

Collaboration Plan

Establishing a safe environment is key, especially if the stakeholders have not worked together and do not know each other. Following the steps below can improve collaboration, bring people and ideas together, and also give them something in which to look forward. I recommend this strategy occur first and then introduce the collaboration plan afterwards. This is because a sense of trust and some kind of bond needs to be established first.

- 1) Establish ground rules of trust, respect and compassionate communication.
- 2) Distribute ground rules prior to meetings and start each meeting with a reminder.
- 3) Use dialogue practices and collaboration techniques such as active listening, suspending assumptions, appreciative inquiry, openness to new perspectives.
- 4) Confirming the shared goal of completing the project in a thorough and timely manner and create a meeting schedule in which everyone commits.
- 5) Establishing a method for sharing the reward and recognition after the completion/grading of the project.

Our group did not have anything like this strategy when we started and I wish we would have. It was difficult not knowing each other and not having any trust established. Also, we did not know each other well enough to anticipate actions or responses, making team collaboration even more difficult. Going forward, I will use this strategy for effective collaboration so the team has a safe and supportive environment, guidelines for proper collaboration and dialogue and a clear rewards policy.

For my project purposes, I am focusing on the campaign itself and the anchor events we have planned for the "Global Unity Games - Tomorrow Together" which runs from 9/11-9/21. Most know the significance of 9/11 and it's a day that marks the beginning of the awareness

campaign. September 21st, the last day of our campaign, is the International Day of Peace and I find it symbolic that we begin with a day of national remembrance and end with a day of peace. Our plan has mainly been promotional, leading up to the events. Those of us on the Silicon Valley Organizational team have been promoting the Global Unity Games through social media, community marketing resources and collaborative meetings with community and government representatives. We have been working with them to promote the concept of the Compassion Games and the Global Unity Games events. Many have signed the "Charter for Compassion" and the "National Treaty for Peace" which are a commitment to uphold compassion and peace. They have hosted us at several of their community events and meetings so we can better spread the word and they have also added our information to blogs, social media and mentioned us in meetings and discussions as a resource for compassion cultivation.

Beyond promoting, some community representatives and organizational representatives will join us at our events during the Global Unity Games and will help us conduct activities with those that attend. Compassion in action can be so powerful in a community, through random acts of kindness, activities, signing charters and treaties, and simply raising awareness; and it can bring people together as they commit to a common purpose of upholding compassion in their lives. Some elected officials will attend the upcoming events of the Global Unity Games and will endorse the Compassion Games and our efforts in cultivating compassion in the community.

Results

We have been and we will continue to track progress via our documentation and mapping process. If someone signs the charter of compassion, it's documented, photographed and entered into the acts of compassion database for a certain location. It then shows up on the map as

another example of compassion in action. We measure the number of these incidents and we can see, in addition to the map, which communities have more participation, or, more compassion. We and the community leaders can take that information and challenge a neighboring community to a "coopetition" and another game is started. Compassion is contagious and the idea is that it spreads throughout out communities in this manner, and continues throughout the world. I think it is worth mentioning again, that stories are posted as well, and telling stories is such a powerful way of communicating!

Data

It starts with one person and participating is easy. Of course, as with anything, there are many ways to play. We will focus on committing and documenting random acts of kindness for one person or for a team. These are the simple steps and I encourage others to post this on their social media pages, make social media groups that play together and map their success:

- Step one: get inspired!-<http://compassiongames.org/ways-to.../random-acts-of-kindness/>
- Step two: Commit your random act of kindness!
- Step three: Post what you did and the result:-
<https://crowdsourcemap.com/st.../compassion-report> (you can choose to upload photos and can get as creative as you like)
- -Click on "add my report"
- -Sign in with FB, Twitter, Google... or as a guest. Your identity is anonymous unless you specify otherwise. If you are concerned, sign in as a guest.
- -Follow prompts to post your Random Act of Kindness
- -Team name: Silicon Valley Sub team name: Shannon's Team (this will be any name chosen) (FYI, Terms of agreement are about any photos you upload)

- SAVE
- Now Share your story to inspire others!-<https://www.facebook.com/compassiongames>

That's it, you have just made the world a better, kinder, more loving place! Compassion is contagious and it will spread globally! Thank you and I hope you decide to play again soon!

There are many ways to play to check them out!-(<http://compassiongames.org/play/>).

Success

Recognizing success is so important! I promote success through sharing the kind acts on social media with shouts out to those that are responsible (if given permission). I will also include links to the mapping site and the stories site so the success can be viewed from different perspectives, in addition to what I post on social media. At the conclusion of the Global Unity Games, we will host a dinner for all of those involved and will speak to the goals and how they have been met. All will share in the reward and the recognition, verbally and on our website. We will send letters to those that participated thanking them and praising their commitment to making the world a more compassionate place. With permission, participants will also be featured on the website.

Conclusion

According to the Engagement Streams Framework, pp. 5, people need a safe place in which to collaborate. This is the premise for stage one of the collaboration plan above. Our text (Mattessich, et al. 2004, p. 4) supports this in terms of environment; the environment is first of the six success categories for collaboration.

People with a common goal and shared values respond positively to ground rules, commitment, and guidelines for enhancing communication. Most people see enjoying in the rewards after the work as a positive and even an incentive. People generally are willing to put in

the hard work if they can see the prize at the end and feel it is attainable. Also, sometimes people simply forget the steps to effective dialogue and collaboration and reminders can be a thoughtful and welcome addition to meetings. Ground rules and guidelines can also keep the collaboration focused and on track. Mattessich et al., (2004) explains a commitment to a common goal and the sharing of rewards and resources as major aspects of what makes collaboration work.

I have learned that I cannot "make" effective collaboration happen by controlling others' views. What I can do is take ownership of my part of the collaboration and do not jump to conclusions, use practices of effective dialogue (active listening, suspending judgment, respecting others' perspectives) use my best compassionate communication, self regulate, use conflict as a tool, know the difference between peacemaking and conflict resolution and when to use each, pay attention to what is not being said and non verbal communication and leave my ego at the door. Learning and practicing these lessons has made me a better communicator, listener, collaborator and leader.

Together with the stakeholders, I can and we can, within our communities, increase the knowledge of compassion and its importance. If we can articulate well the benefits one gets when committing random acts of kindness, we can be more effective. These aspects support the main goal of raising awareness of compassion and the need for its cultivation. The over-arching goal is to make the world a more compassionate place and I believe, with the efforts of the stakeholders, the collaborative process, and compassionate hearts, we can be successful.

References

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