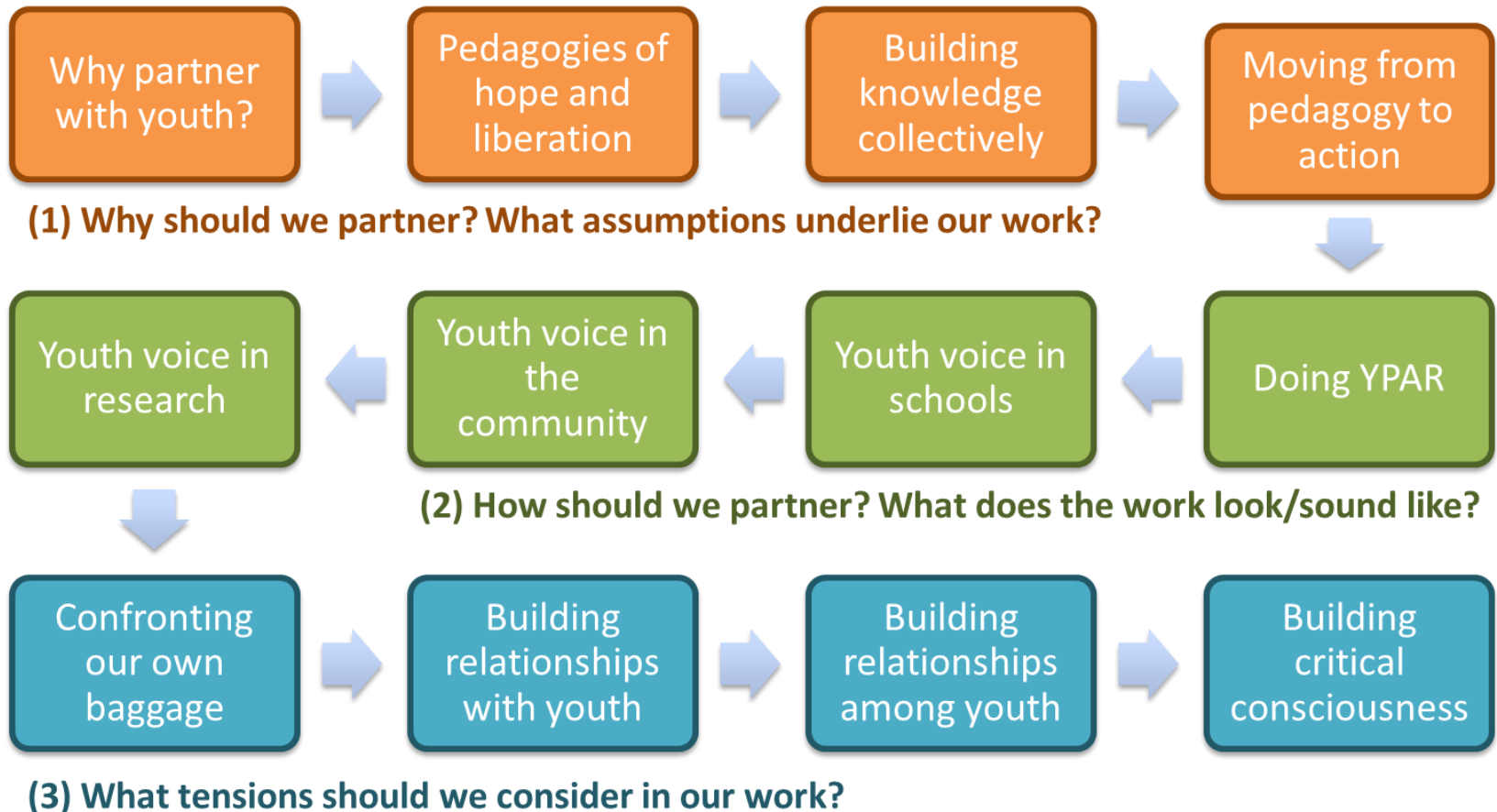# Partnering with Youth in Educational Research & Practice

April 5, 2018

Building Relationships with youth: Bridges & Boundaries

April 5, 2018

Why partner with youth? → Pedagogies of hope and liberation → Building knowledge collectively → Moving from pedagogy to action

(1) Why should we partner? What assumptions underlie our work?

Youth voice in research ← Youth voice in the community ← Youth voice in schools ← Doing YPAR

(2) How should we partner? What does the work look/sound like?

