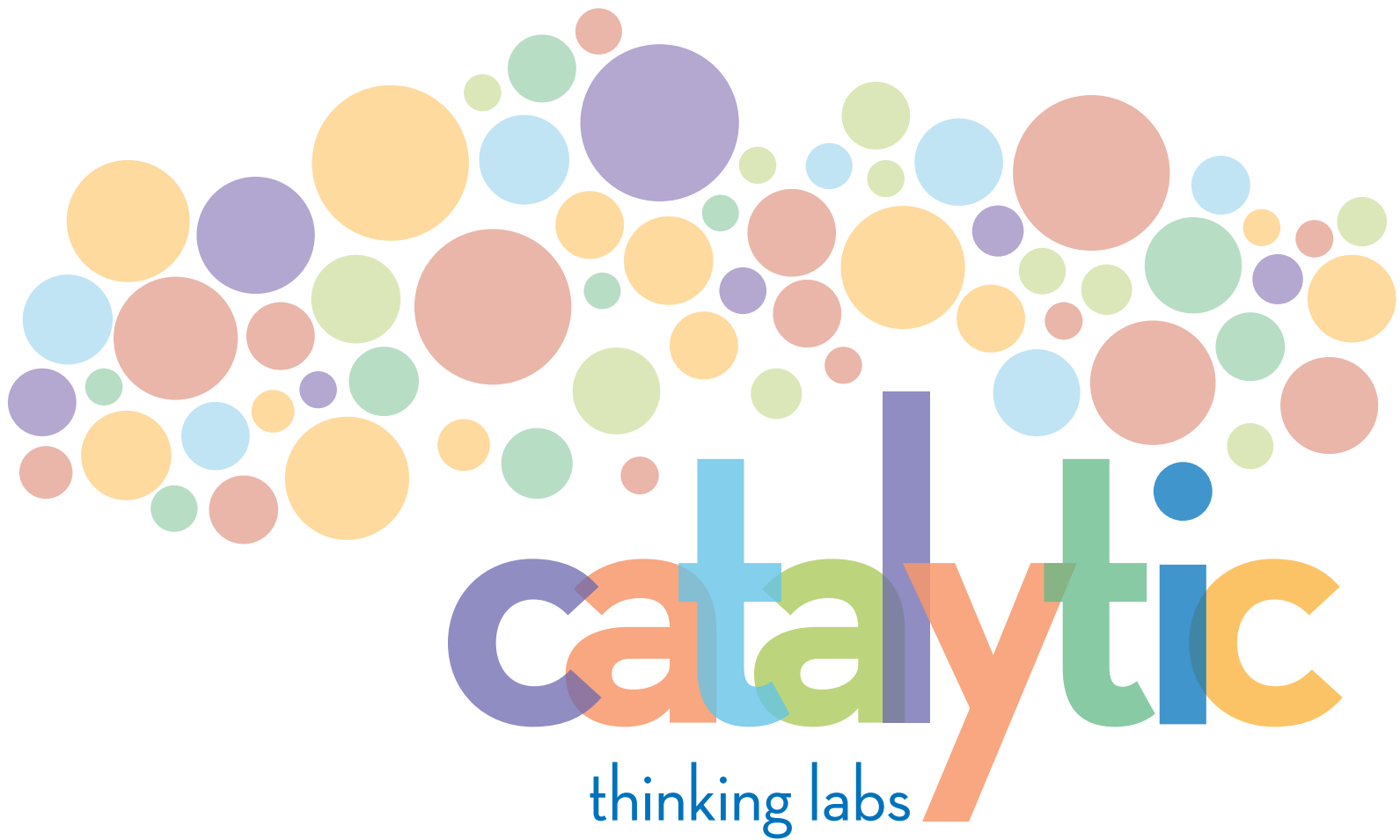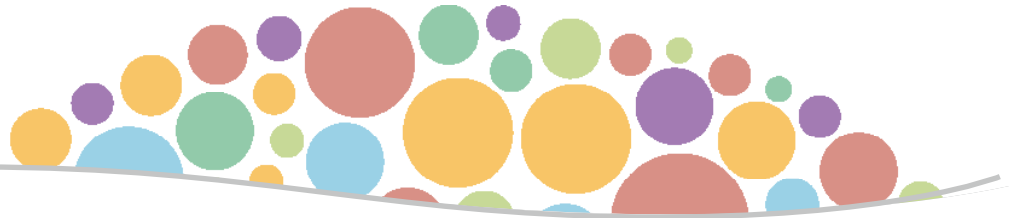# Lab Catalog

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Overview of the Catalytic Thinking Labs

These are Professional Development Labs in thinking, itself.

Labs by nature are experiential – you learn by doing. We provide direct instruction and adaptable activities. You immediately practice HOW to think far more effectively, in new ways, about things you care about.

This body of work raises to consciousness our current habits and default practices while immediately offering new ways of thinking – this lets us improve.

With crises from local to global, in so many areas, frustration is rising among those wanting to make a significant difference. We routinely disappoint ourselves. This is true whether we are in business, government, or civil society. When we start with thinking, itself, we get serious traction on making change.
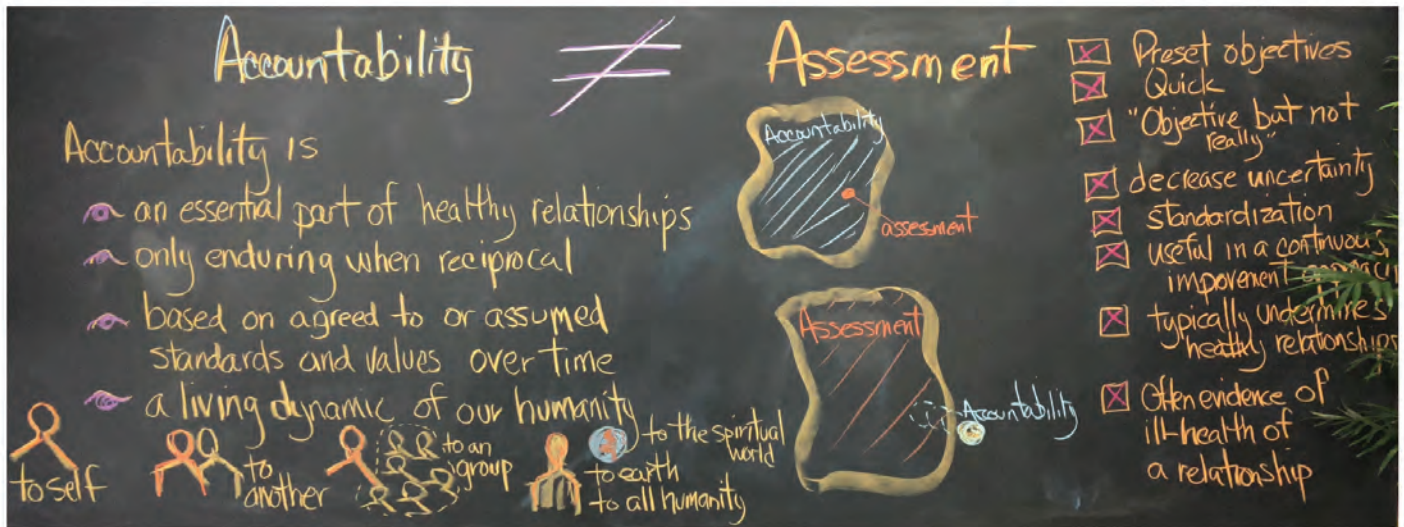
Participants bring the grit and heart. We bring more than 100 Labs with warm-hearted, rigorous and proven instruction, and Lab activities. You work in small bites, on your own or with your team or small group. Each Lab is 60-90 minutes.

