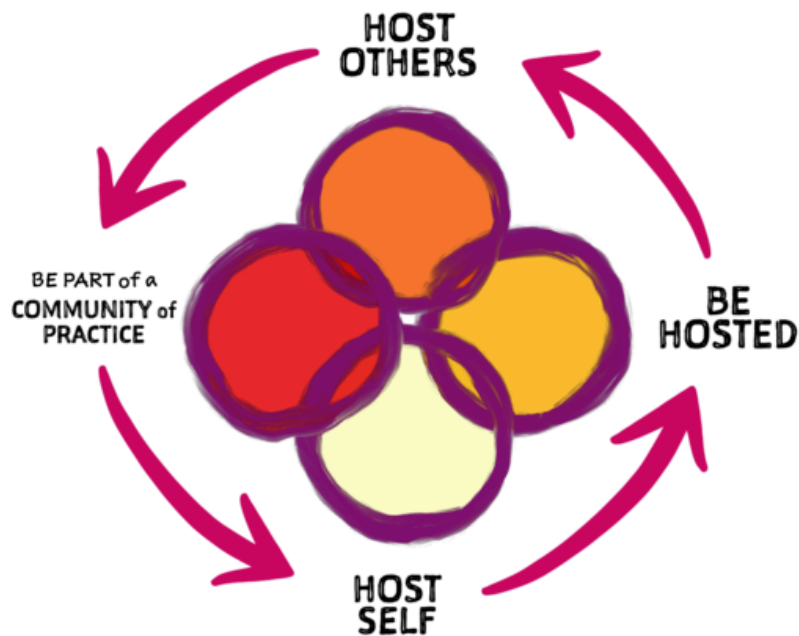


Fourfold practice: leading ourselves and others through times of change



Before embarking on the journey of providing others with guidance for a process of transformation, we need to prepare ourselves in order to make sure we are stable enough to stay standing and not be eradicated when the “winds of change” will come.

This simple but crucial idea is one of the key concepts of [Art of Hosting](#) and one of my favourite practices to transmit when giving training or capacity-building sessions to teams preparing to host participatory processes at SenseTribe.

This practice is called “The Fourfold practice”. However evident it might seem in its essence, it takes a slow and deep process of introspection to really understand it. In order to really embrace this practice one needs to go beyond traditional paradigms of learning and approach it in a non-linear way that leaves room for intuition. The intuition will lead the way through the fractality of all living beings (and structures) and will enable the magic of the hosting process to happen.

I love the way Maria Scordialos describes it [in this video](#):

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/mLb8cbAKcXQ>

“I love to see the fourfold practices like a kaleidoscope, with four different lenses which are brought together to create a whole, and what we discovered is that even though there are four lenses it’s a fractal so every lens has the other lenses in it. That’s the pattern of it, when we share it with people it can sound linear. It is not linear and when you’re learning you might need to dissect it and play with it so that you can learn it. But the real power comes from the interconnectivity of the lenses”.

If you want to host conversations that really matter, you first need to dive into the depths of your being and connect with your inner truth, and this can sometimes involve a painful and drawn-out process.

...host yourself first – be willing to sit in the chaos – keep the space open – sit in the fire of the present...

The four fold practice explained

1. Be Present

..host yourself, sit in the fire of the present...



Be clear about what you need and what your personal contribution to the circle can be. Take a quiet moment to breathe in order to focus on the present. Make space to dedicate time for listening and speaking. Invite all the participants in the meeting to be present.

2. Participate and practice conversation



Listen with attention and speak with intention

Conversation is an art. It demands that we listen carefully to one another and that we offer our contributions to serve the whole. Join the conversation with curiosity and without judgment. Curiosity and judgement cannot live together in the same space. The art of conversation is the art of slowing down in order to speed up.

3. Host conversations



Be courageous, inviting and willing to initiate conversations that matter, and then make sure you harvest the answers, insights, learnings and wise actions...

Hosting conversations is not quite the same as facilitating. It means creating and holding the container in which a group of people can do their best work together. Prepare a question and

know what you will do with the harvest. Hosting conversations takes courage and a bit of certainty and faith in your people.

4. Co-create



...be willing to co-create and co-host with others.

The value of conversations arises when we listen to what is in the middle, what is emerging from the centre of our collaboration. So contribute what you know to the mix so that patterns may become clear and the collaborative field can produce unexpected and surprising results.

Some history

The four fold practice was the first pattern that gave rise to the [Art of Hosting](#). It is simply an observation that great conversations happen when people are present, when they participate, when they are well hosted and when they co-create something.

<https://youtu.be/FWodPL9C1UI>

This practice helped me really get to the core of the hosting process and understand that one can be an expert in tools and formats. But this will not necessarily make this person a good host nor open the way to deep, enlightening conversations. The key is the fractal!

A poem by Toke Moller, one of the initiators of Art of Hosting, summarizes its essence in few words:

*There are four practices that can become one.
It is about being awake
caring for each moment
It is about hosting by being conscious now.
It is about being a student listening and learning.
It about stepping up with courage
when it is my turn to lead.
It is to co create with others
for the benefit of All.
These can be practiced as one whole
by anyone.*

[Download the Four Fold practice two-page guide](#)

[Download the Four Fold origami](#)