



**A Hero's Journey:  
A Handbook  
for  
Facilitators of Multicultural  
Parenting**

**Multicultural Health Brokers  
With the assistance of  
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**We are here  
to awaken from  
the illusion of  
our separateness.  
Thich Nhat Hahn**

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## Preface and Appreciation

Throughout the ages and across cultures, a recurring story has been told about heroes who pass through a spiral journey of encountering paramount crisis, experiencing "re-birth", re-orientation and finding a fresh path. The journey is an essential process of deep transformation, in response to internal and external changes. The heroes emerge from the journey, fundamentally changed with newfound wisdom and a bitter-sweet memory of the journey.

In the last 2 years, as we searched inwards and outwards for a transformative learning process most relevant for Multicultural parenting, we have re-discovered this archetypal story. We have found it to resonate with both the "stories" of immigrant and newcomer families struggling to re-define relationships and identities in their new "homeland" in Canada, as well as poetically, the type of learning process needed to generate an emerging and collective knowledge about parenting in a multicultural context.

This handbook represents a set of beginning thoughts and experiences of one group of immigrant & refugee families, workers and participatory educators embarking on the "journey" to attempt to generate insights into parenting in multicultural context, using a participatory & transformative process. We hope it would produce a catalytic effect on others, inviting them to embark on a similar journey.

We, at the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op humbly and gratefully thank:

- ❖ The parents within 9 immigrant & refugee communities who shared their stories, struggles and hopes with us
- ❖ Elizabeth Lange - our Participatory Educator and Monique Nutter - our Participatory Evaluator who lovingly came on the journey with us.
- ❖ ECALA (Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association) who trusted us with the resources to "launch this first step" of the Hero's Journey of parenting in a multicultural context.

**Yvonne Chiu and Lucenia Ortiz**

**The universe is  
made of stories,  
not of atoms.  
Muriel Rukeyser**

## Chapter One: Introduction

### Purpose of Handbook

This handbook is the result of a Participatory Action Research project piloting transformative learning in multicultural parenting. Its authors are too numerous to be named as they include parents and facilitators from at least nine different ethno-cultural communities in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

The handbook is intended to support those interested in facilitating multicultural parenting education with immigrant parents. While it does set out some sample curricula, it is not simply a set of plans to be implemented. Rather, it is a guide to a process of planning, acting and evaluating. We are calling this process a hero's journey given the goals, fears, anxiety, humor, and joy that is part of the process of confronting myths, departing from safe and comfortable harbors to journey through unknown waters, eventually arriving in foreign territory and learning the skills to slowly make a new home. This handbook traces the phases that facilitators need to go through themselves in order to assist immigrant parents. This handbook also illustrates some processes that enable immigrant parents to generate their own knowledge, develop skills and take action capable of transforming their families, communities and society. The knowledge generated, the actions taken, and the outcomes achieved will be unique to the strengths, capacities, and social conditions of each family and community.

### From Generating Knowledge to Praxis—Developing A "Third Way"

Immigrant parents' adjustments from one culture to another require facilitators to go much deeper than simply delivering information. Our experience as Brokers in the arena of multicultural parenting has led us to believe that for immigrant families to be successful, parents need to develop a "third way" of parenting, one that combines the best of values and practices from their culture of origin with the best of Canadian values and practices. There is no book or set of rules that outlines which values and practices are best and how well they will work for whom. Instead, parenting education among immigrant parents must be a participatory process that enables them to reflect on their own history and make their own choices. In this way, they will generate their own

**Imagination is  
far more  
important than  
knowledge.**

**Albert Einstein**

**You are destined  
to fly, but that  
cocoon has to go.  
Nelle Morton**

knowledge, determine their own actions and, in their own way, transform themselves and their families.

The development of a "third way" requires a process that cycles between investigation, analysis, action, and reflection in two interactive domains: 1. the intrafamilial and community domain, and 2. the community and societal domain.

*Intrafamilial and Community Domain: Support parents to strengthen relationships within their own families as well as strengthen relationships among families within their communities.*

- a. Facilitators immerse themselves in the reality of immigrant parents by gathering parents from particular ethnocultural communities.
- b. Parents and facilitators together investigate and analyze parenting issues, values, practices in various focal areas, and what is working and will work in this new social context.
- c. Parents act to transform their parenting practices, which often necessitates transformations in personal identity, family roles, and relations of power.
- d. Parents reflect on how effective the changes they have made are in achieving healthy families and healthy integration into the host society.
- e. The spiral continues.

*Community and Societal Domain: Strengthen relationships among strong families to build the power to act effectively to transform the community's and host society's ability to truly welcome and integrate immigrant families.*

- a. Facilitators immerse themselves in the reality of immigrant parents by gathering strengthened families from particular ethnocultural communities together.
- b. Parents together investigate and analyze the social conditions that support or hinder their ability to parent effectively.
- c. Parents and facilitators act to transform the community or host society to truly welcome and integrate new members of Canadian

**Whatever you can  
do, or dream you  
can, begin it.  
Boldness has  
genius, power  
and magic in it.  
Johann Goethe**

communities.

- d. Parents, facilitators and other relevant stakeholders reflect on how effective the changes are.
- e. The spiral continues.

### ***Structure of the Handbook***

In line with our purpose, this handbook is not intended to answer the question: What is effective multicultural parenting and how can I do it? Rather it is a series of questions and actions designed to help facilitators and parents together answer this question for themselves through their own investigations, analyses, actions and reflections. The handbook is the story of our efforts to develop and implement an effective multicultural parenting curriculum within the Edmonton immigrant community. It focuses on the process we have undergone as facilitators and as parents to develop resolutions to the dilemmas and issues in multicultural parenting. It also provides some resource materials we used to help clarify our thinking. We are not providing a recipe for success. Rather, our aim is to make explicit the ingredients and equipment we used in multicultural parenting education. We respect your ability to use these ingredients and others in new combinations to develop your own delicious recipes!

Chapter Two, Understanding the Transformative Process of Immigration provides some context for our efforts in multicultural parenting education. Chapters Three and Four, About Multicultural Parenting and About Participatory and Transformative Facilitation, are what the facilitators themselves went through to prepare for implementing multicultural parenting education with parents in their respective ethnocultural communities. The next three chapters Designing Participatory and Transformative Learning Processes, Samples of Curricula, and Evaluating the Learning reflect our initial efforts in piloting and evaluating these parenting sessions. Each of the sections starts out with questions, activities, and resources we used to investigate, analyze, act and reflect. We then share some of our preliminary results recognizing they may or may not be similar to what others groups may find. One chapter traces the learning process of non-immigrant support workers who regularly engage immigrant communities. The final two chapters, Skills Toolbox and Continuing to Build Collective

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Knowledge, Multicultural Parenting Capacities, and Facilitator Skill  
provide additional resources that you may wish to use in your  
explorations of multicultural parenting topics.

## Chapter Two: Understanding the Transformative Process of Immigration

### *The Hero's Journey: The Practice of Multicultural Health Brokering*

The practice of multicultural health brokering traces its origins to anthropologists who "straddled between two sub-cultures and acted as cultural translators and go-betweens." Since these origins, "cultural brokers" are now recognized as individuals who are "insiders" within a certain ethnocultural community and who help to link this community to the outside world. Jezeswski (1989) defines cultural brokering as the "act of bridging, linking, mediating between groups and persons of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change." For us, it involves bridging gaps in cultural meanings or gaps in understanding between various social service professionals, immigrant parents, their cultural communities, and the broader society. We act as messengers and advocates for the knowledge and cultural traditions of the people we serve. Our goal is to foster understanding to achieve the best possible outcomes for immigrant families, namely equitable access to the social services and the societal understanding that they need for successful integration into Canadian life.



The Edmonton Multicultural Health Brokers began as a demonstration project in 1995 and evolved into a worker's cooperative that was formally registered in 1998. We have worked with thousands of individuals and families from the Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish-speaking, Arabic-speaking, and South Asian communities. When working in our respective communities, we have tried to use a "popular education" approach that was formulated by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator. Freire discarded the traditional notion that the teacher is a giver of knowledge and the student is a passive receiver. Popular education is based on the principle that learners should be empowered to take control of their own learning, so that they are actively involved in bettering their own lives and, in this case, challenging Canadian society to be more welcoming and to provide what is required to assist integration.

However, we found that we were not utilizing this popular education approach as fully as we hoped in our parenting courses. We also were not starting from our own personal experience and generating our own

knowledge about the parenting adjustments that were required in Canada. To begin our journey of challenging ourselves to work more fully in a participatory way and understanding our own personal transformation, we began with a River of Life activity.

### *The Hero's Journey: The Process of Immigration*

The second step we took to transform our practice as facilitators of transformative learning was to explore our own immigration history and the adjustments we faced as we learned to parent with one foot in our culture of origin and one foot in the Canadian culture. We wanted to identify the key issues and learnings that developed as we went through this experience. While this process was helpful for determining the challenges, needs and capacities that immigrant families face, particularly in parenting, it was also used to help us rethink our overall program.

The River of Life Activity:

Draw your experience of immigration as a river. The source of the river can be your home country, the second part of your river your experience of leaving your home country and the reasons you left, the third part can illustrate the challenges and experiences you had during the process of immigration and then, finally, the experiences you had adjusting to Canadian life. Think about the color of the river, the different points where it is calm, rapids, waterfalls etc. and where the river is flowing through (realities in different countries). You can label and write on your river to record your key experiences. This may be a very difficult and emotional process, but perhaps it can be part of the healing process to think back over your journey.

Analysis: In pairs, share your river. Share as much or as little as you feel comfortable with. Can you see common experiences in your immigration process? Discuss with the whole group: Even though our stories are unique, do there appear to be common stages that we all went through?

Summary of Our Findings from the River of Life Activity:

Mapping the journey of immigrant and refugee families from their home country to Canada in this research provided a beginning set of knowledge

**Home is not  
where you live,  
but where they  
understand you.**

**Christian  
Morgenstern**

to help us understand the unique and complex circumstances that affect the lives of parents and children. Across communities, common themes emerge from the experiences that form the basis of an organizing framework of an immigrant and refugee's journey to their new homeland as shown in Figure 1.

**To rise into love  
you must descend  
into your  
wounds.  
Robert Bly**

Life in home country	Figure 1. The journey from home country to Canada	Life during crisis	Life in the refugee camp	Life in Canada	settlement & survival landing	transition to integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distinct gender roles</li> <li>• strong social support system</li> <li>• comfortable life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• escape from war</li> <li>• survival of family</li> <li>• disruption of education</li> <li>• arduous immigration process</li> <li>• urban refugee situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no basic amenities</li> <li>• food and supplies rationed</li> <li>• no school for children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unfamiliarity with new environment</li> <li>• different climate &amp; culture</li> <li>• emotional stress (loneliness &amp; isolation)</li> <li>• parenting is difficult</li> <li>• discrimination</li> <li>• inadequate housing, employment, and services</li> <li>• different school system</li> <li>• spousal relationship changes (gender roles, intimacy)</li> </ul>			

Life in the home country describes a comfortable life for most of the participants. Comfort defined in terms of high economic status, presence of social support systems in both nuclear and extended family and social networks in the community. This loss of comfort and support surfaces as stressors on parents, once they immigrate and they begin to cope with parenting and homemaking all by themselves. The common expression, "it takes a village to raise a child" captures the nostalgic yearning among parents when they have to deal with children's behavior without the support of older relatives and respected elders in the community.

