Trying Another Way

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Abstract

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There are at least four factors educators should consider when engaging in community development in rural and remote regions. These recommendations include understanding the local context and the researchers place within it, broadening the scope: who is not at the table that should be, acknowledging and mobilizing existing community assets, and how to manage the information that is collected during the process

The paper reviews recent attempts to bring together key stakeholders living and working in a rural and remote community on Vancouver Island with the intension of developing a food security hub. Several false starts had occurred in bringing this group of stakeholders together to begin working collaboratively toward increasing the islands current level of food security. The text reviews reasons why these attempts at collaborative strategic planning did not move forward despite the identified food issues in the region.

The final section describes the redesign of a workshop that aims to bring the right people at the right time together to engage in collaborative planning that will translate into sustainable action towards the goal of regional food security.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Defining "Me"

Introducing myself has always been somewhat of a struggle for me. Even though I am confident in who I am and my place in the world, a direct answer to the most basic questions like "What is your name?", "Where are you from?", and What do you do for a living?" do not directly lead into an easy flowing conversation for me.

In my case, my maiden name is both uncommon, and very difficult to pronounce. After twenty eight years of hearing what must have been every possible mispronunciation of "Senft", I happily took my husbands' family name. The name "Dyck" admittedly opens me up to other interesting possibilities, but mostly people get it right the first time. This leads into the next question the "Where are you from?" The reason I struggle with this is the simple fact that I never really had one place to call home.

In my formative years, my father worked as a farm machinery distributor. By the time I entered junior high I had lived in seven different towns and had attended at least as many schools. Because of the nature of my father's work, I never really had a place to call home. Admittedly, I have lived in as many places or more in my adult life, so it is without any blame that I share this information. It is without a doubt that growing up at no fixed address helped to shape the way I think. Being exposed to different way of doing school, life, and recreation in my formative years taught me that there is always more than one way towards the end result.

My formal post-secondary education also poses a bit of a mystery. Have you ever heard of someone having a BCR? I have a BCR, and this multidisciplinary degree in Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies has opened many different doors and experiences to me over the last twenty years.

This educational path offered me a good balance of theory and practical applications. I gained knowledge and grounding from my courses in ethics, psychology, art and music therapy, education, law, social work, marketing, biology, and human service development. I cannot imagine working through my adult life in any other way.

As seen above, I realized a long time ago how I struggled to find the right words to introduce myself, but it was not until entering graduate school, that my inner tensions really started to manifest. Perhaps it was the need to re-introduce myself repeatedly to new instructors, amidst a group of peers who were connected professionally, and who knew each other well, that highlighted my pattern of behaviour. I realized that when I introduced myself, I did so by explaining who I was not, within the context of the group. For example, to my graduate group of peers, I defined myself as; not being a British Columbia certified teacher, not originally being from the North Island, not currently teaching, and so on. This became increasingly problematic as each new instructor went through the motion of asking me to categorize myself within the group by asking me to tell what grades I teach, at which school I teach at, and where I completed my Education degree. Being required to locate myself using those questions meant that I was nobody in the context of the group – much like being classified as "other".

This feeling of being "different than" culminated for me during residency this summer when an instructor asked, "If you are not a teacher, then who are you and what do you do for work?" I am not sure what I said in response, but I remember deciding in that moment that it would be the last time I would not have an answer to that question. I stayed awake that entire night trying to come up with something more fluent, attempting to find the proof that I belonged in this Master's cohort, and for good reason. It was time to become literate in the language of "Leslie".

The question above about my identity, as asked by my instructor, was the impetus in defining my Master's project. I had to find a way to locate myself within my research and understand with clarity the lens from which I work. To do this I looked closely at my defining influences: my role as an educator, learning about myself in the contest of other cultures, and finding "home".

I am an Educator

For as long as I can remember, and what people tell me from before my memories start, I have always been one to make my own path. I was not a disagreeable child or young adult; I just always had my own way of thinking about things. I knew from a very young ago what worked for me, and what did not. Fast-forward to my first year of college, and this character trait emerged in a more formal way.

I enrolled in postsecondary school for the first time because my parents told me that I had to. With some parental "coaxing" I soon found myself out of my Pizza Hut uniform and enrolled in the Rehabilitation Services program at Lakeland College. I found out quite quickly, in the first week of school, that this program had nothing to do with sports or physical therapy, but rather it focused on how to support people with disabilities. At the time, I had never met anyone with a disability, but I was confident that I had no interest in working with them. There was one professor in the program, who by chance or perhaps fate, I discovered shared the same passion for sports that I did, and we started spending time together chatting about basketball.

I remember the afternoon in his office when I summoned the courage to tell him how much I hated the program, that I did not want to work with disabled people, and that I was angry at my parents for talking me into going to college in the first place

Dr. Toombs looked me straight in the eyes and said, "Well, Leslie, can you find another way to make this work for you?" I took this as the challenge that it was, and began to think about how I could use the skills I was being taught across all situations. I used my energy to find another way, within the predetermined structure, to make the program meet my needs.

Over the course of two years I completed four practicums. I located placements for myself, turning down the ones that were offered to me, and created a depth of knowledge and experience for myself unlike any of my peers. I learned that the fundamental lessons and core teachings in my program could be applied across all fields. In each one of these roles I was an educator, and I was always looking for another way.

Fast forward ten years into my professional life, with stops – in Vocational and Residential settings supporting people with disabilities (work which I discovered I adored) and at a junior high school working as a Behaviour Management Specialist, and I found myself wanting to go back to school. I wanted to move vertically on the professional ladder, and having only a diploma was becoming a road block for me.

I tried one year in an Education program, but it was not a good fit. The instructors focused mostly on teaching mainstream students, and I could not imagine spending my time work within such a defined system or routine. I loved the challenge of working with people who do not fit the system. I loved helping people to find the answers to the question, "If it is not working, then what would?" How could I continue on this path of being an educator, but not a teacher? Eventually, I found a good fit, which was in the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies program at the University of Calgary.

This multidisciplinary degree reinforced and built upon the guiding principles of my diploma program, and what I had learned in the field over the last ten years. I felt at home

studying best practices for delivering consumer-based services, and working collaboratively across the disciplines for inclusion and social change. Many of my peers had been working in the field for as many years as I had, and this program valued our prior learning and honoured our front line experiences. By this time, I had seen the ebb and flow of soft government funding, the patterns of enforced change being enacted from offices afar and their impact on marginalized people, and how decisions were often made to support the existing institutional system rather than the people who are dependent upon it. I began to feel strongly that it is wrong to "parachute in the so-called experts" into an area to make important decisions that would have huge impacts in a community without even asking what is working, or what community members would like to see more of. The scope of my guiding question began to grow. My guiding question was no longer just about me, or the marginalized individuals who I was supporting – it was about community.

