



**HILARY BRADBURY
AND ASSOCIATES**



COOKING
WITH **ACTION**
RESEARCH

RESOURCES:
FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH:

Resources for Self and Community Transformation

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. WHAT	9
ACTION RESEARCH: A CONTEMPORARY DEFINITION	10
ACTION RESEARCH BASIC RECIPE	11
ACTION RESEARCH CAULDRON	13
ACTION RESEARCH ON THE UP!	14
AR+ CO-LABS	15
ATTRACTORS	19
ACTION RESEARCH COMPARISON TABLE	20
CASH VALUE: A TERM COINED BY PRAGMATIST PHILOSOPHER, WILLIAM JAMES.....	23
CHARACTERISTICS AND PRINCIPLES.....	24
COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS.....	27
CRITICAL VIEW OF ACTION RESEARCH	29
DEFINITIONS OF ACTION RESEARCH IN TWEET-SIZED PORTIONS	30
DEVELOPMENTAL MIND-SET, ACTION LOGICS AND ACTION RESEARCH	32
EXPERIENTIAL (ADULT, ACTION) LEARNING.....	35
EXTENDING EPISTEMOLOGY	38
FEEDBACK LOOPS AND ORDERS OF CHANGE.....	40
FIRST, SECOND, THIRD PERSON INQUIRY/PRACTICE	41
FOUNDERS OF ACTION RESEARCH.....	43

FRIENDSHIP: ACTION RESEARCH AS CULTIVATING "POST-TRIBAL" GROUPS	45
GENERATIVITY AND ACTION RESEARCH	
SOME NOTES ON DIALOGUE, LEADERSHIP, PROCESS, LEARNING AND CHOOSING METHODS	47
GOOD ACTION RESEARCH	51
FOUNDINGS: ARTICULATING EPISTEMOLOGY	53
INTENTION	59
PARTICIPATION ON THE C-SPECTRUM	
WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS, RELINQUISHING CONTROL.....	60
POWER: AN INTERPRETATION OF "POWER-OVER" VERSUS "POWER-WITH"	63
QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS RESOURCES.....	65
QUALITY CHOICE POINTS IN ACTION RESEARCH	
DEVELOPED IN COLLOGUE WITH MEMBERS OF THE ARJ BOARD.....	67
SUGGESTED GENERAL READINGS ON ACTION RESEARCH	69
SYSTEMIC WORLDVIEW.....	72

II. How73

ACTION RESEARCH PRACTICES: AN OVERVIEW.....	74
ADVOCACY/INQUIRY: A BALANCING PRACTICE	78
ART: ENHANCING CREATIVITY IN ACTION RESEARCH IN SIX LESSONS.....	81
SIX LESSONS ON CREATIVITY AND ACTION RESEARCH.....	82
ARTS AND ACTION RESEARCH: READINGS	89
DEVELOPMENT ACTION RESEARCH PRACTICE: 3 STEPS	95

DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY READINGS	103
EDUCATION AND ACTION RESEARCH READINGS	108
EMBODYING TIMELY INQUIRY	114
FOUR PARTS OF SPEECH	118
FOUR PARTS OF SPEECH	119
FUTURE ORGANIZING: 7 STEP OUTLINE	120
FUTURE ORGANIZING READINGS	122
GLOBAL ACTION NETWORK UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE: TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH ACTION PLAN	126
INSIDER ACTION RESEARCH	133
INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP	134
INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS EDUCATION READINGS	137
INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS EDUCATION READINGS	142
LARGE-SCALE TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH: INGREDIENTS AND ACTIVITIES.....	143
LARGE-SCALE TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH READINGS	149
MINDFULNESS MEDITATION PRACTICE: NURTURING ACTION RESEARCHERS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	154
POWER DYNAMICS IN STUDENT-PROFESSOR RELATIONSHIPS: REFLECTIONS FROM A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE	157
PROTAINER "SAFE SPACE:" GROUND-RULES FOR CULTIVATING RELATIONAL SPACE	163
PURPOSE: DISCOVERING EVOLUTIONARY INTENTION	164
RELATIONAL ACTION INQUIRY: STEPPING IN TO LEARN TOGETHER.....	169
RELATIONAL ACTION LOGICS.....	171
RELATIONAL ACTION INQUIRY: READINGS ON POWER AND EROS	177
TEACHING: SYLLABUS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS' ACTION RESEARCH	181

III. WHY	183
SUSTAINABILITY HOLISTIC THINKING: FIVE CRITICAL CAUSES.....	184
TIMELY ACTION: WISDOM OF COLLECTIVE ALCHEMY	189
TRANSFORMATION RECIPE: A SUMMARY OF THE COOKBOOK APPLIED TO AN URGENT, COLLECTIVE, BUT UNDER-ORGANIZED PROBLEM.....	191
WICKED MESSSES AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY: AN ATTEMPT AT INTEGRATING KEY ELEMENTS OF COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH	193
WORLD TRANSFORMATION AND ACTION RESEARCH	199

IV. NOW WHAT?	206
AN INVITATION.....	207

V. APPENDIX	208
SUMMARY OF THE STORY CHAPTERS VOLUME 1: COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH. STORIES AND RESOURCES FOR SELF AND SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION.....	209
BIOGRAPHIES OF THE AUTHORS.....	212

Hello!

Since starting to bring action researchers and their writings together in the *Handbook of Action Research* series (since 1997!), I have dearly wanted an accessible resource directory for colleagues and especially for the next generation of students interested in action research. Such a resource directory would need to be a living, working effort—and affordable too—in which best ideas, examples, practices, and tools are shared and improved upon through collaboration. The resource volume that follows - a companion to the Cookbook's stories - offers a good start.

Undertaking such a creative project requires a collective and long-term view. Our work began in 2015, when the network Action Research Plus (AR+) was convened to bring institutional-level action researchers into collaborative dialogue. By “institutional-level action researchers,” I mean those whose action research practice was both at the organizational level (i.e. not one professor in a professional school, but the entire school or, better, the entire university; not one nurse in a hospital, but the entire hospital or, better, the entire healthcare system), and actively supported—financially and collegially—by that organization.

INVITING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FROM THE AR+ COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE/INQUIRY

The mission of AR+ reads “accomplishing more good together.” Given my experience that most action researchers operate on a shoestring, I wondered what might be accomplished by knotting our shoestrings together (apart from maybe falling over!)? We met in dialogue around this idea and from those conversations, AR+ “co-labs” formed. From this, *Cooking with Action Research* emerged to share tales of our work.

Inspired by our choice of the word “Cooking” for the title, I asked the authors to provide their “recipes” in an appendix so that others might attempt the kinds of action research their chapters describe. These I then gathered into one place and scavenged additional ingredients that I had on hand from previous Handbook(s), with a dash of reference to the Action Research journal. Continuing the metaphor of cooking, the resource directory that follows offers a pantry, with racks of spices, drawers of staples, and shelves of mixing bowls.

For the resource pantry to be truly nourishing, it must be restocked and refreshed over time. We invite you, therefore, to take from, experiment with, and add to what is here.

LET'S MAKE IT BETTER TOGETHER

Your participation with us in this effort—ideally with institutional support and ideally in a co-lab— will determine its value. Let us accomplish more good together than we might alone as we raise consciousness about contemporary action research as a response to our sustainability crises. Let us know and signal to ourselves more fully as a community - consider for example using the terms Action Research as a keyword in your writings. Together we offer a (keynote searchable!) viable alternative to the dominance of conventional “ivory tower” academic knowledge. The times require what action researchers offer. Well beyond timid academic descriptions of problems, the action research approach to practice-inquire-experiment helps us toward a more sustainable world.

- The “What” and “Why” portions of the *Resource Companion* is authored (scavenged is the better word) by Hilary Bradbury except where otherwise noted.
- Occasionally in the text that follows you will see asterisks **. These indicate that more detail is available outside the Resource Volume, often in the Handbooks of Action Research. Over time, and as copyright allows, we hope to make available these chapters in updates to this Resource Volume.
- In the action research spirit of user-friendliness, references provide access to internet pages where available; apologies if listed web pages are no longer available. Please provide to AR+ your own suggestions of videos, audios, or readings for future editions!

- Hilary Bradbury, Ph.D.
AR+



1. WHAT

ACTION RESEARCH BASICS



ACTION RESEARCH: A CONTEMPORARY DEFINITION

Action Research (AR) brings together action and reflection, as well as theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern.

Action Research is, therefore, a pragmatic co-creation of scientific and practical knowledge *with*, not *on*, people. It concerns issues that require social or fundamental change among multiple stakeholders where systems are at work, and systems-thinking is prominent or required. AR is generated by a broad repertoire of methods at personal/interpersonal and collective levels. In comparison to conventional social scientists, Action Researchers use data generation and assessment efforts as opportunities for experiments in developing and prototyping sustainable futures. Its efficacy is evaluated by the knowledge and capacity developed (both academically and with stakeholders) and the impact on the focal issue. Concern for contributing to a larger body of knowledge includes critical reflection on assumptions and practices that hold our current systems in place.

We aim for a sustainable future. A “sustainable future” refers both to the success over time of the project, and to minimization of the social and environmental impacts of the project such that future generations benefit rather than are hurt.

Action Research:
A Contemporary
Definition

ACTION RESEARCH BASIC RECIPE



Action Research starts, not with a research question, but with a need that leans into a change agenda, such as “How can we improve this situation?” We must understand that no one typically wishes to be changed by a professional planning and implementation process and so we place a lot of emphasis on engaging the stakeholders who can design and enact the change agenda.

In other words we start by not being alone with our change agenda/research question. We adopt a reflection-in-action stance from the start, which means we will attempt to build-in times for reflecting on how we’re progressing, or not, on a regular basis.

We keep in mind that knowledge creation in one part of our effort should then feed into the next cycle. Unlike applied researchers, we engage stakeholders in defining problems, planning and doing research, interpreting results, designing actions, and evaluating outcomes. We step beyond AR into the democratization of research processes, program design, implementation strategies and evaluation. It’s helpful to be clear, therefore, what are “shared” (i.e. “our”) goals and “distinct” (“my” or a sub-system’s) goals.

When good AR happens, stakeholders within a system learn that they can inquire rigorously into the world, co-create knowledge and realize valued outcomes (i.e. take a more scientific, but human-friendly approach). This allows us to be more than consumers of others’ views or (possibly fake!) news.

AR therefore provides an ecology of knowledge that includes “conventional science” — with its ability to tease out causal relationships and refine existing theories.

*Action Research
Basic Recipe*

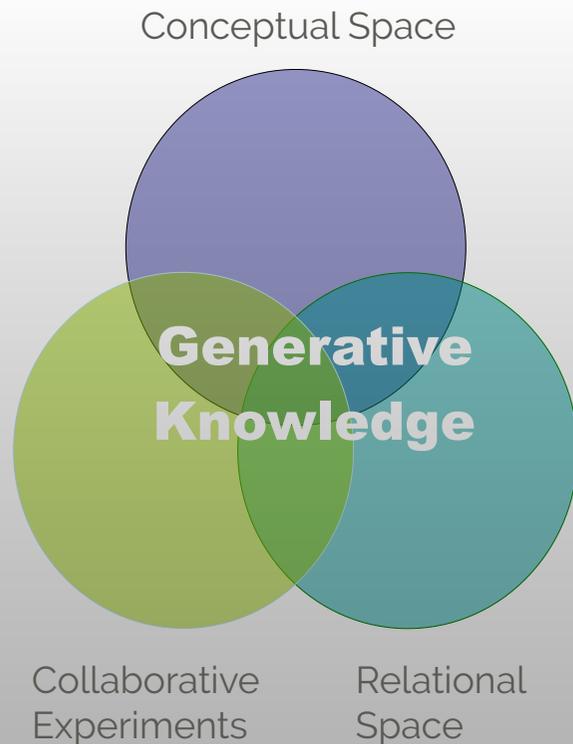


BASIC SEVEN-POINT RECIPE FOR AR:

1. **Articulate the AR question** with those who have a stake in the matter at hand. What is the purpose of your efforts together? What is shared goal? What is distinct?
2. **Develop a stakeholder network map.** Who needs to be involved? Who can become involved? Who has influence in the system given your intentions?
3. **Design for a participative process** that is clear about the degree of participation appropriate along the path from research question to notable results.
4. **Consider what facts and evidence is needed** and a process for gathering those. Quantitative (e.g., survey) and qualitative (e.g., interview) data collection methods will help support data gathering.
5. **Plan to discuss and analyze your data** and incorporate the stakeholders' perspectives.
6. **Develop an action plan** with those able to make change happen.
7. **Reflect on what you're learning** and how to move forward. Use the quality choice-points as you evaluate your work.

*Action Research
Basic Recipe*

ACTION RESEARCH CAULDRON



*Action Research
Cauldron*

A simple rendition of the key ingredients of Action Research puts generative knowledge at the heart of the alchemical cauldron.

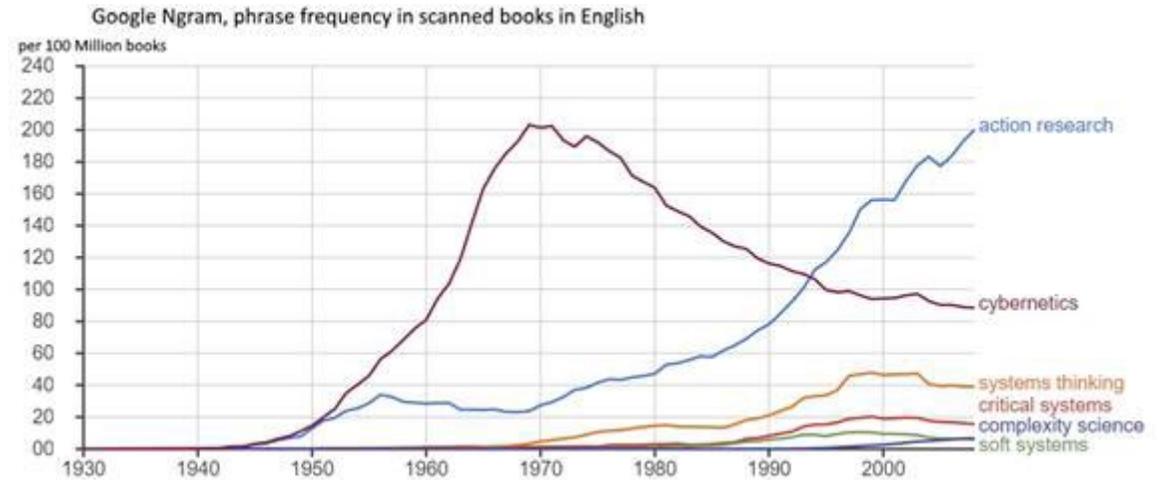
The figure of the cauldron suggests that when there is a good enough relational space to allow for innovative conceptual space, good collaborative experimentation can ensue.

Many social scientists, activists and thought leaders have also created impressive conceptual models for social change. What's important here is to draw attention to how Action Researchers, who put a premium on actually co-producing change, help facilitate (not just describe) transformational structures. And we do this democratically.

ACTION RESEARCH ON THE UP!

In a trend analysis of the the use of terms like systems thinking, complexity science and cybernetics we see that action research has been steadily rising since the 70's.

*With thanks to Gerald Midgley and Jessie Henshaw for drawing this to our attention.



AR+ Co-labs are convened by the AR+ community. AR+ is a registered nonprofit with a small, dedicated staff originally funded by royalties from the Handbook of Action Research series. AR+ now convenes advanced practitioners of Action Research, typically global-minded change scholar-practitioners, who can do more together than without each other. Each is supported by his/her institution.

We connect to improve our own Action Research through partnership and learning platforms with peers in other parts of the world, to co-develop transformative learning resources to help ourselves and others progress, while re-enchanting knowledge creation for a flourishing world. Importantly, AR+ also helps develop the next generation of Action Researchers.

AR+ convenes Co-labs that offer a way of working together in a self-organizing and purpose-driven way to address shared inquiry/practices that arise from the complex socio-ecological and economic problem domains of our times. Co-labs commit to working within the collaborative spirit of Action Research, i.e. supporting a learning orientation, bringing scholars and practitioners together, prioritizing mutual benefit, and cultivating current work and a next generation. We inquire/practice in an integrated way that includes personal/first-person, interpersonal/second-person and impersonal/third-person inquiry/practice.

AR+ Co-labs foster friendly, person-centered spaces as dynamos of good Action Research for the world's benefit.



AR+ Co-labs are currently active in several domains:

- Healthcare
- Education
- Future Organizing
- Relational Action Inquiry
- Transformative Practice

Cooking with Action Research is a potential attractor for those wishing to learn more (and play together): E.g. the AR+ Education co-lab would convene those educators who want to experiment. Each operates in different fashion and seek to be responsive to participants' design needs.

The Relational Action Inquiry (AR+ RAIR) co-lab has convened three cohorts of a dozen people each over two years, meeting monthly. The Education co-lab has grown as a cohort over two years, also meeting monthly. The Transformative practice co-lab (AR+ MICA, Mindful, Integrative, Creative Activists) is concerned with experimenting with practices such as theatre, silence, painting etc to solicit new kinds of community voices and knowledge from the social field. We are developing the e-Theatre of Inquiry, as a set of meetings and webinars for faculty and students wishing to learn more about different practices and applications for their Action Research.

All current and future participants participate by (suggested) donation. While no one is turned away for want of resources, all members donate to AR+ so we may feel we are all “co-invested.”



KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ART+ CO-LAB:

(gratefully inspired by Catherine Etmanski)

- Emergent work, i.e. we don't know the answer in advance
- Interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral
- People affected by the problem are part of the solution
- Complexity and systems thinking
- Genuine humility and admission that we don't know how to solve the problem
- Principles of aesthetics and/or design

CO-LABS INVOLVE:

- A dedicated space— virtual and F2F where sustainable.
- A complex challenge that draws people together
- Key people who feel a deep need to address that challenge
- A facilitative, emergent methodology
- Results in action and social impact



RELEVANT LINKS AND PEOPLE

- AR+ Overview of co-labs: <https://actionresearchplus.com/ar-co-lab-workshops/>
- Social Innovation Generation's Primer on Change Labs: <http://sigeneration.ca/Labs.html>

ATTRACTORS

by Danielle Zandee and Svante Lifvergren



Attractors

Attractor is a term from complexity thinking; it is the “something” around which a new system organizes itself. In the Healthcare chapter of the Cookbook, for example, the new systems designers took the patients’ perspective, making the patient the attractor of the new system, organizing it around them.

That was a fateful yet very positive choice that allowed for a fundamental shift in the healthcare system. This departure from “cure and care as usual” created a really different starting point for change. In systemic terms, making the patient an “attractor” gives a unifying and energizing focus for all stakeholders. This allows for new patterns of conversation and action that may take their system into entirely new directions.

In the companion volume’s story of the healthcare transformation in Sweden, doing this gave voice to the experiences of the patients and made their journey through the system the key attracting principle that inspired all development activities. In other Action Research settings, the citizen, or the student, or the customer may be an attractor. They become involved actors in change, rather than mere objects in conventional research. Inevitably, dominant notions of “how things are done around here” will be interrupted, which creates ample opportunities for shared learning which informs new practice.

In a school system, the equivalent would be placing students at the center and having all other stakeholders (teachers, administrative staff, parents) organize around their needs. Similarly, in any system, it places key (called “star”) stakeholders at the center and redesigns accordingly.

ACTION RESEARCH COMPARISON TABLE

by Hilary Bradbury & Steve Waddell

TABLE - *Action Research Comparison*

	ACTION RESEARCH	APPLIED RESEARCH	CONVENTIONAL RESEARCH
Purpose	To understand and improve	To improve	To understand
Basic (power) orientation	Inquiring “with.”	Inquiring “for.”	Inquiring “about.”
Researcher (decision makers)	Embedded. Problem code-finer, learning co-designer, co-implementer.	Expert who knows what good outcomes should look like and helps to move situation toward them.	External to the context. Problem definer, research designer, research implementer
Stakeholders	Problem co-definers, research co-designers, research co-implementers;	Sources of data; clients of research	Subjects of the research; sources of information; samples for testing conclusions;
Evidence	Experiential, partial, emergent, dialogic, intuitive. Qualitative and quantitative. Includes stakeholders’ first person experience with interpersonal reflections and dialogue.	Both qualitative and quantitative. Primarily interpersonal and objective, also allows interpretive data.	Both quantitative and qualitative data. Impersonal and objective data only.

Action Research Comparison Table

TABLE - *Action Research Comparison*

	ACTION RESEARCH	APPLIED RESEARCH	CONVENTIONAL RESEARCH
Learning process	Learning and dissemination integrated into the research process; questions about the status quo made possible; nested systems made visible. Iterative.	Inquiry modes to define stakeholder problem and then match problem to existing intervention models or new combinations thereof. Linear.	Knowledge development with researchers distant from the phenomena. Dissemination efforts assive & after the fact.
Strengths	Complex contexts where what to do “best” is a subject of discussion and negotiation; systems activity is coordinated inside political-pragmatic realities. Seeks to localize unique practices.	Expert diagnosis, aiming at contractual arrangement with defined scope of work. Seeks to deploy “best practices.”	Understands simple and complicated contexts by weighting variables or forces into deterministic sets, seeks generalizability.
Weaknesses	Many positive outcomes cannot be easily summarized quantitatively. By those not familiar with action research, it can appear as lacking in concern for objectivity.	Efficiency orientation may conceive of new situations as versions of known prior ones, ignoring new knowledge creation opportunities. Delivering on a predetermined contract can block emergent processes.	Commitment to objectivity standards of the natural sciences render it as armchair speculation, i.e., inactionable and potentially misleading.

Action Research Comparison Table

TABLE - *Action Research Comparison*

	ACTION RESEARCH	APPLIED RESEARCH	CONVENTIONAL RESEARCH
Benefits	The work belongs to those involved. Builds problemsolving and learning competencies in groups, organizations, communities.	Returns value to those who pay.	Serves an academic community. May exploit the object of research.
Action Outcomes	Action is coordinated as seamless part of the research design. Learningplatforms, workshops, experiments, new practices, new learning, new forms of knowledge/practice, sometimes also using peer review.	Quick wins (may be short term only wins); may create stakeholder dependence, usually requires hand-over for follow up for sustainable action which may be difficult to coordinate.	Publication or communication of new information to disciplinary colleagues through peer reviewed journals.

Action Research Comparison Table

CASH VALUE: A TERM COINED BY PRAGMATIST PHILOSOPHER, WILLIAM JAMES



Cash Value

The term “cash value” asks for a demonstration of how an idea is useful. There is a suggestion in the concreteness of the term that we are better off avoiding lofty flights of abstraction if we have not also considered how they may help us.

Cash value is an important concept for Action Researchers from the Pragmatist tradition. The quality of AR is determined by its pragmatic usefulness. This contrasts with abstractions that are welcomed in other fields, but which unfortunately have little traction in the real world. Overall a healthy balance is useful when considering the beauty of concepts (e.g. all people are created equal) and what it takes to make it so in practice. Utopian thinking is only good in AR practice when firmly wedded to pragmatic value.

To insist on pragmatic value in good AR is a refusal to accede an elevated position to objective (third person), speculative truths alone. We are activist-scholars calling for changes (or in some cases, resisting unwise changes); those changes must also be internal, emotional, and embodied in personal, professional, and scientific practice. Speculative statements of theory and principle are not the goal of AR.

Contemporary AR is a practice of cultivating collaboration by key participants who are actively responsible for learning, namely learners themselves, educators, and the community resources involved in specific learning projects. The practice/theory of AR stresses a transformational orientation to knowledge creation. We emphasize a relational (beyond objectification so we may learn *with* others), integrative (of subjective, inter-subjective, and objective voices), and emergent, practical impact.

CHARACTERISTICS AND PRINCIPLES

CHARACTERISTICS OF ACTION RESEARCH IN BRIEF

- AR is emergent and developmental.
- Action Researchers are values-oriented with a concern for human and ecological flourishing.
- AR modality is primarily participative and democratic, working with and toward knowledge in action.

PRINCIPLES FOR CONTEMPORARY ACTION RESEARCH

1. THE ACTION RESEARCHING SELF IS RELATIONAL

A starting point for us is everyday experience - similar to that of every human being: We find ourselves in relationship and without easily defined boundaries (if often overlooked in our self-centered focus!).

From a physical standpoint, we are constantly metabolizing resources (air, water) in relationship with the world that is apparently, though not materially, outside ourselves. So too we live in relationship with social, emotional, cognitive, and historical resources.

*Characteristics
and principles*



*Characteristics
and principles*

Complex, intractable, nonlinear problems (climate change, structural inequality etc.) are, in part, created by treating people as atoms, as billiard balls, as if their subjectivity doesn't matter, as if the "system" has nothing to do with their intersubjectivity.

Honoring plural subjectivity has been central to the Western Pragmatist tradition of James and Dewey (and the Asian tradition where it's referred to as "no [separate] self.")

We may, therefore, state a first principle of contemporary Action Research that **the self is relational, interdependent.**

2. ACTION RESEARCHING IS A PARTNERSHIP IN COLLABORATION

We are a species graced with capacity for partnership and collaboration (along with easily awakened tendencies to domination and conflict). Over the centuries, our human systems have slowly supported collaboration on a wide scale (e.g. democracy and liberation movements). Spectacles that celebrate domination have been relegated to the margins of the civilized world (though atrocities remain worryingly frequent).

In truth, institutionalizing collaborative structures remains difficult to achieve because we have inherited both psychological and cultural habits that impede collaboration, especially where there is resource scarcity. Our habit patterns are combinations of social structure (injustice, exclusion) and individual bias (black-and-white thinking, short-term tribal logic, fear) in reciprocal cycles of conditioning.