The Catalytic Thinking Labs are guided self-education. It's a different kind of professional development.

Welcome to the work!
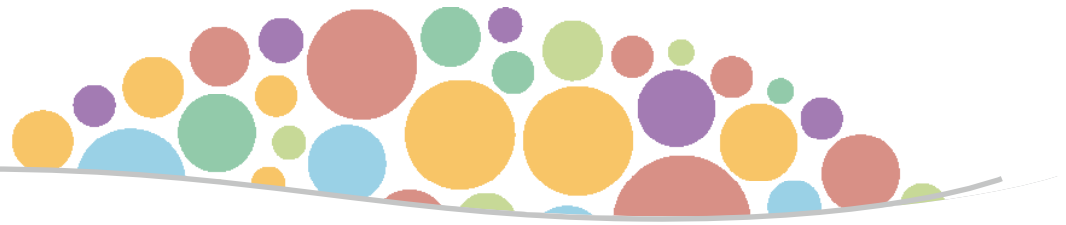
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As a guide for managers and participants, we've bundled Labs within each Arena into focused, shorter courses. We offer *Professional Development Certificates* for each Arena, and for focused courses within each Arena, as well as a *Comprehensive Certificate* that comprises all of the Labs. *Certificate* programs require additional experiential assignments to apply what is learned.

Get Started

The content will support your learning journey whether you choose to take an Arena, Certificate, or Lab.

1 Developing and Disciplining Your Judgment

Transforming your thinking requires self-education, self-assessment, and self-correction. Developing and Disciplining Your Judgment provides foundational insights to guiding your self-education.

Building self-confidence in your reasoning and independent judgment is the foundation of Catalytic Thinking Labs.

Developing Better Judgment Lab

We want to hire and work with people who have good judgment. Good judgment is closely related to reliability and trust. Developing Applied Critical Thinking skills and practices strengthens one's judgment, and enables us to be more discerning about the judgment of others.

The Practice of Good Judgment Lab

Good judgment is not an accident or a random event. It is not developed by those who are sleeping through life. It requires self-awareness, self-reflection, self-assessment, and self-correction. Yet it is invaluable, both for the individual and for the family and organizations involved.

2 Experiential Learning Basics

Transforming your thinking requires discipline, motivation, and ongoing self-assessment.

Guided Self-Education Basics

Experiential Learning Practices

3 Potent Questions Lab

We can live life as spectators. Or, we can awaken and begin to pose questions that become organic forces of growth for our organizations, our family, our communities, and ourselves. We don't expect immediate answers; we do expect long-term engagement in a shaped process of discovery and sharing.

Crafting and posing Potent Questions guides our exploration.

4 Accelerating Knowledge Sharing

Each Catalytic Thinking Lab is connected with a sister platform, windtunneling.com, to further global sharing of thoughts and experiences. After each Lab, participants link to the companion WindTunneling project and are able to share, and read/respond to the contributions of participants from around the world.

The following Labs are organized in a developmental path. You may take the Labs in any order, based on your interest or the needs of your team.

1 Nourishing a Culture of Thinking

Thinking is invisible and delicate. Healthy thinking needs a nourishing culture to grow. Toxic attitudes and behaviors inhibit its full development. This is about more than just being "nice."

Effective thinking practices require a nourishing culture.

2 Facts, Opinions, and Reasoned Judgments

Words can confuse us. The word "opinion" is such a word. "I have the right to my opinion!" It can mean a highly emotionally charged assertion of a superficially understood position. It can also mean a substantial, fully researched, explored and argued judgment on an issue of national import. When all we have is "fact" and "opinion" we make decisions based on the 4Ps: power, position, personality, and politics. We need objective standards for well-reasoned conclusions.

Distinguishing mere opinions from reasoned judgments is key.

3 A System of Living Thinking

Every day we have to figure things out. Thinking long and hard will not cut it if we want to be comprehensive and confident. We can learn a living system that can be called up every time we look at our hand.

A reliable living system can be learned.

4 Developing Well-Reasoned Conclusions

To build confidence in our judgment is possible when we learn to use reliable frameworks and block out toxic elements.

To be a confident person means to be confident in our judgment as well as our skills.

5 Modes of Thinking

We think in many modes. Some are more convergent, where we try to find the one right answer to a given task. Some are more divergent, where we imagine what does not exist yet. We can recognize each mode and strengthen it with unique techniques.

Different modes of thinking have different strengths.

6 Intellectual Humility

We invite others to share their knowledge when we do not pretend to know more than we do know. We seek diverse perspectives and are willing to explain *why* we think what we think. In a complex world, this is a rational posture.

Recognizing how little we actually know opens possibilities.

7 What Has Value in a Knowledge Economy?

In a highly complex world, with global acceleration on every front, we need people who can think effectively, generate productive options, and guide our public discourse. We have an abundance of 'Big Data' but we're rather short on understanding and wisdom. What are we investing in?

Weighing data against wisdom: where do we need to invest?

8 Rewards and Punishments

The extrinsic motivators in our culture have a huge impact on our thinking. We are signaled to think this, to not think that – or even to look away and not think at all. Until we awaken to how we are being manipulated, we will not develop true self-determination and freedom. Intrinsic motivation, living from the inside out based on our values and purposes, fuels a life of meaning.

We can rise above external rewards and punishments.

9 Punished by Rewards

Carrots and sticks, as Alfie Kohn shared with us in *Punished by Rewards*, make us into domesticated "humans." How do we learn to build an internal locus of evaluation? How do we develop confidence in our own judgment if our thinking is still undisciplined and confused? What steps can we take to become more fully human?

We can shift to self-control when we recognize how controlled we've been.

10 Accountability Does Not Equal Assessment

One of the ways we are controlled in schools and organizations is by the experience of being assessed by others. As a free individual, strive to be accountable to yourself and to what you think is true and good. In society, what we want is mutual accountability, yet what we buy is assessment. Assessment generally undermines accountability and individual initiative.

We want accountability; what we focus on is assessment. They are not the same.

