Participatory Leadership for Community Inclusion

A report of a Community of Practice focused on community engagement.

January 30, 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thank you to the participating communities, many of whom joined us from the CACHI initiative to take on this additional deep-dive into engagement in service to their communities.

CALIFORNIA ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTH INITIATIVE

PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION
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PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION
A report of a Community of Practice focused on community engagement.

The Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL) is thrilled to share its approach, methods, lessons learned and outcomes resulting from a multi-year effort to build a Community of Practice (CoP) focused on community engagement and inclusion in California. A CoP intentionally creates the opportunity for stakeholders to address a particular topic or issue utilizing a number of methodologies, frameworks, and practices. A key focus of this PHIL-hosted CoP is capacity building through **offering experiences for participants to practice and apply their training**. For this project, we partnered with ten (10) California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) sites along with other non-CACHI partner organizations to better inform the conditions, practices, and methods that are needed to engage and include community residents in the governance structures of, and the decision making processes for Accountable Community for Health (ACH) collaboratives across the United States.

Working together with the CACHI site participants and other partner organizations, this CoP explored what it means to engage and include community residents in the operations of ACH collaboratives with the ultimate goal to improve the quality of life and well-being in communities. The opportunity to develop and facilitate this CoP emerged from the observations of Carolyn Wang Kong, Chief Program Director for the Blue Shield of California Foundation (BSCF). Carolyn noted limited inclusion of community residents in the governance structures of ACH collaboratives. To that end, PHIL was grateful for the opportunity to co-create alongside the BSCF, CACHI site partners, and all of the community residents across California who participated to develop this CoP. We hope this report can serve as a model for other ACHs and broadly to communities across California and the United States.

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

California CACHI sites and other ACH partner organizations from the following counties participated in this CoP:

- Boyle Heights - LA County
- Fresno
- Humboldt
- Imperial
- Lake
- Long Beach - LA County
- Mendocino County (non-CACHI)
- Napa
- San Gabriel Valley - LA County
- Sonoma
- West Sacramento - Yolo County

"I am deeply impacted by and grateful for the teaching, thought partnership, and collaboration with other areas across the state that the Art of Hosting training and the Community of Practice has provided."
~CoP Participant

Goals for this CoP were to generate systems change by enhancing participant skills in participatory leadership, develop and demonstrate effective program design, and illustrate the feasibility of replication. We created the conditions by which CoP participants could increase their skills and confidence to create broader community inclusion, foster improved communications across teams, and increase trust and accountability with community residents and within their ACHs. We specifically focused on developing a culture of innovation in order to identify new solutions to address pressing and complex community needs.

The shared interest of CoP participants was how to create meaningful engagement with community residents with an eye not just towards engagement, but also inclusion and participation in the development and execution of community health initiatives.

Results: As a result of joining this CoP, participants are better equipped to engage with community members in their ACH communities, which is associated with improved community health and well—being outcomes writ large. The participants in this CoP demonstrated enhanced skills and trust in their ability to meet community needs and include community voices in their ACH governance structures.

Framework: This CoP was built using a systems change framework called Theory U. It was selected because it is a flexible framework that supports a range of methodologies, allowing participants to utilize what is most relevant to achieve their goals. Theory U is designed to facilitate innovation by transforming limited, ineffective structures that typically only benefit individuals and shifting patterns of thinking towards a systems approach that ultimately benefits the broader population.

The Theory U framework comprises the following 5 movements:

Shared Intent
Gaining a Systems Perspective
Meaning Making
Prototyping
Scaling

CoP Outcomes

Compared to baseline, the percentage of respondents who reported feeling "completely confident" increased at follow-up for each of the skill areas, with the greatest improvement seen in communication skills.

In addition, the percentage of respondents who reported feeling only "slightly confident" decreased for facilitation/hosting skills, communication skills, and leadership skills (see Appendix: *A Comprehensive Evaluation Report for the Community Engagement: CACHI Art of Hosting & Community of Practice*, September 2019).

To allow participants to experience the full innovation and systems change potential of the framework, we divided the CoP into three distinct phases.

Phase I was a foundational training which incorporated Theory U's movement one: Shared Intent. The training utilized the Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter (AofH, Art of Hosting) method and was implemented in two locations: Napa, CA and Los Angeles, CA. The AoH training focuses on participatory leadership methodologies that teach users how to gather, lead and host meaningful conversations, while at the same time, creating space for personal and organizational deep reflection.

In Phase II, participants dedicated ten months to gaining a broader system perspective through participating in a CoP Lab which incorporated movements two through four: Gaining a Systems Perspective, Meaning Making, and Prototyping. Utilizing their newly formed AoH skills and other system change frameworks and practices, participants returned to their communities and established the conditions under which they could host meaningful conversations. The goal was to identify community voices and hear new perspectives that previously would not have been heard. During this time, PHIL held multiple web-based continuous learning sessions for CoP participants to learn from each other as well as subject matter experts who highlighted various pathways for continued engagement and inclusion of community residents. For example, presentations were given on Asset Based Community Development, Photovoice, and Participatory Budgeting. Through these continuous learning sessions, the CoP participants spent time in peer-to-peer dialogue and making meaning of what they were learning. To deepen their practice and application of prototyping, resources were provided through onsite technical assistance along with stipends provided to community residents for their participation in the project.