So much of our work as Action Researchers is, therefore, to see the systems of inter-connection we live within, and how they have operated over time and how to remove trenchant obstacles to collaboration. Seeing what is “out there,” we so often turn to find that it is also “in here.” Seeing independences in systems allows us to appreciate the deeper patterns at play, and to consider how we might do things differently over time.

Appreciating the temporal quality of our inquiry and its embeddedness in systems reminds us to be humble, yet persevering. We may state the second principle of contemporary Action Research that **our systems seek wholeness over time**, moving beyond obsolete fragmentation.

3. ACTION RESEARCHING IS PURPOSEFUL AND PRACTICAL

And what is it all for? Action Researchers care about social action that is practical and emancipatory. Finding ourselves in relationship within complex emergent systems, we seek to make a positive difference, to minimize suffering, to work toward justice, to muddle through.

Practical knowing offers a culmination of knowing in allowing us to balance science and artistry, and bringing our knowing to fruition as a contribution for self and others. A third principle of contemporary Action Research is **the primacy of practical contribution**.

COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS

by Marina Apgar & Will Allen

Complex adaptive systems are made up of multiple interconnected parts, or agents, that are constantly interacting and influencing each other, creating non-linear, emergent patterns of change. These systems are not deterministic, predictable or mechanistic—they are living and evolving spaces in which people, communities, and the natural systems they engage with are in constant flux. They cannot be controlled nor can they be designed a priori.

Ecologists have been using the conceptualization of social-ecological systems as complex adaptive systems for some time now. Over 20 years ago, Holling and Meffe (1996) wrote a seminal paper arguing that to build resilience—the ability of a complex system to adapt and change in order to maintain the same characteristics—in social-ecological systems, environmental management had to overcome what they termed the “pathology” of command and control, or centralized approaches to management. They made a call for “adaptive management” or, in other words, for managers to learn from practice and to think of implementation as experimentation. Yet, we know that still today, the pathology of controlled management persists.

As Action Researchers, we believe that a more profound shift in practice and approach is required if we are to understand and truly engage with the dynamics of social-ecological systems from the vantage point of complexity. Taking complexity seriously from a social process perspective means we must let go of the myth of controlling and managing and embrace facilitation of interactions in such a way as to enable emergent change to surface and see ourselves as part of that change.

*Complex Adaptive
Systems*



Complex Adaptive Systems

Following Bob Dick, we know that “if you change your own behavior in interaction with others, you can then change the relationships, processes and actions that characterize it” (1996). Action Researchers come prepared to use reflexivity to help question underlying assumptions in order to unlock new and potentially transformative pathways to change.

Environmental managers and biophysical researchers need to do more than embrace learning by doing, and reflect upon what their role is in supporting change. It is this difference in the depth of engagement with complex adaptive systems and seeing ourselves as part of them—as one of the agents that is influencing change within—that Action Research brings to the field of adaptive and collaborative environmental management.

- Holling, C. S. & G. K. Meffe. (1996) Command and control and the pathology of natural resource management. *Conservation Biology*. 10(2): 328-337. Available at http://coastalcluster.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/Adaptive/Holling%20%26%20Meffe%201996_CS.pdf.
- Bob Dick (1996) Managing change [On-line]. Available at <http://www.aral.com.au/resources/change.html>

CRITICAL VIEW OF ACTION RESEARCH

by Hilary Bradbury and Christopher Juniper

We are warned that doing and learning AR in the neo-liberal, hyper-capitalist world that shapes our contemporary institutions and systems is not necessarily supported by the larger institutional context.

From this vantage the benefits of AR may appear to exceed the costs for an organization. Action Research generally takes more time up front and its worth in terms of time investment of busy, expensive staff is therefore in question. When is it best to apply AR? Perhaps not always. But when it comes to the the big decisions such as how to fix an inadequate/costly healthcare (see Lifvergren and Zandee in Volume 1) or higher education system (see Teehankee Volume 1) then YES, the investment is worth it.

All the more reason to note that success associated with AR practices is challenging.

Rather than establishing and verifying conventional truths about what currently exists, the idea, as articulated by Cookbook co-author Danielle Zandee, is to **interrupt habitual practice** by exploring and inspiring innovative alternatives.

In short, an Action Research approach to transformation knowledge creation is worth investing in. We believe this Cookbook—and the co-lab communities of practice that we hope it spurs—invites you to join this democratic journey toward a more sustainable world.

Critical View

DEFINITIONS OF ACTION RESEARCH IN TWEET-SIZED PORTIONS

- Action Research (AR): Creating transformative knowledge “with” others.
- Action Researcher: A reflective agent of social change and transformation.
- AR Power orientation: Partnership and researching “with”.
- AR researcher: A person embedded with the research typically in multiple roles—a problem co-definer, lead research co-designer, lead, research co-implementer.
- AR stakeholders: Problem co-definers, research co-designers, research co-implementers.
- AR time horizon: Balances focus on the here and now with reflection on past issues to influence future designs.
- AR evidence: Experiential; partial; emergent; dialogic; intuitive; qualitative; quantitative.
- AR learning: New knowledge and its dissemination are integrated into the research/action process.
 - Action Research learning: Learning is characterized by questions about the status quo or exploration of nested (hard to see) systems.
- AR benefits: The work belongs to those involved; problem-solving and learning competencies are built into participating research/action groups, organizations and communities.



*Definitions of
Action Research
in tweet-sized
portions*



*Definitions of
Action Research
in tweet-sized
portions*

- AR outcomes: Action is coordinated as a seamless part of the research design
 - AR processes: Workshops, experiments, new practices, new learning, new forms of knowledge/practice.
- Good Action Research: A combination of a well-designed change agenda, practical outcomes, actionable insights, all intended to emancipate.

DEVELOPMENTAL MIND-SET, ACTION LOGICS AND ACTION RESEARCH

Source: Bill Torbert

Relevant link: Conversation with Bill Torbert: <http://actionresearchplus.com/bill-torbert/>

It is well known and accepted that children transition through a series of developmental stages. What is less well known is that adults do too. According to developmental psychologists, there are at least seven transformations in action-logic possible anytime from middle childhood through one's adulthood—from Opportunist to Diplomat to Expert to Achiever to Redefining to Transforming to Alchemical to Ironic.

These evocative terms are offered by William Torbert. They are important for us as Action Researchers to understand as our work can be creatively informed by knowing ourselves and our co-researchers through this important perspective.

For more than fifty years, research by Jane Lovenger, Bob Kegan, William Torbert, and others has consistently demonstrated that leaders who grow through multiple action-logics evolve a greater capacity to influence personal, familial, team, organizational, and even societal transformation. There are scientific assessments of these levels available, such as the Global Leadership Profile (<https://www.gla.global/>) that measures vertical, capacity development (not just horizontal competence improvement within one's existing capacity).

The seven characterizations of the action logics below are thumbnail sketches; they describe development over time and through complexity. Notable is that the large majority of the adult population in Western democracies ceases development before the redefining action logic. As a consequence, Harvard developmental psychologist

*Developmental
Mind-Set, Action
Logics and Action
Research*



Developmental Mind-Set, Action Logics and Action Research

Bob Kegan has suggested that most people experience themselves today as “in over their heads” when dealing with the complexity of everyday political, financial, and social life.

It is theorized that more people, if enabled to develop toward later stages, could offer positive influence on the development of a more sustainable society. Some Action Researchers—especially those interested in action inquiry—actively facilitate conditions that are intended to be developmental. Consider then what action logic mind set is in play in you and your context.

Opportunist: Short time horizon, flouts power and sexuality, rejects feedback, hostile humor, deceptive, manipulative, externalizes blame, punishes, views luck as central, punishment rules, views rules as loss of freedom, “eye for an eye” ethic.

Diplomat: Observes rules, avoids inner and outer conflict, conforms, suppresses own desires, loyalty to group, seeks membership, right versus wrong attitude, appearance/status conscious, tends towards clichés, works to group standard.

Expert: Interested in problem solving via data, critical of others and self, chooses efficiency over effectiveness, perfectionist, values decisions based on merit, wants own performance to stand out, aware of alternative constructions in problem resolution but can be dogmatic, accepts feedback only from “objective” craft masters.

Achiever: Results- and effectiveness-oriented, long term goals, concerned with issues of ethics and justice, deliberately prioritizes work tasks, future inspires, drawn to learning, seeks mutuality in relations, aware of personal patterns of behavior, feels guilt if does not meet own standards, blind to own shadow, chases time.



*Developmental
Mind-Set, Action
Logics and Action
Research*

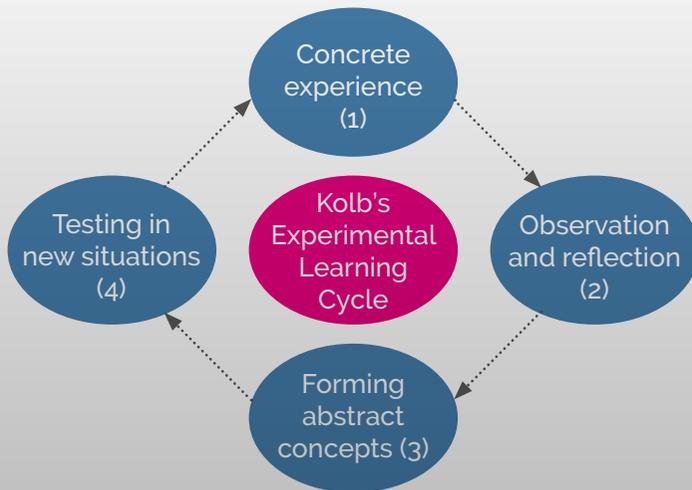
Redefining: Collaborative, tolerant of individual difference, aware of context and contingency, may challenge group norms, aware of owning a perspective, inquiring and open to feedback, seeks independent, creative work, attracted by difference and change, may become something of a maverick, focuses on present and historical context.

Transforming: Process- and goal-oriented, strategic time horizon, systems conscious, enjoys a variety of roles, recognizes importance of principles and judgment, engaged in complex interweave of relationships, aware of own personal traits and shadow, high value on individuality, growth, self-fulfillment, unique market niches, particular historical moments.

Alchemical: Alert to the theater of action, embraces common humanity, disturbs paradigms of thought and action, dispels notions of heroic action, deeply internalized sense of self-knowledge held with empty mind, sees light and dark, order and mess, treats time and events as symbolic, analogical, metaphorical (not merely linear, digital, literal).

EXPERIENTIAL (ADULT, ACTION) LEARNING

David Kolb



*Experiential
(Adult, Action)
Learning*

Building upon earlier work by John Dewey and Kurt Lewin, American educational theorist David A. Kolb believes “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.” The theory presents a cyclical model of learning, consisting of four stages shown below.

This pragmatist-informed theory of learning lies at the heart of AR also. This model is used by many Action Researchers often implicitly or without reference to the even more simplified “Lewin Model.” It also goes by different names, e.g., Ernie Stringer suggests that AR is a cycle of seeing, thinking and acting. And even more simply we may say that AR involves cycles of action and reflection. However, Kolb’s model is empirically tested and according to the model, one may begin at any stage, but must follow each stage of learning in the following sequence:

CONCRETE EXPERIENCE (OR “DO” [“BE”])

The first stage, concrete experience (CE), is where the learner(s) experiences an activity such as a lab session or field work.

REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION (OR “OBSERVE”)

The second stage, reflective observation (RO), is when the learner consciously reflects back on that experience (together).

ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION (OR "THINK")

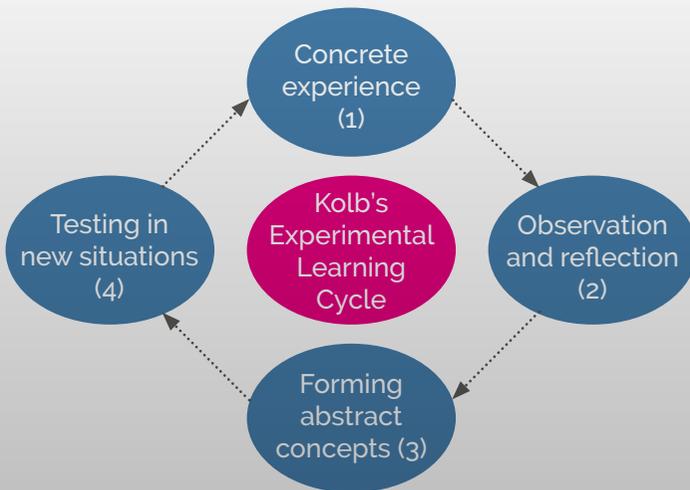
The third stage, abstract conceptualization (AC), is where the learner attempts to conceptualize a theory or model of what is observed (together).

ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION (OR "PLAN")

The fourth stage, active experimentation (AE), is where the learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory or plan for a forthcoming experience. This then feeds a next cycle. Generally speaking this experimentation component, missing in conventional learning efforts, makes Action Research a powerful approach to change.

Additionally, Kolb identified four learning styles that correspond to these stages. The styles highlight conditions under which learners learn better. It is helpful to know one's own preference as it often (unconsciously) dominates one's way of facilitating and teaching. These styles are:

- Assimilators, who learn better when presented with sound logical theories to consider.
- Convergers, who learn better when provided with practical applications of concepts and theories.



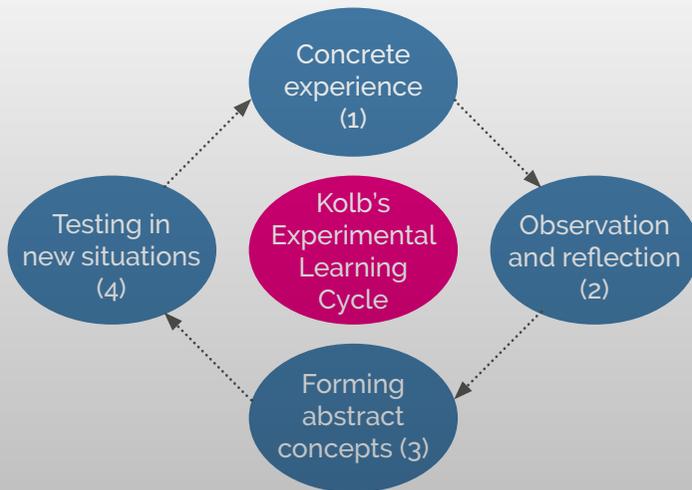
*Experiential
(Adult, Action)
Learning*

- Accommodators, who learn better when provided with “hands-on” experiences.
- Divergers, who learn better when allowed to observe and collect a wide range of information.

SUGGESTED READINGS ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Kolb, David A. 1984. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. First edition Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall.

Kolb, David A. 2014. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Second edition. Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson FT Press.



*Experiential
(Adult, Action)
Learning*

EXTENDING EPISTEMOLOGY



*Extending
Epistemology*

Originally defined by John Heron and Peter Reason, “extended epistemology” calls us to go beyond privileging cognitive propositions to acknowledge the importance of experience, relationality, artistry, and practical contribution.

The notion of “extended epistemology” responds to the call of Boaventura de Sousa Santos to make room for cognitive justice and knowledge democracy.

Catherine Etmanski’s and Kathy Bishop’s contributions on the arts in this volume are excellent examples of extended epistemology in action.

In a similar vein of expanding perceived notions of what counts as important in inquiry, the potency of Torbert’s (Chandler and Torbert, 2012) concept of integrating first-, second-, and third-person Action Research/practice has been noted (it’s one of the top downloaded articles from the Action Research journal!).

Peter Park (2005)** also cautions that we “cannot understand knowledge in terms of a narrow definition of rationality that recognizes only technical. We cannot privilege knowledge inherited from positivistic sources.” Park offers three types of knowledge:

- Representational knowledge: gathering and analyzing information in order to understand a problem (Functional subtype is analytic and reductive while interpretive subtype is synthetic and integrative.)
- Relational knowledge: getting together by organizing and strengthening community ties
- Reflective knowledge: honing the ability to think and act critically, raising awareness, mobilizing for action



*Extending
Epistemology*

Olav Eikeland (2015)** summarizes Aristotle's relational ways of knowing:

Theoresis – knowing through dispassionate observation, deduction, demonstration

Pathos – knowing by suffering, being affected by something

Khresis – knowing by using something

Poiesis – knowing by making something

Praxis1 – knowing by doing

Praxis2 – knowing through dialogue as reflection, practicing or training for something

Theoria – knowing through deliberation and deduction in dialogue, understanding forms/patterns

Furthermore, Eikeland suggests four types of AR:

- Intervention: social experimentation
- Collaboration: problem-solving between professionals within or across disciplines
- Applied Research: mainstream research applied to practical problems
- Native Practitioner: practitioners research their own practice (such as nurses)

**Peter Park's and Olav Eikeland's papers which offer considerably more contextualization and nuance are available in the Handbooks of Action Research which we hope to make available in a next version of the Resource Volume.

FEEDBACK LOOPS AND ORDERS OF CHANGE

Action Researchers invite and work at different depths of change. From simple to complex. The following three types, using Chris Argyris' distinctions, may be useful in teasing out what we are up to, (or not), in our work.

Consider how these orders of change are in turn related to first, second and third person perspectives (described in the next entry).

'Single-loop feedback' leads to fix or improvement to current action. We can call this first order change.

'Double-loop feedback' leads to deeper changes, therefore the topic, timing, or strategy comes into question. We can call this second order change.

'Triple-loop feedback' takes a larger perspective, asking about the paradigm or framing assumptions behind one's practice. We can call this third order change.

Feedback Loops
and orders of
change

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD PERSON INQUIRY/PRACTICE

Source: Bill Torbert



*First, Second,
Third Person
Inquiry/Practice*

First person practice, I-focused, or subjective inquiry and practice concerns paying attention (no simple matter!) and thus broadening the reach of what and who is attended to in my/our Action Research settings. Journaling, meditation, and reflective exercises are ways to enhance first person inquiry/practice.

Second person, you-focused, or inter-subjective inquiry and practice is the key to speaking and listening in our efforts to coordinate action in “during the act” research. Teamwork is often a keen focus of second person inquiry/practice in AR.

Third person efforts are “theirs,” meaning they are beyond the direct impact of me and you and operate independently and or in large-scale conditions. These allow for organizing to evolve and proto-institutionalization.

Seeking to integrate personal, team, and larger systems practices is a key theme in the different examples of AR at work in Healthcare, Education, Development, Organizational life, personal, and small groups in the Cookbook. While local-scale or classroom-level AR increases in popularity, for AR to thrive sustainably, supportive institutional (i.e. third person level) structures are needed. This emphasizes the need for institutional transformation with capacity building and as the key leverage for change in educational systems. Impactful inquiry requires so much more than cognitive insight.

Chandler and Torbert (“Transforming Inquiry and Action”. Action Research. Volume 1(2): 133–152.) offered 27 “different flavors of AR, underpinned by the dimensions of voice, practice and time:



*First, Second,
Third Person
Inquiry|Practice*

“This typology highlights how narrow a segment of reality is examined in most social science studies, as well as how fundamentally different the first- and second-person participatory study of the present and the future is from the third-person detached study of the past. We show that Action Research has multiple aims, including personal integrity and social mutuality as well as explaining empirical variance in intended outcomes. Far from diluting the positivist concern with validity, however, we argue that Action Research studies that include a greater proportion of the 27 types of methods are likely to account for more of the empirical variance in situations than do traditional social science studies.

FOUNDERS OF ACTION RESEARCH

Kurt Lewin is often considered to be a founder of AR but many don't know that it was John Collier who coined the term. More importantly, AR had at least two key founding pathways which now interweave.

The two streams include the popular or indigenous knowledge traditions of Latin America and the Southern Hemisphere (associated with Orlando Fals Borda) along with the organizational development tradition of the Northern Hemisphere (associated with Kurt Lewin).

And it's important to remember that the words "Participative Action Research" were coined by anthropologist Marja Liisa Swanz, as her work moved organically from describing what she saw in her field work in Tanzania to actively participating with the people whose lives she was documenting. Emancipation is important in all the founders' efforts.

Today, it is probably safer to suggest that this is not the originators' Action Research anymore. We are moving beyond the Newtonian mechanistic worldview of earlier AR (which was positivist in accord with its social context) and creatively meeting the implications of the linguistic turn of qualitative research. Action Researchers of today integrate the humanistic stance with a concern for action, while respecting scientific methods. In the real world, most of us are seeking to integrate subjective, inter-subjective, and objective knowledge.

*Founders of
Action Research*



Founders of Action Research

It is encouraging to know that AR can trace its core orientation back to Aristotle, whose notions of multiple ways of knowing included what we might call the primacy of the practical (techne) and cultivation of cycles of action and reflection (praxis).

Today more of us understand that “knowing” includes the heart. The heart-mind dualism of the rational-scientific age, now called the Cartesian error, was unknown to Aristotle. Classical Greek insistence that knowledge moves toward wisdom and ethical action (phronesis) was perfectly familiar to Aristotle and to the Western tradition. As the first rediscovery of Aristotle helped usher in the European Renaissance, so again may the recognition that AR has roots in Aristotle lead to integrating knowledge processes beyond current conventional post-Cartesian formulations.

If the dualisms that warp Western post-Enlightenment inquiry were never fragmented in the foundational work of Aristotle, the same holds true for Lao Tzu and Confucius (the Asian equivalents of Socrates and Aristotle), and Buddha (perhaps the Asian equivalent of Plato) whose ideas reverberate, indeed are strongly resurgent, in contemporary Asian thought (e.g. the Kyoto School). And while these remain too little known among Action Researchers, the notable uptake of the Asian concept/practice of mindfulness shows up in AR discussions and is present in this Resource volume.

FRIENDSHIP: ACTION RESEARCH AS CULTIVATING "POST-TRIBAL" GROUPS



Friendship:
Action Research as
Cultivating "Post-
Tribal" Groups

Action Researchers have much in common with pragmatists (e.g. the Frankfurt School) and with social action movements e.g. feminism and human liberation movements of all stripes. We also walk a middle path between pragmatism and idealism (for which we are often found wanting and criticized by left and right!).

Endless talk *about* action (or worse, about theory), if divorced from practice, is the result of the inability to achieve a key alchemy, namely reflection on action and action in the midst of reflection. We must do better. We therefore like to work with the like-minded, especially those whose work we can complement, such as those trained in material-empirical hypothesis deduction. AR can bring zest and impact to conventional system development/refinement efforts!

A favorite quote from Margaret Mead goes: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Friendship and its implied mutuality is related to how we enact power (see "power-over" versus "power-with"). In AR, awareness about poor dynamics can become an inquiry into amplifying the sense of connection. It is about taking care of our own needs in balance with the needs of another in service to our mutual connection and purpose. It is about commitment to caring and sticking around in moments of challenge and difficulty.



*Friendship:
Action Research as
Cultivating "Post-
Tribal" Groups*

We are reminded that the Renaissance was the work of a network of friends in Venice which changed the Western World. There are so many examples of the power of small groups, in which power becomes transformed as people are empowered to coordinate their action in service to something larger. Action Researchers who leverage these creative forms of power, bringing cycles of inquiry and action into their work, are likely to find themselves with new friends along the way. Indeed it helpful to consider that as a primary goal.

GENERATIVITY AND ACTION RESEARCH

SOME NOTES ON DIALOGUE, LEADERSHIP, PROCESS, LEARNING AND CHOOSING METHODS

by Danielle Zandee and
Svante Lifvergren

(Note: this entry concerns the authors' experience with healthcare system changes in Skaraborg, Sweden, see Volume 1)

DIALOGUE

System-wide dialogues have become common practice in processes of organizational development and system transformation. Action Research clearly enriches dialogic approaches, such as appreciative inquiry, with its clear focus on daily practice and the issues that need to be handled. Talk is important, but for tangible change to happen it needs to be intimately connected with action.

A pivotal strength of the approach evident in the Swedish Healthcare transformation is that the patient was the attractor in all dialogues and the guiding questions were ultimately action-oriented. Important general questions actively held in focus by dialogue facilitators in the Swedish context included:

Key Questions that gave rise to transformation in Swedish Healthcare

- What can we do to provide care so that it aligns with the needs of each individual patient?
- And ultimately, how can we integrate our actions so that we—as a system—are perceived as one care provider in our interactions with the many patients that we meet?

*Generativity and
Action Research*



Generativity and Action Research

LEADERSHIP

The healthcare transformation story makes apparent that the interweaving of first-, second- and third-person Action Research in a complex, dynamic system is not just about curiosity and analytic skill, or reflective capacity and the drive to learn from new experiences. What stands out is the political savvy and relational intelligence in a leadership approach which can be qualified as generative. The use of measurements, the sharing of outcomes, the inclusion of stakeholders, the showing of enthusiasm, and the genuine listening to patients and co-workers, are all activities that helped keep the process going.

Generative leadership is thus about bridging differences, connecting initiatives, amplifying results, and energizing participants to concurrently improve inquiry and strengthen a relational network of collaboration. It is very much about creating trust in both the actors and the process. Generative leadership shows up in moments and places where emergent change needs to be nurtured by taking away obstacles and providing support. Such leadership includes an understanding of how to formally organize for continuous development.

GENERATIVE PROCESS

The actions of many actors interlock to create change in unforeseen ways. No one alone had the power to transform the system, and changes were not pre-planned. Instead, the outcomes of shared reflections on improvement initiatives would point to the next feasible steps in the process. What could be the smallest change with the largest impact?



Generativity and Action Research

This is a typical question to ask from a systemic worldview that sees change as the emergence of new patterns of shared understanding and action. Action Researchers who embrace emergence can facilitate inquiry as a generative process that punctuates the status quo, creates a sense of possibility, and develops energizing ideas for novel action. (See suggested readings by Danielle Zandee in the section entitled “Healthcare Transformation.”)

