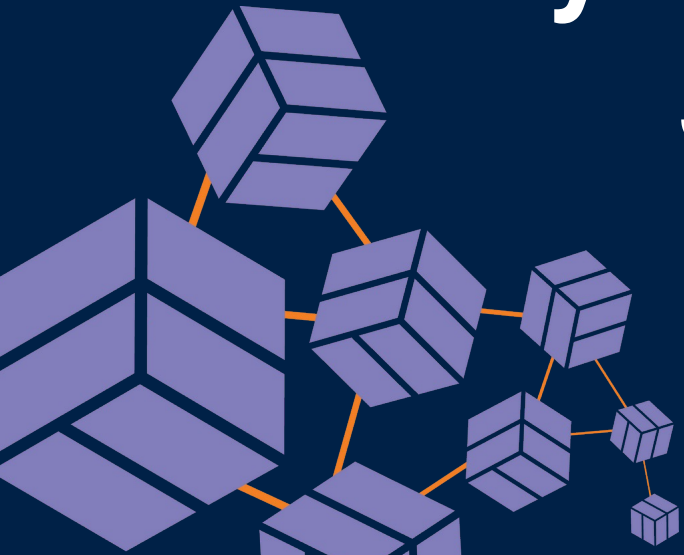# Map the System
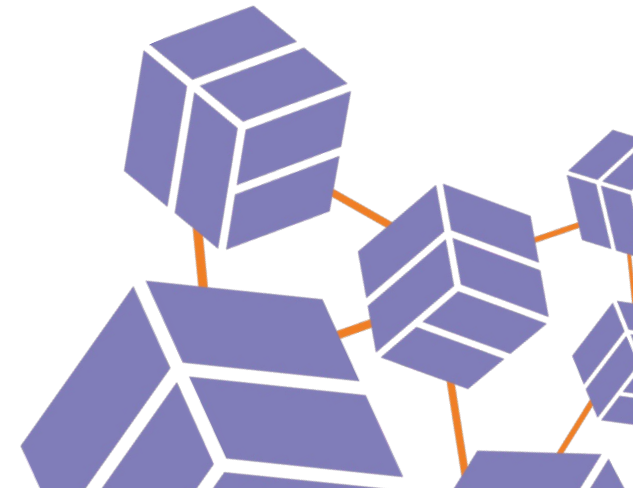
Systems Thinking in Action: Solutions Mapping & Landscaping

