InQuiry: A Participatory Approach for Understanding Stakeholder Perceptions

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Key Points

· This article addresses two important and elusive issues for funded projects: quantifiable measures and deep understandings of participant perceptions.

· It describes the development of the InQuiry evaluation tool, which combines Q methodology (factor analysis process to quantify perceptions) with a qualitative participatory approach. InQuiry generates both quantified metrics of what participants believe about a given topic and also a rich narrative of why participants think the way they do. These data yield metrics for understanding fidelity, outcomes, and impacts.

· Beginning with the history of a program funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, this article also illustrates the tool's usefulness. The Seattle Community Learning Exchange, an example of InQuiry in action from beginning to end, explored how members of a diverse community perceived peacemaking and healing within the community and implemented peacemaking circles by building capacity and shifting perceptions.

All our knowledge has its origins in our perceptions.
– Leonardo da Vinci

Funders seek innovative solutions and approaches to age-old and emerging problems. The intent of innovation is to create new outcomes and lasting impacts. How an innovation is introduced and executed has been the focus of empirical (e.g., Honig, 2009), conceptual (e.g., Lipsky & Weatherly, 1977), and theoretical research (e.g.,

Rogers, 2003). This research has focused on the implementation of the innovation.

Outcomes and impacts of innovations are often usurped by the fidelity or infidelity of implementation. Innovation studies are often incomplete, inconclusive, or easily mitigated with a variety of confounding variables, both organizational and institutional. However, failed innovation is most often blamed on the individuals trusted with enactment. In other words, we tend to pathologize the individuals, not systems, when unpacking failure. As a result, funders are not provided with a vivid account of why innovations fail or succeed. MacFarquhar wrote, "donors ought to evaluate their programs with precise metrics in order to make sure of a good return on their charitable dollar" (2016, p. 41). The purpose of this article is to identify a tool to measure and understand one important element of the implementation of an innovation: the people charged to perform the work, the street-level actors.

To understand the actions of the actor, we must first examine his or her perceptions and beliefs. Does belief follow action, or does action follow belief? This chicken-or-egg question is central to the playbook for project managers. What we know is that beliefs are powerful predictors of action. Habits or beliefs can lead to a conservatism that is "void of reason, centering on one's habits, interests, and opinions" (Buchmann, 1986, p. 530). Weiss wrote that "however weakly integrated …, [beliefs] provide an emotionally charged orientation that provides a basis for tak-

ing a position" (1995, p. 575). Conversely, others have posited that changing practice leads to new beliefs: "Only a change in practice produces a genuine change in norms and values. Or, to put it more crudely, grab people by their practice and their hearts and minds will follow" (Elmore, 2002, p. 3). In any case, beliefs matter when it comes to actions.

Current literature focuses on the beliefs and perceptions from surveys or a qualitative examination. Surveys provide an aggregate that can be overly general and rely on a large sample size. Qualitative techniques are not generalizable and are time consuming and labor intensive. The InQuiry process seeks to bind the attributes of each research design while minimizing the barriers.[1] InQuiry is a multistep assessment tool that seeks participant input before, during, and after data collection. Participants provide input on the data-collection items, engage in a sorting activity of the items, and collaborate with like-minded groups and across groups to interpret perspectives. In the end, InQuiry seeks to understand participant subjectivity – that is, its perceptions or beliefs. The InQuiry process shifts the agency of the evaluation efforts from an external evaluator to the participant stakeholders. This is achieved by fully engaging stakeholders as participants in the collection of individual beliefs and the subsequent analysis of their collectively held beliefs. This analysis collectively interrogates why those beliefs exist, the rich diversity of those shared beliefs within an organization, how they diverge and converge, and how they manifest as action, policy, and practice.

The InQuiry process does not claim to provide the one best measure. However, it does quantify the elusive and idiosyncratic beliefs of individuals. This is often a missing piece to better understanding fidelity, outcomes, and impacts. This article describes the development of the InQuiry process and provides an example as evidence of its usefulness, beginning with the history of a program funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Next,

The InQuiry process shifts the agency of the evaluation efforts from an external evaluator to the participant stakeholders. This is achieved by fully engaging stakeholders as participants in the collection of individual beliefs and the subsequent analysis of their collectively held beliefs.

it explores the development of InQuiry as a tool for evaluation. Finally, it provides an example of InQuiry in action from beginning to end.

The History of the Community Learning Exchange

The Community Learning Exchange (CLE) emerged from Kellogg Leadership for Community Change (KLCC), an earlier initiative of the Kellogg Foundation. The KLCC, launched in 2002, was a departure from the previous Kellogg leadership-development initiatives; it sought to train a collection of individuals in a community to work across boundaries to cultivate collective leadership in order to drive local solutions to issues. As the initiative came to a close, members of the KLCC community – technical assistants, evaluators, and KLCC site fellows – came together to create the next-generation KLCC, the Community Learning Exchange.

The CLE is a social innovation, and its activities are designed to honor place, seek the wisdom of people, rely on the assets that exist in the community, and engage community members in what the exchange terms "gracious space."[2] The intent of a CLE's work is not to generate solutions based

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[1] Q methodology does not claim generalizability, and Q can be as time consuming as other methods. However, the deep investigation is transferable and informative to that particular group of participants (like qualitative techniques) and quantifies participant data (like quantitative techniques).

[2] Gracious space, which is taught and lived at CLEs, is defined by four elements: "spirit" – the aesthetics of music, poetry, and people; "setting" – the power of place; "invite the stranger" – welcome all comers; and "learn in public" – engage in work publicly (Hughes & Grace, 2010).

Q methodology refers to a set of measurement procedures specialized to the study of subjectivity (1980, 1993). When using Q methodology, the researcher asks participants to sort a collection of statements, from the most characteristic to the least characteristic statement, for a topic that is being investigated. Q methodology solicits the perspectives of the participants and allows those views to be expressed idiosyncratically (1999), and combines qualities of both quantitative and qualitative traditions.

on the advice of outside experts. Rather, CLEs seek to empower people in the very communities where socio-political inequities exist; as such, CLEs "trust in people's ability to develop their capacity for working collaboratively to solve their own problems" (Horton, Kohl, & Kohl, 1990, p. 132). There is a strong belief that the seeds of solutions already reside in the communities that are suffering or have experienced historical trauma.

The CLEs are held nationally and have transitioned into local work.[3] There have been 17 national CLEs since the completion of KLCC.

[3] See www.communitylearningexchange.org

The national CLEs invite teams from across the country to engage in a participatory, three-day learning experience that is focused on a given topic and rooted in context of place.[4] Each CLE engages in a set of social technologies or pedagogies that have been an important feature of the work. The CLEs are fundamentally different from traditional conferences or professional-development workshops; participants not only engage in the work, but they also engage directly with other participants from around the country and community members from the host site.

