

REORDERING OUR PRIORITIES THROUGH SYSTEMS CHANGES LEARNING

Relating Systems Thinking & Design (RSD) #9

Thursday, October 15, 2020 | 5:30 AM IST

Zaid Khan, David Ing, Dan Eng, Zemina Meghji, Kelly Okamura, Joanne Dong, Nishat Korada

REORDERING OUR PRIORITIES THROUGH SYSTEMS CHANGES LEARNING

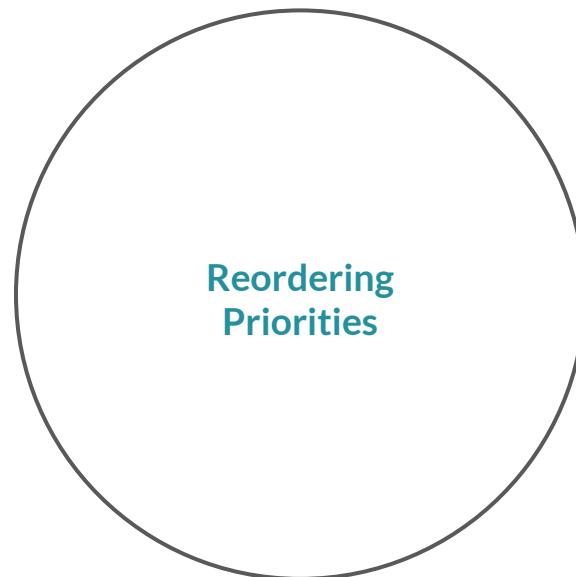
Relating Systems Thinking & Design (RSD) #9

Thursday, October 15, 2020 | 5:30 AM IST

Zaid Khan, David Ing, Dan Eng, Zemina Meghji, Kelly Okamura, Joanne Dong, Nishat Korada

This workshop will explore:

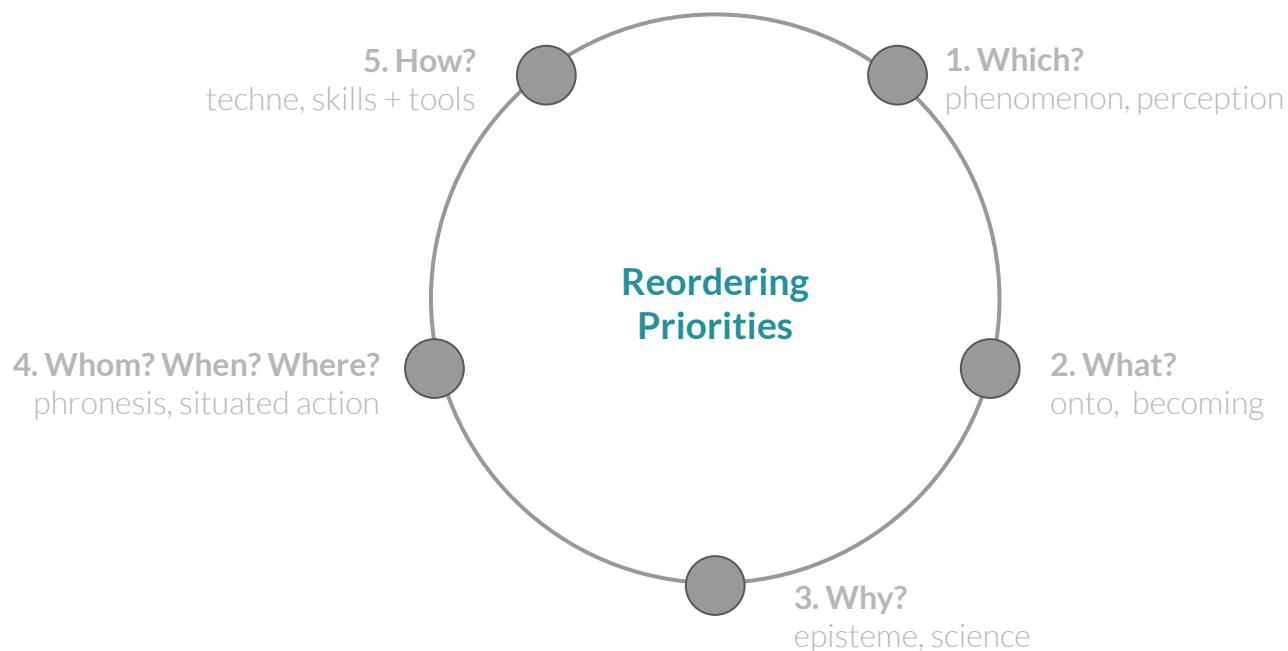
As a collective, how do we order our priorities when working through systems changes?



