



SOUTH COAST SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Peer learning &
support community

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

What practices of collaboration have we been using in our learning community?
We encourage others to practice these in their own contexts!

Purpose game

To develop a shared sense of purpose and collective clarity for our group in our first session, we played the Purpose Game. Here's the protocol.

A simple practice, so the "why" we are doing something is clear for all, not just assumed.
Let purpose be the leader.

Protocol

3–10mins

For significant events, or when purpose is not clear, play the purpose game! It also helps to develop our skill and ease in identifying purpose.

- PREPARATION
Invite everyone to get 3 sheets of paper and a nearby object.
Ask people to just play along with you for a few minutes, even if it feels strange.
- 1. WARM-UP #1
Ask everyone to hold up their objects. Choose one object for everyone.
Invite everyone to write down on their paper, the purpose of this object.
One after the other, each person reads what they wrote. No explanations, no justifications, no apologies.
What's the purpose of a strawberry?
- 2. WARM-UP #2
Repeat Step 1. with a new object.
This might seem unnecessary but it is key to building up our muscle to write purpose statements with ease, using our natural language and our inner creativity and wisdom.
- 3. PURPOSE OF...
Ask everyone to write what is the purpose of [what we want to know the purpose of]*.

Do a go around, each person reading what they wrote. Nothing more, no explanations, no justifications, no apologies.

- ASK: Is there anything that was shared that we can't live with?

EXAMPLES

- What's the purpose of this event? (great when we want everyone to co-create an event or participate fully)
- What's the purpose of our team? (great to get alignment)
- What's the purpose of this project? (useful at the start of a project or if we feel we've become lost.)

Source: **Percolab Coop**

Article: [Clarifying Purpose](#)

Principles for collaboration

We invited these principles to help guide us, and made them visible each session. Sometimes we spoke to them as a reminder when new people had joined.

For a longer term group, we would co-create the principles, and when new people join, bring them in by sharing conversation about what these principles mean to us. We also consider what is no longer needed, what needs adjusting and what needs to be added. A general rule is to have less over time, as there is shared understanding. This helps them be sticky! 3-5 is ideal.

- **Speak with intention** What has relevance, what needs to be spoken
- **Listen with attention** Seek to understand, listen for what's underneath, with curiosity over judgement
- **Take care of the group** Be aware of your impact
- **Invite collective wisdom** Everyone has something to offer. We look first to the group for answers before outside experts.
- **We work with emergence** With what is alive, and needed within our group
- **We share responsibility** for the quality of the outcome
- **Ask for what you need & offer what you can** No more no less
- **Good enough for now, safe enough to try** Practice over perfection

Sources: **Art of Hosting, The Circle Way, Percolab Coop**

[Percolab's principles / ways of working](#)

Check ins & check outs

A core everyday practice to build healthy listening and working better with time.

Check ins and check outs strengthen our connection to ourselves, each other and the purpose.

We always started with a check in, and finished with a check out.

1. SENSE

Listen in to the context of the meeting, the purpose and the energy people are arriving with and work with it to design your check-in/check-out.

Check-in questions create a mood that the meeting can build on. You can focus on what's inspiring people, what we are noticing, or appreciating.

2. INVITE

Based on the sensing invite everyone to check-in around the question. You can focus on what's inspiring people, what we are noticing, or appreciating. Each person responds to the question, speaking from their own personal experience.

Breakouts: Depending on the size of the group, the time available or the context it can sometimes be useful to either stay as one group, or to break out into sub-groups.

3. TAKE TURNS

Silently listen and witness what each other person shares.

Avoid reacting or starting a conversation when others are speaking.

Make sure everyone gets a turn.

4. CHECK OUT

At the end of the meeting, take a moment to check-out.

Again, begin by sensing what would be helpful to either reflect on the meeting, the relationships or what's coming next.

VARIATIONS

Talking is the default way people do check in, but it is not the only way. Try out other ways!