Living in Other Cultures

As mentioned, I grew up without having a place to call home. Depending on the lens through which ones views this statement, one might see that fact as a deficit in my life. I did settle down and find roots, but true to my form, I found "home" in my own unique way.

When I was nineteen, and a recent graduate from my diploma program in Rehabilitation Services, I found myself employed as a Family Relief Provider for the YWCA. This position paid me under ten dollars and hours, took me all over the city of Edmonton (on my own dime) and I provided respite to families who had a dependent person in home.

In four hours shifts I attempted to help where help was needed most.

Each shift was different, and depending on the home, I could find myself teaching parenting skill or inclusive play to siblings, doing personal care and medication routines - or giving

caregivers a break if that was what was on the agenda. Little did I know at the time that these interactions would set the stage for my entire career.

Although I have worked in varying capacities over the years, there is a common thread in my work that I can see now that I am looking for it. I can follow this thread right back to the early days of my career. The repeating theme of my curriculum is to find ways for people who are dependent on the system, for varying reason, to be seen as valuable in the eyes of their support systems. I always seek to level the playing field; creating moments in time when those who are dependent; are just people – not less than.

I learned that some things in life are great equalizers. There are some things that we cannot control, and we just have to find a way to work with them. Having a dependent person in care – be this a young child with a pervasive disabling condition or an elderly parent with the onset of dementia, at the root certain aspects of life are the same for all of us. People are people no matter if they are rich or poor; educated or illiterate. We all love, we all laugh, we all fear, we are all jealous, we get angry, we need, and we all feel hopeless. In my position I was meant to be the skill provider, but in reality I became a partner in learning. More than twenty years has passed since I have been in those people's homes, yet I can still hear their voices and see some of their faces. My list of lessons from this time is long but, most importantly, I lived a key learning; treat every situation and person I encounter with great care and respect, because at some level these people are the same as me, and at any time I could be in their shoes. My job was amazing; I began to wonder what other opportunities might be out there waiting for me.

With my future in mind, I decided to take a look at what the world had to offer. I began to work night and day and once I had enough money saved, I downsized from my spacious one bedroom home, rolled my essentials into a fifty litre backpack and hit the road; first stop,

Taiwan. That first month abroad was more difficult than I had imagined. I struggled with the language barrier, culture shock, jet lag, bed bugs, being considered a giant woman; being different ALL of the time. I stuck with it though, as challenging as it was, and by the time I landed in Australia I had a serious case of another kind of bug, the travel bug!

I began to love the freedom of the backpacker lifestyle, going where I wanted and being accountable only to my inner compass. This first extended trip abroad taught me a lot about other cultures. However, more importantly, it taught me about myself in the context of other cultures. I learned about freedoms I had taken for granted, rights I assumed were mine simply because I was a human being and a woman. I began to see how privileged I was.

In essence, for the first time, I was walking in the shoes of the people that I supported in my work. It was not a disability that handicapped me, but rather it was something that I embodied, it was my culture. One airplane ride away from Canada, I became dependent upon others, requiring help to get my basic needs met. I had to put my trust in others who were unknown to me before that moment in time, and it was terribly humbling.

If one looks at my resume, they will note gaps in my working history with several periods of time unaccounted for. What I was doing during this time is difficult to measure in a professional sense. How do I sell the randomness of fending of spider monkeys in Nicaragua, spending time in women's cooperatives in Guatemala, or living through the Tsunami in Indonesia as transferable skills?

I once read that Albert Einstein has a sign posted on his office door that read, "Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts." To some, the travel gaps in my professional timeline are a deficit, but I do not agree. These gaps in time are when I experienced the things that cannot be counted, the experiences that give meaning and

clarity to my role; highly influencing my present pathway.

Setting down roots

About three years ago, my family and I moved from the city to a rural town on Vancouver Island. Our move was prompted by a job offer (for my husband) three years of accumulated student load debt, and a debt forgiveness program available to teachers who would move north.

Our five-year plan included reducing the student debt load while living, adventuring, and exploring all that the island had to offer, and then moving back to the city. Our plan did not factor in the possibility of finding "home". Truth be told, within about two weeks of relocating to the North Island, more than any other place I had visited in my lifetime, it felt like home. By the time I had completed "my rights of passage": suffering my way through the damp and wearing through my first raincoat, I knew that this was the place I wanted to be for a very long time.

When we moved from the city I left a job that I really loved. I had been working as a Disability Services Advisor at the local university. This job, at first, had the right balance of working directly with students, and working with administration and faculty to impact change. Eventually, my caseload increased to the point where my position became mostly administrative, and I struggled to be effective at this without being grounded by hands-on work. With this said, I embraced the opportunity to take a step back from my work, and explore the possibility of redefining my career path.

I spent about a year looking for that perfect opportunity, and then decided that I would pursue a new career path once I checked graduate work off my list. As I became engaged in my new community I began taking note of the breadth of services and supports available to people juxtaposed with the reality of empty classrooms, workshops, and lecture halls. I listened to

frustrated people in the community vent about lazy people not making use of these awesome programs that were available for FREE! I tried to ignore what I was seeing in my new community; wanting to enjoy the break from working, but I could not put it to rest. I began to question why, with so many services and support opportunities available, were the participation rates so low.

I believe that the answer to building our community through such supports need to come from within the community. I think that needs can be determined by taking the time to locate the appropriate knowledge and expertise from within the community itself, and working together to discover where our own starting point is. I want to explore the idea of building community capacity from within; I want to try another way.

My Project

I have recently been hired to do community research and engagement on the status of food security in the local district. I will use this research project as the underpinning for my Master of Educations' project. As an insider researching my community's capacity to address food security in our region, I will look into the literature finding best ways or "other ways" to successfully creating sustainable and ongoing community programming that is socially inclusive, responsive, and appropriate to members of my region.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

"Men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection." Paulo Friere

Background and Introduction to the Research

Recently I was hired to do Food Security and Community Engagement Research for the region in which I live. The project had three main objectives; to explore the current gaps and assets in community efforts to improve food security within the region; to determine the feasibility and relevance of providing support for the development of a hub; and to develop a region-wide action plan to build on assets, address gaps, and ultimately improve food security across the region.

The research project was a partnership between a provincial health authority and a community health organization. It was apparent as early as my interview that the two partnering organizations worked very differently. The provincial health authority came prepared to the interview with documents, charts, and tables outlining the purpose, objectives, and possible outcomes of the project. The community health organization came to the interview taking a completely different stance. I was told that "here, we don't fit into the cookie cutter model", and that one important task of the research would be to uncover "our" approach to Food Security.

