

CAN WE GET ALONG, LONG ENOUGH TO COLLABORATE?

by

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APPROVAL

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Abstract

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Successful collaborations take effort. This study analyzed the process followed by 20 groups of diverse professions that were brought together to solve a community health problem. To this goal a four part model of conflict was adapted and used to understand how conflict emerged, was managed or resolved. The model allowed for the identification of five routes to conflict. Conflict was either averted or managed constructively by most of the groups and a set of productive behaviors is associated with this ability. Experienced collaborators utilize these behaviors at various times throughout the collaborative process to promote group cohesion and the possibility of integrating differences and transforming them into more creative outcomes. Conflict is found to be neutral; for some groups it is stagnating while others are able to use it constructively.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

For social workers, engaging in collaboration with the goal of finding solutions to social problems is an essential part of community organizing and development work. The social movements of the 1960's and 70's, and the mobilization around the HIV/AIDS epidemics in the 1980's and early 90's provide examples of how collaborations can lead to successful actions to address imbalances of power, oppression and its correspondent limitations. More recently, the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street (OWS) and Anti-Fracking Movements have reawakened a wave of social engagement and the possibility of the resurgence of broad base movement building. They have also offered reminders of what can happen when internal challenges arise. While at Zuccotti Park the organizers of OWS-NY reached out to their allies asking for help in dealing with internal disagreements and conflicts that threatened the permanence of the occupiers (Burghart, 2011). Confronted with the need to present a unified front and be a strong group able to withstand external pressures, occupiers were aware of the need to address internal differences that are common in any diverse group. The real or perceived differences can originate from a variety of sources, including culture, gender, race/ethnicity, class, age, level of ability, level of integration into mainstream society, education, profession, and philosophical/ideological orientation (McRae & Short, 2010; Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, Garcia, 2008).

Social workers have been leaders in creating sustainable community-building initiatives through participation in social change movements (Burghardt, 2011). In times of scarce resources, it becomes even more imperative that social workers engage both in macro and micro efforts, understanding the relationship between delivering services, strengthening and building community, and fostering social change (Aldarondo, E., 2007; Wheeler & Parchment, 2009). This is no easy task. As leaders, social workers must balance the responsibility and

accountability to funders while attempting to provide services, give voice to, and engage with the groups they represent. Further, social workers need be aware of the role the profession has played in 'social control' (Margolin, 1997) and how this affects the willingness of some communities to trust and become engaged in collaborations with us (Glover Reed, 2005). Working with diverse groups of people requires care, attention, and a grounded and mindful professionalism. This includes recognizing the interplay between the societal context of racism, poverty, gender and other oppressions, and the influence of these on attempts at community building strategies.

Social workers sometimes assume collaboration to be par for the course, even when they have to dedicate so much time and energy to its development. This may be part of the reason why research on collaboration by social workers is somewhat limited. This is not the case with other professions where the literature reflects the importance of learning about collaborations, particularly in the field of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations. In the business world for example, the specifics of how to pair individuals and the right mix of professionals to form the most creative and productive teams, is of great research interest (Klein, 2005).

Collaboration research can advance social work knowledge and if applied appropriately, can be useful to social workers and organizers working to bring groups together to the benefit of the entire community. I am interested in building on collaboration knowledge for the benefit of groups seeking to solve social problems. More specifically, with this research my goal was to learn more about the process of collaboration and to identify the ways experienced facilitators effectively manage differences that arise in the process. It was my hope to gather information that could benefit coalition building efforts amongst professionals, and potentially be useful to a

wide range of sectors and social groups who come together to create new ways of relating and of finding solutions to common problems.

Collaboration Essentials and Barriers

Collaboration means different things to different people (Lasker & Weiss, 2003). In some cases the term has been used to describe a joint venture, business partnership or alliance; in others as a process, and thirdly as; a goal or outcome. For the purposes of this research proposal, collaboration will be defined as: A process that is continuously in development, that enhance the ability of individuals that come together and form a group, with the purpose of finding creative solutions to social problems (Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, Garcia, 2008). The creation of social movements depends on the ability of groups to coalesce, organize and work towards a common goal (Addams 1969). Collaboration is an essential component to community organizing and development (Bayne-Smith, Mizrahi, Garcia, 2008; Garcia, Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, 2010; Lasker & Weis, 2003; Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, Garcia, 2009) and may happen with varying levels of community representation. Some groups collaborate at a grass-root level (all community members), others are a combination of community and organizations, and others function primarily at an organizational or professional level, as in the case of coalitions (Burghardt, 2011). These coalitions are often multidisciplinary, creating a particular kind of diversity generated by professional culture and training (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001; 1992).

Multidisciplinary research has given shape to the range of issues that arise that challenge collaboration as well as those elements present in collaborations that are successful and effective. At the heart of these positive elements is the need for achieving what Lasker and Weiss (2003) have called proximal outcomes. Proximal outcomes are the relational skills and actions that allow groups to come together in a constructive way. In their study of community health

collaboratives, they determined that if these proximal outcomes are present, they will strengthen community problem solving that, in turn lead to community health; participants are able to work together, identify tasks and accomplish their goals. The proximal outcomes as described by the authors are: 1. individual empowerment: tasks and skills that prepare individual members to be active participants; 2. Strategies used by groups that bridge social ties between participants, and; synergy, or the synchronicity and creative flow that can come between groups that find a way to communicate and work together.

Successful collaborative efforts *Build member capacity* and readiness to engage in the process, and assume ownership of the project; *Relational capacity* and respect for every participant, the promotion of individual empowerment and the appropriate use of conflict resolution skills; strengthen *Organizational capacity* that speaks to leadership development, have clear organizational structures, shared responsibility and unity of purpose, and finally; address *structural and power balance* that refers to equality amongst partners awareness of external forces and their impact on the group; patience, and willingness of group members to admit and rectify mistakes (Jones, et al, 2007; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). The combined capacities and proximal outcomes are based on the presence of relational abilities and skills that serve as a foundation to the collaborative. If not present, the collaborative effort might not be successful.

Authors have identified barriers to collaborative efforts. As might be expected, many of the challenges are in direct contrast to what has been found to be necessary for collaborations to succeed. Barriers can be divided into two categories: external or macro level and internal or micro level. External, structural barriers refer to societal messages and disinformation that lead to distrust of particular groups. This includes structural limitations such as: conflicting ideologies; politics of interest groups, hierarchy and power imbalance, pressures and

expectations from funding sources, lack of resources and time limitations. Internal barriers are what could be called the consequences or result of pre-existing divisive forces that influence individuals in the collaboration. These include: positional differences (class, education level, rank, profession) (Brewer, 1999); cultural and racial differences (McRae & Short, 2010); gender differences (Daley, 2009; Klein, 2005); social identity differences (Yoshino, 2007); world view, goal and strategic differences (Zawerstein, 2009); factors that affect the development of trust (Mizrachi, Drori & Anspach, 2007); tendencies to dominate and function in a hierarchical way (Molner-Feiger & Schmitt, 1974); controlling personalities, and relational challenges, to name a few.

In addition to the above, researchers in the field of small group studies have identified particular norms and structures of groups in formation (McRae & Short, 2010). Every group, regardless of the reason for coming together, must come to an understanding of its goals, have a shared vision, and agree upon ways of arriving at those goals. Group development frameworks propose that groups must also deal with issues related to member concerns about boundaries, relationships, and power (McRae & Short, 2010). The group must manage interpersonal differences and develop the ability to create a space where every participant feels safe. To be successful, coalition members must also reach basic agreement on decision-making, strategies and evaluation (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993). In collaborations (coalitions) led by professionals, the various professional identities, values and epistemology, are potential sources of conflict (Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, Garcia, 2008; Repko, 2008).

Coalition members may underestimate the challenges created when diverse groups come together, even when there is a philosophical commitment to unity. According to Mizrahi & Rosenthal (1993) a high level of diversity “slows down the progress toward external goals

because it takes time to evolve trust, familiarity, and comfort”. If collaborating groups are able to develop trust and successfully negotiate the barriers that arise, they may then engage in the work at hand. If they are unable to do so, resentment and distrust can turn potential collaborators into adversaries.

Disagreement and Conflict in Collaborating Groups

Social change coalitions and collaborations exist within a dynamic tension between cooperation and conflict (Alicea in Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993; Ospina & Saz-Carranza, 2005). Conflict in these groups is to be expected, and it occurs at various levels (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993). Those that are most relevant to this research occur around issues such as: leadership, decision-making, and personality and style. When a group first comes together there are visual differences that are immediately apparent, and others that emerge as the group gets to know each other. Race, ethnic differences and gender are the visible differences that are noted by individuals in groups in formation, but that are often not talked about directly, much less addressed (McRae & Short, 2010). During the initial stage, members are more likely to draw on past experiences and stereotypes, to make sense of these differences (Brown & Mistry in McRae & Short, 2010). Interpretations about behavior or intangible perceptions based on stereotypes result in an unstable, if not artificial, group foundation. The less visible differences such as philosophy, class and positional status, sexual orientation, religion, and others become apparent and can become sources of conflict as the group begins to interact more intimately.

When groups of diverse composition come together they need to manage a number of matters and concerns so that they may develop into a functional group. “We use the term *functional* broadly to mean a group that is taking up its task and finding ways to work effectively that are specific to that group, given the context in which they exist.” (Page 48, McRae & Short,

2010). Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993) explore the dynamic conflict present in collaboration and conclude that it is inevitable. The differences can produce a new and exciting result, leading to creative ideas that integrate the perspectives of the entire group (Ospina & Saz-Carranza, 2005). On the down side, the differences may become disagreements that are insurmountable, leading to outright tension and conflict. Conflict is expressed in a variety of ways, actively through, opposition, disruption or impasse, or passively through inaction, withdrawal, and negativism (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993). When the conflict becomes so difficult that it cannot be resolved, particular skills are necessary to address it.

Current theory of collaboration is useful in efforts to evaluate their effectiveness and success. However, the literature provides few solutions or recommendations on how to manage the problems and challenges that hinder collaboration among groups that come together for this purpose. For example, although diplomacy and conflict resolution skills are clearly identified as important, little is said about why these skills are necessary, nor about how to concretely put them into practice. The challenges to groups getting along are studied within the peacemaking field. However, even those practitioners and researchers who have dedicated their lives work to the resolution of conflict between adversaries, describe the task as “an uphill battle” that produces minute, even imperceptible results (Shapiro, 2006). In researching this topic, no “how to” guidelines were found for effectively working through conflicts that may cause otherwise like-minded groups to stalemate, fracture or disintegrate. Gaining this knowledge could be valuable to social workers, organizers, community practitioners, and to those who work in inter-organizational settings. New knowledge about ways to create more cohesive groups and collaborations would be a significant contribution to the social work profession, as it would

support social workers in doing their work by nurturing their abilities as facilitators of collaboration.

CHAPTER II: STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH

This study sought a deeper understanding of how disagreements and differences are managed in collaborative efforts, to maximize the benefits of diversity and minimize negative and destructive conflict. My interest stems from the awareness that many groups that come together with good intentions so often disintegrate before they are able to accomplish their goals. It was my hypothesis that if not seen and used as an asset, the differences participants bring could become contentious and interfere with cohesiveness in group process.

Not all collaborations are able to maximize the benefits of diverse perspectives and experiences. Learning the skill to effectively manage difference and help groups coalesce is critically necessary at this time of great social upheaval. It is hoped that a deeper understanding of how collaboration develops, and how division and dissent is overcome, will contribute to new methods to improve participation in collaborative groups. This in turn would enhance the possibility for groups to find and implement collective solutions. For social workers and other professional collaboration leaders this would translate into having additional tools to assist groups address those differences that can lead to disagreements, so that these differences may be managed, rather than become sources of interference to the development of cohesion and solidarity.

This research made use of existing data from a study in which I was a co-researcher, of experienced professional collaborators to examine the 'what and how' of effectively managing diversity to help a collaborative move forward successfully. One aim of this study was to find out if the attitudes and behaviors named by collaboration practitioners of an earlier study (Garcia, Mizrahi, Bayne Smith, 2010; Lasker & Weiss, 2003) are in fact present and used by professionals to effectively coalesce and resolve conflicts that arise in the group process.

Another goal was to learn how experienced collaborators develop trust, promote successful group formation, and manage the differences that could lead to conflict, and that are so common in diverse groups of people.

Working Definitions

Collaboration is defined as a developmental process that enhances the ability of groups from diverse backgrounds (professions, cultures, socioeconomic levels, ideologies etc.) that work collectively toward finding creative solutions to social problems (Garcia, Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, 2008) was the focus. The literature indicates that building relationships between collaborators is of much importance to building a collaborative (Bayne Smith et al, 2008; Jones et al. 2007; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). The development of relational capacity is one of the four abilities that any collaborative effort must accomplish if it is to succeed (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Difference is defined as the state of being unlike others, and/or of having distinguishing features that are associated with a particular group, such as race, gender and profession (McRae & Short, 2010).

Experienced collaborators is the term used to refer to the participants of the originating study, who were invited to participate because they were identified as ‘exemplars’, i.e. professionals whose work is dedicated to the practice of and/or the teaching of interdisciplinary community collaboration (Bayne Smith et al, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

To understand the process of collaboration, and the effects of differences on this process it was necessary to combine the knowledge base from different theories. This is so because there is no one field that has been able to capture the many angles and lenses from which the issue can be addressed (Schirch, 2004). This is in part because the literature centers on varying levels of

analysis, such as the individual, intergroup relationships, or on structures and systems (Shapiro, 2006). The different goals and interests of particular professions can help to further explain this. Psychology for example, aims to understand the cognitive dimensions of relationship building and decision-making (Klein, 2005), while the business and management fields are interested in ‘matching’ the right combination of professionals and personalities, to maximize the creativity and productivity of diverse teams. The conflict resolution field, on the other hand, has as an overall interest in helping adversaries to stop violent conflict, and to varying degrees resolve the conflict in a lasting and significant way.

Community Development and Collaboration Theories

These are used as a framework to understand collaboration as a process, and to guide the understanding of what makes such a process effective, healthy and successful. Collaboration has come to mean many things. a) From the business perspective: venture, strategic alliance, to produce better outcomes and results, more creative solutions. b) As a developmental process: to enhance the ability of groups from diverse backgrounds (professions, cultures, socioeconomic levels, etc.) to come together to find creative solutions to social problems. c) As a goal: for groups identified as being in conflict, or who have differences to be resolved, and who need to learn to work together towards a common goal. The literature on collaboration as a field has identified the core elements of effective collaboration and the factors that can threaten the collaborative process.

Small group theory.

This field of study is useful to understanding the group formation process and the relational bench marks groups must develop if they are to be “functional’ (McRae & Short, 2010). This field of study has also developed knowledge on the impact of readily detectable

attributes (Shaw & Barret-Powers, 1998) and the cognitive process of sense making that individuals pass through when meeting someone new particularly someone who is perceived to be different from them (Jackson et al, 1992). This knowledge is relevant to this study because it helps to explain the ways people respond to others in new situations, such as to being in a group. Collaborations could be considered small groups that need to coalesce to be productive in their task, and pass through the stages necessary for this to take place.

Conflict resolution theory.

This expansive field of study has produced a great deal of knowledge about what conflict is, how it manifests and how it can be resolved. Most of the research is focused on social conflict and peacemaking and on groups that have been recognized to be adversaries. Authors have proposed models for the stages of conflict and for ways of resolving conflict, which will be useful to my research.

Critical theories.

Several post-modernist theories converge on the importance of integrating the experiences of every participant, while equalizing power imbalances, toward the creation of a more inclusive and just society. Critical race theory, social identity theory, and feminist theory provide a framework from which to understand the challenges to effective collaborations, and to identify those performance indicators that could contribute to a successful collaboration experience.

A Provisional Theory of Conflict in Collaboratives

Because the focus of this dissertation is the emergence and management of conflict in collaboratives formed by professionals, it is useful to begin the analysis with a suitable a priori theory of conflict. Based on the review of previous literature and research a four-part conflict

model was adapted and used as a basis for recognizing conflict as it arises during the collaboration process. The model provided the ability to trace the precursors to conflict, that is, the behaviors and attitudes that emerge pre-conflict that could either be useful in diluting or diffusing tension, or lead to conflict. Because positive solutions and strategies were the aim, rather than focusing only on the behaviors that fuel conflict, I also attend to what it is that experienced professional collaborators *do to move the process along* and to: manage or resolve the conflict.

The research literature on conflict describes anywhere from three to seven stages of conflict (Brahms, 2003; Dudouet, 2006). It was necessary to adapt these stages to reflect what was initially observed in the groups studied that were composed of collaborators, not adversaries. The theory and the stages of conflict, as per conflict resolution theory, will be further discussed in the literature review section of this proposal. For the purposes of this research the four phases of conflict that were used are: productive group process; tension; conflict, and; resolution.

To help understand how conflict affects the process of collaboration, the metaphor of a blocked pipe is useful. A clear pipe allows the water to flow freely. This corresponds to the productive group phase where there are no disagreements or apparent tensions in the group. The group is able to work together, develop a common goal and work towards a common task.

The tension phase is where disagreements begin to surface, like a pipe that begins to collect debris that sticks to its walls and limits the flow of water. Authors characterize the escalation of tension as the process of moving from disagreements that are peripheral and insignificant – types that yield empathy and the ability to find collaborative solutions - to a stance where common ground erodes (Dhami & Olsson, 2008; Dudouet, 2006; DeDreu & Weingart, 2003), that is, communication is blocked. This phase seems to be an ideal place to

intervene. Actions taken by the participants at this point can help to diffuse disagreement before they escalate to the stage where conflict emerges.

The third phase, Conflict, is where disagreement and conflict is outwardly expressed, the tension escalates, and the group becomes stuck. Like the pipe, if the group cannot manage its disagreement, communication may flow at a trickle or become entirely blocked.

The fourth and final phase four is the de-escalation or conflict resolution occurs when the group becomes unstuck and is able to resume its task. This may include a process of negotiation, where the parties agree to disagree, give up their position or compromise. To return to the metaphor, action must be taken to move or dissolve the blockage, so that the water flows again.

The questions that guide this research.

Using the Four Phase Model this research sought to answer the following questions:

1. Does the four part conflict model developed for this study account for instances of conflict and its dissipation as they occur in this data set, originating from a study of collaboratives?
2. What can this four phase model help us to learn about conflict in collaborative processes? To what extent does this model reveal how conflict emerges, escalates and is diffused?
3. What does the provisional theory tell us about effective ways to prevent and resolve conflict? That is:
 - Are there themes in group processes or content that are associated with transition from phase 1 to phase 2 of the proposed conflict stages?

- Are there groups where the disagreements are resolved before they lead to conflict? In these groups where the disagreements are managed or diffused, what is it that group members do to accomplish this?
- In groups that reach phase 3, is there a transition from conflict to the resolution of conflict (phase 4)? If so, what form does it take?

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW

Situating Collaboration Within the Field of Community Organizing and Development

Community collaboration has historically been one of the strategies used by social workers and other organizers seeking to unite groups, create social collectives and to counter the imbalances of power and inequality in our country. Collaboration is an integral part of community organizing and development (CO&D), the area of practice that is a vehicle through which social workers express their commitment to social justice. This is the area of social work practice that aims to fortify both individuals and communities, so that they may build collective transformation. This can be done through the creation of what have been called “social collectives” (Marullo, S. & Edwards, B. 2000) that can help individuals and communities to become connected and whole. If social collectives are formed they have the potential to break through the division, isolation and alienation that have prevented groups from organizing to find collective solutions to social problems.

Community practitioners utilize a variety of vehicles to accomplish their goals, ranging from grassroots empowerment work, to legislative advocacy, to structural system change. The strategies and methods selected by community practitioners are contextual as well as guided by the goal (Bughardt, 2010). The theory and ideology that drives community practice also varies, from those that focus on reducing or solving specific problems to those that go deeper into an analysis that understands and attempts to change the factors that place particular communities at risk (Glover Reed, 2005). Weil, Gamble & Ohmer (2005) highlight eight primary models that may be selected according to the context, the philosophy, and the values of the practitioner/organizer. The eight models are: neighborhood and community organizing; organizing functional communities; political and social action; community social and

economic development; social planning; program development and community liaison; coalitions; and, social movements (Weil, Gamble & Ohmer, 2005). Regardless of the strategy used in community practice, and who is involved, three concepts and abilities are necessary: cooperation, coordination and collaboration (Roberts-De-Genaro & Mizrahi, 2005). That is, the basis of community practice relies on the ability to come together, and to move towards a common goal (Rosenthal & Mizrahi, 2005).

In the last twenty years interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary, multi-organizational collaborative efforts have been developed at local, national, and international levels, to respond to the social problems of the time (Korazim, et al, 2007). Social workers participated in the resurgence of interdisciplinary collaboration in the 1980's & 90's, when the National Institutes of Health (NIH) began to fund collaborations for public health (Lasker & Weiss, 2003). Believing that it was through collective problem solving that specific programs could be implemented in diverse communities, the NIH turned to community agencies to lead collaborative efforts that would in turn impact health outcomes. These collaborations involved various health professionals (including social workers), universities, and the community. The Community Care Act (1990) emphasized the importance of teamwork and closer collaboration among health professionals for the implementation of community health programs and policy (Wilson & While, 1998). Other government agencies and philanthropies followed suit and began to fund collaborative efforts, both nationally and around the world. However, it is not until the 1990's that these collaborative efforts begin to be evaluated, leading to the development of models for collaboration and evaluation (Wilson & While, 1998).

