

# NCDD Confab Call

May 10, 2012, 2-3:30pm Eastern / 11-12:30 Pacific

## with Tree Bressen and Sue Woehrlin, discussing the Group Works Card Deck

NCDD Confabs are opportunities for members of the NCDD community to connect with each other and to hear about exciting projects in our field. We run the Confabs via conference call, and use collaborative Google docs to allow Confab participants to introduce themselves, jot down notes, ask questions, share resources, and more.

### Featured NCDDers:

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On this call, we'll be talking with **Tree Bressen** and **Sue Woehrlin** about the newly-available *Group Works Card Deck*, which is the product of a multi-year collaborative project to develop a pattern language for group process.

NCDD Feature on the Group Works Deck (by Tom Atlee): <http://ncdd.org/6871>

Group Works Deck PDF: <http://groupworksdeck.org/download> ([pdf at ncdd.org](#))

Please download this pdf file and have it handy during the call. It includes some general information and sample cards that we will refer to during the call, so that you can have some "hands on experience."

### Who's on the call?

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- Sandy Heierbacher, NCDD Director, [sandy@ncdd.org](mailto:sandy@ncdd.org) or [www.ncdd.org/contact](http://www.ncdd.org/contact)
- Andy Fluke, NCDD, [andy@ncdd.org](mailto:andy@ncdd.org)
- Raines Cohen and Betsy Morris in Berkeley (CA), [Cohousing Coaches](#), [Cohousing California](#) marketing the card deck & tools as **Cohousing Cards** and **Chalice Cards** (for UU congregations).
- Sue Woehrlin, [suewoehrlin@gmail.com](mailto:suewoehrlin@gmail.com)
- Kat Morgan, [kat.morgan@hiusa.org](mailto:kat.morgan@hiusa.org), interested in all things OD, any tool that vitalizes & democratizes group life...love NCDD
- Tree Bressen, [tree@ic.org](mailto:tree@ic.org), [www.treegroup.info](http://www.treegroup.info), <http://groupworksdeck.org/>
- John Abbe, [johnca@ourpla.net](mailto:johnca@ourpla.net), Group Works co-developer (& tech person), process artist, Co-Intelligence Institute president, and <http://wagn.org/> co-designer (the Group Works project used Wagn to develop the patterns)
- Patrick Maxwell, [ptmpeace@gmail.com](mailto:ptmpeace@gmail.com), Co-Intelligence Institute intern
- Tim Bonnemann, Founder and CEO, Intellitics, Inc., <http://www.intellitics.com>, [@intellitics](#)
- Ben Roberts, Newtown, CT. *weDialogue* and Occupy Cafe, [www.weDialogue.com](http://www.weDialogue.com) ([ben@wedialogue.com](mailto:ben@wedialogue.com)), [www.OccupyCafe.org](http://www.OccupyCafe.org)
- Rick Lent, Boston, [www.meetingforresults.com](http://www.meetingforresults.com)
- Edward Dolan, Boston, Mass. Bay OD Learning Group, [edwarddolan@verizon.net](mailto:edwarddolan@verizon.net)

- Alec Neal, Minneapolis, MN - Paradigm Architect, Heartland Inc., [www.heartlandcircle.com](http://www.heartlandcircle.com), [alec@heartlandcircle.com](mailto:alec@heartlandcircle.com)
- Amy Lenzo, Richmond CA (San Francisco bay area) - independent online communications professional, Director of Communications for the World Cafe Community Foundation (proud to be an early contributor to/participant in the Pattern Language project) <http://www.beautydialogues.com>, <http://www.clearlightcommunications.com>, <http://www.wedialogue.com>, <http://www.theworldcafe.com>
- Judith Katz, Oakland, CA - Cofounder, Connection Action Project <http://connectionaction.org>, [judith@connectionaction.org](mailto:judith@connectionaction.org)
- Nancy Hess, Hummelstown, PA; Org Dev Consultant; [njhess@njhessassociates.com](mailto:njhess@njhessassociates.com) (sorry am late and will leave early, am on the road between mtgs.)
- Barbara Shapiro, NYC, Museum Educator, [bshapiro@mindspring.com](mailto:bshapiro@mindspring.com)

