

Alexis Kirk ([00:00](#)):

Mark, I wanna go back a little bit to something that you started to touch on earlier and really just get you to talk a little more about how co-creation shaped the core values and philosophies of how your agency operated beyond the development of the practice model that you were working on. Can you talk a little bit more about how co-creation took you from kind of business as usual to business unusual?

Mark Lapid ([00:24](#)):

Yeah, great question. We've talked about co-creation. You know, up until this point in the context of we working with community partners, I think there was also this real big emphasis on the idea of co-creation. Even within our implementation team. Our implementation team was constructed kind of by grabbing whoever folks seemed to fit the mold of what kind of what we were asked. You know, it could involve people around training, so people around evaluation. And so we, members of the original implementation team had never worked together and we were of different classifications and work in a system where classifications impact kind of this privilege and power dynamic in and of itself. And I think it required a lot of humility within that team and relationship building to put those kind of titles aside, which was very parallel to this idea of working with community in that we came in and had to be very aware of our own privilege and status when we walked in their room.

Mark Lapid ([01:36](#)):

Especially how it impacted these communities, you know, our communities we worked with. And so we ourselves in an implementation team really identified and worked through this idea of relationship building, of partnership to kind of set the foundation as we now know of co-creation. Especially given that much of what we are being asked to do in the spirit of implementation and implementation. Science was beyond anything we had experienced before. So that in and of itself helped set a tone amongst the implementation team members of how to engage each other of how to engage the staff that we were supporting and exploring. We had, you know, these aha moments ourselves and a commitment amongst the team members to say, if we truly want our staff to know what it feels like to be interacting with the use of this practice model, we have to embody that practice model in the way we interact with them.

Mark Lapid ([02:42](#)):

So there was a lot of trust being built and practice outside of working with community partners amongst our own selves to really understand how do we identify the problems? How do we work through these adaptive issues? How do we really engage the different drivers of leadership and leadership to help, you know, support us to break barriers? There was all of these kind of things that the four, there was four of us at the time, looked to each other and just said, What do we got to lose if we wanna do it in the spirit of what we're trying to create? And so I think that became very much our own area of practicing all of the foundational aspects that led to this ability to do co-creation with our community partners. And so that's where I think this idea of understanding what business unusual really felt like and looked like it was, you know, it really required a group of folks to be very committed to this idea of being curious, having courageous conversations saying, We don't know the answer to it and let's try to figure this out together.

Mark Lapid ([04:05](#)):

And I think once we understood or started feeling more comfortable with each other doing that, it's kind of like that whole idea, let's just practice it at home before we practice it out with other folks. And so

that's where it was a both end. I think, you know, every time we've interacted with the community partners and they brought that to our attention, we had to come back to the drawing board and work it out together and vice versa, whatever we decided together this group, we would inform the community partners that we don't know if this is gonna work, but what do you all think? This is what we think might, might be a strategy and if it doesn't work, what do you all think we should do? So those were kind of the common themes of how we got started to get better. At the time it wasn't identified as co-creation, it was just trying to figure it out.

Alexis Kirk ([04:56](#)):

I really appreciate you kind of drawing out the parallel experiences of what you guys went through internally in your own team. And that's something that we talk about all the time, kind of working with community partners is parallel processes and it sounds like the whole idea behind co-creation is really engaging community partners and kind of dealing with these tough issues of power and hierarchies and autonomy. And it sounds like while you were tackling that with your community, you were also working on it internally as well to take your, your titles and your roles and your positions that you came into the implementation team with and really work through kind of setting those aside and really focusing on, okay, how can we just think differently? How can we get outside of our box, really challenge the status quo of whatever bureaucracy may exist and whatever power dynamics may exist, and really embody and embrace that business unusual attitude. And I just, I love hearing that part of your story.