The CO&D field has developed an increasing interest in the study of Interdisciplinary Community Collaboration (ICC), as it relates to building communities. The Journal of

Community Practice (2007), a publication primarily directed at social workers involved in community work, dedicated a special issue to the topic of community collaboration. The issue provides a map of the state of community development worldwide, offers a discussion on various models of community collaboration, makes a case for the need for a more concerted effort to educate social workers and other professionals to be effective collaborators, and provides a few case examples (Korazym-Korosy & Butterfield, 2007). The editors emphasize that, despite the increase in community development efforts around the globe, there is a scarcity of literature on the subject. In the United States, where social workers are not well represented in large-scale community development initiatives, the need for strengthening their professional capacity by building on the community development curriculums and programs is identified. The editors raise a few critical questions, including: What are the core values and competences that community practitioners should have? How much involvement should community representatives have? Can it be proven that using interdisciplinary approaches are better than relying on uni-disciplinary ones? Is there a need for specialized additional training? These questions offer a beginning research agenda in this field. This nascent area of research has generated case studies of collaboration and some examples of evaluation. The scarcity of research within the field, makes it necessary to look outside the social work profession for knowledge about the theory of collaboration.

In the social sciences, many reasons are offered and make the case for the need for interdisciplinary collaboration (IC). The need for stretching tight resources to provide services, for more efficient and effective forms of service provision, and for the elimination of the duplication of services, are motivators for interdisciplinary collaboration, as presented in a meta-analysis of more than 71 IC articles in the social sciences (Jones et al 2007). The urgency to

solve social problems calls for combining knowledge, skill, and resources so that new, feasible, and innovative solutions can be found. In the health and social sciences, the primary motivator is the desire to solve complex and interrelated problems (Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Amey & Brown, 2004), particularly as social and environmental determinants are recognized. Health problems, broadly- defined to include the physical and emotional wellbeing of individuals that enables them to realize their aspirations and satisfy their needs (WHO, 2009), may go beyond the scope or capacity of any one profession or organization, requiring a comprehensive and encompassing community effort (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Through extensive reviews of the literature on interdisciplinary collaboration much has been learned about the elements necessary for effective collaboration as well as the factors that interfere with its success (Jones et al.,2007; Rosenthal & Mizrahi, 2005; Lasker & Weiss,2003; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001). Based on this knowledge, the models for evaluation named above have been the instruments used with existing collaborations to determine their effectiveness and success. The knowledge gained is useful in beginning to understand how collaborations function, and to identify the areas that require additional study. What follows is a summary of the elements present in collaborations that are believed to work and those factors present in those that are not functional. The literature describing the elements present in effective collaboration is extensive, for this reason collaboration theory is sufficient to describe them. The barriers have been identified and minimally studied. Other literature and theories are integrated for a more complete understanding of barriers.

Elements Necessary for Effective Collaboration, Core Competences and Processes

The result of a qualitative analysis of 80 articles, chapters, and practitioner guides to collaboration conducted by Foster-Fishman and colleagues (2001), captures what are believed to

be the core competencies and processes needed to facilitate the success of collaborations (2001). Their framework offers four critical components that must be developed: member capacity, relational capacity, organizational and programmatic capacity, and structural and power balance. I expand this framework and integrate aspects described by other authors. Summarizing the core competencies provides the backdrop for understanding what is desirable in a collaborative, to then be able to identify those that are not functional or where there is conflict. It is important to note that although the first two are the more relevant to my study, the latter speak to some of the external factors that can influence the success of the collaborative.

Member capacity

Member capacity is, the tasks that need be accomplished to prepare the members of the collaboration to be equipped to address the problem at hand (Foster-Fishman, et al. 2001). The Model of Community Health Governance, presented by Lasker and Weiss (2003) expands this concept by suggesting that “to strengthen their [members] capacity to solve problems that affect the health and well being of their residents, communities need collaborative processes that achieve three proximal outcomes: individual empowerment, bridging social ties, and synergy” (2003). A sense of ownership of the process, whereby everyone feels a sense of shared goals and vision, is also important (Liedtka and Witten, 1998). In the healthcare field, the need for coaching on conflict resolution and negotiating skills is recognized as essential (Mitchell & Crittenden, 2000). This is one skill suggested by other researchers as a core competence for all facilitators of collaboration (Bayne-Smith, et al, 2008; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993).

Relational capacity

Strengthening social ties Jones (Jones et al. 2007; Lasker and Weiss, 2003) are

recognized as and there is agreement with the need to be attentive to the relationships between members, as these determine the development of trust amongst partners. Many of these relational skills are what Lasker and Weiss have referred to as “proximal outcomes” (2003). Successful collaboration is linked with agreement about key community needs and priorities, and “attitudinal consensus” or common values (Hyde & Meyer, 2010). Strategies for how to build consensus, collective identity, and solidarity are one of the topics of the literature on conflict resolution (Burgess, Spangler, 2003; Susskind, McKearnen, Thomas-Lamar, 1999) holistic management and entrepreneurship (Covey, S.R., Merrill, A.R., Merrill, R.R., 1994; Savory & Butterfield, 1999) and community development (Delli Priscoli, 2001; 2003).

The ability to self reflect and to learn about yourself as a partner builds the foundation for self growth and growth of the collaboration (Mai, et al., 2005). The originating study of engaged academics and practitioners of Interdisciplinary Community Collaborations (ICC) that will be used for the proposed research, confirm what has been found in other literature. In our study of practitioners regarding the knowledge base, skills, and attributes ICC practitioners must possess, two of the three primary components were linked to relational skills and the set of values and attributes necessary for this work (Bayne-Smith, Mitzrahi & Garcia, 2008). Intrapersonal skills consisted of self-awareness, the conscious use of self, and the willingness to share of one self. This introspection relates to being aware of one’s privilege, influence, and power imbalances, and how these may affect other members and the collaboration as a whole. Interpersonal skills relate to relational group processes including: the ability to listen, to resolve conflict, and relate to people. The values and attributes were referred to as “core principles and beliefs that underlie the purposes and processes of ICC work: respect for others; inclusiveness; have a broad vision; love of justice; trustworthiness” (Bayne-Smith et al.; 2008, pp. 258).

The ICC practitioners asserted the need to have humor and humanity and to be sensitive to issues of power imbalance and prejudice (Bayne-Smith, Mitzrahi & Garcia, 2008; Mai, et al., 2005). Those practitioners emphasized a need to maintain passion, energy, and a sense of hopefulness (Bayne-Smith, Mitzrahi & Garcia, 2008).

Organizational and programmatic capacity

Synergy, the ability to “gel” (Lasker & Weiss, 2003), or connect as a group, is not totally in the hands of individual members, as it is in part determined by external factors such as resources, expertise, information, time, etc. (Jones et al 2007). A more recent review of the literature, seventy- one articles on collaborations in the social sciences, conducted by Jones and colleagues (2007), found that while no definitive statements could be made regarding the nature of collaboration, resonance was found in the importance of categories such as structure, process, and the qualities necessary for collaboration. Jones, like Foster-Fishman and colleagues, focuses on the initiation stage of collaboration, where the vision and goals are articulated, and define it as being pivotal to success. The three literature reviews already discussed agree on the relevance of attending to how partnerships are established by the member organizations and the ways leadership is developed. The level of heterogeneity of the group, and the degree of involvement of the members, are among the determining factors of successful outcomes (Foster-Fisher, et al. 2001; Jones, et al. 2007; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). What is not talked about is the direction of this correlation, that is, are heterogeneous groups more or less successful?

Interdependence, conditional equality, unity of purpose, shared responsibility for results, and awareness of self-interest in the process, are also considered to be key elements that need to be developed and negotiated in any collaborative process (Jones, et al. 2007). Clarity of role and

goals is key to collaboration, as being misdirected in the purpose will have a direct effect on the respect afforded to the various member participants (Henneman, et al., 1995).

Structural and power balance

Lasker and Weiss (2003) make reference to the power imbalance of our society as factors that influence these variables. Structures that create equality amongst partners, a process of transparency, communication, open dialogue, and empathy are highlighted as essential problem-solving abilities necessary for conflict resolution (Mai, et al., 2005). The creation of a safe space nurtures the willingness to discuss in an environment of respect, acknowledge problems, and recognize differences, including cultural, class and gender issues, is crucial (Bayne-Smith et al., 2008; Cottrell & Parpart, 2006; Mizrahi et al. 2009). The collaborative group need develop the determination to overcome barriers. Time, patience, and willingness to admit mistakes are essential to success, as well as the willingness to question one's own thoughts (Cottrell & Parpart, 2006) and be open to other perspectives. Collaboration is a learning process that engages all participants, with opportunities for learning and growth integrated to the process.

Challenges to Effective Collaboration

The literature repeatedly shows that even when a common problem is identified and joint priorities are set, collaboration is not always possible (Knickemeyer, Hopkins, & Meyer, 2003; Steenbergen & El Ansari, 2003). Regardless of the type of collaboration, there is a set of reasons offered for why collaborations fail. In some fields, specific challenges have been identified and studied, the most common include: conflicting values and vision, limited resources, not enough time to accomplish goals, eroding sense of community, difficulties in engaging community members, and politics of interest groups (Fogel & Cook, 2006; Jones, et al., 2005; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). Ospina & Saz-Carranza (2005) refer to two paradoxes confronted by coalitions:

unity and diversity, and confrontation and dialogue when challenging institutional targets. The first is associated with the ‘inward’ work of building community amongst its members: nurturing and facilitating member interaction, openness and participatory process, and attention to personal relationships. The second, relates to the management of tensions/paradox between the group and other stakeholders associated with managing factors such as: cultivating legitimacy and integrity; linking the local and the national; and paying attention to relationships with other external stakeholder groups (Ospina & Saz-Carranza; 2005).

This paper presents barriers to collaboration in two sections: external (macro, organizational) and internal (micro, intra and inter-personal) barriers. The external barriers, although not the focus of this research, are important to name as they can have a chilling effect on the ability of disparate groups to go beyond stereotypes to develop the trust needed for collaboration. The internal barriers will be discussed in more detail as they are closely related to this study.

External barriers to effective collaboration.

Funder expectations, regulations, time sensitive-funding

Donors often assume that various and diverse interests, groups, and professions will easily come together to solve complex problems (Craig, 2007; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). The erroneous expectation is that these groups will somehow coalesce, without adequate resources or enough time to develop a cohesive bond or identity, and effectively implement the project, program, or venture they are being funded to advance (Craig, 2007; Lasker & Weiss, 2003). In addition, competition for resources and different interests can create power imbalances between organizations (Bayne-Smith, Mitzrahi & Garcia, 2008; Fogel & Cook, 2006; Jones, et al., 2005; Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Liedtka and Witten, 1998).

Conflicting ideologies

The difference between the intent to provide service and that of implementing a social justice mission can create deep conflicts (Henneman, et al., 1995; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 2001). Political and world view differences are included in this category.

Confusion of language

The multiple terms—*partnership, community engagement, collaboration, community development, coalition*—and the ideologies they represent, may mean different things to different people. The ambiguities generated by such definitional differences create lack of clarity of purpose, and often lead to frustration and unmet goals (Foster-Fishman, et al. 2001; Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Consensus is not enough

Successful collaboration is linked with agreement about key community needs, priorities, and “attitudinal consensus” (Hyde & Meyer, 2010). Strategies for how to build consensus, collective identity and solidarity are offered by the literature. Yet, even when a common problem is identified and joint priorities are set, this is not enough to carry the effort of some collaboratives through to completing or accomplishment their goals (Knickemeyer, Hopkins, & Meyer, 2003).

Lack of clarity in roles and goals

Being misdirected as to the purpose of the collaboration will have a direct effect on the respect afforded to the various members of collaboration (Henneman, et al., 1995). Collaborators are often disappointed and may become disinterested because they have felt betrayed by institutions and the political system (Bayne-Smith, Mizrahi & Garcia, 2008; Fogel & Cook, 2006; Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Politics of interest groups

Having the focus on a single issue can lead individuals and groups to see problems in isolation, in turn leading to the failure to see the interconnectedness of issues. Special interest advocacy creates competition, and discourages a process of active listening with co-collaborators (Lasker & Weiss, 2003). If there is no active listening and a willingness to understand the perspectives of others, the ability to think critically and find alternative solutions is limited.

Organizational barriers

Disciplinary ethnocentrism and disciplinary defaulting—where the group or the individual fall back on traditional professional values in times of disagreement—are considered significant challenges to interdisciplinary collaboration (IC) (Klein, 2005). In business and science, lack of integrative skills, systems thinking, marginality, and resistance to innovation are problems that have limited the ability to create interdisciplinary collaborations within these sectors (Klein, 2005).

Internal Barriers to Effective Collaboration.

What happens externally has repercussions on what happens internally. Societal conditions and historical context shape and influence any collective effort (Burghardt, 2010). The societal structures, social and cultural conditioning, and institutional oppression shape and influence the individual, and in turn the group. They have an impact on the ways people relate to each other and on the potential for collaboration (Antonio, 2001; Markus & Mar Yam, 2007). The contextual reality interacts with the ideas, experiences, and need to respond of any given community, affecting the strategies selected by the group (Burghardt, 2010). The external can affect the personal, relational, and attitudinal conditions that take place when a group of people begin to get to know each other. Participant differences in perspectives and in their

understanding of the aim of collaboration, for example, may be framed by their positional and situational realities. Member's lives and experiences vary, as do professional training and skills. Their lives are shaped by structural differences, and by power imbalances that might not be openly acknowledged (McRae & Short, 2010). Not acknowledging these differences openly may have the effect of making the experiences of some group participants invisible.

In a study conducted to evaluate an urban community collaboration, the question “is attitudinal consensus enough to build collaboration?” was asked. The study, Community Benefits District (CBD) (Hyde & Meyer, 2010), utilizes data gathered to determine community consensus, and attitudinal difference—by race, gender type and length of residence—to then determine if consensus is sufficient to ensure community collaboration. Even though there was high to moderate consensus on what the problems were, the CBD was not able to successfully collaborate. Issues such as competition and conflict and the insular position of some of the neighborhood associations prevented any attempt at long-term solidarity that would sustain the collaboration. The study design, a mixed method approach, enabled the identification of the most significant factors (i.e. trust, legitimacy, and the need for continued engagement) and demographic differences (in this case race) that affect the possibility of sustained collaboration.

The CBD study is unusual in that it specifically sought to identify the diverse factors that can destroy collaboration. Collaboration theory does not usually address the interaction between these factors. This section discusses some of these tensions, focusing on the dialectical dimension of establishing relationships. Toward the goal of expanding knowledge on the specifics of the importance of relationship capacity mentioned by Lasker and Weiss (2003) and Foster & Colleagues (2001) I have gone beyond collaboration theory. First I will present what collaboration theory has to say about this subject, and then, the challenges as they are discussed

by other theories (ie. small group theory, critical race theory, cultural and identity theory).

Acceptance of categorical distinctions

The social structures and categorical constructs (race, ethnicity, gender, education, class, age, level of ability, level of integration into mainstream society, etc.) may create obstacles to collaboration. The categorization of these social boundaries have served research purposes but, they are also the source of inequality, generate conflict, and cause human suffering (Epstein, 2007). The acceptance of constructed and real differences that hinder collaboration are adopted and replicated in varying settings without being questioned and are “enforced by persuasion, barter, custom, force and the threat of force” (Epstein, 2007). It is expected that those who are not from the dominant culture will eventually acculturate or develop mechanisms that enable them to co-exist in both cultures. However, the pressure to accept the constructs and values of the mainstream culture is so strong that even those who are aware of marginalization will conform, “cover” and suppress their difference, to be accepted (Yoshino, 2007).

These differences manifest in various ways, such as, communication styles (Klein, 2005, 1990; Lasker & Weiss, 2003), what someone considers to be of primary importance (Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Foster-Fishman, et al. 2001; Bayne-Smith, et al. 2008), and in the perceived relevance of the collaboration to the participant’s lives (Bayne-Smith, et al. 2008; Mizrahi, et al., 2008).

World view and strategy differences

Philosophical and ideological differences are additional sources of conflict. There may be differences in the desired impact of the collaboration—that is, some stakeholders are interested in providing a specific service or in achieving a concrete

programmatic goal, while others want deeper, longer-term outcomes (Craig, 2007). Obstacles emerge from positional differences. The inability to discuss these differences and to find a common ground often lead to resentment and anger that colors the actions of members of the group. The differing views and unclear vision may lead to diffused efforts and fragmentation of strategic thinking. This is difficult to overcome.

Professional differences

San-Martin et al, (2005), report that there is considerable evidence from their review of 12 studies, that professional culture does have an effect on the practice of collaboration. Professional roles and boundaries (Reuben et al, 2004), as well the socialization process (Rawson, 1994), are viewed as contributing factors in the degree to which certain professions develop the ability to collaborate. The limited literature looks at collaboration and professional differences between two professions at one time (Mizrahi & Abramson, 2003), or at the status differences between varying health professions that impede collaborative work (Bronstein & Abramson, 2003). No literature was found that studies the impact of profession on the interactions among various professionals.

Relational capacity, communication styles

Factors involving relational capacity, interpersonal conflicts, establishing clear goals, and difficulty in decision-making were the most prominent obstacles to collaboration voiced by practitioners (Bayne-Smith, Mizrahi & Garcia, 2008) and researchers (Fogel & Cook, 2006; Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Liedtka and Witten, 1998). Some collaborations are so diverse and conflicted that they require the in-depth involvement of a facilitator skilled in conflict resolution and mediation, and who can help individuals overcome their differences (Bayne-Smith, Mizrahi & Garcia, 2008; Siriani, 2007). Anger, resentment and distrust are

common emotions that need be mediated in groups of diverse composition (McRae & Short, 2010). Collaboration literature names these problems but does not address them directly, nor does it propose specific ways of preventing them.

Trust and lack thereof

Relationship building, a characteristic of successful collaborations, is about coming to understand, to trust and rely on your fellow collaborators (Mai, et al., 2005). One perspective on trust is that there are two types of trust: calculative, which occurs in impersonal and instrumental interactions such as work and business, and normative, which occurs in informal and personally-involving relationships (Mirzachi, et al. 2007). The Trust Repertoires presented by Mirzachi and colleagues advance these concepts and offer a useful framework for the analysis of the role of trust and trust-building in ICC. In this approach: (1) the truster is seen as an active agent who is capable of dispersing trust according to the social context; (2) culture is viewed as an active tool to be used by agents (truster) rather than something to be impacted by; (3) the choices and strategies selected both shape and are shaped by the political context (Mirzachi, et al. 2007). Trust, then, requires that the trustee holds a variety of social skills, cultural knowledge, and the ability to discern and read social environments and political contexts

Many of the external barriers discussed above influence the development of trust in any group, particularly amongst individuals who come from diverse backgrounds. The mixed messages and disinformation transmitted via the media may lead to a 'racial and cultural profiling' that exacerbates distrust when individuals come in contact with those of the targeted group (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Dittmann, 2008). Challenges to collaboration may arise when collaborators attempt to engage a community distrustful of the initiators of the collaboration and/or other stakeholders. The efforts often dissolve, as there is little response or

engagement from the community. Conflicts between professions, community, and academia (Cottrell & Parpart, 2006), and conflicts within organizations (Klein, 1990; Richardson, et al., 1973; Epstein, 2005) are additional complicating factors. Trust between partner organizations goes beyond the belief that each organization will be responsible and follow through on their tasks, and includes the belief that each organization will operate from an ethical stance, with goodwill and positive intentions (Vlaar, Van den Bosch, Volberda, 2006). Distrust occurs when there are negative expectations resulting from past experiences of opportunism or deception. Distrust may manifest itself as fear, vigilance, or suspicion (Vlaar, Van den Bosch, Volberda, 2006) that may not allow a collaboration to move forward.

The formalization of trust, and how it interferes in the collaboration process, was the main theme of an issue in the journal of *Group & Organization Management* (2007). Formalization is the codification and enforcement of inputs, outcomes, and inter-organizational activities. Through contracting, a form of formalization, partners attempt to minimize opportunism through increasing the transparency in the relationship, giving control to all partners (Vlaar, Van den Bosch, Volberda, 2007). The extent to which partners feel an ease in the communication, the interpretations (meaning) partners give to another partner's behavior, the extent to which conflicts continue, and partner satisfaction, are critical to the success of collaborative endeavors (Vlaar, Van den Bosch, Volberda, 2007).

The problem of developing trust is so significant that it has produced the need for what has been referred to as relational organizing. Relational organizing is described as the process of “weaving the very elaborate process of trust” amongst diverse members of a collaboration (Siriani, 2007). Through one-on-one relationships, differing perspectives are explored, conflicts are resolved, and language clarified so that new ideas can emerge. This approach however, has

not been studied nor evaluated, in part for its recent development.

Internal barrier not raised by collaboration theory: social identity.

Individuals belong to multiple identity groups, those they were born into and those they select or are placed into (McRae & Short, 2010). Embedded intergroup relations theory, developed by Adelfer (1994) posits that the interactions between any two members or more, depend on the unique personalities of the individuals and the messages each individual receive and internalize from their own group (McRae & Short, 2010). The racial-cultural dynamics of group formation are characterized by an individual's identity and affiliation or level of connectedness to his/her racial cultural group, that is linked to a broader sociocultural context (McRae & Short, 2010). This concept is defined as embeddedness (Adelfer, 1994). Individuals do not usually question their racial-cultural learning and how it relates to their identity, until they encounter or are challenged by others whose difference conflicts with their worldviews (Carter in McRae & Short, 2010). How individuals maneuver their sense of identity and that of others, is the subject of study of paradoxical group dynamics. Three clusters of group dynamics relate to the ability to develop relational capacity in a group: (a) paradoxes of belonging, which refers to the challenges of membership; (b) paradoxes of engaging, that refers to participation; (c) paradoxes of speaking, which relates to influence (Smith and Berg in McRae & Short, 2010).

Not acknowledging cultural differences openly may have the effect of making the experiences of some group participants invisible, "perpetuating the existence of an 'other' with which one group can compare itself via the use of racist [or cultural] stereotypes and projections" (McRae & Short, 2010, pg. 6). If every some members of the collaborative do not participate, either because they are made invisible or because they hold back, the collaborative suffers. The

insights and contributions of all add to the richness of the process and the outcome of the collaborative effort.