Finally, Phase III, movement five: Scaling,was incorporated as the participant efforts were scaled. The CoP participants and their communities were invited to join PHIL's Networks for Purpose online platform, which is a collaboration platform for members to exchange ideas and resources and also provides a space for participants a space for participants to grow their CoP in perpetuity.
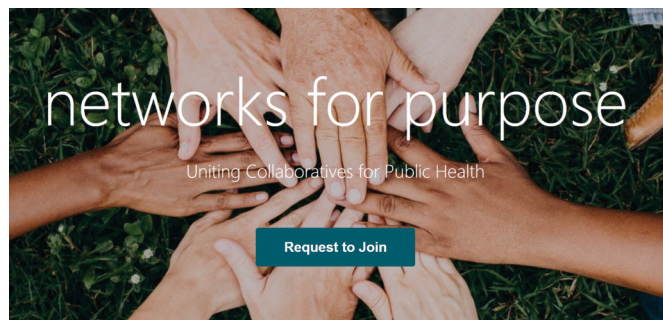
Ultimately, building and supporting a CoP is about building new communication and engagement skills. Building these skills, like any other, requires time, dedication, patience, and practice. Through developing a CoP with the CACHI sites, PHIL successfully created a model pathway for meaningful inclusion and engagement of community residents in a cross-sector community health program.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Community inclusion and engagement are essential to the success of any Accountable Community for Health (ACH). Across the country, the ACH model is being implemented to create sustainable solutions that increase the health and well-being of their communities. Efforts to fully engage community residents in these solutions are challenging for a variety of complex reasons. For example, collaboration dynamics between organizations and residents can be characterized by unequal power distribution, absence of strong relationships and trust, and difficulty arriving at tangible outcomes or agreements. Additionally, there may be limited skills and confidence among ACH organizations and their individual leaders on the best path to create opportunities that inclusively engage residents. We invited ACH participants from the California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) sites to form a CoP. Participants collaboratively developed a shared purpose, a common language, and common tools and resources. All participants were seeking to increase community resident engagement and inclusion in the ACH sites in the communities which they serve.

SEEKING CHANGE AND IDENTIFYING GOALS

Goals for the CoP were two fold. First, to increase participant confidence and capacity to engage with their ACH communities. Second, to develop and demonstrate an effective program that could be replicated in ACH communities across the country, and therefore have impact beyond the initial participants to reach additional communities facing similar challenges. Specific goals for participants and programs are described below.

Participant Goals

- Equip participants with the skills and confidence to create the conditions in their communities that result in broader community inclusion.

- Train participants in new methods of participatory leadership and engagement to foster improved communication, trust, and accountability with community residents and across their ACH organizations.

- Build the skills and confidence to innovatively identify new solutions and make connections across sectors to address pressing and complex community needs.

- Increase participant awareness of the best practices for community engagement so they can most effectively identify and convene skilled, engaged residents in their organizations.

Program Goals

- Generate systems change by enhancing participant skills in participatory leadership.

- Develop and demonstrate effective program design and illustrate the feasibility of replication.

- Cultivate a culture of innovation among partners to identify new solutions and connections across sectors which address pressing community needs.

- Document and share the curriculum, learnings and newly discovered opportunities with the broader network of ACHs and public health organizations across the country.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE?

Communities of Practice (CoP) are when a group of people join efforts around a shared passion for a subject and commit to interact regularly in order to learn how to improve their skills and knowledge related to the subject area.

By creating a CoP, the participants gain a knowledge base and a comfort level that allows them to more deeply engage with their communities and implement these practices. These skills are building blocks for one's ability to engage in meaningful dialogue with their teams, organizations, partners, and community residents.

Domain: The area of shared inquiry and the issues that relate to it.
The domain in this project is focused on a shared passion to build skills, knowledge and ability to engage community residents to further the ACH model for community development and civic engagement.

Community: The relationships among active members who are focused on the shared inquiry (domain) and the sense of belonging that these give them.
The community is the CACHI sites, teams, organizations, partners, and community residents and others interested in building skills and knowledge and working to create systems change in their own context of work, community, and life in the domain area.

Practice: The body of information and knowledge, methods, stories, cases, tools, and associated know how. Each member has a practice in the domain, which other members recognize and can draw upon.
The practice for this project centers on building shared knowledge, understanding, and confidence in the shared inquiry.

> *"The Community of Practice is a space where I've learned a new way of doing business. Knowing that we have a team of thought partners and a platform to incubate ideas, our team has applied several Art of Hosting techniques within our organization and with our partners. Being a part of the Community of Practice has helped shape the way I think about leadership, collaboration, and systems work."*
>
> ~ CoP Participant

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

To build a CoP, intentional opportunities must be created for stakeholders to come together around shared concerns, in a safe space, guided by trained facilitators. The facilitation utilizes a number of methodologies, frameworks and practices in order to address the complex issues facing the community. A key focus of a PHIL-hosted CoP is capacity building through offering experiential learning for participants to practice and apply their training.