This is part of getting to better questions
about systems changes



This is part of getting to better questions
about systems changes



Asking better questions can make us aware of **solving the wrong problems**

Type III Errors: Tricking ourselves

*Unintentional error of solving
wrong problems precisely*

Type IV Errors: Tricking others

*Intentionally getting others to
solve the wrong problem*



We're in year 2 of 10 (ish) at the **Systems Changes Learning Circle**

Systems Changes [Home](#) [Presentations](#) [Wiki](#) [Maps](#) [Pattern_Language](#) [Errors_Breakdowns](#) [Social_Innovation](#) [Learning](#) [About](#)



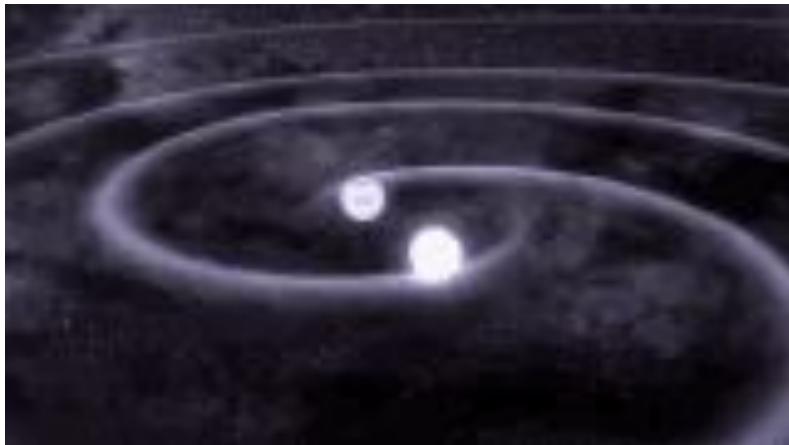
In which *systems* would you like to see *changes* occur?

Systems Changes is an open collaborative community, initiated with a learning circle in Toronto, Canada. A call for participation was launched in January 2019 at the monthly Systems Thinking Ontario meeting. The web site will evolve as contributions and knowledge are added.

The plurals in the program name are significant.

- There are multiple **systems** simultaneously at play, not just a single system.
- **Changes** include those within a field that individual and groups can influence, and those in an extended environment that are beyond our abilities.

Heads up: after 2 slides, we'll break into groups, and then pause for 5 minute to think...



Which three (3) *systems* changes are most *present* for you?

This workshop will balance:
framing (we share a perspective with you)
and **situating** (your place in your life/work)

S: Listing your systems changes

I. Orientation

F: Types of systems changes and dimensions of relationship

S: Mapping your systems changes

II. Possibilities

F: Descriptions and modes of systems changes

S: Prioritizing systems changes

III. Action

F: (de)complexifying and (de)complicating systems changes

S: Discuss what's next and interest in Systems Changes

Learning Circle

S: Listing your systems changes

I. Orientation

- F: Types of systems changes and dimensions of relationship
- S: Mapping your systems changes

II. Possibilities

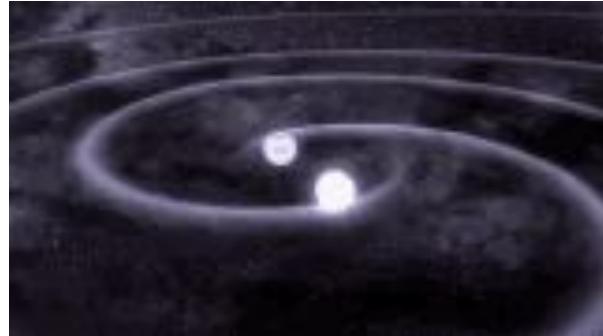
- F: Descriptions and modes of systems changes
- S: Prioritizing systems changes

III. Action

- F: Complicating and complexification of systems changes
- S: Discuss what's next and interest in Systems Changes Learning Circle

Which three (3) systems changes are most *present* for you?

