Tension shifting

Below is a description of what a tension shifting process might look like. Generally this is a facilitated space and aims to address tensions between two individual rebels or two (or more) groups of rebels.

Check-ins (5 mins)

Could be one thing you're grateful for, how are you feeling, and what would make it easier for you to be present in this meeting today.

Regenerative cultures Reminder

Ask if someone wants to share something that has been moving them recently. If no one is moved to share something then go with a Regenerative Cultures reminder.

Updates

Before diving into the tension shifting meeting, ask if there are mission critical updates for the group. Facilitation Tip: don't let it become a discussion about each project. This is just for essential updates only!

Feedback & Tension Shifting

Facilitation Tip: explain the importance of feedback to learning how we can do our work better.

Prepare for shifting

- Check openness for feedback (1 min)
  - Show of fingers 1-5, how available are you to receive feedback?
- Journal any tensions since the last tension shifting session individually (4 min)
  - Identify any that emerge as most significant.
  - People to put their 1 major tension on a shared google doc (as a record of tensions emerging)
- Read through each other's tensions (2min)
- Internal mood checker - supported by the facilitator (5 min)
- Sort the priorities (4 min) - The facilitator sorts tensions in order of significance (example of categories below):
  - Emergency / High Intensity
  - Regarding group functioning & relationship with whole group
  - Individualised & Interpersonal Tensions
  - -> Check Consent to agree on priorities

Shift Tension

- Understand and hear the person’s tension
  - Ask person to share more
  - Practice Active Listening (mirroring what has been heard)
  - Give space for clarifying questions
  - Try to hear the person
- Explore possibilities for shifting
  - Brainstorm: What ideas might meet the needs?
  - Variety of possibilities
- Decide next steps with your normal decision making process
- Check whether tension feels shifted

Facilitation Tip: Repeat if there is time for a second or third tension

Recap conclusions & celebrate

- Review APs & Agreements
- Move any leftover tensions to the next Tension Shifting session (agree when this will be)
- Does anyone need any support?
- Celebrate

Check Out (5 mins)

Round of: How everyone is feeling at the end of the meeting

Benefits: recalling occasions when the team did well brings gratitude, joy and hope and increases motivation to work together.

Issues

What has not gone so well? No team is perfect. It’s normal to have some slips and failings. If they are noted here, everyone can learn from them.

Give everyone an opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings citing specific examples and using the framework:

- I observed or I noticed...
- I felt...
- I needed...

This is not a time (yet) for answering or problem solving.

Responses are noted

Benefits: everyone is listened to equally, gives an opportunity for any disappointment or dissatisfaction to be voiced in a non-violent way and acknowledged without blaming.

Identifying the roots of issues and next steps

Discussion: Think about what these issues mean about the way the team works. Are there themes or common threads?

Looking at the successes and issues, the Principles and Values and the documented purpose of the team, where are the strengths and where are the gaps, blind-spots or weaknesses?

- What does the team need to work on?
- Think about what you might do differently as a result of the learning from this workshop.
- How will you go about making this shift?
- What help and support do you need and where will you find it?

Next steps: who will take the lead in moving forward? When? How?

Closing

Check-out go round