On the other hand, there were parents who said that immigration freed them from difficult economic conditions in their home country. Canada was seen as a land of opportunities and expectations were high but only to realize later that chances for advancement are more difficult than what they had imagined.

Life during the crisis period evokes painful and terrifying memories of war, escape from the home country, and harsh living conditions in refugee camps. The individual stories of each parent in overcoming obstacles to reach safety and freedom exemplify courage and the determination of parents and children. To survive life in refugee camps and to find faith and hope in another country shows their resiliency. These are the inherent strengths that many refugees bring to their new homeland, and are again put to test once they begin a new life in Canada.

The settlement experience from landing, survival, and transition to integration validates what is found in the literature. What distinguishes this research is the juxtaposition of the settlement experience with the parenting challenges of the research participants. Set against the broader context of poverty, social exclusion and the practical difficulties of everyday living where language and cultural unfamiliarity are confounding limitations, immigrant and refugee families live with complex circumstances. Parenting capacities are severely constrained when parents must live day-to-day responding to crisis such as eviction notices, food scarcity, and poor health of children. These challenges often become visible in the breakdown of family relationships, problems of children in school, and child welfare cases.

**Healing occurs as we express ourselves genuinely, by saying in some way what the past has been. In expressing how it was and is, we make ourselves the witness – one who sees rather than one who has merely been tossed about by passing events.**  
**Arthur Egendorf**

Hopes for the future are anchored mostly in children's success through education. Parents value education as an important step in advancing the family situation. Where the parents' dream of a better life seemed unattainable through their own efforts during their lifetime, children would most likely achieve a secure future given the freedom of choice and the opportunities available to them in Canada. To many of the parents, it is almost an acceptance of their own limitations to prosper given the difficulties of finding suitable employment, limited access to education opportunities and meeting the demands of parenting and family maintenance.

In summary, immigrant and refugee families made it to Canada mostly through their own efforts - voluntarily or involuntarily. While all have encountered difficulties, many have lived through pain and horror that most of us will never experience in our lifetime. These experiences have created enduring effects on parents and children that will continue to shape their lives in this new country. This research validates what is known in the literature about immigrants and refugees and also offers new insights in working with them as parents speak from their hearts and suggest ways to support them not as passive receivers of programs and services but as individuals and collectives who have strengths and capacities to offer. It is hoped that this research would not only assist us in our parenting courses, but serve as a catalyst to sensitize and strengthen the practices and services that most appropriately meet the needs of the marginalized and isolated; to nurture innovative program design anchored in respect for diversity and negotiation of differences; and to create inclusive policies rooted in genuinely addressing inequalities and inequities that profoundly impact family life and well-being.

### **The Hero's Journey: The Process of Transformation**

These findings also connect to the process of transformation, as detailed by various researchers, notably Jack Mezirow (1991).

#### **Stage One: Disorienting Dilemma**

A trigger event creates the need for change.

#### **Stage Two: Critical Phase**

Begin to question your sense of self and deeply held values, question society, question taken-for-granted realities, scan horizon for new options, need hope.

#### **Stage Three: Commitment Phase**

Determine what beliefs to keep and what beliefs to shed, take on new perspectives, imagine and try out new roles, take leap of faith.

#### **Stage Four: Integration Phase**

Gain confidence, develop inner authority, integrate perspectives into all aspects of lives, accept uncertainty/provisionality of life.

## Chapter Three: About Multicultural Parenting

**We cannot discover new oceans unless we have the courage to lose sight of the shore.**

**Anon.**

### *The Hero's Journey: The Transition to Multicultural Parenting*

To more specifically explore the challenges that parents experienced during each of the stages of immigration, we engaged in an activity called "Parenting Collages."

#### **Parenting Collages:**

**First Collage:** Draw or cut out pictures or words from various magazines that represent parenting in your home country. Once this is complete, work in pairs to identify the larger cultural values in your home country; the roles of father, mother, extended family and community; the forms of communication, and how children are educated and disciplined. Write these reflections on the provided reflection sheet. Share with whole group to determine commonalities.

**Second Collage:** Draw or cut out pictures of how you experienced parenting in Canada. Once this is complete, identify the larger cultural values; the roles of father, mother, extended family and community; forms of communication, and how children are educated and disciplined. Write these reflections on the provided reflection sheet. Share with the whole group to determine commonalities.

#### **Third Collage:**

On one half of a large sheet, write down what you wanted to preserve from parenting from home country (and what you wanted to leave behind). On the other half, determine what you want to incorporate from Canada (and what you do not want to accept). Discuss as a whole group: What is your image of effective parenting in a multicultural situation?

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#### Parenting Collage Reflection Sheet

##### Parenting in my Home Country

*Roles of Father, Mother, Extended Family, Community:*

*Larger Cultural Values:*

*Forms of Communication:*

*Education and Discipline of Children:*

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**Maybe “journey” is not so much a journey ahead, or a journey into space, but a journey into presence. The farthest place on earth is the journey into the presence of the nearest person to you.**

**Nelle Morton**

**Parenting in Canada**

*Roles of Father, Mother, Extended Family, Community:*

*Larger Cultural Values:*

*Forms of Communication:*

*Education and Discipline of Children:*

**Effective Multicultural Parenting**

*Roles of Father, Mother, Extended Family, Community:*

*Larger Cultural Values:*

*Forms of Communication:*

*Education and Discipline of Children:*

**Themes in Making a Transition in Parenting Style:**

The following notes were the commonalities we found and some of our insights about what would have been helpful to us at each stage.

**Phase One: Parenting in My Home Country**

***Common Experiences***

Stability

Clear Roles and Rules (particularly by gender)

Clear Lines of Power and Decision-Making (often male authority but also including power of in-laws)

Happiness - joy, carefree, hope, easy, simple, loving

Self-sufficiency - financial sufficiency, had a good job etc.

Traditional values, role models for these values

Strong System of Care (surrounded by extended family)

Familiarity - know what to expect

***Other Experiences*** (these need more description, so that those who share these experiences have more themes to identify with)

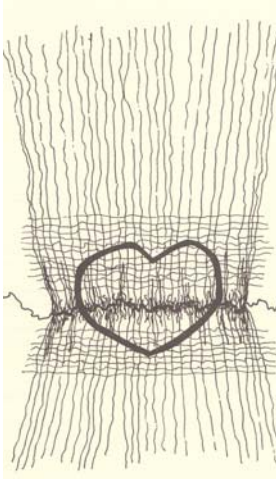
Raised by single mom who had authority

Were a couple who respected gender equality and child independence already

**Thinking about and Planning to Leave**

Were secretly planning escape given war, violence, oppression

Were thinking of leaving, desired a better future for children



### **Factors of Success in Phase One**

Recognizing our gifts and strengths

Learning from each other

Relying on each other

There was a place to go where you could seek information and someone who could relate to your problems.

### **What would have helped in this Phase?**

Communication no matter what was the problem

### **Phase Two: Leaving Home Country, Immigrant/Refugee Process, Landing in Canada**

#### ***Common Experiences***

High Hopes - willingness to adapt knowing we are achieving a dream

Many Losses - separation from family

- loss of status (eg. lower status employment, as refugee not citizen)
- loss of independence
- loss of power, freedom and self-determination

Isolation

Confusion and Ambivalence

Fearfulness

Torn between "old country" problems and "new country" problems

Relational role shifts equals conflict, trust is destroyed

Parents become dependent on children

### **Factors of Success in Phase Two:**

Parent support learning new things

Language skills

Survival skills - need to grow up fast

Knowing not alone

Being together for some family

Hopefulness that things will get better

Willingness to leave things behind

### **What would have helped in this Phase?**

Meeting and learning from others who have gone through same process

Some way to prepare and warn us of the "mixed up reality" to normalize the experience

### **Phase Three: Settlement and Survival**

#### ***Common Experiences***

Search for support

Improve communication

Adaptation and new self-identify positive and negative

Struggle with changes in family/situation and social structure  
Shame with lowered status and loss of social respect

### **Factors of Success in Phase Three**

Family support

Family needs to be core of strength

Sacrifice - Parents might feel like giving up but keep going out of strong love for children

Flexibility

Role model for values

Ask for support and determination

Role modeling persistence - show children we can do this

Ensure you maintain the reason you came, your purpose of life

Children need to know previous status and social respect to develop sense of pride in themselves and their family

Self talk into different perspective/acceptance of new position

    "I realize that I cannot be what I was...."

    I need to let go...not embrace the difficulties...but push through them..."

Focus on what is being gained: peace, silence, quiet, political freedom, freedom of speech

Realize the lower status is only temporary

### **What would have helped in this Phase?**

Communication

Give and take in family

### **Phase Four: Transition toward Integration**

#### ***Common Experiences***

Developed support networks, systems, communities and family

ESL

Work retraining/upgrading

Mentoring

Self-Awareness

Motivation

Gaining confidence

Acceptance and Accommodation

Learning new ways - let go of "what was" and accept "what is"

Acceptance of changing family dynamics and changing roles

Role reversals

### **Factors of Success in Phase Four**

Learn new skills and flex into new environment

Academic achievement

Ability to adapt to multicultural parenting "Having a good command of English"

Educated parents

Harmonious marital relationship

Teachers as role models

### **What would have helped in this Phase?**

Needed to learn model of financial independence rather than depending on collective family

Saving money in the past so that had more financial stability

Save for future

Stable and suitable employment

Multicultural parenting workshop

### **Our Vision of Effective Multicultural Parenting:**

From this activity and reflection, we devised our vision of what it takes in knowledge and skills to be effective in multicultural parenting.

### **Needed Personal Skills**

- Being a good parent means being a good person first - being honest, responsible with a desire to help others
- Being open to learning and growing.
- Recognizing personal strengths.
- Flexibility in leaving behind some aspects of lifestyle and parenting to accept new ones.
- Learning negotiation as a way of being.
- Learning to be sensitive but also to express oneself.
- Learning to challenge each other politely.

### **Needed Parenting Values and Attitudes**

- Using the question "What did my parents want for me?" as the guiding question and learning new ways to reach those goals.
- Overcoming the fear of parenting.
- Children, parents, and spouses need to evolve together.
- Being willing to accept support outside the family, work collectively on our parenting, and reminding ourselves of our basic values.
- Becoming conscious - learning to name and analyze different values and practices.
- Learning to explain the rationale for values and behaviours.