Internalized Oppression, Internalized Domination

The impact of oppression on the individual can have both psychological and sociological consequences (Tappan, 2006; Szymanski & Stewart, 2010) that can in turn have an effect on successful collaboration. The psychological effects on the recipient are commonly known as internalized oppression (negative attitudes, beliefs and feelings about oneself as a member of a minority group, and about the minority group; acceptance of the subordinate position of their ‘powerlessness (Szymanski & Stewart, 2010; Tappan, 2007). The intersectionality of gender and race is beginning to be studied, revealing the need to attend to both kinds of oppression in any therapeutic setting (Szymanski & Stewart, 2010). It can be inferred, that these issues will come into play in any human interaction, and in the relational capacity of some group members.

On the other side, internalized domination describes the phenomenon of privilege, whereby the dominant group accepts their group’s socially superior status as normal and deserved (Tappan, 2004). For example, the concept of ‘white’ although socially constructed and denied by many of those who hold this skin color, grants them a special status, “Whiteness is an unearned status in a society that claims to be a meritocracy, in which people advance based on talent, intellect and achievement” (Sisneros, et al, 2008, pg. 41). The understanding of these concepts as internal and unchanging has created a duality of good and bad, dominant and subordinate, powerful and powerless. As important as these concepts and ideas are, internalized oppression and internalized domination and their impact on the relational capacity and potential of diverse collaborators, has yet to be introduced to the study of collaborations. The inclusion of this theory could be useful to the understanding of the processes of relational capacity and

development of trust, both essential elements to effective collaboration.

Diversity and Conflict

Insights from small group theory.

Coalitions and ICC can be considered to be small groups in formation making the literature in this field pertinent. Attempts at clarifying the effect of diversity on small group processes, has been a focus of some research, generating differing findings (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998). The literature has led to the conclusion that there is a need for further study and theory, to understand precisely how and why differences among small group members affect group effectiveness (Guzzo and Dickenson, 1996).

Small group process

To situate how diversity affects small groups, it is first necessary to review small group process theory. Shaw & Barrett-Power (1998) define groups as “small collectives or individuals (ten or less) who have the opportunity for significant, meaningful interaction with one another.” These groups whether social or work–related are seen by others and themselves as a social entity, are interdependent, are part of a broader social system and have a task to accomplish (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998). It is generally accepted that groups undergo a series of stages that some authors believe to be sequential, while others argue that they are cyclical. Tuckman and Jensen describe the cyclical stages of group development as: *forming, storming, norming and performing*. *Forming* refers to the activities necessary to the group’s establishment of a pattern of interaction. *Storming* refers to what happens when the group has conflicts and differences of opinion about function, goals and tactics. *Norming*, speaks to the group’s ability to create norms, standards and behavior that help it to function. *Performing* are the behaviors that are

directed at task accomplishment. These include problem solving, decision making and implementation activities (Tuckman and Jensen in Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998).

Diversity in small groups

Shaw and Barrett-Powers, authors that have focused on this field of study, describe two distinct sources of diversity in groups: readily detectable attributes (those that can be easily identified in a person such as, age, gender, race) and underlying attributes (personal characteristics not easily identifiable, such as cultural beliefs, personality characteristics or knowledge level). What the authors call Underlying Attributes I, are linked to readily detectable attributes and are the subtle attitudes, values, beliefs and conflict resolution styles related to cultural and ethnic origin, gender and age. The second group of attributes, Underlying Attributes II, includes socio-economic and personal status, education, functional specialization, human capital assets, past work experiences, and personal expectations. These attributes are less closely related to nationality/ethnic origin, age, or gender, the readily distinguishable characteristics (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998).

Readily detectable attributes affect group development at a cognitive level, as they influence our social cognition. That is, human beings follow a process of “inferential logic” (Jackson et al, 1992) when they meet someone new. These processes of recognition of dissimilarity occur once information about the detectable attributes is introduced. The information is absorbed, helping individuals ‘make a guess’ about another person’s social identity. Once recognition of dissimilarity takes place, stereotypes tend to occur, increasing misperceptions and bias. In addition, interactions with individuals not like us create anxiety and decrease interpersonal attraction (Jackson, Stone, Alvarez, 1992). Overcoming and dealing with the initial biases and stereotypes calls for considerable cognitive effort, as it is necessary first, to

be conscious of the biases, then, be willing to work to dispel them (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998). This is an important challenge for individuals in groups during the *forming stage*, as they undergo the process assess who is in the group. As they attempt to get to know their fellow group members the group makes choices about the perceived costs and gains of interacting with group members who are different from them. During the forming process, members make sense of each other, choose if they are to be part of the group, make choices about who to align with, and begin to develop relational comfort. The ability to form a cohesive group is influenced by the group's capacity to get past the forming phase and move into norming. (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998). If the group is able to accomplish this without significant disagreements or conflict, they will begin to *norm*.

Diversity Management Skills (Shaw & Barrett-Power, 1998) are skills that members bring with them, that help them to mediate the discomfort in foreign and unusual situations. The four dimensions of skills and desirable abilities useful to assist in management of difference in groups and in any cross-cultural encounters are: communication skills, willingness to communicate with others, the ability to build relationships, self-monitoring, an awareness of how one's behavior affects others, and evaluation flexibility (the ability to assess situations and modify one's expectations) (1998). Shaw and Barrett-Power's (1998) hypothesis is that when diversity management skills are low in a group, the differences in cognitive paradigm dissimilarity will negatively affect the group's ability to coalesce and form. When diversity management skills are high, individual group member cognitive paradigm dissimilarities will not interfere with the groups ability to norm, storming will be managed and the group will be able to move to behavioral integration and the performing, or action phase (Shaw & Barrett-Power,

1998). If the group is able to accomplish behavioral integration – the ability of a group to make decisions and engage in collaborate action – it will then be able to attend to the task at hand.

The model is further expanded by McRae & Short as they integrate it to analyze small psychotherapeutic groups, and develop theory (2010). Through combining open systems theory, experiential learning, group relations theory and research on racial and cultural group dynamics, they advance knowledge by analyzing the application on the development of mixed small groups. It is their contention that talking openly about difference helps the group, particularly during the beginning, or *forming* period. In the early stages of group formation, groups have difficulty resolving conflict, because of their differences, and these differences can be managed more effectively when the group develops multicultural competence and create an environment where difference is brought out to the surface. The authors emphasize the importance of the forming phase as it is when the group acquires “the recognition and work at understanding ‘the other’ that creates the foundation for connecting and sense of belonging in the group” (pg. 53). They go on to say “ talking openly about difference creates space to work with common issues”. It is only when the group has come to a resolution of their differences that they are able to move to the task of building relationships, moving closer and deepening their understanding of each other (McRae & Short, 2010.) This can happen when the facilitator, who is then able to help the group work through differences in a safe way, has built a safe ‘container’.

Roles

Groups are complex and multi-layered entities. Multiple processes – intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, intergroup and inter-organizational- and dynamics might be taking place at once (Wells, 1990). Group members take on roles that they ‘play out’ in the interaction, and that serve as defensive or adaptive mechanisms. The roles most commonly

identified as functional are initiator, information seeker and give, coordinator, harmonizer, tension releaser, compromiser, feeling expresser, socializer, and energizer (Wilson & Hanna, 1990; McRae & Short, 2010). Roles that relate to the individual as self-centered are: aggressor, dominator, blocker, intellectualizer and recognition seeker, and; more negatively associated roles include: monopolizer, advice giver, and that who acts superior (Corey & Corey, 2006; Jacobs, Mason & Harvill, 2002). Other roles are follower, rebel/alternative leader, mediator, and scapegoat (McRae & Short, 2010).

Awareness of the roles that are manifested in groups is important, as “social roles in groups, as in society, are often characterized by the need to have an identified ‘other’ on which to displace and project negative thoughts, feelings, and desires in service of denying and/or sublimating anxiety.” (McRae & Short, 2010, pg. 84) Theory seems to indicate that in mixed groups, initially, people of color tend to take on the role of follower as a way to assess group dynamics (McRae & Short, 2010). An understanding of roles and their function in group dynamics is useful to the process of analysis, to understand more fully the group interactions in the structured exercises.

Insights from conflict resolution and peacemaking theory.

Conflict has also been defined as the process resulting from tension between team members because of real or perceived differences (De Dreu, Harinck, & Van Vianen, 1999). From this perspective it is the incompatibility or perceived incompatibility of goals and interests that lead to conflict, and the level of the incompatibility is the most important variable impacting the intensity of the dispute and dynamic of conflict phases (Deutsc, 1991). The original source of research on conflict primarily emerged from what has come to be known as the conflict resolution and peacemaking fields. This literature has been focused on three primary areas:

those with the goal of: 1. assisting groups engaged in social conflict (Dudouet, 2006); 2. the desire to understand conflict from a cognitive vantage point (Dhmi & Olsson, 2008), and from; 3. organizational theory interested in helping groups at the workplace to be more creative and effective (DeDreu & Weingart, 2003). The definition and the understanding of what the source of conflict is depends on the field of study.

Cognitive studies are geared at representing differences in how parties conceptualize a solution to a problem, how they apply judgment and the ways judgment leads to disagreement (Dhmi & Olsson, 2008). The unit of analysis in cognitive studies is the individual and interpersonal relationships. The Interpersonal Conflict Paradigm (ICP) posits that when individuals have a joint task they must accomplish they may disagree on two levels: in principle and in practice. In principle, they disagree on how they view the problem and how it must be solved. An example could be two varying perspectives of why there is poverty and what to do about it. One person sees it as the fault of the individual who is lazy and irresponsible, while the next person might see the source of poverty as a problem of unequal distribution of wealth. Disagreements in practice, relate the inconsistent in the policies those working together might create, vs. how they implement and follow through on what they agree. A third source of conflict is the motivational component of why people do what they do, as well as the values that drive the motivation (Dhmi & Olsson, 2008).

In the organizational field conflict sources are divided into organizational and task conflicts. Relationship conflicts are those about personal taste, political differences, values and interpersonal style. Task differences are those about distribution of resources, procedures and policies, and judgments and interpretation of facts (DeDreu & Weingart, 2003). There is some disagreement as to how useful conflict is to the accomplishment of creative tasks. A mega

analysis of the literature conducted by Simons & Paterson (in DeDreu & Weingart, 2003) concludes that groups that experience task conflict tend to make better decisions because such conflict encourages greater cognitive understanding of the issue being considered. In contrast, relationship conflict limits the information processing ability of the group, because group members spend their time and energy focusing on each other rather than on the group's task related problems. The notion that task conflict may be productive and that relationship conflict is dysfunctional is strongly reflected in management teaching. This of significance to this study as collaborative groups are both task oriented and relational. That is, they have to accomplish a task and at the same time, to some degree they must "get along" and agree on basic principles that guide the goal and the work that follows.

If the groups are unable to agree or compromise, tension can escalate to conflict and they are faced with stagnation or disintegration. Once conflict has emerged, it can grow further, creating particular dynamics and growing in intensity, potentially changing course. This is why it is crucial to understand the stages of conflict, as they may provide indications of what might happen next and provide opportunities to facilitate management of this conflict (Dudouet, 2006).

Conflict stages

The most frequently referenced metaphor for the stages of conflict is a wave, that presupposes that there are seven stages: latent conflict, conflict emergence, conflict escalation, stalemate or violence, followed by de-escalation/negotiation, dispute settlement and post conflict peace building (Brahm, 2003). Some researchers challenge the idea that conflict is linear (Stauffer, Drake, Currian, Steinberg, 2005). These authors point to the multiple variables that affect conflict, and that cannot be made to neatly fit into a diagram. It is also questioned whether the pre-phases and post-conflict phases are really equal opposite sides, with a process of

“climbing upwards” toward violence or conflict, and a climbing downward through an easy and smooth de-escalation that leads to cease fire and reconciliation (Dudouet, 2006). In describing their diagrams, most authors provide a disclaimer, suggesting that they are aware that the stages are idealized, and may be far from what actually happens when two social groups are in conflict (Bloomfield in Dudouet, 2006).

It is important to note that the research in the peacemaking field is generated from parties that have been identified as adversaries, and who may have already engaged in conflict. This is not the case in collaboration efforts, where for the most part, members come in voluntarily, with the intention of working together to find solutions. Initially, the common goal may be enough to move the group along on their task, but as differences emerge, the need to deal with them becomes apparent.

Adapted conflict stages for this study

For this study of collaborators I found it necessary to adapt the stages of conflict proposed by conflict theorist, to be able to capture the particularities of how conflict arises in these groups that are not adversaries. This study utilized data from groups that came together to collaborate and to find solutions to a simulated exercise of community health problems. Most of the participants did not know each other prior to the day of structured dialogue and had to quickly become a group in order to accomplish a very complex task. The stages of conflict to be used for the identification of disagreements and analysis of conflict in a non-adversarial group consist of 4 phases. These stages are cyclical, that is the group may start and end at any place and may repeat stages throughout the process. The four stages are:

1. *Productive group: nominal disagreement*

This is the beginning stage where only visible differences are apparent. Social identity differences have not emerged and disagreements have not surfaced. Group members are getting to know each other. They are dialoguing and working together effectively to accomplish the task they have been assigned.

2. *Tension:*

As the discussion proceeds, value, status, or cultural differences begin to surface. There is evidence of tension and disagreements may begin to ensue. Disagreements are not resolved through empathy and finding collaborative solutions. In this phase, common ground begins to be lost if the disagreements become contentious. Stereotyping or negative identification of other group members may take place.

3. *Emergence of conflict:*

Disagreement is expressed explicitly and orally for the first time.

4. *Resolution:*

This is where the conflict begins to wind down. This might occur as a result of negotiation, or of an intervention by a fellow member. The group is able to resume the task at hand.

This four phases were believed to be more appropriate to groups that were not in conflict, who for the most part did not know each other, and who were brought together with the goal of collaboration. How these stages were utilized for this study will be described in more detail in the section that follows, Methodology.

Insights from critical theory and cultural psychology.

To understand the fluid interaction between individuals and groups and the broader cultural context, postmodernist theories are integrated. These theories challenge the epistemology that there is one truth and that this truth is superior to other truths. This paradigm posits an epistemological pluralism that embraces multiple ways of knowing and that these various ways of knowing are needed to arrive at a more complete truth (Hoffman, 2006). Critical Theory critiques social structure and examines social conditions (Seiler, 2011). This theory aims to understand the ways in which various groups are oppressed, as well as the world from their perspective, within this context. Feminist theory and Critical Race theory respectively, examine the position of women and of racially marginalized groups. Both theories part from the premise that gender and race are socially constructed and that men and women, and the different races and cultures are socialized in segregated groups, as a result, they develop different ways of communicating and of experiencing life (Belenky et al., 1986). Both theories strive to advance a social justice framework.

With regard to scientific studies, theory has developed in the understanding of the consequences of the categories of race and ethnicity and their subordinating effect (Purdie-Vaughn, et al. 2008). The field of cultural psychology is now able to give us information about cognitive, individual, and collective cultural differences, and how they are intertwined (Matsumoto & Hee Yoo, 2006.) This knowledge brings us to a deeper understanding of the effect of culture on the individual, and the mechanisms by which the individual can in turn “shape” culture (Markus & Hamedani, 2007). Collective constructionist theory of the self posits that there is an interaction between the ways a social act is socially defined and subjectively experienced in each cultural context (Kitayama, et al 1997). Cultural differences can be mediated

by the participants' perceived consensus in the context in which they find themselves, as much as by their personal views (Zou, et al. 2009). This is a significant discovery as it affirms that there is an interactive exchange, the group affects the individual and the individual can influence the group.

Cultural environment and the societal norms are significant, again indicating the need to take into account the social context, that largely determine collective and individual processes in the construction of the self and the different world-views created by these environments (Nisbett, et al, 2003; Kitayama,et al, 1997; Uskul, et al. 2008). There is evidence that the dynamics of prejudice are shifting to more subtle and indirect expressions of stereotypes (Bond, 1999; Yoshino, 2007) making it more challenging to address and manage these subtle differences. Dismantling bias and prejudice is a challenge for any group attempting to work together and this is a long-term effort that might not be resolved within the time frame of the collaboration.

Cultural psychology research appears to focus primarily on cognitive processes while critical race theory analyses structural factors. No studies have been found that focus on the ways race, gender and other cultural differences come into play in the process of cohesion and formation of collaborating groups. Particularly, these theories point to the societal conditions and their influence on the individual but do not study how these differences interact, leading to conflict between social groups. The differences between collaboration members don't always escalate to disagreements or to conflict. Coalition researchers do speak of the paradox between unity and diversity, as they push in opposite directions (Ospina & Saz-Carranza, 2005, Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993). In order to grasp how it is that this balance is achieved and how the process of managing conflict takes place, it is first necessary to better understand conflict. Conflict resolution theory is useful for this goal.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

This study looked at the group formation process of experienced professional collaborators brought together to solve a simulated community health problem. Through the analysis of transcripts from 20 of 21 of these groups, instances of the four stages of conflict were analyzed to identify what leads to conflict and how conflict is or is not resolved. Furthermore, the study seeks to learn about the ways in which conflict can be obstructive or constructive.

Research from Which Data Originated

The data for this study was drawn from the third strand of a sequential, multi-level, mixed-method study of Interdisciplinary Community Collaboration (ICC). Terry Mizrahi and Marcia Bayne-Smith, primary investigators, and myself conducted the original study. The research design in this third phase emphasized the process of how different professional disciplines engage in collaboration. Specifically, professional differences in approach to community health problems in multi-disciplinary groups were compared to single-discipline collaborations. A total of 51 participants, professionals representing six different disciplines--social work, law, public health, community psychology, nursing, and medicine--were brought together, each for a day of structured dialogue.

To provide a context for the data that is available for my study, in the following sections I will be discussing the rationale for the methodology, sampling strategy and procedure followed in the originating study. Then, in the section called “This Research” I will focus on how the data was analyzed and utilized to generate the answers to my research questions.

Rationale For The Methodology

Mixed methods research methodology uses quantitative and qualitative methods that need not be linked to any particular inquiry paradigm (Green, Caracelli & Graham, 2008). The mixed

methodology of this study incorporates triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. Initiation refers to the beginning phase of discovery, where new perspectives or frameworks are sought. Development refers to the use of one method to advance what has been learned from previous findings, and expansion is broadening the range of knowledge by using mixed methodology (Green, Caracelli & Graham, 2008).

Mixed methods design is a response to some of the problems of evaluation of coalitions and community collaborations (Lachance, et al, 2006). Using multiple methods makes it possible to capture a range of individual, environmental factors that can influence behavior and health, and that include individual, institutional, community, and public policy factors (Lachance, et al. 2006). The evolution of the original study's design led to three phases. The third phase, the source of the data used for the proposed research includes: a survey; a simulated exercise; a post-simulation debriefing session; the numerical ranking of their satisfaction with the outcome and process of the collaboration, and; large group debriefing at the end of the day. The study was interested in depth and breath, context and content, and a mixed method design increases the possibility of learning the fuller dimensions of an issue (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Rationale for the simulated collaboration exercise.

An alternative to the challenges of naturalistic studies of collaboration is to create simulated collaborations using vignettes to initiate the process (Wilson & While, 1998).

Naturalistic inquiry would be the ideal strategy for evaluating the process of collaboration (Patton, 2002) however this type of study takes time because impact can only be measured long term, making them expensive and impractical. It is also potentially intrusive for a researcher to observe a real collaborative process at every stage, making it difficult to evaluate relational skills

(Lachance, et al. 2006). Furthermore, if participants know they are being observed, it would be difficult to determine if the Hawthorne effect is taking place. Using the methodology of simulated vignettes made the study feasible.

Simulations of real events offer opportunities to capture data that are not possible in naturalistic settings. Vignettes make the controlled environment more natural and realistic (Forrester in Wilson & While, 1998). Wilson & While (1997) make the case for the use of vignettes to evaluate both the group and the agency in interdisciplinary collaborations, with minimal disruption, resources, and time. The simulated collaborations that were created for this study allowed for direct observation of the process, rather than relying on self-reports by those who practice collaboration. The simulated experience provided a semi-natural environment, with a realistic ICC situation. This enabled the researchers to control for time, the professions of the participants, and the type of collaborative experience. In essence, the design of the simulated experience was quasi-experimental, as participants were in a semi-controlled environment, while engaging in a process without being directed (Lincoln & Guba; 1985; Patton, 2002).

Sampling Strategy

The researchers were interested in bringing together professionals with extensive experience, who had been identified as being engaged in community collaboration, and who were teaching or supervising others in this process. To accomplish this, a combination convenience strategy (Patton, 2002) with a specific criterion was carried out. The original list of potential participants was generated from academics involved in the first phase of the research, those professionals known by the researchers, and names of professors listed in university course offerings as teaching collaboration. Criteria for inclusion in the potential participant list were developed. Those fitting the criteria were invited to participate in the first structured dialogue.

The criteria were as follows: participants had to hold a degree from one of the six professions selected for the study; they had to be in a teaching position teaching ICC or supervising someone in the same profession; and they had to have at least 5 years of experience. Initially, these very specific criteria made it difficult to identify potential subjects, particularly because some of those contacted had multiple degrees, were multi-disciplinary themselves, or were teaching in departments other than in their own profession. The convenience strategy was an effective method, but it did not provide the number of participants desired. The researchers speculated that perhaps the low numbers represented a limited number of interdisciplinary courses and/or engaged academics. “Engaged academics” refers to those teaching at university level and who are also involved in community collaboration efforts.

The researchers decided to try snowball sampling, before concluding that all those who satisfied the criteria in NYC had been identified. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique commonly used in qualitative research, particularly when a population is being studied that is difficult to identify (Rubin & Babbie, 2008.) Through snowball sampling, the researchers began to ask those who agreed to participate, and the various teaching departments, to identify persons who might be interested in the study. This approach generated additional names of potential participants. A total of 51 participants were present: 12 men, 39 women, 2 Asians, 8 Black/African American, 6 Latinos, 30 White. Since in utilizing this method the researchers had to rely on the recommender and the reputation of the person being recommended, there was no certainty that the person recommended was in fact a collaborator.