Admittedly, I left the meeting feeling a bit confused, but excited nonetheless. On one hand, I was being asked to do research to determine the feasibility of how our region could/might fit a predetermined proposed structure. On the other hand, I was being challenged by people with local knowledge and history to find another way. I knew from that first meeting that I had to find the space in between the two paradigms; the space where two frameworks would get their needs met together yet separately. I had been in this space before as an employee, and recognized the challenge I was being presented with.

From the beginning of this research process, I felt that I was being pulled in different directions by the grassroots, bottom-up organization and the top-down, medical-model system. I accepted the challenge as an education in food security and an opportunity to locate best practises for a culturally and geographically diverse rural region on Vancouver Island. This research, then, examines program delivery and design - specifically in food security - from top-down and the bottom up approaches. It looks into the literature to explore the space in between these two approaches which is being currently being called the "hub model". It concludes with an examination of the necessary elements that would need to be considered for the development of a food hub in the region.

What is Food Security?

Food is one of our basic needs, but understanding food security and the politics surrounding food issues is incredibly complex. The term "Food Security" can take on many meanings. To some it means stores of food in a community that would become available in case of an emergency. To others it means having a home garden and growing your own food. It can also mean community strategies for supporting urban agriculture. Food Security is all of these things, and more.

The widest accepted definition of the term states that food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (World Food Summit, 1996). In 2003, Hamm and Bellows proposed a more holistic approach with their definition of food security. They said that "a community is food secure when everyone obtains a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice" (p.37).

Their definition suggested that food insecurity cannot be solved by increasing access to food or simply through improving distribution systems, but that communities and people need to be engaged in the process of feeding themselves. It may help to think about food security on a continuum. Kalina (2001) states:

> "food security is a broad, complex issue one that is more effectively addressed from a community rather than an individual perspective...it is useful to think of food security along a continuum, moving from short-term relief toward redesigning the food and other systems"(p.12).

The stages along the food security continuum include short term relief (food banks, soup kitchens), capacity building (community kitchens and gardens), or redesign (food policy, social advocacy).

Over the last ten years the definition of 'food security' has evolved, and it now includes the notion that food security cannot be achieved through the simple practise of producing and distributing more food, and at cheaper prices. Yet, Eyben and Napier-Moore (2009), define a term like 'food security' as a "fuzzword". They say that fuzzwords shift to match the context of a conversation or audience, and they remain "strategically ambiguous" or vague to enrol the broadest audience or range of views possible (p. 288). While the term 'food security' leaves many consumers in the dark, this "fuzziness" of term allows for multiple stakeholders to participate in taking action. The broadness of the term allows stakeholders to agree to disagree because they are able to make the term fit the context in which they are viewing it.

Approaches to Food Security Research and Planning

Top-down medical model

The Provincial health body that has co-sponsored the research into my community's food security is one example of a top-down health-promoting organization that has the resources and power to make and impose decisions on action planning and program implementation.

Viewing food security through the lens of their medical model, one would see a system that is broken and needing to be fixed. The systematic approach to healing the food system would be achieved by fixing its various parts. The problems would be seen as defects or abnormalities that need to be changed. The structure of the medical model is top-down. In "food security terms" the focal point would be creating an absence of food insecurity rather than promoting health. An example of this would be the perception of how many see the condition of food insecurity or unhealthy lifestyle choices as a lack of education. The medical model approach to this misperception would be an attempt to educate the population through literature.

Education is always a good idea, but what the outside expert looking in may conclude is a people who are lazy for not choosing to educate themselves rather than for what it really is; a community that has low levels of literacy. As Travers (1997) writes, "some strategies such as the dissemination of written information, may increase the differential between the advantaged and the disadvantaged" (p. 344). It is important to educate all members of a population, not just those that can easily access the curriculum.

Bottom-Up Community Organizing Model

The local community health organization that is the other co-sponsor for the considered food security research is an example of a bottom-up model that is based in both grassroots and

community organizing principles. This health network (HN) draws its direction from its members, who together prioritize the social issues deemed relevant for action.

This particular HN is a regional advisory committee that was formed in 2010 to bring a collective voice to the gaps and needs in current local practises. They work locally to address the social determinants of health.

Kuyek (2011) supports this approach to community organizing:

> Organizing effectively is contextual; it is about using the collective power of people to shift and shape the cultural, economic, political and social aspects of the environment around us. How we analyse and understand the structures and characteristics of that environment determines our strategies. The better we know the context, the more effective we can be. (p. 11)

Challenges of Top-Down and Bottom-Up Models

Bottom-up organizations, such as the HN, help to prioritize the work that needs to be done at the local level. Actions are prioritized and defined; and priorities are set by the group gathered around the table. The chosen projects are often championed by someone at the table who is passionate about a topic.

The bottom-up group often depends on project funding from top-down funders such as the Provincial Health (PH) body. Projects that are funded by outside sources require accountability and documentation. Although projects are locally based they are required to fit the funding model as it is presented by the "backbone institution".

Being funded project by project has an impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of a project; should it be recommended to move into another phase. Next steps are often dependent upon the outcome or determined feasibility of the last completed project. The project funding

model does not allow the time for necessary relationships to build between the researcher/community developer and the potential participants in the project. It takes time to build trust and relationships to form, time and contract constraints can impact continuity of community service. A gap in community engagement is enough for members to lose interest or become involved in other projects. The medical model is often mistrusted in rural communities as people do not tend to trust experts that have been brought in from "the outside".

The communities in this region are unique and it takes time to build relationships with the local knowledge keepers such as our First Nations partners.. Outsiders often depend on documentation to help with studies, but are not privy to oral history of a region. This missing information can be key to a functioning project. This may be the answer to the question about low enrollment in relation to the wealth of programs being offered in the area.

Part II: Trying Another Way

"The starting point for organizing the program content of education of political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people"
Paulo Friere (p.151)

A Sense of Loss

In small rural communities, engaged residents can take on many roles. They also often travel between communities for work. A population can also be transient due to the seasonal types of employment available in a region. My region was booming in the 1980's with industries in mining, logging, and fishing. According to one source the population of a local community grew to over five thousand people during the height of the copper mining industry. The mine employed over nine hundred workers from surrounding communities. The largest local community at that time was thriving. In 1995 the mine closed and many skilled workers,

professionals and their families began to leave the community. Over time, businesses shut down and the population began to decline.

Locals describe a sense of loss when they refer to the "good old days". This loss continues to resonate in a community that defines itself on what it used to be. As Payne and Williams (2008) state "rapid and extensive community changes often destabilize neighbourhood social capital, including the social networks among residents and the linkages that connect neighbourhood residents to opportunities, organizations and services in the larger community" (p. 42). One must consider what such a destabilization causes for the remaining members of the community; in this case, for their food security.