**Needed Communication Skills**

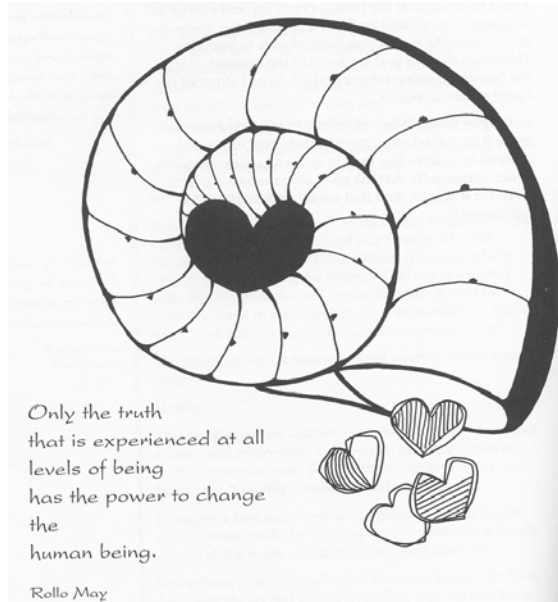
- Learning tools for dealing with not being valued.
- Learning two-way communication (not authoritarian communication) with children and spouses.
- Learning that protective mechanism can be negative.

**Needed Family Structure Skills**

- Learning how to recreate family without extended family present.
- Learning ways to incorporate different ways of hospitality.
- Learning to recreate a new lifestyle.
- Re-defining the family.

**Needed Multicultural Skills**

- Being able to remember the traditional values, naming the conflicting values in Canada, and making good choices from both cultures.



## Chapter Four: About Participatory and Transformative Facilitation

**People say, what is the sense of our small effort. They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.  
Dorothy Day**

### *Vital Learning for Facilitators*

To generate meaningful collective knowledge using a participatory process requires facilitators to make an intentional shift in practice. Thus after identifying the focal areas of interest that parents would be interested in learning more about, our next focus was on preparing ourselves as facilitators of participatory and transformative learning.

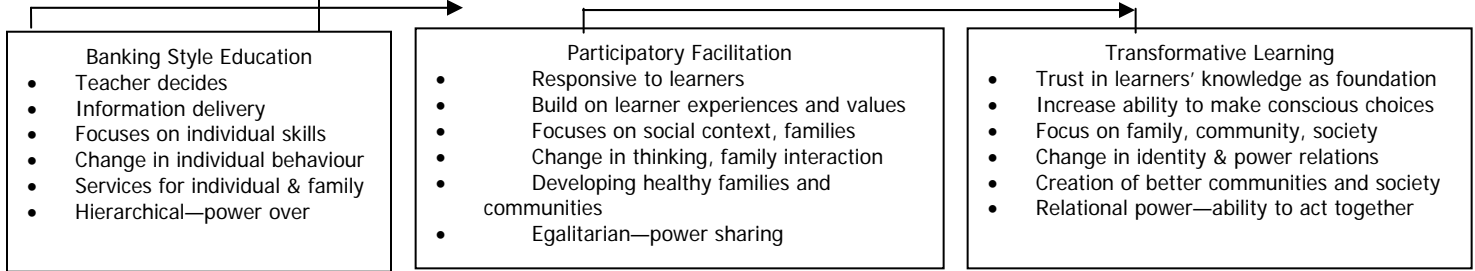
As parenting group facilitators, most of us being immigrant parents ourselves, we continued to use reflective activities to explore how we could shift our practice toward more participatory methods with a transformative intent, including one-to-one reflective sessions on where we thought we were in our existing facilitation styles. We also participated in transformative learning workshops that modelled processes for generating collective knowledge of parenting children in two cultures.

### *Getting Started—Enhancing Awareness of Facilitation Style*

An important place for facilitators to begin is to engage in some self-reflection on facilitation styles. One key question we asked ourselves is:

Where are we on the pedagogical continuum from Banking Style Education to Transformative Learning?

Pedagogical Continuum



**Investigate**

We began exploring this question with one-to-one reflective sessions with our evaluation facilitator, using an Appreciative Inquiry approach. In Appreciative Inquiry, instead of addressing deficits, challenges, and problems within organizations or communities through problem-solving, participants are asked: a) to identify what is working particularly well, b) to envision the future if “the best of what is” occurred more often, c) to develop a plan to lead to that future, and d) to implement the changes necessary and monitor and sustain the changes achieved.

**Analyze**

We identified themes and practice strengths and plotted them on the Pedagogical Continuum.

**Act**

Together with our colleagues, we reviewed the analysis. We recognized our strengths in relation to participatory facilitation, and decided to build on these to move further along in transformative learning. We designed and piloted sessions in relation to several focal areas identified by parents in nine different multicultural communities.

The focal areas we piloted with parents included:

- Parenting Styles
- Getting to Know Yourself
- Discipline
- Healthy Eating for Toddlers

The focal areas we piloted with our colleagues prior to going directly to our parenting groups included:

- Raising Daughters
- Communication
- Discipline

### *Reflect*

At the end of each session, we asked parents to share reflections in the following areas:

- How do you feel? When did you feel most alive and engaged in this session?
- What did you learn in this session? What did you learn about yourself? About other participants? About the topic? Who did you learn from?
- What new skills or approaches did you learn in this session? What will you do differently as a result of participating in this workshop? How will this be helpful to you?
- What would you change about this session to make it better? What would you like to see in upcoming sessions?

After the pilot sessions, we gathered for a reflective session with our facilitation teams, made up of co-facilitators and colleague participant/observers. We asked ourselves the following questions in our facilitation teams:

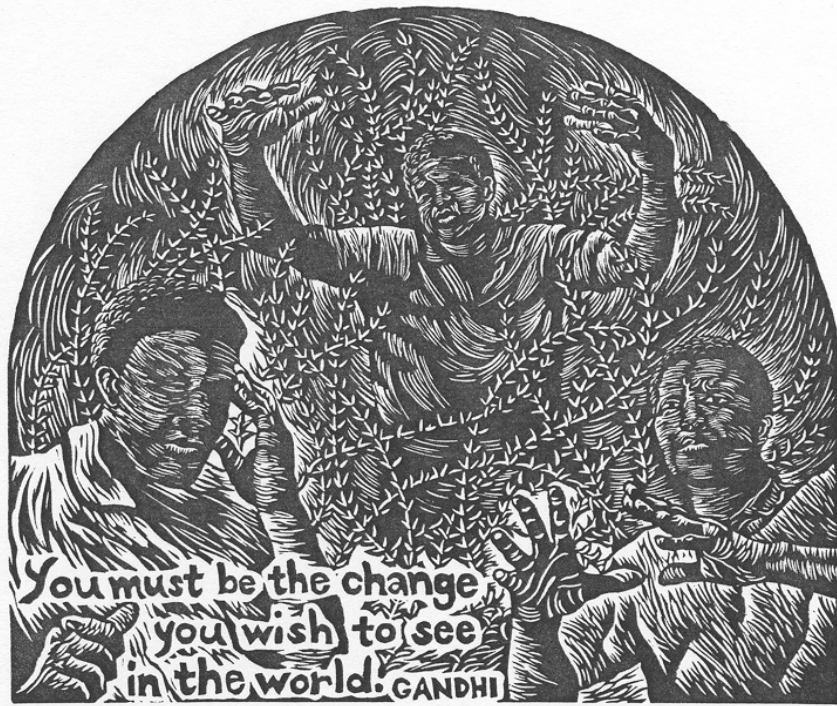
- How did you feel at the end of the session? When did you feel most alive and engaged in this session? When did others seem to be most alive and engaged? What was it that energized you? What was it that energized others?
- What were the high points? What were the points of struggle in the workshop?

- What did you learn in this session? What did you learn about yourself? When did you feel confident? When did you feel vulnerable?
- What would you change about this session to make it better? Based on your own and parents' reflections what will you do in upcoming sessions?

After all of the pilot sessions, we gathered with all of our colleagues who had piloted a session, and reflected on the following questions:

- What changes have we made in our facilitation toolboxes?
- How are we using these tools? What are we doing differently? Or more of?
- What new knowledge have we generated regarding the focal areas in our curriculum?
- How comfortable do we feel with the participatory approach? Do we feel the same sense of power and control?

We then took another look at the Pedagogical Continuum and added our new strengths and capacities to it. The results of our cycle of Investigation, Analysis, Action, and Reflection are in Appendix A—*Current Practice Capacities in Relation to the Pedagogical Continuum*. As you will see, we have made some progress on our goal of moving along the continuum toward Transformative Learning. It is also clear to us that we see our facilitation styles more clearly, and are more conscious about developing processes that will invite both participation and transformation. We recognize this as a first loop in an ongoing spiral of learning.



*Kate Knight*

## **Chapter Five: Designing Participatory and Transformative Learning Processes**

**You must give birth to your images. They are the future awaiting to be born.**

**Rainer Maria Rilke**

### *Why Should We Use Transformative and Participatory Learning Processes?*

Reason 1: Transformative learning is about empowerment - when we want to have control over our lives, we need to make conscious choices. When we live in our own home cultures, we often live out of habit and we act out the cultural scripts that are part of our society. In a new country, taking control over our situation means we need to know what this culture is and how to make our own decisions about how we will live here. This process of "awakening" or "becoming conscious" is the process of empowering ourselves. The most important way to empower ourselves is to do it collectively where we can support one another.

Reason 2: When we use an "expert" model, the power still resides with the "expert" and others obediently follow the expert's prescriptions for success. If we want people to make deeper changes and know how to response to a number of situations that will arise, they need to be able to make their own decisions. They need to become empowered where

they are not following a recipe but know the ingredients to make up their own recipe if they are cooking in a different place. The only way to assist an empowerment process is to help them make the transition from expecting you to be the expert toward them trusting their own knowledge and using the ingredients you have to share.

Reason 3: The best way to assist people in trusting their own knowledge is helping them understand what they already know and how to use that knowledge. Once they begin to understand the store of knowledge and experiences they have, you then build on this foundation with new content.

Reason 4: If people are in a transformative process already, through the process of immigration to a new country, then they are searching for ways to become powerful in this new situation. By understanding the phases of change they will go through, as you went through it, you can better assist them.

Reason 5: People learn holistically, not just cognitively or their minds. We call this the Six Guitar Strings of Learning (see below). To make real change, people need to learn new ways of being at the emotional, social, physical, intuitive, relational, and spiritual levels.

Reason 6: Transformative learning is about deliberately creating better communities and a better society.

**It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.  
Albert Einstein**

### *Stages of a Transformative Learning Process*

**Definition of Transformation:** "to go across...into a new shape." *A profound or deep-level change in the basis of one's thoughts, feelings and actions.*

**Transformative Learning:** *Providing a space and process for becoming aware of how our assumptions, habits and past experiences shape us, constrain us; and developing new meanings and habits.*

***Immersion into Reality*** - (knowing your learners before and during first session)

How can I facilitate the learners in discussing their daily reality and discussing the main concept? How can I affirm what my learners already know?

