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Progress

Based in the belief that human knowledge, technology, and social systems can continuously improve to solve challenges and create better conditions for all.

What evidence do you look for to show your work is creating progress?
How do you measure advancement in your field?
What role does innovation play in your approach to change?

Cydlal

Recognises valuable knowledge, practices, and ways of organising that have sustained communities across generations.

What cycles do you notice in your work or community?
How do you adapt strategies knowing that challenges may return?
What can we learn from previous cycles of change?

Balance

Seeks to honor diverse perspectives, needs, and values while working toward solutions that serve multiple constituencies.

What needs to be balanced in your approach to change?
How do you integrate different perspectives and needs?
What does sustainable change look like to you?

Restoration

Prioritises protecting valuable institutions, rights, + achievements from erosion or regression.

What aspects of the past do you want to restore or preserve?
How do you balance preserving tradition with adapting to new challenges?
What has been lost that you're working to recover?

Maintenance

Prioritises protecting valuable institutions, rights, and achievements from erosion or regression.

What systems or structures are worth maintaining?
How do you balance stability with the need for adaptation?
What would be lost if current systems weren't maintained?

Emergent

Recognises that complex social systems are inherently unpredictable + that outcomes emerge from interactions rather than linear planning.

How do you adapt when things don't go as planned?
What role does experimentation play in your approach?
How do you prepare for unexpected outcomes?

Regenerative

Focuses on actively strengthening the social, ecological, + economic systems that support all life.

How does your work contribute to the renewal or strengthening of social, ecological, or economic systems?
What would it look like if your community or organisation was truly thriving?

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Evaluative Questions

Success Definition

How do you define success in this work?

What does success look like from your worldview?
How do you know when you've achieved your goals?
What might success look like from a different perspective?

Evaluative Questions

Learning Orientation

How do you learn + adapt in your work?

What do you pay attention to when learning about your impact?
How do you adapt when you learn something unexpected?
What would you like to learn more about?

Evaluative Questions

Feedback Loops

How do you know if your work is having the intended effect?

What signals tell you that your work is on track?
How do you hear from the people most affected by your work?
What feedback do you find most challenging to receive?

Evaluative Questions

Unintended Consequences

What unexpected effects might your work have?

What might go wrong with your approach?
How do you prepare for unexpected outcomes?
What would you do if your work had negative effects?

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Scenarios

Funding Decision Dilemma

A community group proposes a solution that conflicts with your organisation's standard approach. How do you respond?

What's your initial reaction to this proposal?
How do you balance organizational requirements with community wisdom?
What would you need to feel comfortable supporting this approach?

Scenarios

Evaluation Challenge

Your project shows strong community engagement but limited quantitative results. How do you interpret this?

What does strong community engagement tell you about the project?
How do you communicate the value of qualitative outcomes?
What questions would you ask to better understand the impact?

Scenarios

Partnership Tension

Your funding partner wants more control over implementation than you're comfortable with. How do you navigate this?

What are your concerns about increased control?
How do you balance accountability with autonomy?
What would a compromise look like for both parties?

Scenarios

Systemic Change Frustration

After years of funding, the underlying system hasn't changed much. How do you respond?

What changes have you noticed, even if they're not systemic?
How do you think about timelines for systemic change?
What would you do differently with this knowledge?

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Power

Centralised

Trust in hierarchical, top-down decision-making; community participation is often mediated by institutions or leaders

Who should make the important decisions?
What decisions require expertise or authority to make well?
How do you ensure accountability in decision-making?
When is centralised leadership most effective?

Power

Decentralised

Emphasis on decentralised, grassroots or self-organising approaches; individuals + local groups exercise significant agency + self-determination

How do you support self-organisation and autonomy?
What can communities do for themselves?
How do you support local leadership and decision-making?
What happens when you step back from control?

Power

Distributed

Support for shared decision-making among authorities + community members; + collaborative + participatory structures are valued

How do you share decision-making power?
What decisions benefit from collaborative inputs?
How do you balance different voices and perspectives?
What structures support meaningful collaboration?

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Response

Technical

Problems should be broken into parts + solved linearly. Technical problems requires expertise - with the right expertise every problem, even the complicated ones, can be solved

What specific problems are you trying to solve?
What specific issues can be addressed with clear solutions?
How do you break down complicated problems into manageable parts?
What expertise and tools do you need to solve this?

Response

Systemic

The world is understood as interconnected systems: actions are evaluated for their impact on the whole, with attention to complexity, feedback loops + emergent properties.

How do you shift challenges within + across interconnected systems?
What connections do you see between different aspects of this work?
How might this intervention affect other parts of the system?
What feedback loops are you paying attention to?

Response

Participatory

Responses need to emphasise interaction, cooperation, adaptive learning; participation is critical to a process of mutual learning + co-creation

How do you involve people in creating effective responses to their identified challenges?
Whose voices need to be heard in this process?
How do you learn together while working on solutions?
What emerges when people work together on this?

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Bridging Questions

Perspective Taking

Imagine you held a completely different worldview? How might your approach shift?

What would someone with a different worldview say about this challenge?
How might your approach change if you viewed this from another perspective?
What assumptions are you making that others might question?

Bridging Questions

Common Ground

Despite different worldviews, what do you share in common?

What do you both care deeply about?
What challenges do you both face?
What would success look like for both of you?

Bridging Questions

Creative Tension

How could your different worldviews strengthen each other?

What does your worldview offer that others might not see?
What blind spots might your worldview have?
How could combining different approaches create better outcomes?

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Relationship

Instrumental

Interactions are instrumental in nature + based on exchange: each party seeks specific, often short-term benefits. Success is measured by clear, immediate outcomes

What are you seeking to exchange or achieve?
What specific outcomes are you accountable for?
How do you measure success in your partnerships?
What do you need from this relationship to be successful?

Relationship

Transformational

Engagement leads to profound + long-term change for all involved. Relationships foster growth, tackling of difference, mutuality in identity + collective transformation

How do you and your partners learn + make sense of the challenges together?
How has this work changed you personally?
What have you learned that you didn't expect?
How do you navigate differences and challenges together?

Relationship

Systemic

Emphasis on building trust, mutual respect + ongoing partnership. Outcomes are more flexible + adaptive

How do you build trust and ongoing partnership?
What does trust look like in your relationships?
How do you adapt when circumstances change?
What have you learned from your partners?