

**So what's the difference between "co-" and "collaboration?"**  
**By Deanna Shoemaker (2019)**

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Co is... playful!

Making something up together...

Bouncing off each other's ideas...

A way of *being* rather than doing...

An ethos of communion, connection, integration

Collaboration is... teamwork!

Coordinated actions and strategic divisions of labor.

Cooperation (as in "Work with me, people!")

Prescribed goals and assignment of tasks.

Practical.

Productive.

Temporary?

A well-oiled machine with individual parts.

Co is... deep immersion

(working our way up to the high dive and taking a leap of faith)

Swimming in the deep end

Co also holds spaces for discomfort-----struggle-----doubt

(we hang in there, occupying these hard spaces together)

It is emergent and takes TIME

...It is not pre-determined

...It may fall apart

Co is not knowing

Dreaming up new maps

that emerge and shape-shift and offer multiple pathways and terrains~

It's getting lost, together

And finding our way in, and out, together...

It's an invitation to dance, even if we don't know the steps

(We make it up!)

It's Deep listening  
Co-presence  
    Shared vulnerabilities  
        Willingness to move  
Radical love?

Warning: It requires courage, humility, patience, trust  
(it's HARD!)  
    tolerance for ambiguity  
        willingness to cross into liminal zones  
(it demands...)  
    entering a new space as equals  
    honoring multiple perspectives/positions/contexts  
    valuing diverse bodies of knowledge  
    finding shared meanings  
    suspending assumptions

Co is Synergistic  
    Feminist  
        Relational  
            Processual  
                Dynamic  
                    Organic  
(and MESSY!)

"I am because we are" (Ubuntu)  
We are living documents  
Walking our talk  
Feeling and sensing our way together...