***Problem-Posing*** - How can I facilitate the learners in asking questions and posing problems about their reality? In thinking about their common habits and beliefs?

***Immersion into Alternatives*** - What new ideas or processes can I introduce them to that will help them address their daily reality in a new way?

***Critical Analysis*** - How can I facilitate their analysis about their reality at a deeper level? In other words, how can I foster their questioning of their values and habits? How can I help them understand the cultural, societal, economic or political aspects to help deepen the understanding?

***Introducing New Ideas or Skills*** - presenting new ideas/skills or using learning processes that demonstrate the new ideas/skills; this should offer a new way to think about their issues that gives hope

***Group and Personal Reflection:*** Discussing new choices that can be made, individually making choices - providing a chance for people to use the new thinking and practice new skills, help them to name and integrate learnings

***Action Planning and Acting:*** Helping people to plan for new actions that express their new choices, values or new skills. They make take the action during the course and then report back on the results or reflect on the results.

***Reflect:*** When they return, they can reflect on what happened to them when they went back home? What did they do? What was the response? What issues arose? What worked?

**Speaking first to  
be heard is  
power over.  
Hearing to bring  
forth speech is  
empowering.  
Nelle Morton**

**Final Session:**

*Affirming or Celebrating the Learning.* Bring the course to closure through a presentation of learnings and a warm activity that affirms the community.

(insert graphic of a transformative and participatory learning process)

### Three Facilitator Models

The following descriptions, adapted from Dorothy MacKeracher, 1996, describe three ways facilitators typically engage their learners. The first, Directing, is close to what we have referred earlier to as the Banking model. The second, Enabling, is close to what we have referred earlier to as the Participatory model. The third, Collaborating, is close to what we have referred earlier to as the Transformative Model. Consider your own practice as a facilitator and which description most applies to your practice currently.

#### **Directing (Banking)**

The teacher-expert directs the learning process.

The teacher-expert defines the content.

The teacher-expert inputs the content (banking model).

The teacher-expert provides feedback and reinforcement to learners.

#### **Enabling (Participatory)**

The facilitator acts as a catalyst or enabler of the learning process.

The facilitator provides the content and process resources.

The facilitator provides some learning experiences.

The facilitator helps the learners explore other content of their choice.

The facilitator guides the reflection of the learners through dialogue.

The facilitator provides support, encouragement and guidance to learners.

#### **Collaborating (Transformative)**

The animator collaborates with a community of learners.

The animator assists learners to grow individually and in community.

The animator negotiates both the content and process by group consensus.

The animator enables the learners to share leadership functions.

The animator is a co-learner in a problem-solving process.

### Values and Qualities of Transformative Learning

As you can see, transformative learning is as much about process as it is about content. Mezirow, Brookfield, Shor, and Freire who are all theorists and practitioners of transformative learning all see

**I hear, I forget.  
I see and I  
remember.  
I do, and I  
understand.  
Suzanne Toton**

transformative learning as having **these qualities and values**:

- problem-posing - not depositing knowledge into heads (training) but fostering critical thinking; it begins with problem-posing or asking questions - what is the problem here? what is the issue all about?
- dialogical, interactive and collaborative (community-oriented); it is interactive or discussion-based where people engage in critical thinking through perceptive questions that try to get to the root causes/issues, to see patterns and principles
- democratic - everyone gets a say, all are encouraged to speak, space given for "developing a voice" which is empowerment; teacher does not take hierarchical, authoritarian position - but is teacher/learner and learner/teacher; accompanies the learner, where power is shared, the atmosphere created is one of respect, safety, and caring
- praxis - ensuring there is a reflection/action process so it is not just book learning or talk, but acting and then reflecting
- political - it helps people to see how power is used in their workplaces and elsewhere so that they are not passive but have their eyes open and are working for empowerment
- hopeful - that it is not just bad news but offering hopeful, positive ways to move forward that make a difference
- starts with experience - the learning begins with the experience of the learner or it provides them with an experience that they can talk about or do something about
- transformative - not only is the process transformative, but inserting some new ideas or ways of doing things is part of the transformation

### ***The Six Dimensions of Learning***

When you are planning for your facilitation of a group, it is important to think about each of these dimensions for a holistic learning process. For the most powerful learning to occur, it must reach all these parts of what it means to be human.

#### **Emotional**

learning is often felt first

positive emotions generate energy and excitement

emotional conflict often accompanies significant learning

negative emotions can block learning; naming and accepting them can generate growth

**Relational**

cooperative, respectful climate for significant learning  
dialogue with teachers, classmates and written material  
people often come to learning situations in the midst of change

**Intuitive/Metaphorical**

A way of knowing traditionally undervalued or mistrusted  
intuition comes to us through emotions, mind's eye (images), physical or  
hunchescreativity - invent, create, take leaps  
tapped by images, symbols, play, meditation, dreams - spontaneous  
fostered through silence, relaxation, receptive attitude and practice  
considered path to wisdom, expanded awareness, an awakening

**Rational/Intellectual**

The rational considered highest mental power in our culture  
The logical brain that analyzes, abstracts, counts, marks time,  
systematically plans  
often overemphasized in school system  
works best when enhanced by other ways of knowing or more active  
techniques

**Physical**

can block or enhance learning - body sends us messages, need to trust it;  
the more senses used, the more effective the learning  
relaxing and aesthetic environment = more positive attitudes  
energizing, playful activities = optimism, risk taking and higher  
participation  
often need to learn how to play, it is an experiential process  
consider the room, layout of room, lighting, noise, temperature, windows,  
time of day, number of breaks,

**Spiritual**

spirituality is awareness of connectedness to self, others, Earth,  
universe,  
more than religion which is a belief system and often institutionalized  
openness to a vision of what could be/ought to be - feeling of being  
called to a higher purpose

this realm provides the meaning for our lives  
when we undergo a transformation this is the realm that undergoes a  
major shift in definition of self, worldview, and sense of purpose

---

The following section is a guide for thinking through how to create a  
participatory learning session. While this should not be thought of as a  
recipe, it is important to think about all these facets of a session, to  
ensure that you are fully prepared.

### **General Format of a Participatory Learning Session**

---

#### **Physical Preparation**

What materials do you need to prepare?

What supplies do you require?

What room will you be using?

How will you set up the room? (set up tells learners the relationship they  
will have with you and others)

Check temperature, lighting, visibility, aesthetics, noise, etc.

Do you require any equipment?

---

#### **Getting to Know your Learners**

##### **Preparatory Questions (interview some learners if needed)**

What is the cultural background of my learners? Will there be  
significant cultural differences between them?

What will the past experiences of my learners be?

What is the gender of my learners? Will my learners feel safe?

How comfortable do my learners feel in Canadian culture?

What will be the expectations of my learners?

How comfortable will my learners be with touch? With speaking? With  
movement? With sharing family details?

How well do the learners know me? Know each other?

Will the learners have confidence and a strong self-esteem?

What "role" will my learners be in? parents, professionals, individuals?

What would build trust in these learners?

What would build their sense of capacity? Confidence?

What will their common issues be? What will they want to know?

What are the challenges that these learners face?

What would make it easier for my learners to attend, concentrate and enjoy?

What do my learners already know?

What information will help them make a successful transition to parenting in Canada?

---

### **Setting your Goals and Objectives**

**Course Goal: (sample)** The goal of this course is to assist new immigrant parents in becoming familiar with Canadian culture and to understand the different parenting styles in their home country and in Canada, as a way to build their capacity for strong, effective, and loving family units....

**Objectives: (sample)**

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

---

- Describe the different parenting styles in their home country
  - Describe the different parenting styles in Canada
  - Make choices that will best suit their family members honoring the best in their traditions and borrowing the best from Canadian culture....
  - Other?
- 

### **Introduction to Session (and Review)**

- Greet people as they enter or as they settle in
- Can use food and drink, background music, or profile cards to ease tension
- Introduce yourself, establish credibility in terms of experience and knowledge
- Introduce the course briefly to build interest and benefits to be gained
- If this is not a first session, then greet everyone, reintroduce the main goals
- You can use a fun activity or innovative way to review what you did last time, affirm their learning, and ensure continuity

***Sample Activities:***

*Intro Cards*

*Contact Sheet*

*Buzz Groups*

*Review Games*

*Expectation survey- One hope you have for this course is...*

---

**Who is all here? Community-building and ice-breaking...**

- if this is a first session, you would start with very low threat introductions so people know who is in the room

- if this is early in your course, fun and energizing activities help to release tension, spark interest and enjoyment, build trust and a sense of security

- if people have been working together for some time and know each well, activities that involve touch, more personal details, or movement can be used

- these activities should have a purpose that relates to the material

***Sample Activities:***

*Great Wind Blows*

*Group Resumes*

*People Bingo*

---

**Why? What's in it for Me? What do I know already?**

***May be combined with above. Need to affirm existing knowledge, then establish relevance and intent, get their attention, ensure will address the needs, build positive attitudes and trust***

Sharing experiential knowledge

Establishing Expectations/Needs/Hopes

Sharing Learning Goals and Objectives

***Sample Activities:***

*An experience I had relating to this topic was...*

*Issues I face are...*

*Knowledge or skills I already have is...*

*How I parented or was parented in home country was...*

*Sole Beliefs - my basic assumptions about other people or parenting is...*

*Needs/Capacities survey*

*Brainstorming*

*River of Life*

---

## **What? Introduce content**

### **So What? Activity to process and use information**

*Building interest, sharing information, getting involved, safe environment, building hope*

Thought-provokers - pose issues or raise questions they say they face  
Introduction to Main Ideas/content that offers new ways of thinking, new assumptions

Introduction to new skills and attitudes

Applying the content or new skills through an activity or discussion - empowerment

#### ***Sample Activities:***

*Stories of how this content is relevant*

*Continuum Voting*

*Mini-lecture (no-more than 20-30 min at a time)*

*Video*

*Guest Speaker*

Once you have presented information, need followup activity where the group uses/processes the information...

*Demonstration and practice*

*Group Discussion - dyads, triads, pair/square/share etc.*

*Critical Incident*

*Role playing*

*Worksheets*

---

## **Energizers, Breaks and Energy Shifts -**

***addressing physical/intellectual/emotional energy***

Varying the presentation style, materials, learning activities

Use lots of concrete activities along with abstract information - like examples, stories, images, games, simulations, role plays, problem-solving  
Should have a 15 min break every 60-90 minutes, some say 10 min every hour; unless doing a hands on activity where people are free to move about

Try to end on time to respect people's time

---

**Conclusion: Now What? What am I leaving with?**

*Reinforcing new ideas and positive attitudes, Building confidence and sense of satisfaction, Celebrating learning by displays or demonstrations*

Facilitate Individual and Group Reflection after activity

Providing Feedback to them

Help learners recognize learning - Review Content and Process

Do Action planning - what will I do with this information this week?