The strength in the CLE work made for a great challenge for its evaluation. We utilized traditional surveys and interviews as well as nontraditional measures, such as PhotoVoice[5] and Q methodology.[6] The InQuiry process was born out of the need for another tool to evaluate the CLE.

Development of the InQuiry Process
Q methodology

Q methodology refers to a set of measurement procedures specialized to the study of subjectivity (Brown, 1980, 1993). When using Q methodology, the researcher asks participants to sort a collection of statements related to the topic being investigated in a way that most resembles their perspectives. Q methodology solicits the perspectives of the participants and allows those views to be expressed idiosyncratically (Brown, Durning, & Selden, 1999), and combines qualities of both quantitative and qualitative traditions. Q methodology invites participants to make decisions as to "what is meaningful" and, hence, what does and does not have value and significance from their perspectives on a given subject. This methodology also seeks to define and understand each participant completely and as a whole (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

[4] Two examples of these learning experiences: Moral Courage: The Heart of Faith, Education, and Change, Oct. 9-12, 2014, in Jacksonville, Fla.; and Leading Racial Healing for School, Family, and Community Healing, Oct. 10-13, 2013, in northeast North Carolina.
[5] PhotoVoice is a highly participatory and reflective tool by which individuals take photos for collective meaning-making (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, Nievar, & McCann, 2005; Militello & Benham, 2010).
[6] See www.qmethod.org

Q methodology was created as an attempt to understand subjective thoughts in a rigorous and purposeful manner (Stephenson, 1953). Its purpose is to better understand the relationships of subjective statements by a group of participants; its aim, similar to traditional factor analysis, is to generate a limited number of distinct viewpoints (Brown, 1980). In Q, these viewpoints are statistically significant representations of viewpoints or "families." Traditional factor analysis investigates a population around a set of tests or traits. While measuring such variables is important, they do not account for the richness and complexity of life. Life is filled with subjectivity. Q methodology inverts what is factor analyzed. William Stephenson introduced by-person factor analysis, known as Q methodology, as an "inversion" of traditional by-variable, commonly known as R, factor analysis. Stephenson wrote, "This inversion has interesting practical applications. It brings the factor technique from group and fieldwork into the laboratory, and reaches into spheres of work hitherto untouched or not amendable to factorization" (1935, p. 297). More specifically, Q methodology is a "systematic and rigorous quantitative procedure used to study the subjective components of human behavior" relative to a phenomenon of interest (McKeown & Thomas, 2013, p. ix).

Q methodology is an appropriate and culturally relevant way to engage marginalized communities in data collection and dialogue. It is a powerful tool for understanding values, attitudes, and perspectives of marginalized communities while also maintaining close proximity to participant subjectivity – a proximity that is believed to honor and maintain the integrity of participants' cultural identities. In fact, Q methodology has been called a "methodology for the marginalized" (Brown, 2006). Q methodology can empower and bring forth the voices of participants often neglected by traditional evaluation approaches. The process included participant involvement and contributions at each part of the research and evaluation.

No one evaluation tool or metric offers complete understanding or validation of impact, or measures the extent of change as a result of a given

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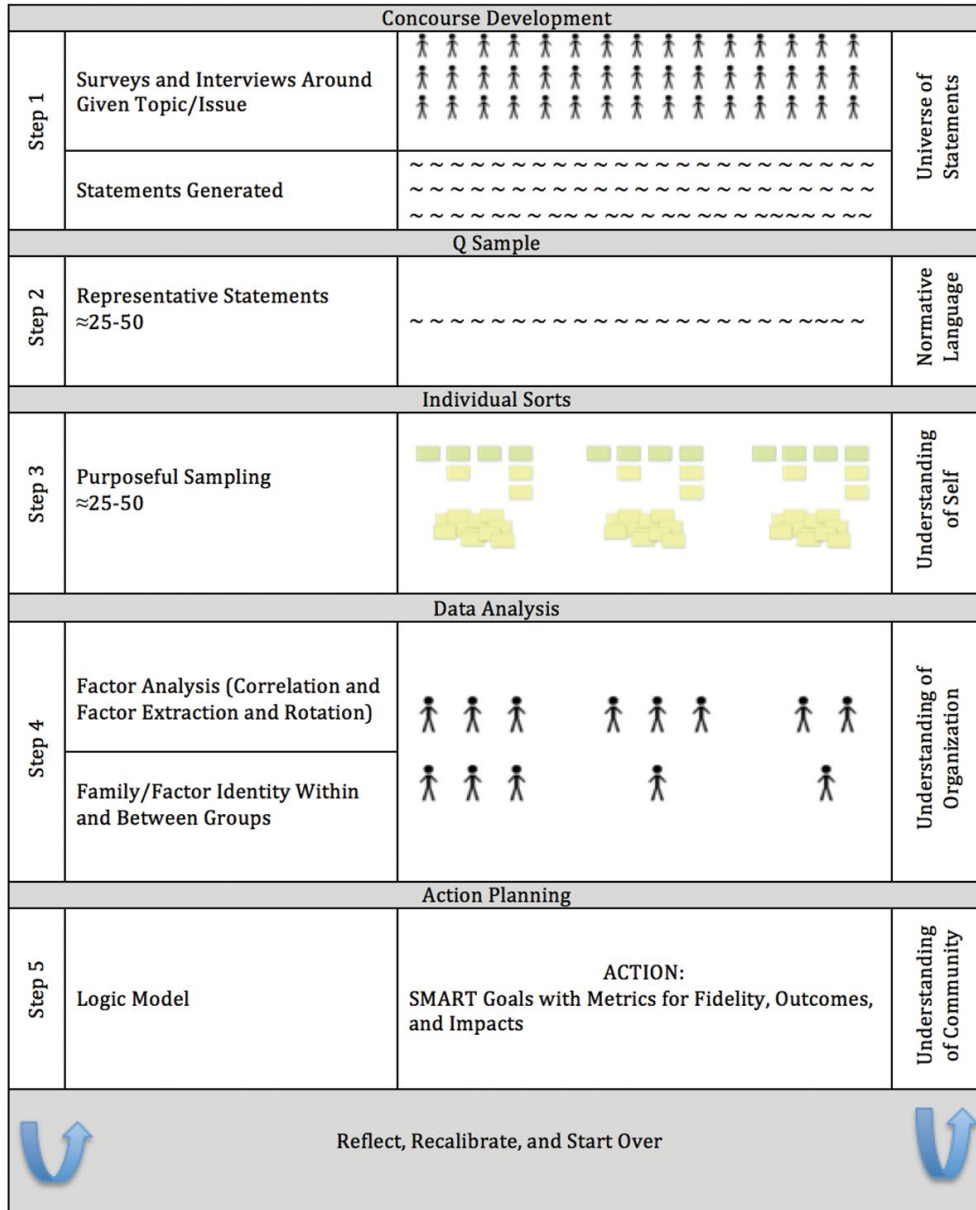
project. However, the benefits of Q methodology far outweigh the shortcomings:

- It provides insight into respondents' viewpoints related to specific issues or ideas.