Workshop overview

- Introduction   10 min

- Starting with asset framing   20 min

- Solutions mapping   20 min

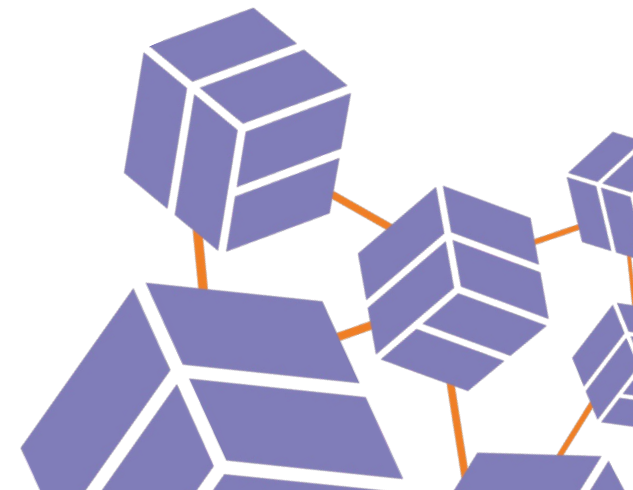- Application exercise   *To complete in own time*
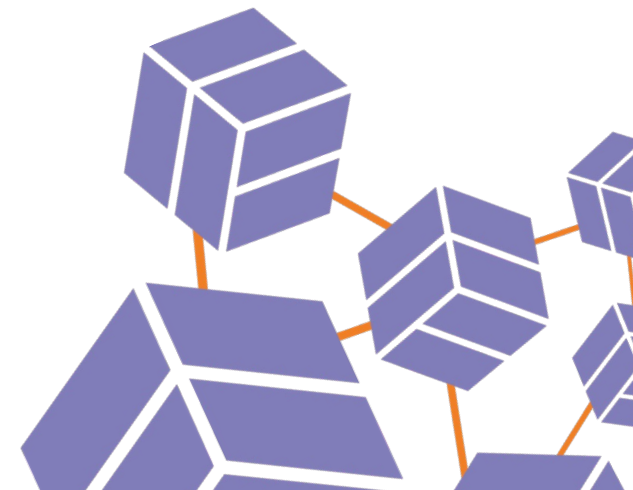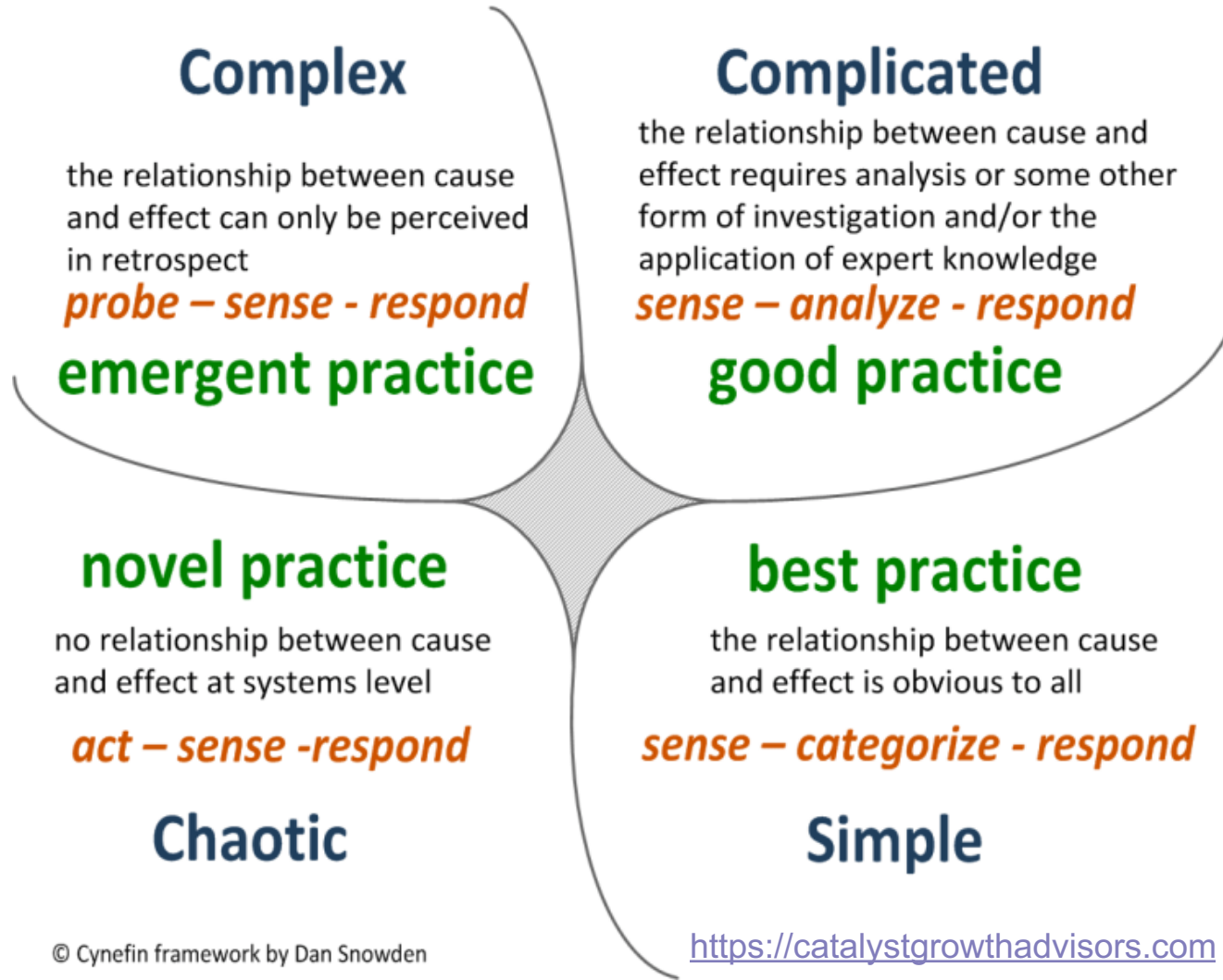
- Feedback + Recap   10 min

Introduction

What is a solution?

Solutions in complexity

Complex

the relationship between cause and effect can only be perceived in retrospect

probe – sense - respond

emergent practice

Complicated

the relationship between cause and effect requires analysis or some other form of investigation and/or the application of expert knowledge