On the first structured-activity day, a total of 6 mono-disciplinary groups and 5 multi-disciplinary groups, representing each of the six professions, took place. Many of those who could not attend the first structured dialogue when originally invited expressed an interest in the

research process and requested to be considered if a second structured day was organized. The great interest from participants and the desire to have a larger sample from which to compare these groups motivated the researchers to schedule a second structured dialogue one month later, when 6 mono-disciplinary and 4 interdisciplinary groups were observed.

Human Subjects Protection

IRB approval was sought and granted for the second and third phases of research. All the procedures and instruments were approved, and compensation for involvement in third phase was granted.

Procedure for Data Collection

On each of the two days of structured activities, participants took part in two groups, first in a mono-discipline group with members of their own profession, and, after a short break, in a multi-discipline group. When participants arrived in the morning for the structured activity, they received a name tag that had a color and a number, a packet that contained an agenda, a room assignment for each of the breakout groups, the hypothetical community situation, and a survey that they would be asked to complete by the end of the day.

Participants were welcomed as a large group, they were introduced to the research team, were reminded that they were participating in a study on interdisciplinary collaboration, and the general plan for the day was described. Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions. After this, they were asked to go to their assigned room. They were unaware that they were pre-assigned to a group with people of their own professions, nor that they would later be asked to participate in mixed profession groups. In each room, there was a note-taker and an observer/facilitator present. In the mono-discipline groups, the observer asked them to read the hypothetical community description, they were invited to select a problem to be addressed by the

group, and to decide as a group, how they would solve it. In addition, they were told that at the end of the day they would have an opportunity to present their proposal to a group of (simulated) donors.

Each profession deliberated on a pre-constructed community health problem case study, a simulated vignette (Appendix B). Within the hour each group would have to select a problem to focus on, generate ideas for how to solve it, and create an action plan. A series of questions were posed to the group, and they were given an hour to come up with a concrete proposal. Although the participants were not asked to answer specific questions, rather to follow a process, the researchers considered and respected the philosophical and methodological premises of this form of inquiry. The group was encouraged to go through the process of collaboration in their own time, without an active facilitator. The groups were only prompted by the observer to remind them, a few minutes before time would be up.

The observer, who kept time, gave a time check at 15 minutes before the hour, and asked deliberations to end at the end of the hour. The mono-disciplinary group was asked to rank their experience and to discuss it. There was a fifteen minute break and then these professionals were then placed into multi-disciplinary groups to deliberate on the same case study. All the sessions were audio-taped with permission and also systematically observed by members of the research team. Each group had one hour to discuss the hypothetical case study, decide on the problem the group would focus on, and develop a plan for its solution.

After each simulated problem-solving session, each group debriefed on the process and outcome of the structured dialogue. They were first asked to rank the collaborative experience, from 1-5, with 5 being most satisfactory. Then they were asked to rank their satisfaction level with the outcome of the process—that is, the solution to the problem. After everyone gave the

ranking, they had an opportunity to discuss the rationale for that number.

All the participants were then brought together for a general debrief, in which they discussed their experiences of the collaboration. They had the opportunity to ask questions and to share any additional reflections about collaboration in general, and about the simulated process in particular. They also shared their impressions and thoughts after the day of activities. In addition, participants completed a self-administered post-dialogue questionnaire relating to their professional background, knowledge, experience, and perspectives on interdisciplinary community collaboration.

At the end of each of the two days of structured dialogues, a total of 12 mono-discipline groups, and 9 multi-discipline groups had been brought together to deliberate on the same case study.

Reliability and Validity of the Research Design

Qualitative research takes steps to ensure reliability and validity through various processes, repeating observations, and obtaining as much information as possible (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Qualitative data consists of what was gathered through: Observation notes, transcripts from the twenty-one (21) groups, including the post group debrief and transcripts from the large group debriefs. To ensure the quality of the data, several measures have been taken. Lincoln and Guba's concept of trustworthiness and the four criteria for measuring its presence in qualitative research – credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability (in Patton, 2002)- were used as guidelines for the design of the study.

The vignette created for this study simulated the potential problems present in a poor and underserved community (Appendix B). The idea was that the problems described would be familiar to all the participants. As has been described, participants were made aware in advance,

that they would be participating in a study of collaboration. When invited, they were told that they would be engaged in conversations about collaboration. What they did not know was that they would be assigned first, to a mono disciplinary group and then to a mixed professions group. They were not aware that they would be discussing the same community health scenario in both groups, nor that there would be an observer and a note taker, present in the room. Both of these factors raise a question of reliability. As stated by Patton (2002), the process of observing affects what is being observed. In one of the groups, for example, participants were waiting for direction from the facilitator, and would not proceed unless indicated. In another, the facilitator did initially play a facilitator role, even though that was not her function. It will not be possible to definitively determine what impact having an observer and a recorder present in the room, has had on the study. What will be possible is to benefit from these observations, to give life to the transcripts. The transcripts and observer notes will be used to gain the full flavor of what occurred in each group.

Limitations of the Originating Study

There are some limitations to this study that will have to be considered in the process of analysis. First, are the problems of using secondary data. Since the original topic of study was not social identities or conflict, the questions asked, the simulated exercise and the ranking of satisfaction were not geared at gathering information about the impact of social identities on the process of collaboration. Nonetheless, the study produced a considerable amount of data on issues of difference in social identity and varying perspectives. As was noted, a large group debrief geared the conversation in this direction, led by the participants not the researchers, indicating that, as McCrae and Short suggest (2010), the content generated by difference is there.

Internal consistency (Patton, 2002) is complicated, when there is an observer, a recorder, and a coder, all of whom bring different worldviews and experiences, to the process.

Ontologically, qualitative methods operate under the understanding that there are many truths, not just one truth (Patton, 2002). This study strives to embrace as many perspectives as exist and to take them into account in the analysis of data. Typically, to address different interpretations of the same event inter-rater reliability protocols are established. This protocol will be further discussed in the analysis section of this proposal.

Thirdly, the reliability issue of the varying levels of note taking and insightful comments of the observers and recorders had to be addressed. The transcripts have already been made as uniform as possible prior to the data entry phase into the Atlas TI Qualitative Analysis system. This factor will have to be considered during the coding and analyses phases. The tapes from the group sessions were transcribed by the recorders of each group or by professional transcribers. It was necessary to utilize professional transcribers when it was discovered that the sound quality of some of the tapes had been challenged. Two of the 21 transcripts were revived as much as possible. The notes from the observer and the recorder will be specially useful in these instances, to reconstruct as much as possible what happened in those two groups.

This Study

This study had a particular interest in how diverse worldviews and behaviors, beyond those of professional training, influence collaboration. The literature reveals that building relationships is foundational to collaboration. Social identity and other differences are possible reasons for the breakdown in creating the trust that is so necessary to relationship building and bonding. The differences that every member brings into the collaborative, may lead to disagreements that if not addressed, or if superficially resolved, might lead to the demise of the

collaborative when members feel dissatisfied, unheard or disrespected (McCrae & Short, 2010). On the other hand, if used constructively, the differences can lead to new and creative solutions (Harper, 2004). There is a dearth of research on the actual process of how it is that world view differences and approaches influence collaborations, or about how the challenges are resolved in groups that are able to move through the stages of group formation, allowing them to create successful collaboratives.

This research focused in on the first two questions of the problem solving exercise (simulated vignette). In the introduction, the simulated exercise lists a series of social conditions in the neighborhood and asked the participants to select a community health problem and priority from the list. The researchers were aware that this would necessitate some discussion, negotiating and problem solving, as any of the problems described could be viewed as either a social determinant or a community health problem, depending on the perspective of the participant. The premise was that, depending on the professional perspective there might be a preference for some problems versus others. This was the first task of the group, one that had to be accomplished at the same time that the group was getting to know each other and trying to coalesce as a group. Through the analysis of transcripts of the process followed by the groups, this research aimed to answer the following:

1. Does the four part conflict model developed for this study account for instances of conflict and its dissipation as they occur in this data set, originating from a study of collaboratives?
2. What can this four stage model help us to learn about conflict in collaborative processes? To what extent does this model reveal how conflict emerges, escalates and is diffused?

3. What does the provisional theory tell us about effective ways to prevent and resolve conflict? That is:
- Are there themes in group processes or content that are associated with transition from phase 1 to phase 2 of the proposed conflict stages?
 - Are there groups where the disagreements are resolved before they lead to conflict? In these groups where the disagreements are managed or diffused, what is it that group members do to accomplish this?
 - In groups that reach phase 3, is there a transition from conflict to the resolution of conflict (phase 4)? If so, what form does it take?

The analysis section will discuss the process followed to answer these questions.

Data Management And Storage

The transcribed simulated exercise sessions were inputted into the Atlas Ti system. Only the researchers, and two coders have access to this program with the data. The program has a password and only these persons have access to it. Other data is currently in the hands of the Primary Investigator, Terry Mizrahi, and will be made available to me only when necessary. I will keep this data under lock and key to ensure safe keeping.

Analysis

The study aimed to surface various levels of information and insight, both deductive and inductive. To this goal, thematic and grounded theory analysis was conducted.

Epistemology.

Teddle & Tashakkori (2009) assert that qualitative data is iterative in nature. As such, analysis begins during the collection process and continues through the writing process. In this

research, analysis began with the observation process and the notes taken by me, of the groups I witnessed. The dynamics that were observed provided an initial theme to be explored by this study.

To understand the fullness and complexity of collaboratives, it was essential that they be viewed and analyzed from various angles. A transformative-emancipatory ontological perspective guided the analysis as this perspective understands that there are diverse world views and social realities that “need to be placed within a political, cultural, historical, and economic value systems to understand the basis of the differences” (Mertens, 2009 pp. 75). From this vantage point, knowledge is understood to be influenced by human interest and that its construction reflects the power and social relationships in society. The goal of this research is consistent with this paradigm as it aims to go beyond advancing knowledge, to provide practical information that can be applied by social workers and organizers in the practice of community collaboration.

The transformative epistemology paradigm values objectivity that is characterized by the inclusion of broad and various views that are presented without bias (Mertens, 2009). The researcher is expected to have experiential knowledge as well as theoretical, requiring a closeness to the subjects that is discouraged in the positivist approach. The researchers are immersed in the ‘How’ of their work, while maintaining an awareness of their role as observers that may be influencing the process. As a researcher, observer, and also a bicultural woman from Latin America who has been engaged in collaboratives, I have undoubtedly brought my own perspectives and viewpoint into the analysis. As such, it has been my responsibility to monitor this at the same time that I am reminded of the fact that in this study, the participants are the ‘experts’ in the process of collaboration, not the researcher.

Grounded theory is the process of generating theory that is based on evidence, utilizing a systematic process of design, data collection and analysis that culminates in theory generation (Patton, 2002). Constant comparison analysis is well suited for grounded theory as it is useful to studies that attempt to explain how social processes affect human behavior (Thorne, 2000). The process involves comparing data and continuously analyzing how it relates to each other. It is also useful to understanding the ‘how to’s’, steps or stages of particular phenomena. In this case, conflict –its emergence, escalation, diffusion and most importantly de-escalation – in groups that come together to collaborate, is the phenomena of study.

Steps of analysis.

The analysis has two primary steps: Open coding on the collaboration process, and Identification of the stages of conflict. *Open coding*, the process of identifying concepts and critical instances in the data (Patton, 2002) is exploratory. Themes were identified on topics such as: how issues and ideas are moved forward, how support of an idea is expressed, how conflict comes about, how it is expressed, the sources of conflict, how it was mediated, is the conflict resolved or left open, attempts at clarifying, explaining, etc.

Step two was more focused and selective. *Selective Coding* refers to the method of choosing one of the emergent themes for closer analysis (Patton, 2002). The aim was to capture specific words or phrases used by the participants that represent one or more of the 4 stages of conflict described previously.

Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Patton, 2002) where line, sentence and paragraph segments in the transcripts were reviewed to decide what codes fit the concepts suggested by the data itself (Bowen, 2005) and by the phases of the conflict model. The following five steps of coding took place to ensure that the concepts

were clear and reliably identified: cataloguing each transcript according to phase of conflict; reviewing and distinguishing the Tension Phase from the Conflict Phase; distinguishing tension diffusion and tension aversion (ie. what happens before conflict) from conflict diffusion and conflict resolution after conflict occurs; coding all instances of each of the phases in a systematic way using Atlas Ti; and, creating broader categories that encompass sub-categories as connections are made. This five-step process was necessary because the distinctions between tension and conflict were not easily discernable, making it indispensable to have more precise modes of identifying them.

First Reading: Open Coding Process, Identifying the Phases of Conflict

In the first step, all transcripts were read carefully in order to categorize them into one of the four phases (emergence) of conflict, and the phase they were at, at the end of the simulation. During the first reading the primary focus was on identifying which phases occurred in each group during the simulation exercise and the transcript was classified by the phase the group ended at. The sections of each transcript were marked and color coded for signs of tension, conflict, de-escalation, and resolution of conflict. To use the metaphor of the clogged pipe, if there was a slow flow, that is to say, if a group was able to work productively for the most part, but had two or more instances of tension and disagreement, that group was catalogued as a Phase 2 Group.

As the transcripts were read during this coding phase, it became evident that certain words were good predictors of disagreement and/or conflict. These included:

1. Words like “but”, “disagree”.
2. Phrases like: “in my opinion”, “in my experience”, when I ...”, “ I have done...”, “I see it differently...”

3. Other phrases are “milder” and do not serve as definitive indicators of conflict but, are signals that something significant is happening. These phrases may be genuinely exploratory, or they may be questioning and doubtful of the intent of others, or critical. “I am playing devil’s advocate”, “help me understand”.
4. Interruptions, silences
5. Sarcastic or “smart” comments
6. Derogatory or provocative comments, such as: “sick” referring to the community, “you can multi-task” referring to women who might be sex workers.
7. Strong assertions: “the strategy has to be...”
8. “I” vs. “we” statements

There were a few instances where it was difficult to distinguish between Conflict Phase 2 and Phase 3, and that required closer analysis to ascertain the difference between a disagreement, tension, and explicit conflict. It was necessary to look more closely at what happens when people disagree but there is no escalation to tension (Phase 2) or when there is explicit conflict (Phase 3). Behaviors that averted or diffused conflict were identified, requiring that these be noted and coded. The behaviors that helped distinguish between tension, conflict, conflict aversion, and conflict diffusion are:

1. Disagreement is explicitly stated or expressed indirectly
2. The person who disagrees speaks frequently and will suddenly, as a result of the interaction, stop talking or speak less. There is a change in tone or in the number of interjections after an intervention by someone else

3. There are indirect disagreements that the group does not address directly, as when someone changes the subject or moves forward without addressing the tension or disagreement
4. With an explicit disagreement the recipient or person to whom it is directed either emotionally or verbally reacts, or responds in a calm manner
5. A disagreement that escalates to conflict is signified by:
 - a. The group stops working
 - b. The ways they resume work
 - c. How long it takes the group to return to the task

A codebook was created based on what was learned during open coding. The codebook reflects the signals and behaviors associated with each of the four phases.

The second reading: Distinctions between Phases

This reading revealed interesting distinctions in the subtleties that differentiate Phase 2 (Tension) from Phase 3 (Conflict). The findings from the open coding process and text passages such as those presented above were used to create the initial draft of the codebook (See Appendix D). To confirm the codebook categories, a second coder was invited to use it to identify instances of each of the designated phases in the transcripts. This coder is very familiar with the data set as he is a coder and Atlas Ti consultant for the research team from the originating study. First, he was asked to review the Four Phase Model and to give a general sense of whether he thought there were instances of these stages in the data set. He confirmed that this information could be gathered, in fact, he recalled and reported some he had identified during the coding process for the original study. He then proceeded to examine the codebook more closely by reviewing definitions of the categories within each Phase. After doing so, he

gave suggestions for re-wording and re-classification to more accurately reflect what was sought. With the revised codebook in hand he identified three transcripts and went through them to determine if each Phase was identifiable by the categories in the codebook. He found the codebook to be reliable in capturing the phases. Once revised, the codebook was used to code for all instances of each of the four Phases of Conflict into Atlas Ti.

One of the challenges in analyzing this data has been the awareness that a balance must be maintained when doing group analysis within and between groups (Patton, 2002). The group was the unit of analysis during the first step of coding, and the passages of text representing each of the phases of conflict became the unit of analysis once they were coded into Atlas Ti. This distinction was necessary because the unique within group dynamics cannot be understood completely without knowing what preceded a given interaction.

CHAPTER V: RESULTS

The Four Phase model of conflict I created to assist in understanding conflict amongst experienced collaborators, has guided a detailed analysis of available data. Each of the planned steps of analysis followed revealed noteworthy information that adds to existing knowledge about the factors that interfere with and promote collaborative processes. Analysis indicates that the four phases of the conflict model are operative in the groups studied. In the section that follows, I will report on how each of the phases presented themselves. Then I will discuss what can be learned about conflict from each of these phases and the answers to the proposed research questions will then be discussed.

A Framework for Presenting the Findings

For the purpose of understanding what the Four Part Model exposes about productive group process and conflict behaviors, the findings are presented in sections consistent with the three Research Questions (RQ). For RQ1, each of the Conflict Phases as they appear in the data set is described using one or more categories created for each phase during analysis. To answer research question 2 (RQ2), a brief exploration of conflict pathways or trajectories is presented. Some attention is given to special cases, outliers, in an attempt to better understand those groups that stood out either because they did not exhibit conflict throughout the exercise, or because they remained in conflict and were not able to resolve it. To answer Research Question number 3 (RQ3) I contrast these groups. Research Questions 2 and 3, about the transitions from one phase to the next are more fully answered by the findings discussed in the section so named.

Participant Demographics

To situate the results of this study about disagreements, differences,

and the management of conflict in collaboratives, it is useful to consider some of the descriptive data on the participants, collected as part of the original study. The originating study was primarily interested in the impact of professional training and culture on interdisciplinary collaboration. Table I represents the professions, gender, and race/ethnicity of the participants. As noted previously, the original research assembled both mono-disciplinary and multidisciplinary groups. Data from both are used in this study. The data shown are the only demographics available and relevant to the current study.

Table 6.1
Participants by Profession, Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Profession	Race/Ethnicity				Gender	
	Black (18%)	White (63%)	Latino (14%)	Asian (4%)	Male (20%)	Female (80%)
Law	1	6	2	0	2	7
Medicine	1	7	2	0	2	8
Nurse	1	5	2	1	1	8
Public Health	3	4	0	0	0	7
Psychology	1	4	0	0	1	4
Social Work	2	5	1	1	4	5
TOTAL	9	31	7	2	10	39

Assessing the Phases of Conflict

It was expected that even in multiple groups of collaborators there would be instances of groups that: work well together and are *productive (Phase 1)*; groups that have instances of *tension (Phase 2)* and are able to navigate this tension; groups that have *conflict (Phase 3)* that leads to ‘blockage’ and poor flow that make them unable to produce results; and, groups that have *conflict* and are able to *resolve (Phase 4) this conflict*.

Table II gives a snap summary of each of the phases as they appear in the groups. There does not appear to be patterns in the presence of conflict in mono-disciplinary versus multi-disciplinary groups or in their ability to manage or to resolve it.

Table 6.2*The Groups and Stages at end of process. Mono and Multi disciplinary groups.*

		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Mono-disciplinary	#				
Doctors	2				2
Layers	2		2		
Nurses	2	1	1		
Psychologists	1		1		
Public Health	2		2		
Social Work	2			1	1
Total	11	1	6	1	3
Multi-disciplinary					
Red	2		1		1
Brown	2			1	1
Purple	2		2		
Pink	2	1	1		
Blue	1		1		
Total	9	1	5	1	2

Phase one: Productive group process, nominal disagreement.

Productive group behaviors were present in all of the groups, even in those groups where conflict was constant and was not resolved. The following results are from all groups, not just those that resulted in being categorized as productive group work. Only two (2) of the twenty groups exhibited these constructive behaviors throughout the period of time allotted for the simulation. In one of the groups disagreements surfaced, but did not escalate to instances classified as tension or conflict. These two groups worked well together, moved the process along and accomplished the task assigned by the researchers before time expired.

Categories of behaviors related to group productivity

As shown in Table 3 there are four primary categories of behavior in Phase 1 that have been created to organize the findings. The productive group process phase categories are: actions that promote group cohesion and productivity; actions that relate to personal affect and behaviors that

generate constructive responses; solution focused actions; and, group facilitation activities that promote a continuation of the task and group process.

Within each category is the subcategory used in the initial codebook. A more detailed chart with the number of instances of constructive behaviors by gender, race/ethnicity and professions is presented in Appendix E at the end of this document.

Table 6.3
Phase 1 *Categories – Behaviors related to group productivity*

1. Promotion of group cohesion	2. Self-regulated behavior and affect	3. Solution focused behavior	4. Group facilitation behavior
Agreement demonstration	Humor, curiosity, enthusiasm	Creative ideas, solutions	Process: Moves, slows, cedes turn, respectful
Agreement of process	Positive/proactive perspective	Recommendations	Synthesis/reframing
Build group cohesion, community	Self reflection	Constructive attempt to educate	Seeking clarification, understanding
Inclusive of others and ideas		Positive Perspective of Community Seeking Feedback (on own ideas and analysis.) ¹ Awareness of Complexity (May also be 2 if it is about personal perspective)	

The productive group process phase categories are: actions that promote group cohesion and productivity; actions that relate to personal affect and behaviors that generate constructive responses; solution focused actions; and, group facilitation activities that promote a continuation of the task and group process. The excerpt below is representative of an exchange of productive behaviors. The group spontaneously agrees to start with reporting on what occurred in the first group (mono-disciplinary) they participated in. The report-backs were used by many of the groups spontaneously as a way to begin the conversation, once they realize that it is the same simulated exercise. It appeared also as an opportunity to get to know each other, and learn about

¹ May also be in 1 when building consensus.

what the same profession groups they just worked with did and what they identified as the problem. This excerpt will be referenced in the following descriptions of the Four categories of Constructive Behaviors. Intermittent Bold and not bold letters are used to distinguish one code from the next.