Theory U has proven capacity to deliver high-quality results by tapping into the thinking and experiences of diverse stakeholders across sectors. To provide an architecture, PHIL utilized the five movements of the Theory U framework for creating systems change.
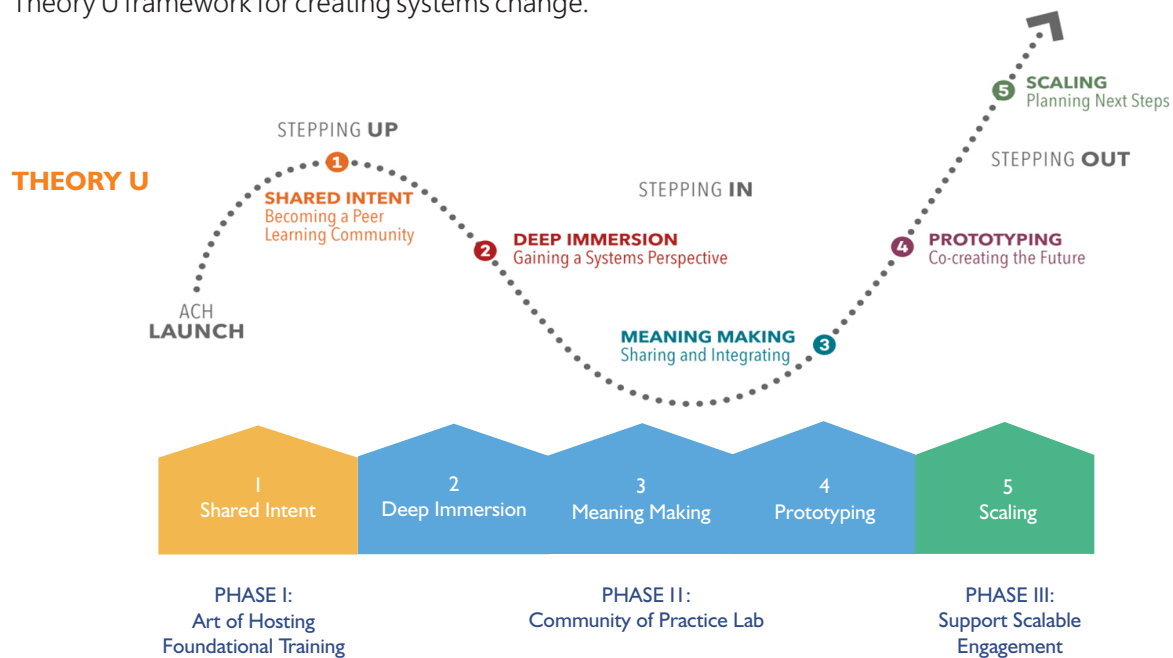
To allow participants to experience the full innovation and systems change potential of the Theory U framework, we organized the CoP into three distinct phases. Phase I was a foundational training which incorporated movement one: Shared Intent. Phase II was a 10-month CoP Lab experience which allowed participants the opportunity to work through movements two through four: Gaining a Systems Perspective, Meaning Making, and Prototyping in their home communities. Finally, Phase III was dedicated to movement five: Scaling. The CoP participants applied and integrated their skills into their ACH leadership team meetings, community convenings, and resident listening sessions. Additionally, they were trained on PHIL's Networks for Purpose platform to scale their learning beyond the CoP forum. They joined fellow community organizations, partners, community residents, and other ACH practitioners to continue learning, practicing, and applying their leadership skills in perpetuity.

Theory U is a systems change-based approach originally created by Otto C. Scharmer of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Learn more about this process in the Methodology Spotlight in the Appendix.

CRAFTING A DESIGN CHALLENGE QUESTION

As part of the approach, the PHIL facilitators also utilized a Design Challenge Question when creating this CoP. By definition, a Design Challenge Question is a method to organize information about a problem you are trying to solve and where you want to go. When crafting the question, take into consideration the challenges and opportunities as well as the impact being sought.

The Design Challenge question is worded as:
"How Might We...?"

This question format suggests a solution is possible and does not provide the answer. This approach is an invitation to partners and communities to collectively come together to better understand the issues specific to each community and generate multiple solutions. The process to identify the Design Challenge Question takes into consideration the challenges, barriers, and opportunities each participant and their communities are facing.

To answer the question, it requires the input from those impacted by the problems, thereby gaining a better understanding of the system and possible places for change. A properly framed Design Challenge Question drives toward ultimate impact, allows for a variety of solutions, and takes into account existing constraints and context.
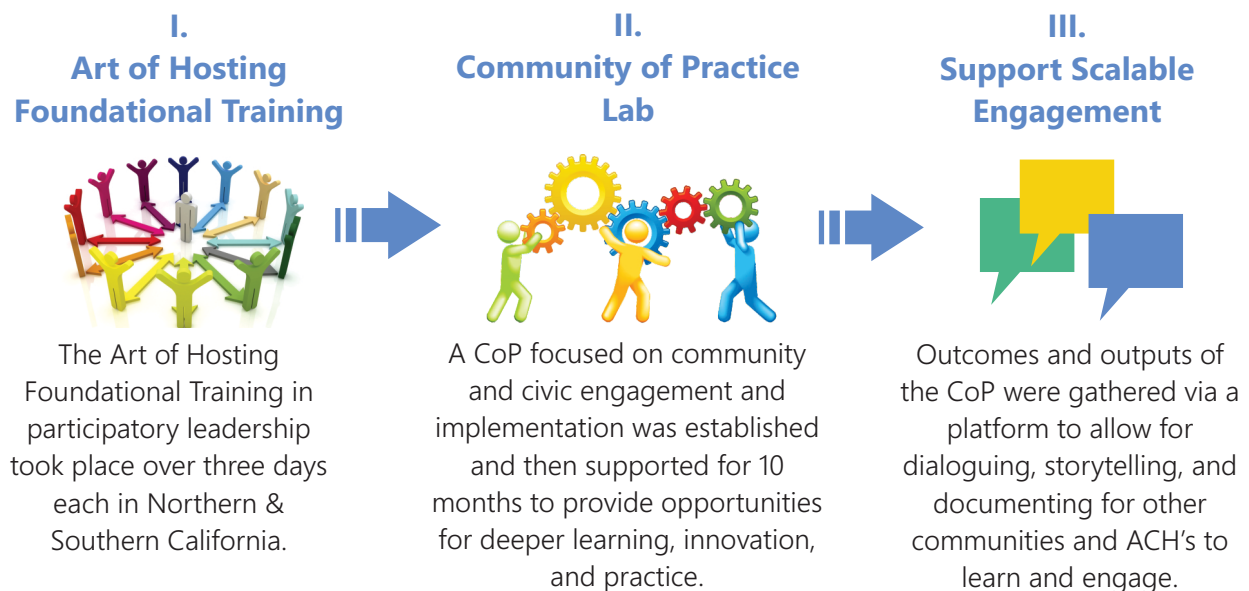
THREE PHASES: Creating the structures for engagement using a three-phase approach.

The Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter (AoH, Art of Hosting) is a foundational training designed to transform existing collaboration dynamics by introducing a set of methods and practices by which participants learn the skill (or art) of holding meaningful conversations and creating the conditions for participatory leadership to emerge. This training capitalizes on the notion that people work on the things that they care most about.

The AoH training for this CoP created a foundation for common language, methods, practices, principles, and frameworks which participants can then put into practice during Phase II - the Community of Practice Lab (CoP Lab). Collectively, Phases I & II provided an opportunity for participants to build knowledge, skills, and methodologies that allowed them to better engage community residents and test their skills through prototyping in a CoP Lab space. Beyond prototyping, participants further incorporated this knowledge base and new-found skills beyond their communities to their peers and fellow ACH practitioners, thereby creating the Conditions for Scalable Engagement.