Which systems changes have time,
energy, and attention in your world?

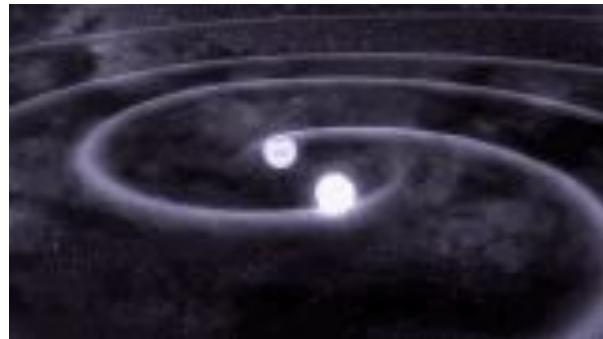


Which three (3) systems changes are most *present* for you?

Which systems changes have time,
energy, and attention in your world?

Me:

- I started a new job (career system)
- My mom is moving (housing system)
- Improving media literacy (media system)



BREAKOUT GROUPS

1. 30 seconds per participant / 5 mins total -- your name and where you're participating from
2. 3 mins total -- think and write down your three (3) systems changes
3. 1 min per participant / 10 mins total -- share your three (3) systems changes

S: Listing your systems changes

I. Orientation

F: Types of systems changes and dimensions of relationship

S: Mapping your systems changes

II. Possibilities

F: Descriptions and modes of systems changes

S: Prioritizing systems changes

III. Action

F: (de)complexifying and (de)complicating systems changes

S: Discuss what's next and interest in Systems Changes

Learning Circle

Unpack “shifts” we can differentiate between (i) shifts in states; (ii) shift in behaviors; and (iii) shift in regimes