sense – analyze - respond

good practice

novel practice

no relationship between cause and effect at systems level

act – sense -respond

Chaotic

best practice

the relationship between cause and effect is obvious to all

sense – categorize - respond

Simple

© Cynefin framework by Dan Snowden

https://catalystgrowthadvisors.com

Features of complexity

- Relationship based! You cannot isolate the parts

- No single formulation of the problem → lots of disagreement

- No end point

- Unique situations and contexts

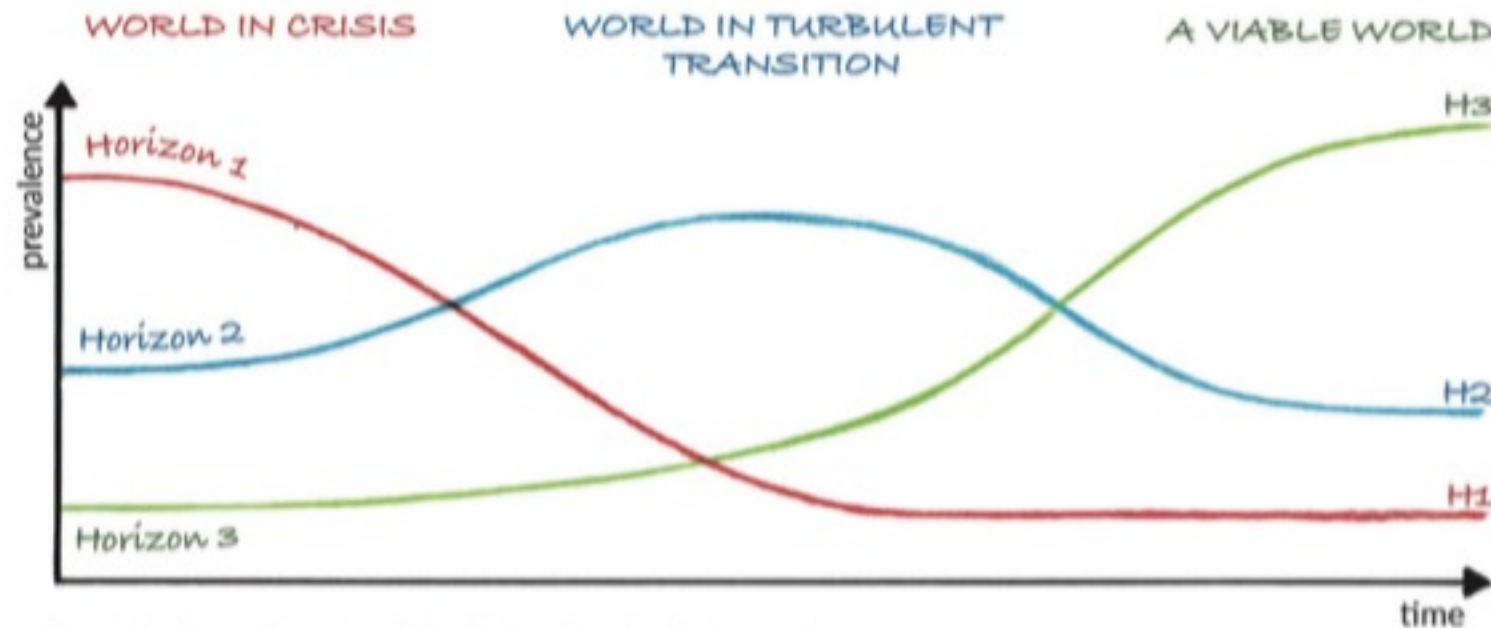- Solutions are not true/false but good/poor
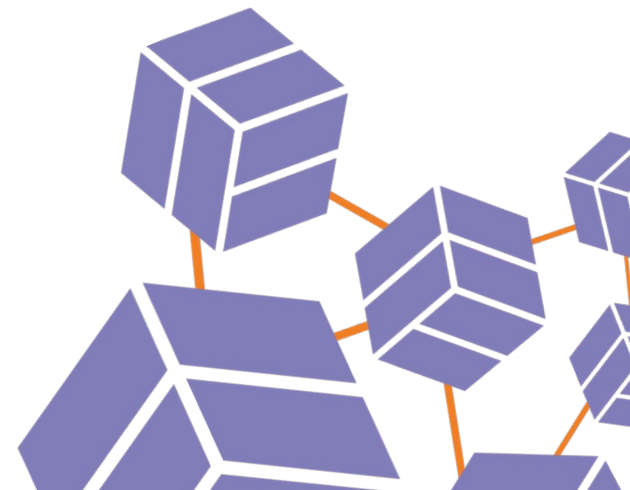
Looking for emergent practices

- What has and has not worked

- What needs to be adapted

- Opportunities from other contexts

3 Horizons Model

THREE HORIZONS FRAMEWORK APPLIED TO THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A REGENERATIVE CULTURE

WORLD IN CRISIS   WORLD IN TURBULENT TRANSITION   A VIABLE WORLD

Sustaining innovation keeps 'the lights on' and maintains status quo.

Disruptive innovation identifies opportunities to change the scope of what is possible.

Transformative innovation facilitates the transition towards regenerative cultures.

https://medium.com/activate-the-future/the-three-horizons-of-innovation-and-culture-change-d9681b0e0b0f
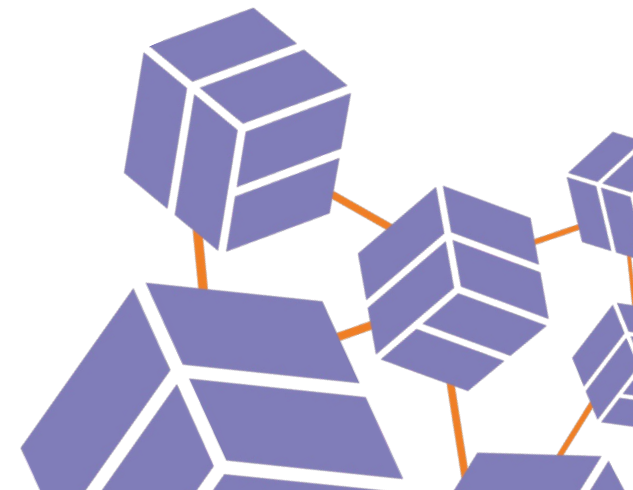
Starting with assets

Needs vs Assets

Needs Based	Asset Based
• Focus on deficiencies	• Focus on effectiveness
• People are consumers of services	• People are producers
• Community members observe as issues are being addressed	• Community members participate and are the source of solutions