I. Art of Hosting Foundational Training	II. Community of Practice Lab	III. Support Scalable Engagement
The Art of Hosting Foundational Training in participatory leadership took place over three days each in Northern & Southern California.	A CoP focused on community and civic engagement and implementation was established and then supported for 10 months to provide opportunities for deeper learning, innovation, and practice.	Outcomes and outputs of the CoP were gathered via a platform to allow for dialoguing, storytelling, and documenting for other communities and ACH's to learn and engage.

"This training caused a powerful shift in our internal team dynamics and externally as well. Our team is practicing distributed leadership and engaging our community partners in a completely different way. We were searching for a way to be more authentic, connected, and effective. We found it at this training! The highly skilled facilitators offered real tools for change and coached us to practice what we were learning. I would highly recommend it to anyone looking to do things differently." ~ Participant, Art of Hosting training

ART OF HOSTING & CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

The CoP experience began with participants joining one of two **AoH** trainings to lay the foundation for shared language, purpose, and the basis for capacity building in participatory leadership. This foundation is crucial for participants to meaningfully engage with their communities.

The AoH training is a highly effective way of harnessing the collective wisdom and self-organizing capacity of groups of any size. It is based on the assumption that people give their energy and lend their resources to what matters most to them—in work as in life—the AoH blends a suite of powerful conversational processes that invite people to step into and take charge of the challenges facing them.

This is not a training where participants sit back and listen. A key differentiator of the AoH training is that facilitators intentionally provide the opportunity for participants to both learn and practice the various methods in the safety of a group setting where everyone is learning together.

> **Art of Hosting Conversations that Matter trainings were held:**
>
> Northern California, Napa (November 2018)
> Southern California, Los Angeles (December 2018)

Groups and organizations using the AoH as a working practice report better decision-making, more efficient and effective capacity building, and a greater ability to quickly respond to opportunity, challenges, and change. People who participate in the AoH training typically say they walk away feeling more empowered and able to guide meetings and conversations they are part of toward more effective and desirable outcomes.

The intention with the AoH training for the CACHI CoP was to provide the opportunity for participants to build relationships, trust, learn participatory leadership methods, and cultivate skills and confidence in applying those methods. These methods lay the foundation for participants to facilitate meaningful dialogue in their respective communities—in order to pave the way toward community inclusion and participation.
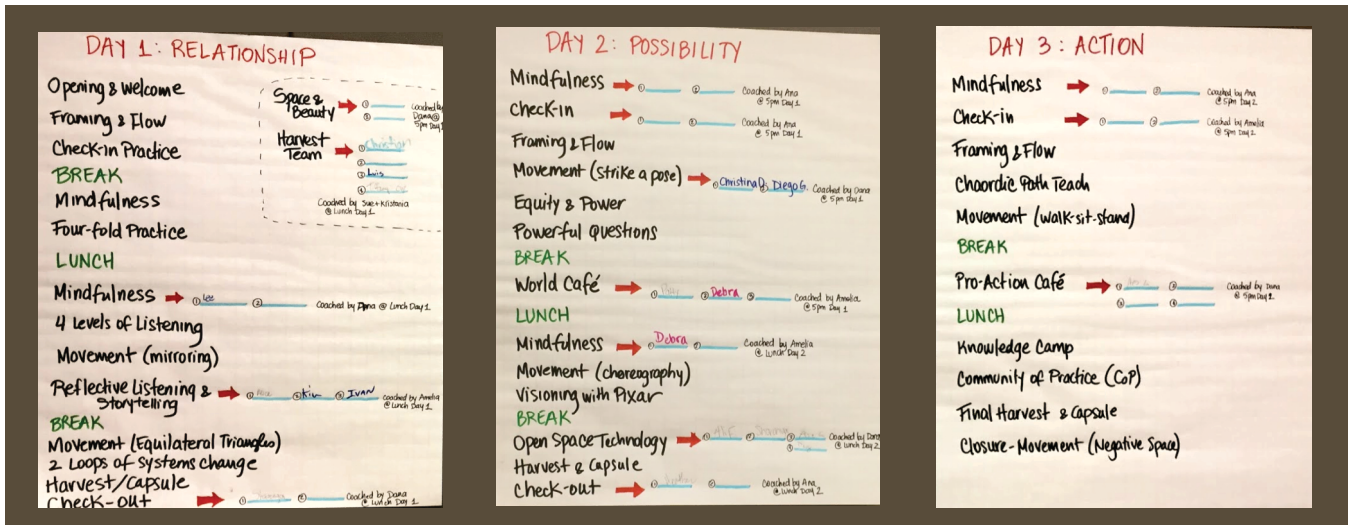
BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF SKILLS AND ALIGNMENT

The Art of Hosting (AoH) training provided a foundational structure and catalyst for the Community Practice Lab (CoP) phase of the project. The AoH Training and CoP Lab were informed by the use of: 1) creating the Shared Intent Design Challenge and 2) adopting the Four-Fold Framework as a set of operating guidelines.

SHARED INTENT DESIGN CHALLENGE

The Shared Intent Design Challenge — or the Design Challenge Question — is used to help participants identify the fundamental question that the group is collectively trying to answer — this is their shared intent.

For this CoP, the resulting Shared Intent Design Challenge Question guided the overall process throughout the AoH training and the CoP Lab. *For this project, the participants co-created the below question to guide their work:*

SHARED INTENT DESIGN CHALLENGE QUESTION

"How might we co-create the conditions to increase and leverage community residents' involvement in shaping the health and well-being of their own communities?"

"[Art of Hosting was] transformative. Really solidifying and/or convincing you if you were not on board that you could start with relationships and look at the possibilities of what you can do together. The whole moving at the speed of trust. Really teaching us…how to engage with each other and with residents. Everyone who went was just like "Wow!" We have changed our whole view about how we read these collaborative models."
~ participant, Art of Hosting training Long Beach

COMMUNITY OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Creating operating principles is one way to support the shared intent of how groups want to work together. One method to establish operating principles is offered through one of the AoH methodologies, called the Four-Fold Practice.

