



## SLOWING DOWN: THE ART OF TRANSITIONS



### SHINING A LIGHT ON A PRACTICE

Throughout our day we are **making transitions** / **consciously and unconsciously**. Life IS about transitions and interruptions.

It's how we **flow from one thing to another**. How do we stay present to one another? How do we transition gracefully from one aspect of a meeting to another? In convening we want the **transitions to be clear and graceful**.

Our **first** transition is from our **everydayness into this special space of community and connection**, leaving behind at least for a while the busyness of our day.

The Art of Convening includes the skill set of the **Art of Transitions** to

- **Refocus**
- **Reset** intention or context
- **Remember** "what is at the heart of the matter," no matter the setting.

The key is this: Neuroscience tells us it only takes 60 seconds to course-correct or refocus; having a plan for those 60 seconds is key.

When we convene, we can employ **three "tools"** that allow us to make the shift in focus and presence: **breathing, poetry** or a brief **body-centered practice**.

**Notice how building transitional time** into your meetings and gatherings can **set a tone and pace** that is calmer, quieter, removed from the hurriedness of normal conversation.

Transitions are the **silence between the notes in music**. Without silence there is no music. Transitions allow us to **slow to the speed of life**.



*Transitions are an important and often neglected aspect of any gathering. Whether at the beginning, as people settle into their chairs, or with a change from process to process, transitions are “the spaces in-between” and another opportunity to keep participants present to themselves.*

*Like cleansing the palate between courses, a Transition Exercise, whether it be a poem, meditation, visualization, stretching of arms or legs, or just a brief breathing exercise, helps people to re-center, recalibrate, to be fully present for what comes next.*

*For the Convener to be aware and fully present to each transition is a constant practice. There are many ways to create this awareness. [Page 62, The Art of Convening book]*