Adapted from: https://leadingdifferently.com/2015/02/10/asset-focused-leadership/
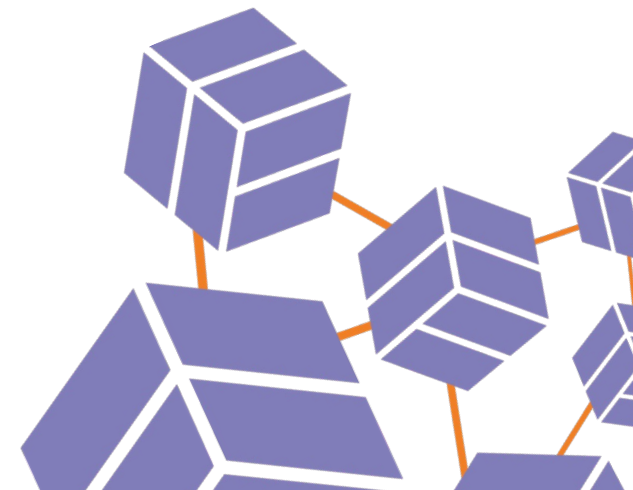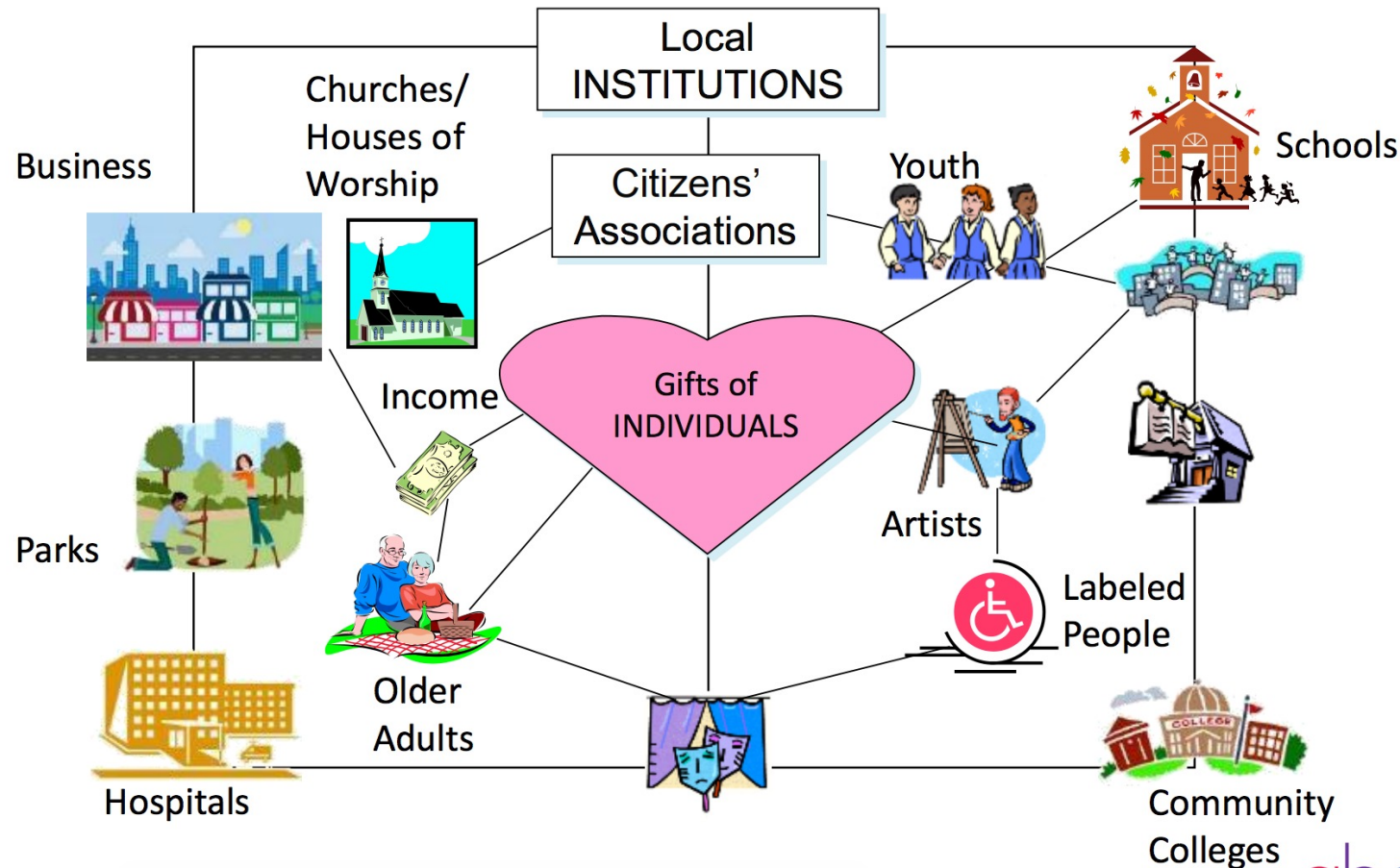
Asset-based community development (**ABCD**) is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials.
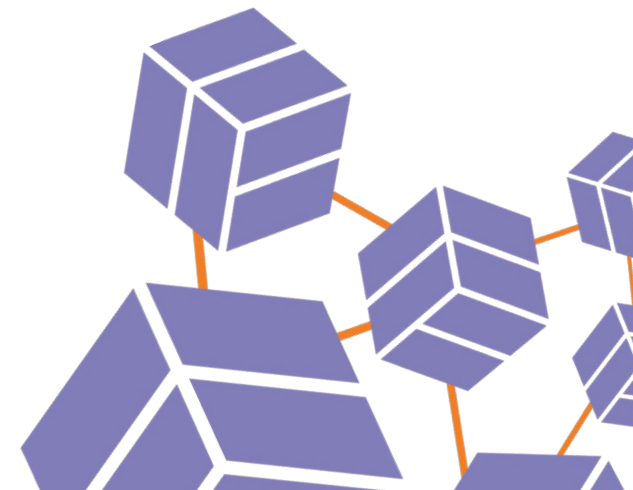