Such inquiry is forward-moving, both critical and relational, and fundamentally looking for what gives life to a human system. The Action Researchers in Skaraborg understood how to interrupt the system without overstressing it. They would question common practice and yet stay connected with it through how they communicated their results and plans. Thus, they made their Action Research a generative process of daring and caring.

LEARNING

Quality improvement efforts can be geared towards rather superficial and short-term efficiency benefits. In this healthcare case however, improvement activities became learning opportunities for fundamental and long-term change. Obviously, learning in iterative action-reflection cycles is at the heart of any Action Research approach.

What makes this case special however, is that a systemic worldview promoted learning that was both deep and wide-ranging, both dispersed and interconnected, both personal and interpersonal. Learning happened simultaneously



Generativity and Action Research

within the microsystems around the patients, in exchanges between improvement projects, and in whole system dialogues.

All these learning platforms were integrated in ways that allowed for a powerful interplay between first-, second-, and third-person research practice. When learning is stimulated and leveraged throughout the system, it may become a way of living that propels an ongoing renewal of practice.

CHOOSING METHODS (INC. QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENT)

The healthcare transformation case (Cookbook, 2017) shows how quality improvement and management tools—such as the four-step reflection process, the patient pathway mapping, and the creation of balanced scorecards—can be integrated in open-ended, learning-oriented, Action Research approaches.

The use of familiar approaches is both pragmatic and wise. It is a safe starting point for inquiry into daily practice and it aligns with the perspective of managers and policymakers who must approve the intended research.

One of the success factors in the Swedish Healthcare story is the consistent use of qualitative and (especially) quantitative measurements. Factual improvement percentages helped to make novel practices (such as the mobile teams) legitimate.

The lesson here for Action Researchers is to have a rich repertoire of tools and methods that allows for acceptance and effectiveness. Documenting “what works” as a set of compelling numbers can give guidance to a step-by-step approach.

GOOD ACTION RESEARCH

Why Action Research?



Mary
Brydon-
Miller

AR+
Action Research

Good Action
Research

Good Action Research is a combination of our multifaceted skills (part facilitator, methodologist, and politician), emancipatory intention, and the ability to accomplish practical results.

The “Manifesto on Transformation of Knowledge Creation,” signed by all 60 advisory editors of *Action Research* journal, puts it this way: “Action Researchers see our work as providing models for increasing the relevance of conventional social research to wider society. What makes our work fundamental to the revitalization of social research more generally lies in its orientation towards taking action, its reflexivity, the significance of its impacts, and that it evolves from partnership and participation.”

By “partnership and participation” we are referring to the quality of the relationships we form with primary stakeholders and the extent to which all stakeholders are appropriately involved in the design and assessment of inquiry and change. By “actionable” we mean the extent to which work provides new ideas that guide action in response to need, as well as our concern with developing Action Research crafts of practice in their own terms. By “reflexive” we mean the extent to which the self is acknowledged as an instrument of change among change agents and our partner stakeholders. By “significant” we mean having meaning and relevance beyond an immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.

Why Action Research?



**Mary
Brydon-
Miller**

AR+
Action Research

*Good Action
Research*

The following papers have been particularly popular in the Action Research journal (ARJ). Both are available for free download at <https://actionresearchplus.com>

- “What is good Action Research?” by Hilary Bradbury
- “Why do Action Research,” by Mary Brydon-Miller et al.

GROUNDINGS: ARTICULATING EPISTEMOLOGY

“Groundings” refer to efforts to articulate the multifaceted worldviews that give rise to our work as Action Researchers. The world is not self-explanatory, but a product of experience, perception, and conceptualization. Articulating our worldview is, therefore, an act of finding ground under our feet (hence, “groundings”) whereby we come to know both what we know and that we know.

Below is a synopsis of groundings from the 2015 Handbook of Action Research** that suggests many of the kinds of concepts and contexts that explain what Action Researchers think and why they practice.

The more practitioner-oriented of us might wonder if it is necessary to expend so much of our intellectual resources on this obviously reflective component of our work. After all, we also know by doing/showing/acting, not solely or primarily by reflective explication. A rose is a rose even without knowledge of botany. Because practical knowing offers a culmination of and fulfills prior forms of knowing, contribution for self and with others may happen without explicit reference to epistemology.

However, it is helpful to know why we do things. Moreover, for our own confidence, artful performance, and ability to build capacity for self and others, it is also good to know what we know. If that weren't enough, the stronger our roots in epistemology, the more we can be creative and improve upon improvisation with practice. Thus, groundings bring our practical knowledge into line with what we are consciously aware of. By becoming grounded, we may also take flight.



Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology



The groundings are offered as a loose thread through the philosophy of science, starting with epistemological foundations to plot a course that starts with Aristotle (who is as good a founder of AR as any!). We move quickly through the age of positivism to go beyond conventional understandings of science as capable of objectivity and emphasize systems thinking and intersectional politics. In the contemporary environment of Action Research we attend as a community to issues of scale and scope.

ARISTOTELIAN PRAXIS MEETS CONTEMPORARY CONSTRUCTIVISM

Olav Eikeland explains that the Action Research movement, although varied and experimental, has in fact been rediscovering praxis, a key part of Aristotle's notion of knowledge creation. Thus we Action Researchers need, conceptually, to recover Aristotelian praxis in order to gather, recollect, and justify our work properly. Importantly, this means not being persuaded to justify our work by criteria that are designed for and by other (i.e. conventional) forms of knowledge.

The qualities of conventional (empirical, positive, materialist) research continue to dominate despite epistemological battles won. Action Researcher need an ability to articulate their position and defend it in the face of this epistemological domination. The move in philosophy of science argues, so says Gil Colman, in the positive, for a constructivist or postmodern-interpretivist or constructivist approach to knowledge, which acknowledges plural worlds and multiple perspectives.

Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology



The constructivist framework is explained by Kenneth J. Gergen and Mary M. Gergen in their chapter in the 2015 Handbook of Action Research called “Social Construction and Research as Action.” It includes concepts key to the AR worldview, such as collaborative epistemology, and putting pragmatics over being “very right,” as well as advocacy.

PRAGMATISM: INTERTWINING THEORY WITH PRACTICE

Bjørn Gustavsen and Øyvind Pålshaugen articulate and illustrate the importance of creating strong links between theory and practice, and emphasize that by keeping this fruitful connection in mind, Action Research can become an actor of critical importance in social science generally. They suggest that we think of new practice, rather than new theory, as key, something exemplified by the deeply impactful research on quality in worklife that they have led in Scandinavia starting in the 1970’s.

The intertwining roots of Action Research and organizational change continued, as explained by David Coghlan in his 2015 Handbook of Action Research chapter, “Organization Development: Action Research for Organizational Change.” The early and mutually supportive development of Action Research and management consulting and change endeavors continues to this day but has moved into many change arenas where organizing differently is called for, such as in Healthcare.

Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology



Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology

SYSTEMS THINKING

Evolutionary thinking and systems theory, help us understand that in trying to change the world, it is best to understand how we are located within highly complex systems. We may do best when we think of ourselves as helping change happen inside a complex field. Benjamin Lichtenstein proposes that passion and aspiration are the essential drivers of emergence within complexity. Understanding this can be very helpful for understanding the dynamics of social groups and complex situations (systems). In other words to be practical, clarify the intentions and passions of the group.

BEYOND MARGINALIZATION

Dealing with issues of power and reconceiving marginalization through empowerment is a key requirement of Action Research. In this way we have much in common with the Frankfurt School but, unlike them, we don't just talk and theorize!

Leading Latin American Action Researchers Danilo R. Streck and Oscar Jara Holiday - who helped open Volume I, explain the growing importance in Latin America of what may be translated as "Systematization of Experiences," which requires us to place a great deal of attention on the backgrounds that actors in Action Research bring to working together. These backgrounds are conditioned by culture and personal family dynamics.

George Ladaah Openjuru, Namrata Jaitli, Rajesh Tandon, and Budd Hall take up the issue of knowledge democracy more generally and seek to privilege marginalized voices of the South and North in what they call “Knowledge Democracy.”

And speaking of marginalization and the benefits of diversity is added to when Marja-Liisa Swantz (who coined the term “Participatory Action Research” while doing her anthropological work in Tanzania in the 70’s), draws attention toward the impact of Action Research on women. When involved Action Research goes better. Involving women (who in developing countries are mostly responsible for agricultural work) is too often neglected in conventional development work and in this way Action Research helps to bring a correct influence.

INTERSECTIONALITY OF RACE, GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND GLOBAL VILLAGE

Addressing power sets the stage for deeper work with intersectionality that speak to how issues of marginalization intertwine. In today’s parlance, giving attention to race, sexuality, and power differences is to address how these issues intersect, i.e., their intersectionality.

This new world of increasing voice and Action Researchers’ efforts to fostering people’s participation brings us also to be deeply concerned with ethics which is about respecting even inspiring dignity in our co-researchers.

Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology

TACKLING INTEGRATION: FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PERSON ACTION RESEARCH

Integrating the first person, that is our personal reflexive subjective heart/mind in our work has resonated a lot with a new generation of Action Researchers. We might say that good Action Research resides on the quality of the “first person” ability to know biases and work with shadow elements of consciousness to help shift self and system toward a more emancipated consciousness. Our work in second person intersectional spaces is now called to larger scale and scope. Social contagion processes that move our experiments through ever widening social networks lead to third person proliferation.

Source: Hilary Bradbury’s Introduction to Groundings in the Handbook of Action Research, 2015. Sage Publications.**

Groundings:
Articulating
Epistemology

INTENTION



The purpose of knowledge—at least as Action Researchers might say—is not simply to know the world, but to change it. Our immodest aim with this modest book is to inspire more of it. In loftier terms, we want to see a deepening of the democratization of knowledge creation, where inquiry is the privilege of all, not just those with formal scientist titles. Because we know knowledge creation is not primarily or solely about good ideas, we—the community of practice that has produced this book—offer to expand our community to be of support for those who need partners, mentors, colleagues, and friends on the journey.

Intention matters!

Intention

PARTICIPATION ON THE C-SPECTRUM

WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS, RELINQUISHING CONTROL

There is no one right way to partner with stakeholders nor is it always advisable or appropriate to invite participation from the start of a project. What is advisable is best determined by those involved. This may and often does change over time if more stakeholders are included.

We can imagine a spectrum that runs from research-dominated with complete control of the knowledge creation agenda (and in which the average citizen is a source of data) all the way to a model in which researchers see stakeholder citizens as co-researchers, with whom there is a collaborative and often surprising knowledge co-creation. There are milestones along this spectrum.

As a general rule, Action Researchers seek to move toward the co-creation end of the spectrum while conventional researchers, whose models of objectivity require it, tend to stick to the controlling end of the spectrum. The following spectrum may also be read as a stage model where the next level is a developmental advance toward mutuality and creativity. The obstacles to this may be many, including time commitment and resources, as well as inter-personal capacity inadequate to the task of working with the increasing complexity.

CONTROLLING THE KNOWLEDGE-CREATION AGENDA:

A minimal requirement in the AR paradigm is that the citizens, if treated primarily as informants to a controlled agenda, are kept informed and have something of value-to-them in exchange for their time and input. At best, it turns what has been an extractive and unilateral relationship into one of mutual exchange. For this reason, ethical consent, though always an important concern for scientists, is active as a

*Participation on
the C-spectrum*



process throughout Action Research efforts (rather than only a preliminary obstacle to overcome).

CITIZEN SCIENCE:

A close relation is the practice of involving citizens in data collection. In fact the citizen scientist may be controlled or may be seen as a partner in co-creation.

CONSULTING:

The AR team does most of the work and especially consults decision-makers throughout so that the implications of the work can move seamlessly into cycles of action. When working with busy people, a consulting model makes a great deal of sense. There is likely power sharing, but the roles are kept quite separate as a way to encourage efficiency.

A word of warning: Where there is high power distance in the AR context, e.g. when we are working with a population that traditionally has been unempowered or colonized (such as with poor people or minorities in any context), what may be consulting in the Action Researcher's mind may be experienced as control. Reflection and transparency is necessary here.

Beyond consulting lies **collaborating** where Action Researchers and citizen stakeholders share more roles, becoming more interdependent. This usually requires trust building, as in the case of healthcare researchers working with local populations of immigrants to get cancer screening rates to increase. This means being open to the

*Participation on
the C-spectrum*



Participation on the C-spectrum

need to redesign programs, advert things in a way that is more compelling to the target population. Finally, there may be a stage of co-creation of knowledge among equals which many of the accounts in *Cooking with Action Research* exemplify.

The development of *Cooking with Action Research* itself illustrates a combination of participation types along the spectrum (as does AR+, a collective originally convened to emerge into new forms).

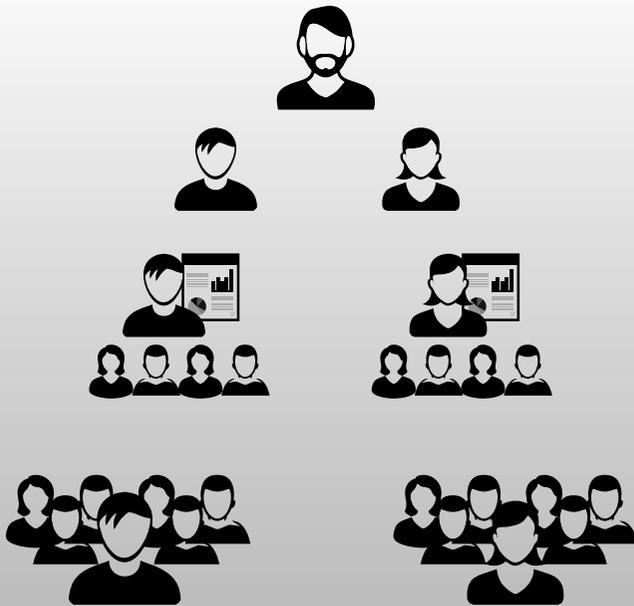
The chapters represent new knowledge that was **co-created** when authors, who had not previously known each other, met to talk and write together. For example, Danielle's insights as a scholar-practitioner, bringing new eyes, helped highlight useful insights on Svante's practitioner-scholar endeavors. Steve Waddell and Oguz Baburglu brought their respective practice concepts of Global Action Network and University of the Future together.

The development of the book from seed to harvest was a form of **collaborating** with Hilary acting as the "hubtress" in bringing an original plan and some resources to those who could bring time and attention to improving and enacting the plan.

All of us **consulted** with the stakeholders we speak about in the chapters—and some of whom appear in the companion videos. Our consultation was a way to stay on track with our perspective on the stories and also a way to provide space for additional learning for those stakeholders so inclined. The entry on power dynamics by Jean Hartmann is a good example of a consultation that led to insights that in turn, helped shape dissertation committee dynamics at her school.

POWER: AN INTERPRETATION OF "POWER-OVER" VERSUS "POWER-WITH"

POWER OVER



“**Power-over**,” is a pyramid form of ranked power that places one (usually male) person above others in a cascading hierarchy. This hierarchy is so common in organizational life that we might think it is natural.

Yet it only became “natural” in the West through the spread of the military culture of the Roman Empire. Its success in bringing clear lines of responsibility has resulted in a kind of militaristic “command-and-control” paradigm of organizing, which perhaps reached its pinnacle in the 1950s “Organization Man” or “yes-man” imagery.

Yet today, despite its widespread use and influence, it is crumbling. It is seriously questioned as being un-democratic by those seeking professional relationships that are more egalitarian in spirit.. We now see seeds of new organizational forms sprouting, deeply informed by participatory practices.

“**Power-with**” implies a circle form, often considered more feminine, certainly more equalitarian.

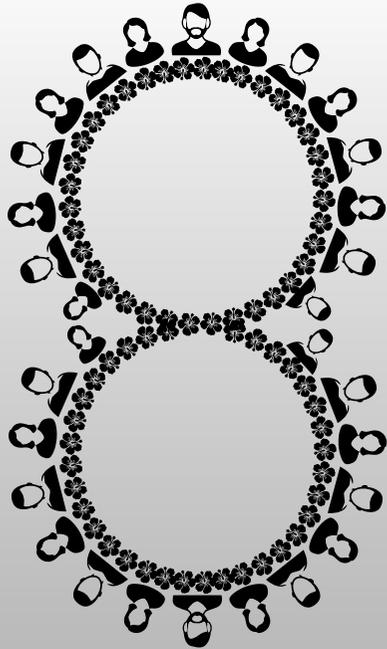
In the *Cookbook* chapter on Future Organizing by George Pór, Hilary Bradbury, and Bjorn Uldall, we see future-responsive organizational leaders stepping up to the challenge of creating whole workplaces where all associates’ talents can bloom, their callings aligned and honored.

At the heart of organizing our future is learning to tackle power dynamics. For new organizational forms to be sustainable, new heights of self-management are required, coupled with a sense of purpose. These new types of organizing, therefore, place transformational action learning at the heart of their effort.

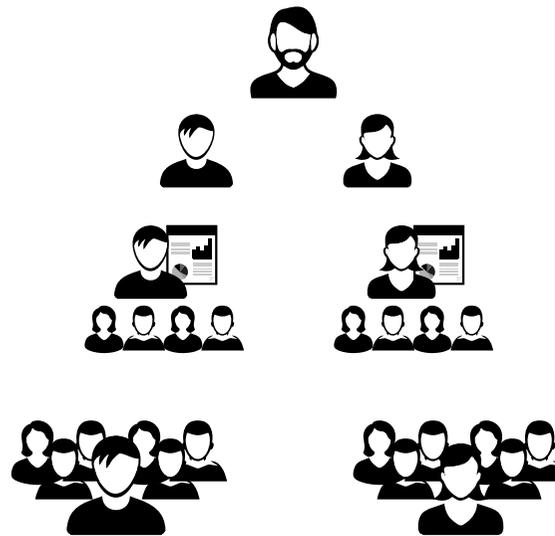
“Power-over” Versus
“Power-with”

We see in experiments with “power with” the promise of an emerging collective intelligence. This is good timing as we must respond better to the large system challenges of our societies, often captured under the umbrella of “sustainability,” e.g. social, economic and environmental performance.

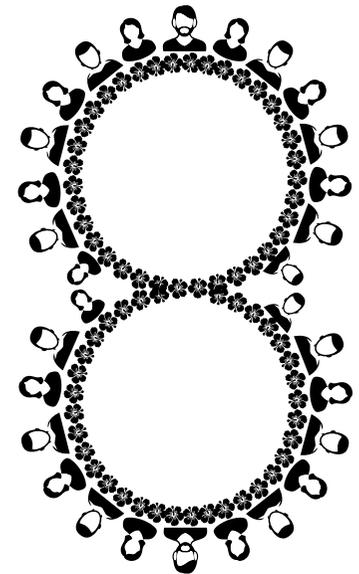
POWER WITH



POWER OVER



POWER WITH



*“Power-over” Versus
“Power-with”*

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS RESOURCES

Action Research is not a method, it is a participative approach or orientation to research with stakeholders that uses all useful methods as appropriate. For this reason, many Action Researchers are mixed methodologists, using qualitative and quantitative methods.

It is fair to say, however, that today more of us use qualitative methods and that currently the Action Research orientation finds itself within the interpretivist paradigm. As relational psychologist Ken Gergen says, “What is the point of yet more studies that describe, say, abusive relationships? Isn’t it better to have studies that teach us how to overcome such relationships?” Indeed!

Hilary Bradbury’s interview with Ken Gergen explores the journey from conventional training as an experimental psychologist to his becoming the foremost articulator of the social construction paradigm. At the heart of Ken’s work lies a deeper question, namely, what is the point of our research? What is worth doing? The interview is available at: <http://actionresearchplus.com/ken-gergen-on-ar-and-social-construction/>

The AR practice called Learning History may be of use to those interested in linking Action Research and qualitative methods.

General background on learning history by Shamaila Gull: https://gallery.mailchimp.com/23bfcc4520c74a21a17fd1332/files/a69fd72f-aa38-406b-b379-b897f1d58b31/xShamaila_Blog_LH.pdf

Bradbury, H., G. Roth, & M. Gearty. 2015. “The Practice of Learning History”. In Bradbury, H. Ed. 2015. *The Handbook of Action Research*. Sage Publications.

*Qualitative and
Quantitative
Methods Resources*



Available at: <http://actionresearchplus.com/the-practice-of-learning-history-local-and-open-system-approaches/>

Gearty, M., Bradbury-Huang, H., & Reason, P. 2013. "Learning History in an Open System: Creating Histories for Sustainable Futures". Management Learning. Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1350507613501735>

*Qualitative and
Quantitative
Methods Resources*

QUALITY CHOICE POINTS IN ACTION RESEARCH

DEVELOPED IN COLLOGUE WITH MEMBERS OF THE ARJ BOARD



1. Quality requires articulation of objectives: Allowing understanding of the extent to which the AR explicitly addresses its objectives.
2. Quality requires partnership and participation: The extent to and means by which the AR reflects or enacts participative values and concern for the relational component of research. By “the extent of participation,” we are referring to a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers.
3. Quality requires contribution to Action Research theory-practice: The extent to which the AR builds on (creates explicit links with) or contributes to a wider body of practice knowledge and/or theory; that it contributes to the AR literature.
4. Quality requires appropriate methods and process: The extent to which the AR process and related methods are clearly articulated and illustrated. By “illustrated,” we mean that empirical papers “show” and not just “tell” about process and outcomes by including analysis of data that includes the voices of participants.
5. Quality requires actionability: The extent to which the AR provides new ideas that guide action in response to need.
6. Quality requires reflexivity: The extent to which self-location as a change agent is acknowledged. By “self-location,” we mean that authors take a personal, involved and self-critical stance as reflected in clarity about their role in the AR process, clarity about the context in which the research takes place, and clarity about what led to their involvement in this research.

*Quality Choice
points*



7. Quality requires significance: The extent to which the insights of the AR are significant in content and process. By “significant,” we mean having meaning and relevance beyond their immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.

SUGGESTED GENERAL READINGS ON ACTION RESEARCH



Action Research journal, or ARJ. <http://journals.sagepub.com/home/arj>

Action Research journal, or ARJ, is an international, interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed, quarterly-published, refereed journal which is a forum for the development of the theory and practice of Action Research. The journal publishes quality articles on accounts of Action Research projects, explorations in the philosophy and methodology of Action Research, and considerations of the nature of quality in Action Research practice.

The ARJ Blog offers popular and free access to papers as they are published: <http://actionresearchplus.com/blog/>

Bradbury, H., (Ed). 2015. *The handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (3rd ed.). London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

This is the most current edition of the popular series of handbooks that first came out in 2001. The third edition celebrates the “arrival” of Action Research as we name and acknowledge our contributions and seek to complement the dominant conventional forms of research. Earlier editions of the Handbook (and the related ARJ) continually shape discussion and practice in constructive ways. In truth, they are more volumes rather than editions because so much content is new or completely revised, suggesting timely attention to developing our own and others’ capacity; after all, we are an emergent and responsive field, always adaptively learning.



Suggested General Readings on Action Research

Learn more (and check in for discounts that we offer regularly to make this large and expensive book more affordable!): <http://actionresearchplus.com/handbook/>

Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (Eds.) 2001. *The handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (1st ed.). London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (Eds.) 2008. *The handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (Completely revised 2nd ed.). London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (eds.) 2009. *The handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (Graduate student paperback edition). London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

FYI: Editions are often available secondhand through various internet sources; and stay tuned to AR+ as chapters from previous Handbooks are uploaded by the authors with copyright permission.

Other key texts:

David Coghlan and Teresa Brannick
Doing Action Research in your own organization
<https://study.sagepub.com/coghlanandbrannick>

David Greenwood & Morten Levin
Introduction to Action Research



Suggested General Readings on Action Research

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/introduction-to-action-research/book227935>

Ernest T. Stringer
Action Research

<https://www.amazon.com/Action-Research-Ernest-T-Stringer/dp/1452205086>

Herr and Anderson
The Action Research dissertation

<https://www.amazon.com/Action-Research-Dissertation-Students-Faculty/dp/1483333108>

For more excellent suggestions, see the various suggested readings throughout the Resource Directory.

SYSTEMIC WORLDVIEW

By Svante Lifvergren and Danielle Zandee



*Systemic
Worldview*

(Regarding the Örjan healthcare system project, Skaraborg, Sweden [See Volume 1])

Even the smallest improvements in a system may be approached from an awareness of their interconnection with other actions in a large and complex system as if it were one unit. This awareness shows, for example in the healthcare arena, in tracking the patients' pathways and involving all stakeholders from healthcare providers to politicians in the improvement efforts. A systemic perspective guides the attention to what we have called "pivotal moments" and "leveraging mechanisms."

Action Researchers need to be alert to the moments that create openings for learning and for change. Getting a project adopted by a system, in the healthcare case this meant by the development coalition, and getting into conversation that reveals different perspectives (in the healthcare case "how to call the patient)" offer pivotal moments. It is in such instances that the unfolding process gets energized and may change direction.

A systemic worldview sees change not as episodic but as continuous and emergent. Though no one can be in charge of emergent change, it can be facilitated by leveraging mechanisms. These are the noticeable initiatives and subtle tweaks that create the environment and conditions that help amplify the emergent transformation of the system. The use of measurements and whole system dialogues are examples of leveraging mechanisms.

II. HOW

ACTION RESEARCH: FIRST AND SECOND PERSON ALCHEMY



ACTION RESEARCH PRACTICES: AN OVERVIEW

Action Research is probably most known for the many dozens of powerful practices for working with communities and groups that Action Researchers have developed over time and made available to others. These practices use different qualitative and quantitative methods and have different levels of formality.