- It enables the exploration of sensitive issues in a way that is more directed by group perspectives, as opposed to the perspectives of the evaluator or implementer.

- It is participatory and engaging, as distinct from a self- or enumerator-administered survey.

- It yields statistically valid results related to the factors or clusters of items, which allow comparison of how treatment and comparison groups might or might not differ in the way they perceive particular issues.

InQuiry
At CLEs, Q methodology has been modified to be even more inclusive and participatory. The CLE evaluation team dubbed this incarnation of Q methodology as InQuiry (Balutski, Militello, Janson, Benham, & Francis, 2014; Benham, Halliday, Militello, Oliver, & Ortiz, 2009; Guajardo, Guajardo, Janson, & Militello, 2016; Janson & Militello, 2011; Militello & Janson, 2015; Militello, Janson, Guajardo, & Militello, 2014;

TOOLS

		Concourse Development	
Step 1	Surveys and Interviews Around Given Topic/Issue		Universe of Statements
	Statements Generated		
		Q Sample	
Step 2	Representative Statements ≈25-50		Normative Language
		Individual Sorts	
Step 3	Purposeful Sampling ≈25-50		Understanding of Self
		Data Analysis	
Step 4	Factor Analysis (Correlation and Factor Extraction and Rotation)		Understanding of Organization
	Family/Factor Identity Within and Between Groups		
		Action Planning	
Step 5	Logic Model	ACTION: SMART Goals with Metrics for Fidelity, Outcomes, and Impacts	Understanding of Community
		Reflect, Recalibrate, and Start Over	

Militello, Janson, & Militello, 2014). The InQuiry process includes participant involvement and contributions at each part of the research and evaluation processes – not only with the creation of the research instrument and data collection, but also regarding the actual analysis of the data and the extension of the results to real work in real communities. (See Figure 1.) As such, this work is significant not only because it elevates the voices of a diverse set of community leaders and members, but in that it also frames a process in which a rich diversity of voices can be applied

FIGURE 2 Spectrum of a Foundation's Funding Roles
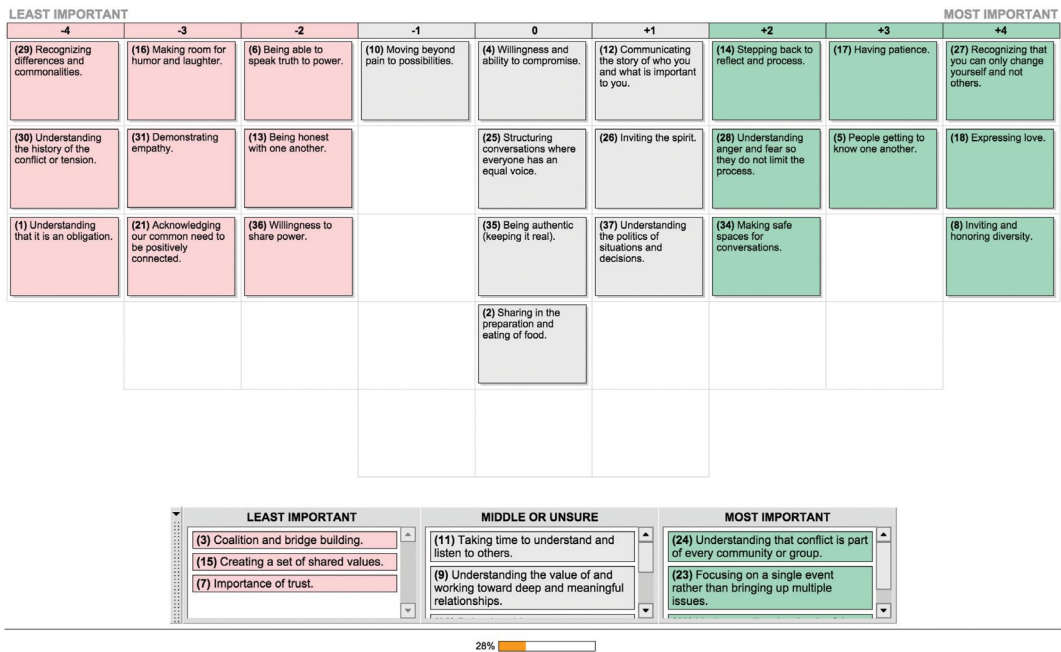
to their own meaning-making and their communities' development. The example provided in this article describes the InQuiry process from the inputs (creation of statements), throughputs (sorting exercise), and outputs (participatory data analysis).

The InQuiry process begins with the traditional aspects of a Q study:

- Developing the concourse. During the design of the research project, the Q researcher must develop a set of statements related to a particular object of inquiry or subject matter, which is referred to as the concourse. Stephenson (1953) notes, "a concourse must be governed by simple principles, few in number" (p. 7). Statements are collected from academic and popular literature, interviews, participant observations, and focus groups (van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). The primary purpose of the development of the concourse is to create a large set of statements that broadly represents different opinions of the group to be studied. This inclusive process seeks to capture multiple

voices in a manner that does not privilege any one voice or source, especially the a priori assumptions of the researcher or evaluator.

- Developing the Q set. After the concourse has been collected, the statements are piloted to create the final Q set. This process involves removing statements that are redundant and editing statements for clarity and brevity. Each statement should make an original contribution to the Q set (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Statements containing two or more clauses are usually problematic and should be removed or made into two statements. Furthermore, negative statements can be confusing for participants, and are best avoided (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

- Selecting the P set. Once the Q set has been determined, the researcher identifies participants for the study, known as the P set. Unlike R methodology, Q methodology does not require a large sample size because it "has little interest in taking head counts or generalizing to a population of people" (Watts & Stenner, 2012,

The purpose of the process in Seattle was to understand how this diverse group perceived peacemaking and healing within the members' communities. As a result, InQuiry was evaluative in regard to the identification of members' perceptions. It was also an important research instrument, as these perceptions could be measured over time (i.e., identify shifts in perceptions) and linked to program outcomes (e.g., are certain perceptions more or less powerful to the intended changes).

p. 72). Moreover, according to Brown (1980), a Q study requires only enough participants to establish factors, which can then be compared to one another.[7] Participants should also be theoretically relevant to the research questions. Brown provides an example: If one were to conduct a Q study on democratic value patterns, the P set would include people from different democratic nations as well as people from different social classes.