Shift between states
falling asleep <-> waking up

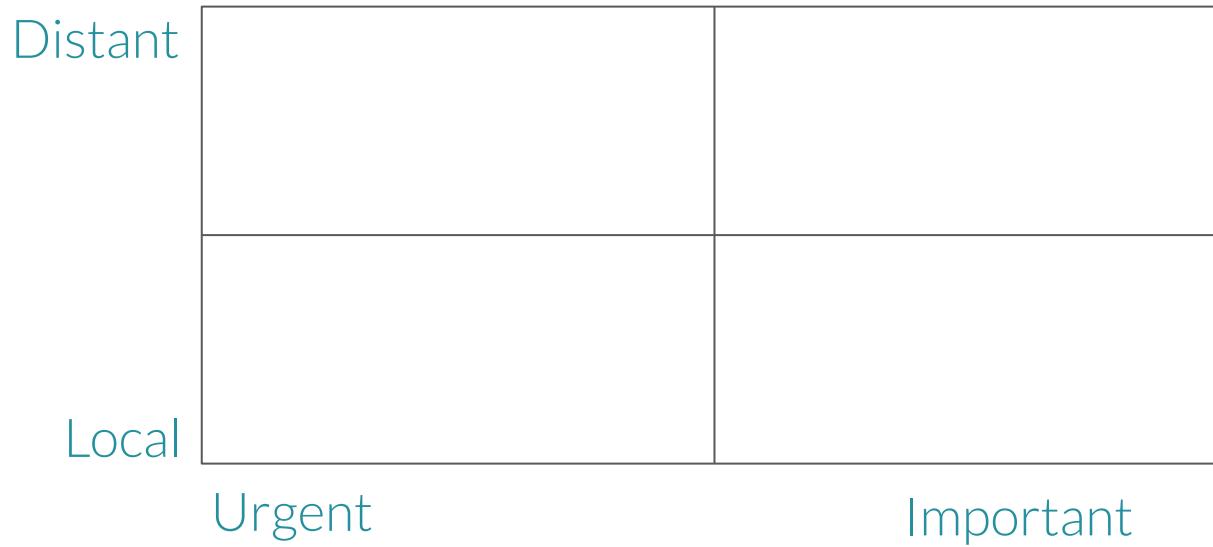


Shift between behaviours
living carefree <-> minding health



Shift of regimes
enjoying normalcy <-> alert on edge

What if we considered our systems changes in a matrix along two dimensions: (i) urgent - important and (ii) local - distant



In balancing priorities, Eisenhower said that “The urgent are never important, and the important are never urgent”



Urgent
...but not important?



Important
....but not urgent

Systems changes may be with relations seen as:(i) local in direct interaction, or (ii) distant through representations



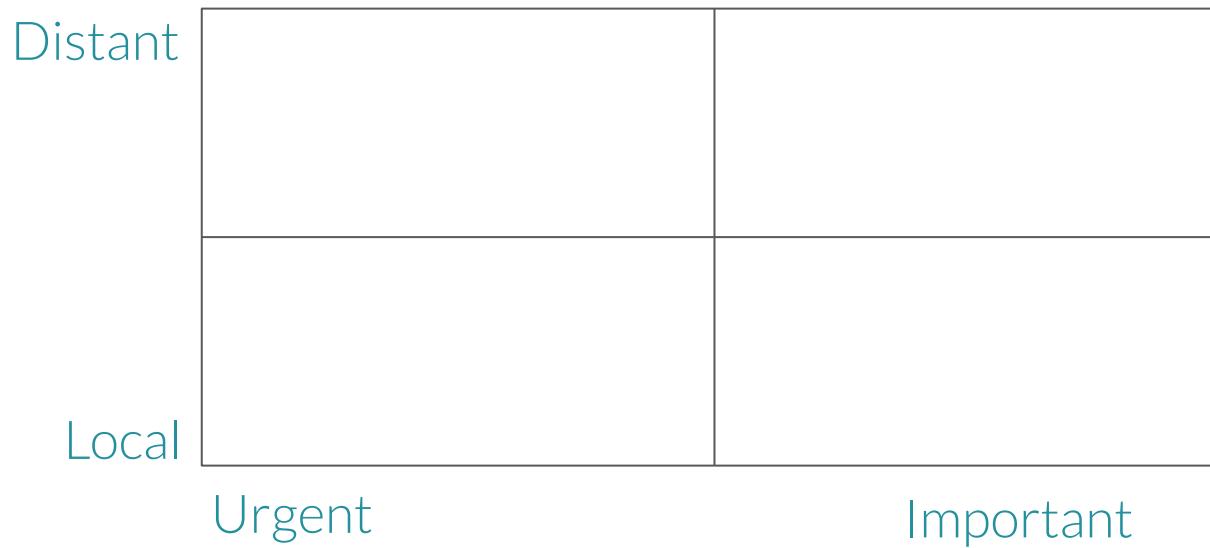
Local in direct interaction
Co-responding alongside



Distant through representations with equivocality (ambiguity)
Mediated with a contextual landscape