Home activities/assignments

Feedback/evaluation to you

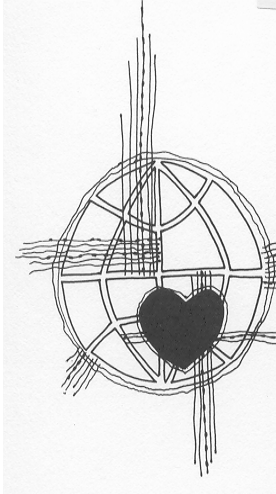
***Sample Activities:***

They summarize the session

One thing I liked today was...

One thing I didn't like today was...

Evaluation forms



## **Chapter Six: Samples of Curricula**

The focal areas we piloted with parents included:

- Parenting Styles
- Getting to Know Yourself
- Discipline
- Healthy Eating for Toddlers

The focal areas we piloted with our colleagues prior to going directly to our parenting groups included:

- Raising Daughters
- Communication
- Discipline

## **Session One: Knowing Self**

### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

- a) light check in
  - my name
  - what year did you come to Canada?
  - name some things you have learned for last session on Parenting Styles
  
- b) brief review of the last session (we identified styles of Parenting)
  - 1a) Authoritative
  - 2a) Permissive
  - 3a) Democratic - ideal model where there is a balance of parenting
  - 4a) The way you were parented in your home country and what changes you want to make

### **2. Ice Breaker (if necessary)**

Find the persons who were born in December.

### **3. Introduction of Today's Session:**

Knowing Yourself; the question of Who Am I?

- a) We will explore and reflect on who you are as a person. Knowing yourself will influence your parenting practices.

Start with a background on:

#### **Johari Window**

Joseph Lutz and Harry Ingham, the 2 inventors of this process.

Handout and explain

	<b>Known to Self</b>	<b>Not Known to Self</b>
<b>Known to Others</b>	<p><b>OPEN</b></p> <p>Things I know about myself and that you know about me</p>	<p><b>BLIND</b></p> <p>Things you know about me, but that I am not aware of</p>
<b>Not Known to Others</b>	<p><b>HIDDEN</b></p> <p>Things that I know about myself that you do not know</p>	<p><b>UNKNOWN</b></p> <p>Things that neither I know about myself nor you know about me</p>

In conclusion, this will bring more clarity about your style of communication, which, in terms of this window is a process of human interactions.

Any questions - - -

4. Exercise - through the use of Visualization or a Guided Imagery

### Guided Imagery or Visualization

30-35 minutes

Process:

- a) Put yourself in a comfortable position
- b) Relax and do a couple of deep breathing
- c) When ready, close your eyes, and breathe in your favorite soothing color into your body, starting from your toes, legs, trunk, shoulders, arms, neck, head, relax your forehead, your eyes, your

mind... and,

#1 Imagine that you are walking along a path leading to a noisy market place. Near the marketplace are rows of vendors selling colorful items. You see in the market place something you would like to get for your child, only you realize you cannot afford it—notice how you feel. You continue on your way and trip over something---

You are deciding whether to pick it up.

Will you pick it up?

#2 While walking, you see a mother hand in hand with her child walking opposite your way, and suddenly a picture of your own child jumps out from your mind---

#3 Now, you see your own child, walking, talking, playing, growing --- you dream about her future, her life in the real world...

You have a basket in your hand...

Your task is to put in this basket all that is important to you to give and equip your child, while your child is growing up...

#4 You retrace your steps further, bringing with you, your favorite peaceful color and your basket. You arrive at home and your child is there to greet you, how do you feel?

You breathe in, and now breathe out all your negative feelings beginning from your toes, legs, trunk, shoulders, arms, neck, head, forehead.

When you are ready, open your eyes.

Debrief: 15 minutes

Process question:

How is the experience?

What are your feelings?

5. Group Report/Discuss 15 minutes

Divide in to 2 groups (a group of white & green)

Together, I would like you to empty your baskets. Create a list on flipchart paper of everything you put in your basket.

Each small group presents back to large group their Parenting Values

1) What are your family values you want to instill to your child?

The facilitator then asks:

2) How will you share these with your child?

6. Exercise - if time permits

QUICK KNOW YOURSELF QUIZ

1-8 questionnaires

Share in groups

7. Wrap-up

Evaluation

ATTENDANCE Sheet

---

## **Session Two: Parenting Styles**

(Being Developed)

## **Session Three: Healthy Eating for Children**

### **Objective:**

To become more knowledgeable about good nutrition.  
Share strategies to make children eat healthier meals.

**Set up** of seating arrangement to be in U shape. This formation optimizes better eye contact and semiformal style making a more comforting atmosphere.

### **Ice Breaker Activity:**

Ask each participant to tell their name, and name the food they like to eat the most or the least.

### **1.) Activity**

Break participants into groups of 4.  
Ask them to write a menu of a typical supper/lunch.  
Hand out the "Canadian Health Food Guide". (Note - The Canada Food Guide will be provided in different languages.)  
Let the group analyze if the menus follow the Food Guide.  
Ask the groups to come back into the bigger group.

The facilitator can answer any questions regarding Canada Food Guide and then have more discussion.

Discussion on how to make healthier choices.

What to add to make it better.

Use the flip chart and record any changes.

### **2.) Activity**

Talk about challenges to make kids eat healthier. Record on the chart.  
Ask participants for strategies to overcome them.  
After that activity the facilitator is to add other strategies that have not been covered.

Give out handouts for other nutritional information.

Ask participants to write down 1 or 2 strategies they will try on their children for 1 or 2 weeks.

Bring back to the next workshop whether the strategy worked and how they did.

## **Audience—Chinese Parents**

### **Pilot workshop on Healthy Eating**

---

#### Objectives:

Part 1: To be knowledgeable about good nutrition and the importance.

Part 2: Strategies to encourage children eat healthy food.

#### Goals:

Generate or bring out participants' own knowledge about healthy eating for young children.

#### Introduction / Ice breaker:

Option: Self-introduction with what you would like to do for fun? Or, find a partner and interview each other about likes and dislikes of food, and why? Partner report their findings.

#### Group activity:

Part 1: Divide the participants into group. Ask each group to design a typical menu (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks) that they prepare at home. Each group presents their menu and explains why: selection and ways of cooking. Ask the other groups their opinion of how to make the meal better.

~ break / healthy snack time ~

Part 2: Divide the participants into groups and share their challenges and strategies that work for them. Each group presents their challenges and strategies and explains why. Ask the other groups for comments.

Formal / supplementary information from Capital Health and professionals.

Conclusion/Evaluation:

Ask the participants: Did you have fun? Were you energized? What did you learn? What thing(s) you'd like to try? What part of the workshop did you like the best and why? What else you'd like to learn? How to improve the next session?

## Session Four: Stages of Child Development

**Be patient with  
all that is  
unsolved in your  
heart. Try to love  
the questions  
themselves, like  
locked rooms and  
like books that  
are written in a  
foreign  
tongue...Live the  
questions raw.  
Rainer Maria  
Rilke**

- 1) Goal: To increase parents' knowledge of early childhood development. How their role can enhance their child's growth and development and what impact this has on success in their adult life.
- 2) Objectives:
  - Gain more knowledge about stages of growth and development; 0-6 years and normalize it as they experience it observing their child's growth.
  - Focus on four areas of development: Language, Social/Emotional, Intellectual, Motor development and windows of opportunity - how parents can take active role in enhancing these areas of development.
  - Recognize the milestones of growth and development with special focus on red flags.
  - Information about community resources for parents to ensure normal and healthy child growth and development.
- 3) Icebreaker / Introduction
  1. Name, hobbies
  2. Number of children and their ages
  3. How long in Canada?
  4. What is the one thing they want to learn from today's workshop? (Hopes, and expectations - write on flipchart as they talk).

Facilitator:

Reaffirm and state the hobbies and things they like to do.  
Go back to goals and objectives and act accordingly.

Activity: Interactive session

Share experience and knowledge of child development.

Option: Role play and / or flipchart

Facilitator:

Draw up a matrix of early childhood development and parents to share their experience and observations of child's growth and

development.

This activity can be done either in groups of two or in a large group. Synthesize the information; compare and normalize the information shared by the parents.

(Handout: Stages of Development)

BREAK

4) Interactive Session: Milestones and Red Flags

Facilitator:

Read out some scenarios and ask parents to identify the red flags.

(Handout: Milestones and Red Flags of hearing, vision, language, etc.)

5) Strategies

Facilitator:

Ask the participants to share some strategies to enhance language, social skills, etc. in your child.

Some suggestions:

- Language: talking, reading, singing, word games
- Social/emotional: interactive games and play activities; puzzles, games with taking turns, tea parties etc.  
Family socialization: opportunities to play in different group settings; rhymes that bend etc.
- Intellectual: reading, looking at pictures and albums together and talking about it. Opportunities to explore and experiment with various objects and environments. Puzzles, cause and effects, toys and activities.
- Motor: tummy time, floor time, ample opportunities to move around and active play.  
Drawing, doodling, blocks, pouring, dumping, play dough, etc.

(Handout: Language, social, intellectual and motor development) value of reading and play.

6) Learning and Evaluation

- Did today's workshop address some of the concerns you had?
- If so name some.
- What are some of the new things you learned today?

- What are some of the things you might do with your child you had not done before? (Choose an activity)

## **Session Five: Organizing Play and Learning Activities**

1) **Goal:** To explore the concept of learning through play, with emphasis on importance of interactive play to enhance parent-child relationship and school readiness.

2) **Objectives:**

- Parents learn about the children through play and its importance for healthy child development.
- -Show parents ways to include play in the interaction with their children in the daily activities.
- -Parents learn to make inexpensive homemade toys and crafts.

3) **Introduction and Check In**

Have participants say their:

- Name, how many children and ages.
- Something they did with their child; read, play or made something together.
- Hopes and expectations.

(Match hopes and expectations with goals and objectives)

Logistics (Please copy from "Discipline")

4) **Activity:** Draw or write, activity can be done in small groups or one large group depending on number of participants.

**Sharing & Discussion Points**

- What is play and what does it mean to you?
- How did you play as a child and who did you play with?
- What kinds of toys and things did you play with? Did you make any of them yourself?

**BREAK**

5) Gather back in large group and have small groups do the presentations. Synthesize and find commonalities and naturalize it for the group. Some of the activities we did as a child were actually learning

through play activities, except they were naturally present and embedded in family life. The difference is that due to change in family life (no extended family and community support) we have to create the opportunities and replicate what was naturally present there.

**(Handout: Learning through Play)**

**6) Activity:** Build a toy and identify the learning from that specific toy:

- Zip-loc bag, book/album
- Sound shakers
- Texture mat
- Nesting toy
- Making puzzle

**(Handout: Age appropriate activities and toys)**

**7) Strategies:** How can you include the interactive play in your day to day living? (Ask the participants and write on flipchart).