BUILDING COMMUNITIES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

A PATH TOWARD FINDING AND MOBILIZING A COMMUNITY'S ASSETS

JOHN P. KRETZMANN · JOHN L. MCKNIGHT

https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/abcd-institute/

Community Assets Map

Resources: https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/resources/Pages/tool-kit.aspx
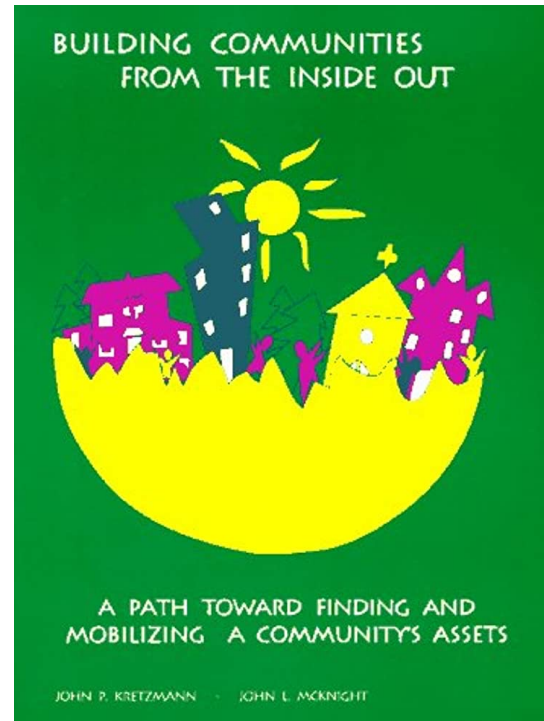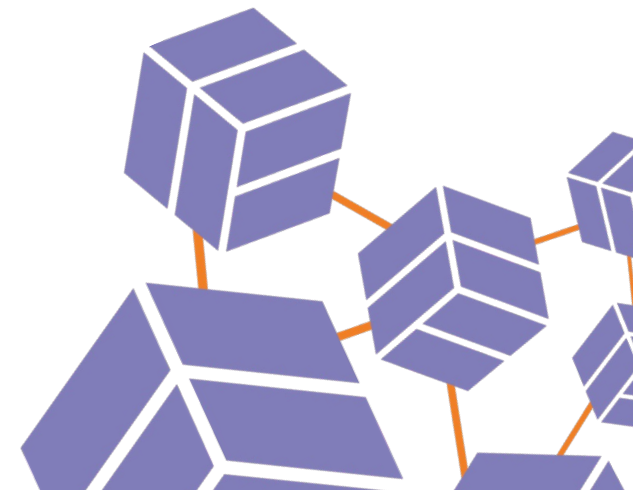
Sources of Solutions-Finding

- Individuals

- Associations

- Institutions

- Physical Assets

- Modes of Exchange

Adapted from: https://leadingdifferently.com/2015/02/10/asset-focused-leadership/
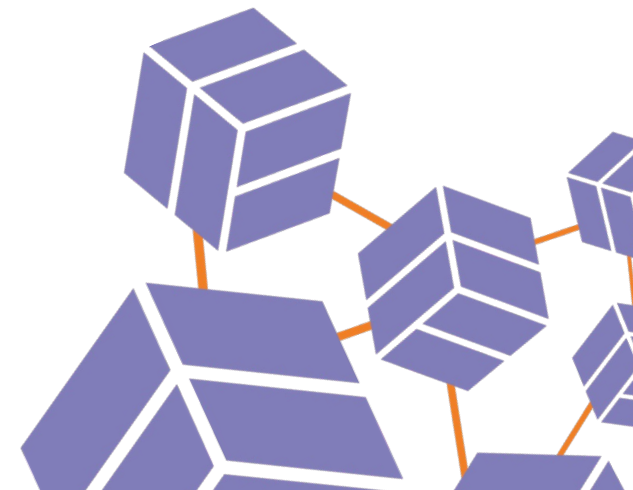
Frame 2: Asset Framing

Asset-Framing is a narrative model that defines people by their assets and aspirations before noting the challenges and deficits. This model invests in people for their continued benefit to society.

https://www.chcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UnderstandingAssetFramingGuidelinesAuthors.pdf

2 Ways of Thinking

Daniel Kahneman, described by Shorters:

"We have two systems in our minds: First, the **associative system,** which is super-fast, has a habit of instantly forming narratives, and does 95% of our mental processing before conscious thought.

Then, our **conscious mind**, which interprets the world and makes decisions based upon what our associative minds make available."
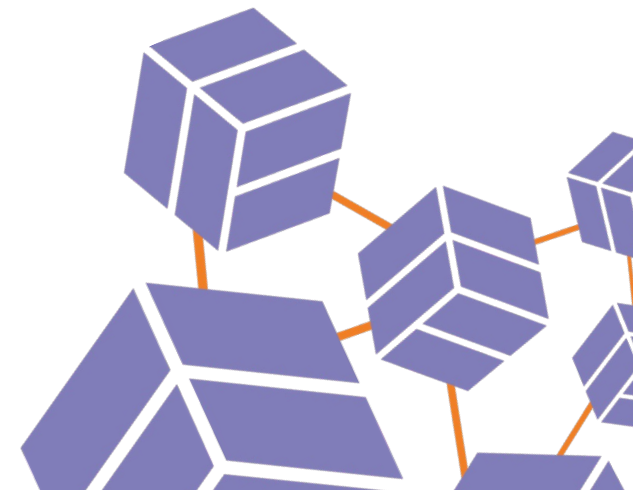
Sources of Solutions-Finding

- Define people by their aspirations and contributions rather than their challenges

- Re-think the language in problem statements: "We help at-risk youth in high-crime neighborhoods," vs. "We help young people overcome obstacles and achieve their dreams."