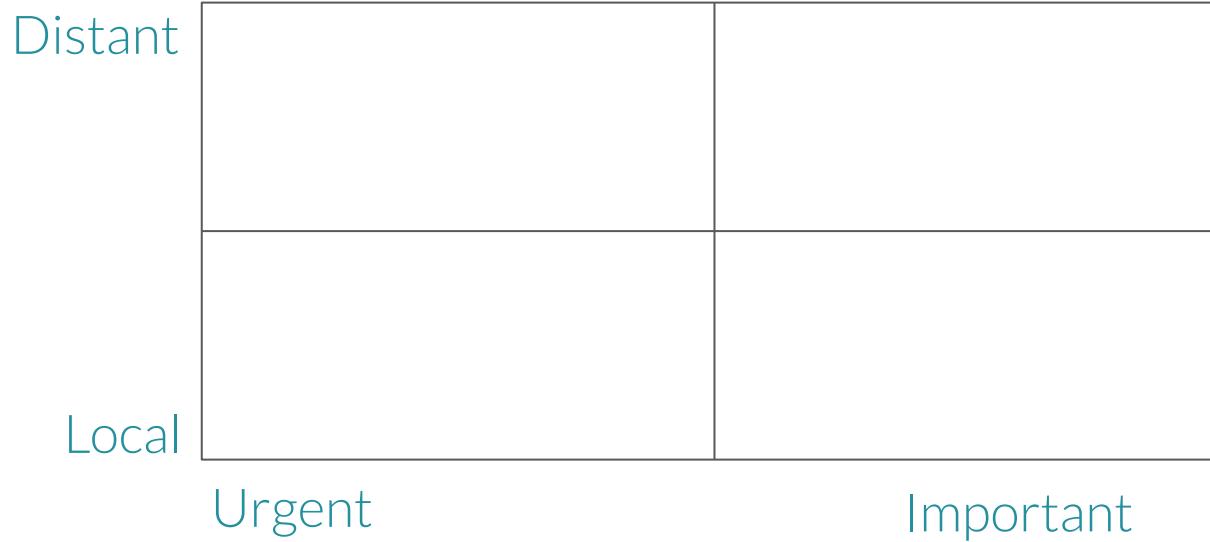
BREAKOUT GROUPS

As an exercise, map the (3) systems changes most present to you in two dimension of (i) urgent – important, and (ii) local - distant



BREAKOUT GROUPS

1. 3 mins total - map each of your three (3) systems changes
2. 10 mins total - notice where the systems changes are being placed, openly discuss what's appearing in the quadrants



S: Listing your systems changes

I. Orientation

F: Types of systems changes and dimensions of relationship

S: Mapping your systems changes

II. Possibilities

F: Descriptions and modes of systems changes

S: Prioritizing systems changes

III. Action

F: (de)complexifying and (de)complicating systems changes

S: Discuss what's next and interest in Systems Changes

Learning Circle

Critically examining systems changes, we see: (i) systemic change; (ii) systematic change; (iii) systems change; and (iv) ecosystem change

Systemic Change

Transforming arrangements in a whole setting into altered functions and structures.



Systematic Change

Transitioning through a social realignment in an orderly manner



Systems Change

Migrating to a new whole as an alternative to maintaining the old

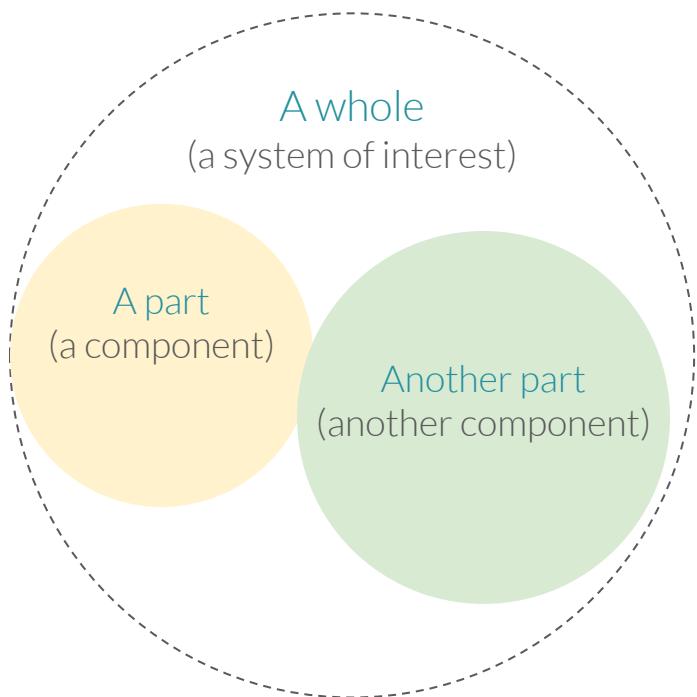


Ecosystem Change

Co-responding alongside nearby living systems as shared landscapes reshape



A system is a whole that cannot be divided into independent parts



- (1) Every part of a system has properties that it loses when separated from the system.
- (2) Every system has some properties – its essential ones – that none of its parts do.

