



Mapping Dialogue – Essential Tools for Social Change

By Marianne Mille Bojer, Heiko Roehl, Marianne Knuth and Colleen Wagner – Taos Institute Publications (2008)

£12.60

This book would be a useful addition to the bookshelf of any member looking for an introductory book to support them to create genuine, face-to-face dialogue, particularly those looking to create sustainable social change in their communities.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, the foundations of dialogue practice are explained: clarity of purpose, good questions, inclusiveness (including all the different voices and parts of a system), a clear process and appropriate tools, right physical space to support the work as well as a set of principles to guide how the group will work together. The authors also enlarge on the qualities and skills of an effective facilitator – strong listening skills, personal awareness and authenticity, ability to ask good questions and a holistic approach – and have devised four major criteria for assessing facilitators.

The second part of the book outlines a selection of dialogue tools for use with complex, multi-stakeholder and large groups though there are some tools that can be used with smaller groups. For each of the 10 main tools they give an overview, a brief description of the process, discuss possible applications, give a case example, as well as providing a commentary and websites/references for finding out more about the tool.

The book emphasizes throughout the core beliefs which it identifies as important for a facilitator: that people want to solve their own problems. That everyone holds a piece of the puzzle of the future. That social change happens when you bring people together and engage them in conversation with each other.

As a whole, the book provides a useful overview of a variety of tools for working for social change in one thin volume. Whilst I would have liked to know more about some of the tools (those that were new or less familiar), I appreciated the signposts provided for each tool which pointed to sources where I could learn more. Overall, it was an easy read that served as a good introduction to a variety of tools and which stimulated my curiosity to find out more.



- Reviewed by *Chris Partridge, Kinharvie Facilitator*

http://www.kinharvie.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=144&Itemid=277

http://www.kinharvie.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=18&Itemid=102