

Shifting PARADIGMS

- ABCD practice in South Africa -



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BACKGROUND

- IKT established as a community grantmaker in 2002 to respond to the South African context:
 - development fatigue
 - Lack of financial support for CBOs
 - Many barriers for CBOs to access donors
 - Emerging / young democracy
- It took 3 years from 1999 – 2001 to consult and establish a set of guiding principles and our intention that still hold true today ...

Small grants for small organisations



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We choose to work with small grassroots organisations that could fall through the gap;
- To make small grants to small organisations;
- To act as a catalyst for other initiatives;
- To work from an appreciative approach



Money follows good things....



OUR ABCD JOURNEY...

- We met our lead facilitator in 2001 (Nin Eliasov, then Director of Community Connections)
- Chance meeting with Gord Cunningham (2005) where we realized what we were trying to do, had a name!
- In 2008, Coady invited us to contribute to: *From Clients to Citizens* with a case study on Measuring and Valuing community in kind contributions
- That was the beginning of a relationship that has grown over years with various collaborations



OUR ABCD JOURNEY (cont)....

- We hosted our first official ABCD workshop with Brianne from Coady in 2010.
- In 2011, IKT started hosting its own training courses with a strong emphasis on paradigm shifting – this forms the foundation of our training and is central to our approach
- We also host local ABCD festivals (2015) *Small is the New Big*; (2016) – *The Head, Heart, Hands and Feet of ABCD*; (2017) – *Feel the fear and do it anyway* and this year's festival (2018) – *Our stories matter...*





WHAT IS PARADIGM SHIFTING?

- Changing ways of thinking and seeing (mental models)
- Addressing all forms of poverty – recognizing that poverty of mind and spirit is pivotal to other forms of poverty and that if these do not shift, then transformation seldom happens.
- Short clip.... Story of Siphoh



OUR APPROACH

- We use tools and methods that promote critical thinking and open up learning conversations to assist people to think differently;
- We promote appreciative language to shift understanding and relationships (eg. learning partners rather than beneficiaries);
- We incrementally popularize ABCD going where the energy is;
- We host multi-stakeholder training and workshops; and co-invest in local training where invited.



SUCCESSSES

- We've seen the fruits of some of these efforts – amazing collaboration, sharing of goods and services, supportive networks and bridging the rural / urban bias
- Being invited into many spaces – GIBS, Beyond Painting Classrooms, University, Churches, Schools, Local Community Groups, Business Chamber and interested donors (GIZ, DG Murray Trust and Department of Social Development;
- Organisational accompaniment eg. Raphael Centre where an entire organization is willing to shift paradigm, process and practice and we can accompany over time.



SUCCESSES...cont

- Of critical importance is the presence of a champion/ protagonist willing to push for change
- Attending international festivals (eg. UK, Goa) and co-hosting the ABCD Festival in SA in February 2018 with a cohort of ABCD colleagues.



CHALLENGES

- Development practitioners start very idealistic and highly motivated but can become overwhelmed by needs and problems;
- Emphasis on ABCD as a set of tools rather than shifting mindsets;
- It has been difficult to demonstrate change and produce evidence. Finding donors that are flexible and responsive is difficult;
- Uptake is slow – changing behavior and attitudes is a lifelong exercise and there are no quick results – you have to be prepared to accompany, support, mentor, coach and be a critical friend long term...



Thank you

Money follows good things

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