

RECONNECTING ON COMMON GROUND

Coming back together around our shared values, vision, and purpose



ontario
independent
facilitation
network

facilitating change, customizing supports

REFLECTING ON OUR TIME TOGETHER

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

OIFN - WHO ARE WE?

OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

OIFN is a Community of Practice that includes people with developmental disabilities, family members and/or loved ones, independent facilitators, and other allies who are interested in supporting people to live meaningful, everyday lives in their chosen neighbourhoods and communities.

OIFN LEADERSHIP

- Ashley White, Timmins
 - Cathy Bloomfield, Durham
 - Cathy Stroud, Huntsville
 - Colleen Mitchell, Windsor
 - Joyce Balaz, London
 - Megan MacDonald, Tavistock
 - Roz Vincent-Haven, Waterloo
 - Susannah Joyce, London
-
- Bill Rollo, OIFN Community of Practice Coordinator



OIFN - OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION

Our vision is an Ontario where all people experience full belonging and inclusion and have control over their lives – to make decisions, share their interests and gifts, and receive and direct the resources and supports they need in order to take their rightful place in Canadian society with the same opportunities as other citizens.

MISSION

Our mission is to support people with disabilities, their family members and/or loved ones to pursue meaningful, everyday lives. We are committed to learning alongside others about the contribution independent facilitation can make to people strengthening their voices, claiming their power, creating change, and living full lives in their chosen neighbourhoods and communities.



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OIFN - OUR CORE BELIEFS

We believe in the rights of all people to set the pace and direction of change in their lives...as upheld by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People Living with Disabilities, Article 19.

We believe in people having support to determine their lives...with the support of their families and/or loved ones.

We believe in ensuring that people have meaningful support for decision-making...

We believe that natural neighbourhood connections and community resources are the first resort...

We believe in reflective practice and shared learning through a Community of Practice...

We believe that partnerships and collaboration are necessary vehicles for bringing about justice and social change...

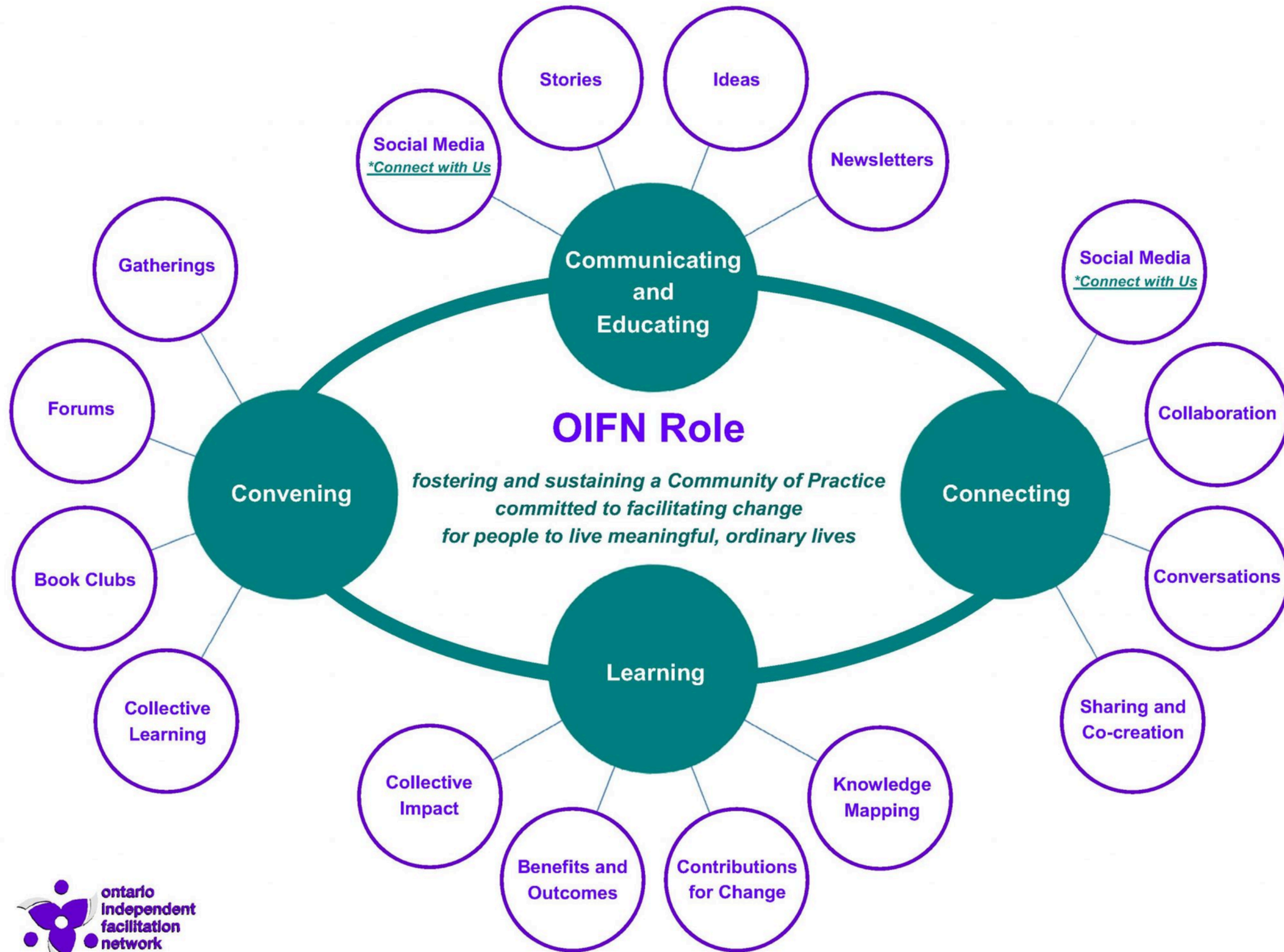
We believe that sustainable options must be available for people and families who are looking for ways to manage their own housing, staffing, direct individualized funding, facilitation, and support resources...

