**Bridging Cultural Divides with Aquaponics**

moderated by Phil Reasons

President Aquasol International

Interactive Breakout Discussions 4:30pm – 5:00pm

There's no doubt that the collaboration of diverse cultures can create opportunities for innovation—combining ideas that haven't been connected before creates the potential to produce something new and useful.

* **What is cross-cultural collaboration**
  + The term refers to a person's reflective thinking about his or her \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ assumptions. ... It's this kind of heightened awareness and reflection about what I think about other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and how other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ think about me that helps cross- \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ creative collaboration."
  + Collaboration of any kind is always between people it is not between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* **Have any of you worked in a cross-cultural situation**
  + Describe personal experiences.
* **What where some of the challenges**
  + Different perspective

(In Africa, saying to a female friend one has not seen for a while that she has put on weight means she is physically healthier than before or had a nice holiday, whereas this would be considered as an insult in Europe, North America and Australia.)

(Expressions are differentiated according their importance: for the Inuits (Eskimos) snow is part of their everyday life, therefore many words (e. g. over 10 substantives) exist to describe it.)

* **What can be gained by cross cultural collaboration**
  + Cross \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ groups are especially likely to find variations in views. Understanding those variations can affect the success of interactions. Cross \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ collaborations bringing their own unique \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. These challenges and difficulties require us to take a deeper look at things that we would usually take for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The question is how to reap the benefits while minimizing the inevitable misunderstandings.

I often compare it to the heightened awareness you have when driving in a foreign city, where you will pay more attention to the road signs and traffic signs. It's this kind of heightened awareness and reflection about what I think about other cultures and how other cultures think about me that helps cross-cultural creative collaboration.

Affective trust is especially critical in creative collaboration because unlike collaboration that merely involves the sharing of labor, creative collaboration requires sharing of new ideas.

Given that new ideas are often undeveloped, they are risky to share. Sharing a bad idea might cause one to be ridiculed. Conversely, a good idea might be stolen. Only when there is high affective trust would two partners be willing to freely exchange new ideas.

As long as one person is able to connect and adjust to the other party, then that is sufficient for them to collaborate, In other words, if one person is able to grapple with his or her cultural assumptions, then that person can spur a fruitful collaboration without the other person necessarily even realizing it.