- Consider the systemic obstructions to those aspirations and contributions - and what are current solutions that are removing those barriers

https://www.comnetwork.org/blog/asset-framing-the-other-side-of-the-story
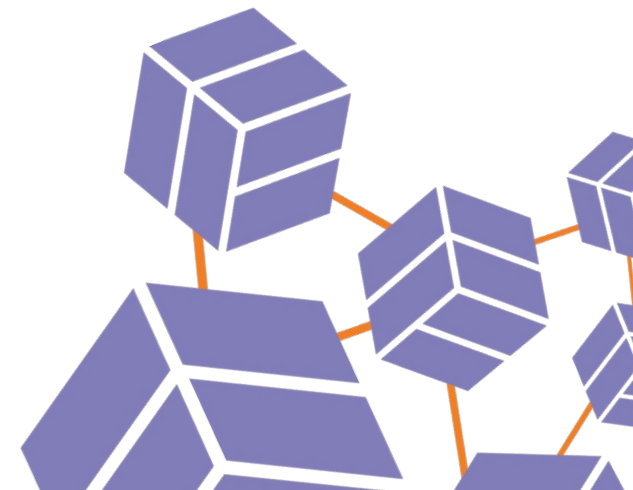
Frame 3: Complicating the Narrative

Complicating the Narrative (CTN) is a journalistic method inspired by conflict mediation techniques to find and include the details that don't fit the narrative to expose more complex stories.

About   Impact   Learning Lab   Solutions Story Tracker ®

Transforming news is critical to building a more equitable and sustainable world.

The Solutions Journalism Network is leading a global shift in journalism, focused on what the news misses most often: how people are trying to solve problems and what we can learn from their successes or failures.

Learn More

https://thewholestory.solutionsjournalism.org/complicating-the-narratives-b9fea0e9df63

Looping for deep listening

1. Listen with the intent to understand what your partner is saying.

2. Offer your understanding: communicate what you think they meant in language that conveys understanding.

3. Observe their reaction to be sure you got it; ask "does that sound right?"

4. Polish your understanding, correct what you got wrong by asking them what you missed, and finally encourage them to tell you more.

Sources of Solutions-Finding

- Amplify contradictions
- Widen the lens
- Get to people's motivations
- Listen more and better
- Expose people to the other tribe
- Counter confirmation bias
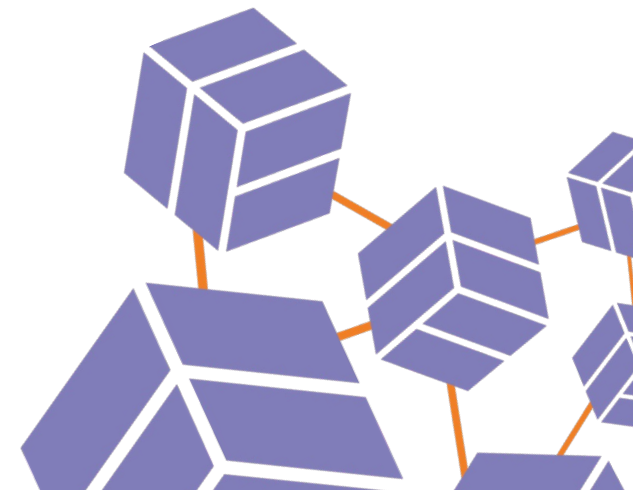
Solutions mapping

What are we looking for?
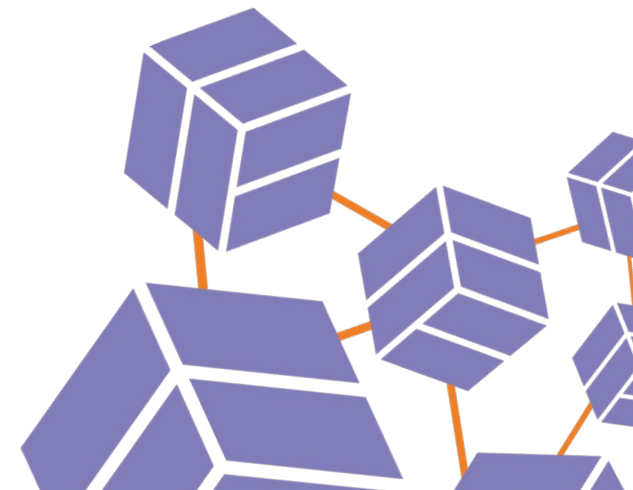
We are looking for *emerging practices* that shift:

➢ Policies

➢ Programmes

➢ People

➢ …Narratives?...