Action Research practices can be mixed and matched for many circumstances: working with small groups (e.g. John Heron's and Peter Reason's cooperative inquiry) or very large groups (e.g. David Cooperrider's appreciative inquiry summits), working to produce formal scholarly output that includes a change agenda (e.g. Bradbury, Roth, and Gerry's Learning History), working with illiterate people in impoverished circumstances to improve their lot (e.g. Chamber's PRA), encouraging collective reflection and experimenting (Otto Scharmer's U-Lab).

One good overview of the range of practices available is in the Handbook of Action Research series, which included the following in the 2015 edition. In time we hope to make all chapters available at AR+. ** For now simply seeing the range and names may encourage more experimentation among us all as we sample from others' practices.

The practices were introduced by Alfredo Ortiz and Tere Castillo in their introductory essay: http://actionresearchplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Practices.Final_-_OrtizCastillo.pdf

“The Practice of Learning History: Local and Open System Approaches”

Hilary Bradbury, George Roth, and Margaret Gearty

Action Research
Practices:
An Overview



*Action Research
Practices:
An Overview*

“PRA, PLA and Pluralism: Practice and Theory”

Robert Chambers

“Developing the Practice of Leading Change through Insider Action Research: A Dynamic Capability Perspective”

David Coghlan and A.B. Shani

“Innovations in Appreciative Inquiry: Critical Appreciative Inquiry With Excluded Pakistani Women”

Graham Duncan

“Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry”

Aftab Erfan and Bill Torbert

“Systematization of Experiences: A Practice of Participatory Research from Latin America”

Elza Falkembach and Alfonso Torres Carillo

“Empowerment Evaluation and Action Research: A Convergence of Values, Principles, and Purpose”

David M. Fetterman

“Action Evaluation: An Action Research Practice for the Participative Definition, Monitoring, and Assessment of Success in Social Innovation and Conflict Engagement”

Victor J. Friedman and Jay Rothman



*Action Research
Practices:
An Overview*

“Theatre in Participatory Action Research: Experiences from Bangladesh”

Meghna Guhathakurta

“Using T-Groups to Develop Action Research Skills in Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous Environments”

Michael Krot and Lisa Stefanac

“The Action Research Practice of Urban Planning — An Example from Hong Kong”

Hok Bun Ku & Jackie Y. C. Kwok

“The Artistry of Emancipatory Practice: Photovoice, Creative Techniques, and Feminist Anti-racist Participatory Action Research”

M. Brinton Lykes and Holly Scheib

“Action Science Revisited: Building Knowledge Out of Practice to Transform Practice”

Diana McLain Smith

“Systemic Intervention”

Gerald Midgley

“Community Based Participatory Research with Communities Defined by Race, Ethnicity, and Disability: Translating Theory to Practice”

Christina Nicolaidis and Dora Raymaker



*Action Research
Practices:
An Overview*

“Action Learning”

Mike Pedler and John Burgoyne

“The Network Leadership Innovation Lab: A Practice for Social Change”

Elissa Perry, Robin Katcher, Mark Leach and Laurie Mazur

“Awareness-Based Action Research: Catching Social Reality Creation in Flight”

Otto Scharmer and Katrin Kaufer

“The World Café in Action Research Settings”

Frederick Steier, Juanita Brown and Flavio Mesquita da Silva

“Ethnographic Action Research: Media, Information and Communicative Ecologies for Development Initiatives”

Jo Tacchi

“Re-Fashioning Citizens’ Juries: Participatory Democracy in Action”

Tom Wakeford, Michel Pimbert and Erin Walcon

“The Practice of Helping Students to Find Their First Person Voice in Creating Living-Theories for Education”

Jack Whitehead

“The Practice of Teaching Co-operative Inquiry”

Lyle Yorks

ADVOCACY/INQUIRY: A BALANCING PRACTICE

by Hilary Bradbury and George Pór

If we have to choose one “salt,” i.e., a ‘behind the scenes’ ingredient that helps multiple aspects of our practice with Action Research, we choose “balancing inquiry and advocacy” for its power in transforming self and system.

Peter Senge originally outlined four purposes of this balancing practice: first, by examining our perspective and reasoning, we increase our knowledge and improve our thinking; second, by increasing our knowledge and improving our thinking, we improve our decision-making, and thus, take more effective action; third, by unpacking our inferences and assumptions, we gain more accurate knowledge and we better understand and improve the conclusions we reach (all of this reduces the amount of unresolved conflict we experience); and finally, by offering transparency and humility about our own thinking, curiosity into others’ thinking, and improved conflict resolution, we improve and strengthen our relationships.

A warm up exercise: At the heart of the matter is *listening better*. Listening to the point that there is real dialogue so that what is being said is better than what either one might say alone. Synergy is when $2 + 2 = 5$, and AR and good listening is trying to achieve synergy – we are better together! Depending on how good (or bad) at listening you already are, your practice with this may be as simple as shutting up more or as complex as sharing more of what you are thinking/feeling or paying attention to the non-verbal knowledge present also.

Drawing from Argyris’ *Action Science*, we begin by examining a difficult conversation. Best is to record and transcribe this conversation. Next best is to write from memory as much of the exact words used. Then you prepare to code your own statements either as advocacy (AD) or inquiry (IN).

*Advocacy | Inquiry:
A Balancing
Practice*



Advocacy | Inquiry: A Balancing Practice

Advocacy refers to a statement that explicitly asserts your opinion, perception, feeling, or proposal for action (that last statement was an example of advocacy!). Inquiry seeks to learn something as in a question, but not all questions are inquiry, nor is all inquiry stated as a question (e.g. “What did you mean by that?” is clear inquiry, but so is “I am left puzzled by what you just said. I’d love to understand more.”) You do not code the interlocutor’s words, only your own.

After coding all sentences simply count up the code to create a ratio: e.g. AD=4 sentences; IQ=2 sentences. Result: 2:1 ratio of advocacy over inquiry. This result means that I advocate twice as much as I inquire. (In this result I may see some of the seeds of my difficulty in managing dynamic whole- or complex-systems!)

Leaving aside our deep attraction to pointing out how we’ve been wronged by the other in a difficult conversation, here, instead, we take time to see how much more inquiry we might have brought to the conversation. It’s not that the other is right or wrong; it’s that we need to practice listening for where we can meet or join them, or perhaps understand that we cannot work together productively.

A first step is to understand what they are thinking. You may wonder at what point you should end your inquiry, if say, you are dealing with someone whose views are (by most standards) unacceptable (say you have the misfortune to be in dialogue with a neo-Nazi). We urge you to continue. The point is to treat it as an opportunity for understanding. What makes them tick, believe the way they do? Where is the common denominator for you? Usually there is one! Perhaps your neo-Nazi interlocutor is expressing a fear of change and a desire for a more orderly world. That is something we can all likely agree with. The rest can even be inquired into.



*Advocacy | Inquiry:
A Balancing
Practice*

While in such extreme circumstances, it's unlikely that any arguments will be won, a new openness is signaled. That's a good practice today; as say climate change denial becomes politically mainstream in the USA, it may even be time to have these conversations!

Usually, however, we are not engaged with the extreme. Notice how difficult it is to listen to one's nearest and dearest. A hallmark of the creative orientation is openness, courting of surprise. Where better to find it than in one's own living room, by experimenting with listening more, asking more, or (depending on your ratio) sharing more.

ART: ENHANCING CREATIVITY IN ACTION RESEARCH IN SIX LESSONS

by Catherine Etmanski & Kathy Bishop

“If art cannot change the world, it can help to change the consciousness and drives of the women and men who would change the world.” - Herbert Marcuse, Frankfurt School Critical Theorist

“The day is coming when a single carrot, freshly observed, will set off a revolution.” - Paul Cézanne, 20th Century French Painter

At its essence, AR is about engaging groups of people to co-create meaningful change in the world. Yet, to bring about change, we know we need more than statistics and facts; we also need to inspire the heart. As Action Researchers concerned with today’s complex global challenges, we (Kathy and Catherine) know we need to tap into a variety of methods to successfully bring about change. How, then, can we tap into our collective creative potential to address today’s challenges?

We have learned that when most people think about research, they normally default to methods such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups. However, there is growing momentum among Action Researchers who recognize creative or arts-based methods as essential to our human survival and who are turning to such methods to support their change objectives. (Note that we say creative or arts-based due to the fear that the word art sometimes evokes in readers—more on that below!) Here, we explore how including creative and arts-based methods in AR processes can offer a range of possibilities for promoting embodied sensory experiences, building empathy with multiple audiences, and opening new ways of seeing, being, doing, and knowing.

*Art: Enhancing
Creativity in Action
Research in Six
Lessons*



SIX LESSONS ON CREATIVITY AND ACTION RESEARCH

Recognizing that creative methods held the potential to engage people's full selves (body, mind, and spirit) and spark a different kind of dialogue for change, we turned to theater-based research in our doctoral work. As educators, we have since learned through our own and our students' trials and errors, as well as through the wisdom passed on from our mentors. We have distilled this learning into six key lessons.

LESSON 1: CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS ARE NOT INHERENTLY PARTICIPATORY OR PROGRESSIVE

Creative or arts-based methods are not necessarily action-oriented, democratic, or participatory in and of themselves. The extent to which they meet these criteria is determined by the way in which they are employed. Like all research methods, to be effective methods for change, they must be embedded within a larger AR framework, one that fosters emancipatory change and promotes human flourishing.

LESSON 2: VALUE THE PROCESS AND THE PRODUCT.

AR promotes iterative cycles of observation, reflection, action, and evaluation. Creative or arts-based methods can be included at any point in the research process, from problem or question-definition, to data collection, to analysis, to implementation.

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As such, a creative intervention can be introduced as one of many AR cycles. At times, this creative intervention will lead to a final arts-based product (e.g. a theater performance or art installation). In such cases, artistry and aesthetics become relevant considerations. However, not all creative processes need to focus on a final product.

At times, a collective creative process may serve to build relationships, empathy, and trust among participants, all of which are helpful in most AR projects. In these instances, producing a product for public viewing may not be necessary. When making a decision on whether your creative intervention will lead to a final product, consider your goal, intended outcomes, desired impact, and audience.

LESSON 3: VALUE ARTISTS' WORLDVIEW AND EXPERTISE

In our work, we have learned that the idea of researchers (or educators, activists, community developers, and so on) merely using the arts can be seen as offensive to some professionally trained artists who have spent a lifetime developing their artistry.

Some have gone so far as to say that untrained researchers have no business meddling with the power of artistic media; after all, an untrained professional would not be permitted to conduct surgery or perform psychotherapy. Although this is an extreme position and there are a range of opinions on the subject, we agree that some understanding about the worldview and expertise needed to engage in creative or arts-based methods is certainly required.

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Research in Six
Lessons*

For example, artists utilize different ways of knowing, such as image, gesture, metaphor, sound, and/or imagination as ways of constructing and co-constructing knowledge to transform human understanding. Furthermore, the artistic process is holistic and iterative rather than proceeding through separate phases like research traditionally does via data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Therefore, the language of the artist may be better aligned with terms like “generation,” “interpretation,” and “presentation” or “performance” when working with data.

Similarly, it is useful to understand that there are different skills, knowledge, and worldviews associated with research—just as there are different skills, knowledge, and worldviews involved in education, community development, or strategic activism. When planning to facilitate a creative or arts-based process, consider whether you may need to complete additional training in specific arts-based practices (e.g. training in the theater, as we both completed), or at least seek guidance from individuals who have more skill in a specific artistic medium than you do.

There may even be times when it’s helpful to hire an artist to support you in your work. For example, if you are looking to utilize theater-based methods, you might choose to hire a playwright, actor, or director. In this way, you not only honor the art form, but you can also ensure the perceived lack of aesthetic quality or artistry does not detract from the findings and potential to mobilize change.

LESSON 4: TRANSFORMATION TAKES MANY FORMS.

Often, we'll hear reference to the arts as means of promoting transformative learning experiences. Transformation is such a widely-used term that we have given some thought to just how the arts are helpful in this regard.

First, creative or arts-based experiences can generate “Ah-ha” moments of insight. Creative or arts-based methods can bring to the surface pre-conscious or previously unarticulated concerns and desires. These insights may seem non-linear or irrational, yet they are rooted in the symbolism inherent to the arts.

As such, through bypassing rational defense mechanisms or censorship of the brain and revealing insights that come from the heart, working with symbolism can support greater self-awareness. When facilitated skillfully, creative and arts-based methods can also build relationships, trust, empathy, and a sense of community through enabling people to share these insights with others.

When drawing upon symbolism to co-create meaning of a shared experience, any creative medium can be adapted to become a research method. Different researchers-as-facilitators will use their own techniques for teasing out the symbolic connections between the experiential activity and the topic of inquiry.

We have found that the most straightforward way to co-create meaning in a group setting is to move through an experiential learning process of discussing what actually happened in the activity, to what this could symbolically mean in the context of the topic under investigation, and to how this collectively articulated knowledge could inspire action.



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Research in Six
Lessons*



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Creativity in Action
Research in Six
Lessons*

Next, as is understood by grassroots activists, corporate marketing teams, and politicians of all stripes, creativity and the arts are central to communicating powerful messages. Creative methods can, therefore, promote transformation through their educative, political, or consciousness-raising effect.

Finally, in the current context of corporatization of the arts, rather than seeing creativity as a human attribute or birthright, many people have early wounds related to their perceived deficiencies and lack of artistry (think of teachers or parents who told you that you can't sing, can't dance, or can't make money through the arts). With skillful facilitation, you can enable people to reengage with creative methods in a way that supports them in healing those early wounds.

As with any transformational experience, a core element of skillful facilitation is to ensure that people are not forced to participate. We recognize that people have different comfort zones and invite people to engage at the level they choose for their own comfort or challenge. We suggest that if they do not want to engage in their activity, they can find another way to participate. For example, being an active observer is also a powerful way to contribute.

**LESSON 5: CREATIVE AND ARTS-BASED METHODS ARE
DECEPTIVELY POWERFUL**

On the surface, including creativity or the arts in AR may be perceived as fun, lighthearted, and playful. But make no mistake, the arts are powerful methods, more powerful than one might imagine.



*Art: Enhancing
Creativity in Action
Research in Six
Lessons*

Even though deep, personal, or emotional responses may not necessarily emerge through a creative or arts-based practice, should you engage with the arts, it's best to be prepared for a range of emotions—e.g. curious, energized, joyful, excited, sad, confused, embarrassed, bored, or angry—to emerge. At times, participants' emotional responses can be powerful, overwhelming, and unexpected—no matter how many times you may have articulated that they might react strongly to the process.

Researchers have a responsibility toward the welfare of their participants so we urge you to be well-prepared to respectfully, compassionately, and professionally support individuals and groups through difficult emotional responses. Ensure people are giving their voluntary, informed, and ongoing consent to engage with you, offer validation for their experiences and emotions (as the monk Richard Rohr suggested, “everything belongs”), and provide support should they need to walk away.

We never know the extent of one another's wounds, but in cases where you know you are working with people who have experienced trauma, we recommend that you have a counselor present or available on easy referral. As mentioned previously, symbolism can go straight to the heart and catch people off-guard, bringing up memories they may have forgotten or intentionally pushed aside for their own survival.

LESSON 6: CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS ARE MORE THAN UTILITARIAN TOOLS

Although creative methods have all the benefits mentioned above, and can serve a purpose of problem-solving or stimulating out-of-the box thinking, consider that beauty and aesthetic form need not have a secondary utilitarian value.

Rather, the arts have their own place and intrinsic value in societies the world over. Recall that when women garment workers and union organizers marched in New York in 1908, they declared, “We want bread and we want roses too!” Moreover, as stated at the outset, when included in an AR process, creative or arts-based methods are not simply tools; they are infused with their own meaning and traditions and offer new ways of revealing the world to those who choose to engage with them.

Having learned what is possible for creative and arts-based methods in AR, it is helpful to keep the bigger picture in mind. That is: in the face of increasingly complex global challenges, we can no longer rely solely upon the same strategies that maintain the status quo. We need to find new possibilities for collectively envisioning a more just and compassionate future and learning our way forward. Creativity and the arts offer us many possibilities for doing just that.



*Art: Enhancing
Creativity in Action
Research in Six
Lessons*

ARTS AND ACTION RESEARCH: READINGS

by Catherine Etmanski and Kathy Bishop



Arts and Action
Research: Readings

Bishop, K. 2014. "Six perspectives in search of an ethical solution: Utilizing a moral imperative within a multiple ethics paradigm to guide research-based theatre/applied theatre work." *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 19 (1): 64-75.

Surveying some key applied theater practitioners in the field, Bishop addresses the moral imperative each suggested when considering research-based theater/applied theater work and links it to an ethical perspective identified in a multiple ethics paradigm model. She then puts forward a synergized moral imperative which may help theater-based researchers in particular, and applied theater practitioners in general, to think about ethical issues in a comprehensive manner to support their own ethical practice and further discussions towards new ethical paradigms in the field.

Bishop, K., Weigler, W., Lloyd, T., & Beare, D. 2017. "Fostering collaborative leadership through playbuilding". In C. Etmanski, K. Bishop, & B. Page, *Adult learning through collaborative leadership. New directions in adult and continuing education*. Jossey-Bass Quarterly Sourcebooks.

Written by four applied theater practitioners, this chapter explores playbuilding as a creative approach to leadership, learning, and—by extension—research. Drawing upon their practical experiences within community-based, secondary schools, and university settings, the authors share stories and strategies for fostering collaboration through playbuilding. This special edition of *New Directions in Adult and Continuing Education (NDACE)* focuses on adult learning through collaborative leadership. It will be available on the NDACE website



in the fall of 2017: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1536-0717](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1536-0717)

Boal, A. 1979. *Theatre of the oppressed* (A. Charles & M.L. McBride, Trans.). New York: Urizen Books. (Revised edition printed in 2008 in London by Pluto Press; originally published in 1974 as Teatro del oprimido).

This classic work by Brazilian director Augusto Boal documents how participatory theater can be employed as a means of promoting emancipatory research into the struggles of everyday people. In line with Paulo Freire's educational work, Boal believed that those who stood to benefit from a social intervention (whether through education or the theater) should have the most say in creating it. For Boal, theater was a means of "rehearsing the revolution." He further suggested that everyone can act, in both senses of the word (i.e. on stage and through social action). This book was foundational in introducing readers to Boal's concept of Theater of the Oppressed in general and, in particular, an interactive method he called Forum Theater. His later works documented theater games and promoted an approach to democracy he called, Legislative Theater. More on Boal's work can be found online, including a preview of the link between his work and Action Research in the Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research:

<https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-action-research/book234014#tabview=google>

Arty and Action
Research: Readings



Arty and Action Research: Readings

Brydon Miller, M. & Friedman, V. 2011. "Action Research and the arts". Special issue of *Action Research* journal, 9(1). Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/arja/9/1>

This special issue makes a direct link between AR and the arts.

Interested readers may wish to check out other journals with special issues related to the arts, e.g.:

International Journal of Lifelong Learning, 31:4 (2012);

New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 116 (2007);

New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 107 (2005);

Convergence, 38:4 (2005);

Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 16:2 (2010);

The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 48:3 (2002).

Diamond, D. 2007. *Theatre for living: The art and science of community-based dialogue*. Victoria, BC: Trafford.

Based in Vancouver, Canada, David Diamond is a master of hosting theater-based community dialogue. Inspired by the late Augusto Boal, Diamond moved away from the oppressor-oppressed binary and took a systems approach to participatory theater. Based primarily on his work with Canadian First Nations, but also with communities in conflict around the world, Diamond supports community members in telling their stories through the theater.



Arts and Action Research: Readings

Integral to his approach is that the so-called oppressors or villains of the story are played with integrity. Audience members do not need to condone the actions of these characters, but they do need to understand what motivates them as members of a given community. By representing all characters with integrity, Diamond hopes to inspire community healing through the dialogue that takes place on stage. More information available at: <http://theatreforliving.com/>

Etmanski, C. December 9, 2015. Video dialogue with Hilary Bradbury for AR+. Available at: <http://actionresearchplus.com/catherine-etmanski-community-based-research/>

In this 20-minute video dialogue, Hilary Bradbury and Catherine Etmanski discuss Etmanski's co-edited book on learning and teaching Community-Based Research (CBR, see reference below). They discuss the mutually enriching relationship between AR and CBR as well as the role the arts can play in promoting a more just, compassionate, and sustainable world.

Etmanski, C. 2014. "Creating the learning space: Teaching arts-based research". In C. Etmanski, B. Hall, & T. Dawson, (Eds.), *Learning and teaching community based research: Linking pedagogy to practice*. Pp. 265–284. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

This edited book offers a range of strategies for learning and teaching community-based approaches to research. The contributing authors and co-editors explore learning by doing as well as learning in university and community settings.



Arty and Action Research: Readings

In particular, Etmanski's chapter documents how she approached teaching arts-based research in the context of a graduate level leadership classroom. Drawing upon experiential learning processes, and beginning with students' own interests and expertise, she explains how she created a brave and welcoming space that was conducive to learning through the arts.

More information on the book available here: <http://www.utppublishing.com/Learning-and-Teaching-Community-Based-Research-Linking-Pedagogy-to-Practice.html>

Knowles, J. G. & Cole, A. L. (Eds.). 2008. Handbook of the arts in qualitative inquiry: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

With 54 chapters documenting a range of arts-based practices, this is a foundational handbook for anyone interested in engaging in the arts as part of a research process. The contributing authors provide background context and ideas to help frame how arts-based and Indigenous practices have been conceptualized as research and go on to provide several examples from different media, including: storytelling, photography and visual images, song/lyrics/music, poetry, Métissage, dance, quilting, theater, collage, sculpture, digital media, and more. They also present a range of issues and challenges related to the arts and research.

More information and chapter previews are available here: <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/handbook-of-the-arts-in-qualitative-research/book226626>



Arty and Action Research: Readings

McLean, C. & Kelly, R. (Eds.) 2011. *Creative arts in research for community and cultural change*. Calgary, Canada: Detselig Enterprises.

Advocating for new creative research approaches that lead to action and change, this edited book offers a variety of articles about creative arts in research and practice across different contexts and disciplines.

O'Connor, P., & Anderson, M. (Eds.) 2015. *Applied theatre: Research radical departures*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.

Two skilled applied theater practitioners from New Zealand and Australia (respectively), O'Connor and Anderson address radical and critical departures by doing theater as research. This book offers both theory and practice on this subject. It provides an overview and examination of applied theater and research and how it interconnects with other research epistemologies such as arts-informed inquiry and Indigenous research methods. Then it offers a series of international case studies highlighting possibilities and tensions within the work.

DEVELOPMENT ACTION RESEARCH PRACTICE: 3 STEPS

by Marina Apgar & Will Allen

(The examples referred to are further described by the authors in Volume 1)

STEP 1: STEPPING IN AND STEPPING OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT

Bringing a social process lens to facilitating collaboration in environmental management means, at times, making oneself invisible, and at others claiming center stage. Our arena for engagement as Action Researchers pursuing environmental sustainability rests mainly in the relational spaces we can build in practice.

The vignettes of how we entered environmental research programs illustrate that there is no “right” entry point—other than one where you are invited in. This is not to suggest that there are not better or worse entry points, and indeed there may be cases where it is wiser not to enter at all; the point is that you have to meet people where they are, and build from there.

In our experience, we rarely start work with groups familiar with social process and Action Research. The starting point, therefore, is to build relationships and capacities for working in a dialogic and reflexive way. Even when having a mandate to design implementation processes using AR (as we did with the aquatic agricultural systems program), time was required to explicitly talk about reflexivity as a central feature of our practice. It took three years to be able to articulate and codify the emerging design that helped illustrate our expertise as designers of learning processes.

*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

Yet for some of the researchers involved, this remained uncomfortable as it meant they were also part of a reflexive process—they had to work in a different way. At times, therefore, we had to hold open the uncomfortable space to enable reflection and learning through it.

The New Zealand example illustrates how the space for AR can be built, incrementally, over time. At first it was labeled “human dimension” research—something that could sit alongside the biophysical research components. Yet the subjects of the social dimension research were the processes that made the program work. While we think of a planning meeting as a critical moment to build collaboration, and would facilitate it looking across different ways of understanding a problem space or defining avenues to build solutions, for many in the room it is simply a planning meeting.

Indeed, we had to ensure they did have a plan as a result, but we also wanted to make sure that it was developed through listening to each other and opening up dialogue. With time, people became more used to collaborative approaches, and eventually, we as Action Researchers stepped aside and the program and other project leaders facilitated, with us supporting in the background.

As Action Researchers we hold multiple identities, and bring forth the most useful one when the process requires it; at times we are the social scientists in the room, at others we are there to support colleagues in achieving their goals, and sometimes, we become key designers of processes.



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

Embracing complexity means we must have patience and trust that what matters will indeed emerge from the interactions we are facilitating. When that works well and our collaborators do think about the world differently, then they are changing themselves which will help achieve the environmental and/or sustainability goals we seek. Additionally, we, our processes, and our frameworks are rendered less visible.

**STEP 2: NURTURING CAPACITIES FOR OTHERS TO NURTURE
EMERGENT CHANGE**

No matter the entry point or the exact positionality of our AR practice, when working with programs that seek to break from business as usual, we need to understand and treat them primarily as exercises in capacity development, or surfacing capacity available in the system. As noted before, breaking from business as usual may mean facilitating important change or resisting bad change being handed down from on high.

This was particularly evident in the aquatic agricultural systems program, where in each site and across sites, implementing teams had different levels and types of expertise and exposure to participatory approaches, and the implementation model and learning design was necessarily contextualized in each location. For example, Malaita in the Solomon Islands is a remote coastal marine island where the community has limited experience with agricultural or development interventions. In this context, we had to rely on volunteer champions to provide a link between trained facilitators and community members. In this setting, the



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

role of partners, such as University researchers and NGOs was to provide specific technical support to the program team.

