you think there is something to add ? or if one of us need to say something we gently ask by saying : there is something i'd like to say
the respect , love and focusing on our goal spread this feeling over the group and also as a model for them to act in their classes as they work 2 per class

actually me and her were trying to act together as Nadia , Gany and Steph were leading together in AOF

Kathy Butt-Ellwand That's so great! Thanks for sharing Aida Gadallah. Sounds like having a shared goal and respect was key in your smooth relationship, and discussing how to work together before hand. Nice tips here!

Nadia Chaney Oh I love this. To me the best way to speak to a co-facilitator in a group is like this. "Do you mind if I add something?" "Do you have anything to add" etc. It gives the group a transparency of process yet allows all facilitators to always save face and feel respected

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Great tip Nadia Chaney!

Hatty Sappaday I love when facilitators model communication and negotiating together

Nadia Chaney Me too! Good co-facilitators save themselves so much time and energy by creating that resonant energy of trust and respect in the group

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Yes Hatty Sappaday! So important to model for the group what you would like to see in the community you are creating with them.

MamaNke OraChi Sarah Norr

DISCUSSION QUESTION #2

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Discussion Question #2: What ingredients make a great co-facilitation relationship?

Nadia Chaney Hm. Knowing how the other person likes their feedback comes to mind

Kathy Butt-Ellwand DEFINITELY an essential question to ask a new co-facilitator. The best thing I did on summer camp one year was to ask my team to give me their feedback after the moment once I'd stopped facilitating, because I was really tired and needed to have energy to be open to receive it well.

Nadia Chaney I also LOVE what Aida Gadallah is talking about in Question 1. How to speak to a co-facilitator in front of the group. I think if the group witnesses the facilitators respecting each other, they actually FEEL respected

Kathy Butt-Ellwand What do you think Hatty Sappaday?

Hatty Sappaday Well, I would say clear planning and communication. I've worked well with very different people when we planned carefully together. At the same time without a strong plan I've struggled to make the most of the facilitation team.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Thank you Hatty! Planning and communication can avoid a lot of challenges.

Hatty Sappaday I wonder about this question too, since, as a new-ish facilitator, there are some people I feel more comfortable about



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working with, and I'd like to feel like I know how to make it work with most people.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Yes! If we use the metaphor of a dance, there are some dance partners who it just 'flows' with energetically, so what tips do people have that can help co-facilitation to flow even if you have very different styles?

Nadia Chaney Know your style and your needs! The more you can tell a co-facilitator up front about yourself the more likely they are to be able to meet you there

Nadia Chaney Also...keep that sense of humour when possible. A little flowing-with-what-is can go such a long way

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Nadia Chaney double like!

Voula Samara if we use the metaphor of dance: be a novice and at the same time a pro. Strike a balance between leading the dance and willing to be led. Trust your partner but at the same time try to "save" the dance if your partner loses it. The point is to keep going and for the audience to perceive the whole thing as spontaneous and yet well practiced and rehearsed, smooth but also with clear moves. Great metaphor!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand YES Voula totally agree. It's like the rules of improvisation - say yes, make your partner look good!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Fun is important to me, to have relaxation and flow. One co-facilitator and I were very stressed before a session, rushing round to get ready, so we stopped, put this song on and danced round like crazy. It made us laugh and gave a great energy to greet our group! https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=jofNR_WkoCE

Hatty Sappaday Nadia and Kathy you are so right! It's easy to forget in an anxious moment but makes everything flow better for facilitators

and participants! (I'm now searching for a FUN-damental pun here but don't have one yet - let me know if you come up with one!)

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Amazing!

Voula Samara Ok this is for #1: respect respect respect. And I agree with fun, extremely important especially when there is a tough moment. I always remember the “make your partner look good”. I think it says it all.

Soma Ragab Good intentions and encouragement

DISCUSSION QUESTION #3

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Discussion Question #3: What are some of the challenges of working with a co-facilitator? What can you do before and during a session to address some of these?

Nadia Chaney For me the biggest challenge is related to how we act when we feel afraid/triggered/disrespected/confused/incapable etc. Getting clear on my own behaviour through therapy, journaling, and feedback has helped me so much to be a better co-facilitator over the years

Kathy Butt-Ellwand This is a long term practice right Nadia Chaney? Working on ourselves while we work with others. Absolutely essential. Co-facilitating and the opportunity for honest caring feedback is very revealing, and a wonderful and sometimes confronting tool for our own personal development.

Nadia Chaney Yeah. I'd say it's very long term! I'm still learning from feedback I got fifteen years ago :D In the short term I think it's like: Notice something is wrong; Name it to myself; Anchor



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myself in the present moment; Do my best and ask for help if possible/necessary; Process it later

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Nadia Chaney This is great. Sometimes in the past I have spent the rest of the session being upset by feedback and keeping it safe to look at later is a very helpful way to keep it as a learning tool rather than a further trigger. We should do a whole session on feedback!

Nadia Chaney That is a GREAT idea

Hatty Sappaday YEEEEEEES to all of this

Aida Gadallah challenges are : when there is difference in power , energy and faith in what we are doing .
before: we can discuss about the way of our interaction
but difference in energy and faith , i don't know how to manage it

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Thanks Aida! That's a tough one...any ideas
Hatty Sappaday Nadia Chaney?

Nadia Chaney I'd say try applying the strength-based lens. For example, if I can work to see some one with low energy as thoughtful or careful or peaceful rather than slow or lazy...

