

# FRE May Call Notes

## May 28, 2019 | 2:30pm EDT

This month, we learned about the work happening in the City of Seattle and King County to transform their homelessness system. As part of the process, Marc Dones and his team engaged people with lived experience as part of the process to live the value of centering those closest to an issue to design the solution.

### Guest Speakers

- Marc Dones, National Innovation Service | [marc@nis.us](mailto:marc@nis.us)
- Danielle Winslow, All Home King County | [Danielle.Winslow@allhomekc.org](mailto:Danielle.Winslow@allhomekc.org)
- Mary Flowers, People's Institute for Survival and Beyond | [Mary.Flowers@seattle.gov](mailto:Mary.Flowers@seattle.gov)
- Azia Ruff, Lived Experience Coalition | [azia@nationalyouthforum.org](mailto:azia@nationalyouthforum.org)

### Context about the work in Seattle and King County (Marc and Danielle)

- Seattle has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest homeless population in the nation. About four reports about Seattle's homeless population. The core system issues were not addressed in those reports. They wanted to do a system overhaul. They wanted to do that work through an equity lens. General willingness to center people of lived experience and people of color.
- As data has been getting stronger, we've been paying more attention to it. What type of interventions are people going to? There is not equality as to the outcomes once they have got to the system. How do we hold accountability at the center of this issue? If we ignore race, then we are never going to solve our issue.
- All Home wanted their governing board to understand the issue, so the COC went through a race equity training. Asking those questions to do work differently. Consolidations to a single authority, so that mean shifting, sharing, and releasing power.
- When you partner with a community, you start reaching out to people and partnering with people with lived experience and worked with them to help co-create a new system. Mary Flowers, People Institute Northwest, has helped shepherd this conversation and helped it remain grounded in anti-racism framework. Co-creation to not be making assertions that are not backed by the community. You want to partner with the community to create solutions that will be long lasting.
- Contracts are limiting the type of relationship that consultants can make by have such short time frames in the beginning. Eight months to a year for incorporating community and people with lived experience in the co-creation. Consultants are burned out from trying to meet the contract time frame at an expedited manner. It is also important to build trust in community.

### What changes would you recommend to the contract/grant agreements to build in transformational rather than transactional relationships? (Marc)

- Mandate that consultants need to be at the community meetings and be in community. Funding should be more in line with community desire. Allow community to be a part of the selection process. A portion of the budget is to pay the community organizers.

**Can you give an example of what didn't work? (Marc)**

- Trying to rush the community building and engagement process. They didn't loop back and request additional feedback. Is this an accurate reflection of my voice? They were not able to get deep with the providers. Need more community organizing and less advocacy.

**Azia, can you share how you were involved in this process? (Azia)**

- Last fall, Azia was on the Youth Advisory Board and connecting with the Lived Experience Coalition. The regional redesign work was informed by the experience from YAB and the Coalition. The onboarding and the orientation that was done by the Youth Advisory Board was helpful in educating members about the system and provider landscape. They provided a lesson on the acronyms and the complexity of the system.

**How do we prepare people to transfer/share power?**

- Are we where we want to be? If not, how can we go in a different direction. How do we help people source solutions that can really help those most vulnerable?
- Leadership coaching may be good in helping leaders share power and think about equity.
- The charter is going to state that the "consumer board" must be consulted before we can pass anything forward. Making this accountability a part of the structure and system.
- Trying to contract with the folks that have been a part of these lived experience coalition and other community groups, so they are paid fairly.

**How do you create a space that is impactful for the community where people's voices are heard?**

- If they pull it off, it will be the first to build a "durable space" to create transformational spaces. It requires a lot of patience and slow work. There needs to be some space for healing and then work from there. It is about creating training and education for people with lived experience who want to engage in this work. How to leverage their grasp of the field and experience as it combined.

**What is your experience around the research? What were some of the rewarding and challenging issues? What are better ways to measure success? (Marc, Mary)**

- Contracted with Marc's team to host design workshops to try and get representation from the sub populations. Have workshops with the providers, clients, and customers.
- In the youth sessions where providers were present, young people were not heard and were not comfortable in the presence of the providers.
- It was observed that the transactional nature of collecting information made people feel more uncomfortable. Customers needed to be met where they are at instead of in provider space on the time.