### What questions do you have for the speaker or other participants on the call?

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1. Kat Morgan: Any tips on using/introducing this to groups who might find the language “touchy-feely” :)
  - a. Tim: great question!
  - b. Sue: one idea is to take out the cards that are most “touchy feeling” when working with a particular group... or have a group name its own patterns that fit its culture better!
  - c. Tree: Or pick a subset of the cards that you feel are most useful or relevant to that particular organization. And emphasize that these patterns grew out of real life experience, pragmatically based.
  - d. *Kat: love the responses about language -- I absolutely experience group process as spiritual and my work in OD/facilitation that way. The folks I work with know that about me, appreciate and expect that from me. They want/need me to facilitate a different experience than a task-only business-ROI focused meeting. I do talk about this with groups, even those that aren't explicitly faith-based -- but I may be more likely to talk about it as “passion,” “purpose,” “mission,” “values,” or “culture”. I talk about the “energy” of the group. It's all in how I introduce and define the terms -- so “mission” isn't just a buzzword or used unconsciously, without really reflecting on the meaning. I talk a lot about emotions and the emotional life of organizations and groups too, which also pushes the boundaries towards what some call “touchy feely.” I use silence too. I talk about that as “negative capability”\* or “reflective time.” [\*from Keats: “when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.”]*
2. Raines: In bringing the cards to many groups, I found that while people recognize the patterns in their work and find resonance, folks without facilitation experience find it challenging to understand the deeper context. Any plans to build an introductory guide? (*I was building off this idea when I suggested an online “orientation” course of some kind below ~ Amy*)

3. Ben Roberts: any thoughts about posting pdfs of single cards on the groupworksdeck.org website for easy sharing during an online meeting?
  - a. Tree: At this time, each pattern does have a page on the site (see under The Patterns --> [Patterns by Name](#)). *I've been using the links to a given page in lieu of pasting in an actual image of a card. Good enough, but lacking the punch and beauty of having the card right there on a Google doc, for example. If each card were posted there in addition, say to the right, would that meet the need you are describing? Yes, if it was an image I could easily cut and paste.*
  - b. If you had a program that allows you to edit PDFs, it should be possible (at least I think it should). - Kat *I have used a "snip" program in Windows to do this successfully. But cutting, "saving as" to my desktop, and then pasting to another doc, is a bit clunky. An image on the website that I could more easily copy would help. True, this multi-step process can be clunky.*
  - c. If you have a set of graphics saved from the individual web pages, you can import them into a PowerPoint/KeyNote doc and then "dial by number" using the keyboard to quickly go to any card. Handy when working with a larger group or even a big table - when someone pulls up or discusses a card, have a quick-reference list and type the number and press return to bring the card up onscreen. - Raines *Sounds very cool. I'm not familiar with this tech.*
4. Judith Katz - Can you offer "case studies" of how these cards have been implemented?
  - a. Tree: We will talk about that a little on the call, not sure if you mean on the call or asking for that on the website?
5. Rick Lent: Ben, I loved your example of building ownership for a budget problem with your congregation. Is there any chance I can hear from you how it goes, how you design the congregational conversations and so on? [rick@meetingforresults.com](mailto:rick@meetingforresults.com) Sure, Rick! We'll be done on 5/18. Sent you an email...
6. Edward Dolan: I would love to know the filters or characteristics you used for determining what was included. Tree: see the full version at [http://grouppatternlanguage.org/Hallmarks\\_List](http://grouppatternlanguage.org/Hallmarks_List) (on our old website) and a "softer" version on the new website (near bottom of page) at <http://groupworksdeck.org/about> .
7. Ben Roberts: re the question about what the cards tell us about our personal strengths and weaknesses, I had an insight as I considered this... That this varies hugely for me when I am in a host role versus that of a participant. For example, as a host I am great at holding space. But as a participant, I often get caught up in the things that are most important to ME and can clutter/clog the space if those aren't aligned with what is happening in the group. So this suggests to me is that there might be distinct processes to explore for using the cards with participants as well as practitioners/hosts/facilitators. *creating/defining clearer boundaries for yourself as a participant? clarifying purpose of your participation, for example. For me, that's easiest when the purpose of the meeting, the decision-making process and participants' role(s)*