Sources: **The Art of Hosting community, The Circle Way, Percolab Coop**

Article:

- [8 visual check ins to invite creative presence](#)

Generative Decision Making

Making decisions together does not have to be long and painful. The realm of "consent based decision making" is not well known even though it can help organisations make decisions collectively efficiently and wisely. We use the specific Generative Decision Making process in Percolab.

We introduced it in our first session as a way of making a few foundational decisions together.

The process requires a host, ideally, the host rotates from person to person. At Percolab everyone can run this type of decision making and we rotate organically depending on the day.

When first developing the practice it can be helpful for an organisation to invite in an external host for an initiation or supportive coaching to develop the internal skills.

Sources: **Percolab Coop, Sociocracy**

Articles:

- Discover the [Generative Decision Making process](#), and download a free [GDM flyer](#).
 - [3 tips for generative decision making](#)
 - [Trauma informed Decision Making](#)
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Storytelling

Our storytelling was based on [Listen For...](#) an appreciative storytelling game supporting a deeper practice of listening to each other. It is great to use in many ways when forming a team, need to build trust, reconnecting, deepen connection.

We used the listening cards in our storytelling sessions to help focus our listening, and offer appreciative insights or questions back to the storyteller.

Steps

- One person agrees to be the first Storyteller. They choose a “Storyteller” card. Everyone else will be a Listener and chooses a “Listening” card.
- The Storyteller will tell a story by following the prompts on the card they pulled from the deck. Everyone listens without interrupting.
- After the story is finished, the Listeners share what they heard through their listening lens. Avoid giving advice or asking follow-up questions. Instead, offer the storyteller what you heard directly or indirectly through the lenses you picked. You can even ask a question for the storyteller to think about or share an image that came to mind.
- The Storyteller hears what the Listeners share back in silence. This can be hard! But waiting until each person has spoken avoids falling into conversations and helps us discover if there are any patterns in what’s being said. Only after all the Listeners have shared does the Storyteller have the floor to share any insights they gained and what they learned about their story.

Simple as that! Repeat the steps above until everyone has a chance to share a story.

Tip: Even if you don’t have the cards, you can create your own ‘listening lenses’ and themes for storytelling. The process is the same :)

Sources: **Percolab Coop, Going Horizontal, Art of Hosting, Appreciative Inquiry**

- Links: <https://www.percolab.com/listen-for-a-storytelling-game-with-a-twist/>
www.percolab.com/listenfor
 - Come play! Join a free online Listen For.. community game. They are free and take place bi-monthly in Asia-Pacific friendly time zones. www.percolab.com/event
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Open space technology

An Open Space meeting creates time and space for people to engage deeply and creatively around what matters to them. The agenda is set by people with the power and desire to see it through.

We had Open Space during most of our sessions. It's also useful for

- Coming together for a community or organisation retreat, as a way of organising the agenda and living in community together.
- A way of setting the agenda in a meeting
- In the middle of a larger participatory process, once other processes are used to explore issues and relationships and common ground is built.

PRINCIPLES of OPEN SPACE



Whenever it starts is the right time.



Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.

When it's over, it's over.



ROLES in OPEN SPACE

HOST



PARTICIPATE



MOVE



PAUSE

LAW of MOBILITY (TWO FEET)

If you are not somewhere you are learning or contributing, MOVE somewhere that you can.



Thanks to former Percolab member Daryl Cook for the graphics! .

FOLLOW YOUR PASSION + TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Sources: **Open Space Technology, Art of Hosting**

[Open Space World](#)

[Open Space resources - Chris Corrigan](#)

Asking for help

Ways to ask for and offer help with more focus on our expectations and needs, and builds belonging. How do we get beyond the discomfort and miscommunication of asking for help?

We practiced asking and offering help at the end of our time together, using this typology below from Percolab.



Source: **Percolab Coop**

Article: [The Art of Asking for Help](#)

Poster: [Asking for Help](#)