TREC TOGETHER RISING AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY

Self-reflection exercise on organizational power and your role in the community

Rethinking Relationships to Build Long-Term Power

1) **What types of power does our organization engage with?**
   a. Individual - personal behavior change such as consumer decisions and lifestyle choices
   b. Structural/positional - institutions, business, government decision makers, etc.
   c. Social/networks - volunteer networks, community associations, affinity groups, etc.

2) **How do you tend to exercise power in these different arenas?**
   a. When and with whom do you tend to use the carrot? Why?
   b. When and with whom do you tend to use the stick? Why?
   c. When and with whom do you tend to share or gift power? Why?

3) **Who and where do you gather knowledge from?**
   a. Does your organization primarily listen to input from academic, economic, political, faith, health, and/or community-specific sources?
   b. Do you tend to listen to institutions or people you know and trust?
   c. Do your information sources include diverse beliefs, perspectives, and types of power?
   d. Do you ask partners, decision makers, funders, and/or community leaders for advice?
   e. Who aren't you asking their opinions? Why not?

4) **Do you currently mobilize, organize, or both?**
   a. Is your approach focused on leveraging existing power?
   b. Is your approach focused on building additional power?
   c. Is your approach building power for individuals, organizations, or the broader community? How and why?

5) **Where do you engage different types of people?**
   a. When do you go to them? Why?
   b. When do you have them come to you? Why?

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6) **Are you currently building relationships intentionally or casually?**
   a. Do you have clear goals and a list of individuals/organizations you want to build or maintain relationships with?
   b. Do you have dedicated people proactively working as relationship managers?
   c. Do those people have clear time and clear expectations for relationship management?

7) **What is your motivation to engage with organizations and communities different than your own?**
   a. What do you hope to achieve?
   b. How is it mutually beneficial?
   c. What risks are there to you and your community?
   d. Are you willing to change your plans, goals, or even ways of thinking in order to be in partnership with communities different from your own?
   e. What is core to your organization's values/approach that you aren't willing to change?

8) **What is, and has been, the historical relationship between your organization and a new community you hope to engage?**
   a. What is your organization's history around race and racism? Agricultural communities? Religious groups? Business community? Affinity groups? Etc.?
   b. What about other organizations that look and sound like yours?
   c. Are these communities likely to be aware of this history as well?

9) **Is there a shared analysis and language around these topics, communities, and people?**
   a. What parts of your organization's, or even movement's, history are you comfortable naming and owning in order to make amends and move forward?
   b. Are there things you are you not comfortable or willing to take responsibility for? Why?

10) **What strengths and resources can your organization offer to partners and the community at large?**
   a. Do you have access to unique and important information?
   b. Do you have access to key constituencies or decision-makers?
   c. Do you have particular skills or tools that could be shared in solidarity?
   d. Do you have financial and/or other resources that others lack?

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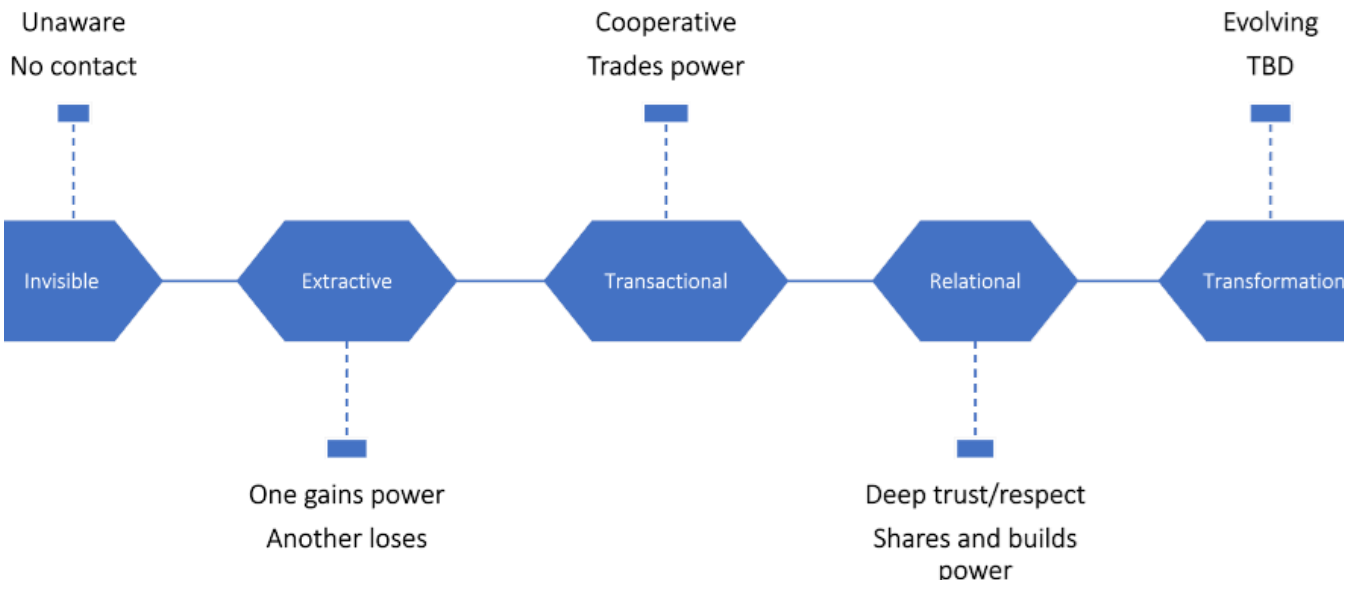
11) **How do you want to work with others and what are you prepared to offer?**



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