For this CoP, we used the Four-Fold Practice at each of the training sessions to create agreed upon principles. In doing so, participants created the principles for the upcoming CoP Lab and were taught how to replicate this practice in their own communities.

FOUR-FOLD PRACTICE

Co-Create. Become a community of practice.
When we are engaged in the Four-Fold Practice, it is in service of co-learning and co-creating—for the sake of health and wellness in our communities.

Host others. Take responsibility for contributing.
A learning community runs on the self-organization, passion, drive and responsibility of its members and being willing to step up for their beliefs and act upon them.

Be Present. Host yourself.
Becoming part of a learning community begins with your capacity to practice self-care, to be fully present, and to know what you need in both challenging and easy moments.
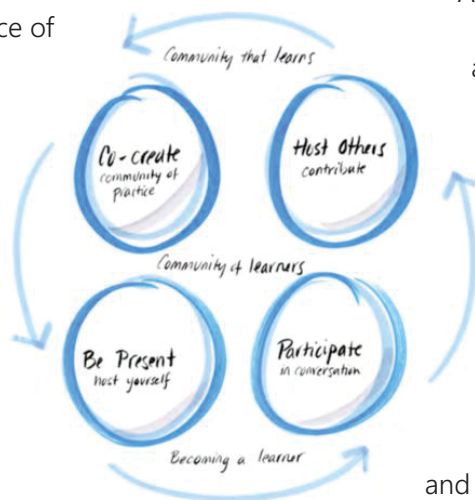
Participate. Join the conversation.
A learning community thrives on a shared purpose, under the conditions that attract and maintain participation and when each of the members fully participate.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE LAB: Incubator for innovation in the area of engagement.

The AoH training provided a foundational structure and served as catalyst for the 10-month CoP component of this project which took place from January to October 2019. All participants were invited to deepen their learning and further expand and practice their skills in this second phase.

Prior to joining this CoP Lab, participants reported that they previously believed conducting surveys was the best—or sometimes only—way to learn about community needs. Through experimenting in the CoP Lab, participants gained the ability to have a broader systems perspective, learned new methods for engagement skills, and applied them.

Applying the new methods, such as Open Space Technology or World Cafe, participants created opportunities within their ACHs or organizations to hear the voices and perspectives from their community members. Participants sought out the people who were most directly impacted by the problems for which they were seeking solutions.

Within the CoP Lab phase of this project, PHIL provided technical assistance through: monthly calls, web discussions on community engagement methods, providing encouragement, and creating space for participants to share their experiences. During the monthly calls, participants shared how they applied their learning in their communities and reinforced their confidence to do so. They also increased understanding of how their peers were testing various methods in their communities.

Some of the methods used by participants were: Mindfulness, Earned Media, Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), Photovoice, Participatory Budgeting, and Cultural Humility. *The full list is available in the Methodology section of this report.*

STORY FROM SONOMA

As part of the CoP Lab experience, Sonoma County participants took their new skills and practices back to their ACH where they authentically engaged the leadership team. CoP participants incorporated the methods and tools learned from the CoP (i.e. World Cafe, Open Space Technology) into their approach for a key meeting with ACH council members to try a new style of working.

CoP participants created the conditions for authentic engagement through changing the room set up (e.g. organizing tables in pods vs. classroom style), holding mindfulness moments, and playing music.

The response was overwhelmingly positive as Council members expressed enthusiasm to host future meetings in this same manner going forward. The CoP participants reported to their peers that it was a great process, albeit bumpy. Especially during the 'harvesting conversations' portion, it was challenging to fully capture all the information. Overall, however, the process gave them experience in applying and improving their skills.

At the next meeting for ACH Council members, the CoP participants took the lead again. This time, they graphically depicted the comments that were shared during the meeting. This created a sense of inclusion and allowed meeting attendees to feel heard.

In addition to the ACH Council member meetings, the CoP participants have used their skills and confidence to host meaningful engagement in other related groups and meetings, and again, these new methods were embraced and well received.

"The different strategies for moving work groups to action by changing the meeting format are helpful and immediately useful."

~ participant, Art of Hosting

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE LAB: Learning Lab Elements

During the CoP Lab, PHIL fostered shared learning with an intention to give a broader systems perspective, meaning-making, and prototyping through the offering of the following elements:

Tools and Resources
PHIL curated a set of resources and tools relevant to the domain of the CoP. Members were then invited to add additional resources throughout the training time together, culminating with an extensively documented resource library for participants to utilize and share within their communities.

Monthly Group Video Calls
Workshop members participated in monthly web-based discussion calls that: fostered peer learning exchanges, inspired ideas for innovation, shared lessons and failures, and planted the seeds of possibilities for deeper collaboration and innovation.

Practice Sprints
Participants were encouraged to practice the various methods and community engagement pathways, structures and/or processes in and with their communities. Each month, participants came together to share and reflect on their progress and learning during the group calls.

Reflection Practice
Participants were encouraged to regularly take time to reflect on what they were learning. Reflection practice was incorporated into the structure of each call. Participants used the time to ask questions such as *"What am I learning?"* or *"What does it mean for me and my work?"*

Technical Assistance & Stipends
Funding for this project supported PHIL to provide technical assistance to each site, offering knowledge and expertise on engagement pathways based on the interest and needs of each site. Additionally, stipends were offered to interested CoP participants. Stipends were used to purchase items such as gift cards, child care, or food to support community residents' participation.

'Knowledge Camp' Web Discussions
Web discussions were offered on various community engagement methods and practices. These were instrumental in broadening perspectives and supporting deeper levels of learning.

SUPPORT FOR SCALABLE ENGAGEMENT

The intention for this CoP was to create the opportunity for participants to come together to learn new methods, replicate and integrate participatory leadership and engagement practices into their methods of building ACHs in their respective communities. This report and related materials document the outcomes of how CACHI CoP participants integrated these skills into their ACHs as well as provides a frame for future replication in communities across California and the U.S.

