

A Tool for Collaborations

From 2014 to 2016, Dreamwalker Dance Company offered interdisciplinary artist Helen Yung a research residency to explore ideas and inquiries together. Collaboration has been a key theme.

The questions on the following page are intended as a check-in tool to help inform the development of positive creative collaborations. A key assumption here is that what's more important than 'work product' is the relationship(s) that are produced. Producing good work at the expense of good relations is not an intelligent long-term strategy, and won't achieve mutual satisfaction in the short-term either.

There are many ways to introduce the tool, depending on the purpose and the group. I would say that the tool is not for guiding 'how to collaborate' - it is a tool for reflexivity... To stir the kind of thinking/contemplation that (I hope) will enable people to approach collaborations in a way that improves the relationship as it progresses... To be a little more aware of one's frames. To see and feel more expansively because you've spent time discovering mutuality and vision.

How deeply you sink into these questions is up to you and your collaborators.

Further questions or conversation may result. How you handle this is, again, up to you and your collaborators. I suggest you hold the situation lightly between you. Give it some space. Know that not everything is knowable. Reality is multiple and not fixed.

As a tool, this set of questions is simply a way of starting. It is a way of beginning or tracing conversations - how, if, when and to where you follow those beginnings or clues is up to you.

www.helenyung.com

www.dreamwalkerdance.com

At the outset:

1. How is this collaboration for us?
2. Without modesty or aggrandizement, what are the strengths that I see or feel I am bringing to this temporary or long-term partnership?
3. What are the strengths that I see or feel my collaborator is bringing to this partnership?
4. What are our expectations?

Suggested questions to ask yourself at the beginning and to track for yourself, from time to time:

5. How is this collaboration for me? What are my expectations?
6. What is an implicit or under-acknowledged hope or desire I carry?

After settling in, perhaps a quarter or a third of the way into the collaboration:

7. Placing myself in an ideal future, *after* we are successful, how will I have changed?

Interim check-in:

8. How do I notice my collaborator is honouring me in our partnership?
9. How do I notice that I am honouring my collaborator in our partnership?

This is a working prototype. It needs testing. I welcome your thoughts and stories of how you use this, the resulting experience, etc: inbox@helenyung.com