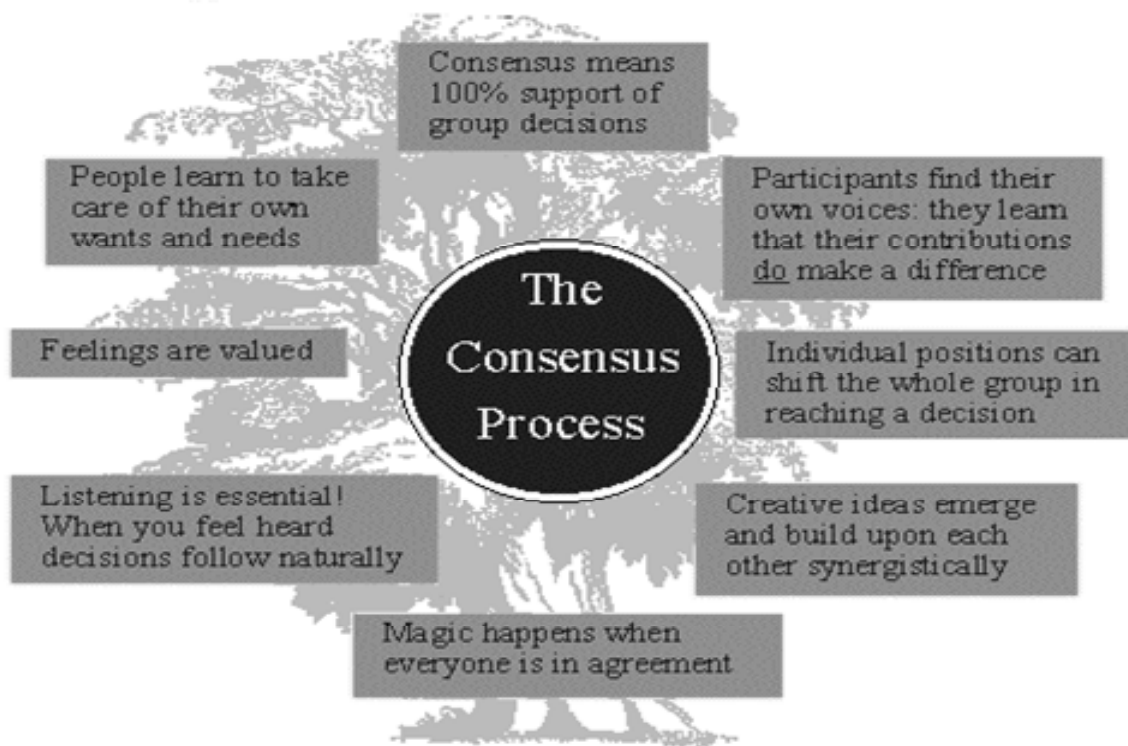


The Consensus Process



From <http://www.tmn.com/~lsartor/sunburst.htm>

Consensus decision-making is a decision-making process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also to resolve or mitigate the objections of the minority to achieve the most agreeable decision. Consensus is usually defined as meaning both: a) general agreement, and b) the process of getting to such agreement. Consensus decision-making is thus concerned primarily with that process.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Ingredients of successful consensus process

- Facilitation
- Participants understand the process
- Participation
- Cooperation
- A safe place to talk about the decision at hand
- Ideas are heard and acknowledged
- Decisions are Documented
- The process is reviewed

From <http://www.ic.org/nica/Process/Consensusbasics.htm>

Consensus Voting with Thumbs

How do we make decision in this group?

1. The group, an individual or a subcommittee comes up with a proposal/idea.
2. The proposal/idea is made clear so everyone in the group understands.
3. The group is asked to use the thumb voting technique to show how they stand on the proposal.
4. The group moves forward only when everyone is either a “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-sideways”. Discussion will continue until everyone has a chance to express their view for disagreeing on the proposal and everyone agrees to move forward.
5. If we come up against a roadblock and are unable to make a decision with this technique, majority vote should be considered to help move the group forward.



A **“thumbs-up”** indicates agreement with the proposal as stated or presented (i.e. yes, I can accept that decision and want to move forward with consensus agreement).



A **“thumbs-sideways”** indicates an incomplete agreement or a desire to modify the proposal, which does not rise to the level that would cause a member to block consensus (i.e. I do not LOVE this proposal, but can live with it, and want to move forward).



A **“thumbs-down”** indicates a strong disagreement with the proposal, which leads a member to block consensus on the proposal (i.e. I do not like the proposal and want to share my opinion and ideas with the group before moving forward).