Excerpt 6.1

Productive Behaviors

Behavior	Dialogue exchange
Agreement demonstration	<i>P1: “I think that’s it. The interesting thing was we were a group of physicians almost all of whom identified much more as public health people than clinical. I don’t know I was probably one of the only people who saw a patient.”</i>
Humor	<i>E- Laughing.</i>
Group build, use of We	<i>Given that we didn’t have any debate. Or little debate about going after a health problem versus going after the social determinants we settled way quickly in going after the social determinants. One starting point was housing because we, the thought was if people didn’t feel safe and comfortable going home then anything else wasn’t going to be successful. So part of our issue was legally dealing with landlords not taking care of their buildings and part was to bringing in funding for abandoned buildings that we assumed were around the park. E- Laughing. Then trying to get the police precinct to address the issues of safety in the park and using the park as a focal point; farmers market, gardens, using the buildings as community centers for job training. Rehabilitating the buildings would be used as job training opportunity. We had little projects like using community college students to go out and do surveys in the community about problems that are going on. It’s interesting that everybody came up with pieces of the same thing. We started out with what do we need and then gave it to ourselves.</i>
Commonality	
Creative Solution	<i>Laughing. We were the experts we have all the resources you need, data. Well here we have data ... data and surveys.</i>
Commonality, synthesis	<i>P2: We were pretty cynical about government.</i>
Self reflection	<i>We thought we might need to get social services, volunteer groups on board and might need political favors. Who is getting re-habilitation dollars aren’t always necessarily the people who need it the most. We didn’t know who was ordering the police to harass the immigrants. Could have been the business people. Of course we know that the different agencies could also be on either side of the table in terms of the political agenda. We were hoping that we could at least find enough people out in the community organizations that would be committed enough to the issues and maybe use as leverage for</i>
Positive attitude, no limits	
Self Reflection	
Awareness of Complexity	

Process Request, Seek Feedback	<p><i>political.</i></p> <p>P3: How should we move forward now? Should we go back to square one?</p> <p>P4: No I don't think we should go back to square one. I mean it seems like that there is a sort of consensus that we want to deal with the social determinants of health and even that we should focus at the park. Is that accurate are we making assumptions?</p>
Group Build, move process	<p>P5: I think so. It sounds like we have some data collected and community input and the table. That was the most important point. We can't just make it up. We don't just have that data.</p>
Build idea	<p><i>I think we can assume for this purpose we have that. That happened we have that.</i></p>
Agreement demonstration	<p>P2: And also get the language of the community members. That's critical that we can go out and have that to bring people to the table so we can go into the community and let them know what it is, what's available, what we are trying to do.</p>
Creative Solution, positive approach	<p>P5: Let them know its safe for the undocumented.</p>
Inclusion	<p>P2: They will also tell us about the things that are not so glaringly obvious for us.</p> <p>P3: So?</p>
Seeking clarification	<p>P2: Define members of the community that represent larger community groups right?</p> <p>P6: The representations?</p> <p>P2: They might be different in terms of the immigrant groups. There might be different, who are associated with religious groups in the community. I don't know if anybody in the college would have any connections would have something going on with, you have all the background information?</p>
Humor	<p>E- Laughing</p> <p>P6: You are magically endowed now.</p>
Build idea	<p>P2: Where would we find people like that? I guess going to some of the service agencies.</p> <p>P1: PTOs, Parent Teacher Organizations, faith based organizations.</p> <p>P4: And it says that there are voluntary groups. I guess whatever they are start going to some of them. Once you had your list you could start to see who it looked like was out there and not represented and figure out what you were going to do about that.</p>
Self reflection	<p>P7: I like to come up with a goal and work backwards. So I'm not really sure that we all agree on what our goal is now. Lets Come up with similar goals.</p>
Synthesis	<p>P2: I thought the broad one was trying to address poor health in the community and what that means.</p>
Inclusive	<p>P3: What we haven't really incorporated the perspective that your group came up with which was very valid."</p>

Category 1: Promotion of group cohesion

Category 1 Behaviors are used by collaborators that help the group to form and work as a unit, allowing for a focus on the task and accomplishment of goals. Three of the sub-categories within this section accounted for many of the instances of Phase 1 behaviors coded for: 1. statements that built on ideas, and that aimed to highlight commonality and create consensus; 2. expressions of agreement and assent of the ideas of others; and, 3. those that supported the inclusion of diverse views, perspectives and ideas. The excerpt above starts with a demonstration of agreement and offers some examples of inclusion of various members of the community and of diverse ideas.

The behaviors captured in the following exchange showcase other productive behaviors particularly Build Commonality and Cohesion, as Participant 5 (P5) is able to build cohesion, while creating agreement within the group.

Excerpt 6.2

Category 1: Behaviors that promote group cohesion & productivity

Constructive Behaviors	Speaker	Instances, dialogue
Inclusion	P:4	I guess we could think about community organizing more broadly, because it might even have an impact on the community policing.
Integrate, Build Idea	P2	Or if we were to develop a program around community empowerment, then that would take into consideration all these issues including the very last one where there is a community college that can train some community health workers. Oh, I didn't even see these. (Laughter)Based on info on the imaginary community, this just has to be South Bronx, East New York or Bed Stuy.
Seeking Feedback	P:4	It could be any community around the country, the question is the same, where do you start? Which symptoms do we focus on?
Seeking Clarification	P:3	None
	P:2	So, you are saying don't treat the symptoms, treat the

Clarification. educate positive	P:3	<p>root of the problem which is poverty.</p> <p>Yes, because that's the root cause. The root cause of the problem here is poverty, it's a social determinants upheld. Which is, umm, evidenced by high infant mortality rates and low birth weight babies, so that's the outcome, so we have to treat the cause.</p>
Positive Perspective	P:5	<p>What I like about what both of you put forth is that its straight forward. Actually made me think of highlighting the problems, but you guys both put forward that you look straight at the strengths. You've got a high number of young kids so how do we mobilize the young kids. We've got colleges. How do we use or tap into these resources. So in other words the first thing that you guys looked at, is okay what are the strengths in this community? We know we got a lot of problems, so do we in most of our New York City communities. I mean obviously they are getting attention from these local elected officials, they are trying to get the funds.</p>

P5 recognizes that it might be more constructive to focus on the strengths of the community and not on the problems. This shift in perspective, while acknowledging the ideas of the other group members, overrides the discussion about whether to focus on the problem or the root causes. Instead, P2 adopts the idea and offers a suggestion that leads the group to continue to work at building on that idea, and developing a constructive plan for integrating the community in a community project that addressed health rather than illness. The above example also conveys some of the behaviors categorized as constructive Self Regulated Behaviors, that is, enthusiasm and positivity that will be discussed in the following section.

Specific efforts made at building and strengthening the group are observed in the next excerpt. These efforts are combined with an attempt to find agreement on how to proceed and of process, as well as of important group facilitation behaviors (Category 4). This is worthy of note as it might be expected that experienced collaborators would spend time and effort building the group. Yet, few of the groups dedicated time to this goal.

As this group defines its identity for the simulation, they are also deciding how to position themselves as a group internally and externally. They are realizing that they can envision and create themselves just as they want to be.

Excerpt 6.3

Productive Group, Various Categories

Group Cohesion	Speaker	Instances, dialogue
Build group	P:1	There is an assumption in all of this that we belong to some recognized agency-we can't walk around without their understanding who we are...
Seeking clarification	P: 2	So who are we?
Positive/Proactive Perspective	P:1	we can be whatever we want to be-a health department, a voluntary association that is recognizable-but with the population described, unless you are identifiable-people are going to run away from you-especially the undocumented
Build consensus	P:3	So lets assume we are an organization
Build idea	P:4	A trusted organization!

Category 2: Constructive self regulated behaviors and affect

This category encompasses those behaviors that are associated with personal characteristics, insights and attributes that infused the groups with the idea that as a group they could accomplish anything.

“We were extremely grandiose and decided we were going to go with at least three major funders under the stimulus act and so that we were not going to be short of money.”

This statement made by the narrator of the excerpt featured in Section 3, is at once an example of this idea that the group can do anything, positivity, and of self-reflection. In Excerpt 1 P:6 says to P:2, “You are magically endowed” to encourage this creative thinking that has no bounds. Instances of productive positivity, of expression of a positive perspective and attempts at creative solutions often noted in constructive exchanges. These are instances when the

individual or group utilize and encourage a positive approach to the collaboration, the group or the community. The first excerpt also demonstrates how a positive attitude and approach led to creative ideas and solutions. Humor is often associated with a positive perspective, as reflected in the above quote.

In some instances a positive perspective was used to change the dynamic in a difficult situation. The participant in the following excerpt makes a substantial attempt at diffusing a difficult situation taking place in a group categorized as Conflict Phase 3, by explaining her perspective and why she has a preference for a positive attitude;

“I just want to get to a common thread, you know, rather than debating or arguing. What can we bring together, lets look positively. You bring up the issue of cost, excellent. I mean, how do you pay for free service? I’ve worked and lived in three countries. I’m Canadian by birth, I’m here now. So I’ve experience from a research perspective, and from a living one.”

Productive Reflexivity or thinking out loud is instances where a participant stops to consider his or her role, or the group’s process or rationale in a particular situation. These instances often appeared in groups where there was tension or conflict and seem to be used by practitioners as a way of intervening to help the group move the process along.

“I would really have to be careful not to tread to an area that I really don’t know and assume that I have access to these people based on some of the things that I’ve been reading. I would really need, I think you mentioned this, to get this out to the community leaders. Ummm, and maybe_not necessarily just the ones that they accept at community board, although they are really good, but there are some clergy and other social areas. Even the gangs, youth gangs, I see there are young people here that are wayward. Uhhh, I would not commit myself to anyone. I would try to see about how the community feels that... I would also try to be careful about coming in with that sort of bulldoze the community. I think they should do would be so, I guess I’m taking back my

original comment about what I think should be done here. I have a different level of consciousness now.”

In the above example, the speaker’s externalized reflections lead him to re-think his position as he evaluates the potential repercussions to the community of their group’s proposed plan. Rather than accuse any of the other participants of being insensitive and unaware of the community, he takes responsibility for himself and for having miscalculated the importance of getting community feedback. The participant’s reflection prompted the group to think more critically about the impact of their proposed ideas and to consider alternatives.

Category 3: Solution focused behaviors

These are actions of the participants that help the group find solutions to the problems posed by the exercise, or to internal tensions that surfaced. In the example above, the participant’s reflection helped the group with their choice of an approach. In the following spontaneously occurring report back from the mono-disciplinary group to the multi-disciplinary group, this participant gives a synopsis of the group’s decision making process. In her retelling of the group’s process, she uses several constructive actions that convey a sense of belonging, and building of the ideas that were generated in the group. Her own reflexivity and awareness of complexity provide examples of these constructive acts.

Excerpt 6.4

Category 3, Solution Focused Behaviors

Behavior	Monologue
Awareness of Complexity (Sect. 3)	I’m happy to go. We, I think like everyone else had trouble grappling with the enormity of things. We ended up focusing a great deal on the notion of the physical environment. Making it not only safer but more productive, and the employment issues. We were extremely grandiose and decided we were going to go with at least three major
Self Awareness Positive	

Build Group commonality	funders under the stimulus act and so that we were not going to be short of money. I think the idea was to, many of the themes you folks were talking about here were ours as well, to take the resources that were within the community. The
Positive idea of Community	entrepreneurial spirit that was going on and sort of work off of that to try to take skill sets to think about whether we can revamp the community in terms of its physical safety and housing through people who worked in construction. But also trying to think about other areas where people who might not be in the workforce could develop skills in areas that would be interesting to them. For example the idea of infant mortality and teenage pregnancy kinds of issues, would there be
Creative Idea	youngish mothers in their 30's with teenage girls who would be very mobilized by the idea of having their daughters have more opportunities than they had? And could we then focus people around the things that were most compelling to them and try and build capacity in the community on the basis of what people were most interested in. One of the things that we were concerned about is, this is possibly my bias, I have always found it very difficult to organize communities around health. The people who seem to care about health are people who are usually disabled or stricken by some kind of illness that either focuses them very significantly around that illness or robs them of their vitality to be able to actually do as much as somebody who is well. So we sort of thought that the way into this would be more through shared visions that people had about where they came home to and what was available in their communities. And health gets created by social circumstances.
Inclusive	
Self Reflection	
Awareness of complexity	
Build Community	
Build Group	

Category 4: Group facilitation behaviors

The behaviors in this category are those that help the group stay on task. In these groups there was no designated ‘facilitator’ who emerged. Some of the groups allowed for time to talk about how they identified as a group or about the decision making process they would follow, but surprisingly, most did not. Instances of requests for agreement of process were noted after the report-backs in multi-disciplinary, as noted in Excerpt 1: “*How should we move forward now? Should we go back to square one?*” Direct questions such as these helped the group to

pause, and then decide how it would proceed. Some groups used these moments as opportunities to make decisions as a group, rather than just allowing one person to determine the direction the group should take. If no decision was made on process, for the most part participants intervened when the group went off task, or was moving too quickly or too slow.

The groups were able to complete the assigned task, in some cases with great detail and clarity, made use of many of these constructive behaviors. These groups moved the process along and through the use of constructive actions were able to return to work even when they came up against a blockage or slow flow in their process.

Phase two: Tension.

This phase presented challenges in operationalization, as disagreement was expressed in different ways and to varying degrees of intensity, throughout the data set. Disagreements appear to be present in all groups but in many instances they do not turn into tension or conflict. This distinction was not originally made in the codebook, rather, became apparent upon further analysis. Disagreements are simply statements of differing opinions or ideas. One of the groups provides a representative example of a typical difference in perspective that takes place when the group is developing their strategy for addressing an issue:

P1: "I wouldn't define it only as emergency services, while it is indeed one way to guarantee a way around the question of funding illegals. The problem is, if all we provide are emergency services..."

P2: Well, in reality we would do comprehensive services, but he's saying we should pitch it as emergency services. And he is right, emergency services are guaranteed to be paid for.

P1: But it is ridiculously costly to let things get to the point where emergency care is even needed."

The disagreement is respectfully stated and is used to build upon, as part of the process of thinking through alternatives and consequences. Everyone seems to be in agreement on the basic need but, is viewing it from a different angle. Once the disagreement is

clearly articulated, the group is able to work through its concerns, and to become clearer on how they will present their strategy to the panel of funders.

Tension appears to be qualitatively distinct from disagreement. That is, tension captures instances when the disagreement is articulated or delivered in a way that is received with discomfort or unease. The “uneasiness” is made evident in several ways: by periods of silence, a change in the tone of voice, facial expressions and other body language, noted in the transcript by the observer of each group. Tension may be an expression of a participant’s opinion that is contrary to another’s statement, without making it an explicit manifestation of disagreement with that person. During this phase (2) the group continues to focus on the task however; the disagreement slows the process down, like the pipe that begins to be congested, and diminishing the flow.

Excerpt 6.5

Phase 2, Tension

Behavior	Speaker	Instance, Dialogue
Use of ‘But’ as tension indicator Seeks clarification	P:1	But wait a minute, but when you go to top near italics. U- (<i>looking at exercise instructions</i>). , we have to do these things, identify a community problem...but this is what we we’re asked to do.
Solution Recommendation	P:2	The answer that we have to give is that we are coming up with a strategy to work with a community to get that answer.
But, focus on task not on process	P:1	But what is the community health problem? We're supposed to answer that.
	P:2	Well we should work with the community to get that answer.
Disagreement	P:3	I don’t see that as our charge / responsibility. We're here to present results of data. Its not asking the community, someone already did that. Someone did the helicopter.
Voice raised	P:2	I’m not going to get on “the helicopter”! We can already visualize this community, it's been studied up the wazoo. So if you want, we can take whatever, old folks, pregnant teens, low birth weight, low health
Expression of frustration		

Disagreement statement.

Revert to past experience

Sarcasm

Seeking feedback

Moves process

Observer Comment

literacy. As people invited here today, we at least need to at least I, would like to state that this is an antiquated way to work with communities. It is kind of offensive and it's the helicopter approach. The community should be the one to identify its highest priority. **If you look at the CHIP model, it says you can work with the community and build trust, and then that gets worked with (somewhat incoherent)...so, let's look at a problem.**

They want us to pick a health problem, so its going to be teen pregnancy, infant mortality low birth weight. So the community health problem is access to care, is that optimal as what we call the big health problem? They shut the clinics, and access is diminished and everyone goes to the ER. **Everyone agree this is the problem? Access to appropriate healthcare.** So, now for goals and objectives, first schedule a chat with facility which cut the services...SPARCS data is a good place to ground an analysis.

(drifts off and group is mumbling over one another, nobody else comes in to pick up the conversational thread.)

Excerpt 6.5 highlights some of the behaviors that characterize the Tension phase. The interactions distinguish between disagreement and tension, and highlight some of the behaviors associated with tension. Participant 1 disagrees with moving forward and is trying to get the group to answer the questions that are asked in the simulated exercise. Participant 2 responds with frustration at being asked to do something she does not agree with but does not direct her discontent at P1. Rather, her discontent is with the proposition of the exercise, which she sees as disregarding the community. She reverts back to previous experiences with academics when she states that she will “not get on the helicopter”. Participant 2 clearly expresses disagreement, and at the same time wants to continue the group process. Her discontent and the tension it creates distracts the group but does not stop the flow for long. Constructive behaviors are noted in this

excerpt as they are used as attempts to help the group stay on task, potentially keeping the tension from escalating to conflict.

Categories that identify sources of tension.

The behaviors that were found to be indicative of a shift from a friendly disagreement to an escalation in tone to tension include the assertion of personal view, the use of *I* instead of *we*, interruptions, crosstalk, sarcasm and expressions of negative perspective. During the Tension Phase participants revert back to past experiences at different moments and in different ways. In this excerpt expertise is used, matter-of-factly, to establish knowledge and status.

“Right, so now we are on the strategy of the program. This is what I teach, that’s why I know this stuff.”

Table 6.4

Categories that identify sources of Tension, Phase 2

Avoidance, Diffusion	Signifiers	Source of Difference	Negative Perspective	Escalators
Denial of tension	I, but words	Disagreement in approach	Biased comments	Sarcasm
No Response to Trigger	In my opinion	Value of measure instruments	Pessimism, hopelessness	Derogatory comment
Use Constructive Behaviors	Revert to past experience	Philosophical perspective	Skepticism, questioning	Use of past work to prove point, expertise
	Interrupt, back talk, text or talk on phone Raise Voice	Micro, Mezzo or Macro solution	Critique	Criticism

Table 6.4 captures the categories of signifiers of tension, some of which are demonstrated in the following excerpt the participant uses it to assert his/her point and defend a position:

“I think my point is when we say one of them has highest priority we need to be able to say why it is that any one of them has highest priority. I think it’s almost impossible. I’ll go with anyone of these problems that we have in front of us. But the data that we have in

front of us is not enough to really say that this is the highest priority... But even my research, I have several pieces of, several publications, that clearly say from the voices of communities that we don't want to work on one problem alone."

Some participants revert back to their experience to assert their expertise in a topic. This behavior can also be used in preparation for an argument, as demonstrated by participant 3 in the following example. He lays the ground by explaining where he is coming from, and what his concern is. The excerpt also provides example of how disagreements become tension when they shift from a general difference to what can be seen as a personal criticism or judgment.

P3: I mean the work I have done both in the Bronx and Queens, every time there is anything like this what I see happen is like clinics being funded by private money or if it is not private like the AIDS institute gives some grants for the clinic that has the van that goes around doing the AIDS thing or whatever. I have never seen anything that has the kind of connections that we are trying to create. I'm not saying that it's impossible, **I don't know is it's legal** that one community can diverge funding...

P4: But why can't. we? Put Medicaid money, it can be put into preventative care that's not unheard of so it's diverting money that would be coded under emergency care then using it under preventative care. It's the same dollars.

This group is struggling through philosophical as well as priority differences. The statement made by P3, "***I don't know if it is legal***" is very direct and speaks to the core of the issue. It is not clear whether the intention is to shame the proponent of the idea to divert funding, as the statement is not said directly against him. Perhaps because of this ambiguity, the issue, not the statement becomes the subject of debate for the group.

In the next excerpt (6.6), it is explicit disagreement directed at a person or the group that appears to trigger tension. When it is turned on, or directed at that person, not the opinion, the statement can heighten the build up, as happens above.

Excerpt 6.6

Tension identifiers

Tension Indicator	Speaker	Instance, dialogue
But statement	P:1	<i>But, what I am saying is that you either have a strategy that is focused on services or you have a strategy that is focused on community organizing</i>
Constructive ‘and’, inclusive Clearly states disagreement	P:2	<i>And I think it’s a collaboration, its both. It has to be both of them because you can’t solve. You can’t write a grant, you are not going to get a grant to solve all of these problems.</i>
But Either or perspective	P:1	<i>Right, but you still have a focused strategy and I think that focused strategy has to choose between what we are going to do. We’re going to increase service availability and we are going to do all the outreach and all that other stuff, or we are going to organize the community.</i>
But	P:2	<i>But if you are talking about low birth weight and infant mortality, we have that goal, that is what it is. The first thing you are going to have to increase access to timely and comprehensive prenatal care.</i>
Judgment statement	P:1	<i>I think you are looking at this in an incredibly narrow way. I really do, you know, if all you need to do is get prenatal care out there, there wouldn’t be any...</i>
	P:2	<i>I am just talking about one point.</i>

Negative perspective

Two tension identifiers that have the potential to impede productivity and escalate a disagreement are negative perspective and sarcasm. A critical perspective about the community, the members of the group, a profession or a person’s approach have repercussions in the group dynamic. Derogatory comments like **“the community is sick”** or **“It’s not a community”** convey a negative judgmental perspective. It is not a direct attack but a subtle comment that conveys a bias or a skeptical or hopeless vision, such as **“They have to graduate from high school to get into college. If they can.”**

The time when a negative attitude is introduced becomes relevant to how the group proceeds. The literature on small group process concurs that the initial phases of group formation are critical, and that they set the tone for the development of trust and safety (McRae, 2010). In the sample excerpt at the beginning of the description of Phase 2, the discontent of P2, who does not want to “helicopter into the community” sets a tone in the group that disqualifies some of the propositions of the simulated exercise. A direct comment about a profession stated in a derogatory way, such as, “*I don’t know if it is a lawyer thing but...*” has the potential for injuring the development of trust amongst group members (McRae & Short, 2010), potentially influencing the ability of the group to gel and produce results.