In the Philippines, however, communities were large and highly interwoven such that it was possible to employ local community facilitators as field research aids, and they could, in time, learn to design and facilitate AR. Whether voluntary, paid, government, NGO, or researcher, each member of these mixed teams came with their own biases, strengths, and weaknesses which we had to work with as a starting point. Our use of capacity building here is context specific and ranges in scale from individuals to teams, from communities to organizations.

For research leaders, the practice of running a complexity-aware research initiative goes beyond the already significant task of enabling cross-disciplinary collaboration, to managing an array of social processes, such as public participation and engagement, multi-stakeholder inquiry, and conflict management. Klein (Lélé & Norgaard, 2005) describes twin challenges of integration: horizontal integration (across disciplines) and vertical integration (across experts, policymakers, and community). This represents unfamiliar territory for many program leaders and environmental managers. Where, when, and with whom should they be concentrating efforts to stimulate dialogue and collective learning? Does this change over time and if so, how? Answers to these questions have important resource implications for any project and require active design and management of the social system that the project occupies.

It is within institutional spaces that innovative, flexible leaders, which are so central to opening up more transformative pathways, can be encouraged to take



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

risks in discerning and supporting fresh ideas. Traditionally, research leaders are rewarded for strengthening their own programs (or departments) and for building links to others.

In this regard, collaborative research often calls for leaders to put the bigger vision before the immediate needs of their program or organization. There are several ways in which leaders can support such integrative research and integrative researchers. One key attribute is the ability to bridge across different viewpoints and help people develop and articulate a shared vision. Understanding different inquiry epistemologies—from positivism to constructivism—and helping both social and biophysical scientists find ways of working together from their different epistemologies is also important.

The gulf, however, is heightened even more when it comes to linking across traditional (indigenous) and local knowledge cultures. As our experience in the aquatic agricultural systems program illustrates, we were facilitating an emergent process, which meant that teams on the ground were often without specific guidance at the outset. For many, the lack of a blueprint and clearly defined boundaries was challenging. Many were used to project implementation in which the project leader has already decided what it will focus on and comes in with a rigid plan that is implemented according to a logical framework and a schedule.

Researchers grappled with learning how to let communities and stakeholders be in control of their own development process. These teams went through their own transformative change process, learning to move away from defining the



Development Action Research Practice : 3 Steps

research agenda and change processes themselves and move toward becoming more comfortable with their role as facilitators of an emergent process of change. The capacities required to engage in participatory- and sustainability-oriented research is best nurtured through the experience of implementation itself.

The following individual competencies were important:

- Planning through use of Theory of Change to build systemic interventions;
- Analytical skills to embrace uncertainty in complex systems;
- Process skills including communication and listening for network;
- Facilitating learning of others and across disciplines; and
- Skills to understand social and gender norms.

STEP 3: BUILDING A CULTURE OF LEARNING THROUGH MINDSETS AND TOOLS

Beyond the capacity of individuals to work in an integrated way, as Action Researchers we also focus on the goal of building a culture of reflection and learning in the groups we are working with, be they within or across institutions.

In the aquatic agricultural systems program, we worked with implementation teams using self-assessments to create tailored plans for supporting their development, making sure that (as a team) we asked ourselves the question: How are we growing toward our goals?



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

Building a team culture of learning can be aided by the use of tools and frameworks to: make sense of the social context of a problem area or interventions; aid in designing strategies to meet social process needs such as communication and engagement; and be the basis for evaluation with a view to understanding how change is unfolding.

In the aquatic agricultural systems program, use of visioning tools helped to articulate a common goal, which in turn helped identify opportunities for joint action. Use of drawings and layering individual to group to collective visions also ensured that the marginalized voices were leading the design process.

The design then included use of Theory of Change methodology (i.e., a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen) as a tool to map out the processes through which an action leads to an outcome over time; this was one way in which we visualized complex impact pathways and enabled collaboration of stakeholders to build integrated solutions. This has proved important because many managers in environmental settings do not have tools to involve all these stakeholders in such a meaningful way. In particular, they often lack tools to easily set out, document, and communicate complex goals, activities, and intended outcomes.

Developing a Theory of Change, therefore, can assist by supporting diverse stakeholders to work together and plan for outcomes by envisioning a big picture view of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a specific context. However, a Theory of Change within an AR process is understood as both a process and a product; it is important to involve practitioners and stake-



*Development Action
Research Practice :
3 Steps*

holders in a facilitated process of analysis and reflection and not use it as a linear planned view of how change must happen.

We also used tools for reflection to help us in an evaluative exercise of looking backwards to understand what had happened as a result of an intervention. After-action reviews (AARs) are a versatile tool (long-used by institutions such as the US military) that help institutionalize the practice of reflection from the smallest activity to the broader change process. Ultimately, it was the combination of an appreciative mindset and tools to facilitate reflection and learning that enable the AR approach to take root and flourish. In this sense, AARs bookend the learning process. They were used in both the aquatic agricultural systems and Wheel of Water research programs as tools to help those involved reflect and connect lessons and activities that they gained from the process.

DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY READINGS

by Marina Apgar & Will Allen



Allen, W., Fenemor, et al.,. 2011. "Building collaboration and learning in integrated catchment management: The importance of social process and multiple engagement approaches". *New Zealand Journal Marine and Freshwater Research*, 45(3): 525-539.

The authors focus on the experience of an integrated research program based in the Motueka catchment in New Zealand and reflect on how to engage stakeholders in ways that support social learning. They illustrate the range of platforms for dialogue and learning that were used in the program during its 10-year life. They highlight the need to use multiple engagement approaches to address different constituent needs and opportunities, and to encourage the informal conversations that spring up around these.

Apgar, J. M., Allen, W., et al. 2017. "Getting beneath the surface in program planning, monitoring and evaluation: Learning from use of participatory Action Research and theory of change in the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems." *Action Research*, 15 (1): 15-34 Also available: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750316673879>

This paper, led by Marina, is part of a special issue of the Action Research journal on development and transformation. The authors share a novel design for program planning, monitoring, and evaluation based on combining Action Research and the key skill of reflexivity with a process-oriented view of Theory of Change. They use experiential evidence from the CGIAR program on aquatic agricultural systems to argue that, in order to dig deeper and address power relations while using participatory Action Research and engagement,



Development for
Environmental
Sustainability
Readings

the research must be strengths-based and staged to respond to opportunities as capacity is built. Related and in the following link is to a video conversation between Marina and Kent Glenzer who was the special editor for her paper. They discuss their work for the special issue on Action Research and Development: <http://actionresearchplus.com/international-development-aid-social-justice-arj-special/>

Armitage, D. et al. 2009. “Adaptive co-management for social-ecological complexity”. *Frontiers in ecology and the environment*, 7(2): 95-102.

In this paper, the authors suggest adaptive co-management as an approach to foster ecosystem management and resolve multi-scale society-environment dilemmas. They point out that the approach draws explicit attention to the learning (experiential and experimental) and collaboration (up the hierarchy and with peers) functions necessary to improve our understanding of, and ability to respond to, complex social-ecological systems.

Byrne, D. 2003. “Complexity theory and planning theory: A necessary encounter”. *Planning Theory*, 2(3): 171-178.

In this short essay, the author engages with complexity theory as a vehicle for rethinking planning. He proposes planning as the process through which we seek the future, and, using a complexity framing, argues that it can and indeed should be an emancipatory process. He proposes that participatory Action Research is well-suited to produce the dialogue needed to seek the future with others—a particular take on how complex systems theory informs how we engage.



Development for
Environmental
Sustainability
Readings

Chambers, R. 1983. *Rural development: Putting the last first*. Harlow, Essex, UK: Pearson Educational Limited.

Coughlan, P., & Coughlan, D. 2002. “Action Research for operations management”. *International journal of operations & production management*, 22(2): 220-240.

This paper defines and explores the legitimacy of an action-oriented research approach in operations management, an area where it is not often implemented. It begins with a review of the role of empirical research in Operations Management. It then outlines the AR cycle and how it is implemented. Finally, it describes the skills required to engage in AR and explores issues in generating theory.

Dick, B. 1996. Managing change [On-line]. Available at <http://www.aral.com.au/resources/change.html>

This is a resource file that supports the regular public program “areol” (Action Research and evaluation on-line) which is offered on-line by Bob Dick. The paper describes the overall change process as having three phases: (1) pre-planning requires negotiating roles and building relationships; (2) planning involves setting goals, analyzing the situation, deciding what to do, and deciding how to monitor it; and (3) action which has two parts—implementation and monitoring.

Douthwaite, B., et al. 2017. “A new professionalism for agricultural research for development”. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*: Vol. 15 (3): 1-15.



Development for
Environmental
Sustainability
Readings

This paper presents a synthesis of the learning about using the Research in Development approach to agricultural research as developed and implemented by the CGIAR program on aquatic agricultural systems. The key characteristics of the approach are discussed in relation to the call for more systemic, learning-focused, and reflexive practice—the new professionalism. The authors show that it is possible to build a large multi-partner program using a participatory, strengths-based, and interdisciplinary engagement process that emphasizes building capacity as a means to reducing poverty.

Holling, C. S. & G. K. Meffe. (1996) Command and control and the pathology of natural resource management. *Conservation Biology*. 10(2): 328-337. Available at http://coastalcluster.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/Adaptive/Holling%20%26%20Meffe%201996_CS.pdf

Kemmis, S. 2009. “Action Research as a practice-based practice”. *Educational Action Research*, 17(3): 463-474.

In this paper, Kemmis points out that AR aims at changing three things: practitioners’ practices, their understandings of their practices, and the conditions in which they practice. It is a meta-practice: a practice that changes other practices. It transforms the sayings, doings, and relating that compose those other practices. This paper suggests that “Education for Sustainability,” as an educational movement within the worldwide social movement responding to global warming, provides a good example of AR.



Kilvington, M., M. Atkinson, & A. Fenemor. 2011. “Creative platforms for social learning in ICM: the Watershed Talk project”. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, 45: 557–571.

Phillips C. J., et al.. 2010. “Integrated catchment management research: Lessons for interdisciplinary science from the Motueka Catchment”. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, 61: 749763.

Reason, P. & Torbert, W.R. 2001. “The action turn: Toward a transformational social science”. *Concepts and transformation*, 6(1): 1-37.

Kilvington, M., Allen, W., & Fenemor, A. 2011. “Three frameworks to understand and manage social processes for integrated catchment management”. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, 45(3): 541-555.

This paper examines the role of social frameworks in supporting environmental research and management. It shows how social frameworks can be practical management tools that help project leaders and participants: (1) make sense of the social and management context of a project; (2) design strategies to meet social process needs such as communication and engagement; and (3) evaluate the effectiveness of the project with a view to improving it.

EDUCATION AND ACTION RESEARCH READINGS

Suggested by Martin Leahy & Aliko Nicolaidis



Bradbury, H. 2017. Ken Gergen on AR and social construction [video dialogue]. AR+ Action Research Plus. Retrieved from <http://actionresearchplus.com/ken-gergen-on-ar-and-social-construction/>

In this interview with Ken Gergen, Hilary Bradbury explores the relationship between social constructionism and Action Research. Per Gergen, going back to ancient Greece, creating knowledge involved doing something; AR is a natural extension of social constructionism. Gergen challenges researchers to move beyond describing to doing something: “If knowledge is a social construction, why not construct something worthwhile?”

Etmanski, C. Hall, B., & Dawson, T. (Eds.). 2014. *Learning and teaching community based research: Linking pedagogy to practice*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

This edited book offers a range of strategies for learning and teaching community-based approaches to research. The contributing authors and co-editors explore learning by doing as well as learning in university and community settings. More information on the book available here: <http://www.utp-publishing.com/Learning-and-Teaching-Community-Based-Research-Linking-Pedagogy-to-Practice.html>

Heron, J. 1996. *Co-operative inquiry: Research into the human condition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/co-operative-inquiry/book205168>



Education and
Action Research
Readings

Co-operative inquiry is a form of AR where peers meet regularly to inquire into improving professional practice. They engage in cycles of action and reflection over time. This process is an excellent way of learning how to do AR. Peers involved in diverse AR projects, e.g. doctoral students, could reflect on their projects, discover new ways of seeing them, go back and try something new, and return to the group to reflect on the results.

Leahy, M. & Gilly, S. 2009. "Learning in the space between us". In J. L. Kincheloe & S. Steinberg (Series Eds.) & B. Fisher-Yoshida, K. Geller, K., & S. Schapiro (Vol. Eds.), "Innovations in transformative learning: Space, culture, and the arts". Volume 341. *Studies in the postmodern theory of education*. New York: Peter Lang.

https://www.amazon.com/Innovations-Transformative-Learning-Culture-Counterpoints/dp/1433102919/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1498056260&sr=8-1&keywords=innovations+in+transformative+learning+space+culture+%26+the+arts

The authors describe their group experience over 2+ years, working with a third doctoral student, of inquiring into collaboration. They set out to study high-end collaboration and ultimately decided to use their own experience as the data for their dissertations (Leahy on dialogue; Gilly on transformative learning; and Wyatt on space for both/and). This chapter would be valuable to Action Researchers interested in an account of a bootstrap experience of co-operative inquiry among doctoral students; they engaged in this for a year before becoming familiar with Heron's work. It could also be useful to anyone interested in the commitments necessary for creating and sustaining this kind of space for transformative learning among peers.



Education and Action Research Readings

Lehrer, J. 2009. “The philosophy of cooking”. *The Atlantic*. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/daily-dish/archive/2009/10/the-philosophy-of-cooking/195486/>

Levin, M. & Martin, A. (Eds.) 2007. “Educating Action Researchers”. Special issue of *Action Research*, 5(3). Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/arja/5/3>

In this special issue, Morten Levin and Ann Martin made an important contribution to the topic of Educating Action Researchers. Contributors to this edition took up some of the themes we continue to grapple with today, such as the need to transform institutions of higher education themselves to create more hospitable conditions for Community Based Research, and the importance of integrating systemic reflection into the learning process. Includes several case studies of courses and programs from around the world.

Rowe, W., Graf, M., Agger-Gupta, N., Piggot-Irvine, E., & Harris, B. 2013. “Action Research engagement: Creating the foundation for organizational change”. *Action Learning, Action Research (ALARA) Monograph Series*, 5: 1–44.

This model offers a practical approach for doing AR by describing principles and steps to engage people and create change readiness among organizational stakeholders. Dialogue and participation are promoted as essential to creating engagement, commitment, and readiness for change necessary for successful change projects.



Banerjee A. 2013. "Leadership development among scientists: Learning through adaptive challenges" (unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Georgia, Athens. Available at: Google Scholar.

An exemplary AR dissertation study applying the methodology of collaborative developmental action inquiry. The inquiry focus was to develop leadership among a group of scientists by using learning approaches that support and challenge the development of adaptive leadership capabilities for skillful and timely action.

Dzubinski, L., Hentz, B., Davis, K. L., & Nicolaides, A. 2012. "Envisioning an adult learning graduate program for the early 21st century". *Adult Learning*, 23(3): 103-110. Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1045159512452844>

In this article the findings of a one-year collaborative developmental action inquiry study are presented. The findings explore the pedagogical and methodological challenges of leading adult learning in higher education.

Nicolaides A. & McCallum D. C. 2013. "Inquiry in action for leadership in turbulent times: Exploring the connections between transformative learning and adaptive leadership." *Journal of Transformative Education*, 11: 246-260. Available at Google Scholar.

The authors discuss the tenets of triple-loop learning and the implications for growing adaptive capacity for leadership.



Education and Action Research Readings

Nicolaides, A. 2015. “Generative learning: Adults learning within ambiguity”. *Adult Education Quarterly*: 1-17. <http://actionresearchplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Adult-Education-Quarterly-2015-Nicolaides-0741713614568887.pdf>

The author discusses the potential for learning within complexity, especially in the presence of ambiguity when adults confront uncertain and adaptive challenges that require new learning.

Smith, L. 2016. “Growing together: The evolution of consciousness using collaborative developmental inquiry” (unpublished doctoral dissertation). College of Education, University of Georgia, GA. Available at: https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/smith_lakeesha_r_201605_edd.pdf

An example of the AR approach being used for a dissertation. The student researcher created a group of women who inquired together into the development of consciousness. Given the topic of the research—development of consciousness—participants explored matters related to self and self in relationship.

Taylor, M. 2006. *Rationalism and the ideology of disconnection*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

This is a powerful critique of rational choice theory and the consequent economic system (“the art of the deal”) founded on a belief that peoples’ actions are dictated by the need to satisfy drives. It is a correction to the idolization of individualism and reason. The author challenges the reader to reconsider fundamental beliefs about the nature of being human. People act irrationally all

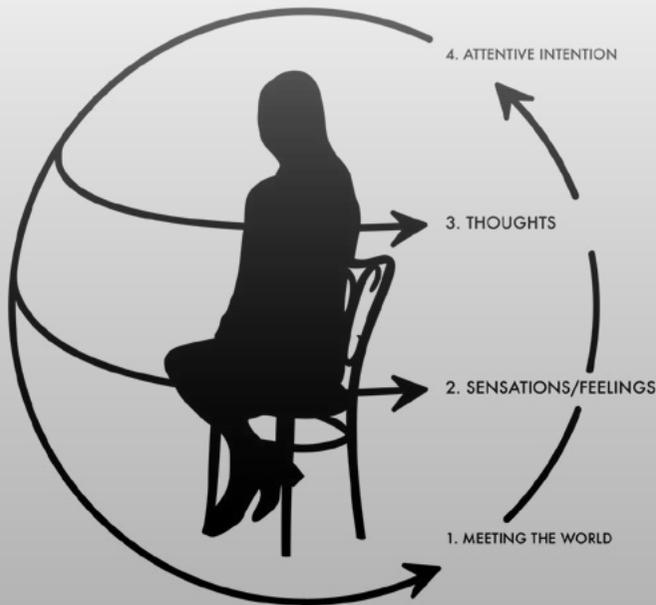


the time, e.g. a firefighter runs into a burning building, a woman refuses to sell her home to a casino developer etc. They do so not to satisfy rational personal drives (e.g. maximizing income), but because of commitments to other people and values held in their communities. Working toward human flourishing is a natural human activity.

*Education and
Action Research
Readings*

EMBODYING TIMELY INQUIRY

by Hilary Bradbury



*Embodying
Timely Inquiry*

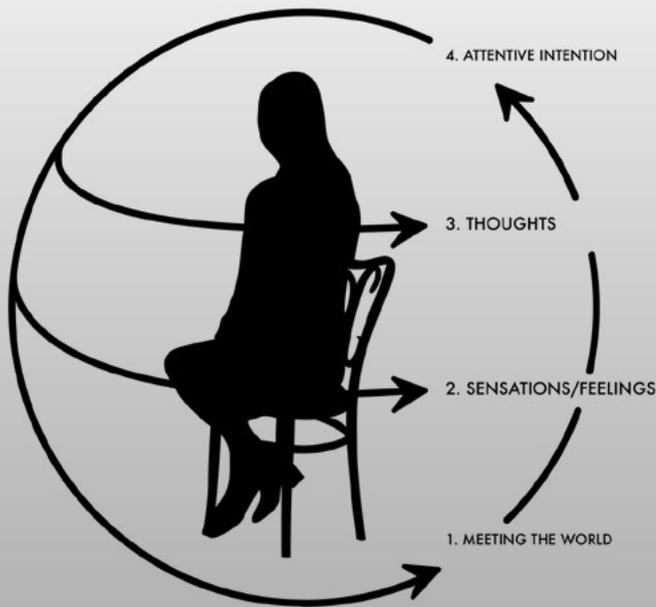
Offered as a basic practice for developing mindfulness in the context of action, the practice of Embodying Timely Inquiry draws attention to Four Territories of Awareness: Embodiment, Thought, Sensation, and Attentive Intention, as noted in the following descriptions. This practice is described as being at the heart of future organizing (original source: Bill Torbert, also ... see Por, Bradbury and Uldall, Volume 1).

TERRITORY 1: AWARENESS OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

This is where “I” meets the world. Starting here I get grounded, e.g. in taking a breath or feeling my feet on the floor and I notice that. Again and again. That’s it, incredibly simple. This can be designed into a meeting by asking for a “moment to collect ourselves” before we start, and guiding participants’ attention to the interplay between their inner sensation of breathing and being supported by the outside world seat and floor.

TERRITORY 2: THINKING WELL

We might focus here on Advocacy and Inquiry because it connects us right into the heart of Organizational Development (OD) where thinking well together is the basis of continuous learning and project success. Clearly this arena has been a hot item in the field of AR and those friendly crossover domains such as Non-Violent Communication. There are literally dozens of worthy ways to improve our thinking and communication. The heart of the matter is to recognize how much narration above and beyond the facts goes on in our brains! Next is to begin to strain out the nasty projections and pan for the gold of real insight. For this



Embodying
Timely Inquiry

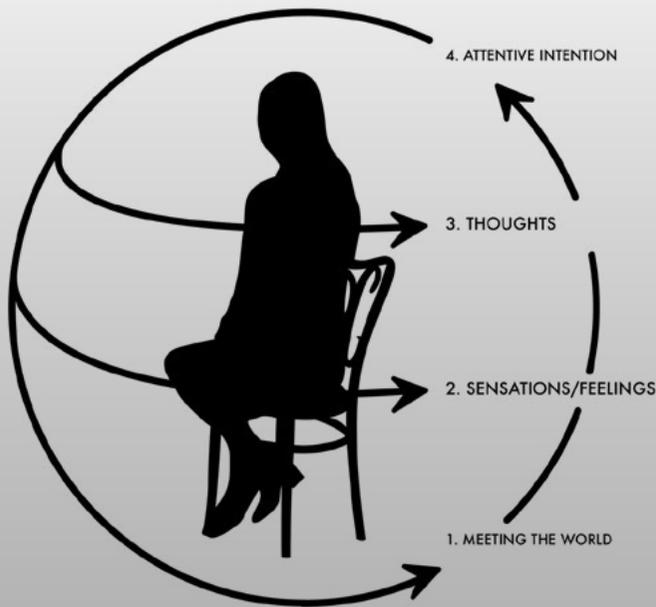
we must monitor our own reactivity to what we are hearing. Most Westerners, especially the masculine in spirit, lean too much toward advocacy, i.e. the stating of our opinions. To balance that, you need to make conversational space for others by asking more questions. For the more feminine in spirit, achieving that balance means leaning in and sharing more of what we really think, not ending our advocacies in a questioning tone, but also softening the tone of conversations, e.g. allowing for and inviting more humor.

TERRITORY 3: INNER SENSATION AND FELT SENSE

How I hear, touch, taste, smell, and feel. It asks simply that we attune to our senses. Taste the food we are eating, feel the floor we are walking on, or the seat in which we are sitting. To feel ourselves as embodied is both refreshing and key to overcoming the creeping cerebralism that otherwise takes over our lives.

This has group application too. In a group context one of my favorite exercises develops from taste sensation and is well-described by Alfredo Ortiz et al. in the *Handbook of Action Research* (2015). Including this in a group meeting works best around a mid-meeting coffee break. The break allows the group to capture what Connie Gersick suggests is the “mid-point punctuation” of any group meeting that opens to a naturally more productive second half of the meeting.

To cultivate the mid-point punctuation may be as simple as inviting people to really taste their coffee/tea before returning to the meeting and then turning to the person next to them to share their experience of the coffee (not the meeting!). This takes less than a minute but anchors the otherwise natural abstrac-



*Embodying
Timely Inquiry*

tion of the meeting in a concrete interaction. The mid-point coffee break usually invites lighter hearts and helps contribute a moment of bonding.

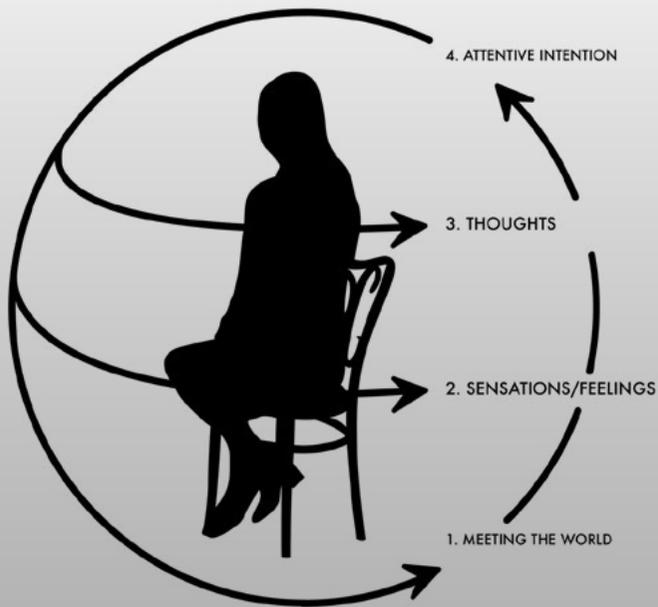
From there it may be a good time to check for what (new) direction has become clear over the break. More advanced practitioners of embodied inquiry might wish to be reminded to turn their attention to sensation throughout the meeting. Advanced watches or phones with their silent timers can be set for this. Whatever the practice, it is important that time in territory 3 is brief. Simply welcoming a moment of sensation, which breaks into the recurrent chatter of the mind, offers refreshment. It is unusual in a world that allows thought and chatter to predominate; yet it is easily accessible.

TERRITORY 4: ATTENTIVE INTENTION

Here, we briefly observe all three of the previous territories and make contact with our own sense of intent, with the group's purpose, and with how to appropriately articulate that purpose at this moment. In doing so, we see how we align toward action.