*in that are made very clear.*

- a. For the NCDD conference, what if everyone was invited to choose a card that they felt represented a strength and another for a weakness and then used those as touchstones for their participation? Maybe a card for something that is a “growth edge” too? It might shift their participation in interesting ways. A session at the end could be held for collective reflection on the experience.

### Other stuff you want to share related to call content...

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- Want a deck in person in Marin without waiting? We’ve placed some with Open Secret bookstore in San Rafael. And we’ll have them at the Sustainable Enterprise conference in Sonoma County tomorrow, as well as San Mateo’s Maker Faire next weekend -- Raines (*Great work, Raines - you’ve been a brilliant marketer for the deck! ~ Amy*)
- The deck has inspired a similar effort on emerging economies, by Jennifer and Tom Atlee. See [http://emergingeconomy.wikia.com/wiki/Living\\_Economy\\_Card\\_Deck](http://emergingeconomy.wikia.com/wiki/Living_Economy_Card_Deck) (they also drew on <http://www.reliableprosperity.net/> ) --John Abbe
- As I have been exploring the cards myself and talking with others about them and the responses I’ve heard to them, it seems that the set really offers a kind of “Master Class” in group process, and it makes me think we might look at creating some kind of online co-learning process using them as the basis for people who want to either develop or strengthen their own group processing skills. This could be another way of producing revenue for the project as well.  
~ Amy Lenzo. (Tree: Love it! Maybe a topic to raise on the email list?)
- The blank cards are also handy when you lose one of the pre-printed cards! Have fun re-sketching the illustration. ProTip: Don’t hand people cards as they come into a room and expect to get them all back afterwards. :-) Oh yeah, one more thing: the cards are a great tool for finding experienced facilitators in the room, especially people who have worked with different types of groups. Just look for who “lights up” or “gets it” as you work with the cards -- Raines

### Feedback on the Confab:

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*How did this confab work for you? How can we improve the calls and the use of google docs for future calls?-*

I liked the combination of Google Docs and the pdf...along with the interactive nature of the presentation. Rick Lent --Ditto (Kat)  
Thanks!

Great work to create this deck, and a great call to share it with us! (Ben) *One concern--if the calls get much bigger, it becomes hard to manage the participation smoothly. MaestroConference would be a better platform in that case. Probably didn’t need to hear that, but you asked! I would be happy*

*to help, of course. If NCDD had its own account, that might make it easier to deal with some of the registration and advance communications elements than it was when we did this last time. I'll bet we could get one comped to you.*

This was great! Thanks Sandy and Tree and Sue - and all (Amy) No need to be shy, Tree - you are a natural at this! ;-) Lets talk about doing more...

One quick question from Sandy... do folks think we should keep reserving the last 15 minutes of the confab calls for announcements from participants? I've done this for 2 calls so far, and it seems to be hit or miss.

*I think it's good. Ben.*

*Keep it (and ask everyone to keep it short). ;-)* Tim

*I like it, Sue - even if there are no announcements, I think leaving space for them is valuable (Amy)*

Tree: I think if we had posted the agenda we'd worked out for the call, it might have helped things run a bit more smoothly.

Sandy: or maybe just giving a quick overview of the agenda at the beginning of the call (giving people something else to read before the call can be demotivating)