The Four Voices of Collective Impact

**EXPERTISE**

**The Voice of Expertise**
is about understanding with our heads. This is the voice of rational research and analysis, of selecting and tracking metrics, of measuring effectiveness.

**Principles**
Create a goal that’s specific enough to measure progress. Treat everything as a hypothesis—and test these. See the whole system.

**Methods**
Map barriers and emerging opportunities. Invite experts to help the group learn more about the issues. Eliminate limiting factors.

**Traps**
Believing that rigorous analysis is more true than real-world experience. Getting stuck in trying to understand the issue (Analysis Paralysis). Going around and around (Death by debate).

**Gifts**

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**EXPERIENCE**

**The Voice of Experience**
is about understanding with our hearts. This is the voice that reminds us to listen for pain and hope, to deepen our insight into the lives of others, to feel empathy.

**Principles**
Start understanding the system from the experiences of real people. Understand the context to create full solutions.

**Methods**

**Traps**
Weighing lived experience over systemic understanding. Wanting to help without understanding impact. Settling for sympathy. Developing a “we’re helping the helpless” mindset.

**Gifts**

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**DESIGN**

**The Voice of Design**
is about working with our hands. This is a creative, dynamic voice reminding us to work openly and collaboratively and iterate early and often to create solutions faster.

**Principles**
Test ideas early. Fail early and often. Quick rounds of brief feedback help more than one big round. Go with what’s working.

**Methods**
Physical modeling. Storyboarding. Offering questions not suggestions in feedback rounds. Storyboards and scenarios to focus on HOW, not IF.

**Traps**
Losing steam when we hit hard realities and political resistance. Incremental mindset. Experimentation over implementation. Losing track of the purpose and desired outcomes.

**Gifts**

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**INTENT**

**The Voice of Intent**
is about working from our spirit and our highest purpose. This voice invites us to dream big, bring our passion, and to aspire for better, more meaningful futures for all.

**Principles**
Craft a unifying purpose. Revisit the purpose in times of doubt or confusion. Deepen purpose over time. Differentiate, then integrate.

**Methods**
Purpose for the group and purposes for each meeting. Share individuals hopes and intentions. Define both focus and frame. Discuss frustrations and fears.

**Traps**
Dreaming over doing. Assuming unity without testing it. Groupthink. Failing to adapt purpose and strategies to changing context.

**Gifts**