

Noticings

Turning the Tide uses Noticings in workshops to help build the training skills of participants by inviting them to learn from and question the facilitators' choices. It gives insights into the facilitators' thinking, models transparency and openness and helps build curiosity. We learned it from Training for Change.

What are Noticings?

Noticings are observations without judgement or evaluation. Noticings invite curiosity, further thinking and discussion of the context or situation. Noticings can be used in

- a group-working context to inquire about choices others make.
- a training of trainers to help the group focus in on specific skills or group-working dynamics.
- campaigning to help the group take stock of what's going on and develop or refine strategy.
- tense or difficult situations when you'd like to intervene and change the dynamic or balance of power. Noticings have the potential of breaking behaviour patterns by reflecting back what's going on.

Noticings are not evaluations. An evaluation is an observation with judgement, a declaration of preference or an assessment such as like or dislike. An evaluation often feels complete once stated.

| Noticing | Evaluation |
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| I noticed you asked Bob to speak up. What was your intention there? Was it to support our hearing, or to encourage Bob's assertiveness or something else? | I liked it when you asked Bob to speak up because I could hear him better. |

Evaluations and judgements make assumptions and divide things into categories such as like/dislike, good/bad, interesting/boring, success/failure, or you did 'x' to make me happy, help me or annoy me.

Noticings strive to draw on genuine curiosity and goodwill to find out what is going on for another person or his/her thinking.

| Noticing | Evaluation |
|---|---|
| You started the workshop with an icebreaker activity. It brought out a lot of noise and laughter, and then you stopped it abruptly. I'm wondering why you chose the activity you did, and about ending it when you did. What were you thinking? | You started the workshop with an icebreaker activity, and I liked that because it helped me relax. All the noise and laughter felt light. It was fun; I got to talk to a lot of people. I thought all this was good but you stopped abruptly though. Why? |