Some suggestions:

- Sorting and folding laundry
- Classifying objects by color and size
- Pairing the items; similar, what goes together
- Baking
- Setting table
- Dress up a bear
- Picnic party / tea party
- Looking at the family album
- Dusting
- Singing during a car ride
- I see ... what do you see?
- Bear with feelings

**8) Learning Evaluation**

- Name some of the things you learned today.
- What are some of the things you will be doing with your child differently?
- What are some of the things you would like to learn more about?

---

## **Session Six: Roles of Fathers**

**(Being Developed)**

## **Session Seven: Discipline**

### **Discipline**

1) **Goal:** To assist participants/parents in becoming more skilled in disciplining their children in Canadian society.

2) **Objectives:** At the end of this session the participants will know:

- What does discipline mean; the difference between discipline vs. punishment.
- Different parenting styles in context of discipline.
- Discipline and your child's temperament.
- Find a balance and bridge between own traditions and borrow the best from Canadian society.

3) **Logistics**

Set up the room; seating

Make sure there is:

- enough lighting
- room temperature is appropriate
- flip charts, markers and other art supplies if needed for the workshop
- refreshments
- childcare is required
- handouts
- A/V equipment etc.

4) **Icebreaker: Pairing and Introduction**

Have participants paired with the person sitting on their right. Have them talk to each other; name, number of children and their age, how long in Canada. What is the one thing they feel they are really good at. Give them 3 minutes and at the end of the 3 minutes, each pair will introduce each other.

**Facilitator:**

Reaffirm and state some unique things participants have shared and maybe help each other if needed. After the icebreaker write down on the flipchart the rules and guidelines for sharing and

discussion in the group. Also, on the flipchart write expectations and hopes of the participants from today's workshop.

**Hopes & Expectations:**

At the end of this activity compare the goals and objectives with hopes and expectations (synthesize them).

- 5) **Group Activity:** Draw and/or write. Break into 4 small groups - one person from each group takes a lead and write down the discussion points.

**Points for discussion:**

- Share your experiences of being disciplined as a child back home.
- Did it work? Was it a good way of disciplining a child?
- What do you know about discipline in Canadian society?
- What you do and don't like about it.
- What do you believe appropriate discipline strategies entail, what would they be rooted in?

**Break - Mix and Mingle**

- 6) Gather back into a large group - small group will present the results of the discussion. Have the groups put their flipcharts up on the wall while they do their presentation. Synthesize the group discussion collectively and pick out themes. As the group practices strategies in disciplining their children - point out the changes or new/different things they might be doing - hence, point out transformative learning and applying it in their parenting style.

**7) Learning / Evaluation**

1. What are the things that you find similar regardless of where the children are being raised?
2. What are some of the new things you learned from today's session?
3. Name some of the things you would be doing differently now.

**8) Action: Homework:**

Apply some of the discipline strategies from today's session to:  
bedtime, feeding/eating.

**Handouts: What is discipline?**

- Temperament of your child.
- How to deal with temper tantrums
- Six steps to problem-solving.

## **Session Eight: Parent-Child Communication**

1) **Goal:** To explore the ways for effective communication and its importance for healthy relationship between parents and children.

2) **Objectives:** What is communication? What does it entail?

- Learn about types of communication and styles of communication.
- Explore the difference in the communication styles between your own culture and Canadian society.
- Effective ways of communication with your children.

### **3) Icebreaker & Introduction**

- Have participants say their names, number of children and their ages - if any going to school - what grade.
- State one challenge they face when communicating with their child.
- Hopes and expectations.

Give each participant 2 minutes for introductions.

Match hopes and expectations to goal and objectives.

### **4) Interactive Activity**

Explore with the participants what does communication include; talking, gesturing, writing, give or receive information. There are a number of methods by which we communicate: spoken language, tone and pitch of voice, facial expression, touch, proximity, eye contact, and posture are some of them - through this discussion parents may develop critical awareness of their "body language" and messages they give to their children.

Ask them questions: ways of communicating:

- Share some of the positive and negative ways your parents communicated with you as a child.
- Share how you responded? How did you feel?
- Would you have liked to change the ways they communicated with you? If you could, what would it be?
- What don't you like about the way you are communicating with

your child?

- Do you think you can play an important role in improving communication between you and your child?

This experience is more effective if you do it in smaller groups - if the group is smaller in number, it can be done in one large group.

Participants can write or draw on flipchart.

### Types of Communication

Passive - Parents will give in to the child and sometimes let the child take advantage. The parent might believe "I am not able to control my child."

Aggressive - Overpowers, yells, ridicules, sarcasm, may physically hurt the child. The parent believes that "I am the parent and the child has to listen and obey. No consideration is given to the child's feelings and the child is not heard.

Assertive - Parent expresses her thoughts freely and firmly, while respecting the rights and feelings of the child. Says, "This is how I feel and what I think, what do you think?"

"Assertiveness" is a word that does not have an exact equivalent in many languages. It might seem like a new concept to some of us. In all cultures there are accepted ways of getting things done, ways of acting strongly but politely, and ways of being assertive. What is considered effective behavior may vary greatly across cultures. In some cultures it is acceptable to express strong emotions or feelings in a workplace setting while in others it could be considered "non-professional" behavior.

### Communicating effectively with children

Communication includes both sending and receiving messages. We can avoid lowering our children's self-esteem and taking responsibility for our own thoughts and feelings by sending clear "I" messages. For example saying "I think ..., I feel ... I would like ...." Stay away from using statements (blaming types) like, "you

always..., you never..." which breaks down the communication.

Effective listening is most important block of effective communication. It's a skill that can be learned. This will encourage parents to take responsibility for their own thoughts and feelings. By doing so parents can teach their child to take responsibility for his/her own thoughts, actions and feelings. You show your child how to listen by modeling effective listening.

**To listen effectively to your child you need to:**

- Be truly interested and want to understand what your child is saying. For example, if the child is constantly bringing his/her lunch back exactly packed the way you had given it to him/her, perhaps he/she is being teased by other children for bringing ethnic food for lunch. Instead of asking "why"? ask questions like "tell me what happens when you go to the lunch room"?
- Show interest through our body language; eye contact, leaning forward, nod - you are still listening, --- "so what happens next?" Don't ignore your child when he/she is talking to you i.e. watch TV, stay indulged in your task at hand, talk on the phone, etc. Wait to respond until he/she has finished saying what he/she intends to say.
- Listen and observe for the feelings and the needs your child is trying to express by the non-verbal cues in addition to listening to the words.
- Check that you correctly understand the feelings that are being expressed; do not simply assume that you know. Reflect the feelings back to the child, "it seems like you are really frustrated by not being able to do your shoe laces."
- Accept all feelings, even when they appear irrational to you. Realize that feelings cannot be controlled; only actions caused by the feelings can.
- See your child as separate from you - an individual - a person - as unique people with their own thoughts and feelings (no matter how young), not necessarily the same as yours.

Barriers to Good Listening: non-verbal clues that display lack of interest and caring such as interrupting, blaming, continuing to read a book/newspaper and watch TV, lecturing, advising, threatening when the child is striving for compassion and attention. All these are considered barriers to effective listening. Wait until a later time to give advice when the child is trying to tell you something that is important to him/her that involves his/her feelings.

Therefore, effective communication is the basis on which mutual respect and loving and caring relationships are built on. When we are listening to our child attentively and effectively we are demonstrating our love, concerns and respect for them.

### **Communication Styles : Canadian vs. Other Cultures**

The children growing up in two cultures and their parents are faced with challenges of not understanding and each other's world and point of view - children are expected to behave one way in school and another way at home. Language and communication styles are some of the few stumbling blocks for creating misunderstanding and unhealthy relationships between parents and children. Here are some of the differences in communication style that usually cause conflict between parents and children.

#### **Canadian Culture**

##### **Independence:**

- Children are told from very early childhood to think for themselves, be self-sufficient, and make decisions on their own.
- Generally children work and support themselves for college education, therefore it gives them the right to decide for their college education; parents can only guide them.

##### **Small power distance:**

- Children are allowed to question authority; parents, teachers, etc.

Children can have a friendly - equal basis relationship with parents.

- Children are considered as an "individual person with thoughts and feelings". Children actively participate in decision making for things that concern them and in some cases the whole family matters.

#### **Communication Styles (Direct)**

- Children are encouraged to make firm eye contact while talking to another person even if the person is older than them or is an individual with authority.

#### **Other Cultures**

#### **Interdependence:**

- Children are thought to seek advice, support for important decision making from others; parents, grand-parents, older siblings, uncles and aunts...
- Usually parents pay for their children's college education. They have high expectations from their children therefore; they find themselves setting direction for their children that may not agree with what the child wants to do.

#### **Large power distance:**

- Children are taught to listen and obey parents and elders. They are not expected to question authority. Children have distant relationship with parents.
- It's as if children are owned by parents, often their point of view and feelings are not taken in consideration while making important decisions about their lives. Attitude is "what does a child know", we are parents; we know what is best for our children.

### **Communication Styles (Indirect)**

- Children are taught not to look straight in the eye when talking to parents and people with authority; teacher, doctor, etc. They are expected to look down and avoid talking back.

### **Cultural Considerations**

Exploring the difference between communication styles between mainstream culture and other cultures is an attempt for parents to understand why their children behave the way they do. It is important to realize that children spend a good part of their "awake time" at school, where they are exposed to a dominant culture; naturally they will be influenced by the dominant culture.

It would be fair to say that as first generation immigrant parents, we are trying to preserve our culture and heritage, but we have to understand the power of "influence" and find a balance between the two cultures. We can try to "own the best of both cultures" and make it work. As parents it is really crucial for us to understand the child's point of view, what challenges he/she might be facing for being a visible minority child. To gain mutual respect and healthy relationships with children, parents also need to understand the culture is evolving. We are influenced by each other's culture in this "global village" and when needed we adapt to a changing world. As parents we should realize that "culture" in home country is also changing at a rapid pace. In this fast changing world it is possible to keep your own cultural heritage and values while integrating into the host society by adapting to some good "value" from this society.

### **Audience: Vietnamese parents**

#### **Icebreakers:**

"Guessing who"

To draw parent's interests, hobbies get to know each other deeper

(Focus on age 0-5 years old)

**Objectives:**

To be able to describe/ define a healthy communication

To be able to identify the similarities /differences communication style back home & Canada

**Plans:**

Clear (and unambiguous) description of educational intentions for the parents - Birth parent,- legal parent

Common Emotional Sheets, Observation check list:

(birth to one year, one year to 5)

Ages- appropriate toys for children (toy telephones, puppetsdolls, joint storytelling...)