- Performing the Q sort. Once the P set has been determined, participants are given a set of statements that they then place into a forced distribution, placing the statements they most

agree with (as representative of their views) within the +4 category and statements they least agree (as representative of their views) within the -4 category. (See Figure 2.) To aid in this process, the administrator may have participants initially sort the statements into three piles: one of agreement, one of disagreement, and one neutral. The Q sort can be accomplished digitally using software, such Flash Q.[8] According to Brown (1980), "performing a Q sort is more akin to evaluating essays for which right answers as such do not exist" (p. 195). In other words, there are no incorrect sorts in Q methodology, because the researcher seeks to understand the opinions and perceptions of the P set. During the sorts, the data-collection team is encouraged to discuss and record reactions from those sorting the data.

- Analyzing the data. After the Q sort, the data are analyzed. The goal of the analysis is to extract as many unique viewpoints as possible. Any statistical software package can be used for this process, but a free program called PQ Method was created for Q data analysis.[9] The analysis includes the computation of a correlation matrix,[10] factor analysis,[11] and factor rotation.[12] The resultant factors represent unique sorts, or model factor arrays. Participants are then statistically associated with a factor.[13] Participants on each factor have an affinity (statistically) of how they sorted the statements with others who sorted (Brown, 1980).

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[7] Statistical significance is a function of N where N is the number of statements, not the number of participants for R statistics.

[8] Flash Q is freeware and can be accessed at www.hackert.biz/flashq/home
[9] PQ Method is freeware that can be downloaded at http://schmolck.userweb.mwn.de/qmethod (Schmolck & Atkinson, 1997).
[10] Pearson Product-moment is used to determine the correlation coefficient among participants. Van Exel and de Graaf explain that the correlation matrix "represents the level of (dis)agreement between the individual sorts, that is, the degree of (dis)similarity in points of view between the individual Q sorters" (2005, p. 8).
[11] Factor analysis can be done with principle component analysis, or centroid analysis can be utilized.
[12] Factor rotation can be done with either the varimax method or a theoretical/judgmental method. A number of vectors are examined to determine the number of factors to rotate including eigenvalues, explained variance, and number of participants loadings.
[13] Participants are not always statistically associated with a factor. For example, a participant may not have a sort that is statistically significant to one of the factors that were rotated.

TABLE 1 Statement Development

Statement	Code	Final Statement
Coalition and bridge building	Participant 3, and Pranis, Stuart, and Wedge, 2003	
Willingness to compromise	Participant 13	4) Willingness and ability to compromise
Learning to compromise	Participant 17	

**TABLE 2** Final Statements for Seattle CLE

Final Statements for Seattle CLE	
1. Peacemaking and healing is an obligation	20. Allowing yourself to be vulnerable
2. Sharing the preparation and eating of food	21. Acknowledging our common need to be positively connected
3. Coalition and bridge building	22. Demonstrating courage
4. Willingness and ability to compromise	23. Focusing on a single event rather than bringing up multiple issues
5. People getting to know one another	24. Understanding that conflict is a part of every community
6. Being able to speak truth to power	25. Structuring conversations where everyone has an equal voice
7. Importance of trust	26. Invoking the spiritual
8. Inviting and honoring diversity	27. Recognizing that you can only change yourself and not others
9. Understanding the value of and working toward deep and meaningful relationships	28. Understanding anger and fear so they do not limit the process
10. Moving beyond pain to possibilities	29. Recognizing differences and commonalities
11. Taking time to understand and listen to others	30. Understanding the history of the conflict or tension
12. Communicating the story of who you are and what is important to you	31. Demonstrating empathy
13. Being honest with one another	32. Being humble
14. Stepping back to reflect and process	33. Being creative with solutions
15. Creating a shared set of values	34. Making safe places for conversation
16. Making room for humor and laughter	35. Being authentic (keeping it real)
17. Having patience	36. Willingness to share power
18. Expressing love	37. Understanding the politics of situations and decisions
19. Understanding the depth of the situation	

The InQuiry process adds an important sixth step:

- Grouping participants into families. This process involves grouping members of the P set who loaded on the same factor together. Instead of evaluators interpreting these group's factors, we invite these groups to sit together as a family; participants do not need any knowledge about factors or factor analysis. Each family is taken through a protocol in order to reach a deeper understanding on the thoughts, feelings, and opinions around the sort. The goal here is to foster communication among participants in each family as well as among

FIGURE 3 Screenshot of On-line Sorting
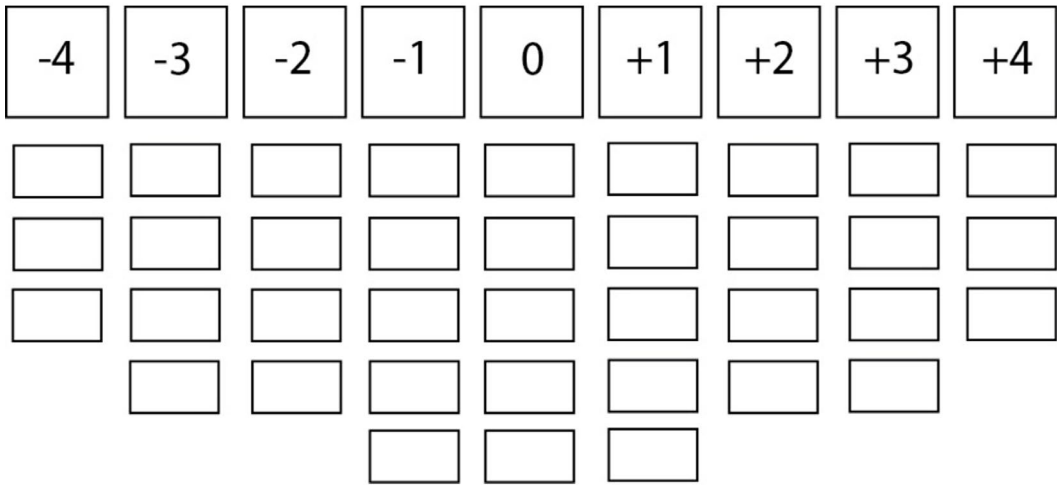
the families. Like Q methodology writ large, InQuiry is not generalizable. However, it is both transferable and informative to that particular group of participants. It is not vital that all participants are present in this step. Similar to the traditions of qualitative interviews and focus groups, a representation of participants is sufficient (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

These steps are better explained using an example: here, a specific use of InQuiry at a CLE to elucidate the InQuiry process.

Seattle CLE

The aim of the Seattle Community Learning Exchange[14] was to assist residents of Seattle, Wash, in improving their communities through the implementation of peacemaking circles. The intent was to build capacity (knowledge and skills) and shift perceptions (motivation and will) about the utility of peacemaking circles. The Seattle CLE invited community teams to gather and explore peacemaking and healing as critical leadership practices. Peacemaking circles bring people together for the purpose of expressing thought

and having others receive it deeply (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003). While much progress has been made in creating a healthy community in Seattle, there remains division, mistrust, anger, and pain. Those who attended the CLE were as diverse as the city itself, including Asian Americans, African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics.