We believe that Independent Facilitation has an action and change orientation with a focus on assisting to clarify vision, goals, and needs...

We believe that independent facilitators must be free of conflicts of interest in order to be in right relationship with people and families.



WHERE IS OIFN TODAY?



REFLECTIONS ON OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

WHO ARE WE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Appreciations over the years:

- Learning and being with allies who share the same values and principles and are grounded in the 'real' meaning of Independent Facilitation.
- Community engagement – bringing OIFN and Independent Facilitation into other communities.
- Sharing “whole” stories that bring the values to life and highlight possibilities, successes, but also interesting failures and learning moments.
- From a family perspective – finding hope in others' stories, especially where others are more ahead. Hearing how others have done it; it can happen; we are not alone.

Opportunities for moving forward:

- Sharing information, spreading awareness about, and growing Independent Facilitation
 - Clarifying the role
 - Distinctions from agency–provided PDP
 - Simplify wordy language on website
 - From a family perspective – questions and responses about Independent Facilitation
 - Fitting Independent Facilitation within DS sector changes
 - Supporting facilitators to grow their practice. How can facilitators find one another?
 - Communicating the importance of funding Independent Facilitation outside of people's support funding
- Supporting people and families to tailor supports and maximize their funding
- Bringing people together in different ways – in-person and virtual opportunities
- Community engagement/rebuilding the vibrancy of Independent Facilitation as a viable option (Ex. engaging Family Networks)
 - Walking alongside vs. carrying people
 - Independent Facilitation is often seen as a scarce resource – how do we share in the abundance?
 - COLLECTIVE ACTION – what organizations and people are out there?
- Clarifying the pathways to become independent facilitators



CONNECTING THROUGH OUR SHARED NARRATIVES

FROM ORGANIZING: PEOPLE, POWER, CHANGE

https://commonslibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/Organizers_Handbook.pdf

Five key practices of organizing:

- telling stories,
- building relationships,
- structuring teams,
- strategizing,
- and acting



CONNECTING THROUGH OUR SHARED NARRATIVES

**"IF I AM NOT FOR MYSELF,
WHO WILL BE FOR ME?
IF I AM ONLY FOR MYSELF, WHAT AM I?
AND IF NOT NOW,
WHEN?"**

– HILLEL (PIRKEI AVOT, CHAPTER 1:14)



STORIES OF US

Vision &
Dreaming Big

Contributions
&
Opportunities

Inclusion &
Belonging

Curiosity

Creative
options &
possibilities

Interdependence

Our shared
Values

ALL means
ALL

Being
intentional

Accepting
without
Judgment

Caring &
Heart

Collaboration

Mutual
Respect



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STORIES OF NOW

CHALLENGE

What are we trying to overcome? Why must change happen now?

CHOICE

What options do we have to address the issue? What do we want others to do to help?

OUTCOME

This is the world we want to see – what is our "dream"?



STORIES OF NOW - BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS

Belief

GROUP A
pg 1

- everyday life in community
- we are all capable
- ...

GROUP A pg 2

- Access to resources necessary for success

- you don't know what you don't know

- stories provide for shared experiences

GROUP A pg 3

- passion to do more

- can't do it alone

Collective action

- curious... what else?