A 'food hub' is one approach to bridge the lingering social capital gap, bring closure to the sense of loss, and bring hope to the community as it rebuilds, uncovers, and builds new social capital bonds.

A hub potentially provides a platform for collaboration to help build, as described by Pilisuk, McAllister, and Rothman (1996), a "web of continuing relationships so that people may indeed come together, share their supportive attentions and resources, and experience a sense of belonging to their community" (p 17). Building a sense of community is not done through chance; it requires skill and leadership to help it emerge. A networking food hub can leverage the collective power of the stakeholders to address long-standing issues that challenge food security on the North Island.

Hub logic: Food Hubs – Two kinds

A "food hub" is another fuzzy term chosen for what Eyben et al., (2010) describe as its "strategic ambiguity" (p.287). Strategically, ambiguous terms are often employed because of their ability to shift to match the context of a conversation where perhaps collective agreement is

not seen as possible. Eyben et al., (2010) state that "fuzziness may thought to be necessary, but it is rarely popular… accordingly, the need for greater clarity gets written into texts" (p. 288). The term "food hub" has shifted and changed over the years while being developed in various communities. Essentially, there are two kinds of food hubs: the physical hub and the networking hub.

Physical Food Hubs

A physical hub, like the one that is being proposed in Victoria, British Columbia, is facility based. According to the Victoria Community Food Hub website (2013), The Victoria Community Food Hub will be a multi-stakeholder facility to support the development of a sustainable local food system on Vancouver Island.

"The collaborative goal of the stakeholders will be to increase the production of Island-grown food, by providing necessary physical infrastructure to store and process food, while incubating social enterprises" (p.1).

Facility based food hubs work well in urban environments where there is one local government, one set of by-laws, and a range of stakeholders working within that framework.

Networking Hubs

Networking hubs are also built upon broad stakeholder involvement. Networking hubs work as connectors and leaders within a region – identifying opportunities for collaboration and alignment between stakeholders. Networking hubs aim to support the stakeholder groups were they are at rather than bringing them together physically under one roof. A networking hub would work well in an area that is both geographically and culturally diverse, where smaller communities are used to working in isolation to address their own issues. A networking hub could help to provide a collective voice for the common issues that are threaded through each

rural community within a region. As Bishop (1994) asserts "a great source of power for all people is the process of linking our common problems and concerns" (p.85).

A food hub gives a collective voice to the food security priorities in a region. It provides a space for its participants to find commonalities and together advance the priorities.

Relevant Factors toward the Development of a Food Security Hub

As Atkinson, Desmond, Saperstein, Billing, Gold, and Tournas-Hardt (2010) acknowledge "rural populations face unique barriers when attempting to engage in healthful nutrition" (p. 410). These barriers might include lack of transportation, inconsistent access to healthy fresh foods, cultural norms, and gaps in food literacy. It is possible however that lack of resources can help a community draw from its strengths. Atkinson et al., (2010) assert that "[rural] communities also have many strengths and assets, such as volunteerism and collaboration among residents and agencies" (p. 412).

The Social Determinants of Health

According to Raphael (2009), there are fourteen social determinants of health and "each of these determinants of health have been shown to have strong effects upon the health of Canadians. Their effects are actually much stronger than the ones associated with behaviors such as diet, physical activity, and even tobacco and excessive alcohol use" (p.9). The social determinants of health include: disability; food insecurity; education; employment; housing; gender; Aboriginal status; early life; employment and working conditions; and health services. Raphael suggests that Canadians suffer health issues not from the choices they make, but rather from the living situations they are faced with. When addressing community health it is important to consider the entire situation, not just the parts that are struggling.

Geography of District Involved in my Project

The Region encompasses the northern third of Vancouver Island. The people of this region live in rural, remote, and sometimes isolated settlements which include municipalities, First Nations Reserves and rural settlements spread over more than 20,000 square kilometres of rugged mountains wide valleys, islands and fjord coastline. (C. Parker personal communication, Dec 2, 2013). There is distance between communities and separation by water at times as well. The communities in the region are very diverse and have developed local practices over time to meet their needs. There are also several micro-climates that allow for different growing seasons depending upon how a community is situated.

Cultural Diversity

For First Nations people living on reserve in the region, this is not their traditional homeland. For example the Gwa'sala and 'Nakwaxda'xw peoples were relocated to local reserve land by the government of British Columbia in the 1960's. One boat ride away from their homelands two separate and distinct Nations were made into one. Being taken from their homelands severed their connection to the homelands, the edible plants and game that would have traditionally been part of their diet was no longer available to them. Over time, the first peoples have become largely dependent upon food that is provided to them through emergency supplies and government rations. Hemphill (2012) wrote that "the people had an ancient recipe for happiness, and they were torn from it like and unripe berry from its life-giving stem" (pg. 1).

Food Security on Coastal Vancouver Island is an issue best understood when put into an historical context. According to Turner, Parrish, and Solberg (2007) "the traditional and local food systems of coastal peoples has changed significantly over the last 200 years, and this has accelerated in the past three or four decades." (p. 5) As people shift away from local and

traditional foods they become more dependent on food that is grown and produced in other regions.

Food Literacy

Although food is a daily requirement, people have varying levels of food literacy. Food Literacy is defined by Vidgen and Gallegos (2011) as the "ability to basically understand the nature of food and how it is important to you and how you are to gain information about food, process it, analyze it and act upon it" (p. ii). It is important to recognize the power in levelling the playing field choosing to implement programs meeting learners at their level of readiness. Kapusnick and Hauslein (2001) stress how "diverse learning styles, interests, and abilities act as filters for student experiences, while emotional safety, challenges, and self-constructed meaning determine how students make sense of information" (p. 156). For this reason, building a diverse community of stakeholders who work on the front lines and closely with the people is crucial as they will know their learners best.

Authentic Education

As mentioned, people in this rural community take on many roles. With that said, people often do food security work (stage one) off the side of their desk. There are many informal systems in place to take the edge off of hunger on a daily basis. While emergency stores of food kept in a desk drawer do help, they do little to build a person's capacity.

A hub could help connect teachers and learners to appropriate programming that is being offered in the community while the learner is still within a teachable moment. An authentic education can occur at this time. Freire (2009), who focused on transformative and critical education in his work, writes,

> "Authentic education is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B" , but rather can only occur when "A" works with "B", mediated by the world – a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views of opinions about it. These views, impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes, or hopelessness, imply significant them on the basis of which the program content of education can be built. (pg. 150)

Teaching people to question is one of the most powerful tools an educator can offer to their students. Seeding learners with information that helps them to question the status quo, offers ideas of how things could be done another way. Friere (2009) suggests that "utilizing certain basic contradictions, we must pose this existential, concrete, present situation to the people as a problem which challenges them and requires a response – not just at the intellectual level, but at the level of action" (p. 151).