The InQuiry process was just one element of the Seattle CLE evaluation. The purpose of the process in Seattle was to understand how this diverse group perceived peacemaking and healing within the members' communities. As a result, InQuiry was evaluative in regard to the identification of members' perceptions. It was also an important research instrument, as these perceptions could be measured over time (i.e., identify shifts in perceptions) and linked to program outcomes (e.g., are certain perceptions more or less powerful to the intended changes?). This article reports on the InQuiry data as a means for baseline data regarding participants' perceptions and rich conversations around peacemaking and healing with a group of community members. To achieve this end, we undertook the following steps.

Developing the Concourse
The first step in a Q methodological project is the development of a concourse of statements.

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[14] The CLE was titled, "Peacemaking and Healing: Leadership Practices for Healthy, Inclusive Communities." The host organization was the Center for Ethical Leadership and was held in Seattle on May 15-18, 2014.

TABLE 3 Participant Significance by Factor

Participant	1	2	3	4	5		Participant	1	2	3	4	5
	Factor/Family 1							Factor/Family 3				
4	0.53*	-0.04	-0.05	0.27	0.39		33	0.18	0.08	0.62*	0.29	-0.09
5	0.66*	0.18	0.32	0.12	0.23		35	0.45	-0.14	0.52*	0.31	0.02
6	0.50*	0.27	0.29	0.26	0.14		39	-0.15	0.23	0.63*	0.06	0.16
8	0.42*	0.22	0.05	0.35	-0.23		40	0.03	0.15	0.45*	-0.27	0.30
10	0.63*	0.22	-0.04	0.11	0.18		41	0.41	-0.21	0.54*	-0.16	0.02
17	0.59*	0.20	-0.01	-0.20	-0.07		48	0.11	0.45	0.61*	-0.01	-0.08
22	0.51*	0.25	0.18	0.47	-0.08		50	-0.10	0.02	0.55*	0.27	0.02
27	0.67*	0.04	0.16	0.29	0.12		52	0.36	-0.23	0.37*	-0.03	-0.12
30	0.79*	0.10	0.21	0.27	0.03		53	.022	0.16	0.50*	0.31	-0.35
32	0.65*	0.22	-0.18	0.10	0.07		55	0.26	0.02	0.53*	0.12	0.32
34	0.54*	-0.09	0.16	0.46	0.07							
42	0.72*	0.10	-0.05	0.03	0.08			Factor/Family 4				
46	0.66*	0.09	0.01	-0.06	-0.12		12	0.22	0.26	-0.17	0.39*	-0.50
47	0.78*	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.26		15	-0.05	-0.03	0.21	0.56*	-0.05
55	0.44*	-0.25	0.03	0.24	0.28		18	0.58	0.11	0.16	0.61*	-0.03
							19	0.04	-0.23	0.00	0.45*	0.12
	Factor/Family 2						25	-0.02	0.12	0.30	0.51*	-0.03
1	0.04	0.44*	-0.33	-0.08	0.26		26	0.31	0.19	0.01	0.62*	0.14
3	-0.08	0.53*	0.10	0.53	0.01		28	0.21	0.27	0.25	0.54*	-0.05
7	0.19	0.54*	0.05	-0.05	-0.06		29	0.21	0.00	-0.06	0.64*	0.41
9	0.37	0.51*	0.14	-0.05	-0.13		44	0.20	0.24	0.00	0.42*	0.38
11	-0.08	0.48*	0.23	0.03	0.26		45	0.31	-0.29	0.06	0.50*	-0.08
14	0.29	0.42*	0.38	0.20	0.23		49	0.06	0.44	-0.18	0.46*	0.28
20	0.16	0.52*	-0.03	0.30	-0.05							
21	0.20	0.62*	0.06	0.19	0.21			Factor/Family 5				
24	0.33	0.57*	0.20	-0.20	0.20		2	0.29	0.13	-0.30	0.11	0.43*
31	-0.02	0.53*	-0.13	-0.16	-0.04		13	0.12	-0.02	-0.09	0.17	0.57*
37	0.34	0.48*	0.24	0.15	0.10		36	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.06	0.65*
38	0.03	0.36*	-0.18	0.17	-0.07		43	-0.03	0.10	0.11	0.01	0.53*
51	0.05	0.54*	0.29	0.05	-0.05		23	0.32	-0.04	-0.13	0.23	-0.46*
								Did Not Load on Any Factor				
							16	-0.13	0.23	0.25	0.18	0.01

Note: $p < 0.05$, Significance = 0.322*(1√37 x 1.96) where n = 37 (in Q methodology n = number of cards to calculate the standard error).

TOOLS

TABLE 4 Statement Placement by Factor

Statement	Family				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Peacemaking and healing is an obligation	-4	-3	-1	-3	-2
2. Sharing the preparation and eating of food	-2	-4	-4	-4	-4
3. Coalition and bridge building	-4	-2	-2	0	0
4. Willingness and ability to compromise	-2	3	1	1	-2
5. People getting to know one another	1	0	-3	2	1
6. Being able to speak truth to power	2	1	1	-4	4
7. Importance of trust	4	3	3	4	2
8. Inviting and honoring diversity	-1	4	3	-1	2
9. Understanding the value of and working toward deep and meaningful relationships	2	2	0	-1	0
10. Moving beyond pain to possibilities	2	-1	-2	-2	-1
11. Taking time to understand and listen to others	4	3	0	4	3
12. Communicating the story of who you are and what is important to you	0	2	-3	1	-1
13. Being honest with one another	2	2	2	3	3
14. Stepping back to reflect and process	-2	0	1	1	1
15. Creating a shared set of values	0	-1	-4	-1	-3
16. Making room for humor and laughter	1	0	-2	1	2
17. Having patience	-1	-2	4	4	0
18. Expressing love	0	-4	3	2	1
19. Understanding the depth of the situation	-3	0	1	0	2
20. Allowing yourself to be vulnerable	1	-1	-1	-2	-1
21. Acknowledging our common need to be positively connected	-3	-3	0	-3	1
22. Demonstrating courage	-1	-4	-1	2	4
23. Focusing on a single event rather than bringing up multiple issues	-3	-2	-3	-4	-1
24. Understanding that conflict is part of every community	-2	3	4	-3	-3
25. Structuring conversations where everyone has an equal voice	3	2	-1	2	0
26. Invoking the spiritual	1	-3	2	0	1
27. Recognizing that you can only change only yourself and not others	3	-2	-2	3	-2
28. Understanding anger and fear so they do not limit the process	0	-1	2	-2	0
29. Recognizing differences and commonalities	1	1	4	-1	-4
30. Understanding the history of the conflict or tension	-3	1	2	-1	3
31. Demonstrating empathy	0	0	0	1	4
32. Being humble	-1	-1	0	3	-3
33. Being creative with solutions	-1	-3	-3	0	3
34. Making safe spaces for conversation	4	4	3	0	-2
35. Being authentic (keeping it real)	3	1	-1	3	-3
36. Willingness to share power	3	4	1	-3	4
37. Understanding the politics of situations and decisions	-4	1	-4	-2	1

For this study, an open-ended survey was sent electronically to 22 community leaders and community-education researchers across the United States, including people who were going to be at the CLE, experts in the field, political leaders, and community members and leaders of varied ethnicity, age, and gender. The qualitative concept of saturation was used as an indicator that a full universe of communicability was represented (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The survey asked the following questions:

- What does peacemaking/healing look like in your family? Please provide specific examples of peacemaking/healing you have experienced or witnessed in your personal life.