In authentic systems thinking, synthesis precedes analysis and the containing whole is appreciated



Why do the British drive on the left?

Nothing in the car (analysis) will tell you why.

The answer lies in the containing whole/environment (synthesis).

Synthesis precedes analysis

1. Determine the larger system of which the system to be explained is a part.
2. Try to understand the larger system as a whole.
3. Disaggregate the understanding of the whole into an understanding of the part by identifying its role or function in the containing system.

Taking action recognizes modes of systems changes, as
(i) unfolding nature; (ii) fixing problems; and (iii) making history



Unfolding nature
Systems generating systems



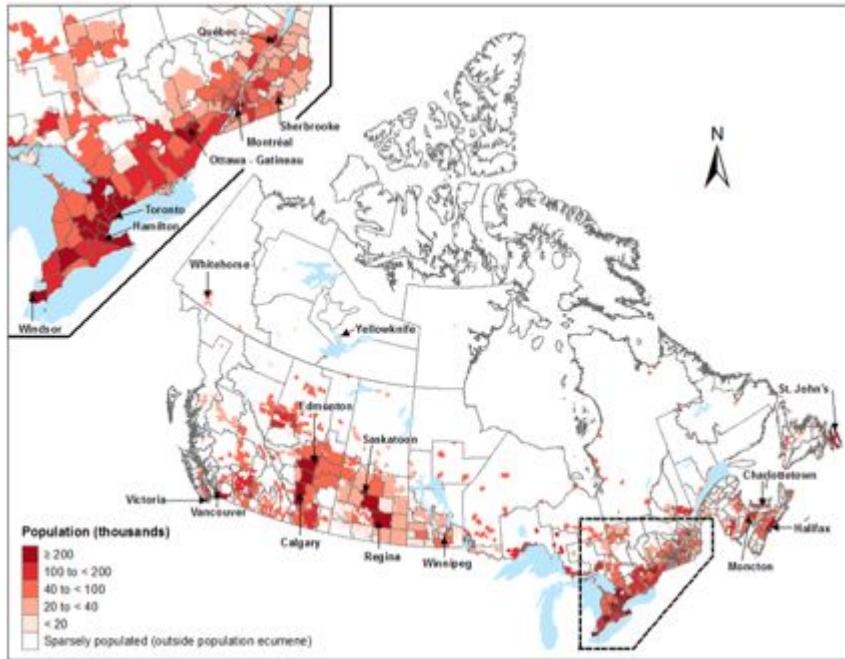
Fixing problems
Solution (engineering resilience)



Making history
Disclosing new worlds

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Conversation for possibilities



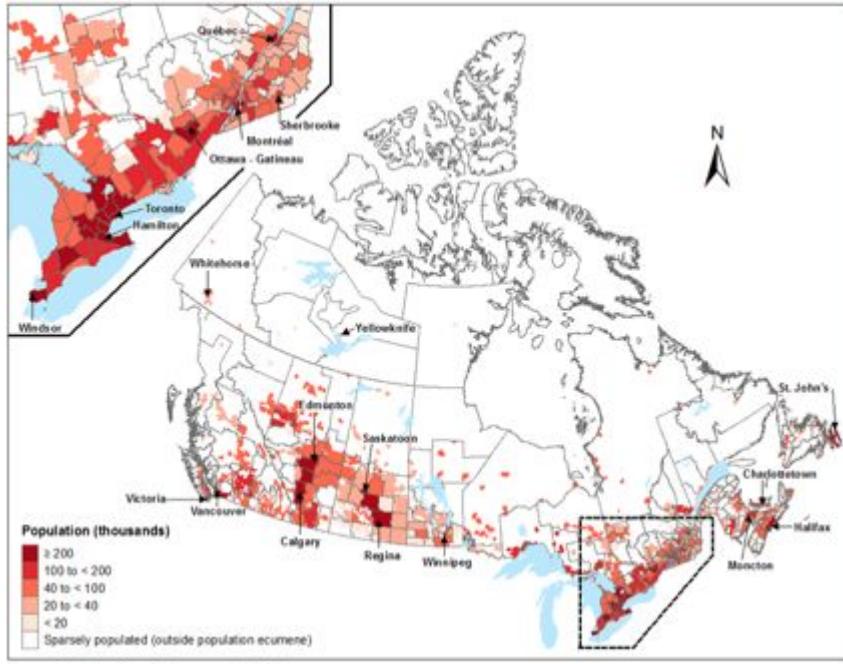
Given the systems changes mapped, if you were given an opportunity to allocate \$35M (\$1 for each citizen in Canada)...