**Goals(Intended outcomes)**

**Parents understand ECD (0 to 5 or ...) Stages of cognitive Development :**  
(sensor motor, Preoperational- concrete Operational, Formal Operational)

**Parents understand multicultural expectations**

**Parents understand parenting styles (assertive, passive, aggressive)**

**Parents create a safe environment -(choices and consequences)**

**Communication in family-Message sent - message received**

Define in your own knowledge

**Activities/ Scenarios:**

Using **flash cards** to investigate participants knowledge:

(words exchange between individuals)

(our action, movements, voice of tone, listening, facial expression and other non-verbal behavior)

- Use concrete props and visual aids whenever possible  
ex: Discuss concepts as "Part" "whole" "one-half". Add or subtract with sticks, rocks or....
- Make instruction relatively short, using action as well as words.
- Don't expect children to be consistent in their ability to see someone else's point of view Ex: be clear the rule\s of sharing toys .
- Be sensitive to possibility that children may have different meanings.  
children may also expect everyone understand words they have

invented- Ex: ask children to explain the meaning of their invented words

- Give a child a great deal of practicing with the skills that serve as building blocks or more complex skills such as reading comprehension. Ex: cut out letter to build words, supplement paper and pencil tasks in arithmetic with activities that require measuring and simple calculations in cooking , dividing a patch of popcorn equally).
- Provide wide rang of experiences in order to build a foundation of concept learning and language. (ex: take field trip to zoo, attend storytelling class, give children words to describe what are they doing. hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling).

### **Role playing**

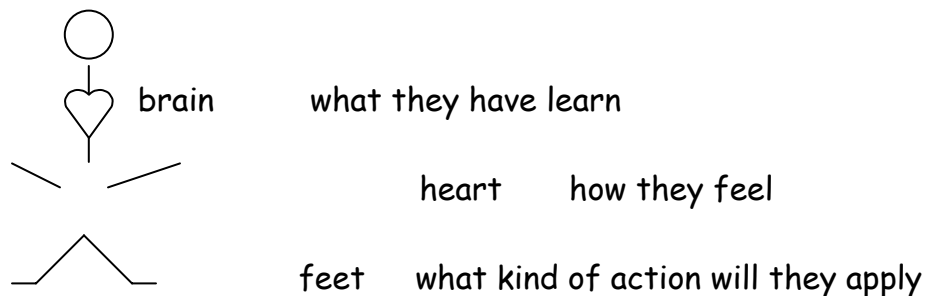
Divide group into 4 people: mother, father and 2 children @ meal/play time

**Group 1** 1-3 years old (appropriate tools for the parents play with their child)

**Group 2** 4 years old

**Group 3** 3-5 years old

**Share outcome from scenario - Reflect**



**Evaluation from group own reflection**

**Wish list from them**

Intended outcome:

To be able to express openly between parents and child in a healthy family  
To create a safe healthy relationship in the family  
To be able to recognize and reflect on their own knowledge and parenting back home  
Will gain some knowledge:  
Be able to bridge parenting in two cultures- flexible and creative

## **Agenda**

### **Communication between parent and child**

**1-1:15 greetings and gathering**

**1:15 -1:25 introduction:  
icebreaker  
using appropriate cultural scenario/ fun activity**

**1:30 -2:30 group brainstorming their own experience**

- How did their parents talk to them when they were young
- How did they understand to their parents messages?
- How will they apply to their own?
- Are there any differences?
- How the group deal with the differences

**2:30 - 3:00 wish list for next session  
Refreshment**

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## **Session Nine: Parenting Daughters and Sons**

**(Being Developed)**

**Session Ten: The Canadian School System**

(Being Developed)

## Chapter Seven: Evaluating the Learning

### *A Word About Appreciative Inquiry*

MCHB members are a very diverse group at many different points on the continuum between banking style and transformative approaches to education. To understand the gains we made in shifting along the continuum both individually and organizationally, we needed to understand our various starting points. See Appendix A for our initial reflections on this.

"Appreciative Inquiry argues that organizations improve most effectively through 'discovery and valuing, envisioning, dialogue, and co-constructing the future'" (Coghlan, Preskill, & Catsambas, 2003). Instead of addressing deficits, challenges, and problems within organizations or communities through problem-solving, participants are asked: a) to identify what is working particularly well, b) to envision the future if "the best of what is" occurred more often, c) to develop a plan to lead to that future, and d) to implement the changes necessary and monitor and sustain the changes achieved. This does not entail sidestepping the pressures and challenges that people in the organization face, it just means primarily directing attention to the capacity and strength within individuals and the organization to make the most of the opportunities arising from those pressures.

We believe Appreciative Inquiry is an appropriate approach to evaluating multicultural parenting education for several reasons. First, by focusing on strengths and capacity, it can alleviate some of the fears and discomfort that come with shifting both individually and organizationally to a more participatory approach. A strengths focus is also likely to enable us to mobilize our capacity to overcome some of the grave challenges immigrant parents face and have articulated clearly. As we are looking for change at both an individual and organizational level, Appreciative Inquiry provides us with a participatory approach based in storytelling that can engage a whole organization in a learning and change process. By focusing clearly on individuals' values and seeking connections between them, Appreciative Inquiry is an effective methodology for building a community of practice, one of the explicit aims of the Multicultural Parenting Project.

Pilot sessions are about learning how best to facilitate sessions on various parenting topics. Thus, together with our colleagues we thought about what we wanted for parents and for ourselves after sessions. We then reflected with parents and our colleagues on how well we did in facilitating a participatory session.

Things we want for parents after sessions:

1. Feel good. Feel energized.
2. Parents have shared and valued their own experiences. Parents have learned from each other.
3. Parents see the session as useful.  
They can identify things they would like to change and put into action.
4. Parents feel connected. Parents wish to do something together.
5. Parents have opportunity to give critical feedback. Parents have input into what topics they will investigate in the next session, and how they will investigate them.

Things we want for facilitators after sessions:

1. Feel good. Feel energized.
2. We learned from parents and ourselves something about facilitation.
3. We learned from parents and ourselves something about the topic.
4. We successfully guided a process that moves from:
  - a. Reflecting on own experiences, including previous changes people have made (quiet reflection—thinking, drawing, writing, cutting & pasting)
  - b. Sharing with each other (discussion or activity in pairs, small groups or large groups)
  - c. Elicit, gather, and recognize collective knowledge
  - d. Identify areas for change and take action
5. Feel connected and see opportunities from .
6. We gathered critical feedback from parents, reflected it back to them, and used this to guide our planning for future sessions.

Two sets of questions follow: 1) questions to guide our reflections with parents at the end of each pilot session, and 2) questions to guide co-

facilitators and observers' reflections after the session. Each facilitator will decide how much time to spend on verbal evaluations at the end of each session (at least 10 minutes is suggested), and whether or not there will also be a written evaluation. It was suggested that we may wish to add questions about logistics, such as food, childcare, transportation etc.

**Guide for parents' closing reflections:**

- Please say one word about how you feel. (Go around the group and get one word from each person—write down these words—then ask the following). When did you feel most alive and engaged in this session? What was it that energized you?
- What did you learn in this session? What did you learn about yourself? About other participants? About the topic? Who did you learn from?
- What new skills or approaches did you learn in this session? What will you do differently as a result of participating in this workshop? How will this be helpful to you?
- What would you change about this session to make it better? What would you like to see in upcoming sessions?

**Questions for facilitators' and observers' closing reflections:**

- How did you feel at the end of the session? When did you feel most alive and engaged in this session? When did others seem to be most alive and engaged? What was it that energized you? What was it that energized others?
- What was best about how this workshop was facilitated? What were the points of struggle in the workshop? What new facilitation skills or approaches did you learn in this session? Did you guide a process that moved from: 1) reflecting on own experience; 2) sharing with each other; 3) gathering collective knowledge; and 4) planning for and taking action? What will you do differently as a result of facilitating / observing this workshop? How will this be helpful to you?

- What did you learn in this session? What did you learn about yourself? About other participants? About the topic? Who did you learn from? What new parenting skills or approaches did you learn in this session? What will you do differently as a result of facilitating / observing this workshop? How will this be helpful to you?
- What would you change about this session to make it better? Based on your own and parents' reflections what will you do in upcoming sessions?

Other ways of reflecting include the forms below. Also see the Session 8 with the Vietnamese Audience for a Head, Heart, Feet Evaluation that focuses on learning, feeling and action.

**Feedback on Participatory Facilitation**  
**Self and Peer Assessment**  
**Multicultural Health Brokers**

**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluating our  
strengths helps  
build our  
confidence.  
-Multicultural  
Health Broker**

**1. Was the set up of the learning space appropriate for their content/purpose? Did the group make all the physical preparations needed?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Did the group introduce themselves? Did the group clearly communicate what their topic and goals were and the relevance it would have to the participants?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. How did the group break the ice or build community among the participants?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What were the participatory elements included in their facilitation? Could the facilitation have been more participatory? (think about – who defined the content and determined process, use of learner experiences, identifying learner needs, finding and using resources, use of external knowledge, activities for processing information, reflection activities)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Where would you place this facilitation on the continuum of participatory learning?**

**Banking Education**

*teacher decides  
information delivery  
focuses on individual skills  
change in behaviour  
improved services  
hierarchical power*

**Participatory Learning**

*responsive to learners  
build on learner experiences & values  
focuses on social context, families  
change in family interaction, thinking, policy  
developing healthy & empowered communities  
egalitarian – power sharing*

**Why did you place it here?**

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**6. Overall, was the topic facilitated in an effective and enjoyable manner? Other general comments?**

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**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIVE CIRCLE:**

***For Group:* can you explain how and why you made your decisions about content and facilitation? How do you feel about your facilitation...do you think it was successful in meeting your goals?**

***For Participants:* How did you feel as a participant during this facilitation? Was it effective and enjoyable as a participatory process? What general feedback can you give?**

***General:* How might we go beyond participatory processes to transformative processes? Where should we go from here to further enhance your facilitation practice?**

**Peer Feedback on your Course Design**

**Name of Presenter:**

**1. Main Concept, Rationale and Goals**

The main concept, the rationale for developing this course, and the goals were clearly communicated. You were convinced as to the importance of this course and the goals to be achieved.

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**2. Course Design and Transformative Learning Elements**

The presenter gave a brief summary/overview of the course that familiarized you with how the course would be implemented, including highlights from the introduction, selected learning activities, and the conclusion (within 10 min time limit). There was evidence that the presenter had thought about transformative learning and tried to implement at least one element of content or process that would have transformative potential.