11 Accountability and Assessment ~ Organizations

In organizations, we have infrastructure and departments that focus on assessment and performance reviews. We assume that assessment will yield accountability of individuals and project teams or departments. The illusion is that if we measure, we can control or influence someone for our benefit. Performance review is a big and powerful industry with very little evidence of productivity.

We want accountability; we buy assessment. They are not the same.

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Applied Critical Thinking

12 Fundamental Human Needs

Recognizing patterns of the needs of humanity, globally over time, was part of the work of Manfred Max-Neef (Chile). His work focuses on "What we need" and "What we want," and the differences between them. Unless we know the relationship in daily life, we chase our wants and ignore what we authentically need.

Human needs and wants follow patterns that are illuminating.

13 Fundamental Human Needs in Our Organizations

Humans organize themselves to accomplish something. Within that organization, and as that group of people connect with wider circles, people have needs and wants. Clearing up the relationships helps the group make decisions for health and the common good. Ignoring these relationships leads us to erode our potential.

Groups also have needs and wants and we can clarify them.

14 Near and True Gifts

It is impossible not to recognize that the state of our society, economy, and political arena is unstable. As individuals and organizations, we want to contribute, to make a difference. What gifts do we bring to this work? Duane Elgin, author of *Voluntary Simplicity*, asks us to audit our near gifts and our true gifts. Then we can have more clarity about how to create value and where to put our shoulders to the wheel.

Identifying our near and true gifts gives us a place to begin.

15 Clarifying Our Worldview

We need to set a solid foundation for our thinking so we can build well-reasoned conclusions, consistent with our purposes and values. In this Lab, we begin to identify what we believe to be real and true about the world and about us, as humans. We review our near and true gifts and our interests. We begin to form an aligned structure that helps us decide which methods make sense to pursue.

Without a coherent worldview or paradigm, we wobble and flounder.

16 Our Organization's Worldview

We've all seen vision and mission statements, and they are mostly met with a "Ho, hum" response. What we learned from Egon Guba's paradigm work in *Clarifying Our Worldview Lab* can readily help us re-energize our organization. We're asking different questions and engaging all staff to bring alignment with purposes that we can stand behind.

Organizations benefit from clarity using Egon Guba's Paradigm framework.

17 Beyond Control

Our habit life and residuals from paradigms in place over the past 60 years need to be addressed. "Command and control" was justified and accepted as a form of organization. What assumptions lie under our worldview, and how can we raise these deep feelings, or hidden expectations to the surface? How do old habits of "command and control" impact organizations?

Control issues and muddy expectations continue to haunt organizations.

18 Ideals and Values

We are seeking coherence and alignment from the macro level of our ideals to the micro level of various opportunities that are before us. We use a funnel imagination, identifying ideals that move us, values that inspire us, and purposes that we are working toward. To gain clarity, we create examples at each level, and begin to identify personal, professional, and community Higher Purposes. Opportunities gain energy from being directly tied to specific purposes.

Confidence comes from a sturdy, consciously-designed structure of beliefs and purposes.

19 Higher Purposes

Building on our clarifying work with our ideals and values, we begin to list out possible Higher Purposes in three areas: Personal, Professional, and Community. We create a chart and review it, adding, amending and deleting ideas that don't feel right over time. With this, we witness patterns. We can confidently take up some opportunities, and decline others.

Ordering and de-cluttering the foundation for our decisions is liberating.

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20 Higher Purposes and Beyond

In organizations, there are often multiple Higher Purposes. That can be healthy if there is clarity among the staff and leadership about the relative significance of each Higher Purpose. In addition, clarity about the urgency of each Higher Purpose, relative to the others, can enable coherence of action.

It can be toxic if we think we agree, yet we don't, and it is masked.

21 Purpose and Motivation Spectrum

As humans, there are predictable attitudes and behaviors when we have to do something but we do not know the purpose. We are a purpose-driven species. Our motivation is directly tied to our understanding of and alignment with our purposes. Disengaged staff reflect confusion or moral inconsistency with purpose.

When we choose a purpose our motivation is high.

22 Crafting Effective Opportunity Statements

Clarifying our thinking enables us to state simply and clearly what we see: 1) as an opportunity, 2) as a problem, or 3) as a question in focus. This does not happen magically: it is a disciplined process of drafting and being guided by criteria and strategies that help us minimize ambiguity and remain aligned with our Higher Purpose(s).

Stating something important both clearly and simply takes work.

23 Assumptions and Indispensable Information

We are always making assumptions. As we try to decide if our opportunity is one we want to pursue, we benefit by identifying the significant assumptions. Then we need to determine how certain we are that each is true. The gaps reveal our research path and we can identify the indispensable information we'll need. This is a disciplined practice that is best done in teams.

Resisting the work to identify and test assumptions is foolish.

24 Organizational Opportunity Statements and Assumptions

Organizations have both current operations and new opportunities. Working with diverse groups enables the identification of significant assumptions, and taps the collective experience of the group relative to levels of certainty. Where there are gaps, indispensable information is identified and researched. If and when conditions change, the group can quickly adapt because they know what they are counting on to be true.

Diverse groups are extremely effective in identifying assumptions and risks.

25 A Spectrum of Validity and Truth

We live in a tsunami of available information. Some of what is available will be relevant to the thinking we're doing about our opportunity or problem. How do we assess the validity of information today? The 6Cs guide us, yet we must remain open to the possibility that we have been misled.

There are trustworthy sources, but the work is on us.

26 Core Concept Expansion

Each of us has a unique history and experience with core concepts, with the words that we use daily. For example, words like excellence, or health, or service, or listen – all are words we use and expect others to share identical meanings. To think that we understand each other without exploring the diversity of interpretations of core words is to bring weeds into the garden that later flower as interpersonal conflict.

Expanding core concepts is a hidden treasure trove in relationship-building.

27 Conversation Mapping to Develop Core Concepts

In organizations or communities, there are words that are regularly used. We assume that these core concepts are mutually understood. For example, we face systemic racism and those two words, along with inequity, inequality, justice, and power are all words loaded with meaning. Conversation Mapping is a beginning activity to enable groups to appreciate how many meanings people have for each word, and how to enrich our understanding by sharing and then discovering patterns.

Expanding core concepts strengthens communities and organizations.

28 Diversity of Perspectives

In today's complex world, the biggest category of things includes what we don't know that we don't know. Each of us has a unique perspective, and to expand and create a richer picture of what is real and important, we need to invest in bringing diverse perspectives to support us.

As we try to decide if our idea is a good idea, we are often resistant to perspectives that challenge our imagination of success. Our apprehension is crafting vulnerabilities for us and for the resources we're using to pursue our idea. Identifying the relevant points of view and engaging in inquiry is a key to good reasoning.

Each of us is limited to our unique perspective that is but a thin slice of reality.

