

GPC Members Meeting 2018: Building Trust for Philanthropic Impact



Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, NY

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Welcome and Framing Remarks: Building Trust for Philanthropic Impact

Peggy Dulany, Founder and Chair, Synergos

DULANY: So, it's great to see so many people here and I have a feeling there's quite a few more coming. How many people here we're not with us last night? Just raise your hands.

So, enough probably -- enough for me to comment that it was quite a night from my perspective, different from our events in the past. Is there anyone who would like to say a word or two just about the energy or what you thought of it? Anyone who was there, that is. Just shout out words.

UNKNOWN: Trust and love.

DULANY: Trust and love. Those were the two words. Yes.

UNKNOWN: Great MC.

UNKNOWN: Yes.

UNKNOWN: Great MC.

DULANY: You like the MC. He was really amazing. Yes, a lot of loving energy, right? Yes. Yes.

So, my role this morning is, first of all, to welcome you, and secondly, to just say a few words about the connection between bridging and love to philanthropy.

So, I don't know if you noticed at the table last night, those of you who were there, we had my 30th anniversary paper on the table. I noticed a lot of people. They sort of got lost among the many papers on the table, including the auction paddles.

But do we have copies here today, anybody? Does anyone know if we brought some? Yes, we do. OK, so anybody who didn't get it last night. But I was just going to summarize a little bit because I doubt if anyone went home and read it.

The connection I see between the work that we at Synergos do with our networks and in the countries where we work, and by the way today, today, I think all if -- most if not all of our country directors from Egypt, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Namibia and South Africa either are or will be with us. So, I hope you have a chance to meet them.

So, the connection is this. We have our new tagline, it's "building trust works". And the way I see it; in order to get impact in the world, we need collaboration. People need to be able to work together effectively.

And in order to get collaboration, we need bridging leaders. That's leaders who reach out across divides. We aspired that all of us are or will become bridging leaders.

And what does it take to become a bridging leader? Well, having empathy, being able to reach out across divides, being able to listen deeply and respectfully to people and finally, having a sense of one's own purpose and of one's own true self, so that people you're dealing with and people you're convening see you as authentic.

They can trust you because they see who you are. Even if you disagree with them, they see who you are. So, the idea is the inner work part of Synergos is exactly that. And many of you here have been to our Montana retreat, or we had one in the Canary Islands. We've had a couple in Mexico, a couple in Brazil.

And the purpose of those is exactly to peel away the layers of our defenses, our fears, whatever it is that keeps us from being our best and most purposeful selves.

So, when we talk about bridging leadership, we're talking about each of us becoming our best most hopeful, most authentic and most effective selves. And that is, in my view, how it relates to philanthropy because, of course, the true meaning of philanthropy is love of humanity, and I would add the planet.

And so, in order to be our most effective, we need to be able to truly listen to people, the people we hope to help, truly empathize with what's going on in the world and in the areas that we want to affect. And that's where the inner work feeds into the bridging leadership capacity building. And we're going to be talking about this during the day.

And then we're in a position to be able to find partners, multisectoral partners that can work with us to get the kind of impact we all want to achieve in the areas we care about. So, that's my introduction for the day and I'm going to pass it on to the GPC Senior Director Melissa.