

Attention to language is essential to leading change. Choosing respectful words and replacing patronizing terms and professional jargon with natural language express equality and build trust. Some words influence the attention of those engaged in change by providing a frame for thinking. Thoughtful change makers intentionally consider the frame that key words invite people into.

Consider Beth's choice of **longing** to invite people to discover direction. It affirms that direction emerges from deep within, a place that we feel our way into. Change embodies love of the unfulfilled: ideals far from realization and questions without known answers. Deep feeling brings us close to others whose differences are essential to exploring the path we long to travel.

A space that makes room for longing is different from a space aimed at complying with external demand to produce person centered plans or a space to manage a project. A space for longing invites exploration of a diverse group's hunger and thirst for a just and inclusive community.

Client: respond to tools as a condition of receiving services.

Consumer: identify preferred & enjoyable experiences.

Co-Creator: discover a pathway shaped by longing

Feeling into the deeper intention

I see our core team as holding the question posed by the initiator of the group as we make it our own.

As a team member said on our last call, we are currently "falling in love with our question/intention." ...And each other.

I use **longing** here to express a desire for something unfulfilled that is coming from a deep place of feeling and care. I prefer longing to words such as "agenda, initiative, project, etc. These words often suggest a pre-formed idea about what might happen. They also might be driven more by external expectations and demands instead of a question deeply held yet unfulfilled by the initiator.

The question deeply held is strong but unformed, which is why it takes such a long time to co initiate.

The question is also one that simply cannot be explored without the engagement of a larger group who will bring other perspectives, energy, passion, and ultimately action confidence to the whole.

–Beth Mount

Longing, asks me to remember my "why." Why did I choose to dedicate my life to the work that I do?

Our system changes in response to scandal. Our work can be taken over by doing what "New York State says..."

My passion is not to be the person who does what "New York State says." I long to rock the world with people who get stuck in a system that currently just reacts.

So many things compete for our attention. We long for a time when we can devote 100% of our attention to only one thing.

When people with developmental disabilities speak from their vision for justice, respect & choice they inspire & energize all of us.

We need to replace rectangular tables with sides and sharp edges with round tables, tables we can go around as many times as we need to hear what we really want.