- What does peacemaking/healing look like in your organization and/or community? Please provide specific examples of peacemaking/ healing you have experienced or witnessed in your work.

- How do you personally engage in peacemaking/healing in your professional work? In other words, what strategies do you use to promote peacemaking/healing in your organization or community?

Additionally, a review of the literature was conducted to identify peacemaking and healing practices, theories, and concepts (Nan, Mampilly, & Bartoli, 2011).

Creating the Q Set

Based on the survey responses, more than 100 possible statements were culled for the Q sort. (See Table 1.) These statements were edited for clarity and brevity and to eliminate redundancy. The resulting Q sort contained 37 statements. (See Table 2.)

Sorting Process

By use of Flash Q, the Q sort was sent electronically to participants in the Seattle CLE, or the P set. (See Figure 3.) Most in the P set completed the sort online, but several had not completed the sort by the start of the CLE. These participants were given the opportunity to sort by hand

The first step in a Q methodological project is the development of a concourse of statements. For this study, an open-ended survey was sent electronically to 22 community leaders and community-education researchers across the United States, including people who were going to be at the CLE, experts in the field, political leaders, and community members and leaders of varied ethnicity, age, and gender. The qualitative concept of saturation was used as an indicator that a full universe of communicability was represented (1994).

on their arrival, which ensured that as many responses as possible were collected for a robust study. Fifty-six people sorted the statements for the Seattle CLE; 48 completed online sorts and the remaining 8 participants were given the opportunity to complete the sort by hand.

Factor Analysis

After running the factor analysis, five factors were selected. Factor analysis enables the researcher to identify patterns of similarities in how the participants sorted the statements (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Therefore, the grouping of these five fami-

FIGURE 4 Family 1 Sort

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Peacemaking and healing is an obligation	Understanding the depth of the situation	Sharing in the preparation and eating of food	Inviting and honoring diversity	Communicating the story of who you are and what is important	People getting to know one another	Being able to speak truth to power	Structuring conversations where everyone has an equal voice	Importance of trust
Coalition and bridge building	Acknowledging our common need to be positively connected	Willingness and ability to compromise	Having patience	Creating a set of shared values	Making room for humor and laughter	Understanding the value of working towards deep and meaningful relationships	Recognizing that you can only change yourself and not others	Taking time to understand and listen to others
Understanding the politics of situations and decisions	Focusing on a single event rather than bringing up multiple issues	Stepping back to reflect and process	Demonstrating courage	Demonstrating empathy	Allowing yourself to be vulnerable	Moving beyond pain to possibilities	Being authentic (keeping it real)	Making safe spaces for conversations
	Understanding the history of the conflict or tension	Understanding that conflict is part of every community or group	Being humble	Expressing love	Inviting the spirit	Being honest with one another	Willingness to share power	
			Being creative with solutions	Understanding anger and fear so they do not limit process	Recognizing differences and commonalities			

FIGURE 5 Family 1 Shirt

FIGURE 6 Family 2 Shirt
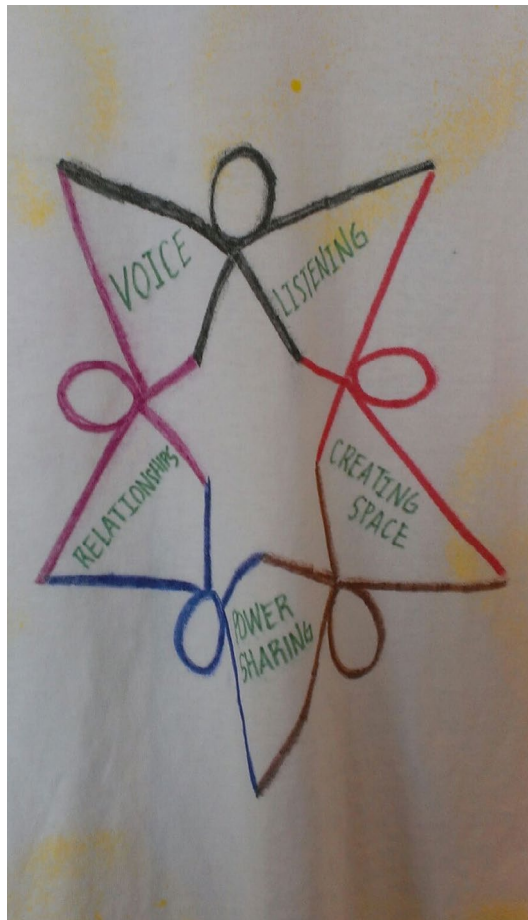
lies placed together participants who held similar opinions on peacemaking and healing circles. These families represented 47 percent of the variance; that is, 47 percent of the possible sorting representations were accounted for (dependent variables are the individual sorts by participants). (See Table 3.) For example, Participant 4 loaded significantly on Factor 1, indicated by an asterisk (*). There is variance in regard to how strongly participants correlate or load (are significant) on a factor. For instance, Participant 30 (0.79) and Participant 47 (0.78) had the highest correlations on Factor/Family 1, while Participant 8 (0.42) had the lowest correlation. All three of these participants, and everyone in between, were significant on Factor/Family 1, but the higher the correlation, the greater the resemblance to the factor.

This study did have confounding loads, which occur when a participant loads signifion more than one factor. For the purposes of InQuiry, these subjects were placed into the factor with the highest loadings (see Participant 8 in Table 3). Table 4 provides the statement placement for each factor/family. For example, Family 1 sorted the statement, "Peacemaking and healing is an obligation" as -4, meaning they strongly disagreed with this statement and placed it on the far left side of the distribution while Family 3 placed it in the -1 column.

Grouping Participants Into Families
After the families were assembled, they were provided a set of cards to sort based on the shared, statistical model factor array. (See Figure 4.) Each family was asked to respond to the following:

1. Who is in your family? Discuss your professional and personal backgrounds.

2. What statements best represent your shared perspective?

3. Name your perspective. Based on how you sorted the statements, create a slogan and or image on the T-shirt provided that represents your shared perspective.

Family 1 contained the highest amount of explained variance in this study (14 percent).