Critical stance.

A negative or critical stance can be carried throughout the group process, making it difficult for the group to successfully complete the task and feel fulfilled by the work accomplished. In the next example, as the group enthusiastically summarizes the product of their work and are rehearsing their statement to the funder panel, the participant questions the group’s accomplishments with just one sentence:

P1: OK, so we have our strategy, our developing community buy-in. We know how to get people in. Do we have a program to solve this problem? We are taking over the building? Why not! We need it. An increasing number of older buildings are being abandoned by their landlords, why not?

Laughter from the group.

Ok, so we get these abandoned buildings in the community, renovate it with day laborers who are also coming in for check ups, it’ll be a certified green building with a low carbon footprint because that is important too. So, any other programs? This is a strategy no?

P2: And people from other agencies, community colleges, literacy programs.

P1: Little Sisters and so on...

P3: But, isn’t this supposed to be medical?

P1: There is a medical foundation here. Little sisters does what they are supposed to do, and we do what we’re supposed to do.

Participant 3’ statement slows down the process and prevents the group

from ending their time together with a completed product and a sense of accomplishment. Instead, some time is dedicated to addressing an issue that had apparently been addressed earlier in the group process.

Tone.

Somewhat different from negative perspective is the tone and attitude that is transmitted through a sarcastic comment, conveying a personal opinion that may be biased. This may include a defiant, accusatory or questioning way of accentuating what is said to convey meaning in a given statement. In the next excerpt sarcasm is delivered as a put down, right at the beginning of the group process, as participants are getting to know each other. The statement creates tension and lays the ground work for conflict:

P1: I'm JR I'm a social worker, community organizer

P2: I'm LG I'm a pediatrician and preventive medicine doctor. I work at ...

P3: I am DRD I am an administrator at a non-profit organization that's community based and hospital based...

P1: What do you do again?

P3: An administrator.

P2: Your kidding! You get to ... what does that say?

P1 is a white male and P3 a Black Latina who is a doctor. The statement "you are kidding" puts into question what she has said about who she is and what she does. Development of trust, a necessary task for group cohesion, may have been affected with this comment, at such an early point in the process of group development.

Sources of Tension.

Differences in strategy and philosophy were two of the main sources of disagreement and tension amongst the groups in this data set. Philosophical differences are those statements that often precede tension by the expression of a divergent opinion that has to do with different strategies, philosophy, approach, methodology or worldview. In the above exchanges, these differences are apparent. In the first excerpt, the source of tension is whether it is appropriate to

gather data without involving the community and without their permission. In the excerpt where diverting moneys is an issue, it is the ethical consideration and difference in strategies that appears to create tension. In another example, a difference in the preferred choice of strategy leads one participant to directly accuse another of being ‘narrow minded’.

Philosophical or strategic differences were a source of tension for some groups and of conflict for others. The groups that were able to hear each other’s perspective, and accept that it was possible to integrate both Macro (Structural and root causes) and Micro (individual direct practice) approaches continued the flow and remained productive. Some groups were conscious that using Micro and Mezzo (education and community focused) approaches was a strategic choice that could lead to accomplishing broader, social change goals. When the group was unable to integrate both approaches, or remained in a place of disagreement about their perspective about the community, productivity was diminished, eventually turning to conflict and to the stagnation of group process and task, that is, Phase 3.

Phase three: Emergence of conflict

Conflict is defined as a direct expression of disagreement that provokes a negative response in others and that impedes group productivity dramatically slowing or stopping progress on the task. The clog in the pipe reduces productivity to a trickle, at most. The group is unable to move efficiently toward task completion or a resolution of their differences. For some groups conflict persists to the point that they do not complete the task before the time expired. In this data instances of conflict are not as frequent as those of tension. Two of the twenty groups in the study showed evidence of restricted “flow” and were unable to clear up their difficulties, long enough to become productive and accomplish the task within the allocated time. These groups will be discussed further as special or anomalous cases later on in this section.

When coding instances of conflict all statements that directly expressed dissent were identified. These categories were usually associated with a slowing down of productivity as the groups shifted their attention to the disagreement rather than the task at hand. The categories that identified conflict were: 1. explicit criticism of a person's or a group's perspective; 2. articulation and explanation of the disagreement; 3. explicit description of different priorities and values; standing in firm ground or inflexibility; 4. inability to yield ground or to find common ground, and; 5. use of personal attacks. These instances were also associated with philosophical or strategic differences, as indicated by tension escalation, Phase 2. When a group does not satisfactorily address an issue, it tends to resurface often in the form of conflict as the issue becomes the focus of attention. At that point groups are usually unable to complete the problem solving process.

The following excerpt demonstrates how this occurs. The issue of education in the schools is initially mentioned as a strategy but not resolved, and is brought up more forcefully when the group is attempting to finalize their proposal. Even though participant 3 makes an effort at clarifying and at understanding what it is that participant 1 objects to, it may be too late. P1 stands her ground she does not want health education and is unwilling to consider it. The group work is halted at the beginning

P1: I am having a visceral response to health education because I feel that "if only we educate-the 'poor'. I don't want to go to education because I fear it can become blaming the folks for being in that condition.

P2: I'm saying access to quality care.

P3: People can start doing things but we still need someplace for them to go for their health.

And later on in the process

P2: I'm still going to object to school doing, providing health services-I'm sorry.

P3: Is it health services or education.

P2: I Object to both. It hasn't worked

Perhaps a discussion at the beginning of the interaction, about what health education means to each participant from his or her professional perspectives might have prevented this disagreement. Rather than a presumptive exchange where it is not clear what each participant means, each participant might have expanded on their understanding, allowing for some common language and common vision to emerge.

Excerpt 6.7

Phase 3: Conflict

Behavior	Speaker	Instance, dialogue
	P:1	Well, we are looking at a dataset first, lets look at the incidence, prevalence...then we put services in place, look at what happened, and the most accurate way to look at what happened is to compare past with present.
Questioning	P:2	To extrapolate the data, you have to have a program in place.
Raises voice (Observer note)	P:1	You use it all the time to write grants! We do it all the time.
Attempt to diffuse	P:2	I understand that. Look we're on the same page. But in order to collect that data you have to have a program in place. So we will put a nurse practitioner in, how? I am the local hospital and you are gonna put something in my backyard and you are gonna open this clinic?
Clarify statement		
Disagreement	P:3	Well we aren't opening a clinic!
Request for clarification	P:2	So where is the practitioner functioning from?
"I" focus	P:4	I want to put RNs in your org" this kind of thing, lets look at the practical side.

In the previous excerpt (6.7) it is the tone or volume of voice that indicates the emergence of conflict. By the point this interaction takes place, the disagreement has escalated and the constructive attempt by Participant 2 to diffuse it does not help. This exchange does not make progress toward a resolution of conflict. Each member articulates his/her concern and stand

his/her ground, and there are no proposals for a solution. In situations where participants stood their ground and did not accept the ideas or suggestions offered by others, conflict emerged. In some cases, participants were not able to reconsider their understanding of the simulation task from the understanding most group members shared. Such participants were unable to join the prevailing discussion or to go at the pace of the group, even when fellow group members encouraged them or made attempts at engaging them in the group process. Hence, this inability to shift away from a strict adherence to the text prevents the group from moving forward. These groups become stuck, as in our metaphor of the clogged pipe.

The interactions that were just described are from groups that had conflict and were able to resolve it, Phase 4. Five of the seven groups reached the conflict phase. Two of the seven experiencing conflict (Phase 3) were unable to resolve it before the end of the exercise. The conflict in these groups engaged their attention and the group did not accomplish the task of the simulated exercise. That is, they were unable to identify a community health issue to address and were unable to develop a community renovation plan to present to a panel of simulated donors. These two groups are discussed more closely in the following section, as they offer additional information about conflict and the challenges that make it difficult to move away from it.

Conflict unresolved groups:

Two groups that were engaged in conflict at the end of the work session shared the designation of Conflict Group yet they had different characteristics. One of the groups consisted of members of the same profession (social work) and the other was of mixed professions. An analysis of these two groups reveals the need for further analysis to better understand the phenomena of Conflict in collaborating groups. One interesting feature of the social work group is that although they had conflict and did not complete the task, the level of satisfaction with the

collaborative process was reported as good. It can be speculated that one reason for this is that this group had periods of productive group work and a substantial amount of humor. The mixed professions conflict group on the other hand, started with conflict and ended with conflict. Although there were attempts at productive group work, they were not sustained and they did not involve the member that was identified as the source of conflict.

The table below provides a quick summary of some of the ways the two conflict groups are similar and different, offering useful information to the understanding of conflict in these groups. The source of conflict in both groups was traced back to one individual, both male. When a co-occurrence output was requested from Atlas Ti, it revealed that the highest number of instances coded as Conflict: Phase 3 were attributed to three participants, two male one female. Two of these participants coincide with the two groups that remained in conflict at the end of the exercise, and the third was part of a group that was able to resolve conflict, Phase 4. This raises the question, to what degree does personality, and other individual characteristics influence the ability and flexibility to resolve conflicts.

Table 6.5

Conflict Groups, Comparison

Categories	Similarities	Differences
Group Process	Active group engagement Constructive behaviors used to deal with conflict	Inconsistent ranking of level of satisfaction Have different amounts and quality of periods of productive work One group laughs and have instances of humor, while the other is serious and tense throughout
Onset of Conflict	A Provocative comment triggers conflict Negative perspective, sarcasm, judgment	Timing of when trigger happens is different: one is not expected, happens well into process, the other right at the beginning
Handling of conflict	Participants maintain professional	One Provocative participant

	stance toward provocation Initially group does not confront provocative comment	appears to be flexible and backs down at one point, while the other stands ground throughout. Controversial comment is stated authoritatively for one group, and as a joke in the other
Reason for conflict	Philosophical differences Negative attitude toward community	
Characteristics of conflict initiator	Provocative participant is male	In one group the provocative member is a white male, in the other a black male One is a social worker the other a lawyer

Phase four: Conflict Resolution.

For this study conflict resolution is defined as the ability to resume productivity after conflict has occurred. In some instances, the group is able to resume work even when they have not completely resolved the conflict. Data suggest that the behaviors identified as tension diffusion, attempts at conflict diffusion, and conflict resolution are very similar. The efforts made to distinguish the three, during the initial coding process are first presented. Then, an example of conflict resolution is used to show how conflict was resolved by some of the groups.

Conflict Diffusion

In this study tension diffusion occurs when the disagreement is addressed, even grappled with, preventing it from becoming explicit conflict. Conflict diffusion statements are those made to ‘cool down’ the conflict once it has occurred. The behaviors and statements that reduced tension or conflict were coded even when they did not prevent conflict from happening. Averted conflict occurred in instances that were “close calls”; that is, there was a direct confrontation or provocation but the recipient did not react or respond negatively and instead remained on task. Productive behaviors (Phase 1) appear to be an important conflict resolution strategy, and appear in all instances of Phase 4.

The following excerpt shows how an unexpected disagreement can create significant blockage in the group’s ability to finalize their plan, as well as serve as an example of behaviors that help a group return to productive flow. In addition to the behaviors and characteristics previously identified in Phase 3 and 4, the words “trigger” and “reaction” are introduced as categories to suggest that this is what may be occurring at that moment.

Excerpt 6.8

Indicators of move from tension to conflict

Behavior or characteristic	Speaker	Instance, dialogue
Phase 1, Productive interaction	P1	It becomes a hub of multiple outcomes
	P2	The farmers market can have nutritional info and, housing info. There will be organizers there, legal info.
	P3	Lawyers can help with housing issues in the park, it can be a place of information sharing. Get a parenting and a construction group going.
	P4	Have someone teach parenting skills
	P5	Get communities to make food and sell crafts in the park.
	P2	I wonder about the assumption of what teen pregnancy information should entail
Unexpected Trigger or Tension Indicator	P4	You have a playground and you can observe teenage mothers and child interaction
	P2	I have done a good part of my career representing mothers with child abuse, and I just have a little reaction to observations
Reaction, philosophical difference		
Attempt at tension diffusion	P4	That is what you bring to the table, how to create an effective intervention
Self-awareness, seeking explanation & understanding	P2	The limitation is that what the teen parents need is childcare, educational opportunities, and to erase the surveillance piece. My experience with surveillance programs has been very negative. If we assume strengths based positive interventions in the lives of young people who are parents, then, I am ok with that. My experience with parenting programs has been mainly negative. I’m not sure, I wonder about the assumptions that what teen parents really need is skills.
	P4	It is not a mandate it is a readiness to support
Philosophical Differences		

Self awareness,
explanation of
difference

P2

What I bring is a resistance to state intervention in the lives of parents. That is a limitation because this community may be very different. I have to put up my bias.

Prior to the instance described in the excerpt, this group had been able to enthusiastically build on each other's ideas, be respectful, and develop a creative project solution. In this situation, P2's willingness to self-reflect and to acknowledge her bias created an opening for the group to find a compromise and resolve the conflict. The clarity of perspective and P2's ability to compellingly articulate her position made it easier for the group to find an alternative plan. Her flexibility and willingness to step back to see the distinction between past experiences and the current situation help to dissolve the block that had slowed down productive process. These and other productive behaviors were found in all of the five groups that were able to move out of conflict into resolution.

Conflict resolution.

The next excerpt is from one of the Phase 3 conflict groups. Participant 1 accuses the women of the community of "multi-tasking" as prostitutes. In this instance Participant 4, who was very quiet throughout an earlier conflictual exchange, speaks about the park and possible illicit "business," indirectly addressing P1's stance on the sex industry, and offering an alternative explanation without supporting or denying P1's position. P1 is silent throughout this exchange. Participant 4 remains focused on the facts without taking sides, offering an alternative perspective that encourages the group to continue on task. The group changes direction to a more proactive positive perspective.

Excerpt 6.9

Phase 4: Conflict Resolution

Resolution behaviors	Speaker	Instance, dialogue
Attempt at alternative perspective	P4	What the other issues also, the first four bullet points pretty much say there isn't much public funding high unemployment, that makes people have to do, resort to a shadow economy. But then I read the fact that there is a visible presence of sex workers and drug dealers. I'm not so sure that means they are residents of the community or are they using the park as a way of picking up their business?
Productive Agreement	P5	Off the radar. (Agreeing)
Integrating ideas	P4	Yes. So that leaves me thinking there is an influx of people from the outside which leaves this community without any roots so to speak. Is that space, then being occupied by forces from the outside to use it as a shadow economy? Not necessarily. So I'm not so sure, apart from the fact that it happens in the community, how much of this is going into the community, we are not sure.
Creative solution	P3	It may simply be the case because it is abandoned it's attracting that. So OK lets think of something lets get an urban farm in there or something like that.
Self Reflection	P4	The other thing that's missing from this whole discussion is schools. There's all this discussion about health care but we really don't know with these mother's who have kids where these kids going to. If they don't have space to play in community the park can be an asset to create that into a space for kids. And when you get kids involved mothers are going to get involved making sure their have protected environments around their kids. So a piece for me, apart from the fact that there is a community college which serves a different sort of population as opposed to the young kids in this community what's happened to them where are they going?
Awareness of Complexity		
Build idea	P3	Especially when there are so many.
Humor	P5	They have to graduate from high school to get into college." Laugh.

The following is an example of someone who when directly challenged, does not react or engage in conflict behavior. This participant simply explains and clarifies her comment. The group does not appear to be affected by the exchange and continues to work. However, throughout the session there is some tension between the two group members.

P1: Are you saying babies aren't a measure?

P2: I wasn't saying babies weren't a measure. We come from more a preventive kind of goals, one of the people working in adolescent health mentioned that teen pregnancy prevention was a major point. It would eliminate the issue of infant mortality and low birth weight in one shot. We thought that the issue of the building disrepair offered an opportunity to make them into our clinic and higher people from the community from several modalities of care that are traditional and also to have cultures to come in and have some of their shops their and nurses will be heavily involved in primary and preventative care.

It is speculative to wonder if the simulated exercise had continued, whether this incident would have resurfaced, or how it might have affected the group. There is enough information to indicate that the tension would have influenced the productivity of the group.

In some cases, groups were able to resume work to a limited degree even when they did not resolve the conflict, in others, there was some resolution or agreement about the conflict. There were five (5) groups in which instances of explicit conflict took place and the group was able to find a resolution. The three behaviors that were signifiers of resolution after conflict was identified were: the ability to return to the task or resume work; softening of perspective, and; the ability to transform the conflict into a creative solution. When reviewing the transcripts of the five groups that had conflict and resolved it, both groups of doctors were in this category, the only profession that was categorized within the same Phase. Social workers had the highest numbers of creative solutions after conflict.

Summary of Findings on the Four Phase Conflict Model

The first phase of analysis illustrate the four Phases of conflict and the emergence of conflict. This addresses Research Question 1: Does the Four Part Model developed for this study account for instances of conflict and its dissipation in this study of collaboratives? Criteria and credible instances of each phase were provided. Yet, there are no distinctive lines between the four phases, gray areas form borders between one phase and the next. Nor can it be said that the phases occur in numerical sequence. The model has been useful in revealing several pathways to conflict, providing answers to research question 2. RQ2 asked : What can this four phase model help us to learn about conflict in collaborative process? To what extent does this model reveal how conflict emerges, escalates and is diffused? These pathways show that there are several ways disagreements and differences can appear and evolve into conflict in these collaboratives. The pathways also tell us that the phases are not clear cut or definitive. Conflict does not necessarily occur in a linear, step by step way. Rather, at times conflict can be anticipated and at others, it seems to appear totally unexpected.

The pathways include groups where conflict is not present, that is, no instances of tension or conflict (Phase one) were perceived during analysis. These two groups are less common, as are the two conflict groups (Phase three). Phase two group, those that have conflict and are able to resolve it in ways that allow them to resume and continue the task at hand, are more prominent (eleven). Most groups experience only two of the four phases, that is, they traverse from Phase 1(Productive Group Process) to Phase 2 (Tension), moving from one to the next at various times. The groups that follow this path have disagreements and tension but were able to address these differences and to resolve or diffuse them, preventing them from becoming conflict or from stagnating the work process.

A closer Look at phase transition and some elaboration on conflict theory .

The previous section reports on each of the Phases of the Conflict Model and how they present in this data set. Research Questions One (RQ1) and Two (RQ2) are answered, as well as the beginning of Research Question Three (RQ3). RQ3 includes queries that go beyond an identification of conflict phases: What does the provisional theory tell us about effective ways to prevent and resolve conflict? The sub-sections in the question ask: Are there themes in group process or content that are associated with transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2? When disagreements are resolved before they lead to conflict, transition from Phase 2 to Phase 3, how are they resolved? The complexity of RQ3 requires some reiteration and integration of the findings on phase transitions, with an emphasis on theory development. To accomplish this I will now recount some of the significant ways transitions from one Phase to the next take place, particularly the transition from conflict to its resolution.

Transitions from Tension to Conflict.

The data indicate that disagreement does not necessarily lead to conflict. Rather, it is in the ways differences of opinion are expressed and received that appear to determine whether a disagreement is cause for tension, or a trigger for the escalation to explicit conflict. Words alone do not convey what is actually occurring in these groups as the transition is taking place, making it necessary to also pay close attention to other components of communication that occur during the tension phase. That is: change in tone; interruptions and crosstalk; silences (when someone becomes quiet or stops participating); a back and forth about an issue with persistent questions; and, a shift from disagreements that go from a general statement to a personal attack. These sometimes subtle, sometimes very blunt shifts in the expression of disagreement are apparent in the examples used in the preceding section.

The three Indicators of Potential Conflict or Transition from Tension to Conflict found in the data are:

1. The Identification and/or definition of “problem” and whether it needs to be clearly “measurable” or not. When deciding on a priority problem to address as a group, tensions sometimes arise over whether to focus on a more nuanced and broader scope problem that is more difficult to measure, and a specific health problem that can concretely and easily be evidenced.
2. Philosophical or strategy differences, that is disagreements about whether to address a discrete health problem like diabetes through a focus on symptoms and on education, or deal with “root causes” such as, poverty that leads to lack of access to healthy food.
3. Opposing focus on the simulated exercise or task: On the one hand, a questioning stance and emphasis on whether the assigned task is valid, realistic enough, or appropriate. On the other hand, a precise adhesion to instructions that limits movement and creativity. Some individuals dedicated a crippling amount of time to critiquing the exercise. Discussion did not lead to agreement or even compromise in groups where there was a member that is determined to follow instructions impeccably. Fixed ideas, or stand ground, appear to minimize the ability of the group to be creative and to move forward.

Since there are different perspectives, the groups must find a way to arrive at some level of agreement. Groups unable to find a point of commonality, and that have a member who stands his or her ground, are unable to move forward. These are the groups that eventually have conflict.

While indicators of potential conflict appear in the tension phase, it was not always possible to predict when tension would turn into conflict. The two Conflict groups discussed in

the earlier segments are a case in point. In both instances it is a sudden, unexpected incendiary comment that leads to conflict, while in other instances no such comment is present and the trigger is obscure. The source of conflict is not clear hence, not as easy to address or resolve. One of the groups in this study was unique in that all the participants knew each other prior to being brought together for the exercise. The researchers from the original study were unaware of this and did not take compensatory methods. The source of the conflict that emerged in this group was not clear, leaving me to wonder if the history members brought with them accounts for the tension and their difficult interactions.

