Dear all,

We will attempt to summarize the workshop (although you have to know this is very difficult). Dianne took great notes on Friday and I have it summarized as best I could. I have to say that I was pretty tired and probably missed some important pieces. I look forward to seeing you all next week.

Liz

Design Workshop Note, January 6, 2012

We started out talking about the workshops we have been participating in for almost two years and about this workshop in general. We are continuing a bit from the workshop last quarter on Facilitation and coaching and will also talk about design.

We check in then Roger discussed models of interactions with the world:

1st order - I, me, my thinking. This when you look at things from the perspective of yourself. How am I in this system? What can I change that will change the system? What is my influence on the world?

2nd order - collective subjective, we, us, our. How are we together in this moment? how do we interact using habitual patterns or can we break these patterns together?

3rd order - objective, verifiable, they, them, it. How are they behaving and why? what is causing their success or failure? How can I intervene to change the system they are in?

We started talking about design with this model in mind.

What's the first thing you do if you want to design something?

JF's model is that when you agree to do something, then you agree to design something, like a class, and you start with anxiety about how to do it. What's your goal? Who are you in the system? Kurt says it's very clear to him how design works, and that makes him nervous. Linda says her design of how to do something and its lived reality are not the same. She had a funny example of her goal to play the piano "better," and her solution is to buy a book.

Karen says she was very comfortable that her model of teaching was correct, but now she is team teaching and her model has expanded to include input from others. Although this wasn't said this might include design with the 2nd person lens.

Roger says a model is easy to make, so our class this quarter will not be about how to get the best design, but about how to compare our different models to see if we can learn from that.

Andrew sees design as a temporal quality. You are always designing for something in the future. Roger says before he designs, he designs the design process. Is there actually a problem here? If you recontextualize the problem, maybe you don't need the design. You think differently. An example of this was the design problem of building a bridge, maybe if you look at the reasons the bridge is needed, you might come up with a completely different solution.

Homework is to design a day in your life. Don't enact it. Consider who else is in your designed day, who am I as the designer, where did I start to design my day? What state am I animating in my design?

The second part of the homework is to see if you can spend time in an undesigned way. Even if it's only 5 minutes. Try it.

Roger discussed another model where the question might be if design is actually a choice or is it structurally determined. This italicized section is my own thoughts, you may want to skip it............I was thinking about the idea of structural determinism in the context of a building. The structure determine how to exit the building by where the door is located. We walk along the path that leads through the door which we imagine is the only way to leave the room (it is structurally determined) , but in reality there are a whole slew of other choices. We could smash the wall, we could leave through the window, or we could not leave at all.

Roger had some good questions: where is structural determinism working in a design? What are the internal dynamics such that the parts of the design interact?

Rick wonders if this class is about leaving our design models at the door. Probably not.

Roger says that most design models are 'models of becoming'. Roger would rather consider a 'model of being'. A model of becoming assumes something about a problem that needs to be fixed.

context process content
1st 2nd 3rd

These are three models of reality. Usually the process proceeds from right to left, but can also go the other way, starting with context. That's just harder.

Some argue that organizations have solutions looking for problems to justify the existence of the organization.
final form material efficient

final is context in which it is occurring
formal is the form it will take, vision, design
efficient is the process, if then...
motar is the actual material being used

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May your coming year be filled with magic and dreams and good madness. I hope you read some fine books and kiss someone who thinks you’re wonderful, and don’t forget to make some art — write or draw or build or sing or live as only you can. And I hope, somewhere in the next year, you surprise yourself.

- Neil Gaiman