Participatory Leadership for Community Inclusion

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[Participatory Leadership for Community Inclusion Video](#)

This CoP was set up explicitly to support participants to learn how to replicate and scale meaningful engagement and inclusion in their communities. This began with the AoH training where participants learned by doing—experiencing the methods themselves—which in turn supported their capacity to replicate learned skills and tools in their communities. Further, after each new method was introduced, participants reflected on how and where they might apply it in their communities.

As a result of testing and innovating within the CoP Lab, participants reported that they incorporated and integrated these new practices into their day-to-day activities, thus scaling—or implementing—their newly formed skills. During this time, they also continued to receive feedback from their CoP peers on monthly calls where they exchanged ideas, and sought feedback about how to proceed.

SNAPSHOT

The Humboldt Community Health Trust gathered community input in three main ways. First, they conducted 31 discovery interviews with service providers. Second, they conducted 35 lived-experience interviews. Third, they held 9 community listening sessions with a diverse set of stakeholders to understand their community's priorities related to substance use disorders. The findings from these efforts were used to inform future work of the ACH and develop goals for the ACH.

In their own communities, many of the CoP participants hosted listening sessions, World Cafes, and Open Space Technologies, thus replicating the teachings they themselves had received as part of this CoP. As an example, one CACHI site formed their own subsequent CoP to continue integrating and replicating these skills with and for community members, as well as incorporating the methods into their broader ACH governance structure.

Finally, the scaled engagement phase offered a number of web discussions on topics relevant to the CoP. These web discussions and materials are available on the Networks for Purpose platform as well as the PHIL YouTube channel.

The Population Health Innovation Lab along with the Blue Shield of California Foundation recognized the need for community inclusion and engagement in the governance and decision-making processes for CACHI sites. To fully engage and enhance the participatory leadership skills and confidence of ACH practitioners and fellow ACH-like staff working collaboratively with and for community members, PHIL created and implemented a CoP to provide an ongoing supportive platform for participants who are joined in shared inquiry.

Although the time together was relatively short, it was nevertheless impactful and trust was built across the participants. Given the complexity of ACH work, and the multitude of community engagement skills required, this CoP will continue to serve as a refuge for CACHI staff to come together and continue to innovate and grow.

EVALUATION RESULTS

At baseline, respondents were most interested in:

- Gaining strategies for addressing community engagement (96.9% of respondents)
- Improved understanding of community engagement (65.6% of respondents)
- Support for addressing challenges (65.6% of respondents)

As a result of participating in the AoH training and/or CoP, participants demonstrated:

- Increased access to strategies & areas of expertise for community engagement (91.7% of respondents)
- Improved understanding of community engagement (83.3% of respondents)
- Support for addressing challenges (83.3% of respondents)

Throughout this CoP, participants identified areas where they felt stuck, what was working well, and where they most needed support in order to engage with their communities. As a result of this continuous learning and reflection process, participants adapted along the way, thus maximizing the experience of this CoP. Following are the overarching lessons learned.

Accountability

A successful CoP requires active participation and contribution, beyond what is required in more traditional group meetings or lecture style conferences. For many of the CACHI participants, joining this CoP was a completely new way to convene, learn, and in general, come together. For this reason, PHIL facilitators set the expectation that all participants would be asked to contribute and be actively engaged in the process, and they provided opportunities for each person to contribute and host sections of the day. This shared sense of accountability created opportunities for each participant to lean into the experience and allowed for individual and group accountability to be maximized.

Authentic Engagement

With communities: Participants in this CoP expressed the need for authentic and meaningful community inclusion and engagement in their ACHs. At the same time, participants' definitions of and approach to authentic engagement varied widely. In particular, they wanted to avoid the appearance of token representation. Rather, they hoped to create truly meaningful roles for residents. Therefore, this CoP emphasized training and skill building to elicit meaningful authentic engagement.

With ACH leaders: The role and position held by the individual participant affected their self-efficacy to authentically integrate the new community inclusion skills within their organizations. Some participants felt they would need the support of their organization, especially leadership and practitioners; moreover, the leaders in their organization would need context on the importance of community engagement in order to adopt this as standard practice. This bi-directional training could be included as part of the CoP Lab or Supporting Scalable Engagement going forward.

Brave Space

A successful CoP requires a brave space where learning, failure, and practicing new skills are accepted and embraced. When the space for learning feels safe enough, people are more likely to share, learn, and form relationships. A CoP can be a refuge for the members in the same shared inquiry.

- Some of the participants felt vulnerable at first when discussing the lack of community inclusion and engagement in their current ACH structures.
- A tipping point for this CoP was the realization that others were struggling with some of the same questions and that it was okay to not have all the answers. Participants felt comfort in knowing their colleagues had similar goals and relief in not having to explain their barriers in detail.
- Participants were willing to share their stories and recognized that others found value in their sharing.

Incorporating New Practices

Participants were uncertain about how to incorporate their new community engagement skills into their existing ACH governance structures. By offering time to practice in the CoP Lab coupled with peer support in Supporting Scalable Engagement, participants found value in sharing their experiences and learning how others introduced these new skills into their respective ACHs. Finally, having champions or allies to support the new way of doing business was also useful.

> *"This was an incredibly valuable training. I learned and practiced a variety of different approaches with my team that we are already implementing in our community. The trainers are skilled, thoughtful, and inspiring. I highly recommend this training to teams who host meetings or conversations with diverse groups of people."*
> ~ CoP Participant

Launch

This CoP opened with an in person kick-off, or launch, which provided an important opportunity to network and develop relationships. This is essential for bonding, learning, trust building, and sets the tone for participation in the CoP. Many participants found value in the launch, especially the AoH training, which was highly applicable to the skills they needed to operate within their ACH. Future CoP and ACH leaders could consider holding an in person launch combined with training to establish the foundation for community inclusion and relationship building.