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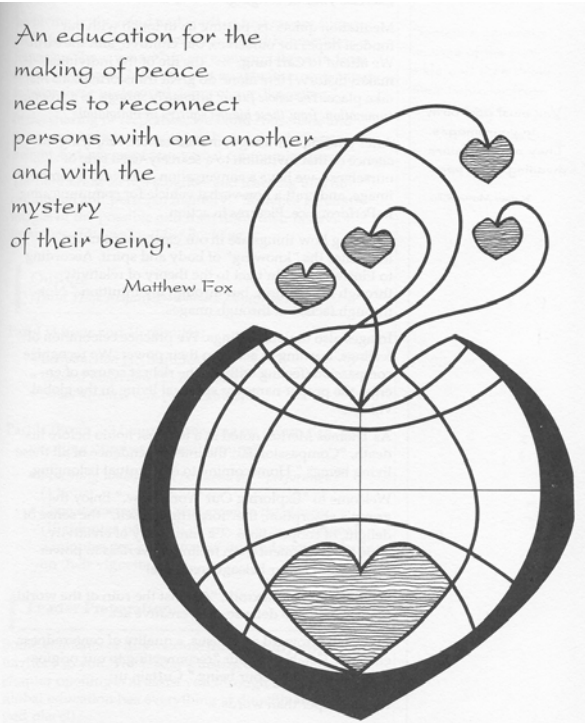
## **Chapter Eight: Skills Toolbox**

**(Being Developed)**



**Chapter Nine: Continuing To Build Collective Knowledge,  
Multicultural Parenting Capacities, and Facilitator Skill**

(Being Developed)



## **Chapter Ten: Engaging Support Workers with Immigrant Communities**

Just as the health brokers needed to engage in a deeply reflective and engaged learning process to themselves be able to facilitate immigrant parents in generating their own wisdom and knowledge about parenting processes in a new country, so non-immigrant support workers also needed a deeply reflective learning process. In particular, non-immigrant support workers explored and reflected on their ideas about what it means to be a helping professional working cross-culturally, skills for relating across cultures that is cognizant of power relations and cultural integrity, and ideologies they may unconsciously hold that informs their views of working in multicultural contexts. This chapter, then, traces three key activities that assisted these support workers in seeing their work in a new light, learning ways of relating that build their capacities for being supportive and for participatory engagement, and developing important transcultural competencies.

The first activity utilized their professional experiences as the raw experiential knowledge they already have. Reflection upon this helped to reveal deep assumptions they carry and habitual ways of relating. The assumption was that support workers cannot move forward professionally if they do not

understand what ideas shaped them as individuals and what professional expectations and experiences shaped them. Often, there is a thread that weaves through our lives - ideas and values - that inform people's life as professionals. Remembering these personal stories helps to weave personal and professional stories together and this reflection helps lay an appropriate foundation for engaging in the life stories of others. Therefore, similar to the multicultural health brokers, they also drew a River of Life that traced their professional biography.

***River of Life Activity - Rethinking Professionality:***

***Purpose: To draw your river of life depicting the social events, people or situations that shaped who you are as a professional.***

Think about the sources of the river that shaped who you are as a person: family values, early experiences, ethnic and religious heritage, socio-economic status, work ethic, and region you are from. Draw these sources of your early learning.

Think about the flow of the river through childhood school experiences. Identify significant moments, people, and ideas that led you in the direction you went in - negative and positive.

Concentrate on the key things that have shaped you personally and professionally - formal and informal learning (full-time and part-time learning experiences) nonformal (learning through life experiences). Consider the six dimensions: intellectual, emotional, physical, social relationships, artistic, and spiritual learning. Show all these as part of your river.

Consider the colors and shape of the river (or tree), the nature of the water (or type of tree), the shores or location in which the river or tree are situated. What was happening in the world at various times that also shaped you? Represent this in some way.

**Analyzing the River:**

- When you look at the whole river, what are the key values and beliefs that define who you are as an individual?
- Name the categories of key experiences that shaped who you are personally and professionally? (positive and negative)
- What are the key ideas that have shaped how you think of yourself as a professional? How does this shape how you do your work and engage with others?
- Was there a time in your life when your key values, beliefs, ideas or

identity were challenged? How did you handle this experience?

- What in your history can be a lesson about the best way to engage others, help others?
- What in your history can be a lesson about how adults most effectively learn and change?
- What are some initial ideas about changing my practice to be more responsive?

### **Models of Professional Support Work**

How can we summarize our existing model of working?

What are the problems with this model? What have we been led to believe our duty is as professionals?

What do we perceive as the expectations people place on us?

### **Assessment:**

WHAT IS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS NOW?

WHAT SHOULD WE KEEP IN OUR PRACTICE?

HOW COULD WE CHANGE OUR PRACTICE?

This last set of questions focussed on the liabilities in the concept of "helping". Questions that were discussed centered around the power disparities typical in professional helping relationships, how this breeds distrust, and how helping professionals often serve institutional goals more than the needs of immigrant families. It can reinforce self-concepts that include a feeling of deficit, stigma, inferiority, dependency, neediness, and even colonialism and paternalism.

This reflection process moved to exploring what a model of accompaniment rather than helping could look like. In particular, this model sees helping as an act of restoration where the immigrant family is the master of identifying their needs, determining the terms of assistance, and reaching for the dreams that fuelled their journey to Canada.

### **Building Mutuality:**

The key element is how to build a sense of mutuality between immigrant families and professional helpers or, rather, those who accommodate their journey. In all the activities that we created, the starting point was for people to engage as mutual humans on an earthly journey rather than professionals and clients. One ice breaker activity was for all participants - both professionals and multicultural health brokers - to sit on the floor in a circle and to share the significance behind their first or last name. Another was to share our dreams and hopes as parents...by drawing or writing on pieces of paper shaped as butterflies...like monarch butterflies who migrate from Mexico to Canada and

back. They then listed what support mechanisms there were for their own families when they experienced hard times. Another was to tell a story of joy in a role as a parent, aunt or mentor for a young person. Another was for each participant to set a table for a celebratory meal, as it would have occurred in their family of origin, to explain the cultural assumptions and power relations that they learned within their own families. This helped to build a sense of mutuality but also expanded the crosscultural knowledge of the participants. Finally, it used joyful, happy stories and illustrated how all families feel a sense of support at a human not institutional level.

One participant engaged the group in an Eritrean coffee ceremony (the birthplace of coffee) and how helping relationships were embedded in community life and various rituals in this part of the world. This served to illustrate how the same functions were met in different societies and cultures and why families find it difficult to trust people who are not community members. Overall, we found that when people engaged in activities together...rituals, cooking together, doing art or crafts together, they manifested mutuality. This sense of mutuality, then, would be learned at an experiential level and then could be replicated.

**Ideologies of Multiculturalism:**

Most important, was the review of the three approaches to multiculturalism and an assessment of which approach was unconsciously utilized in interchanges with immigrant and refugee families. In some cases, professional support workers identified a disparity between their beliefs and their actions. This awareness helped to shape a different way of engagement by understanding the macro impacts it would have in terms of building an inclusive society.

**Ideologies of Multiculturalism - Continuum**

→		→
<b>Assimilation /Integration</b>	<b>Pluralism</b>	<b>Anti-Racism/Inclusion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status quo should be preserved for social order</li> <li>• Minority groups need to know their place</li> <li>• Control immigration; ensure strong programs for assimilation to learn the Canadian way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All people should have equal opportunity to compete and succeed in system</li> <li>• Mosaic - diversity is good, need to find ways to co-exist; celebrate differences</li> <li>• Need to change institutions and laws so people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing system will try to preserve White privilege and will resist change</li> <li>• Racism/multiculturalism placates minorities and keeps them less in lower-status positions for self-serving national goals; life chances rarely improved</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melting pot where all races/ethnicities melted into Canadians</li> </ul>	<p>have chance to succeed ie. affirmative action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need cross-cultural training and more interaction across cultures to change attitudes and increase sensitivity</li> <li>• Focus on appreciating the three D's – diet, dress and dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need authentic inclusion where values, economic and political structures change to ensure justice and true equality</li> <li>• Need anti-racist education along with challenging the system to create a society that has equal power relations between all people and all people are partners in this nation</li> </ul>
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**Listening with the Heart - Creating Transcultural Ways of Interacting:**

This major activity was designed to physically feel the way we interact in different contexts and often how our habitual ways of moving through our days may create important communication barriers.

In a large open space:

- *Walk like you are on a busy city street and in a rush. Walk in a fairly energetic pace, rushing, keep moving, no talking, pass each other. You are very important with lots of things to do. Feel the tension of having to make your way through others who are obstacles.*

**Q: What were the qualities in this interchange? How did your body feel? How did you regard people around you?**

- *Walk a bit slower noticing the people around you. Our eyes engage, we begin to recognize each other's presence.*
- *Walk slower yet and smile. Really notice each other. Practice softening your eyes.*

**Q: What were the qualities in this interchange? How did your body feel? How did you regard people around you?**

- *Now Stand in front of someone. Take their right hand in yours. Without speaking, just register their presence. There is nothing else happening in the day, you feel glad that this person is here right now. You feel they are a gift to your life.*
- *Now mill again, find another person to engage: again, take their hand. Register their presence. Ask them: "What do you love about being alive?" Feel their answer with your heart. You do not need to reply, just give a gesture that you hear deeply.*

**Debrief: What were the qualities in these two interchanges? Are they different from your normal interchanges? If so, how?**

**What blocks deep and genuine conversation? LIST**

*So, how do we engage with the heart when it is a tough story to hear. Listening with the heart is to slow down, disengage the intellect to let the story slowly seep through us; let it enter our body.*

From these experiences, the participants developed some key elements of what makes a safe interchange and what might form the bases for a transcultural way of communicating. For them, a safe interchange included:

1. **Safe Environment** – sincerity of the other was obvious, sense of openness, could talk directly and honestly, could ask for clarity, felt understood
2. **Encouraging Non-Verbal Communication** – nodding, smiling
3. **Validating Feedback** – compassion, felt accepted
4. **Acceptance** – not being judged by listener, appreciation, encouragement
5. **Quality of Feedback** – listened well, gave feedback, genuine interest
6. **Explanations** – good reasoning, understood, preparedness
7. **Egalitarianism/Mutuality** – democratic, mutual respect, equal power
8. **Persistence** – consistent and persistent

**Strategies for Interacting in a "Trans-cultural Way"**

<b>What</b>	<b>How</b>
Clarification	Can you tell me what you mean by...? What I hear you say is... When you don't look at me, what is happening?
Think beyond stereotypes	Openness, inclusiveness
Understand to social behaviour	Reading the context, not just taking literally what is being said decode culture
Conversations	Themes: loss of community all you wanted to know but where afraid to ask how do you raise kids habits behaviours Key questions/touching soul/bounding : what brings joy(music, children), grief (loses, fear), family (parenting), sports
build meaningful relationships	Seeking to understand and to relate caringly trust, respect , consistency document so we know how to create empowering relationships maintain open communication processes
counteract dominant cultural influences i.e. media	communitarian parenting look after other effective models learn more about dominant culture: which is it, what layers does it have identify/ acknowledge/appreciate cultural differences and similarities
Decode culture	identify key elements: symbols and meanings

	label fear so it no longer be a ghost
purpose of being together	identify purpose identify barriers
social responsibility	parenting boundaries

**Conclusion:**

Overall, these activities and engagements created a sense of community and trust across the various divides of race, ethnicity, nationality, and life experience. As one participant noted, respecting across cultures means that we see the heart of the other person first - not the skin color and other physical differences. One we see from this perspective, the other realities add information and richness to the relationship. A follow-up interview will determine what lasting impact this experience had on non-immigrant support workers.

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## **Chapter Eleven: Bibliography**

**(Being Developed)**