Sustainability

I am not the first person who has been hired to do research on food security in this region. There was a body of work to be drawn upon dating back to 2007. Past research and community engagement was also project based and funded through a variety of sources. The threads of this work are left with the community members who, over the years, attended the meetings, and took notes.

There is a sense among community members that the research on this topic, although essential, is just talk. Freire (2009) describes talk that is disconnected from action as "verbalism". He writes that "when a word is deprived of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating 'blah'" (p.147). Friere makes another interesting point in that the other side of verbalism is activism. He says that action for the sake of action is also meaningless. Action needs to be

connected to dialogue and reflection. Projects that include action plans that are well rooted and woven in the community fabric can withstand the ebb and flow of soft funding.

Hub Logic

As mentioned earlier in this literature review, a food hub can mean different things to different people. It can mean a physical space to prepare and package foods, a place where information is disseminated, or a group of stakeholders who have a common set of goals and priorities. A hub can also simply be another name for a network. In this case, the hub, or interagency advisory committee, is a space that is created for people to dialogue and act through the sharing of ideas, resources, and prioritization of actions.

The hub concept is becoming very popular as an answer to current soft funding practises. On Vancouver Island there are four networking food hubs and two others that are possibly going to be developed. Communities and regions are looking inside themselves to determine the capacities that already exist in order to help themselves. People are recognizing that the social problems we face are too important, and there is a need to continue with dialogue and action despite the ebb and flow of soft funding. A well-formed and functioning hub would ideally create a networking web with lots of connections that will continue to function even if one of the links is interrupted.

Chapter 3: My Development of a Local Workshop on Food Security

Eighteen months ago when I embarked on this Masters of Education journey I was at a point in my career where I was questioning my role as middle person between the people who make the rules and the students were meant to follow them. In this particular role, I was working as a coordinator for a provincially funded employment retraining program. My job duties included client intake, curriculum development and delivery, developing and coordinating practicum placement, and monitoring employment retention. I had become increasingly uncomfortable with, for example, delivering training programs that seemed short sited. Short sited in the way that the project was deemed a success on the percentage of students that gained employment rather than their ability to retain employment. I began to wonder, is the path to the goal as important as reaching the goal? I also questioned how would document the narrative, or process, alongside the measurable prescribed outcomes impact the retention of an achieved success?

Up until that time in my career I had worked with groups of students who were enrolled in sponsored retraining programs where there was a prescribed outcome, usually employment or integration into the mainstream. Usually students who were registered in these programs did not feel that the choice to enroll was their own. But each time as I delved into the work, my experience was that it was just as important to address the barriers which were preventing student integration or "success". It was often the case that once these barriers were addressed, be it building social skills or improving one's ability to manage anger, which students were able to proceed more easily through the prescribed curriculum. As an educator I felt that it was difficult to honour and perhaps even measure these unwritten progressions toward a prescribed "success". It was my observation that these unaccounted for and incremental changes (I believed) moved

the students toward the anticipated outcomes. One of these "unaccounted for" changes was the shift that occurred when I invited students to view the situation at hand as an opportunity, an opportunity to take "one step" towards a different path rather than as an imposed outcome. An example of an imposed outcome would be offering an employment retraining program where the successful outcome was employment in a call centre.

Working with students as partners in their own education for change did much to shift the response, and I believe outcome, to the situation at hand. For example rather than seeing themselves as being pigeonholed into a particular job or outcome in the employment sector, I encouraged them to see the number of transferable skills they would be learning. The transferrable skills they would be learning, such as business communication, computer literacy, and accounting could be used across the job market. As Aoki (2005) says "in reflection, the actor through the critical analytic process uncovers and makes explicit the tacit and hidden assumptions and intentions held" (p. 16). This reframing of the situation as an opportunity rather than an imposition, coupled with linking student goals to the transferable skills being offered was a good way to leverage student participation and their eventual success.

Another question I had was about the sustainability of the change or retaining the prescribed outcome. If it was the undocumented behavior changes that allowed the student to be successful, such as an improved ability to problem solve, then how could I convey this information to a funding body? How could I broaden the scope of the meaning of the word success to encompass a more holistic point of view, especially if the funder was focused on the measurable – mostly outcome based successes like completion of a program or a student becoming gainfully employed? I wondered, as an educator, should I find a way to measure or track the changes in behavior that I believed were partners in student success? I questioned was

this analysis necessary since both the student and the funder were able to recognize success in the way that they needed? If I was to measure the components I believed to the undercurrent of success, how would I do that, and does it matter when I, as the middle person, had delivered the product?

In the context of this paper the unmeasured factors that were looked at focus on setting the stage for a successful learner or community engagement. The factors explored were the importance of prioritizing the building of relationships with students and understanding the context of the situation, locating the educators place within the curriculum, finding a common language or uncovering the assumptions being made by the learner, the educator, and the funder, and agreeing on the outcomes (be these emergent or prescribed) of the process. A final consideration was how using narrative "how did we get from A to B" could contribute to the sustainability or retention of a goal. I believe these efforts in setting the stage prior to delivering a curriculum are the very fabric that differentiates an outcome based project from an ongoing community development. These important parts of the puzzle are the fibres and the network that builds resilience and backbone into maintaining the goal that has been achieved.

Presently, I am working in a position that sits somewhere between conducting research and doing community development. In this position I am acting as the conduit between a grassroots organization, a provincial health funding body, and the rural and remote community in which I live. When I transitioned my career away from employment retraining, I thought that I had stepped away from my guiding questions about sustainability of change and the importance of treating whole situations rather than the certain fixable parts that can be measured. In truth my questions resurfaced in the new context. My questions re-emerged during the delivery of a workshop on the topic of community food security. This time I viewed my guiding questions

through conducting a feasibility study that asks about the development of a food security hub in a remote and rural community. When I stepped back to look the questions, that had resurfaced, in the context of my current job, I was surprised. I was surprised at how the questions could be generalized across the different domains and the distance between employment training and community food security. My questions regarding the importance of process as well as product, and the management of the information being collected and used as a contribution toward the sustainability of a change, were relevant in this context as well. I believe that the process of developing the relationships and the network that would create and maintain a functioning food hub would be as important as the result of actually having a food hub. The network of participants would be the bricks and mortar of the product, the elements that would foundation that would potentially maintain it over time.