FIGURE 7 Family 3 Shirt

Sixteen of the participants (29 percent) had a high level of agreement with the array of statements in this factor. The statements they most agreed with, sorting in the +4 category, were "importance of trust," "taking time to understand and listen to others," and "making safe spaces for conversations." They also ranked the following statements in the +3 category: "structuring conversations where everyone has an equal voice," "recognizing that you can change only yourself and not others," "being authentic (keeping it real)," and willingness to share power." During the reporting-out activity, this family wrestled with ideas of the collective versus the individual, and with differentiation as it related to peacemaking. Key ideas that emerged during Family 1's presentation were the importance of "showing up authentically," "peacemaking coming from the inside out," "creating safe space and coming together," "dynamic tension," and the idea that "peace flows from one to another as we connect" as it relates to peacemaking.[15] (See Figure 3 and Figure 5.)

Family 2 accounted for 9 percent of the explained variance in this study. Thirteen of the participants (24 percent) had a high level of agreement

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[15] We do not provide the distribution of statements for the next four families because of space constraints. See Table 4 for the distribution of statements for each factor.

FIGURE 8 Family 4 Shirt
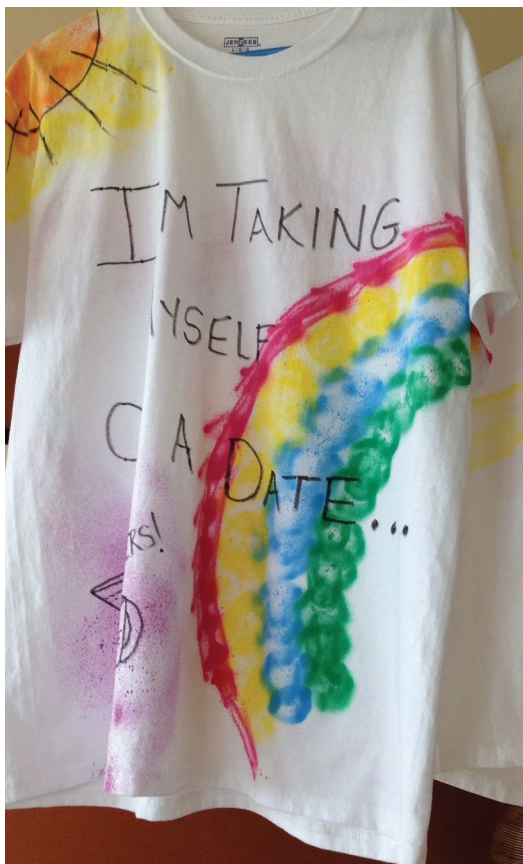
with the array of statements in this group. The statements they most agreed with, sorting in the +4 category, were "inviting and honoring diversity," "making safe spaces for conversations," and "willingness to share power." They ranked the following statements in the +3 category: "willingness and ability to compromise," "importance of trust," "taking time to understand and listen to others," and "understanding that conflict is part of every community or group." Ranking least important with this group, at the -4 category, were the following statements: "sharing in the preparation and eating of food," "expressing love," and "demonstrating courage." During the T-shirt presentation, the family discussed the star symbol they created, with the most important facets of the peacemaking and healing process contained within the points of the star. (See Figure 6.) The slogan listed voice, listening, relationships, power sharing, and creating space as the key elements of peacemaking and healing.

Family 3 accounted for 8 percent of the explained variance in this study. Ten of the participants (18 percent) had a high level of agreement with the array of statements in this factor. The statements they most agreed with, sorting in the +4 category, were "having patience," "understanding that conflict is part of every community or group," and "recognizing differences and commonalities." They ranked the following statements in the +3 category: "importance of trust," "inviting and honoring diversity," "expressing love," and "making safe spaces for conversations." Ranking least important with this group, at the -4 category, were the following statements: "sharing in the preparation and eating of food," "being able to speak truth to power," and "creating a set of shared values." During the T-shirt presentation, this family emphasized diversity, compassion, patience, and the importance of saying "I love you." From these core values they created their slogan, "Trust Love, Show Love." The T-shirt bore the word "love" in each member's native language (see Figure 7), and family members ended the presentation by speaking the word love in their respective languages.

Participant 16 did not load on any of the Factors/Families. (See Table 3.) Nonloaders are traditionally not represented in a quantitative study, but InQuiry does assign "nonloading" participants to a team in a specific role. The most frequent strategy is to assign the participant in the family with which they had the highest correlation (in this case, Participant 16 would be assigned Family 3). Here the participant will identify with the sort and be able to contribute to the conversation and naming of the family. Another strategy is to designate participants as "gadflies," roaming from table to table to listen to various conversations. This provides a metalevel analysis of how each family is coming to understand its perspective. Finally, if there are a number of "nonloading" participants, this group can form its own family – we often call them "outliers." This family does not try to coalesce the sorts into one perspective or family name; rather, each participant will report on the sorts.

Family 4 accounted for 10 percent of the explained variance in this study. Eleven of the participants (20 percent) had a high level of agreement with the array of statements in this factor.

The statements they most agreed with, sorting in the +4 category, were "importance of trust," "taking time to understand and listen to others," and "having patience." They ranked the following statements in the +3 category: "being honest with one another," "recognizing that you can change only yourself and not others," "being humble," and "being authentic (keeping it real)." Ranking least important with this group, at the -4 category, were the following statements: "sharing in the preparation and eating of food," "being able to speak truth to power," and "focusing on a single event rather than bringing up multiple issues." They created the slogan, "I'm going to take myself on a date … today!" to emphasize the importance of self-care. (See Figure 8.) Of particular importance to this family was the celebration of self, celebrating that life is rough, that getting through each day is reason enough to celebrate, and that, at the same time, we should celebrate our talent, skills, and beauty. This family believed that peacemaking needed both intrapersonal skills of patience and honesty and the interpersonal traits of trust and listening.

Family 5 accounted for 6 percent of the explained variance in this study. Five of the participants (9 percent) had a high level of agreement with the array of statements in this factor. The statements they most agreed with, sorting in the +4 category, were "being able to speak truth to power," "demonstrating courage," and "willingness to share power." They ranked the following statements in the +3 category: "taking time to understand and listen to others," "being honest with one another," "understanding the history of the conflict or tension," and "being creative with solutions." Ranking least important with this group, at the -4 category, were the following statements: "sharing in the preparation and eating of food," "recognizing differences and commonalities," and "demonstrating empathy." During the presentation, this family shared their views about the importance of looking at root issues and speaking truth to those issues, which they noted took courage. They said they saw themselves as rebellious rabble-rousers, and that part of the peacemaking process is "causing a little trouble at the top." Their T-shirt depicted a tree, with sunshine representing the spirit, clouds and rain symboliz-

FIGURE 9 Family 5 Shirt

ing politics, and the tree and its roots representing power and communty. (See Figure 9.) One presenter explained, "When we are with our roots, we have power with community and that will lead to action. Each one of our roots represents who we said we were when we started the session this morning."