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Applied Critical Thinking

29 Telling Stories to Share Diverse Perspectives

With the volatility in today's world, in community life and in organizations, many events are transpiring and individuals have unique perspectives of what happened and what it means. Storytelling is as old as our human experience and appeals to young and old alike. Coming together to share stories, using a disciplined systemic approach, enables any group to capture patterns and themes. The technique in this lab is called Narrative Gathering and was developed by Bruce McKenzie (Australia). We build the capacity of our system, organization or community by learning to trust each other because we now know each other better through our shared stories. We find warm commonalities and realize that our differences may be justified or simply misunderstandings.

Stories embody rich detail and sharing strengthens relationships.

30 Inferences

Inference is the leaping horse of critical thinking. We start at a given point, and we leap: "If this is true, then _____ is possible." The variations are infinite. Inferences are rarely supported in schooling but they are possibility generators. As we strive to figure out if our idea is a good idea, developing inferences shifts us into the future and alerts us of possible errors.

Inferences are crucial thinking challenges as individuals and as groups.

31 Serial Inferences

Some thinkers are satisfied with their first order inferences – an inference that is a direct offshoot from an idea or condition or statistic. Deeper thinkers see that taking the next steps will enrich our imagination and possibilities. This can help us avoid trouble by designing around it, or capitalizing on unseen resources.

Inferences help us live into futures with unexpected advantages.

32 Organizational Futures

Research shows that most of the brain power in organizations remains dormant. Enabling staff to join in building out inferences about future conditions and opportunities enables diverse perspectives to share and ping off each other, often revealing opportunities or risks that no one person could see.

Inferences help organizations live into futures.

33 Speed Stating

This technique was developed by Bruce McKenzie (Australia). It enables a group of people to share their unique perspectives quickly and safely. Each person receives the reflections of every other person about the idea or concern he or she stated. We read and respond quickly, and gather multiple ideas that otherwise would remain mute.

Speed stating enables us to share unique perspectives quickly and painlessly.

34 Tentative Conclusions

A Tentative Conclusion is a kind of inference that focuses on the consequences of an idea. Tentative means we stay awake to unintended consequences and we are willing to make ongoing corrections. How can we take a systemic view of consequences? Who owns the risk of an opportunity? Risk needs to be held openly and transparently. By anticipating consequences, we can proactively address them.

Conclusions are tentative: we need to be ready to adapt.

35 My Idea is _____ because _____

As with any idea we want to develop, we need to be ready to respond to questions from others. The disciplined thinking practices in Applied Critical Thinking Arena give us tools to skillfully respond to questions about our ideas. We have courage of our convictions because we know what we believe in and we have done the work to think comprehensively about our ideas.

Guiding thinking with the elements of Applied Critical Thinking builds confidence and clarity.

To enroll in any of these Labs or Certificates, visit our website: catalyticthinkinglabs.com. If you are interested in signing up a team or multiple learners or simply desire to design a custom course contact us at support@catalyticthinkinglabs.com.

Navigating Complex Issues

The following Labs are organized in a developmental path. You may take the Labs in any order, based on your interest or the needs of your team.

1   Navigating Complex Issues

Complexity, as a disciplined set of practices, has emerged. We can move beyond fogging over, reducing our focus, or treating a complex issue as a problem.

There is a rational path to improve our position over time.

2   Barrier Analysis of Systemic Methods for Navigating Complex Issues

Unfamiliar practices that supplement conventional business practices can threaten individuals in leadership positions. The systemic principles and practices are counter-intuitive yet can predictably enable an organization to improve its position over time. There will be, however, predictable resistance.

Change requires insight, courage, and a willingness to learn.

3   Capacity of Our System

We invite others to share their knowledge when we do not pretend to know more than we do know. We seek diverse perspectives and are willing to explain *why* we think what we think. In a complex world, it is a rational posture.

To be intellectually humble is the signal of a reasonable person.

4   Characteristics of Complex Issues

As we study complexity as a discipline, we need to be clear about distinguishing a complex issue from a complicated, chaotic, or routine issue. Each type of issue needs appropriate goals, organization, and leadership that is specific to the nature of the issue before us.

Complex issues have a set of distinct characteristics.

5   Comparing Complex Issues with Other Issues I

Building from David Snowden's *Sensemaking Framework*, we work with a framework that helps us recognize variables, levels of uncertainty, whether the issue is chronic or episodic, and what goals make sense. Sorting issues using these characteristics builds confidence in and across teams or communities.

Each complex issue is unique to time, place, and participants.

6   Comparing Complex Issues with Other Issues II

Systemic Leadership enables appropriate methods, principles and practices for groups to predictably improve their position over time, relative to the complex issue. It also furthers resilience and innovation, as the diversity of perspectives accelerates the knowledge sharing and enables new options for leaders.

Systemic practices for complexity include diversity, transparency, and candor.

7   The Big Switch for Complex Issues

Systemic methods are both supplementary to some conventional practices, and are at times, challenging to the status quo that traditionally has worked for routine issues. We need to look at conventional practices and switch to alternative postures and practices to work effectively with dynamic complex issues.

Clarifying where we need to shift enables the team to adapt.

8   Properties of Systems I

Living systems share properties. We can utilize these properties to help organize our approach to complex issues. Systems have a purpose, boundaries, a hierarchy, coherence, and emergence. They exist within a suprasystem and within them exist learning subsystems, humans who can cooperate.

Complexity can be confusing without having a systems view.

9   Properties of Systems II

Families are dynamic living systems. Individual humans are dynamic living systems. Both are complex, and we can learn from the comparisons.

Properties of dynamic living systems provide insight into complex issues.

10   Systemic and Scientific Methods

Systemic methods have the potential to transform our approach to complex issues. They function in a pre-hypothesis mode using disciplined practices that do not attempt to finalize any given fact, but rather to generate new options from the collective experiences of diverse participants. They align with the nature of complexity, itself.

Systemic and scientific methods are principled and disciplined practices.

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11 Systemic Implications for Management Practices

Managers need to lead systems changes within their organizations. For example, adding patterning to logic opens the doors to unseen options. Adding emergence to extrapolation moves beyond replication to organic growth and imagination. Effective managers will recognize that additional practices enrich the capacity of the organization to navigate complexity, and set about learning by doing with their teams.

New practices will liberate energy and talent, bringing hope.

12 Systemic Methods Roadmap

Bruce McKenzie's pioneering work in complexity guides us to see the patterns that support our deepening understanding of the complex issue before us. Rich picturing enables all diverse participants to share what they know, and we then make sense and identify patterns and emergence. Further steps give us confidence that we're tapping the experiential knowledge available to generate better options.

A roadmap can give us confidence that we know what to do next.

13 Systemic Practices to Tap Experiential Learning and Knowledge

Fully drawing the resources of diverse participants, systemic methods abide by clear practices. For example, without diversity, we end up with old thinking. Without candor, people do not feel free to share what they know. Without designing time to think, people offer underdeveloped responses. Specific practices are essential to optimizing the collective experience of the participants.