Project Rational

A few months ago as part of my work as an independent contractor, I designed and delivered a workshop to a group of key stakeholders, who focus on building food security, in the region in which I live. The redesign of this workshop is the basis of my project (full disclosure here) the workshop did not achieve the outcomes for which I had planned. Through the delivery of this workshop I learned several lessons about food security work in the region where I live. I also realized that my questions about a system being more than just its parts and my hunch that the undocumented narrative being an important component of building sustainability or resiliency into a project were still relevant. My questions were as relevant in the context of community development as they were in the field of education. Despite the failure of the workshop according to the external identified outcomes it presented an opportunity to further explore some of these questions I had around internal and external goals as well as participant's

needs and wants. Through this failed workshop, an opportunity had presented itself. The opportunity to redesign (and potentially redeliver) the food security workshop I had created would let me explore the answers to my questions in a real and meaningful way.

The First Workshop

Earlier in the year I designed a workshop that would gather key stakeholders around the table with the intention of taking the first steps toward the development of a formal regional food security working group, a food hub. The food hub, it deemed feasible, would be comprised of a cross section of key stakeholders representing the northern region of Vancouver Island. The funding for the development and growth of the food hub would be made available through the Community Food Action Initiative. Beyond providing a "bumping place" for face to face contact, the workshop was designed to inform and educate the participants on the topic of food security. It would also unpack the value added possibilities the development of a "networking food security hub" could bring the region.

The workshop activities were designed to acknowledge the work that had been done previously in the region; part of the work to be done was reviewing and prioritizing actions that had previously identified by working groups in the past. There was also an asset mapping exercise that encouraged the stakeholders to look within the community to find hidden resources that could be drawn upon to answer some of the identified gaps. Finally with the newly prioritized actions posted on the wall the stakeholders, with their newly developed sense of community and understanding of the urgency of the issue, were meant to mobilize the actions. But this is not what happened. Instead with the actions on the wall, actions that the group had identified and prioritized, it was observed that the stakeholders became hesitant, some people

left the room, others said they were too busy to take on anymore work, and others said that the meeting was again "just talk" and to call them when we were going to "do something!"

Upon reflection, there are things that I would do differently given the chance. The redesign of this "failed workshop" is an exploration of the different steps I would take based on the rationale provided through a review of the literature, interpretation of the feedback given by participants and the reflections of my observations during the delivery of the first workshop.

Statement of the Topic

The redesign of this workshop is linked closely to the literature especially that of Paulo Friere whose work helped frame the thoughts I had regarding treating the whole person rather than just the situation at hand. Based on my experience of delivering the first workshop, there are four recommendations for change that will be explored in the redesign of my future workshops. Upon reflection, the four recommendations are: understanding the local context and the researchers place within it, broadening the scope asking who is not at the table that should be, drawing on existing strengths, and sharing the process.

Understanding the Local Context and the Researchers Place Within it

The participants of the workshop confirmed early on that they comprehended the complexity of food issues at work in the region. They also understood the many organizations and activities working to improve access and availability of food to residents in the area. Examples of this understanding included shared knowledge of the development of community gardens and farmer's markets throughout the region, education programs at post-secondary institutions and community workshops, and the tireless efforts of food providers to ensure that everyone has enough food to eat. First Nations communities were also connecting youth to

traditional foods and methods of harvesting. The culture of the region encourages many residents to hunt, fish, gather and garden for their own consumption.

In the first workshop, I had set aside about thirty minutes of a very busy agenda to provide an education and definitions of food security and the proposed food security model. From this initial round table conversation I learned that the group who had come together were already on side, in that the information I had planned for the morning segment was not necessarily a good use of time because the participants were a different group of people than originally sampled. I also observed in the conversation an undercurrent of "us and them". In this equation the "us" was the local people who were at the table and the "them" was the provincial health funding body.

It is important to note that employees of the provincial funding body were actually at the table; these employees have work ongoing in the region but do not reside within the boundaries. I wondered about this undercurrent and thought that there must be more history and background information to the story, one that had been embodied by this group over time. I also wondering about who "us" is and who is "them"? I wondered, where do the participants situate me as "insider researcher" employed (one step removed) by a funder from the outside in this process? Eyben et al (2010) suggest that "in such a context, enquiring into the meanings of words may prove useful. Words are construct visions of development" (p. 286). Perhaps instead of framing the workshop with academic definitions and a proposed predetermined model, it would have been more strategic to use the time figuring out these relationships between the groups, the partners in the project, and my role as a researcher.

I would recommend that a researcher take steps prior to a large workshop to begin to know the context and dynamics of a group who will be coming together for the first time around

an issue. Taking time to understand how each participant looks at the issue. In the region where I live and work, communities pride themselves on being unique and different. Some of these differences such as in the geography and demographics are visible on paper. Yet I learned through this experience that listening to the "narrative" or the information between the words in the published reports is as important as studying the documentation.

As Kulyk (2011) suggests, "how we analyse and understand the structures and characteristics of that environment determines our strategies. The better we know the context, the more effective we can be" (p. 11). The first moments of the workshop were over in what felt like the blink of an eye, but I could tell I had a lot more to learn about the dynamics of this group. I knew that my work was not as straight forward as I had assumed, nor would the people align or "jump into action" just because the workshop had highlighted the importance of the cause.

Broadening the Scope: Who is not at the Table that Should Be?

As I looked around the room I saw and acknowledged all the people at the table, but I also began to think about those people who were not at the table that should have been. When I designed the workshop I was looking through the lens of food security but I learned that I should have widened my scope to include others. In a rural and remote region such as this, where people often hold many roles, work across sectors, and do not necessarily focus on food insecurity, it is important to consider who those key people may be. As a researcher working in such a diverse and complex system, and on a timeline, how does one begin to know who those key people are? An interesting note is that is more urban centres the key stakeholders are "positions" in a remote area the key stakeholders are "people" as noted above in part 2 the literature review. People in rural areas often hold many roles in their communities so when they

have a seat at the table they often are representing many different points of view. For example in my region I fill a variety of roles. Some of the roles I fill include being an elected official for my community, co-ordinating the hot lunch program at a local elementary school, I work as the librarian at the local post-secondary institution, and I am the food security coordinator for the region. As you can see when I take a seat at the table, I hold bring with me information and the experience of looking at an issue from many different, but, equally important roles. My point is that in a larger urban center what I do would be the responsibility of four different people.

Another suggested change to the workshop strategy would be in bringing key stakeholders around the table. As noted by Kuyek (2011) "People working for change in community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), unions and campaigns are often unaware or dismissive of the efforts of other activists" (p. 11). A good place to start the search would be looking at the agencies and organizations that focus on the determinants of health in the community. As stated, the determinants of health contribute to the whole health of a population. According to Raphael (2009) the social determinants of health include "disability; food insecurity; education; employment; housing; gender; Aboriginal status; early life; employment and working conditions; and health services" (p. 9).