Confronting our own baggage → Building relationships with youth → Building relationships among youth → Building critical consciousness

(3) What tensions should we consider in our work?

Transitioning In

A Few Announcements

Upcoming Event 1:

Exploring Popular Education as a
Foundation for Teaching & Grassroots
Organizing: Lessons from El Salvador

April 9, 10am-12pm, Larsen Hall G-06

LGBTQ+ youth in rural schools often experience unique challenges that are distinct from those experienced by students in other areas of the country. While the response to questions of gender and sexual diversity differs within and across communities, LGBTQ+ youth who live in a rural context can feel isolated and it is often more difficult for them to access support.

Join us on **April 9th from 4:00-5:30pm in Longfellow 229** to learn more about the realities of gender and sexual diversity in rural schools.

Final Project Rubrics

Here are our BIG framing questions for the day:

What strategies can adults use to build strong relationships with youth?

When and how are boundaries important in building supportive relationships with youth?

What are the barriers or challenges to forming strong relationships with youth?

How can we build strong relationships in the contexts of institutional rules?

How can/should we build relationships with youth when their families/communities hold different values than our own?

Let's Hear from a Few Students

JUST LISTEN
students talk about learning

radio rookies

http://www.whatkidscando.org/resources/spec_youthmedia.html

firesINTHEmind
updates on the practice project of WKCD.org

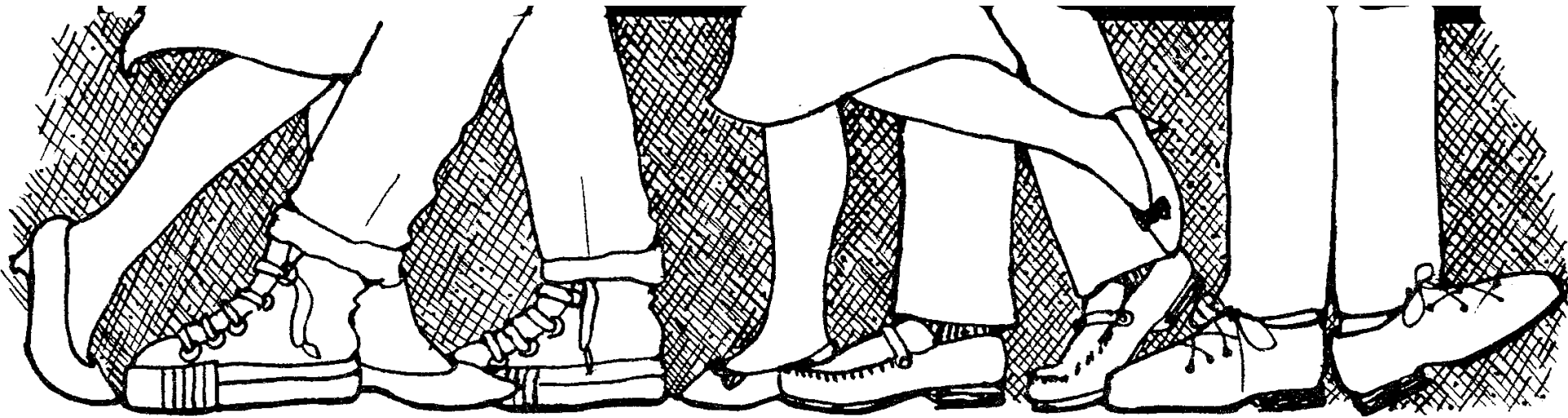# What are the building blocks of strong adult-youth relationships?

Let's start with the Readings!

Feel free to also add tips from other **readings** you've done this year!

YOUTH ON BOARD

Thinking on Our Feet

Tensions & Reflections

TENSION #1:

Often, when working with youth in groups, there is a tension around connecting with individual youth and connecting with – or helping to move – the group. How can we, as adults, connect with individual students while also holding together a community of students? What strategies have you used to connect with students individually? What about in groups?

Tensions & Reflections

REFLECTION #1:

Are you more comfortable working with groups of youth or individual youth? If you said "groups," then what size groups? Why do you think this is the case? What makes you uncomfortable about doing the opposite?

Tensions & Reflections

TENSION #2:

What happens when the stakes are high, like when youth make decisions that may endanger their safety or that of others? How much responsibility does the adult facilitator have *and,* is the responsibility to ensure safety or to facilitate agency? What strategies could adults use in these situations?