...in **WHICH WAYS** would you decide to prioritize the systems changes you mapped?

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Map 4.1 Population distribution as of July 1, 2014 by census division (CD), Canada

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Conversation for possibilities



Given the systems changes mapped, if you were given an opportunity to allocate \$35M (\$1 for each citizen in Canada)...

...in **WHICH WAYS** would you decide to prioritize the systems changes you mapped?

- **10 minutes total**

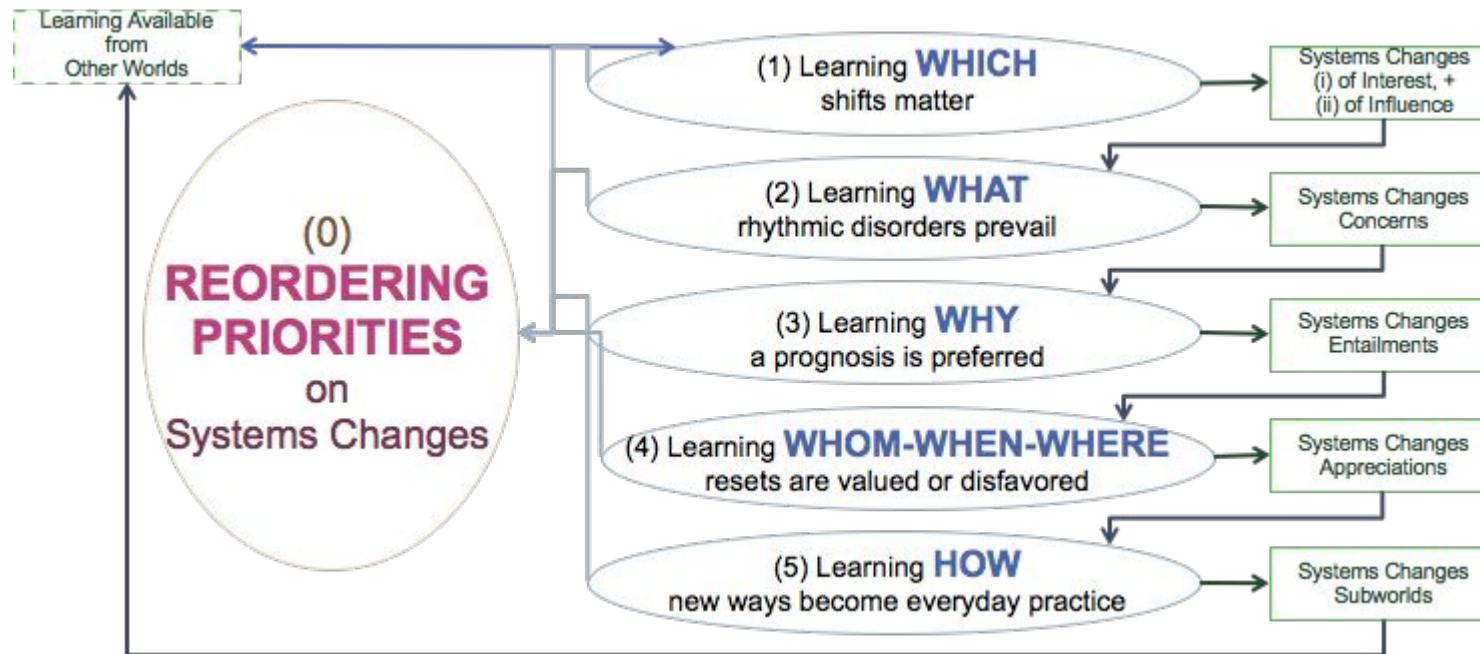
**feel free to choose any country or any “whole” to prioritize within*

What did we learn in trying to
synthesize our priorities?