Systemic methods are sensitive if they are to yield top results.

14 Systemic and Default Organizational Practices

We live with the legacy of "command and control" hierarchy for all issues facing the organization. People are not used to telling the truth at work, and so they need to be protected. Independent judgment conflicts with what the "higher ups" might say, so people withhold ideas. With complex issues, this legacy handcuffs us. We need to take on practices and habits by designing experiences that release the experiential knowledge of all participants as equals.

Default organizational practices handicap our efforts with complex issues.

15 Diversity of Perspectives

In today's complex world, the biggest category of things includes what we don't know that we don't know. Each of us has a unique perspective, and to expand and create a richer picture of what is real and important, we need to invest in bringing diverse perspectives to support us.

Each of us is limited to our unique perspective, which is but a thin slice of reality.

16 The Logic and Conditions for Tapping Experiential Learning

Within our staff, there are reservoirs of knowledge and experience that are untapped. In daily life, learning within the organization and within the broader environment is happening. We can tap this and engage our people. We can fail to tap it and it becomes stagnant and erodes morale. Practices exist that are not burdensome that liberate these resources to serve the organization.

Hidden reservoirs of knowledge can be released.

17 Rich Picturing: Conversation Mapping

Conversation mapping is a technique developed by Bruce McKenzie and has been used globally for decades. People read and write, moving to various tables with unique challenges and "conversations" emerging at each table. They become investigative journalists to identify patterns, themes, and emergent new ideas. These are the first steps to tapping experiential knowledge.

Participants thoroughly enjoy Conversation Mapping and learn!

18 Rich Picturing: Narrative Gathering

Stories are embedded with rich information. Narrative Gathering is a disciplined way of capturing some of the important ideas and patterns from stories that are shared around a table. People have the opportunity to tell their story when they are ready, and to listen and learn about the experiences of others, related to the complex issue that is facing the group.

All of us know more than any of us; stories illuminate facets.

19 Speed Stating

Often we sit through meetings or presentations, and each of us is thinking, but there is no opportunity to share. Speed Stating was developed by Bruce McKenzie as a way to enable everyone to share from his or her unique perspective, and be of service to the other members of the group. It is a highly popular systemic technique.

Speed stating enables us to share unique perspectives quickly and painlessly.

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20 Opportunity Statements

Based on Rich Picturing activities, pairs of participants identify a theme or pattern and craft an opportunity statement to share. They need to include "What is your idea for improvement?" (This can be a small or big step). "How would it work?" "Why would it help?" Pairs can create as many opportunity statements as they like. They learn together through the process how to best explain their thinking.

Opportunity statements enable each participant to make a unique contribution.

21 Three Horizon Mapping

Many group processes break down when it comes to aggregating the ideas of many participants. The Three Horizon Map that Bruce McKenzie developed sets up a way for the creators of the ideas to place them on a matrix, based on their sense of time and necessary resources.

Trusting the pairs to organize their ideas forces a decision.

22 Three Horizon Mapping ~ Strategic Staircasing

The next step in systemic exploration developed by Bruce McKenzie (Australia) is called Strategic Staircasing. When all of the ideas from the group have been posted, small groups begin to backcast and identify prerequisites to big goals that will only be accomplished later. Multiple staircases can be identified and contribute to strategic planning.

Back-casting enables the group to self-organize and own their pathways.

23 Coherence Mapping

Within departments, silos, individuals, and teams at work within organizations, it is easy for things to become disjointed and suboptimize the groups' efforts. Coherence Mapping was developed by Bruce McKenzie and enables the parties to come together, ahead of breakdowns, and build a foundation through specific communication techniques that share crucial information in a positive way.

Anticipatory design saves losses in navigating complex issues.

24 Coherence Mapping Matrix

Identifying "Who needs what from whom?" is the foundation of a Coherence Map Matrix. The process engages diverse participants from each "silo" or group, and identifies needs. This enables everyone to see who is under-resourced, who could meet needs now that they know about them, and where gaps are that could be addressed by others.

Systemic improvements are enabled by specific techniques.

25 WindTunneling Analog

This technique was developed by Bruce McKenzie (Australia). WindTunneling was originally designed to test strategies against a variety of plausible future events, enabling the group to modify strategies to be more resilient. WindTunneling enabled a major bank to identify a massive collapse before it happened. The technique enabled a major company to build redundancies that enabled them to survive a "Black Swan" event.

Originally, WindTunneling was done with groups in person.

26 WindTunneling.com

WindTunneling is a new social form that manifests in an on-line Complexity Toolkit. Tapping into the power of disciplined practices coupled with tapping diverse experiential knowledge provides a fruitful field of refreshing insights for all participants.

WindTunneling is a powerful toolset for innovation, resilience, and strategy.

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Self–Knowledge for Leading and Supporting

The following Labs are organized in a developmental path. You may take the Labs in any order, based on your interest or the needs of your team.

1 Aligning with our Human Nature

This lab explores a framework that identifies core gestures of the human being, sense perception, thinking, feeling, and willing. How are these related? The path toward health, morality, and a self-organizing vitality lies in the balance and integration of these gestures. We so easily get out of balance. Learning how to self-audit these gestures help us recognize how to chart a path to returning health.

Balance and integration of core human gestures lays a pathway to health.

2 Self-Knowledge Backspace

Taking initiative to participate in or lead change efforts requires courage and determination. Often, pioneers will be knocked back, and yet we can call to our aid individuals who personally or through their writing or speaking have modeled courage and determination. They live in our "backspace" and catch us when we are falling. Calling up those in our backspace strengthens us.

Influential individuals have our back and we can call on them.

3 Striving to Become Fully Human

We are besieged with images, words, bargains, and stories that undermine our sense of our human potential. Power and control are the aim of many of these messages. There are themes and the themes interact in ways to sap our confidence in our original thought, our generosity of spirit, and our capacity to change the toxic systems we've built. Recognizing these messages and their patterns helps us to see behind the veils.

We must fight for our individual and collective humanity.

4 Archetype of Transformation

There are patterns to how things change, how change appears to happen. We can learn from these and approach transformation with sharper eyes to see what matters, with a clearer head, a more calm heart, and a willingness to work where we can to support what we care about.

There are patterns to how things change and we can learn to see them.

5 Rewards and Punishments

The extrinsic motivators in our culture have a huge impact on our thinking. We are signaled to think this, to not think that – or even to look away and not think at all. Until we awaken to how we are being manipulated, we will not develop true self-determination and freedom. Intrinsic motivation, living from the inside out based on our values and purposes, fuels a life of meaning.

We can rise above external rewards and punishments.

6 Punished by Rewards

Carrots and sticks, as Alfie Kohn shared with us in *Punished by Rewards*, make us into domesticated "humans." How do we learn to build an internal locus of evaluation? How do we develop confidence in our own judgment if our thinking is still undisciplined and confused? What steps can we take to become more fully human?