In Raphael's model food security is one of the elements contributing to a healthy population, and then it would make sense to invite participation from the broader scope of contributors. An example of the "right" people around the table in the region where I live would include those working within roles such as; addictions and homelessness, school district, poverty reduction workers, first nations bands, local government representatives, researchers and academics, youth, the health authority, grassroots organizations, community dietitians, post-secondary institutions, and the people who do direct food security work.

Bringing this cross-section of the population to the table would bring many different perspectives into view allowing for the issue to be looked at from many angles. Looking at food insecurity from many angles, each delegate through his or her own lens would encourage the sectors to learn about both their strengths and their "blindspots". This opportunity for "cross-sharing" will allow for a common understanding of the needs at a local level. Broadening the scope of participation and taking time to understand the context are two important factors that I would consider changing in the redesign of the workshop given the opportunity. Through the literature, and lessons learned as a researcher, I believe that the answers to building our community and our capacity to address our current state of food insecurity need to come from within. I understand that need should be determined through taking time to locate the knowledge and expertise from within the group working together to discover where our own starting point is. As Atkinson, et al. (2010) state "to implement efficacious interventions that would successfully consider such barriers as assets, community residents themselves must be involved in the development of health behaviour change programs and policies" (p. 410). Through exploring the idea of building community capacity from within; I want to try another way. I concur with Kalina (2001) when she says "the best way to respond to the needs of the group and mobilize a community is to use the community development approach" (p. 21). The community development approach involves people participating in finding the solutions to their own problems.

The next step after bringing the stakeholders to the table would be to find a common language to create a level playing field for all the players. A level playing ground would include the time to build working relationships among stakeholders. Going through the process of finding common language and level ground would encourage a flow when the time comes for

setting and prioritizing actions, building in multiple points of entry and exit, and finding a way to "measure" movement toward the goals.

Moving toward the development of a regional networking food hub with all of these factors in mind would be like community bricolage, or as Kulyk (2011) suggests, "...like making soup out of leftovers. We may be dreaming of bouillabaisse, but when we open the fridge and find some beans, a potato and an onion, we use our imagination and creativity to make the best soup we can" (p. 13). Homemade soup tastes delicious and is often better than one that is created and delivered in a ready-made package. A homemade soup just as a networking food hub is built upon the strengths that are already present in the community.

We live in a bountiful area. Our ocean refrigerator is stocked; the forest shelves are spilling over with that all kinds of traditional and wild foods for us. We can grow most anything here and the things we can't grow in the open, we can grow with the use of simple technologies. We have experts, educated professionals, and wise knowledge keepers living in our midst. We have the knowledge, the ability, and a bountiful region that can provide to us as long as we take care of it. The people who live in this region are resilient, but with so much food around us, why are people hungry? This question is worth asking and answering.

In preparing for the first workshop I spent time reading through reports, meeting minutes, and email threads from the past. From these documents I collated the action plans that had been drawn in the region back to 2007. Next I listed the identified actions (see appendix) into four themes or categories which were education, research, community events, and policy/systems redesign. These themes loosely reflect the projected outcomes of what a developing food hub could impact over time. Within small groups the participants reviewed the action plans from the

past, acknowledging the work that had been previously been done in the region and together worked towards prioritizing the actions in the present context.

This exercise was really well received in that the participants were able to see evidence of the work, that many of them had participated in, was not lost or forgotten. It also allowed the group to update the list as in some parts of the region the identified gaps were being addressed. Upon reflection, the exercise also had one unexpected impact which was anger. Some participants were reminded about the number of false starts in attempts to building a regional food security program had actually occurred. They voiced unhappiness about the historical process of community engagement where local energy and hope was generated, and once the information was collected it left the region only to return in the form of a report. The report, if circulated to the participants, would typically include a listing of recommendations and suggested actions, leaving the responsibility of the next steps with the community as well. As Kuyek (2010) suggests "everywhere, there are activists who have learned and are learning how to put the creation of relationships and building of community at the heart of their efforts. They are building up the soil that will nourish real change" (p. 13). The community development process builds sustainability into the process as participants are more likely to take action on the ideas they have developed in a local context rather than having a pre-determined model or solution imposed upon them.

In the redesign of this workshop, I would repeat the action planning activity, but I would do a few things differently. This activity was designed to help participants recognize the work that has been done previously in the region. This activity attempted to honour the good work that was done, especially since many of the people around the table would have participated in that work. One thing I noticed in my reflections was that the list of attendees at my workshop at

times was quite similar to the participant's lists of the past, so perhaps I was again making a moot point.

A second consideration that went into the planning of this activity was the opportunity for people around the table to self-identify projects that are addressing the actions that were identified as far back as 2007. Within the time allotted, encouraging participants to celebrate what movement had occurred towards the actions despite all of the challenges. Through strategic messaging this activity could have had a strengths based outcome rather the feelings of deficit that surfaced. As Atkinson, et al. (2010) note "assessment of community needs can be done through a deficiency-oriented or asset-based approach. The first option concentrates on problems and needs, often resulting in fragmentation and dependence. The second approach incorporates capacities and strengths and encourages interdependence and empowerment" (p. 410).

In essence, this activity was meant to provide an opportunity for the participants to develop social capital and to create bonds not only with the past (recognizing the loss) but seeing what has happened since, and where we want to go in the future. This activity was one step towards rebuilding the bonds of social capital. Since the food hub I am proposing is a web of networks, it is important to recognize that networks and faces will shift over time causing need for the hub to adapt. It is interesting to note that most of these factors have little to do with capacity building around food skills and everything to do with building community. A number of informal systems have been identified where individuals are doing their best to take the everyday edge off of hunger, but for sustained change to happen and truly address food insecurity a strategy needs to be developed. A strategy that will allow the food insecure to participate in being their own solutions.

Acknowledging and Mobilizing Existing Community Assets

The afternoon session of the workshop was dedicated to an asset mapping exercise. The process of asset mapping was chosen for two reasons; contractual obligation, and to aid recognition of the fact that many of the answers to our food insecurity dilemma could be answered from with the community. According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) "community *asset mapping* is a positive approach to building strong communities" (p. 9). This process is often used to mobilize a community to use its *assets* to develop a plan to solve its problems and improve residents' quality of life.

The asset mapping exercise was quite successful in its delivery due to the simple fact that the participants had been "trained" through similar exercises, almost yearly, for the past decade. They easily identified the physical assets available to us within our region. They also affirmed that the region has many talented people living within its boundaries who could also be counted as assets.