Transitions where Tension is resolved and does not Lead to Conflict.

The findings appear to indicate that even effective and experienced collaborators have difficulties when coming together. Understanding why is part of answering RQ3. Some insight can be gained by taking a closer look at individuals and groups with a high frequency of productive behaviors, as these interventions may have contributed to resolving tension before it turned into conflict. The specific question is: Are there groups where the disagreements are managed before they lead to conflict? In these groups where the disagreements are managed or diffused, what is it that group members do to accomplish this? Eleven of the twenty groups in this study managed the disagreements that arose, in ways that prevented them from turning to conflict.

Members of productive groups who use constructive behaviors demonstrated the following:

- Were curious about what others think and how they view the world;
- Had a positive attitude about the work they are engaged in;
- Showed support of and build on the ideas of others;

- Were inclusive of diverse ideas and of others;
- Worked toward creating a shared vision for the group;
- Can envision alternative possibilities, something new and creative;
- demonstrated relational abilities, listened, built on other's ideas, encouraged others to speak, helped the group to move forward and returned to task;
- Were flexible, are willing to self reflect and admitted when they had made a mistake;
- They explained their perspective when they were in disagreement and are willing to hear the perspectives of others;
- Were open to change their approach when necessary;
- Had a sense of humor

These behaviors and attitudes appear to indicate to group members that it is “safe” to express disagreement. The findings also suggest that collaborators who are careful in how they disagree and express their opinions contribute to maintenance of the productive phase. When they express disagreement it is typically done respectfully and with the intent to build on ideas and find a common solution. Their disagreements are usually well received. Similarly, constructive groups attend to disagreements by discussing them and integrating the differing perspective into the group's analysis. The differing perspectives are used to understand varying dimension of an issue that require consideration. When addressed, these concerns are transformed into creative ideas and solutions.

Transition from Conflict to Resolution.

The description of Phase 4 helps in understanding the transition out of conflict. It is apparent that the use of constructive behaviors is the primary source of conflict resolution.

Mostly noted are self reflective behaviors that appear to be used by collaborators to pause, center and respond in a way that is respectful, and ultimately beneficial to the group. These actions appear to shift a potentially explosive interaction, de-escalating tension, to provide an opportunity for other members to intervene constructively. This “pause” seems to offer a space where alternatives are found and the group can resume work.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

“Too much unity among coalition members weakens the essence of the coalition to create synergy from the organizations’ diversity. Too much diversity slows down progress towards goals since building trust, familiarity and common vision take time.”

Ospina and Saz-Carranza (2005)

The focus of this study is the understanding of conflict and its management in the context of collaboration activity. Collaboration is complex requiring time, attention and balance. Further, there are multiple variables that may influence the ability of a collaborative to stay on course. The findings of this study appear to confirm this. The appropriateness of the four phase model utilized to answer the research questions, has been described in the previous section. In this section I will discuss the findings in relation to what is already known about conflict and about collaboration, each in a separate section. After discussing what the answers to the research questions have produced, attention will be given to the implications for a theory of conflict, one that is specific to groups that come together to collaborate, and to the social work profession.

Findings on the Research Questions and their Implications for Conflict Theory

The first research question focused on testing whether the *Four Phase Conflict Model* developed for this study was useful in the analysis of conflict in this sample of collaboration groups. This model was adapted from conflict theory (Brahm, 2003; Dudouet, 2006) as existent conflict models did not provide the necessary measures to best encapsulate how conflict emerges and is addressed in collaborating groups. The model did capture instances of each of the four phases of conflict and helped to determine how they can be distinguished. The ability to identify each of the phases also revealed the particular and sometimes subtle transitions between phases. Through the use of this model a distinction between disagreement and tension has been made, and it is apparent that disagreement does not necessarily imply an escalation to conflict.

Behaviors that lead to an escalation to conflict were identified, helping the transitions from one phase to another be more recognizable.

That the model served as an appropriate tool to account for identifying instances of conflict and its dissipation is revealing. It suggests that the emergence of conflict in collaboratives is similar to what is known about adversaries and groups already engaged in conflict (Brahm, 2003; Dhami & Olsson, 2008). It may be that *how* conflict emerges in collaboratives is similar to how it emerges for groups with a history of conflict. What seems different is how experienced collaborators prevent and manage this conflict, that is, *what* they do with it. Through the use of particular behaviors effective collaborators are often able to prevent disagreements from escalating into tension. These behaviors appear to regulate the tone and response, thereby preventing tension from moving into conflict and from undermining productive discussion that causes stagnation of the group process. The same productive behaviors appear to facilitate the resolution of conflict once it emerges. In fact, they are used throughout the group process and through the four phases in productive ways.

The model's phase structure also helps identify how participants manage disagreements constructively or deescalate conflict so that productive work can resume. This may be distinctive in these groups because the members are conscious of the importance of collaboration. Most of the groups in this study that had conflict (5 of 7) were able to fold disagreement into a constructive solution. This would support the idea that conflict is neutral, neither good nor bad (Laursen & Hafen, 2009), and that through skill and talent could be utilized in constructive ways to the advantage of the collaborative.

Although the individual phases proved to be a useful analytic tool for understanding the group process, the pathways to conflict and the shifts from productivity to conflict and back,

there is a larger question of whether a “stage” or “phase” model can be supported by findings. Stages suggest a predictable progression of events, linear or otherwise.

Conflict resolution theorists have divergent opinions on whether conflict occurs in stages (Brahm, 2003), and on whether it occurs in a linear, predictable fashion (Dudouet, 2006; Bloomfield in Dudouet, 2006). The fact that the groups in this study showed evidence of five or more routes through the conflict stages seems to indicate that conflict emergence is not linear. Most of the groups did not follow a linear progression, even a cyclical one. Many skipped phases or remained in one or two phases for most of their time together, without arriving at conflict. This would suggest that there is a fluid continuum of conflict emergence that could be intercepted at any moment. The model indicates that rather than thinking of conflict as being caused by a particular event that inevitably leads to explosion (between extremes), it can be more usefully thought of as a parallel process. The group is influenced by each individual and his or her responses, as well as by the group’s level of cohesion and ability to respond. That is, when the “trigger” is introduced, depending on the recipient and the group’s response, it might either go to conflict or continue from where the group was in the process. Again, the sink metaphor could be useful to capture this intercepted fluidity. If a difficult to dilute substance is thrown into a sink where thick materials are found, there is a higher probability that the sink will become stuck. However, if a strong chemical or intervening material is introduced it might cut through the density to allow for the return to the flow, or not.

The identification of this potentially interruptible continuum indicates another difference between the groups studied by conflict theorists and collaboratives. In groups where there is a long history of one group oppressing another, the use of constructive behaviors might not be enough to create a shift in the group or to create sustained trust. In the groups studied, there is

evidence of group building behaviors and strategies that offer the potential of a solid foundation that sustains the group during threatening conflictual exchanges.

The four phase analytic approach to collaborative processes was a useful way of thinking about conflict and of answering the second research question: To what extent does this model reveal how conflict emerges, escalates, and is resolved? The model helped to identify subtle yet important distinctions between Disagreements and Tension, and Tension and Conflict. There are many anecdotal accounts of how tension escalates to become conflict. In his book *Nonviolent Communication* Marshal Rosenberg uses the term “life-alienating communication” to describe the forms of language and communication that can lead to an escalation of tension or to the end of the conversation (Rosenberg, 2002). Moralistic judgments, comparative statements and not assuming responsibility are the three primary components Rosenberg has come to identify. These are consistent with the “conversation stoppers” named by the Best Seller “*Crucial Conversations*” (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, 2002) where the authors describe statements that can turn an important conversation into a battle field or instantaneously end it. Although the authors provide very useful strategies for identifying problematic behaviors, their information is based on years of experience working with organizations but, the research that guides their work is not directly related to these escalating behaviors. These books and others focus on helping individuals to engage in conversations in a way that minimize defensiveness and promote the ability to remain in dialogue with another person (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, 2002; Rosenberg, 2002). Yet, no empirical studies have been identified that speak directly to the subtle changes in tone and approach in the delivery of a statement as the primary difference between tension and the escalation to conflict.

Conflict resolution theory suggests that some disagreement about how to accomplish a task leads to creative problem solving (in DeDreu & Weingart, 2003). Relationship conflicts are those that have to do with relationships between collaborators, and are believed to limit the information processing ability of participants, harming the capacity to accomplish the task, something this study affirms. The analysis of phase two and three identifies the shift from healthy disagreement about the task or the issue at hand, to a significant turn from tension to conflict when the disagreement with other's ideas become personal attacks.

Behavior Associated with Transition from Tension to Conflict

A closer look at participants engaged in instances of conflict highlights behavior they share. The reluctance to move from a firm stance on a position on an issue has been identified by other researchers as a threat to collaboration (Deutsch, 1991; De Dreu, Harinck, & Van Vianen, 1999). Another is the commitment to following direction and doing things in the expected and circumscribed way. In addition, some members have difficulty envisioning a new or different perspective or approach to doing things. Many transitions to conflict were escalated by dyadic exchanges between one person who wanted to stick to the assigned task and had a narrow view, and another who was interested in exploring alternative approaches.

The behaviors shared by those engaged in conflict appear to be associated with personal attitudes and approaches to the work. Further analysis would be required to determine to what degree these behaviors have to do with personality or relational characteristics, and to what extent they are associated with social identity. Factors such as class distinction and social status require closer attention, as they too might influence how the group forms and the relationships that are created. For example, the fact that two of three of the individuals with high instances of conflict are males raises the question of whether conflict behaviors are demonstrated more

openly by males. That the three individuals were of different race and ethnicity, prompts the need to understand to what degree race is a determinant of conflict. Another question that might be asked is whether there are different ways of communicating discord that are acceptable in some communities but offensive in others.

The Contribution of Ideology and Strategy to Conflict

The most productive groups in this study were those that agreed in their identification of the primary community need, as in the simulated case study, and came to consensus about the strategies to use (Hyde & Meyer, 2010). This is consistent with the literature that indicates that a shared vision, common goals (Hyde & Meyer, 2010; Liedtka and Witten, 1998), and agreement in the ways to arrive at those goal (Mitchell & Crittenden, 2000; Bayne-Smith, et al, 2008; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1993) is key to a successful collaboration.

Ideological perspectives and strategic approaches to addressing the identified problem were the most significant sources of disagreement and difference in the dataset. That is, determining the priority issue and deciding on the approach the group would take to find solutions to the problem at hand. Ideological perspective refers to beliefs and values about community and political ideals that informed proposals for service provision and programmatic approaches. More specifically, collaborators disagreed on the best level of analysis to consider in developing a solution. Some focused on individual assistance, using a direct one-on-one level of service provision approach (Micro), while others advocated a Macro, social change perspective aimed at causes and social determinants.

This is useful information for the social work field, where there is often a divide between those professionals who give priority to solving the problems of the individual and those who focus on the larger social issues affecting communities. The participants of this study make this

‘dialectic tension’ apparent in the finding that disagreement in approach and strategy was the most significant barrier to accomplishing their goal. Ideological differences (collective social change versus individual approach) and those that relate to the strategic approach (direct service and education vs. organizing and empowerment) that is prioritized by an individual or group were the greatest sources of conflict in the groups studied.

Critical theory which critiques social structures and examines social conditions (Seiler) is useful to understand and contextualize these findings. Critical theory asserts that world views are socially constructed and are partly based on the segregated experiences of those who are oppressed. Constructivist theory infers that there is an interaction between the way a social act is socially defined and subjectively experienced (Kitayama, et al 1997). From this vantage point, each group participant brings a unique perspective according to their positional experience in society, and will value one approach over the other based on that experience. At the same time, experience can be re-defined and mediated in a new context (Zou, et al. 2009). The group has an opportunity to recreate and shape its own collective worldview. If this is the case, it would be necessary for collaboratives to allow for discussion and analysis of their experiences, as part of the group building and refashioning of a cohesion process.

Managing Conflict

The third research question focused on transitions from one phase to another, and on recognizing the actions that prevent, manage, and resolve conflict. The productive group behaviors demonstrated by collaborators in this study are associated with the ability to effectively address disagreements and conflicts that arise in collaboratives. The identification of these productive behaviors offer a beginning guide for the development of skills and abilities that enhance dialogue and constructive group work. In the section that follows, what has been learned

in answering Research Question Three and the Conflict Model will be discussed in connection with conflict resolution, collaboration and small group theories.

The Conflict Model and Relational Abilities

This study has determined that there is a series of behaviors utilized by collaborators that were deemed to be constructive, as they were instrumental in maintaining or resuming a productive group process. These behaviors (Phase One, Productive Group Process) were found to be present throughout the data and were used by collaborators at different times, for different purposes. The behaviors were identified during the tension phase, often used to deescalate tension or diffuse the impact of triggers that provoked a reaction. They were also associated with instances of conflict, being used as a way to resolve or ameliorate conflict once it occurred. Small group and collaboration theories are useful to further understand the significance of these behaviors, and to answer Research Question Three (RQ3) as it seeks to learn more about how conflict emerges and is resolved by collaborators.

The identification of constructive behaviors used by effective collaborators is one of the contributions of this study. Relational skills and actions, a component of what Lasker & Weiss (2003) refer to as *proximal outcomes* are deemed necessary to any effective collaboration. Many of the skills these theorists have named are associated with the productive behaviors present in all the groups in this study, regardless of their level of conflict. Relational capacity, as coined by the authors, includes the readiness to engage in the process of collaboration, to respect others, to be inclusive of other perspectives, to have unity of purpose, to be patient, and to be willing to rectify mistakes. The empirical identification of productive behaviors in this study confirms the importance of Relational Skills, as attributes and capabilities that need to be developed by collaborative participants and groups. This is relevant because there appear to be no studies that

have examined the behaviors of collaborative groups and related them to the categories offered by Lasker and Weiss.

The findings also confirm the literature with reference to the importance of learning and building relational capacity (Jones et al. 2007; Lasker and Weiss, 2003) and the need to have skills that focus on creating group cohesion rather than divisiveness (McRae & Short, 2010). The solution focused interactive productive behaviors found by this study to promote group cohesion, and facilitate group process, are associated with constructive actions that help create an environment that is conducive to trust and safety. As McRae & Short propose, acknowledgement of social identity and other aspects of diversity is key to creating safety. When differences are openly recognized, they have a possibility of being addressed (McRae & Short, 2010). Some of the groups studied made efforts at getting to know the members of the group and at understanding their perspective. Those groups that attempt to include diverse ideas are better able to integrate them with the final product and are more likely to complete the assigned task. Reports from experienced community practitioners affirm that the facilitator of any collaborative should have both a personality that is receptive and the ability to relate well to others (Mizrahi, Bayne-Smith, Garcia; 2008) and this is confirmed by this study. This is also consistent with conflict resolution theorists (Burgess, Spangler, 2003; Susskind, McKearnen, Thomas-Lamar, 1999) who suggest that the group must build a common identity and solidarity if it is to be successful. Small group theorists emphasize the importance of the beginning stages of the group formation process where trust and safety are created (McRae & Short, 2010). This is confirmed in this study where collaborators that completed the task also managed to integrate everyone's ideas to produce a comprehensive and innovative project at the end of the simulated exercise. The ability to include a range of ideas is consistent with the ability to embrace multiple

perspectives and identities.

Productive Behaviors

This study identifies a set of behaviors associated with constructive approaches to preventing and resolving conflict. These behaviors can be divided into two sections: those associated with the group process, and those related to the individual.

Group process productive behaviors.

Having skills for building consensus (Burgess, Spangler, 2003; Public Disputes Network, 1988; Susskind, McKearnen, Thomas-Lamar, 1999) is basic to successful collaboration. This study confirms the value of these abilities, as the groups that came to an agreement about priorities and on how to proceed as a group, did better at dealing with disagreements. Most significant, is the need to establish group norms and agreement of process that the group can return to, and rely on, when faced with differences of opinion. The agreement about process and decision-making was not always explicit in the groups studied rather, most often it took the form of a request for group feedback, articulation of a process suggestion, or a request for assent on how to proceed. It was the act of “checking in” with the entire group that appears to have made a difference. This is consistent with theorists who believe that there is a need to build collective identity, and for every member to feel ownership of the decisions arrived at by the group (Burgess, Spangler, 2003).

Writers on the topic of collaboration concur that effective groups must manage interpersonal differences and develop the ability to create a space where every participant feels safe and is able to trust each other enough to work together (Susskind, McKearnen, Thomas-Lamar, 1999; Public Disputes Network, 1988). In the groups studied, those that dedicated time to

getting to know each other and to discuss the process to follow were more likely to prevent conflict than those who did not.

Self Regulating Productive Behaviors.

The set of personal attributes identified and categorized as Constructive Self Regulated Behaviors are essential to the collaborative process. Like active listening and communication skills (Patterson, et al, 2002) a positive perspective and the ability to have humor, curiosity and enthusiasm, contribute to the group formation process. The importance of a positive perspective is that it gives the group permission to go beyond the set boundaries. Groups that allowed themselves to imagine something different and new were more creative in their solutions. Humor encourages 'lightness'. Participants and groups that had humor did not take comments personally, or react defensively. Curiosity led to interest in the ideas and perspectives of others, and to more inquisitive inquiries that led to more nuanced solutions. Enthusiasm appeared to infuse the group with an attitude of possibility and a sense of accomplishment.

Self-reflection and taking responsibility is another of the self-regulated behaviors. Self awareness can provide the self control necessary to handle a wide variety of situations (Bennett & Gadlin, 2012). Self-reflection and the willingness to be critical of one's own conditioning and beliefs is a necessary ability of effective collaborators who are attempting to create conditions that will generate new and innovative solutions to challenging problems. Self awareness in the leader can lead to team self awareness (Bennett & Gadlin, 2012). In this data set it was the nurses who articulated the most instances of self-reflection, and social workers the least. This finding is of relevance to the social work profession, which has as a foundational value the use of self-reflection and effective use of self.

Implications for Training Practitioners

The study of collaborators engaged in the process has provided information about some of the attributes, relational and group facilitation skills that are needed for the development of a collaborative. The empirical identification of constructive behaviors that can lead to more productive collaboratives adds to existing knowledge by providing the recognition of skills and abilities to be developed by new professionals who aim to engage in coalitions and other collaboration efforts.

Past studies and analyses that evaluate collaboration have focused on what is linked to successful collaboration but have not offered a model for its accomplishment. Equally important to having an evaluation guide, is having a “how to” guide for preventing, addressing, and remedying challenges and barriers once they are identified. Although this study was not designed to test Lasker and Weiss’ (2003) model, the findings are consistent with their theory, which emphasizes the importance and value of relational skills for effective collaboration. Relationship-building between individuals and small groups is recognized as imperative to the success of any collaborative but, few empirically based guidelines for how to do this constructively exist.

Through learning about and training in the specifics of developing relational abilities, professional practitioners can be assisted in strengthening the relationships between collaborators that could in turn create a sense of community within the collaborative. These abilities must go beyond the niceties of socially respectful interactions between professionals, to a deeper willingness to understand the impact of cultural differences and understanding for each member of the group (Markus & Hamedani, 2007). Professional collaboration facilitators need to know how to mediate tension that can lead to misunderstandings in experience by each member, and

the group as a whole (McRae & Short, 2010; Zou, et al. 2009; Kitayama, et al 1997). This is imperative for a unified collaborative to increase the possibility for withstanding the inevitable external challenges to be addressed. This is a significant gap for the Community Organizing and Planning Field, as it may not be possible to proceed with social change efforts if the internal challenges confronted by collaboratives are not addressed. To build a movement means to build relationships, trust, a common vision and a commitment to resolving the differences and tensions that arise.

The productive behaviors identified in this study can be learned and taught by those professionals, social workers and others, who want to help professional groups be more successful. Behaviors that promote group cohesion, that facilitate group process, and that are solution-focused can be part of the toolbox used by practitioners to build community. This study also identified transitional shifts and triggers that move an interaction from disagreement to tension, and tension to conflict that will help a practitioner identify warning signals as well as points of intervention. The awareness of these triggers may be useful to collaborators, as they can serve as cautionary points that, when identified might help facilitators avoid the risks these transitions pose and suggest how and when to respond constructively. Learning to identify potential escalating moments and developing communication and other relational skills, could mean the possibility of responding early on, so that a disagreement does not become conflict or slow down the productive group process. There are points of intervention, when the phases can be recognized, where the escalation of conflict might be averted by productive behaviors.

One strength of this study is the empirical identification of *what* experienced professional collaborators do that can provide effective strategies for intervening to prevent and address conflict. My findings could be the basis for an empirically supported approach to assisting

professional collaboratives through the different stages of their development. Existing collaboratives can be helped when professional evaluators are able to identify potential sources of conflict and when and how to intervene. Particularly, knowledge of the tension phase provides an opportunity for interventions that could prevent the escalation to conflict. If social workers are aware of the usefulness of productive behaviors, they will be more apt to utilize them when a conflict has occurred, in an attempt to transform the conflict into an opportunity for creative solutions.

New professionals can be trained to develop relational capacities, sensibilities and group process skills, and to learn how to use productive behaviors so that they may apply them at the beginning of any collaboration, creating a solid foundation. Facilitators of existing collaboratives can be given support and technical assistance in improving their relational capacity, as well as in learning when and how to intervene productively to aid the development of the collaborative. These professional facilitators would know the importance of integrating communication and process skills that build inclusion and generate a sense of belonging for every member.

These ideas and the skills demonstrated by the participants of this study can provide the beginning of a “how to” guidebook or manual that helps professional facilitators of collaboratives to build the constructive abilities that help groups to coalesce and become successful. The study has identified both personal attributes that ought to be enhanced and constructive behaviors that can be learned and developed.