Pathways to Engagement

There are multiple pathways to approach community engagement and inclusion into ACH governance structures. Through this CoP, the participants broadened their knowledge base and identified multiple new pathways to engagement, including art, movement, technology, and more. Through the CoP Lab, they explored what was most important to their community members which proved to be an important part of the learning process.

Power

Unequal power distribution between leaders and community residents is an issue that is present in communities across the country. Often it is not clear to community members neither what is happening nor how to deal with it once it is recognized.

Many participants in this CoP reported neither being in a position of power within their communities nor within their ACH organization. As part of joining this CoP, participants were able to identify this barrier and learn strategies on how they could navigate the power dynamics.

Practice

- Learning new practices takes time. Like with any new skill, the more one practices the more confident one becomes in understanding and applying the skill to different situations and use cases.
- As a result of their experience in this CoP, participants better understand that achieving full inclusion and engagement of community residents takes longer than expected.
- Participants now have the ability to identify gaps within the existing ACH system using dialogue with community residents, and can provide an opportunity to prototype new pathways to achieve inclusion and support with the community.
- Participants know they do not need the pathway fully planned out—instead, they now have the skills and confidence to take a leap and try.

> *"We have some great efforts started, but consistently engaging the community is a challenge. We're definitely improving, but it's a long process to have true community-driven efforts."*
> - CoP participant

Reflection and Mindfulness

Taking the time to stop and reflect is hard, and yet, it needs to be incorporated into the culture of an ACH. Participants reported they felt an overwhelming sense of busyness and the pressure to achieve success in their ACHs. Incorporating mindfulness practices into this CoP was welcomed and needed.

Additionally, given that the ACH model is a fairly new concept in the U.S., participants recognized an even greater importance of taking the time to reflect on their learnings at regular intervals.
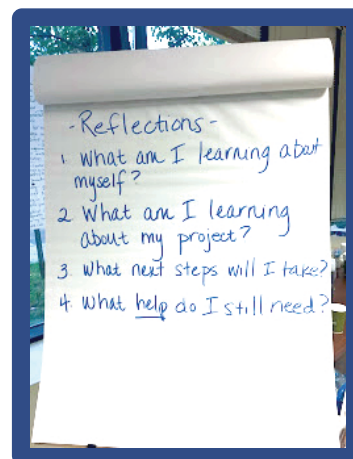
Resources to Support the work

Learning and incorporating new skills into an organizational structure takes time, and often, the learning and funding timelines do not align. A key takeaway from the CoP is the need to identify resources for sustainability with an emphasis of reporting to funding organizations that the community's needs remain regardless of funding status.

Self-Organizing

Self-organizing in a CoP asks participants to set aside the 'business-as-usual' attitude; instead, participants are asked to actively take the lead—to facilitate or host—sections of the agenda during the meeting. Preferably, they would not be called upon by a facilitator, rather they would step up to lead. This style of collaboration takes time to unfold and can be uncomfortable at first. In this CACHI CoP, multiple opportunities were offered for participants to lead or share. It took time to develop a safe enough space where participants felt comfortable and engaged in the process to begin fully participating.

Identify opportunities for ongoing technical assistance (TA) and support to promote long-term improvements in community engagement. As indicated in the open-ended feedback provided by survey respondents, efforts to make substantial changes in the culture/practices of an ACH/group take time and may be better measured as long-term changes. Though the results of the Community Engagement Survey indicate many potential improvements have already been made regarding community engagement practices, on-going TA/support and monitoring may help to track further, long-term progress made by these groups.

Support ongoing avenues for sharing resources and strategies for addressing community engagement. According to the Community Engagement Survey results, almost all survey respondents were hoping to gain strategies for addressing community engagement by participating in the AoH training and/or CoP (Evaluation Report pg. 10, Fig. 8). While most follow-up participants (71%) indicated that they had gained strategies for addressing community engagement, almost a third of respondents did not indicate that they had gained new strategies. Ongoing support and efforts to connect participants with others who are working on improving community engagement may help to further connect participants with new strategies for engaging the community.

Address the importance of actively engaging and including community members as participants of ACHs/community groups. While agreement was fairly high among survey participants that their ACH/group includes community input in decision-making for their ACH/group, active and inclusive community member participation in their ACH/group appeared to be less common among survey respondents (Evaluation Report pgs. 13-14, Tables 3 & 4). Efforts to encourage inclusivity and open participation of community members within ACHs and other community groups should be addressed.

Offer the Art of Hosting training at the beginning of a collaborative. Participants reported the AoH training provided a particularly relevant base for developing the skills required to lead and support an ACH.

Make Theory U framework as concrete as possible. PHIL facilitators learned that it is imperative to use real stories and experiences to make theories and frameworks as concrete as possible. This allows participants to more quickly and easily assimilate what could otherwise feel like complex and challenging theories into their work

Set self-organizing expectations at the beginning of a CoP and use best practices of asking participants to be present, listen, actively organize, and take the lead. This will require facilitators to connect with individual participants in order to learn their needs and sometimes intervene with a high touch to further explain what is being offered and learn how to best support. Naming the expectation at the beginning of any practice and clearly setting the accountability will likely foster more self-organizing in future CoPs.

Art of Hosting and Harvesting Conversations that Matter

The AoH training cultivates participatory leadership skills using frameworks, practices, principles and methodologies and invites complexity, curiosity, non-judgment, and thoughtful action. AoH teaches new skills for innovation across all forms of multi-stakeholder systems. It includes many methods such as: World Cafe, Open Space, Storytelling, and Appreciative Inquiry and Framework to navigate complexity including Cynefin Framework, Chaordic Stepping Stones, and Divergence/Convergence and works with the real challenges and context that participants are grappling with in their own leadership.

Asset-Based Community Development

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach to sustainable community-driven change. It insists that building and strengthening communities requires utilizing the current and potential assets of that community, rather than focusing on the needs and deficits. ABCD challenges traditional thought that assumes communities need to be fixed by outsiders. Instead, the approach considers local assets to be the primary building blocks for developing strong, sustainable communities. Residents often have the abilities and power to drive change themselves.