Yet upon reflection it was unsuccessful in its attempt to shift participant engagement into action. Friere (2005) makes the point that "many political and educational plans have failed because their authors designed them according to their own personal views of reality, never once taking into account the *men-in-a-situation* to whom their program was ostensibly by directed" (p. 150). I realize now that I was not being "authentic" in planning for the workshop. I was doing food security "for" the group rather than "with" the group.

With the best of intentions, I designed an activity that would lead a group of people to the prescribed outcome of my agenda. I did not account for the "human factors" in that they might not want to be lead to the outcome that already been pre-determined solution to the regional food issues from parties outside the region. At this point it did not matter that I was working from a

local perspective, the curriculum that I was delivering was essentially the equivalent of what educators call the "banking model". The banking model of education is a discourse where students are viewed as empty vessels waiting to be filled or deposited with the information that will fulfill their educational needs. Junker (2011) describes "the banking model perspective, the teacher, as the predominant subject of education, makes the learners repositories of an alienating and oppressive knowledge by giving information which they passively receive, memorize, and repeat" (p. 4). Perhaps the asset mapping exercise should have been facilitated by someone who was not as close to the work as I was? To what extent did my view from both the inside and outside of the information skew the themes that emerged as the evidence that the hub model "as is where is" was a good fit? Through dialoguing with the group I could have explained how the themes that emerged in the discussion could be leveraged and activated with support and resources of the hub model.

Upon reflection I believe that the time used doing the asset mapping exercise would have been better used doing what Freire calls "action-reflection". Wallerstein and Berstein (1988) describe action-reflection as the step in a process that takes emerges after the place after the initial listening and dialoguing stages have taken place. They state that "as people test out their analyses in the real world, they begin a deeper cycle of reflection that includes input from their new experiential base. This recurrent spiral of action-reflection-action enables people to learn from their collective attempts at change and to become more deeply involved to surmount the cultural, social, or historical barriers" (p. 384). Since the most of the participants had already been through similar asset-mapping exercises that had brought the group to the same conclusions. I would propose that the researcher facilitate a conversation similar to Frierian method of empowering education. Dialoging with the group about their experiences and what

they see and feel needs to be done, sharing similar experiences from their own lives and communities, and as a group define the layers of the issue.

Sharing the Process

How does the redesign of a workshop answer my guiding questions? Questions that had to do with the accounting for addressing barriers before reaching for a prescribed goal and does recording and sharing the narrative of a project improve the sustainability of a proposed change? A fourth recommendation for the redesign of the workshop is in how the gathered information is handled. At the beginning of the employment after spending hours with documents, but feeling like I was missing important connecting pieces of information I decided to create a pathway of continuous community engagement through a weblog.

Choosing to publish my findings as I navigate my way through the food security project would improve my transparency, hold me accountable, and allow the community to guide the process. It would also allow me to learn alongside my readers. To date there have been 1700 views on the blog with many comments from the public. This transparency has also allowed me to incorporate feedback into my work on an as needed basis. The WordPress blog that I publish under is called "HardyLocalFoods". Most importantly I have created a map so that anyone picking up the project now and in the future can see the course that was taken. Upon reflection I can see how much more "time" sharing my findings on an ongoing basis has given me with the public. I agree with Kuyek (2011) when she says "although there is only one reality, we all look at it through different window. Creating an environment in which we can look through each other's windows helps us to see and act more holistically" (p. 45). Inviting the public to view, comment, and follow my work has also helped to build the relationships that are needed to sustain the outcomes of this project, be them a food hub or not.

The intended contribution of this project is twofold. First it will increase our community's capacity to address food security issues, and secondly it will outline a process and considerations needed mobilize stakeholders into taking actions; moving "the talk" into strategic action. The outcomes of this workshop should not be put in the freezer or preserved. Lessons learned in the process of developing the project could be generalized and used in other remote, rural locations where there is the possibility of developing a food security hub.

Final Thoughts

The task of redesigning the workshop with the support of hands on experience, observations and a literature review confirmed that my hunch that noting the process is important alongside documenting and measuring the prescribed outcomes. The narrative or history of a change gives the learner or a community a map of sorts that tracks the decisions made along the path toward the goal. Community development is not a direct path, but rather an emergent process that is often difficult to navigate. Encouraging students to invest in a process from the onset of the opportunity will more likely encourage them in taking action in achieving and maintaining the agreed upon goal.

In all, I have learned that community development work is not as straight forward as checking numbered items off a list, and that no amount of planning can factor in the emergent nature of this work. In the redesign of the "failed" workshop changes were made to treat the whole system by broadening the scope of stakeholders who were invited to sit at the table, and an emphasis was made on the importance of understanding local context and building relationships. A level playing field was created through utilizing accessible language that was transparent to all stakeholders. Finally the information being collected was shared on an ongoing basis to provide a narrative for which the stakeholders could follow and reflect upon.

Through the design and redesign of my workshop I discovered that the path to the goal is as important as reaching the goal, that process is as important as product. When working with individuals or groups of learners it is important to engage them as cowriters of the script so when the timing is right the steps toward action or change can happen organically.

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Appendix

Action Items from Workshop #1

Education

Workshops for grant writing	Learn to forage and identify native plants
Increased awareness of available grants	Learning to grow a better garden, here
"how-to" workshops	More work on protecting the environment
Gardening workshops for children and youth	Composting education
Food preservation workshops	Plant a row. Grow a row program
Cooking courses	Accessible resources for putting on events

Research

Salmon forever	Soil sampling facility
Research on what grain crops will grow here	Research on how to attract more bees
Build a community greenhouse/garden centre	Composting centre
Harvesting shellfish in a healthy way	Establish a process for protection of medicinal plants
Increase vendors selling produce at the farmers market	Being able to keep fishing, hunting, and gardening locally for the rest of my life

Policy, Systems Redesign, Regional Meetings

Decrease duplication of service	Having grocery stores bring in better quality and fresher fruits and vegetables
Increase access to locally grown foods	Urban hens, urban farming, grants available to encourage new farmers
Food co-op (an organization focused on getting food staples for the poor of our community)	Having land available to build a garden
Increase availability of BC products	Ability to buy local fish
Community meetings done in individual communities and then inviting leaders from each community to attend a regional meeting	Increased opportunity to trade and share food, gleaning

Community Events/Awareness

Coordinated regional community garden meetings	Community garden tours and educational events held at gardens to garner interest
Regional calendar of community events	Spring seed swaps
Seaside market for fish, vegetables, and fruits	Knowledge sharing
Coordinated communications	knowledge of first nations food system