



OPEN
FUTURE
COALITION

Resonance Decision Making Process

The term “Resonance” means to create a relationship of mutual understanding, alignment and trust between people. This does not always mean all parties are in full agreement, but instead is a practice of how to respectfully engage, to explore differences, celebrate unique viewpoints, and value the perspectives of individuals as essential to the wisdom of the whole. Making decisions as a group based on Resonance practices calls upon the intelligence of both our intuition and logic to make choices that align with each member of the group and to the common purpose and ethical foundation.

This style of decision making is best used with groups who have good practices for navigating tensions and are actively engaged in growing collaborative capacity and trust amongst the group.

Essentials for Effective Resonance Decision Making

- Trust
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Willingness to Listen and Share
- Respect for Each Person and the Process
- Willingness to Share Power
- Honoring Divergent Perspectives
- Embrace Diversity and Distinction
- Alignment to Self and Group
- Practicing Collective Intelligence and Welcoming Shared Insight

Foundation for Resonance Decision Making

- TRUST is the foundation of Resonance
- Trust is built through transparency, willingness, accountability, and authenticity
- Resonance process invites people to slow down, take turns listening and speaking, honoring that important decisions need time, collective involvement and healthy dialogue in order to represent the truth of the group

- Resonance relies on all members of a group agreeing to work towards a respectful process of decision making by first coming into resonance with oneself, and then connecting with the group from that place of personal alignment
- Members agree to speak from their heart, take accountability for their perspective and feelings, practice considerate and respectful communication
- Members agree to practice active listening, listen with an open mind, and be present (not distracted or thinking of the next thing you want to say) when another is speaking
- Each member of the group is honored for their unique contributions and is a valued member of the collective wealth of the group
- All member agree to be proactive, engaged, and accountable for their participation
- All members agree to abide within the cooperative cultural practices the group has agreed upon
- While different roles hold different responsibilities and decisions, ALL members have a voice and are empowered to bring innovation, solutions, and creativity
- In Resonance, the “NO” is honored as a perspective or aspect of a decision that is not in full alignment. The NO is proactive, committing to work towards solutions that will bring resonance in the group. A NO is offering reflection and consideration about something that is not fully aligning for the group
- If a particular member is a constant voice of “NO” there may be a need for the individual to reflect with the group about whether that person is still aligned with the values and mission or if perhaps there is an underlying need not being met
- If a decision has several “NEUTRAL” votes this is an opportunity to check in with the group about what could be adjusted to bring people into a full “YES”
- All members agree to participate in a council process to honor all voices, engage collaborative decision making, and to seek mediation, support and tension revelation practices to ensure group coherence

Example Process for Resonance Decision Making

1. A member brings a proposal or topic to the meeting with supportive details and research and asks for a decision from the group.
2. The group goes through a “Round” where each member takes a turn sharing (approx. 1-2 min. each) offering feedback, an opinion, or a vote of either **YES/ NO/ NEUTRAL** (Neutral = Won’t block, not a full YES)
3. If there are all **YES** to **NEUTRAL** responses then the decision passes and an action item is tasked to fulfill the steps necessary for the proposal to move forward
4. If there are any **NO’s** then the member bringing the decision takes the floor again and offers any additional information, or potential reconsiderations, compromises or solutions that may address considerations
5. The Members then take another “round” offering any feedback/solutions/compromises/ or a new answer to their vote (members can stand by their original vote and “pass” on adding anything further to the discussion if they feel complete)

6. If a member(s) still vote **NO** after the second round, the group takes one more round of discussion to see if anything has changed after hearing the group voice
7. If after the third round, the **NO** is still strong, then the matter is tabled for further research, consideration, information, or taken to a “breakout meeting” inviting the person bringing the proposal to the group and the person/people with a strong **NO** to dialogue in a separate meeting in order to work together to find a compromise
8. If a compromise can be reached, the amended proposal is brought back to group for reconsideration and the opportunity for whole group to try again to pass the vote using rounds for discussion and consideration
9. If a compromise can not be reached and both parties still feel strongly about their position, it may be taken to the Advisory council or Steering Committee for support and perspective to try to find a compromise
10. If through the Advisory council or Steering Committee a compromise still cannot be met, the group may bring in a mediator or facilitator to lead a process to support the whole group in finding Resonance on a decision.
11. Some groups go through the Resonance process, take the matter to an Advisory council or Steering Committee, worked with mediators and still have not found a solution. If a matter can't be resolved, then a group defers to previously agreed upon tension revelation and decision making protocols outlining what happens in the case that your particular group cannot align on a decision. Doing this as part of the foundation of your group design will at ensure that everyone understands how you will navigate such an impasse. The most important thing is to create that agreement before you ever have to use it so that even if you can not find a clear solution to a particular matter, all parties are still in Resonance with the process itself and are in agreement to participate in finding a way forward together.