It is important to note that in this family, there was a participant (No. 23) who was significantly correlated with the factor, but in a negative way – -0.46. Participant 23 sorted in a mirror image of the Factor/Family 5. We keep such participants in the family and notify them why they are in the group, but it does not take long for them to notice the stark difference in their sort compared to the family as a whole. This contrarian viewpoint added depth to the conversation in this family;

InQuiry allows its participants to express their opinions in private, which encourages those in groups that traditionally find it difficult to work with outside entities to more accurately express their thoughts and opinions. Freeing participants to express their ideas and beliefs extends beyond confidentiality: allowing free expression is a principle of democracy. The power dynamics of an organization can be flattened, even for a sort period, when participants are seated as equals.

such a viewpoint often helps the larger group to hone and better exemplify the pervasive viewpoint in the family.

All five families had common views on peacemaking and healing within their communities. All agreed that "being honest with one another" was important in peacemaking and healing, placing the statement on the right side of the distribution in either the +2 or the +3 category.[16] This was an element all participants agreed upon and was important in facilitating conversations.

In the end, the InQuiry process at the Seattle CLE unpacked how community members view peace-

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[16] These are called consensus statements, and are statistically significant in their common placement by all participants.

making and healing within their communities. In particular, the process and subsequent findings provided insight into the complexity of peacemaking and healing. Beyond problem identification, however, the InQuiry process demonstrated how peacemaking and healing strategies could be used as a form of strategic communication to affect social change in communities. The process does not take a monolithic, solution-based approach. Rather, individuals, who are situated in the contexts where peacemaking and healing are needed, are empowered to formulate unique, specific paths. This creates agency and allows interventions to be created outside the confines of external experts. In the end, distinct perspectives on peacemaking and healing are shared by people in communities and form the foundation through which strategic practices emerge that can best support local, durable social change.

Impact

Our research team followed one community team from the Seattle CLE to better understand its fidelity to the action plans to employ peacemaking circles, and replicated the InQuiry process with this team. The statements that were sorted were different from the statements used in the Seattle CLE; they focused on how peacemaking circles have impacted the individuals and the organization. These data generated two important data sets: outcome data, including the type and degree of use of peacemaking circles in the organization; and impact data, including how individuals and organizations were describing new ways of knowing and doing their work. Perhaps most exciting were the stories collected about the replication of the InQuiry process throughout the organizations in the community.

Conclusion

InQuiry allows its participants to express their opinions in private, which encourages those in groups that traditionally find it difficult to work with outside entities to more accurately express their thoughts and opinions. Freeing participants to express their ideas and beliefs extends beyond confidentiality: allowing free expression is a principle of democracy. The power dynamics of an organization can be flattened, even for a sort

period, when participants are seated as equals. The family groups often are constructed of members from various parts of an organization. This allows for perspectives to be shared from multiple vantage points of an organization or community.[17]

What begins as an individual experience becomes a group activity through the InQuiry process. When participants are grouped into families with members who have similar viewpoints, positive discourse ensues. Knowing that their family members share viewpoints allows participants to communicate more openly and effectively, resulting in a deeper understanding on the phenomenon in question. Through the presentation of T-shirts, families had the opportunity to see how other participants viewed the peacemaking and healing process. Following this activity, participants returned to their home team, those who were attending the conference together, to discuss plans for implementing what they learned during the Seattle CLE. These conversations with home teams have been powerful for participants. Members come together with a better understanding of one another's viewpoints – a transparency that has proven to be an important step in the action planning process.

We have found with the InQuiry process in general, and specifically in the Seattle CLE example, that participants learn and grow through the three ecologies of self, organization, and community (Guajardo, et al., 2016). Participants develop a new normative language around a topic through the introspective process of the individual sorts (understanding of self); sharing of viewpoints, first with those most like them and then with others in the organization who see things differently (understanding of others); and a focus on the actionable work that can be done to better the whole community. A contextualized understanding of the trilogy of self, organization, and com-

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munity around a topic or issue provides fertile ground real, meaningful, and durable change.

Participants in the InQuiry process regularly provide feedback about how the process does not feel like other evaluation tools. Participants reported that they felt evaluation was conducted with them, not to them. The InQuiry process has proven to be a culturally sensitive tool for evaluation and research.[18] Participants also ask if they can keep the cards so they can perform the sort with others in their organizations.[19] Finally, participants report how they have altered their understanding of a topic for themselves and with those with whom they work.

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[17] In 2014 the authors conducted an InQuiry workshop with a statewide university system based on its strategic plan. Families included clusters by position (e.g., provosts were in the same family), but also eclectic clusters, including a family that contained the university system president and nontenured faculty members. This vulnerable population (nontenured faculty) was able to express its viewpoints with an influential person. In a traditional survey, that view would have been buried in the mean score.

[18] We have found this to be especially true in settings with marginalized and indigenous populations where external evaluators must engender trust with participants. InQuiry solicits participant perceptions and ideas throughout the process. As a result, participants are respected as the experts.
[19] van Exel and de Graff wrote, "One of the great side effects of conducting a Q study is that Q sorters … indicate they have enjoyed participating in the study and that they experienced it as instructive" (2005, p. 17).

TOOLS

InQuiry is an extremely valuable tool for foundations seeking to understand their grantees and generate evidence of usefulness. The process does not have to be relegated to the end of a grant cycle; it can be used at the beginning and throughout a grant cycle. A time-series InQuiry process can help participants develop understandings and a normative language, while providing the funder with multiple, quantifiable measures of shifts in perceptions. The InQuiry process as an evaluation tool fulfills the need for:

- understanding participants' perceptions,

- more quantifiable metrics, and

- participation in the analysis of evaluation findings.

Performing the sorts is an individual exercise that forces people to think more deeply and in nuanced ways about their perspectives; the sort clarifies those perspectives. Clustering participants into families allows participants to understand the topic at a different level; the group or family discussions help people understand the perspective or phenomenon with others who hold similar perspectives. Finally, the process of families sharing makes perspectives transparent, as those of all participants are made public and space is provided to understanding why others hold different perspectives: The process can be understood as a scaffold from self to others. InQuiry utilizes the ecologies of self, organization, and community to help participants make meaning of how they experience the topic of the sort (Guajardo, et al., 2016).

The InQuiry process was developed through a confluence of forces. First, Q methodology was already being used to ascertain participants' perceptions and beliefs. Second, there was a need to engage participants in a genuine, thoughtful process. Third, funders want and implementers need both qualitative and qualitative data. What resulted was an evaluation tool that is useful for evaluators, participants, and funders. Unlike traditional methodologies, this process requires evaluators to empower participants to personally engage

in data analysis. In the end, this shift in power yields findings that are more robust and useful – which is precisely what funders want and need.

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