## Prouds and Sorries: Another Lens for Understanding the Current Reality

**Timing:**                        45-60 minutes
**# of Participants:**        8 at a minimum
**Equipment needed:**     Flipchart pads/easels and markert (1 per subgroup)

### PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION:

With problem situations of high social complexity—when there are many actors and stakeholders with different points of view on a particular issue, who not only can't agree on a solution, but who may not even agree on what the actual problem is—it's sometimes helpful to develop a shared understanding within sub-groups of stakeholders as to what their impact has been on the issue and then share that perspective with the others. By framing the conversation around "prouds" and "sorries," this activity sheds light on the role that each group has had in creating the current reality. It also highlights some of the judgments held across groupings, surfaces some of the undiscussables, and helps the whole group to see more of the system more clearly.

### PROCESS:

**1.** Have the large group divide into sub-groups by asking participants to find people who are from the same sector, same department, or some other shared division or grouping. For example—"Split up in groups of 4-5 people with 'your people' or as the Australians say, 'your mob'." "Your people" may be all the government workers or all the folks in the room from corporations or all the participants from NGOs. It is important to form groups that have some role in common. In an organizational change effort groups might form by department—marketing, R&D, accounting, etc.

**2.** Taking into account the issue the whole group is working on, ask each team to spend 30 minutes identifying what their group is sorry about and also what they are also proud of in terms of their contribution to the issue.

**3.** Have each team list its "prouds" and "sorries" on two separate flip charts. You can limit the number of prouds and sorries (i.e., three of each), which means the team members have to come to consensus first. This works best if you have time for discussion.

**4.** Have each team present its lists to the whole group. Have everyone listen carefully to the reports without comment or feedback. You want to avoid further judgment across teams—"Oh, you're not so bad" or "Don't forget you did this wrong too…"

**5.** After all the sub-groups have presented, ask the large group what they noticed. Were there any surprises or "ahas?" Did you feel that the groups accurately captured their own prouds/sorries?

### DEBRIEF:

Finally, debrief the process—how different were the perspectives within your own sub-group? Do you think you saw your role in the system accurately? How did the "prouds" make you feel? How did the "sorries" make you feel? What did you notice about the quality of the talking/listening within your team and then within the larger group? (See the Toolkit in Issue #1 for more on this topic.)

With credit to Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff from Future Search, who introduced the concept of Prouds and Sorries in their Future Search methodology. www.futuresearch.net