Where Systems Changes Learning Circle is heading

<i>Linear-Sequential Logical Positivism</i>	Schools of Philosophy	<i>Systems Changes Learning</i>
Intention .Solution ← problem	Which? (phenomena, perception)	Attending/attention .Wicked messes
Human will .Machines, linear causes	What? (ontos, becoming)	Living beings .Fluid course of nature
Dynamic equilibria .Engineering resilience	Why? (episteme, science)	Regime shifts .Ecological resilience
Scaling technocracy .Lawful order	Whom, when, where? (phronesis, situated action)	Practical wisdom .Negotiated order
Unfreeze-Δ-freeze .Behavior (collective?)	How? (techne, skills + tools)	Social practice .Affordances

Where Systems Changes Learning Circle is heading



Discuss.openlearnings.cc -- open forum for discussions

Open Learning Commons

Do you want live notifications when people reply to your posts? [Enable Notifications](#) X

[all categories](#) [all tags](#) [Categories](#) [Latest](#) [Unread \(1\)](#) [Top](#) [+ New Topic](#)

Category	Topics
Systems Changes The Systems Changes category on discuss.openlearning.cc is one of the online resources for an ongoing open access research project.	31
Systems Thinking The Systems Thinking category on discuss.openlearning.cc aims to be a venue for conversations that will persist over time.	58 1 unread
Pattern Language	5
Projects #imaginable	10
Front Porch Where we meet and greet others	4

Latest

 Welcome to discuss.openlearning.cc!	0	May 18
 Opportunity hoarding and durable inequality ■ Systems Changes ■ inequality	0	17d
 Tolman: Context in Systems Changes and Neuroscience (Episodic Memory) ■ Systems Thinking	2	29d
 Anna Karenina principle in science ■ Systems Changes ■ science	0	29d
 Lawful order, legal order, negotiated order ■ Systems Changes ■ order	3	Sep 7

systemschanges.com (but needs to be updated, badly)

Systems Changes [Home](#) [Presentations](#) [Wiki](#) [Maps](#) [Pattern_Language](#) [Errors_Breakdowns](#) [Social_Innovation](#) [Learning](#) [About](#)



In which *systems* would you like to see *changes* occur?

Systems Changes is an open collaborative community, initiated with a learning circle in Toronto, Canada. A call for participation was launched in January 2019 at the monthly Systems Thinking Ontario meeting. The web site was will evolve as contributions and knowledge are added.

The plurals in the program name are significant.

- There are multiple **systems** simultaneously at play, not just a single system.
- **Changes** include those within a field that individual and groups can influence, and those in an extended environment that are beyond our abilities.

S: Listing your systems changes

I. Orientation

F: Types of systems changes and dimensions of relationship

S: Mapping your systems changes

II. Conversation

F: Descriptions and modes of systems changes

S: Prioritizing systems changes

III. Action

F: (de)complexifying and (de)complicating systems changes

S: Discuss what's next and interest in Systems Changes

Learning Circle

Complexifying systems increases efficiencies at higher gain; complicating systems improves sustainability at lower gain



Complexifying ~ beating eggs

- Leads to synergy: properties in the whole, not in the parts
- Requires higher energy to maintain
- More efficient, lower variety

Complicating ~ assembling machines

- Leads to redundancy: easy replacement of parts, resilient breakdown of whole
- Requires less energy to maintain
- More sustainable, higher variety

Do you complicate your priorities by working at the provincial level only, ignore the rest? Or complexify at the national level?