4 Techniques

- Positive Deviance
- Appreciative Inquiry
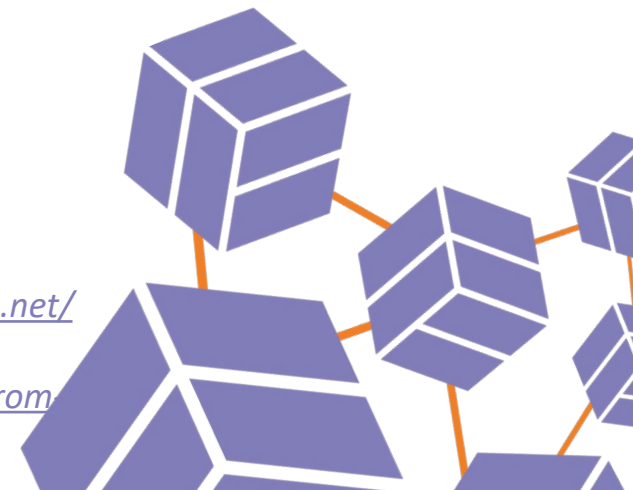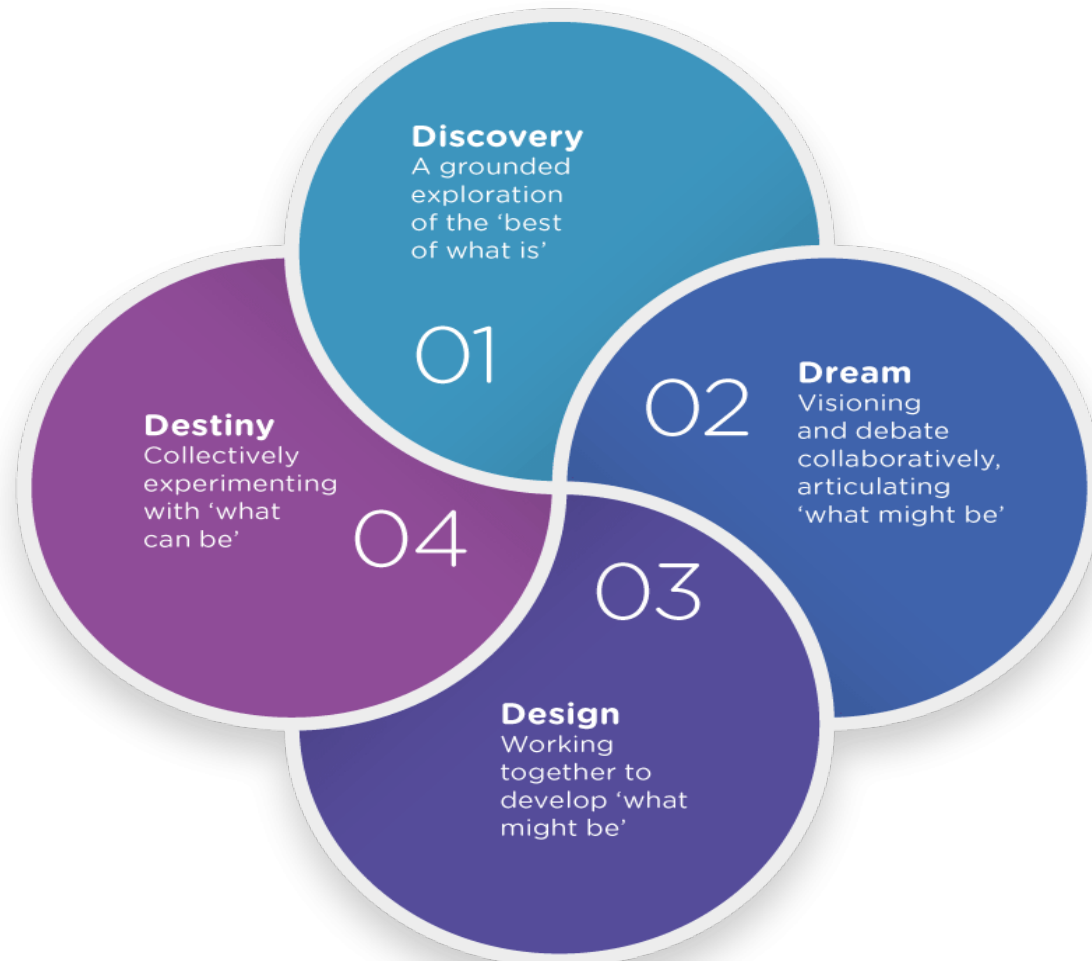- Add/Subtract/Extend
- Bricolage

Positive Deviance

How to spot solutions:
Within a community, some individuals engage in unusual behaviors allowing them to solve problems better than others who face similar challenges.
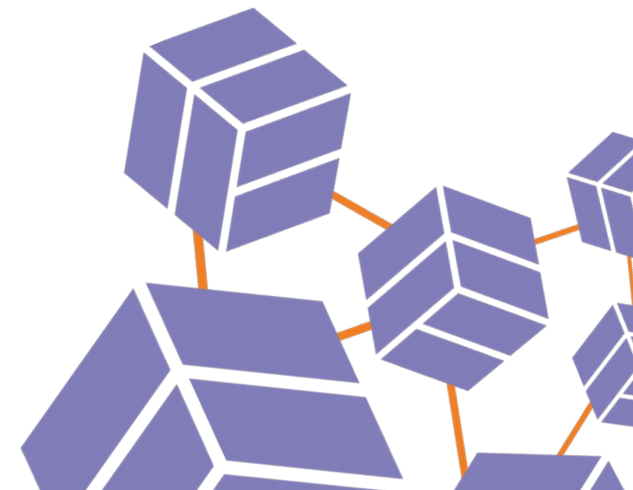
https://www.slideshare.net/dgurteen/what-km-practioners-can-learn-from-positive-deviance