Check-in Question

A check-in at the beginning of a meeting helps people get into the frame of mind for the purpose of the meeting and or convening and helps to remind everyone of their commitment to the shared intention. It ensures that people are truly present.

Often a question is posed to the group related to the shared purpose of the meeting such as— *What is emerging for you? What are you noticing?* The check-in usually starts with a volunteer willing to share and proceeds around the circle. If an individual is not ready to speak, the turn is passed and another opportunity is offered after others have spoken.

Community of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoP) are groups of people who share a passion for something that they do, and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better. In a CoP the following are the key elements:

Domain — The area of shared inquiry and the key issues that relate to it.

Community — The relationships among active members who are focused on the shared inquiry (domain) and the sense of belonging that these give them.

Practice — The body of information and knowledge, methods, stories, cases, tools, and associated know how. Each member has a practice in the domain, which other members recognize and can draw upon.

Community Operating Principles

For groups to come together and work on complex issues, it is important to create an atmosphere of trust and strong working relationships by envisioning how we want to be and work together. An important practice is to spend time at the beginning of a convening identifying a shared set of operating principles and agreements. The hosts can create an initial set of suggestions and open up to the group to co create additional guidelines as necessary.
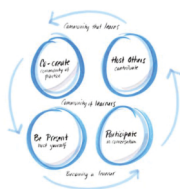
Shared Intent Design Challenge Question

As you consider the challenges, barriers and opportunities in your communities, it is helpful to frame them into a design challenge question. When crafting the question, take into consideration the challenges and opportunities as well as the impact being sought. The Shared Intent Design Challenge question is worded as *"How Might We."* The *How might We* format suggests a solution is possible and does not provide the answer. This approach is an invitation to partners and community to collectively come together to understand the problems and to generate many solutions. To answer the question, it requires the need to go out and talk to those impacted by the problems, thereby gaining a better understanding of the system and possible places for change. A properly framed design challenge question drives toward ultimate impact, allows for a variety of solutions, and takes into account constraints and context.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present, being aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. There are many mindfulness practices that can be incorporated into meetings such as starting with a few minutes of deep breathing or guided meditation. Oftentimes, participants are coming from a day of many activities and their minds are full of "noise" from the day. This practice helps to suspend judgment and unleash curiosity approaching the task at hand with an open mind.
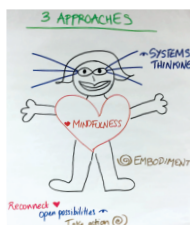
Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. It gives people real power over real money. PB started in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1989, as an anti-poverty measure that helped reduce child mortality by nearly 20%. Since then, PB has spread to over 3,000 cities around the world, and has been used to decide budgets from states, counties, cities, housing authorities, schools, and other institutions. The New York Times calls PB "revolutionary civics in action"—it deepens democracy, builds stronger communities, and creates a more equitable distribution of public resources.

Photovoice

Photovoice was developed in 1992 by Caroline C. Wang of the University of Michigan, and Mary Ann Burris, Program Officer for Women's Health at the Ford Foundation headquartered in Beijing, China. The idea was built on the foundation that images and words together can effectively express community and individual needs, problems, and desires. The method has five key concepts: Images teach; Pictures can influence policy; Community members should participate in creating and defining the images that shape policy; Process requires that policy makers are made an audience; and Emphasizes individual and community action. Give a voice to those who might not have one.

Theory U

Theory U is first, a framework; second, a method for leading profound change; and third, a way of being. Its purpose is to transform ineffective structures, or structures that benefit only a few, into systems that benefit greater populations to increase wellness. The framework was derived from research done by Friedrich (Fritz) Glasl and Otto Scharmer. Theory U researchers interviewed innovative leaders, teams, and organizations to learn how profound transformation happens. They discovered that Theory U has proven capacity to deliver quality results by tapping into the thinking and experiences of diverse stakeholders from across sectors and those directly impacted to create solutions to complex challenges. Theory U includes the following five movements: 1. Shared Intent, 2. Gaining a Systems Perspective, 3. Meaning Making, 4. Prototyping, and 5. Scaling. Theory U was used as the foundational architecture to develop the CoP and the structure on which the experiences were built.

PHIL Community Spotlights on Engagement
• All Children Thrive, City of Long Beach
• Napa County Accountable Community for Health
• West Sacramento Accountable Community for Health

PHASE I: The Art of Hosting Foundational Training
• Community Engagement Practice Lab Packet
• Leading Change Building Our Collective Capacity Workbook
• Community of Practice Membership Intentions
• Art of Hosting Feedback Survey

PHASE II: Community Engagement Lab
• Electives document
• Webinars listed below were provided and are posted here: (Networks for Purpose, WordPress & YouTubeChannel)
  Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Training - Ron Dwyer-Voss, Consultant
  Photovoice 1 and Photovoice 2 - Joanna Hathaway
  Getting your story out - Media 101 - Tom Llewellyn Shareable
  Community Engagement - Dr. Mojgan (Mo) Sami, Academic Director, UC Irvine
  Participatory Budgeting – Victor Rodriquez, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
  Cultural Humility –Len Adams, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
  NEAR sciences Advanced Trauma Informed Care -Teresa Posakony, Emerging Wisdom
  Chaordic Stepping Stones - Chris Corrigan, Harvest Moon Consultants
  Limiting Beliefs - Caitlin Frost, Harvest Moon Consultants
  Making the Most of Resident Advisory Councils – Jessica Curtis, Community Catalyst
  Authentic Youth Engagement - Amina Sheik Mohamed and Elizabeth Cooper, The UC San Diego
  Youth Advisory Council & the Center for Community Health

PHASE III: Support Scaleable Engagement
• Participatory Leadership for Community Inclusion Video (Joanna Hathaway)
• PHIL Theory U Methodology Close-Up

EVALUATION REPORT
• A Comprehensive Evaluation Report for the Community Engagement: CACHI Art of Hosting & Community of Practice, September 2019