We can shift to self-control when we recognize how controlled we've been.

7 Free and Fear Human Groups

The ethos, the understood culture in human groups, is based on fear or on freedom. The ability to speak in public without sanction is a signal of a free society or organization. In a fear society, most individuals become "double thinkers" and withhold their true thoughts. Gaining moral clarity, speaking openly about moral issues is essential if we are to preserve a free society.

Moral clarity is a duty of individuals seeking to live in free groups.

8 Ways of Knowing I

Goethe taught us that we use language differently for living things and non-living things. The words we use carry meaning and deep implications. Standardization works for many non-living things but is inappropriate, even ridiculous for living things, such as people. Ways of knowing what we know is enriched by Goethe's ideas. We can optimize both "thinking about" and "living into" material and immaterial realities.

Thinking about versus living into, living and non-living language.

9 Ways of Knowing II

We shape our thinking and communication with the words we use. We shape how we think and experience by "living into" or "intellectualizing" about what is before us. There are important insights to gain by seeing these two lenses together.

When do we feel most human? Living into things using living language.

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10   Purpose and Motivation Spectrum

As humans, there are predictable attitudes and behaviors that appear when we have to do something but we do not know the purpose. We are a purpose-driven species. Our motivation is directly tied to our understanding and alignment with our purposes. Disengaged staff often reflect confusion or moral inconsistency with purpose. Choosing our purposes, sacrificing for our purposes are unique capacities of human beings.

When we choose a purpose, our motivation is high.

11   Self-Knowledge Taking Stock

Our future can feel chaotic and out of control. We can identify patterns and interactions, using our imagination and current best understandings. We can map these "senses of what is real or possible" and gain insight as to where there are big deficits and where there are likely to be big surpluses. We can clarify many of our assumptions and develop a stronger sense of certainty.

Mapping key elements of our immediate past, present, and future.

12   Capacity of Our System

We invite others to share their knowledge when we do not pretend to know more than we do know. We seek diverse perspectives and are willing to explain *why* we think what we think. In a complex world, it is a rational posture.

To be intellectually humble is the signal of a reasonable person.

13   Worldview and Change

What is the connection between our worldview and how we can make change within ourselves? Through our senses, we merge percepts with concepts. This creates a unique mental picture. Some pictures become accessible as memories. Often feelings influence our memories. Our experiences and memories become our stories of self. Our stories weave together forming our worldview. Worldview reflexively shapes our concepts and our senses.

Each of us has the capacity to change our stories.

14   The Wardrobe

We all have experiences in life that make deep impressions, and often leave us with some prejudices or emotional baggage that is easily triggered. The Wardrobe is a metaphor of our consciousness, filled with thoughts and generalizations that we've picked up along the way. It also holds valuable life lessons we've crafted from our experiences. Taking responsibility for what is unique in Our Wardrobe is often not so easy, and yet, it can be done.

The Wardrobe is a metaphor of our consciousness. What beliefs are we carrying and how can we change them?

15   Assertiveness

We can see patterns of behavior along a spectrum, from passive on one end and aggressive on the other. Sometimes extremes are called for, but rarely. To be assertive and receptive is to hold a balanced poise and posture. What does this ask of us? How can we become more conscious of the self that we want to share with colleagues, family and friends?

Striving to be assertive and receptive indicates a path of maturity.

16   Accountability Does Not Equal Assessment

One of the ways we are controlled in schools and organizations is by the experience of being assessed by others. As a free individual, we strive to be accountable to ourselves and to what we think is true and good. In society, what we want is mutual accountability, yet what we buy is assessment. Assessment, in general, undermines accountability and individual initiative.

We want accountability; we focus on assessment.

17   Accountability and Assessment ~ Organizations

In organizations, we have infrastructure and departments that focus on assessment and performance reviews. We assume that assessment will yield accountability of individuals and project teams or departments. The illusion is that if we measure, we can control or influence someone for our benefit. Performance review is a big and powerful industry with very little evidence of productivity.

We want accountability; we buy assessment.

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18 Self-Accountability and Self-Assessment

What do I look to if I want help in holding myself accountable? How do I design things to assess in a meaningful way to guide me toward the development I seek? If I want a healthy relationship with my friends, where do I modify my habits or invest more time or attention?

Self-assessment can support holding ourselves accountable.

19 Responsibility, Accountability, Commitment

Independent, free and mature human beings are working toward showing responsibility, which means to respond with ability. To stand behind our word and show up is part of being accountable. To choose commitments based on clear intentions, and to live up to them, is a signal to others that you are a person who is reliable. Striving in this way reduces fear of the judgment of others and supports freedom.

Demystifying a free, independent, and mature human being.

20 Learning and Assessment

David Morse's ideas in his book, *Triad Education*, identify three modes of learning: dependent, interdependent, and independent. Who gets to decide what is to be learned, how is it to be learned, and how is it to be assessed? The authority figure? The learner? Both in a negotiation? This powerful picture has great implications for our ability to sustain a democratic form of government.

Triad Education lays out foundational issues about balance to support effective learning.

21 Methods to Assess My Learning

Imagining we are outside ourselves, assessing our attitudes, habits, and behaviors, we can strive to get an objective glimpse of how we are operating. If we want to be free and independent, reliable and confident, we need to be able to assess whether or not we are learning from what is appearing before us. We can do this as a practice.

To assess our own learning can work to liberate us from outside influences.

22 Red and Green Listening

Listening is by far the most difficult among speaking, listening, reading, and writing. How we listen often determines the health of a relationship. We can Red Listen, listening for the faults, inconsistencies or errors a person makes. We can Green Listen, listening to understand both the ideas and the speaker, listening for the strong thread and the insightful. Listening practices can be cultivated, depending on who you want to be and how you want to interact with others. It takes work.

Choosing how we listen, to snipe or to support, is up to us.

23 Critical Listening Skills

What should we be able to do if we have been listening with a critical thinking mindset? What difference will it make to our relationships if we are able to think into and with the speaker? How can we test ourselves? What can we do if we are able to discern what we understood and what we didn't?

Critical listening requires us to wake up and stay awake.

24 Deeper Listening

Deeper listening is a creative activity, where one is co-shaping a space for the human spirit to grow between the parties. This can be the beginning or an ongoing part of a healthy, thriving relationship. One puts oneself in service of the other, suspends judgment, and remembers that love is patient.

Deeper listening can take us to where we truly seek to go.

25 Deeper Listening Specifics

Becoming increasingly conscious of our demeanor, our posture and movements helps us convey our intention of service. We become storykeepers as our partner is the storyteller. We block out interference, and discipline our racing minds to be a calm center and welcome the silence as well as the speaking.

To be known as a great listener is to be known as a mature human being.