https://conversational-leadership.net/positive-deviance/

Appreciative Inquiry

How to spot: Speak to people about their dreams & aspirations. Understand the moments when individuals or communities experience "aliveness" and what are the components of that experience.
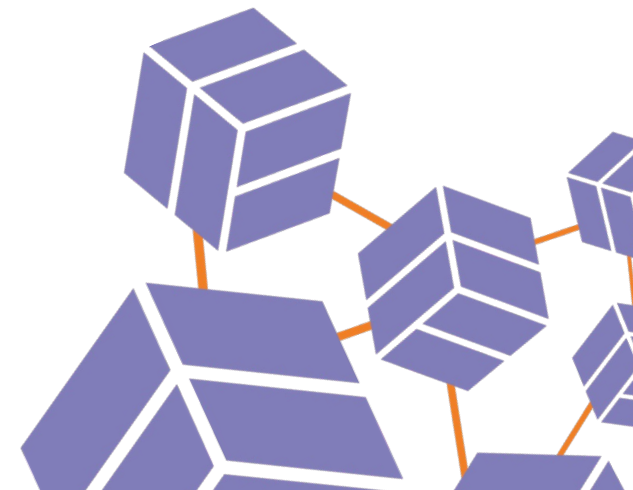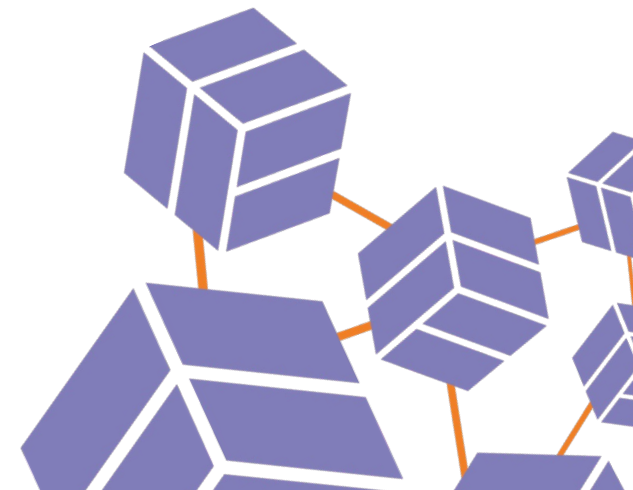
Add/Subtract/Extend

How to spot: Where do we see policies, people or programmes that are adding removing, or extending elements – and creating something new that responds to present needs?
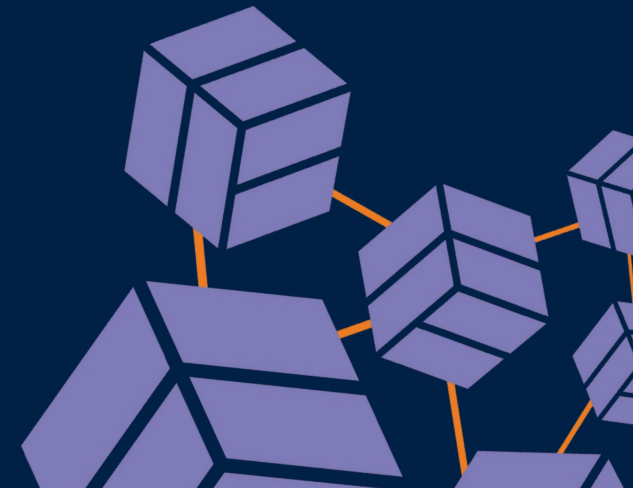
Bricolage

How to spot: Where do we see policies, programmes or people combining things that already exist, but in new and interesting ways?

Application Exercise

Team Exercise:

Choose 1-2 of the Solutions Mapping techniques and discuss the following questions:

➢ <u>WHO</u> would we need to talk to generate a list of solutions using this technique?

➢ <u>WHERE</u> might we have "associative thinking" that we need to abandon or shift before engaging in this conversation?

➢ <u>WHAT</u> would be our list of initial questions?

➢ <u>HOW</u> would we lead with dreams & aspirations, rather than challenges?

Feedback / Wrap-Up
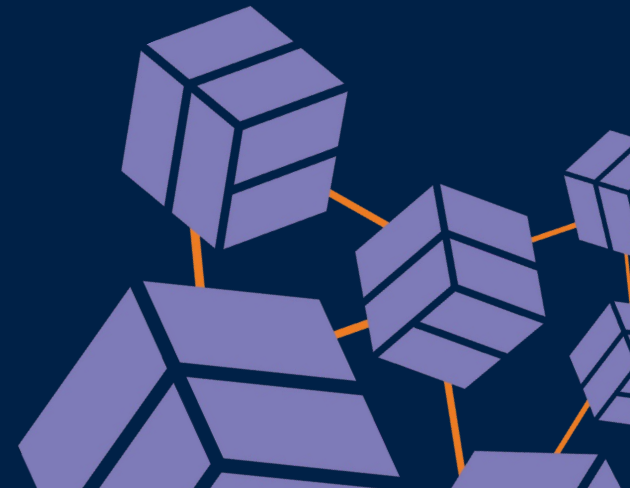
Wrap-Up

- **In complex situations,** solutions are not true/false, but rather good/poor

- **The future is already here:** Look for emergent practices that disrupt the status quo

- **Focusing on assets** is more generative than seeking to alleviate needs

- **4 techniques:** Positive Deviance, Appreciative Inquiry, Add/Subtract/Extend, Bricolage