

## **Future Search**

A Future Search is a large group planning meeting that brings representatives of an entire system together while we work on a task-focused agenda.

The purpose of a Future Search is joint action toward a desired future for a community, organization or issue.

The outcomes are dramatic new actions plans, structures and processes that are congruent with the group's aspirations.

During a Future Search we discuss the following topics:

- Turbulent Environment
- History
- Desired Future

Between 60 and 80 people can be involved in one Future Search and participants can be internal and external participants.

### **Here's how it works:**

The work is completed in small, large, mixed and stakeholder groups.

First, participants start in mixed stakeholder groups to review the past. A history timeline is created with the entire community. Three separate timelines are taped onto the walls, and participants develop timelines for themselves, society and the community or issue.

Then the whole group creates a mind map of worldviews to bring in the present. Personal priorities are marked with coloured dots (each colour represents a different stakeholder group). After this exercise, the participants meet with their stakeholder groups to discuss important priorities for their group.

The next exercise is continued in the stakeholder groups where people have a shared relationship to the overall conference. This exercise is called "prouds and sorries". Each group makes a list of things that they are proud of and those that they are not so proud. After this, they report their results back to the large group.

The next task takes place in mixed groups again. Participants prepare skits that demonstrate their ideal future. Still in mixed groups, the participants search for common ground. They identify common themes from the skits, come up with possible projects and find ways to work towards a common future. All ideas are taken from the flipcharts, cut into pieces and converged on the wall, with the large group. A dialogue begins to confirm common ground themes. Any item identified by all groups is the common ground.

In the last task voluntary stakeholder groups are formed. Participants get together to make short- and long-term plans to work towards their ideal future. The plans are reported before closing and a date for a review meeting might be scheduled.