

Consensus Decision Making

1/17/09

The TWIG (Transition Whatcom Initiating Group) operates with Consensus decision making, using the finger voting method and Holacracy's Integrative Decision-Making Process when needed.

1 finger held up: I agree.

2 fingers: I don't agree but I'm willing to live with it. Or I agree, but I have a concern.

3 fingers: I don't agree but I'm willing to work for an alternative solution (3 fingers blocks a decision).

If a decision yields one or more 3-finger responses, the following sequence begins:

1. Each person who held up 3 fingers is responsible to bring forth a friendly amendment to the next meeting
 - a. If more than one person held up 3 fingers, this group can come together to offer a single, or numerous, friendly amendments
2. At the next meeting, a friendly amendment is offered and discussion follows Holacracy's Integrative Decision-Making Process:
 - a. **Present Proposal:** The proposer states the tension to be resolved and a possible proposal for addressing it. Clarifying questions are allowed solely for the purpose of understanding what is being proposed. Discussion and reactions are cut off immediately by the facilitator.
 - b. **Reaction Round:** The facilitator asks each person in turn to provide a quick gut reaction to the proposal. Discussion or cross-talk of any sort is ruthlessly cut off by the facilitator – this is sacred space for each person to notice, share, and detach from their reactions, without needing to worry about the potential effect of sharing them.
 - c. **Amend or Clarify:** The proposer has a chance to clarify any aspects of the proposal they feel may need clarifying after listening to the reactions, or to amend the proposal in very minor ways based on the reactions. Discussion is cut off by the facilitator.

d. **Objection Round:** The facilitator asks each person in turn if they see any objections to the proposal as stated. Objections are briefly stated without discussion or questions; the facilitator lists all objections on the board, and cuts off discussion of any kind at this stage. If the objection round completes with no objections surfaced, the decision is made and the process ends.

i. An objection is a tangible present-tense reason why a proposed decision is not workable right now – why it is outside the limits of tolerance of some aspect of the system. Objections belong to the circle – they are not the individuals' personal objections.

e. **Integration:** If objections surface, once the objection round completes the group enters open dialog to integrate the core truth in each into an amended proposal. As soon as an amended proposal surfaces which might work, the facilitator cuts off dialog, states the amended proposal, and goes back to an objection round.

f. If one or more people continue to present three fingers, the group discusses whether or not this issue is urgent and important.

i. If a majority of those present consider it urgent and important, we immediately rule by a majority vote.

ii. If a majority of those present consider it non-urgent and important, we repeat step #2 above at the next meeting.

iii. If a majority of those present consider it non-urgent and non-important, we immediately drop the issue indefinitely.

Amendment adopted at TWIG Mtg 1/20/09, with the modification that a majority is defined as 2/3