Impact -

GROUP A pg 4

- Shared information

- Collaboration

- inclusivity

- allies, people, community, agency funders

GROUP A pg 8

- stuck in welfare model of "care" instead of building a good life

- society views group homes as default

GROUP A pg 9

- collective of people who believe in walking with people

- buy into "ordinary life in community"

- more hands

- more energy to spread word

Dream

GROUP A pg 10

- Independent Facilitation

- receives dedicated funding so everyone can benefit from the investment in their future

STORIES OF NOW - BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS

- Values we share, GRPB pg 1
- mutual respect
 - accepting without judgement
 - = cultural, faith, ...
 - true inclusion and belonging - contributions relationships
 - being helpful
 - being intentional - plan
 - ↳ think about possibilities/opportunities
 - creative options

- Experiences/Impact GRPB pg 2
- regular gatherings that were facilitated
 - local networks connecting to provincial networks
 - training available
 - feeling of solidarity
 - opportunities for families to learn from stories

- Challenges GRPB pg 3
- Sustainability
 - financial resources
 - re-engaging
 - bringing in new blood
 - meeting the right people with the same values as our family

- Overcome GRPB pg 4
- re-engagement/energy
 - loss of momentum
 - re-connecting
 - managing geography
 - who is going to hold
 - lack of facilitators across province
 - understanding what independent facilitation is

- Options GRPB pg 5
- involve family networks
 - continue gatherings
 - finding champions in each geographic area
 - develop a plan/PATH for OIFN
 - explore government funding/grant funding

- Dream GRPB pg 6
- full inclusion
 - recognized
 - live with dignity
 - every community has facilitators available
 - individual budget for independent facilitation

STORIES OF NOW

GROUP C

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SHARE WITH THIS COMMUNITY?

Heart

Inclusion

Belonging

Curiosity

ALL means ALL

Respect

Collaboration

Caring

Interdependence

Vision

Dreaming Big

What experiences have had the greatest impact on this community?

The demonstration project

What are the challenges?

Fewer resources available vs imagining what could be

Vibrancy of Independent Facilitators to NOW.... IFDP

Government betrayal of Independent Facilitation

Trying to do this... with NO Community

Limited Funding

Choice

Challenge we are trying to overcome?

Having the TIME to have these valuable conversations

People don't know who the other facilitators are

Survival mode - Feeling alone

Need to start "being" with others

The Community are these things...

Feeling left out

Understanding Opportunities / options for you

CHOICE

GRPC pg 4

For people to Communicate + Not be Judged

More opportunities to come together

Coming with an authentic interest

Easy access information for ALL

Outcome

Grp C pg 5

PEOPLE Are the resources
invite them / join with and
build networks

Building + re-building
relationships

How do we meet others?

* GO SHOW UP *

(Where they are already gathering)

DREAM

VIBRANT Community where
everyone BELONGS
A Bigger "WE"

• TELL THE TRUTH!!

STORIES OF NOW - BREAKOUT CONVERSATIONS

- GROUP D
PAGE 1
- self determination,
 - belief in capacity of people,
 - meaningful support for decision making
 - community as a first resort
 - partnerships and collaboration

* One size does not fit all *

- GROUP D
PAGE 2
- access can be a challenge (funding, awareness, support)
 - managing expectations
 - education
 - ↳ role clarification
 - ↳ boundaries
 - ↳ broad but also in an individualized capacity
 - being present

involvement with schools

one size does not fit all, it may not be perfect but we need to try to move forward

people to have good lives doing whatever they want

STORIES OF NOW - POSSIBILITIES FOR OIFN MOVING FORWARD

CHALLENGES - WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

- Loss of momentum and connection
- Staying present across a broad geographical landscape (virtual does not work for all)
- Feelings of isolation and in survival mode
- Who upholds and promotes the values?
 - Moving from a welfare model and protection to building rich, meaningful lives
- Sustainability of Independent Facilitation and OIFN
 - Financial and human resources
 - Lack of independent facilitators across Ontario
 - Lack of understanding of Independent Facilitation and options
 - Loss of government support

CHOICES - WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Involve family networks
- Continue OIFN gatherings
- Find champions in each geographic area
- Develop a plan/PATH for OIFN
- Explore government/grant funding
- Make information and resources easily accessible for ALL.

OUTCOMES - WHAT IS OUR DREAM?

- Full inclusion
- People with disabilities living with dignity and choice (not one size fits all)
- Independent Facilitation available in every community
- Funding/budget for Independent Facilitation
- Building & rebuilding relationships, vibrant networks, and a “Bigger We”



MOVING FORWARD

OUR STORY OF NOW

What is the story we can tell to invite others in and take action?



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