

Leading by learning through turbulent times...

We've had great feedback from a number of you on our email and LinkedIn lists, and a common theme regarding timing is to wait. Many of you are based in Ontario, so you know it's been hard to get clear direction about reopening. It varies by region, and by sector. Of course, the virus drives the timing, as it should. It's also more complicated than many expected.

Again, the purpose of the proposed one-time dialogue session isn't to launch an ongoing discussion group. In my experience those most often form serendipitously from connections people make and continue for as long as they provide meaningful benefit. I know from experience. When I worked at Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse, I co-led a learning circle called 'Greenhouse.' The core members included nonprofit consultants, academics, and nonprofit leaders, and occasional invited experts. Our agenda was two questions: "What have you learned recently that's working for you and might help others?", and "What do need to learn next to be more effective in the future?" Those are worthy questions for our planned dialogue.

Greenhouse allowed us to 'plant some seeds' of change. Some sprouted into new programs and even organizations. Building – and sharing – collective learning became a core program development strategy for us. We used it to launch several demonstration projects, some that continue today... Best Start, for example. Several innovative child and family initiatives grew out of an Open Space conference we hosted in Ottawa shortly after the Harris government came to power and gutted the human services sectors. Necessity is, indeed, the mother of invention.

So, whether you decide to sign up for our one-time Zoom dialogue (maybe we'll call it 'Greenhouse Lite'), think about how to build capacity for collective learning. Who can you 'quarantine at a distance' with, sharing insights and challenges? Then, reach out and connect. Eric Hoffer, an American philosopher, wrote this about the importance of continuous learning during the tumultuous decade of the 60s:

In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned (we call them 'knowers') find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

And now, here are this week's resource links...

This week's collection is all about collections and collective intelligence. Please note that for some of these, you may need to sign up for their free newsletter (you can always unsubscribe later if you don't find the material useful.) Sources 2-5 below are ones I've followed for years. They've opened up access to loads of free resources. Some of the articles may have a business slant, but often the principles and tools are equally applicable to nonprofit organizations. I

regularly encourage nonprofit leaders to develop their own knowledge curation strategy... that might be an idea for your organization.

- **Public Services Health & Safety Association:** Here's a sector-specific source of COVID-19 guidance I'd highly recommend. PSHSA, a government-funded corporation, has published a collection of sectoral resources aimed at ensuring employee safety during the pandemic. Here's the link for social and community services workers: <https://www.pshsa.ca/resources/covid-19-precautions-when-working-as-a-social-community-services-worker>.
- **Sloan Management Review:** The editors of the Review have assembled a collection of free articles addressing a range of pandemic issues: <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/tag/covid-19/>
- **Process Street:** More downloadable checklists for managing return to work challenges: <https://www.process.st/coronavirus-workplace-processes/>
- **McKinsey & Company:** A collection of 100 articles addressing a wide range of pandemic-related challenges: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/coronavirus-leading-through-the-crisis/navigating-to-the-next-normal-the-first-100-insights>
- **Nonprofit Quarterly:** Here's a recent article on the reopening challenges nonprofits face. NPQ's daily news feed provides top-notch insights into a wide range of nonprofit issues, including pandemic-related and diversity/inclusion issues... topical & timely. <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/ready-setslow-nonprofits-face-reopening-challenges/>

As always... stay safe, and let's learn our way into the future together.



Peter O'Donnell, President, Healthy Futures Group

2650 Lindholm Crescent, Mississauga, ON, L5M 4P4

Office: 905.569.8474 Mobile: 647.988.8474

Email: peter.odonnell@healthyfutures.ca, Website: www.healthyfutures.ca

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