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Key "Take-Aways" Place-Based Leadership Forum: – Banff, Alberta, Canada 2010

"Gathering places matter to the life that flows out of them and in them." – Judy Brown

In May of 2010, a Place-based Leadership Forum was convened by collaboration of Leadership Development at The Banff Centre and The Powers of Place Initiative taking place in Banff, Alberta, Canada. The forum was co-facilitated by Renee Levi, Michael Jones, and Katrina Donald. Twelve participants engaged in dialogue, inquiry and exploration of a prototype for continuing inquiries on the topic of Place-based Leadership: Julie Auger, Judy Brown, Michael Jones, Katrina Donald, Ed Lambert, Renee Levi, Steve Maybury, Tom Ockerse, Nick Nissley, Julian Norris, Ronna Schneberger and Barbara Shipka. Although she was not able to attend, Sheryl Erickson was instrumental in the creation, planning, and subsequent leadership of the Forum. The inquiry was structured as a braid, by three interwoven conceptual lenses: **Nature, Design** and **Community**. The forum was captured on video and other data was collected by way of audio recording, photography, and observational notes. The document in hand shares our key "take-aways", illuminating a potential field of study and practice that is current, alive and engaging. It is an exploration of transformational leaders being in the world.

To follow is (1) a list of the language that surfaced describing key concepts that emerged during the inquiry around place-based leadership and **place-making**. There are glimmerings of (2) ideas for possible formation of communities of practice and (3) a short list of what we consider compelling questions that came forward during the Forum.

Place-based Leadership

EMERGENT CONCEPTS & LANGUAGE

- * Heritage, Legacy and Indigenous People
- * Sanctuaries, Sacred and Spiritual Places
- * Porch Culture, Gathering Places, Third Spaces and the Commons
- * Community of Place
- * Wholeness and Places that Are Alive
- * Displacement and Loss of Place
- * Broken, Damaged and Violated Places
- * Virtual Places and Technology
- * Design and Nature
- * Intergenerational and Intercultural

ACTIONS & POSSIBILITIES

- * Conscious Place-making
- * Partnering and Reciprocity with Places
- * Design of Place: Generative, Life-giving, Life-enhancing
- * Making the Invisible Visible
- * Interpreting and Making Meaning in Places
- * Place-based Leadership Development
- * Healing Broken, Damaged or Violated Places through Place-making
- * Holding Space: a Natural Role of Leaders
- * Intersection or Uniformity of Human Built and Natural Environments

POSSIBLE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

- * Research and Writing
- * Leadership Training, Mentoring and Education
- * Organizational Systems
- * Human-built Structures
- * Eldering Communities
- * Business Communities
- * Community Organizations
- * Renewal and Regeneration Groups
- * Dialogue Circles
- * Retreat Centers & Meeting Places

COMPELLING QUESTIONS OF THE INQUIRY

1. How do the places we have experienced in our lives affect us as leaders – past, present, and future?
2. How can we be aware of our relationship with a place in a way so that place can hold us and support what we are trying to achieve? In other words, how can we ask a place to partner with us, and what actions do we as leaders take -- in reciprocity with place-- if we believe all places are alive?
3. What is the influence on outcomes of leaders who are place-based in sensitivity, competence and ethics?
4. Where have we had an experience of the *wholeness* in a place? Of an *alive* place? What does it feel like for us?
5. What is a language we can use when thinking about and experiencing a sense of *wholeness* of a place, as the place *being alive*? What language is emerging from our awareness of the notion of place-making?
6. As leaders, where do we find a sense of aliveness and sense of place in communities?
7. What are key principles of nature that we can embody and incorporate in being a place-based leader?
8. What are nature-based leadership development practices that enhance sensitivity, integrity, and necessary receptivity for wise decision-making and right action as leaders?
9. How can leaders work with the givens of a specific built environment and also transform it while accomplishing their objectives?
10. How do we weave the notion of place-making or creating a sense of place in a virtual world using technology?
11. How do differing cultures view the concept of place-based leadership as distinct (or not)? What can we learn from and with them about being a leader mindful and in relationship with place?
12. What can we learn about place-based leadership from indigenous peoples?

13. How do intergenerational and intercultural groups contribute to the effective potential of place-based leaders? How do they envision themselves as place-makers?



Left: Artist's Hut nestled in The Banff Centre's Artist Colony. Middle: Renee Levi and Michael Jones Co-facilitators for Place-based Leadership Forum, Banff 2010. Right: Canadian Flag at Canada's Canmore Nordic Centre.

The Powers of Place Initiative is grounded on the belief that "places are alive." For more inspiration visit www.powersofplace.com. For information on Leadership Development at The Banff Centre visit www.banffcentre.ca/departments/leadership.