Kathy Butt-Ellwand I liked what you said earlier Aida Gadallah about having a clearly communicated shared goal...maybe setting intentions together beforehand so you have something you can both hold on to. Also maybe lack of faith in what you are doing can mean lack of confidence? Support to you co-facilitator's confidence can help restore their faith?

Aida Gadallah lack of faith can mean lack of confidence Kathy Butt-Ellwand , aha , i love it , i'll work on that



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Hatty Sappaday I sometimes experience a difference in timing as challenging. For example if I want to leave a silence or take a while to think, my co-fac might just be a faster-moving person and will jump in. Then I might feel like my contribution was lost.

Soma Ragab How can I express a difference of opinion with my supporters in a facilitative manner to participants?

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Good question Soma Ragab! What do others think?

Abdu Magdy I'd say, just say it simply, without complications nor hard feelings

Soma Ragab thank u Kathy.

Soma Ragab what do u mean by others?

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Soma Ragab I was asking if anyone else wanted to answer your question and share their experience.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Abdu Magdy good point- just simply being honest with good intentions can work.

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Soma Ragab some other suggestions- you could try respectfully asking your co-facilitator in front of the group 'can I add something'.
If you contradict your cofacilitator you risk putting them down in front of the group, but if you have an agreement with them beforehand that sometimed you would like to offer the group a different opinion, and ask them how they would like you to do this. It can can give the group a good feeling of trust and respect because they see it's ok to have different opinions and it's safe to be honest, because you are demonstrating these qualities.



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CASE STUDY #1

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Case Study #1: You are facilitating an after-school arts program, with a co-facilitator you know really well, and have worked with a lot before. You respect this person and get on great as friends. You haven't had time to plan together, so you are working from an old plan you delivered together before. It's a disaster. Your co-facilitator approaches you afterwards saying they felt triggered that you talked over them and delivered part of the section they should have led. A) what can you do NOW B) what could you have done before the session

Nadia Chaney Great case!

Nadia Chaney A) be accountable. Listen to their concerns without defensiveness. Say what I intend to do differently next time.
B) If there really is no time to plan decide before hand who is doing what part and then just let that person have all the space they need. In the absence of an agreement there is no right or wrong! It takes so much more presence to work in this way, but it CAN have a benefit of really meeting the group where they are

Voula Samara I am just joining now, hi ladies! Yes I agree that in the absence of an agreement this would be the best. But what happens when you have an agreement and your partner keeps talking over you and then apologizes but does the same thing over and over again?

Nadia Chaney Hi Voula!!

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Welcome Voula! Great to have you here! Will be ending the live session shortly but would LOVE everyone to carry on commenting on each question and case study over the next couple of days. Keep the discussion going!

Nadia Chaney If they won't listen to the feedback there are some choices: a) accept it, see it as a strength, find your power



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within in b) stop working with that person c) ask for outside support or mediation... it's a tough situation. Only once I had to totally stop working with someone, and it took years to heal our friendship, but ultimately it was the right decision. Over all, though, I'm trying to be really really clear about my needs, give very direct feedback, and then just use my sense of humour to accept the person as they are

Voula Samara Very good advice thank you Nadia, the part about being clear about my needs is what I need to do, thanks.

CASE STUDY #2

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Case Study #2: You are facilitating a planning meeting for a new organisation of people with disabilities in your local community. Your co-facilitator is a member of this organisation and is hearing impaired. A) How do you work together well so there is equity between you and you can both bring your full skills and knowledge to the group? B) what do you need to discuss with your co-facilitator before the event?

CASE STUDY #3

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

Case Study #3: You are leading a preparation workshop for an international youth program. You are working with a new co-facilitator, who you have never met before. You have been introduced by email, and the charity you are working for expects you to both arrive at the venue an hour early to prepare and set up. A) What do you need to know about each other beforehand in order to work well together? B) What can you do get the relationship off to a good start?

END

KATHY BUTT-ELLWAND

THANK YOU EVERYONE! Our time together to discuss with live moderation is over for this month. This has been a really useful session, thank you everyone for bringing your experience, curiosity, and presence. We will keep this discussion open for a few days before posting the transcript - so please **KEEP ADDING YOUR COMMENTS TO ANY OF THE POSTS**. We are always open to new topics for the upcoming sessions. If you have any ideas please feel free to post them on this page. If you enjoyed today's session please tell your facilitator, teacher, manager, social worker, group therapist, activist and social artist friends! Don't forget to check <http://www.partnersforyouth.org/> for upcoming trainings, too, there's some new ones just posted.



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Hatty Sappaday Thanks you! Great to see you all in the internet x

Kathy Butt-Ellwand Great to see you and thanks for sharing your experience x

Voula Samara I joined very late but I really liked the questions. Thank you Kathy and Nadia

Kathy Butt-Ellwand You're so welcome Voula! Lovely to see you here. If you like your welcome to add more comments in the next few days. Much love!



Michelle Peek Hey there! Having a hard time finding where the transcripts are posted; could someone direct me please and thanks?

Nadia Chaney Hi Michelle! Sorry for the delay. The transcripts are here:

<http://www.partnersforyouth.org/3rd-thursday-live-forums/>



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Nadia Chaney Just scroll down

Michelle Peek I see it now! Sorry, I was scrolling down on the Facebook page originally which, as is the architecture of Facebook, gets you no where, fast 🙄 ♀

Nadia Chaney You saw the link above?

Michelle Peek Nadia Chaney Yes, thank you!