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ARENA
Self–Knowledge for Leading and Supporting
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26 Deeper Listening for Managers and Team Leaders

Through becoming deep listeners, managers and leaders can accomplish far more indirectly than they could ever make happen directly. Deep listening conveys deep caring, and asserts the worthiness of the speaker. Staff feels seen, recognized, and valued in ways that no other communication form or act can offer. Failing to listen is a display of contempt, evidence of the "non-listener" operating from a superior plane.

Deep listeners release energy and thoughtfulness for their staff.

27 Asking for Feedback

As we strive to learn new things, it can be helpful to ask for feedback from those with more experience. To enable this process to be effective, we need to ask ourselves "What is my purpose?" We need to ask ourselves, "What, specifically, do I want?"

Once we are honest about this, we can help prepare our more experienced helper to contribute toward what we truly need and want.

Asking for feedback requires deliberate and candid preparation.

28 Receiving Feedback

To fully benefit from effective feedback requires that we see this not as an event but as a process. There is preparation, there is the presentation, and there is the reflection, adaptation, and appreciation. Effective feedback can be invaluable but we need to help those giving us feedback, and we need to show our appreciation by demonstrating how we have improved as a result of their help.

Receiving feedback is a process, not a solo event.

29 Giving Feedback

What is my purpose in giving feedback? Is it solicited or unsolicited? Is it scheduled or spontaneous? Is it private or in a group? What are the possibilities and what kinds of feedback help most?

Giving feedback can strengthen or wound relationships.

30 Leading and Supporting

With the complexity of today's issues, "command and control" leadership is both toxic and oppressive. Hierarchy can work for routine issues but, in general, we cannot afford to have followers: we are either leading or supporting the organization's various activities. This is a much higher standard and requires higher levels of consciousness and maturity.

The time for followers is over; we are either leading or supporting.

31 Beyond Control

Our habit life and residuals from paradigms in place over the past 60 years need to be addressed. "Command and control" was justified and accepted as a form of organization. What assumptions lie under our worldview, and how can we raise these deep feelings, or hidden expectations to the surface? How do old habits of "command and control" impact organizations?

Control issues and muddy expectations continue to haunt organizations.

32 Aspects of Leading

When in a leading role, an individual needs to take on four main areas of focus: modeling, providing instruction, building trusting relationships with the operating environment, and inspiring all those involved. Because of our history with conventional leaders from the past, people are sensitive to every gesture, omission and expression given by their leaders. As Thoreau said: wake up and stay awake!

It is an art for the individual who is leading to blend the four main functions.

33 Descriptors of Managing

Managing is different from leading. It has more to do with hands-on, shoulder-to- shoulder rhythmic work to keep operations moving forward. It is about building healthy, trusting relationships with staff and other managers. Skilled managers are crucial and, generally, Millennials don't quit jobs, they quit managers.

Managing is about indirectly supporting the flow of work.

34 Leading and Managing

In many organizations, individuals are playing diverse roles: leading at times, managing, and supporting at other times. It can be helpful to audit one's areas of work and the time invested in each, to see how your work functions are playing out relative to each other. Do your colleagues see what you see? Do your supervisors or staff understand what you are seeing?

It can be helpful to audit areas we are leading, managing, or supporting.

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35 Total Quality Management

W. Edwards Deming (1900-1993) was a pioneer of the first rank. His thinking and continuous improvement methods are more appropriate for complexity than competing approaches dubbed "managed by objectives." His work revolutionized Japan's prowess in quality products, technology, and his 19' statue stands in the Toyota pavilion in Tokyo. US business leaders simply could not tolerate the change his methods required.

Achieving quality requires profound knowledge of human nature.

36 Designing Effective Meetings I

Design is the first signal of human intention, according to William McDonough. Our intention in meetings needs to be focused on the experience of the participants. We can let meetings happen or we can design them. The design elements include process, culture, and content.

Most meetings, virtual or in person, are poorly designed.

37 Designing Effective Meetings II

Effective meetings include design that incorporates our human nature as thinking, feeling, and willing beings. There is the pre-meeting, the set meeting time window, and the post-meeting. All three have opportunities to enrich the experience of the participants and strengthen the capacity of the organization by building trusting relationships. Process, culture, and content all need to be shaped by clear purpose.

Designing effective meetings takes knowledge and consciousness.

38 Adult Learning

Coenraad von Houten, in *Awakening the Will*, identifies the path for adult learning, and articulates how different it is from how children learn. If we are serious about developing original work as adults, we have a series of steps to consider. *Mastery*, by George Leonard, also identifies patterns of how adults learn, and clarifies the path of mastery.

Today's complexity calls responsible adults to step up their self-education.

39 Equity, Equality, and Fairness I

As we try to come together, to understand each other, words can get in the way if we are not clear about what we mean. Equity and Equality are commonly interchanged as if they meant the same thing. Fairness is hooked to them in a hodgepodge way and we are talking past each other. Expanding these core concepts and their relationship can support meaningful conversations.

Equity means something very different from Equality.

40 Equity, Equality, and Fairness II

Fairness, justice, is essential if we are to live together in peace. Yet, is it our intention to do so? What about historic and chronic injustices? How is this related to inclusion? What is my part in the perpetuation of injustice?

What is my role and relationship to chronic injustice?

To enroll in any of these Labs or Certificates, visit our website: catalyticthinkinglabs.com. If you are interested in signing up a team or multiple learners or simply desire to design a custom course contact us at support@catalyticthinkinglabs.com.

Disciplined Social Innovation

The following Labs are organized in a developmental path. You may take the Labs in any order, based on your interest or the needs of your team.

1   Social Innovation

We want the world to be a better place. We want to take part in the change. What is asked of us if we are serious? Social Innovation blends a path of study and on-the-ground exploration with people and systems. Social Innovation is not a product: it is a process. It can be learned and developed. It requires skill-building and courage. One can be an entrepreneur, or more of an intrapreneur, working within an organization. One can take initiative to simply support an ongoing initiative. No one who has succeeded says it was an easy path but it is found to be worth it.

Social innovation is not just a cool thing to do. It calls for discipline and love of the deeds.

2   Social Innovation Roadmap

We want the world to be a better place. We want to take part in the change. What is asked of us if we are serious? Social Innovation blends a path of study and on-the-ground exploration with people and systems.

The path is long and the climb is steep; your colleagues align with your values.

3   Getting in the Game

Getting started can seem intimidating, yet small steps and interactions with people in the field are nourishing for one's confidence. Leading with Intellectual Humility and appreciation for what others already know will open many doors. Step forward!

Small steps, an open mind, and a big heart will open many doors.

4   Self-Accountability and Self-Assessment

What do I look to if I want help in holding myself accountable? How do I design things to assess in a meaningful way to guide me toward the development I seek? If I want a healthy relationship with my friends, where do I modify my habits or invest more time or attention?

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Demystifying a free, independent, and mature human being.