How often we start off anchored in reality, following the conversation and somehow ... we find we've gone off track; we've lost the plot. The facilitator, or self-facilitating group, must turn its attention inward from time to time, and, where necessary, we speak up to see how to guide ourselves back.

Some groups designate a bell that can be rung (carefully) if one participant feels things have run awry. Simply asking for a moment of generative silence can work wonders. What is key is noting incongruity between the territories—say between thought and sensation, or advocacy and inquiry—and determining how to work with that. When something feels off, it is usually worth inquiring into.



*Embodying
Timely Inquiry*

FOUR PARTS OF SPEECH

by Shakiyla Smith



Four Parts
of Speech

Speaking is a key way of working for Action Researchers. Being mindful of introducing the appropriate type of speech at the right time is a key component of relational action inquiry. Torbert has outlined **four parts of speech** which are useful to keep in mind.

When starting out, framing well is key. (How often do we sit in meetings unsure why we are even there!). Framing makes that clear and ideally invites agreement that the focus is shared. In ongoing conversation, the parts of speech should be balanced according to the needs of those speaking. Mindful choices in conversations make the difference between empty words, and words that help coordinate inquiry action cycles that leave stakeholders moving forward with their intention.

Source: Fisher, D., Rooke, D., & Torbert, B. 2003. **Personal and organizational transformations through action inquiry**. Boston, MA: Edge/Work Press.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE OUTLINES THESE PARTS OF SPEECH

TABLE - *Four Parts of Speech*

PART OF SPEECH	DESCRIPTION
Framing	Explicitly stating what the purpose is for the present occasion, what the dilemma is that you are trying to resolve, what assumptions you think are shared or not shared (but need to be tested out loud to be sure). This is the element of speaking most often missing from conversations and meetings.



Four Party
of Speech

TABLE - *Four Parts of Speech*

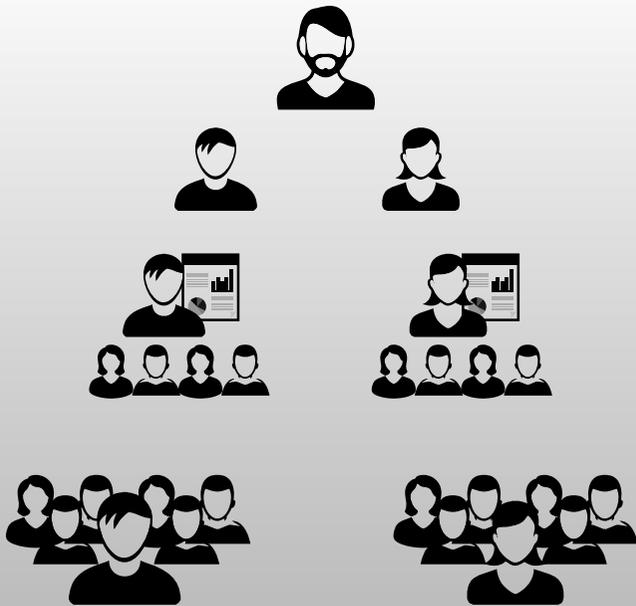
PART OF SPEECH	DESCRIPTION
Advocating	Explicitly asserting an option, perception, feeling, or proposal for action in relatively abstract terms (e.g., ‘We’ve got to get shipments out faster’). Some people speak almost entirely in terms of advocacy; others rarely at all. Either extreme – only advocating or never advocating – is likely to be relatively ineffective.
Illustrating	Telling a bit of a concrete story that puts meat on the bones of the advocacy (i.e., providing the data and reasoning behind the advocacy) and thereby orients and motivates others more clearly.
Inquiring	Questioning others in order to learn something from them. In principle, the simplest thing in the world; in practice, one of the most difficult things to do effectively.

**Taken/adapted from Fisher, D., Rooke, D., & Torbert, B. (2003). Personal and organizational transformations through action inquiry. Boston, MA: Edge/Work Press.*

FUTURE ORGANIZING: 7 STEP OUTLINE

by George Pór, Hilary Bradbury and Bjorn Uldall

POWER OVER



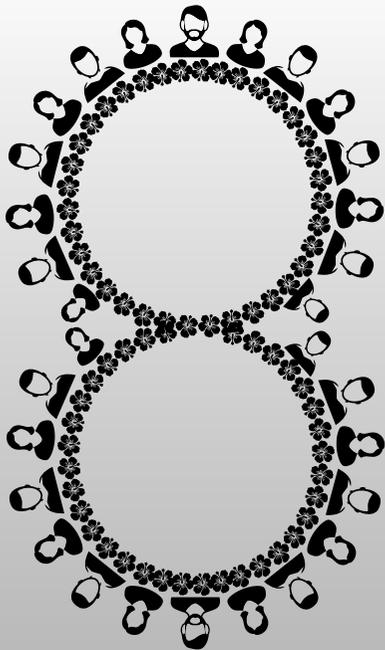
Future Organizing:
7 Step Outline

Future organizing is the grounded utopian vision for how we will work and organize together as more AR processes inform efforts in all walks of life. In our chapter in the *Cookbook*, we outline a series of steps.

FUTURE ORGANIZING IS ...

0. Attractive purpose evolving. In future organizing a hierarchy of people is replaced by a holarchy of purpose. The purposes of each holon (small sub-system), attract a larger inclusive purpose which shapes, and is shaped by, the whole (holarchy).
1. Personal/first person work: Change ‘out there’ is change ‘in here’: “It’s me that has to change!”
2. Team/second person work; we discover our evolutionary purpose together.
3. Supporting Self-Managing is the heart of Future Organizing.
4. Future Organizing become institutional/third person work: We involve key stakeholders.
5. Collective inquiry feeds next cycles of collective action.
6. “Power-with” is the new normal.
7. Practice with others in a future organizing community of practice.

POWER WITH



Future Organizing: 7 Step Outline

FUTURE ORGANIZING: AN ILLUSTRATION

Action Researchers can nurture emergent change within existing organizational and hierarchical structures.

What the Healthcare Transformation case, described by Svante Lifvergren and Danielle Zandee in Volume 1 of the Cookbook, shows, however, is that it helps enormously when conditions and resources are created and maintained through a thoughtful practice of organizing for development. The different parts of the system were connected through the work of a steering committee that interacted as an intermediate between top-down policy directives and bottom-up improvement initiatives. Such linking between systemic levels was replicated throughout the system, with the “home-and-away” learning practice as a prime example.

Another important organizing activity was the design and facilitation of whole-system dialogues, during which connections were made across organizational boundaries, professions, and organizational levels. Such meetings allow for the cross-pollination of innovative ideas and can strengthen the collective capacity for transformation. Whether that happens obviously also depends on the quality of the dialogue in terms of content, participation, and facilitation.

(Note: The Stage 2, second person work described by Lifvergren and Zandee did not include “Discovery of Evolutionary purpose,” as the practice is formally described by George Pór. It shows that Action Researchers use/amend recipes to suit their context.)

FUTURE ORGANIZING READINGS

by George Pór & Hilary Bradbury



Bradbury, H., & Torbert, W. 2015. *Eros/power: Love in the spirit of inquiry, transforming how women and men relate*. Tucson, AZ: Integral Publishers.

Hilary Bradbury and Bill Torbert write from first and second person perspectives about their experiences of Eros and power in their own lives and within their relationships over time. Not only do they present a provocative view of the ways that men and women often fumble and sometimes soar through the relational realm, but they also offer suggestions for how others can explore Eros and power for themselves through relational action inquiry. Read more, get a free chapter: <http://www.integratingcatalysts.com/erospower/>

Laloux, F. 2014. *Reinventing organizations: A guide to creating organizations inspired by the next stage of human consciousness*. Brussels: Nelson Parker.

In this groundbreaking book, the author shows that every time, in the past, when humanity has shifted to a new stage of consciousness, it has achieved extraordinary breakthroughs in collaboration. A new shift in consciousness is currently underway. Could it help us invent a more soulful and purposeful way to run our businesses and non-profits, schools and hospitals? A few pioneers have already cracked the code and they show us, in practical detail, how it can be done.

Muff, K. 2016. “And suddenly, we were living in a new culture... How did that happen?”. Blog in series titled “The Transatlantic Debate Blog, available at: <https://greenleafpublishing.wordpress.com/2016/12/22/and-suddenly-we-were-living-in-a-new-culture-how-did-that-happen/>

Future Organizing
Readings



In the *Cookbook* chapter on Future Organizing, we offer a lengthy citation from Katrin Muff’s blog on how she has been part of an organizational transformation at the Business School of Lausanne. At this link, you can read the original as well as what has come before and after. Generally, we find Katrin’s details refreshing for their honesty.

Pór, G. 2014. “From right mindfulness to collective intelligence to collective sentience: Signposts to the later stages of our evolutionary journey.” *Spanda Journal*. Volume 2. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/10294958/From_Right_Mindfulness_to_Collective_Intelligence_to_Collective_Sentience_signposts_to_the_later_stages_of_our_evolutionary_journey

This essay is a wide-ranging exploration into the conditions for realizing the next-level potential of human and social evolution. It is inspired by a holistic consciousness that integrates deep intuition and systems thinking, spirituality and the precision of action inquiry. The subjects illuminated in that light by the author include collective intelligence, inter-subjectivity, collective sentience, evolutionary guidance systems, and shared mindfulness.

Pór, G. .2017. “On the verge of collective awakening.” (Forthcoming in) *Spanda Journal*.

This study reads as a concept paper for an action inquiry into our collective awakening, its indicators, conditions, and scales. It outlines the distinctive characteristics of generative learning associated with AR and invites us into the exploration of what is hindering and what is enabling the possibility of an awakened community.



Reason, P. & Heron, J. 1998. “A Layperson’s Guide to Co-operative Inquiry.” Available at: http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/leadership/avina_heron_reason2.pdf

This guide inspired Bjorn Uldall’s AR work – it is a design for cooperative inquiry with business leaders, who in turn were inspired to create their own design!

Rooke, D. & Torbert, W.R. 2005. “Seven transformations of leadership.” *Harvard Business Review*, 83(4): 66-76.

In this article, considered one of the top leadership articles by Harvard Business Review, Rooke and Torbert describe action logics in detail and how they relate to leadership capacity. Using empirical evidence, they present the distribution of adults (in one sample) across the action logics. They also discuss the importance of developing more complex capacities for leaders and how leaders at later action logics are better able to lead organizational transformations.

Senge, M. P. 1990. *The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization*. New York City: Doubleday Currency.

This is the bestselling book that started a new management paradigm in the 1990s. The five disciplines—the practice of which has been turning companies into learning organizations—are: Personal Mastery, Mental Modeling, Building Shared Vision, Team Learning, and Systems Thinking. A must read for all organizational professionals, along with subsequent Senge authored books.



Torbert, W.R. & Taylor, S.S. 2000. “Action inquiry: Interweaving multiple qualities of action for timely action.” In Reason, P. and Bradbury, H., *Handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (2nd Edition). 2015. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

This chapter on the practice of Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry is a “one stop short stop” for learning about action inquiry. It is also a good source for understanding the concepts behind the practice of embodying timely inquiry (which they describe a little differently than H. Bradbury renders them, after adding a dash of Zen practice).

Zandee D. 2011. Lecture: “Sustainable organizational development as generative process: About play, poetry, and provocation.” Available at: <https://www.narcis.nl/publication/RecordID/oai:nyenrode.nl:391709>

Professor Zandee’s inaugural lecture is a rare gem in the academic literature. She brings together organizational development, the disruptive concept of “infinite game,” and generativity as guiding value, into a coherent, poetic flow that integrates first-, second-, and third-person science.

Future Organizing
Readings

GLOBAL ACTION NETWORK UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE: TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH ACTION PLAN

By Steve Waddell

How would we go about developing a Global Action Network University of the Future (GAN UofF). What would be the role of AR? What are the steps in investigating such an undertaking?

My experiences suggest something like the following:

STAGE 1: INITIATING CONCEPT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The initiative is framed as supporting current activity addressing change challenges, out of which the development process will grow. The current activities form a latent “GAN UofF,” and the challenge is determining how to support its emergence and increased capacity. This and other core ideas are developed into a one- to two-page document that can be used for stage two. This includes describing the emergent system, tentatively defined as “all those activities and initiatives that are working to build transformational knowledge, capacity and action.”

Usually this takes the form of relatively closed (i.e. you can’t just “join” them) initiatives and projects organized by some stakeholder group within the system. This concept note is a “living document:” it is continually further developed through feedback gathered as the investigation and developments proceed.

A separate document identifies a key hypothesis to test through the subsequent steps. This includes such things as: there is a need for greater capacity-knowledge development (stakeholders may feel their needs are already served), stakeholders will be resonant with a GAN UofF approach (as opposed to other

*Global Action
Network University
of the Future*



possibilities), and there is sufficient support to mobilize energy and resources to realize it. These hypotheses will guide the development and be revisited after each milestone.

Using the information gathered, interviews will be conducted with stakeholders identified through personal networks and web searches. This will provide an initial test of the hypothesis that there will be sufficient interest so that an initiating Stewardship Team can be identified.

DEVELOPING A STEWARDING “PALE” ACTION RESEARCH TEAM

If the idea is truly of value, there must be some people who will commit to helping it emerge. A stewardship team comprises three to five individuals who provide advice, provide legitimacy, and act as the design team for the steps in this stage; they also have an important reflection AR role. They may or may not actually do the interviews and investigation activities such as mapping. They have the following characteristics:

- **P stands for PASSION:** People come with energy and commitment, not just “it’s an interesting idea.”
- **A stands for ACCESS:** They have some minimal amount of time to put into the effort.
- **L stands for LEGITIMACY:** They come with some profile/network/resources that will provide high value for the work and will open doors.



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Network University
of the Future*

- **E stands for EXPERTISE:** They have knowledge or expertise that is relevant to the concept.

Discussion about potential PALEs in this case quickly turned to the United Nations University system; there are networks of consultants; Future Earth as a science network might be interested; GANs should produce a PALE. This is the initial “Action Research team,” which can be described as the initial Stewardship Team. This team has the goal of supporting the following steps; upon completion, the Team’s membership will be revisited.

- **Resourcing:** Modest resources must be found to develop the next steps until firmer seed funding is found. These resources may be “spare” resources from the Stewards’ organization—the Stewards’ time, for example.
- **Exploration with Emergent System Participants:** Initial actors in the system can be identified through the Action Research team. Conventional research interviews with those in the system provide more information about the state of the system: who is doing what, connections, blockages, and priority “needs” for development. The concept note—further developed already through conversations with the PALE group—is used as a basis for discussion; as in any research project, notes should be taken of the interviews to help surface themes that people are interested in and that could be greatly advanced by collaborative development.

This exploration will identify new knowledge and learning needs. If this is greater or equal to the need to act, then move onto the next



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stage which is to decipher the GAN operating model and the system of influences, touch points, critical decisions, decision-making system, and the nature of the reward system. It is important to create early linkages with other GANs in the PALE's immediate network as well as put out an invitation to other GANs that are potential collaborators.

- **Drafting a “Living” Plan:** The interviews are integrated into a concept note that grows into a plan. This should not be thought of as the plan, but an evolving one. This becomes a draft of a funding proposal/business plan.
- **Initial Community Interactions:** Those interviewed and other potential community members will interact to explore common interests and priorities, and to build consciousness of the emerging system. This might be through webinars or small face-to-face convening with relevant stakeholders and Search Conferences. This further refines the living plan and provides guidance for the next steps.
- **Convening Emergent System Stewarding PALE Teams:** The interviews and interactions should identify more system stewarding PALE teams. A couple dozen of these should be convened around the question: “How could my work be helped by a better organized transformation system?” This should be treated as an AR engagement, integrating reflection and testing of a hypothesis about key issues, and looking to advance and find potential future Stewards.
- **Identifying Emergent System Priorities:** The answers to the question in #8 and the enthusiasm that should be generated can then be developed



into a refined funding proposal/business plan supported by an impressive community whose networks and profile should attract the necessary resources for advancing to the design stage.

STAGE 2: DESIGN

1. The AR Stewarding PALE (Passion, Access, Legitimacy, Expertise) Team should discuss how the design process should be structured. There will be a need to set up design teams at each hub of the global action network and a communication and teamwork e-platform.
2. Design effort should start with the assessment of the needs of the Global Action Network (GAN) from the perspective of the three missions of a University: i) Development (broadly defined), ii) Education, and iii) Research. Primacy for analysis should be given to development since the GAN task is a transformational one.
3. A map of stakeholder expectations should be drawn within the GAN system. Representatives of the stakeholders should be identified and they should be contacted to see if they have an interest in participating in a search conference. Each potential participant should be adequately briefed about the purpose of the event and the methodology of the search conference.
4. A two-and-a-half-day search conference to design the vision, mission, and strategies of the GAN University should be held in a retreat location.

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Network University
of the Future*

5. The design teams should take the output of the search conference and clarify the outcomes to be distributed to all the stakeholders for further input. If there are significantly different alternatives, another participative methodology might be deployed to evaluate and to prioritize the alternatives.
6. Once the framework of vision, mission, and strategies is ready, the design process should proceed to work on the academic model. The academic model should include a portfolio of programs to figure out, for instance, the number of learning streams and activities that will build an “ecology of learning.” The focus is weaving learning around ongoing transformational projects. Ongoing knowledge production processes should be folded into the courses in a way that is spontaneously renewed and regenerated. There should be no distinction between degree and non-degree programs since learning and knowledge requirement are expected to be spontaneous and ongoing.
7. Active benchmarking is necessary to compare and contrast the kinds of knowledge within the courses that could be offered as part of a degree program, and to keep a record of the innovative differences for weaving and splicing knowledge.
8. The competences and skill requirements should be matched to the curriculum models and assessment methodologies should be identified if program(s) are submitted to the scrutiny of accreditation bodies. This requires an active search for an appropriate body of accreditation for a GAN University such as a distance learning accreditation.



*Global Action
Network University
of the Future*

9. In parallel to the preparation of accreditation agencies, pedagogical assumptions need to be clarified and action learning processes need to be articulated in a way that enables active codification of new knowledge and retrieval of existing knowledge from existing sources.
10. Resource requirements: Most interaction should be done on electronic platforms yet some additional physical space should be assessed for face-to-face meeting needs. Existing electronic platforms and learning management systems could be used until ones can be developed to meet the ongoing and real time integrational needs of development projects, learning modules, and knowledge production needs. Staffing requirement should be kept to a minimal level since most activities will be run in the same manner as the GANs are run. Faculty could be recruited by the GAN hubs and should be truly global with an effort to observe diversity and gender parity.
11. Finally, an implementation plan and a road map should be prepared to indicate the critical milestones and events.

INSIDER ACTION RESEARCH

by Benito Teehankee



Some cartoon renditions of “critical realist insider Action Research” <https://sites.google.com/dlsu.edu.ph/cr-iar/videos>

Insider Action Research is a type of AR where organizational members collaborate to inquire into the working of their own organization in order to effect change. It involves full members of organizations, not external consultants who are temporarily engaged by the system.

Doing AR from the inside provides a unique perspective on the strategic and operational setting that organizational members deal with in their daily work. Insider AR addresses issues that entail managing real events in real time while enabling action learning and developing sound theories about the focus of the intended change. Thus, it lends itself to projects involving systems improvement, organizational learning, change management, or other concerns confronting organizational “natives.”

Insider researchers face particular challenges, but they also enjoy particular advantages. By playing dual roles—as members of the organization and as researchers—they need to balance the sometimes conflicting duties of their formal and functional roles with their application of research principles aimed at change.

They also need to navigate organizational politics especially in terms of (1) gaining access to different parts of the organization that are not usually accessible to them; and (2) using data and resulting reports or learning processes that in turn mobilize activity around change.

In general, insider AR requires the ability to align personal values with AR values, especially in terms of its commitment to collaboration, democratic voice, and reflective learning.

INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

by Benito Teehankee

*Institutional
Entrepreneurship*

Institutions are comprised of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements, which, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life.

Institutions are stable social structures made up of symbols, social activities, and material resources. Institutions are distinctive in that they are relatively resistant to change and they tend to be transmitted across generations, maintained, and reproduced. Institutions may be considered to have three pillars as a result of the processes that bring them about:

1. A **regulative pillar** refers to “the capacity to establish rules, inspect others’ conformity to them, and, as necessary, manipulate sanctions—rewards or punishments—in an attempt to influence future behavior.” This pillar has been compared to the “rules of the game” for a competitive sport.
2. A **normative pillar** refers to rules that may be considered prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory for social members. This includes values (which indicate preferences of social members), the standards that are formulated to assess structures, and behaviors based on such values.
3. A **cultural-cognitive pillar** refers to the shared conceptions that constitute the nature of social reality and the frames through which meaning is made. The pillar includes symbolic belief systems of social members; in short, how people think about the world around them.



Institutional Entrepreneurship

Institutional theory explains the recurrent behavior of people within various levels of social groups. In describing institutional change at De La Salle University, one way in which this theory adds value is in the organizational field, which is a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field.

This helps us see business schools as comprising a field. Additionally, DiMaggio and Powell (1983 – see Readings list below) proposed the concept of institutional isomorphism as a mechanism by which practices diffuse among organizations in a field, leading to great uniformity as they mimic each other's ways. However, DiMaggio later on acknowledged the possibility, though paradoxical, of institutional change through agency efforts of field members. In the case of business schools, senior faculty and academic leaders—particularly deans and department chairs—can play such change agency roles.

Leadership can exert positive institutional change. Brought together with leadership, institutional entrepreneurship explains how actors can contribute to changing institutions despite pressures for preserving the status quo. We may say that institutional entrepreneurship is encouraged by field conditions—the environment in which the organizations in the field find themselves. These include the jolts and crises [such as] social upheaval, technological disruption, competitive discontinuity, and regulatory changes that might disturb the socially constructed, field-level consensus and invite the introduction of new ideas.



The social positions of actors—that is, their formal position and other legitimated identities within the social field—contribute to institutional entrepreneurship. Such positions affect actors’ perceptions of a field’s conditions, and their capacity to implement change influences, in turn, the likelihood that they will attempt to initiate divergent change. Institutional entrepreneurs tend to be actors whose positions provide legitimacy in the eyes of, as well as the ability to bridge, diverse stakeholders, thereby enabling them to access dispersed sets of resources. Thus, actors who are embedded in multiple fields might be more likely to act as institutional entrepreneurs.

In terms of divergent change implementation, institutional entrepreneurs must be skillful in the communication of a change vision and the alignment of allies in support of that change. The actors can develop a vision by framing the change project (1) in terms of the problem it helps to resolve; (2) as preferred to existing arrangements; and (3) as motivated by compelling reasons.

Mobilizing allies can be achieved through the use of discourse, i.e. persuasive reasoning. Institutional entrepreneurs need to convince field members who are embedded in the problematic practices of the need for change. They do this using rhetorical devices which they feel will resonate with the values and interests of potential allies.

*Institutional
Entrepreneurship*

INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS EDUCATION READINGS

by Benito Teehankee



Alford, H. and Naughton, M. 2001. Managing as if faith mattered: *Christian Social Principles in the Modern Organization (Catholic Social Tradition)*. Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Alford and Naughton explain how management practice can be re-oriented toward virtue, human dignity, and the common good based on principles from Catholic Social Thought. Although mainly targeted at Christian readers, the book more generally gives important ideas in grounding management practice on personal character development, community service, and general human flourishing. A key strength of the book is how it applies social principles to marketing, job design, compensation, product development, and corporate finance.

Anjum, R. and Mumford, S. 2010. "A powerful theory of causation". In Marmodoro, A. (Ed.), *The metaphysics of powers*. Pp. 143-159. London: Routledge. Available at: http://www.generativescience.org/papers/nature/Anjum-_2010-143-159.pdf

Anjum and Mumford give a philosophical but practical account of causality which is not deterministic but rather, dispositional. This allows causes to be considered as already acting in a situation (having "powers") even when outcomes have not yet manifested because a threshold has not yet been reached. Their causal theory and accompanying diagramming tool can be used by change agents to map factors influencing a situation in order to better plan change-oriented actions.



*Institutional
Entrepreneurship
and Business
Education Readings*

Archer, M., et al. December 23, 2016. “What is critical realism?” From *Perspectives: A newsletter of the theory section of the American Sociological Association*. Available at: <http://www.asatheory.org/current-newsletter-online/what-is-critical-realism>

Critical realism was founded by the British philosopher Roy Bhaskar and provides a rigorous metatheory for AR and social change. We might see it as an addition to the “Groundings” section.** In this recent issue of the American Sociological Review’s online newsletter, leading sociologists explain the core principles of critical realism, namely ontological realism, epistemological relativism, judgmental rationality, and cautious ethical naturalism. Critical realism is a viable philosophical counterpoint to the quantitative determinism that dominates much of business scholarship and education. (**See also Benito Teehankee’s explanation of critical realism [Link to PDF, in attachments file.])

Battilana, J. A. (2006). “Agency and institutions: The enabling role of individual’s social position”. *Organization*, 13(5): 653–676. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508406067008>

Battilana highlights the importance of individuals’ social positions (their position in the structure of social networks and in their organizations) in enabling them to act as institutional entrepreneurs despite institutional pressures. The article has practical implications for change agents who want to leverage social network when pursuing change in organizations and practices.



*Institutional
Entrepreneurship
and Business
Education Readings*

Battilana, J., Leca, B., and Boxenbaum, E. 2009. “How actors change institutions: towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship”. *Academy of Management Annals*, 3(1): 65-107. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520903053598>

The authors synthesize the literature to present an integrative theory of institutional entrepreneurship, which presents a ‘recipe’ for successfully introducing divergent change in an organization.