Limitations

The use of existing data presented challenges as well as opportunities. The fact that the study was not specifically designed to build a theory of conflict raises concerns about the

external validity of any theory developed from it. There is the question of whether the simulation is an appropriate data source for a study of conflict and its resolution, even though it did produce instances of conflict that were detectable using the four phases model.

The simulated exercise was successful in creating an opportunity to observe the group formation process in real time. It is not known what the effect is of forming a group in such a short period of time. Would the collaborative have formed differently if they had had the time to build the group? Small group theory speaks to the importance of the first stage of the group process, *Forming* (Tuckman, 1965), but does not specifically name the time it takes for this process to occur. Forming is when groups are attempting to know each other, to identify the goal of the group and begin to form impressions of the group. Group members are cautious and are believed to avoid conflict during this stage (McRae & Short, 2010). The focus is on accomplishing the group building tasks and not on the work. Trust building is an important task during this time. That this forming had to happen so quickly in this study, may have worked in favor of some of the groups studied, that had to quickly get their bearings in order to accomplish a task. Yet, it is not known if it is precisely this focus on task that did not allow for enough group forming and relationship building to occur.

The limited time might account for what happened in the two groups that remained in phase one throughout the exercise. That is, these groups were getting to know each and were avoiding conflict. It is possible that conflict would have arisen had they had more time to be authentic.

This study was of seasoned professionals with an extensive understanding of collaboration. Because of their advanced academic training and class status the constructive task group strategies described in the findings might not be directly applicable to multi-sectoral

community collaboratives with a more diverse and grassroots membership. The findings might not be applicable to groups consisting of new professionals, or to groups consisting of different professions from the ones studied.

Future Research

The field of collaboration continues to present opportunities for research. This study offers insights that can be useful to social workers and other professionals interested in collaboration, particularly that which is interdisciplinary. Since the sample of participants was drawn for a purpose other than theory development on conflict or its management, there are many questions that require future research. In this section, I highlight new research questions raised by the findings particularly in relation to conflict, its management and the skills necessary for effective collaborators.

The research on collaboration does not distinguish between professional training and other more deep-rooted worldviews and personal characteristics (race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ideology, etc.). My experience in a variety of groups leads me to believe that there is a need to learn more about the ways social identities influence the emergence of disagreements and how they lead to conflict. In the introduction section, I offer the example of Occupied Wall Street and their request for assistance in managing their differences. According to organizers these differences threatened to destroy their movement. Some years later, their concerns may have been correct, as the strength of the initial movement has been weakened. Findings from the grounded theory analysis that lead to this study (Bayne-Smith, Garcia, 2008) and that of other theorists suggest that in collaborations (coalitions) led by professionals, the various professional identities, values and epistemology, are identified as potential sources of conflict (Repko, 2008). The literature does recognize that differences other than those in professions, have an impact on

collaboration. This study does insinuate some gender differences, the two individuals that triggered conflict and maintained their stance causing their group to end the simulated exercise in conflict were both male. Possible ethnic and class differences in how conflict is managed are also alluded to. Yet, the findings were not significant enough to report or to arrive at any conclusions. Further study that is specific to social identities and to class differences is necessary to further learn about their influence.

The literature on group formation process speaks of the importance of the initial stage of group development where “members are more likely to draw on past experiences and stereotypes, to make sense of differences “(Brown & Mistry in McRae & Short, 2010). The authors conclude that interpretations about behavior or intangible perceptions based on stereotypes result in an unstable if not false group foundation. This study cannot confirm or refute whether conclusions about other participants were made based on stereotypes about professions, gender or ethnic backgrounds. The study can affirm that there were differences in the ways members from different racial and gender groups related to other members. The representation of gender and race were noted in distinct levels of participation in the escalation of conflict, between men and women for example, and the increased contributions of some groups to managing and resolving conflict. Further research is necessary in this realm.

In relation to this study, perhaps, in order to come up with a cohesive proposal, participants had to articulate their personal position and priorities and were quickly confronted with the realities of their differences in perspective. This is speculative, and requires more research that takes time and the group formation process into account is necessary. The less visible differences such as philosophy, class and positional status, are expected to become apparent later on in the life of a group, potentially becoming sources of conflict as the group

interacts more intimately (McRae & Short, 2010). The groups in this study were only together for a few hours, yet, philosophical and ideological differences quickly surfaced as a significant source of conflict. More research would be necessary to understand what this is attributed to.

The polarity between direct service (Micro) approaches and broader approaches (Macro), as evidenced in these groups of collaborators are also apparent in the social work profession, and require attention. Further research is necessary to more fully grasp the significance of this to groups that work long term and have social change goals. One question requiring further study is whether approaches to creating community change can address the immediate needs of a community, simultaneously addressing the structural and societal issues.

More research on the potential benefits of disagreement and conflict would be helpful to continuing to learn about the distinction between disagreements and tension. More importantly, it could help in the identification of additional strategies that promote the generation of creative solutions that build on diverse ideas and perspectives.

This study has identified having a positive outlook, an open perspective and humor as helpful characteristics for facilitators. The study seems to indicate that when the groups enjoyed their interaction and were challenged constructively, they were more productive. Research to determine if this is true in other collaborative would be useful to the identification of additional productive attributes to be developed by practitioners.

Conclusions

“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.”
Jelaluddin Rumi, 13th century mystic poet

The journey through conflict is not linear, but there are “sign posts” that could be useful to its early identification. The recognition of these sign posts can be helpful to responding early

on to the “triggers” that could lead to tension and conflict. The four phase model described here shows potential for an increased understanding of aspects that can lead to conflict, and the early identification of threatening behaviors. This offers the potential for early intervention.

The information gleaned from this study can be useful to facilitators of collaborations in preparing to enter a new collaborative in setting realistic expectations of themselves and to be cognizant of the influence of their actions. If collaborators know that conflict is manageable once detected and that it can be harnessed and transformed into creative solutions, they might be less afraid of it. Collaborators who build on their positive attributes and who develop a positive perspective appear to be better able to engage in the collaborative process. Recognizing the “triggers” for conflict might lead to the ability to respond constructively rather than reactively to the delivery of offensive statements. Once the delivery loses its sting, the group can attend to the content of what is said, clarifying it and integrating what is valuable into the group’s process. If we are able to learn not to fear conflict we might be more willing to address it rather than avoid it. As a former mentor once said to me:

“Conflict is not the absence of love”

(Maria Mar, Theater of Transformation, 1998).

Conflict in this study is linked to provocative, disrespectful exchanges and personal criticism. The findings of this study insinuate that conflict can be prevented but not controlled for. The use of constructive behaviors and a positive perspective, as demonstrated by these experienced collaborators, can provide the tools to assist the transformative process in collaboratives offering the possibility to discover that they have the potential to transform the individual, the group, and the outcome of the collaboration.

APPENDIX A

Dear

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in our **structured dialogue** on **Wednesday May 27**. It will take place in Room 1010 at **Hunter College School of Social Work** from 9:00-3 PM.

As we mentioned to you already, we are convening a group of 30 select faculty and community colleagues from the fields of public health, community/environmental psychology, social work, community/social medicine, community-oriented nursing, and public interest/community-based law. It will consist of large and small group problem-solving activities. We are exploring ways that professionals engaged in improving community health and well-being work together.

Because we know your time is valuable and we need your commitment and investment that day, we are compensating you for your time with a stipend of \$ 150, plus meals. We received a grant from the CUNY Research Collaborative program for this work. Therefore, we need you to complete a **consent form** that was approved by the Hunter College Institutional Review Board. It includes consent to audiotape the session. It is attached. You may print it out and bring it to the event. We will do the signing then.

If you have not already done so, please send back a brief **one paragraph bio** that includes 1) all your degrees, 2) your current and recent job title/position, 3) recent community activities (relevant courses, consulting, training, evaluation, community collaborations), and 4) your major interests and 5) and a few relevant publications. Your bio will be shared with the other 30 participants only.

If you have any questions before May 24, please call Emma Barker, 718-398-1661 or email her at emmabarker2@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Terry Mizrahi, Ph.D., Professor, Hunter College School of Social Work
Marcia Bayne-Smith, DSW, Associate Professor, Queens College-Urban Studies
Martha Lucia Garcia, MSW, CUNY School of Law

APPENDIX B
PROBLEM-SOLVING EXERCISE

**SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AFFECTING COMMUNITY
HEALTH STATUS**

Here is a description of the health and social conditions in an imaginary community. Please use this example in order to answer the following questions Using the following information, your group is asked to identify a problem and to develop [5 YEAR LONG TERM GOALS AND GOAL FOR FIRST YEAR?? s to be incorporated into a plan that would address the problem. Although there may be several alternative “solutions,” just select one for your plan. What are the goals? How will you implement goals (programs, strategies, tactics, and activities)? Which other professions and/or organizations do you need to join with you to obtain your goal or influence the decision-makers to implement your goal? How will you evaluate it? How will you define and “measure” success?

You will be asked to present your plan to a group of funders at the end of this.

The City Health Planning Department has just released new data about our community. The profile of the neighborhood includes the following:

- Our population is growing, and over 40% of the population is under age 21. About 15% of the population is aging, and many are over 80 years old.
- Many people in our neighborhood do not speak English well. They speak Spanish, Chinese, and Creole.
- We have one of the largest numbers of single-parent families in the City. The majority of them are reliant upon public assistance.
- The incidence of teen pregnancy is increasing and there are concomitant problems of low birth weight babies.
- There are many large apartment complexes in our area. Most are privately-owned and in disrepair. An increasing number of old buildings are being abandoned by their owners.
- Some tenant and block associations exist, and most need more participation.
- Local elected officials are trying to attract City and State funds for housing rehabilitation.
- There is a visible presence of drug dealers.

- There is a new police patrol program operating in our precinct.
- There is high unemployment, but many families receive income from small businesses they operate out of their homes .
- Local merchants are concerned about diminishing business. Their merchants' association doesn't know how to help them.
 - Our health care facilities are limited and have had to cut services in their specialty clinics and primary care unit.
 - Visits to local hospital emergency room have increased dramatically
- We have a large park, although due to budget cuts, it is not well maintained, and is becoming a site of more and more criminal activity and stray dogs.
- There are many voluntary groups and social service agencies.
- There is a community college nearby.

We will provide newsprint and markers

9:30 – 10- Coffee

10 am-10:30 Introductions—Each person has one minute. What are questions—professional background—identity (identities)?

10:30-11:30-first group exercise

After the exercise (1 hour maximum) with the mono-group. Debriefing in small groups—once open ended go around comments about the exercise (pass tape recorder around). Then question—“Did the fact that you were all [NAME PROFESSION] make a difference in how you worked together? How? Was it easier or harder? Did it affect the process? Did it affect the outcomes?”

11:30-11:45

De-briefing about 15 minutes.

Break—

Noon- 1 pm

APPENDIX C



*Terry Mizrahi, Ph.D., Professor
School of Social Work
129 East 79th Street
7112
New York, NY 10075*

Phone: (212) 452-

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PROTOCOL # 100813331

CONSENT FORM

“THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUNDS AND PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNITY HEALTH COLLABORATIONS”

1. BACKGROUND

You are being invited to participate in a study conducted by Dr. Terry Mizrahi, Dr. Marcia Bayne-Smith and Ms. Martha Lucia Garcia funded by the CUNY Research Collaborative. You were selected because of your professional and academic background related to community collaborations. We are contacting about 60 people to participate in the first phase of a larger study. This consent is for the first phase of the study—participating in a written survey (or a telephone interview) about your attitudes and experiences toward interdisciplinary community collaborations. Your participation is voluntary and you can choose to stop at any time along the way.

The purpose of the study is to learn how different professional disciplines from social work; public health; urban studies and planning, law; education and psychology, define “interdisciplinary community collaboration.” The study will also explore how these professions participate in community problem solving activities. The goal of the study is to develop common practice principles for these professionals to teach in the classroom and utilize in the classroom and the field.

1. PROCEDURES

You will be asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire or a telephone interview. It will include a range of questions about your background, education, teaching, practice experiences and perspectives in collaborating with others. You are free to stop the interview or to omit any questions you choose not to answer. You may indicate if you are interested in being contacted again for another aspect of the study in the future. If you are selected you will be asked to give your consent again by signing another consent form with the additional information fully described.

If you agreed to be tape recorded you will receive a separate form consenting to be tape recorded. No one but the members of the research team will be listening to the tapes.

2. RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS

There are no known risks associated with participation in this study other than those experienced in their every day professional lives. You may benefit from participation because it will give participants the opportunity to reflect on their professional practice as collaborators. The researcher will provide you with a list of scholarly references if you want to further your knowledge of the subject.

3. BENEFITS

Benefits to you could be the learning that will take place about ICC. The collective data from up to 60 questionnaires/interviews could potentially be useful in your own teaching, research and/or practice. Moreover, we anticipate that the experience and opinions of the participants will help the academic and professional community to establish best practices and guidelines for effective interdisciplinary community collaboration.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial incentives to participate in the first phase of this study.

5. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of this study, we want to make clear the level of confidentiality that will be assured. This is a study where opinions, experiences, and materials will be shared in the aggregate. Only the research team will listen to the tapes and discuss the process and outcome. We will keep all the taped interviews and completed questionnaires in locked file cabinet in the PI's office for three years after which they will be destroyed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the study you can contact the researchers Terry Mizrahi (212) 452-7112 or Marcia Bayne-Smith (718) 997-2719.

If you feel your rights as a subject have been violated, you may report to the Office of Research Administration 212-772-4020.

CONSENT FORM

"I have read the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received satisfactory answers to any questions I asked. I give my consent to

voluntarily participate in this study based on the information provided to me. I have received a copy of this form for my records and future reference.”

Participant’s Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher’s Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

“I have read the contents of this consent form once again and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received satisfactory answers to any questions I asked. I give my consent to voluntarily participate in the focus groups and final interview/questionnaire phase of this study based on the information provided to me. I have received a copy of this form for my records and future reference.”

Participant’s Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher’s Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX D

CODEBOOK

CATEGORIES & FAMILIES	CODES	DEFINITIONS
<p>CONFLICT: STAGE 3</p> <p>CONFLICT CLARIFICATION</p> <p>CONFLICT CRITICISM</p> <p>CONFLICT PRIORITIES/VALUES</p> <p>CONFLICT FIRM GROUND</p>	<p>CON 3</p> <p>CON – CLAR</p> <p>CON – CRIT</p> <p>CON – PRI/VAL</p> <p>CON – FG</p>	<p>1. Any and all instances where explicit conflict is evident.</p> <p>2. Explanations of why there is disagreement</p> <p>3. Explicit criticism of a person’s or the group’s perspective.</p> <p>4. Explicit description of different priorities and values</p> <p>5. Resistance to finding common ground, stands on their own position.</p>
<p>TENSION: STAGE 2</p> <p>TENSION-AVOIDANCE</p> <p>TENSION NEGATIVE PERSPECTIVE</p>	<p>TENS 2</p> <p>TENS – AV</p> <p>TENS – NEG</p>	<p>1. Any instance when disagreement is expressed or received with discomfort. For example, a response to a statement with “it can be that, or not” or “I don’t think that...” in disagreement of the previous statement. Tension can be perceived but is not explicit disagreement directed at a person or the group. It may be an expression of a participant’s opinion that is contrary to another, without making it an explicit toward the other person. Such as, “there are many people who think that...”</p> <p>2. Tension or conflict avoidance is when the person denies or ignores the tension. It is different from the pro-active behaviors that avert/diffuse tension, bellow, in that avoidance may momentarily</p>
<p>TENSION: STAGE 2</p>	<p>TENS 2</p>	<p>1. Any instance when disagreement is expressed or received with discomfort. For example, a response to a statement with “it can be that, or</p>

<p>CONFLICT RESOLUTION: STAGE 4</p> <p>Conflict Resolution RESUME WORK</p> <p>CONFLICT RESOLUTION: SOFTENING PERSPECTIVE</p>	<p>CON RES 4</p> <p>CR-RESUME WORK</p> <p>CR- CREATIVESOL</p> <p>CR - SOFT</p>	<p>1. The stage where the groups that have had conflict, are able to resume the task. In some instances they are able to resume work even if they have not resolved the conflict, in others there is a 'resolution' or agreement.</p> <p>2. The group is able to use the conflict constructively to move to creative solutions and problem solving.</p> <p>3. These are situations where those engaged in conflict become flexible and open to other perspectives. Usually, it refers to two or more individuals.</p>
<p>TENSION DIFFUSSION</p> <p>CONFLICT DIFFUSEMENT ATTEMPT</p>	<p>TENS – DIFFUSE</p> <p>CON-DIFF ATMPT</p>	<p>Instances where the tension does not escalate to conflict. It is very close, as one party may have directly attacked or is provocative. The conflict is averted, does not escalate. May be because the other person does not respond, or responds in a calm or conciliatory way.</p> <p>These are statements that attempt to cool down the tension and conflict once disagreement has already been expressed. The conflict may not be resolved, but the attempt was made. It may be someone offering an alternative or more positive perspective.</p>
<p>PRODUCTIVE GROUP PROCESS: STAGE 1</p> <p>AGREEMENT OF PROCESS</p> <p>AGREEMENT DEMONSTRATION</p> <p>AWARENESS OF COMPLEXITY</p>	<p>PRDCTV GRP 1</p> <p>PRDCTV – AGRMT</p> <p>PRDCTV- DMSTRT</p>	<p>1. Agreement on how to proceed is sought and/or there is agreement about process.</p> <p>2. Agreement, assent and commonality of opinion are shown through statements of assertion: right, I agree, ditto, etc.</p>
<p>PRODUCTIVE GROUP PROCESS: STAGE 1</p> <p>AGREEMENT OF PROCESS</p>	<p>PRDCTV GRP 1</p> <p>PRDCTV – AGRMT</p>	<p>1. Agreement on how to proceed is sought and/or there is</p>

<p>PROCESS BEHAVIORS</p> <p>MOVING PROCESS</p> <p>SLOWING PROCESS</p>	<p>PROCES</p> <p>PROCES-MOVE</p> <p>PROCES-SLOW</p>	<p>1. These are behaviors/actions that are neutral. They may or may not be associated to a particular stage. They take place in all stages but are more or less common depending on what happens in the group. For analysis, the difference may be found in the when, how the actions take place.</p> <p>2.Actions, that move the process along, possibly because it is stuck or there is tension/conflict.</p> <p>3.Actions to slow the process down either because individual is jumping steps, or there is a need to clarify or further discuss.</p>
<p>OTHER [Distinguishable, folded into other codes]</p> <p>ATTEMPT TO EDUCATE</p> <p>CEDES TURN</p> <p>CHECK ASSUMPTIONS</p> <p>CONFLICT AVERTED: NO REACTION</p> <p>CONFLICT AVOIDANCE</p> <p>CREATIVE IDEAS/perspectives/solutions</p> <p>CURIOSITY</p> <p>CROSSTALK</p> <p>DISAGREEMENT</p> <p>ENTHUSIASM</p> <p>RESPECT</p>		<p>WANTING TO KNOW</p> <p>DIFFERENCE OF OPINION. Expressed with no tension, neutral, received well by group. Tend to build on or clarify ideas.</p>

OTHER [Distinguishable, folded into other codes]		
ATTEMPT TO EDUCATE		
CEDES TURN		
CHECK ASSUMPTIONS		
CONFLICT AVERTED: NO REACTION		
CONFLICT AVOIDANCE		
CREATIVE IDEAS/perspectives/solutions		
CURIOSITY		WANTING TO KNOW
CROSSTALK		
DISAGREEMENT		
ENTHUSIASM		DIFFERENCE OF OPINION. Expressed with no tension, neutral, received well by group. Tend to build on or clarify ideas.
RESPECT		

Codebook Developed for Stages of Conflict/Constructive Collaborative Behaviors.
Martha L. Garcia

APPENDIX E

Chart Constructive Behaviors and their appearance by Gender, Ethnicity/Race and in Multi-disciplinary or mono-disciplinary groups.

BEHAVIORS	Gender		Race/Ethnicity				Discipline						TOTAL
	F	M	A	B	L	W	D	L	N	PH	Ps	SW	
Agreement demonstration	99	15	5	22	13	74	24	16	26	15	21	11	113
Agreement of Process	54	15	10	13	7	39	9	12	4	9	23	34	69
Build group: cohesion/community	61	15	7	21	6	42	18	10	26	13	7	8	76
Build Consensus, ideas, commonality	229	32	15	45	26	175	61	32	50	58	53	47	261
Creative ideas, solutions	63	34	0	22	10	65	29	10	12	3	11	36	97
Humor, curiosity, enthusiasm	89	17	5	14	11	76	17	18	16	5	16	11	106
Inclusive of others & ideas	81	10	2	20	9	60	21	17	19	15	18	16	91
Positive Perspective of Community, build community	43	6	1	6	5	37	10	15	8	7	10	7	49
Positive/proactive perspective	48	8	3	8	3	42	14	4	5	4	6	14	56
Process: Moves, slows, cedes turn, respectful Recommendation	32 42	15 8	6 1	4 12	6 3	29 35	57 10	27 11	40 11	50 6	52 8	38 7	47 50
Productive awareness of Complexity	54	15	10	13	7	39	16	9	11	22	9	10	69
Self Reflection/taking responsibility	18	3	3	4	3	11	4	4	7	4	4	1	21
Seeking Clarification, understanding	71	10	3	23	6	49	26	3	25	17	7	9	81
Seeking Feedback	45	4	1	9	4	35	23	5	7	6	4	5	49
Synthesis/reframing	65	13	2	17	14	45	45	21	18	14	4	11	78
Attempt to educate: Constructive	31	6	1	6	5	25	1	9	14	4	21	7	37
TOTAL	1125	226	74	259	138	878	385	223	299	252	284	272	1350

Female = 83%, Male = 17%

Asian=5.48% Black=19.18% Latino =10.22% White =65%

Doctor= 28.51%, Latino= 16.51%, Nurse= 22.14%, Public Health= 18.6%, Psychology= 21.03 %, Social Work = 20.1 %

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