6   Methods to Assess My Learning

Imagining we are outside ourselves, assessing our attitudes, habits, and behaviors, we can strive to get an objective glimpse of how we are operating. If we want to be free and independent, reliable and confident, we need to be able to assess whether or not we are learning from what is appearing before us. We can do this as a practice.

To assess our own learning can work to liberate us from outside influences.

7   Self-Knowledge Backspace

If we want to make change in the world, to contribute to healing and authentic community and justice, we need to begin with transforming ourselves. Gaining clarity about what we already believe, sorting out what habits we want to change, and developing humility about the challenges ahead are part of the path.

Actively transform ourselves as we work to change the world.

8   Fundamental Human Needs

Recognizing patterns of the needs of humanity, globally over time, was part of the work of Manfred Max-Neef (Chile). His work focuses on "What we need" and "What we want," and the differences between them. Unless we know the relationship in daily life, we chase our wants and ignore what we authentically need.

Human needs and wants follow patterns that are illuminating.

9   Fundamental Human Needs in Our Organizations

Humans organize themselves to accomplish something. Within that organization, and as that group of people connect with wider circles, people have needs and wants. Clearing up the relationships helps the group make decisions for health and the common good. Ignoring these relationships leads us to erode our potential.

Groups also have needs and wants and we can clarify them.

10   Associative Economics

Building from authentic human needs and our capacity to create value, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) developed ideas to help post-WWI Europe. Associative economic principles offer a solid alternative to conventional capitalism by eliminating speculation, and adding shared risk and reward, as well as full transparency to economic processes. These principles offer insight for social innovators.

Associative economic principles liberate us from greed, speculation, and secrecy.

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11 Developing Well-Reasoned Conclusions

To build confidence in our judgment is possible when we learn to use reliable frameworks and block out toxic elements.

To be a confident person means we have confidence in our judgment.

12 Properties of Systems I

Living systems share properties, and we can utilize these properties to help organize our approach to complex issues. Systems have a purpose, boundaries, a hierarchy, coherence, and emergence. They exist within a suprasystem and within them exist learning subsystems, humans who can cooperate.

Complexity can be confusing without having a systems view.

13 Properties of Systems II

Families are dynamic living systems. Individual humans are dynamic living systems. Both are complex, and we can learn from the comparisons.

Properties of dynamic living systems provide insight into complex issues.

14 Ecosystem Mapping

Any social innovation grows into an ecosystem of similar and related services or products on offer. Mapping the players within an ecosystem is similar to mapping the flora, fauna, soil, and climate in an ecosystem. Introducing a new idea without understanding the context of the social ecosystem is risky. We can avoid this.

Appreciating all the players enables collaboration to grow.

15 Building a Dynamic Social Innovation Initiative

Clarity of thought is essential to effective innovations. Seeing and working with the developmental process, with all its trials, is a signal of maturity. What, exactly, is our value proposition? How are the elements relating or coherent with each other? We can map and track these processes.

This process is more like surfing than getting on a train.

16 Quality Collaboration

Today, no one builds an effective social innovation in isolation or alone. Teams are needed because of the complexity and needed diversity of talents, interests, and skills. Behaviorally, what is asked of effective team members? Where are our strengths and where do we need to beware?

We won't go anywhere unless we go together with a minimum of friction.

17 Diffusion of Innovations I

Everett Rogers' book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, tracks how humans, globally, relate to new things. These labs will look at three aspects of his wonderful work; first, we will track the path of the adopter of an innovation, studying the steps.

Humans have been innovating for millennia: there are patterns.

18 Diffusion of Innovations II

Qualities of the innovation itself influence whether or not, or how quickly, adopters take it up. If we recognize these qualities, we can design around our weaknesses and build on our strengths. We can work from what Buckminster Fuller calls 'anticipatory design'.

Patterns exist: we are foolish to ignore them and their wisdom.

19 Diffusion of Innovations III

It is not uncommon in marketing lingo to hear about "early adopters." What is not common is a deep understanding of the characteristics and social norms and patterns of various categories of adopters. Who are we speaking to? The "late majority?" What are the characteristics of the pioneers and early adopters? How can understanding these help us?

Every community is unique; generalizations can help if respected.

20 Demystifying Strategic Planning

Consultants and leaders are routinely talking about "Strategic Planning." This can be intimidating to anyone who has not participated within an organizational structure. Yet, we are always planning our own lives, and influencing the planning of our family and community. "The plan is nothing, planning is everything." ~ General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of Allied Troops, WWII.

Strategic planning also applies to our own professional development.

21 Investing Time Wisely

The capacity of any system is the sum of the relationships to the exponential of TRUST. With whom do we choose to spend our time and invest in relationships? What characteristics are we looking for if we are serious about becoming a social innovator? What will be asked of us if we are to partner with high-achieving people?

Healthy relationships are based on clear, transparent expectations.

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Disciplined Social Innovation

22 Crafting Effective Proposals

Clear, simple ideas are harder to craft than one might imagine. A disciplined process helps us develop and express our ideas with warmth, enthusiasm and pragmatic realism. This Lab is related to the next Lab, *Crafting Effective Opportunity Statements*. Multiple drafts and revisions will be needed!

Your idea will be accepted based on how well it is explained.

23 Crafting Effective Opportunity Statements

Clarifying our thinking enables us to state simply and clearly what we see: 1) as an opportunity, 2) as a problem, or 3) as a question in focus. This does not happen magically: it is a disciplined process of drafting and being guided by criteria and strategies that help us minimize ambiguity and remain aligned with our Higher Purpose(s).

Stating something important both clearly and simply takes work.

24 Informational Interviews

To become a social innovator means to learn from people in the field, people who have diverse experiences. Yet, you cannot build your social capital if you "data mine" people or waste their time by asking questions that are addressed on their website. You can prepare by forming *Potent Questions* — a Get Started free lab — that reveal your interest and enable them to recognize your potential as a thinker. This also honors them by opening new doors to their thinking.

Job offers and future openings can come from dynamic informational interviews.

25 Introductions

First impressions are formed in 7 seconds, according to research. How do you present yourself? What are the basics for professionals? Why not demonstrate that you know how professionals do it? Professionals want to work with professionals: show them you can belong without sacrificing your identity. It takes practice, and recording yourself and reviewing will help.

Focus on your backspace helpers if you are apprehensive.

26 Mentors and the Mentoring Process

We all need mentors, and we all can mentor others when we develop special skills or knowledge. The process can be highly satisfying to both parties if there is a clear understanding of the qualities, the expectations, the form, and the timing.

Strong mentors enable newcomers to become social innovators.

27 Resourcing

Jason Saul (*The End of Fundraising*) and Dan Pallotta (*Uncharitable*) have contributed significantly to understanding the macro issues facing NGOs (non-governmental organizations), nonprofits, and organizations within the Civil Society. Demonstrating social good is tricky and filled with fear of losing funding streams. Social innovators can learn much about the context from these authors.

Social capital markets create opportunities and call for different identities.

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