Bennis, W. and O’Toole, J. May 2005. “How business schools lost their way”. *Harvard Business Review*: 96-104. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2005/05/how-business-schools-lost-their-way>

Bennis and O’Toole provide a cogent critique about how many traditional business schools have failed to provide training in ethical business leadership for its students by excessive focus on the rigor of research being pursued by business faculty. They give suggestions for needed reforms.

Coghlan, D. and Brannick, T. 2014. *Doing Action Research in your own organization* (4th ed.). London: Sage. See:

<https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/asi/doing-action-research-in-your-own-organization/book240933>

Coghlan and Brannick give a compact overview of the principles, processes, and methodologies involved in being a scholarly change agent within one’s own organization. The book provides useful end-of-chapter exercises for practicing important AR skills. All the figures and exercises are available at the book’s website where Coghlan gives short chapter summaries.



*Institutional
Entrepreneurship
and Business
Education Readings*

DiMaggio, P. J. and Powell, W. 1983. “The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields”. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2): 147-160. Available at: <https://www.ics.uci.edu/~corps/phaseii/DiMaggioPowell-IronCageRevisited-ASR.pdf>

DiMaggio and Powell’s seminal article practically launched the neo-institutionalist movement in organizational sociology. They present an incisive analysis of why organizations tend to behave in similar ways after a while (isomorphism) and the important roles played by organizational elites, professionals, legitimized definitions of success etc., in this tendency. This article gives organizational change agents a helpful framework for understanding and engaging the regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive forces that shape organizational practices.

Houston, S. 2014. “Critical realism”. In D. Coghlan, and M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *The Sage encyclopedia of Action Research*, Pp. 219-222. Los Angeles: Sage.

Houston explains in an accessible manner how critical realism can be a rigorous, yet practical, philosophy of science in supporting AR and emancipatory change. Houston simplifies and lays out how the more abstract elements of critical realism, especially explanatory critique and retrodution, can be put to good use in meaningful AR that will positively impact people.

Khurana, R. 2007. *From higher aims to hired hands: The social transformation of American business schools and the unfulfilled promise of management as a profession*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.



Institutional Entrepreneurship and Business Education Readings

Khurana explains the sociological and historical development of the American business school. The book narrates and analyzes how business schools (which were originally conceived by its founders and early leaders as centers for developing socially attuned practice-oriented business leaders) shifted focus toward a more technical and scientific orientation which eventually spread as the globally dominant MBA model. The important insight from the book for change agents is that the same mechanisms which led to the dominant model of advanced management education can be harnessed to pursue reforms.

Leca, B. and Naccache, B. 2006. “A critical realist approach to institutional entrepreneurship”. *Organization*, 13(5): 627 – 651. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508406067007>

Leca and Naccache apply a critical realist lens to describe the institutional entrepreneurship of ARESE, a social rating agency, which developed and institutionalized social ratings in France. The article shows the powerful legitimizing role of measurements in pursuing change.

Mutch, A. 2007. “Reflexivity and the institutional entrepreneur: A historical exploration”. *Organization Studies*, 28(7): 1123 – 1140. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840607078118>

Building on the critical realist social change theories of Margaret Archer, Mutch characterizes the institutional entrepreneur as an “autonomous reflexive.” The case of Sir Andrew Barclay Walker, who pioneered directly-managed public houses, is used to illustrate the practices of the institutional entrepreneur as autonomous reflexive.



*Institutional
Entrepreneurship
and Business
Education Readings*

Navarro, P. 2008. “The MBA core curricula of top-ranked U.S. business schools: A study in failure?”. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(1): 108-123. Available at: <http://amle.aom.org/content/7/1/108.short>

Navarro gives helpful and pragmatic recommendations for improving MBA programs. Based on an evaluation of leading US MBA programs, he envisions several features needed to improve such programs for today’s business world. The features are Multidisciplinary Integration, Experiential Learning, Soft-Skill Development, A Global Perspective and Information Technology Focus, and Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. Interestingly, Navarro’s recommendations would also make MBA programs more aligned with AR.

Teehankee, B. 2013. “Institutionalizing faith-based management education in a Catholic university”. *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*, 31(2): 287-302. Available at: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1013828>

Teehankee uses the lens of institutional entrepreneurship to describe how administrators working within De La Salle University’s business school combined efforts to re-orient its MBA program along social responsibility lines, consistent with the Catholic University’s foundational principles.

LARGE-SCALE TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH: INGREDIENTS AND ACTIVITIES

by Steve Waddell

Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities

Societal transformation by its very nature is large-systems change with two qualities. One is engagement of lots and lots of people and organizations over significant time periods and often. Without this scale, the change will remain a “pilot,” “experiment,” and “odddity,” vis-à-vis the traditional actors. It will be marginalized by the status quo. Legitimacy will be hard to come by and hence there will be more pressures and difficulty in accessing resources.

Second, the type of large-scale change must be understood as not incremental (i.e. acting inside the box) or reform (acting outside the box). It represents a new way of thinking and doing (so it is no longer even a box).

In our global world, the type of large-scale change needed to address the big issues, such as climate change, must have a global mindset since islands of transformation will just exacerbate tensions experienced today, things such as continuous warfare and immigration crises. In the type of large-scale transformation AR, the goal is not to create an AR “project” but an AR and learning *system*.

How might we think about getting that underway? We begin with some key ingredients and activities as follows:

- **Seeing through a systems perspective:** Transformation is about changing systems: the mindsets, relationships, and structures around a particular issue. Given transformation is also about large-scale, it is critical to think of the challenge as changing large societal systems.

The University of the Future (UoFF) has taken on the challenge of creating a new system that integrates stakeholders in new ways, and



*Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities*

seeing their relationships and needs is core to successfully developing a UoF. To understand the Global Action Network (or GAN) concept, it is key to see them as systems which in turn allows us to see their distinctive nature as developing diverse relationships around particular change challenges.

- **Identify and connect up the early change supporters:** In any system, different people and organizations will have different attitudes about change in terms of support for it and the desired direction. A systems approach implies understanding (mapping in some form is good) the relationships and attitudes toward change. Mapping can be either just a technical exercise, or an Action Research activity. As the latter, it is developed in collaboration with stakeholders and actively discussed with them to both improve the accuracy of the map and to develop stakeholders' understanding of the system. A map as such is of limited value; its value really is its use to develop conversations and insights about the transformational challenge. (For a range of mapping strategies see more in the suggested readings.)

For large systems change, an essential starting point is to identify those who are early supporters of change in a desired direction; usually they are unaware of each other because they have diverse positions in the current system, and connecting them is a critical ingredient in developing the latent system.



*Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities*

Developing the Uoff examples started with a particular novel direction: a university focused on socially responsible entrepreneurship, and one focused on development of a community. – This tied together stakeholders in those systems open to the innovations. How this could be done was part of the Action Research activity with stakeholders, as was experimenting with identified directions.

Transparency International (TI) is a great example of how an Action Research mapping approach could have greatly accelerated a GAN's development. Originally, the key initiator thought of making a brand new network based largely on acquaintances made while he was a World Bank senior executive. Then, he became aware of organizations already working on the issue of corruption through conversations, and TI grew rapidly from the never-entirely explicit understanding of who should be in the network. A more explicit mapping approach could have greatly accelerated both the development of the network and the ability for people to think systemically.

- **Improve feedback processes:** A fundamental challenge in connecting diverse actors is to support communication across diverse languages. Of course, some of these are different languages in the traditional linguistic sense (and a quick aside, we hold it as an aspiration that future editions of this book will contain more languages!), but business-government-civil society and different disciplines also have different languages. Transformation usually involves helping diverse actors to understand and “see” in new ways how they are impacting each other. This gives rise through Action



*Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities*

Research approaches to collaboratively identifying new positive synergies and understanding conflicts.

Action Research can support development of the transformation structures and processes for strong and active stakeholder communications. This can be done by integrating reflection, identification of limiting assumptions, and growth in new cultures and “ceremonies” into meetings and other interaction spaces.

For the UofF this could be with new committees and working groups, and through new channels between faculty and students and students and people in their focus communities (business, Kayseri City). The GANs create interactions between stakeholders who often were previously hostile to each other. Previous to the Forest Stewardship Council, the business, environmental, and community development stakeholders were in almost internecine warfare. Action Research processes could greatly speed up capacity to work together productively.

- **Create a distinct identity:** Transformation involves a fundamental shift in identity from traditional and defined to something not previously experienced or undertaken. An identity with developing something transformational supports people to do the new and not get trapped in the traditional. The “new” must create its own legitimacy and profile, so others will know how to interact with it. Action Research processes can help develop the new identities by carrying out network/system wide inquiries about key new qualities and support their development through reflective practice.



*Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities*

- **Make learning and reflection active and core:** Given that transformation definitionally involves doing things in ways that have never been done before, learning is a critical ingredient. But rather than provide abstract workshops divorced from people’s work, it should be embedded in their work and made a part of their culture. Action Research capacity is a critical one in terms of its “stance” (inquiry, reflection).

Among GANs, the International Land Coalition (ILC) has developed a particularly robust approach to learning in the form of the Systematic Knowledge and Learning Approach (SKLA). It is an approach and not a strategy because it is meant to change mindsets, not to provide a rigid framework. The SKLA is designed around five axes, each with unique tools. For example, one axis is: knowledge and learning activities towards change, where “the ILC needs to ensure that members actually adopt and embody knowledge so that they can apply it to generate actual change within the policy arena.” Tools include learning journeys, cross-cluster/cross-level reviewing, and horizontal mentoring (Waddell, 2015 – see Readings below).



Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research:
Ingredients and
Activities

Additional resources:

Steve Waddell and Hilary Bradbury in conversation about Large Scale Change:
<http://actionresearchplus.com/action-research-and-large-systems-change/>

Oguz Baburglu on University of the Future:
<http://actionresearchplus.com/next-generation-universities-oguz-baburoglu-ph-d/>

LARGE-SCALE TRANSFORMATION ACTION RESEARCH READINGS

Suggested by Steve Waddell & Oguz Baburoglu

Baburoglu O. 1998. "The genesis of Sabanci University: The design process of a green-field site university". Baburoglu, O and Merrelyn Emery and Associates (Eds), *Educational Futures: Shifting Paradigm of Universities and Education (Fred Emery Memorial Book)*. Istanbul, Turkey: Sabanci University Press.

This is a paper that describes the four-year-long process of designing the Sabanci University. It is in an edited volume that has 24 other papers that lay out different dimensions of the shifting paradigm of universities. These papers were presented in a memorial conference for Fred Emery and the edited volume has a chapter on how Fred Emery saw educational systems and universities. Stephen Toulmin, Davydd Greenwood, Morten Lewin, Werner Fricke, and Richard Boyatzis are among the contributors. Requests for the book or reprints should be sent to baburoglu@sabanciuniv.edu

Emery, M. & Ronald E. Purser. 1996. *The search conference: A powerful method for planning organizational change and community action*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

This book has both a very good theoretical base and many good examples of search conference applications.

Selsky, J. W., Ramírez, R., and Babüroğlu, O. 2013. "Collaborative capability design: Redundancy of potentialities". *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 26(5): 377-95.

This paper is a continuation of the design principles of the Emery and Trist systems paradigm. It is an extension of the first (redundancy of parts) and the second (redundancy of functions) to a third principle that is redundancy of poten-

Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research
Readings



Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research
Readings

tialities. The third principle is especially relevant for designing networks within a social ecological context.

Snyder, W. M. and Wenger, E. 2004. “Our world as a learning system: A communities-of-practice approach”. *Creating a learning culture: strategy, technology, and practice*, Conner, Marcia L. and Clawson, James G. (Eds.): Pp. 35-58. Cambridge UK: The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.

Bill (William) Snyder and Etienne Wenger collaborated in the development of the concept of “communities of practice.” This book is very useful for those interested in developing learning systems.

van Tulder, R., and Van der Zwart, A. 2006. *International business-society management: Linking corporate responsibility and globalization*. London, UK: Routledge.

Rob van Tulder is a leader in developing approaches to business-government-civil society relationships, with a particular focus on the role of business.

Waddell, S. 2002. “Core competencies: A key force in business-government-civil society collaborations”. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship* (7): 43-56.

Building on four examples of collaboration, this paper develops a core competence model of collaboration by identifying distinguishing attributes, strengths, and weaknesses associated with the distinct logics of business, government, and civil-society organizations. This model includes tools to design collaborations, analyze difficulties, and support collaborations’ strategic development.



*Large-scale
Transformation
Action Research
Readings*

— 2004. “*The global compact as a new organizational form*”. Waddock, S., et al. (Eds.). *Learning to talk: Corporate citizenship and the development of the UN global compact*: Pp. 289-301. Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf Publishing.

This is an exploration of the UN Global Compact and a Global Action Network.

— 2005. *Societal learning and change: How governments, business and civil society are creating solutions to complex multi-stakeholder problems*. Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf Publishing.

The concepts and strategies associated with societal change as a multi-stakeholder learning activity (just like individual and organizational learning) are developed through eight cases of multi-stakeholder collaboration around the world and concerning various goals: road-building (Madagascar), water and sanitation (South Africa), economic development (India), sustainable forestry (Canada), rice production (Philippines), banking (US), environmental decision-making (global), and corporate reporting (global).

— 2011a. “Global Action Networks: Creating our future together”. *Bocconi University on Management*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Traditional approaches are proving inadequate to address big global challenges such as climate change, inequality, war, disease, and environmental degradation. Over the last 20 years, a new strategy with multi-stakeholder global change networks is providing a robust alternative. These Global Action Networks (GANs) are a new type of organization, as different from non-profits, governments, and businesses as those are from each other. They hold the potential to become a



major global governance form for the 21st century. Examples include the Global Compact, Transparency International, The Climate Group, Social Accountability International, The Principles for Responsible Investing, and The Global Reporting Initiative. Although this book will be of interest to anyone involved with global governance and large change issues, this book is written in particular to provide guidance to people interested in further developing GANs.

—. 2011b. “The global compact: An organizational innovation to realize UN principles”. *Governance Papers*. New York, NY: UN Global Compact.

The Global Compact was launched in 2000 to promote the alignment of business action with the UN’s universal principles. It is examined here as a new form of network-based organization called Global Action Network (GAN), multi-stakeholder change networks that are addressing critical global issues. Understanding and supporting the distinctiveness of the UN Global Compact is critical to realizing its full potential. To deepen understanding of how to work effectively with the UNGC, this paper looks at the Compact first through the framework of GANs’ strategic characteristics, and second through its distinctive operating logics.

—. 2012. “Global finance as an Action Research domain: Testing the boundaries”. *Action Research* 10(1): 40-60.

Conducting Action Research with large global systems presents particular challenges. To help address these challenges, this paper describes an eight-step methodology developed through the Global Finance Initiative (GFI), incorporating three visual mapping methodologies and ways to engage diverse participants.



—. 2015. “Networks as learning systems”. NetworkingAction (Ed.). Available at: <http://networkingaction.net/2015/03/networks-as-learning-systems/>: NetworkingAction.

—. 2016. “Applying the appropriate tools: Which one, and when”. Chapter 9 in *Change for the Audacious: A doers’ guide to large systems change for a flourishing future*: 159-98. Boston, MA: NetworkingAction.

The chapter provides a comprehensive overview of eight categories of tools used to support transformation initiatives. It also goes into more depth with mapping tools.

Williams, T. 1979. “The search conference in active adaptive planning”. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Vol 15, 4.

This paper is a good and concise explanation of search conference methodology that may be somewhat dated, but it presents a very good layout of argumentation in a short manner.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION PRACTICE: NURTURING ACTION RESEARCHERS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

By Hilary Bradbury



*Mindfulness
Meditation Practice*

A mindfulness revolution is sweeping the West. We see Buddhas—symbol of enlightened mind—pop up in the most unexpected places, from hairdressers to restaurants. Some say it’s a fad, others see it as a necessary step toward unification of West and East as the world comes to know itself better as a global village. All the better to address our global sustainability problems such as climate change.

Mindfulness has also become an important feature in the helping professions, with many clinical psychologists integrating it for their patients.

Action Researchers also have something to gain from this revolution. Mindfulness might be considered a next step in our reflective practice, which is a requirement for good AR. Reflection too often remains stuck in overly familiar patterns of thought. Mindfulness, on the other hand, is less cerebral and allows for simple access—not easy, but simple—to a deeper “listening.” Happily, it’s free and has little (if any) downside.

There are many schools of thought and permutations on the practice of mindfulness meditation. Yet, at its heart, seated mindfulness meditation refers, simply, to sitting still and, for a predetermined amount of time, bringing awareness to experience. This practice may include awareness of breath and bodily sensation, noises, thoughts, and everything else besides.

Although simple, beginning the practice of mindfulness meditation is often quite difficult, particularly in our fast-paced world and perhaps especially among well-educated professionals, deeply habituated to thought and rumination that leaves us out of touch with the reality of life. Those who say “I don’t have time for that” are often precisely the ones who need it most!



Mindfulness Meditation Practice

Mindfulness meditation, in its mindfulness-based stress reduction form popularized by Jon Kabatt Zinn, teaches stress reduction to build resilience in daily life. This may be seen as a useful technique for enhancing Action Researchers' emotional intelligence and self-care. Mindfulness practice, however, has developed within a transformational emancipatory tradition that's millennia old.

The emancipation intended is from our brain's habit of endless, seemingly unnoticed and/or uncontrollable thinking. Mindfulness meditation allows access to those parts of consciousness typically sequestered behind the rational-analytical ego structure. This bracketing, which happens of its own accord, makes available the actual experience of living! Through practice we become simply more present to what is.

This relaxing into "beyond-thinking" is not entirely unknown in the Western tradition, where Edmund Husserl's phenomenology also seeks to bracket conceptualization so that phenomena may arise in experience. In the Eastern (Buddhist) worldview, however, meditation leads, slowly, safely but inexorably, to loosening the tight boundaries normally held by self/ego structure that perceives itself as separate from the rest of life. With time, meditation generally leads to a subjective sense of expanded experience, more presence, less stress and suffering. This can make all the difference in our creative response as Action Researchers.

The following offers a basic recipe for Mindfulness practice.



Mindfulness Meditation Practice

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

- Sit at ease, with a straight spine.
- Invite awareness to the breath (if that is not for you, try instead to invite awareness of all the sounds in your environment).
- Simply be with the flow of your experience.
- Thoughts will arise. Notice but do not follow them.
- Be kind to yourself when you realize you have been caught up in your thoughts.
- Return to breath/sound/flow of experience.

Try to do this daily for 20 minutes or so. Yes, it's very simple, but not so easy! Trust what unfolds over time.

There are now many guided meditations and helpful timers available for free on the internet. These are useful to beginner and advanced meditators alike. A favorite is the crowd-sourced "Insight Timer" available as an App for free download.

POWER DYNAMICS IN STUDENT-PROFESSOR RELATIONSHIPS: REFLECTIONS FROM A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jean Hartmann

I was invited to offer a student voice about the experience of educating Action Researchers. I approached it as a dare! Dare I reflect out-loud and share openly the anguishing moments during my own dissertation work (work with one of the authors of the education chapter, Martin Leahy)?

More often than not, the work gnawed at my sense of pride, and at times swallowed me whole. I take up this dare because I want to encourage you to practice AR as a way of thinking, feeling, doing, and being better able to connect with yourself and others. Only then, can we begin to collaborate with one another to pursue actionable knowledge for the flourishing of our respective communities.

SPEAKING FROM THE HEART ...

Now, if I may invite you into my mind-heart space, and trust in this reflective commentary that you will hold the tenderness with me, I may dare to share that I am intrigued. The theme of connection and disconnection, related to power dynamics in student-committee-chair relating, is not a bland matter.

In my dissertation work with my chair and the committee members, I experienced that dynamic push and pull of wanting to be closer (or at least better noticed), yet knowingly maintaining a deferential stance. I publicly modeled myself as a disciple of the Confucian tradition (I am of Asian descent), in which teachers are revered.

However, I also expected that my humble ways would not be misinterpreted as weakness, or ceding of intellectual control over my work. I recall that in the emotional heat of working through the scholarly advice of each committee member (and there



*Power Dynamics in
Student-Professor
Relationships*



Power Dynamics in Student-Professor Relationships

was lots of advice and much divergence, as is often the case for many who undertake doctoral studies), my mind was often resistant.

My heart also filled with doubts. What I am admitting is that the push and pull begins within one's self, the many selves that show up as we become fully engaged in our being: integrating heart, mind, and soul. That's why Cartesianism (elevating the rational mind ostensibly disconnected from emotion) doesn't work. But Confucianism (elevating the teacher and discounting the self) can't do any better!

When interacting with others, perhaps especially in the AR paradigm, we desire parity and mutuality. Perhaps especially in the AR tradition, we expect "power-with" egalitarianism: Parity in recognizing that we are equal as people despite our differing intellects, skills, and life circumstances. Mutuality in that we can give and take in the spirit of the common good (good for both of us; for all of us), and do so without bringing harm to each other. But it's not so straightforward.

Martin (my chair) offered a helpful perspective: "In the beginning, the faculty-student relationship is not one of full mutuality, nor should it be. However the goal is to move the relationship from relating as master and apprentice to interacting as colleagues."

Power dynamics are present within any group of people, and no less so for a committee of dissertation readers. Try to reach some explicit agreements about this if possible. And within an AR program (and partnership), it should be possible. At the very least it might be expected that we will seek to make these explicit and learn from them.



Power Dynamics in Student-Professor Relationships

FEELING THE SITUATION ...

Knowledge is political and it helps to enlist support. My proposed study gained support early on from a well-known AR scholar who agreed to act as my external advisor. In turn, this earned the notice of the provost at my school. Being noticed can be dicey, but it worked out for me!

My proposal was then shared with other faculty members at my school as the provost became interested in what it might mean for more students to do AR. He sensed a growing interest in this more interventionist paradigm. We are, after all, a professional school and so my efforts came to be seen as an experiment in promoting the role of Action Research, which in turn meant engaging with administrators and educators in the process of improving higher education teaching and learning at our school. At the very least my work would be noticed! So, then I learned that I must manage my committee.

My committee, which was comprised of an expert Action Researcher acting as outside advisor, the provost, and an affiliate faculty with a track record in Human Resources, was chaired by an organizational leadership scholar-practitioner grounded in psychological counseling's Gestalt methods.

This was a formidable committee with positional power. At times, their differing educational agenda (due to their professional roles) created a situation of unexpected and competing demands for me. I feared that the evolving narrative of my work (explained differently, depending on the committee member's interest) began to supersede its original intent. I had envisioned this work to be more of a learn-



ing rather than performance mode (this distinction is David Kolb's, see the entry on Experiential Action Learning).

I wanted a practice space for me to observe the reflective work of others, and to engage in self-reflection and reflection with others as part of my learning. At the start of the study, however, I came to realize that I did not wish to enact social change through the research. I wanted to be on the shores of AR rather than on a boat in the middle of the Action Research lake (I think it's an ocean).

Nevertheless, AR has a magnetic pull toward social responsibility. It also calls for and then forces confrontation with the issues of power and dominance in the field of practice, as well as within the academic setting. We cannot easily escape power differences, although how we deal with them can vary a great deal.

In retrospect, my work served as a theater of action for the imbalance of power—in the second person—among the committee members and the chair that played out unbeknownst to me during the dissertation process.

Do I dare myself to go deeper in this reflective commentary in the first person? I must, if I believe in the work of relating with others, and making our intentions known to one another so that we can interact on shared terms of parity and mutuality. I wholeheartedly move into that reflection.

This work was also the stage on which I wrestled with the stronghold of tiger mom syndrome (a tiger mom, associated with high academic standards of Chinese culture, is a mom who dominates with the wish/demand for her kid to excel academically).



I would need to confront my childhood phobia of never being good enough along with the self-imposed (or is it culturally conditioned?) subservience rooted in a sense of filial duty to those who hold authority.

That was a lot to work with! This awareness slowly clarified for me that the imbalance of power was also within me. In a way, it was being replicated from my internal landscape at least as much as imposed from the outside. Good insight!

I suspect we all hold images of power that we keep to the recesses of awareness. A dissertation process—with its infantilization—will likely call them forth. We can see where there is “power-with” and where there is “power-over,” where there is espoused views and where there is actual practice. This is transformative.

HOLDING THE PAIN ...

My experience of student-chair relating is that both parties must be aware of their relative influence on each other. Ideally, both will acknowledge the power imbalance in explicit terms with one another. It is difficult for both, albeit in different ways. As a counterweight to the untroubled faculty view, I’d assert on behalf of students that there are doctoral students who seek more than credentialing through a body of knowledge; we seek self-knowing (even if at the start we may not know that).

This search for a more liberated self happens alongside the dissertation process, but takes up a lot of mind-heart space, especially if done well. It may be one of the reasons that AR dissertations encourage the presence of an explicit first person reflection.



Power Dynamics in Student-Professor Relationships

Meeting Grace, the name I give to my more perfectionist self, I can feel her angst beyond the words expressed, and give her space to be present consciously. I imagine this is what Hilary Bradbury described as the phenomenon of two souls surging toward each other in her writing on Eros/Power and Relational Space (Bradbury and Torbert, 2015).

Dissertation committee relations are inherently erotic (Hilary and Shakiyla discuss this “awe-full” term (Cookbook, 2017)). We are calling the best from one another to advance the field of knowledge practice. What I’m left with is, “How messy can ‘power-with’ get?” And the answer is, pretty messy. That is a difficult relational terrain to navigate. But it’s so useful.

If this was occurring as a live conversation, I would pause here and ask, “What would you share of your experiences in the mutuality of relational engagement? How do we offer ourselves to others without expecting the same? How do we accept what others give us and not ask for more? How do we receive in full faith that what is available to us is the best for all considered?”

