

Book Reviews

GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF ToP

By Wayne & Jo Nelson

People demand authentic participation in decisions that affect their lives. Technology of Participation (ToP)[®] methods answer that call because they reflect how humans think, growing out of reflective inquiry into what works in real life, and the study of phenomenology and existentialism. This book explores the foundational understandings of this body of knowledge and its practice. Getting to the Bottom of ToP works at two levels: as a guide to processes that elicit participation to bring insights to the surface and ensure participants collaborate to bring the resulting plans to fruition; and as a theoretical basis drawn from the field of phenomenology. The book is an answer to any of us who have pondered what principles or theory about personal and group change underlie those processes.

Peter J. Taylor, Critical & Creative Thinking Graduate Program, UMass Boston

I have longed for decades for this book, a profound and helpful exploration of the phenomenology of practice of ToP. In this breakthrough work the Nelsons expose the philosophical foundations of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA)'s Technology of Participation (ToP)[®] methods in ways that scholars and facilitators alike will find useful. By tracing ToP's ancestry to the existentialist's insights of Kierkegaard and Sartre, and the phenomenological methods of Husserl and Heidegger, this book not only provides conceptual clarity but releases a deep wellspring of motivation and skillfulness for practitioners of ToP. I will definitely use this book in teaching my NYU Wagner graduate courses on innovative leadership.

Robertson Work, author of *A Compassionate Civilization*, NYU Wagner professor, and UN consultant

Wayne & Jo Nelson

Wayne and Jo Nelson worked with the Institute of Cultural Affairs globally from 1970 until Wayne's death in 2014. Together they used their degrees in sociology, religion, anthropology, and education to guide their work in participatory development and group process facilitation in villages and organizations in many cultures. Jo continues to work with ICA Associates, Inc. in Toronto as a trainer and mentor. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has over 50 years of experience in participatory development in more than 35 nations. For over four decades the Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs has promoted positive social transformation.