Tensions & Reflections

REFLECTION #2:

Talk about a time when you have had trouble "stepping up" – in other words, a time when you think you should have used your power but didn't.

What were you worried about that made it hard for you to step up? If you can't think about a time when stepping up was hard, try to talk about why this might be the case.

Tensions & Reflections

TENSION #3:

Is our role to scaffold strategically so that students learn and/or do what we hope or expect they will? Or, is our goal the opposite: to remain open such that students can determine the direction and outcomes of a project? If we stick to a particular balance of stepping up and stepping back, and truly share power with students, is it okay for the group to fail?

Tensions & Reflections

REFLECTION #3:

Talk about a time when you have had trouble "stepping back" – in other words, a time when you think you should have remained silent, but didn't.

What were you worried about, which made it hard to remain silent? If you can't think about a time when stepping back was hard, try to talk about why this might be the case.

Tensions & Reflections

TENSION #4:

How should we balance the benefits and the drawbacks of stepping up, when it comes to (a) protecting youth from adult criticism and/or (b) helping youth to accomplish a set of goals?

Tensions & Reflections

REFLECTION #4:

We live and work in nested systems - often with adults/youth "allies" whose behaviors and attitudes about youth partnerships differ from our own. What can we do to encourage the adults around us to step up and step back in ways that best partner with youth?

Tensions & Reflections

What strategies can adults use to build strong relationships with youth?

When and how are boundaries important in building supportive relationships with youth?

What are the barriers or challenges to forming strong relationships with youth?

How can we build strong relationships in the contexts of institutional rules?

How can/should we build relationships with youth when their families/communities hold different values than our own?

Break

Grappling with Big Questions

TENSION #1: Building trust and building authentic relationships are key to doing this work, and yet relationships make both youth and adults vulnerable. How do we balance bridges and boundaries so that relationships are best able to positively impact both people?

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE: Duncan-Andrade talks a lot about ridas being folks who are willing to walk the walk beside their students. He doesn't talk as much about the role that clear expectations and boundaries can have in building positive relationships. What are the strengths and limitations of vulnerability? What responsibility do we have, as adults, when it comes to the vulnerability of our students—or our own vulnerability, with them?

Grappling with Big Questions

TENSION #2: How do we authentically build relationships with youth while keeping in mind the "action" or "product" of our collaborative work? How do we balance the benefits of relationships with the urgency of the work?

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE: Relationships take time to build, but often we don't have a lot of time. It also can be hard to build one-on-one relationships, when working with groups of youth. Yet, we know that without strong relationships, its hard (or impossible?) accomplish collective transformation. How do we balance these competing priorities, and who should get to drive this decision? In a youth-led space, should the youth get to make decisions about which relationships are important and which are not? What is our responsibility (if any) in shaping these decisions?

Grappling with Big Questions

TENSION #3: How do we prioritize our relationships with youth, within the structures of institutions that often follow a legal bottom-line? How do we navigate our own moral compass within these institutions, while also protecting ourselves?

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE: Many schools have very clear rules about not exchanging numbers, driving students, texting students, or connecting on social media. And yet, there are students who believe that these are the signs of trust and reciprocity in a relationship. How do we (1) make decisions about how to act within these institutions, and (2) push these institutions to think differently about the guidelines that they set. How *should* institutions be thinking about these guidelines?

Grappling with Big Questions

TENSION #4: How can/should we build relationships with youth when their families/communities hold different values than our own?

SPECIFIC EXAMPLE: Many of you have spoken about going back to communities that are either more conservative or more homogeneous than HGSE. You have brought up multiple tensions about building relationships in these contexts, including: (a) push back from the community/parents, (b) the danger of students experiencing isolation or confusion when they begin to develop their critical consciousness, (c) the danger of disrespecting or failing to honor elders and families. How can we build relationships that take these tensions into account?

Big Idea Share Out!

How do we balance bridges and boundaries so that relationships are best able to positively impact both people?

How do we balance the benefits of relationships with the urgency of the work?

How do we prioritize our relationships with youth, within the structures of institutions that often follow a legal bottom-line?

How can/should we build relationships with youth when their families/communities hold different values than our own?

Transitioning Out

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=22&v=ZTQssl-Ukus