Feel yourself invited to start a conversation in AR+ co-lab. Conversations are created by those who join them. Power has relevance beyond dissertations and to any Action Research partnership.

Note: This personal essay reflects AR’s relationship with power dynamics frequently found in boss/employee relations as well as student/professor relationships. – HB

PROTAINER "SAFE SPACE:" GROUND-RULES FOR CULTIVATING RELATIONAL SPACE

Relational space fosters friendship and development in a space both humorous/playful and earnest/structured, as appropriate. We trust that wisdom is contributed by all that unfolds; we aim for enhancing shared intelligence and therefore require a balance of constructive input and feedback; we interweave personal, interpersonal and collective concerns (also called first-, second-, and third-person AR practice) with an eye to making the world a better place.

Let us, therefore, imagine (repeatedly) that this special circumstance is a hologram of the collective, and let us agree to:

- **Speak** from our own experience (no lectures!).
- **Listen** with resilience and self-care.
 - “Hanging in” when we hear something that is hard to hear and monitoring our reactivity.
- **Participate** within the frameworks suggested by the (rotating) facilitator.
- **Be care-full** to share “airtime.”
- **Respect** occasional generative silence.
- **Actively look** for (and contribute to) the “good, the true, the beautiful.” Follow up afterwards too especially on personal levels!
- **Never link** names/identifiers to information shared outside the group without their permission.



Protainer
"Safe Space"

PURPOSE: DISCOVERING EVOLUTIONARY INTENTION

By George Pór

The purpose of this practice is to help us unlearn everything that we learned about goal-setting for organizations as dependable machines waiting for our directions, so that we can learn listening to organizations as living systems and helping them express where they want to go.

Brian Robertson, the founder of Holacracy, uses the term “evolutionary purpose” to indicate that organizations, just like individuals, have a calling and an evolutionary energy to move toward that calling:

“What is the organization’s identity? And what does it want? ... The metaphor is like the parent-child journey: ... we recognize our child has its own identity and its own path and its own purpose. And just because I might be really excited at the idea of my child being a doctor, that doesn’t mean I get to project that on my child. There is a harmful, co-dependent process when I do that.

We’ve learned as parents that the healthy parent’s journey is a differentiation process, and ironically that differentiation of parent and child allows each to have their own autonomy and identity more fully, which then allows a more conscious integration where we are in relationship and interconnect, but it’s a relation of peers, of equals. ...

It’s us humans that can tune into the organization’s evolutionary purpose; but the key is about separating identity and figuring out ‘What is this organization’s calling?’ Not ‘What do we want to use this organization to do, as property?’ but rather ‘What is this life, this living system’s creative potential?’ That’s what we mean by evolutionary purpose: the deepest creative potential to bring some-

*Purpose:
Discovering
Evolutionary
Intention*



thing new to life, to contribute something energetically, valuably to the world. ... It's that creative impulse or potential that we want to tune into, independent from what we want ourselves." (Laloux, 2014 – see Readings below)

How can we go about tuning into and listening for that deepest creative potential of the organization? How do we find out where it wants to go? Below are some practical examples to help with that.

THE EMPTY CHAIR (LALOUX, 2014)

A simple practice to listen in to an organization's purpose consists of allocating an empty chair at any meeting to represent the organization and its evolutionary purpose. Anybody participating in the meeting can, at any time, change seats, to listen to and become the voice of the organization. The empty chair can be used explicitly or as a guiding voice in our heads. Here are some questions one might tune into while sitting in that chair:

- Have the decisions and the discussion served you (the organization) well?
- How are you at the end of this meeting?
- What stands out to you from today's meeting?
- In what direction do you want to go? At what speed? Are we being bold enough? Too bold?
- Is there something else that needs to be said or discussed?"

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Evolutionary
Intention*



LARGE GROUP PROCESSES

While the empty chair is typically used on a day-to-day basis, when an organization faces a major inflection point, there are a number of more elaborate processes that can help large groups of people to listen in jointly to their organization's purpose and sense of direction. These processes include the following (Action Research informed!) practices:

- Otto Scharmer's 'Theory U,'
- David Cooperrider's 'Appreciative Inquiry,'
- Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff's 'Future Search,'
- Juanita Brown's 'World Café,'
- Harrison Owen's 'Open Space.'

These processes are non-hierarchical and self-organizing. They often bring the "whole system" into the room: all colleagues of an organization, whether a few dozen, hundreds, or thousands, come together for a working session of one or several days. Clients, partners, and suppliers can be invited to join, to add their perspective to the inquiry. Each of these processes comes with its particular format, but they have, according to Frederic Laloux one thing in common: "they achieve the unlikely feat of giving everybody a voice (even when thousands of people are involved), while at the same time channeling these voices toward a valuable collective outcome."

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Evolutionary
Intention*

READINGS ON PURPOSE

by George Pór

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Purpose:
Discovering
Evolutionary
Intention



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Purpose:
Discovering
Evolutionary
Intention

RELATIONAL ACTION INQUIRY: STEPPING IN TO LEARN TOGETHER

By Hilary Bradbury

Adapted from Bradbury and Torbert (2015), “Eros/Power: Love in the Spirit of Inquiry.”

1) TAKE A MOMENT TO SET AN INTENTION.

Let us remind ourselves of our heart-centered purpose in using our time in this unconventionally “care-full” way of relating. Let us remind ourselves that we and our partners are allies in this. We are cultivating the transformation of power toward mutuality between and among us. Our doing so is a potential gift to us and the world. Our purpose for being in conversation is to transform relational darkness into light together, and to liberate through welcoming along with joys and appreciations those shadow parts of us so easily triggered in relationship. We remind ourselves that without truth there can be no love. And that without humor there may be no point!

2) “RELATIONAL ACTION INQUIRY” CHECK-IN.

- Start by listening into the unknown in the space between you (3 minutes).
- Each participant then catches and (briefly, 1 minute) holds the other participant’s eyes. (Organize this as a rotation.)
- Agree on an order for check in. Invite the check in by saying: “What is your experience now?”
- Listen to the check in with your whole body, noticing your sensations.

*Relational
Action Inquiry:
Stepping In to
Learn Together*



*Relational
Action Inquiry:
Stepping In to
Learn Together*

- After the first check in, each of the listening participants speak back the essence of what you heard. Note the emotion(s) you heard. And share some of the sensations you, as listener, had when listening.
- Complete this process for each participant until all three are “checked in.”
- Pause and check to see if anything else wants to be said.
- From here, depending on time, allow your dialogue to emerge, asking, “What was similar across the check ins? What was different? What moves us?”
- Throughout, pause regularly and take a breath so that your speaking and listening are an active meditation that will bring more of life (Eros!) to your conversation.

RELATIONAL ACTION LOGICS

By Hilary Bradbury



*Relational
Action Logics*

We sense that there's you, there's me, and there's the "space between," which we have recently heard called the "we space." This "space between" has too often gone unnoticed, unnamed, like the water we swim in.

Relational action logics seek to name different types of space and in so doing make possible more inquiry. Perhaps we can become more fluent and then exercise more choice in cultivating the kind of relational space we want. The reason we do that is to support collaborative co-creativity, "accomplishing more good together than we can alone."

Relationship—a perennially "feminine" concern—has tended to reside mostly in intuition, silence, or self-help books. But times are changing. Oblivion to relationship—where the other is mere object—causes increasing damage at a time of escalating technology.

Consider everyday porn culture's objectification of relationship and intimacy and how ancient blood hatreds draw ever closer in our global village; social isolation is on the increase despite global social media access to people and ideas; numbers and quality of friendships decline in our stressed out culture. Relationship warrants much more cultivation than is culturally usual! I'd say that without this, we as a society cannot leap to meet the challenges we confront.

I propose we bring a developmental lens to understanding the development of relationship. This is hardly a great leap as relationship, e.g. in couples, is conventionally seen through that lens, starting in the "love is blind" bonding phase to meet a rude awakening in the differentiation phases necessary before they can truly get along sustainably together.



Relational Action Logics

What we notice in all developmental systems (think of Piaget's theory of a child's development, or Fowler's theory of the development of religious devotion, or Wilber's developmental theory of everything) is how similar the stages appear. There is a growth toward complexity.

In describing relational action logics, I was informed by Bill Torbert's work with individual and organizational development. The stages he describes (collaborating with Susanne Cook Greuter) suggest a process of seeing ourselves more clearly and ultimately experiencing ourselves as part and parcel of the flow of life.

As someone keenly interested in bridging the truths of the Western and Eastern paradigms, it is good to see how the later stages of development are well described by Japanese philosopher Dogen. He famously, and for me very helpfully, explained development as a cultivation that decenters the observer-self.

He wrote in a way more pragmatic than dogmatic: "to cultivate the self is to forget the self, to forget the self is to awaken to the flow of life all around." In other words, developing the self makes us less (not more!) concerned with our self. And as such, we can become more attuned to how to serve what's needed around us; we are better at relating.

It seems that as the developing self sees beyond its tightly held self-centered thinking, we see ourselves as a cultural and linguistic construction, oriented to our memory of who we are ("our story"). We may also notice that it is already a bit of a developmental leap to pay attention to the space between; for the truly self-centered self there is only "me, me, me!"



Relational Action Logics

It is important to understand that development alone does not give fluency or ease in relationship. But at least we have already started relational development by naming the challenge. We get ready to leave the comfort of the material, the disinterested, the measurable. But our discussion should help us to see what we have not seen before, i.e. allowing that we are “more” object and therefore more discussible to ourselves and one another, more capable of cultivating richer relational “space between.”

With that as preamble to allow for more systematic discussion and inquiry, please see the figure below. On the figure of relational action logics, you see Bill Torbert’s terms for the individual’s and organizational developmental evolution. I place the relational equivalents beside those.

In bringing more of a relational focus, I also pay a lot of attention to the helpful idea (from psychoanalysis) that in relationship we are dealing with projection and counter-projection. In fact, a marker of later development is not that there is less projection, but that we are more conscious. Thus the stages of relationship have different challenges.

In terms of application, we may reflect on a difficult relational moment and discover: (1) What stages—sometimes just for a moment— did you enter/exit; (2) How does knowing the stage help you, remembering that this is a first iteration of stages (and needing your input). A vignette that uses these categories is the Cookbook chapter on relational action inquiry (Bradbury and Smith).



*Relational
Action Logics*

Invitation: Those interested in learning more about relational action inquiry in the practice of relationship—especially tackling sensitive issues of gender and race—are invited to the AR+ Relational Action Inquiry (RAIR) Co-lab.

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

TABLE - *Tobert's Stages of Development alongside Relational Action Logics*

INDIVIDUAL STAGES/1ST PERSON	RELATIONAL STAGES/2ND PERSON
Impulsive	Projective
Opportunist	Protective
Diplomat	Diplomatic
Expert	Differentiating
Achiver	Achieving
Redefining	Re-finding
Transforming	Synergistic
Alchemist	Transformational-Mutual



Relational Action Logics

RELATIONAL ACTION LOGICS

Protective

- **To trust or not to trust is focus.** Childhood patterns of relating are obviously projected for fit. Threat and infatuation alternate. Externalization, projection, fusion. Power and Eros is both unconsciously and consciously salient, felt as disquieting, unintegrated, alternating between coercive and merging, acutely self centered.

Diplomatic

- **How to bond is the focus.** Avoids inner and outer conflict, conforms, suppresses own desires, encouraging the other, merging, seeking membership, appearance/status conscious, tends towards clichés, works to “the others” standard. Power and Eros remains undiscussible. Masculine more predatory, feminine more silent. Eros expression conforms to norms and is often charming.

Differentiating

- **How to be me and still be with you is the focus.** Wants own persona to stand out, aware of alternative constructions in problem resolution but can be dogmatic, accepts feedback only from “objective” masters. Eros and Power are problems to be solved. Anger of the feminine may be expressed as rage, privilege of the masculine is felt as shame. Power is logistical, eros is nerdy/sideline.

Achieving

- **How to value self and others difference is the focus.** Results and effectiveness oriented, long term goals, concerned with issues of ethics and justice, deliberately prioritizes work tasks, future inspires, drawn to learning, seeks mutuality in relations, aware of personal patterns of behavior, feels guilt if does not meet own standards, still frequently blind to the shadow of splitting, chases time. Eros and Power sublimated.



Relational Action Logics

Refinding

- **How to enjoy self and others differences.** Collaborative, tolerant of/celebrate individual difference, aware of context and contingency, productive challenge group norms, inquiring and open to feedback. Maverick or original structures arise as Eros and Power are creatively accessed. Visioning and post conventional expressions welcomed in discovery of original purpose.

Synergizing

- **How to go with the flow** while mindfully process and goal oriented, strategic time horizon, systems conscious. Enjoyment of a variety of roles is encouraged, inclusive of complex interweave of (also outside) relationships, aware of relational traits and shadow, high value on relational development. Eros and Power invite unique transformation as partners increasingly drop ego insistence in favor of co-expression.

Mutually Transforming

- **How to allow Eros shape the relational space.** Surprise is welcomed in the theatre of action. Cultivates relationship through mindful consideration of “small acts.” Eros/Power combine in mutually transforming power and love.

RELATIONAL ACTION INQUIRY: READINGS ON POWER AND EROS

by Hilary Bradbury & Shakiyla Smith based on their *Cookbook* chapter “Relational Action Inquiry: To the Heart of the Learning”

Bradbury, H. & Torbert, W. 2015. *Eros/power: Love in the Spirit of Inquiry, Transforming How Women and Men Relate*. Integral Publishers.

Bradbury and Torbert write from a first and second person perspective about their experiences of Eros and power in their own lives and within their relationship over time. Not only do they present a provocative view of the ways that men and women often fumble and sometimes soar through the relational realm, but they also offer suggestions for how others can explore Eros and power for themselves through relational action inquiry. Read more, get a free chapter: <http://www.integratingcatalysts.com/erospower/>

hooks, b. 2000. *All About Love: New Visions*. HarperCollins Publishers. Available at: http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17607.All_About_Love

bell hooks is a Black feminist writer and cultural critic who writes about the intersections of race, gender, and class. Her more recent work has explored the topic of love as a force for healing, redemption, and liberation (political, spiritual, mental, and emotional). As part of this exploration, which unfolds over four books, she describes how the various forms of power and oppression serve as a threat to love.

- 2001. *Salvation: Black People and Love*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- 2002. *Communion: The Female Search for Love*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- 2004. *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*. Washington Square Press.

Relational
Action Inquiry:
Readings on
Power and Eros



Lorde, A. 1984. "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power". In Lorde, A. *Sister Outsider*: Pp. 53-59. The Crossing Press.

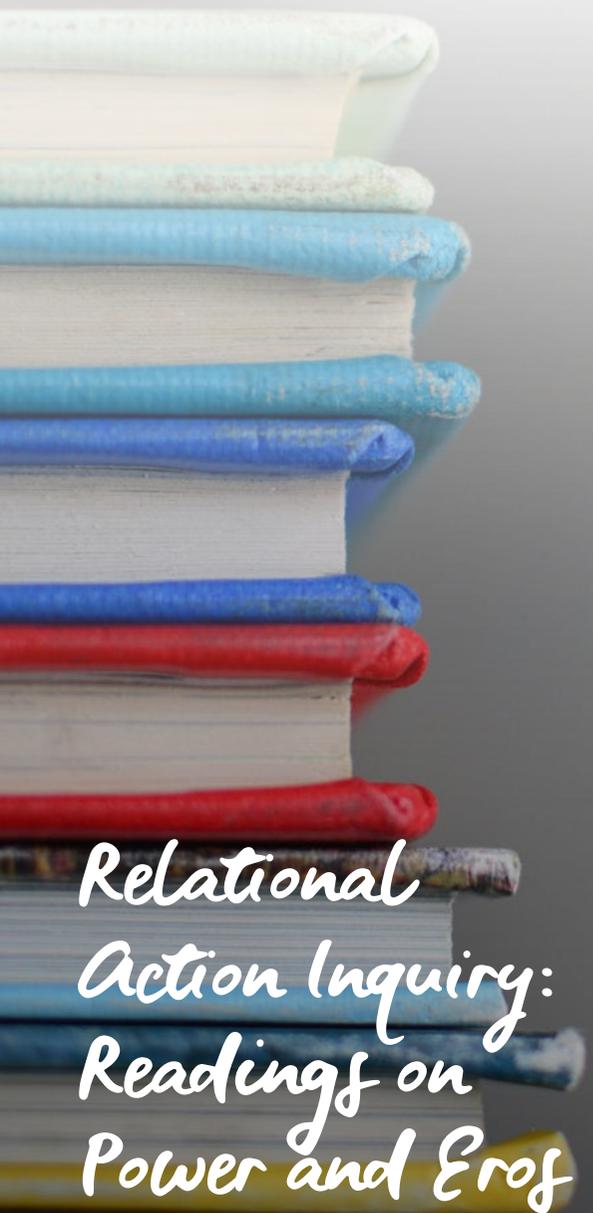
Audre Lorde was a Black feminist poet, essayist, and civil rights activist born in New York City in the 1930's. She described herself as a "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet," and much of her work describes her experiences living in the United States within these intersecting (often marginalized) identities. The power of her work not only lies in these rich and honest descriptions and analyses, but also in her ability to connect the political, spiritual, and aesthetic. This essay is a sort of call to action for those who would lead richer, juicier, and freer lives infused with spirit and erotic yearnings.

O'Donohue, J. 1997. *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*. Harper Collins.

Anam Cara is a philosophical and spiritual collection of writings about "soul friends" and how they carry us throughout the various stages of life. In this book, Irish poet and philosopher John O'Donohue describes the concept of the anam cara and explores the various human concerns of love, work, aging, and death through the perspective of Celtic wisdom and spirituality.

Rooke, D. & Torbert, W. R. 2005. "Seven Transformations of Leadership". *Harvard Business Review*, 83(4): 66-76.

In this article, Rooke and Torbert describe the action logics in detail and how they relate to leadership capacity. Using empirical evidence, they present the distribution of adults (in one sample) across the action logics. They also discuss



*Relational
Action Inquiry:
Readings on
Power and Eros*

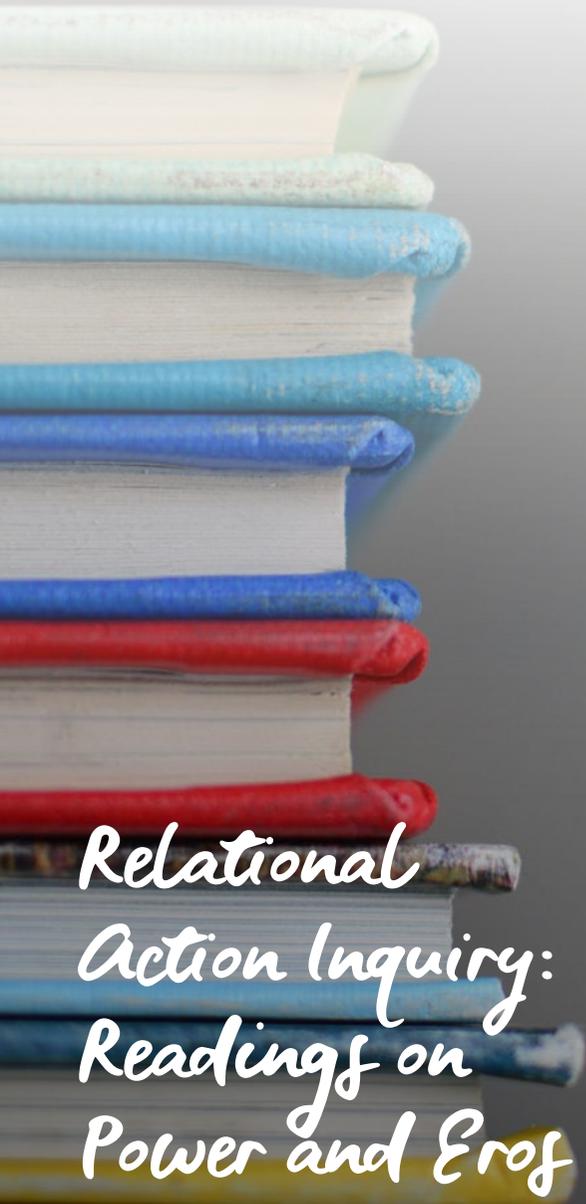
the importance of developing more complex capacities for leaders and how leaders, at later action logics, are better able to lead organizational transformations.

Scharmer, O. 2016. “One Earth, Two Social Fields”. Huffington Post website. Available at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/one-earth-two-social-fields_us_578e922de4bof529aa0746fb?mc_cid=ed666a368b&mc_eid=\[UNIQID\]](http://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/one-earth-two-social-fields_us_578e922de4bof529aa0746fb?mc_cid=ed666a368b&mc_eid=[UNIQID])

In this blog post, Scharmer defines and describes the concept of the social field and this larger, energetic, and relational space that is often not discussed. Specifically, he lays out how the social field impacts the larger, systemic results that are generated in societies. In many ways, this piece outlines how the first and second person spaces contribute to third person (or larger, external) outcomes through the creation of social fields.

Smith, L.R. 2016. “Growing Together: The Evolution of Consciousness Using Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry” (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Georgia.

This is the dissertation of Cookbook chapter co-author, Shakiyla Smith. It describes the experience of and learnings from a virtual collaborative developmental action inquiry (CDAI) group comprised of women of color seeking to facilitate their own development. The work, written from a radically-subjective first person perspective, provides an illustration of the Action Research/action inquiry method and process. It is available upon request from the author.



Torbert, W. R., & Associates. 2004. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

An accessible and in-depth description of Torbert's Action Inquiry theory and method for those who are interested in learning the details of the approach and how it can help them take effective and timely action in their personal and professional lives. This book details all of the primary components of the Action Inquiry approach and includes illustrations and practice exercises

*Relational
Action Inquiry:
Readings on
Power and Eros*

TEACHING: SYLLABUS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS' ACTION RESEARCH

By Benito Teehankee

Teaching:
Syllabus and
Guiding Questions
for Students'
Action Research

Questions for Insider Action Research used with MBA students.

Context and purpose: What is your initial understanding of the situation's background? Who is involved? What are our goals? How did the situation come to be? What are your roles, goals, needs, and concerns coming into the situation?

Constructing: What do you and the people involved agree is the issue and causes?

Planning action: What do you plan to do with the people involved in order to address the issue and achieve your goals?

Reflecting on action: What did you actually do with the people involved in order to address the issue and achieve your goals?

Evaluating action: What results did you and the others achieve relative to goals? For yourselves? For the others? For the organization?

Guiding action/inquiry cycles during the process. Inspired by Mezirow (1990).

Content: Have I (student) focused on the right issue? Should I have (also) looked at something else? Something more? What have I now learned about the issue that I didn't know before?

Process: What do I think about how I went about addressing the issue? How well have I collaborated with others? How could I have done things better or differently?

Premises: What did I learn about my purpose and values? Do I affirm them? Do I change them?



Teaching:
Syllabus and
Guiding Questions
for Students'
Action Research

Here you will find a sample syllabus used by Prof. Teehankee in teaching MBA students - [*Read a copy of Ben's syllabus here.*](#)

III. WHY



SUSTAINABILITY HOLISTIC THINKING: FIVE CRITICAL CAUSES

by Christopher Juniper

There are very likely to be at least five good reasons for any activity to happen in the world. To understand the activity enough to manage and improve it, you must search for at least five of its most critical causes.

I'm calling this process "5CC" thinking, which is not only a requirement for effective clear thinking, but also of being worthy of leadership of...well...anything.

We are presently a sort of game show culture: whoever seems to have the answer fastest and hits the buzzer, they are seen as smartest and carries the day. This leads to suboptimal results because of a lack of sufficient understanding.

The minimum number of critical causes is arbitrarily selected; surely even three is better than one, but the emphasis of 5CC thinking is that there are "at least" five critical causes that need to be identified and understood. Any particular activity may have more than five that need to be identified and understood for thorough-enough understanding to accomplish successful management, and improvement.

Let's start with a simple example. What are the five critical causes of who people are? It isn't hard to select five major critical causes (though people will have different names for them): culture, parents, family/friends (beyond parents), DNA, and individual choices.

5CC thinking can begin with an assumption that all five critical causes have equal weight, and then explore the most likely actual weighting of them. However, the equal weighting should be a default position such that there is a "burden of proof" required to adopt unequal weighting.



*Sustainability
Holistic Thinking:
Five Critical Causes*



Sustainability Holistic Thinking: Five Critical Causes

This means that each of the 5CCs start out at a 20% weighting (if only 5 are identified). Sometimes this will be obviously wrong, as in an auto accident when one driver on a two-lane road inexplicably pulls into an oncoming lane full of traffic, as happened to me last year. The resulting four-car accident was probably 90% or more his fault – the other drivers could hardly be blamed for not getting out of his way fast enough.

But in most of life, which involve complex systems at work behind most everything, five critical causes to explore is a good start.

Now let's take on one of the most critical challenges the people of our planet face: transforming an environmentally unsustainable economy to a sustainable one....one that has a good chance of persisting over time in health.

(Sustainability as used in the world's language is about maximum social and environmental performance to the level of healthy persistence over time of society and the environment in support of a healthy economy. This essay addresses environmental sustainability only, though environmental and social health are tightly linked since the poor are pretty unlikely to think and act long-term.)

The 5CCs causing us to suffer from (or for many, enjoy) an unsustainable economy are likely to be:

- **Prices** are untruthful regarding actual costs of goods/services
- **Consumers** are generally separated from the means of production and can't easily be responsible about the environmental consequences of their choices among highly complex and competing supply chains



Sustainability Holistic Thinking: Five Critical Causes

- **Economic rules/regulations** (beyond prices) aren't structured towards environmental sustainability
- **People tend to think and act short-term** while they pursue personal wealth maximization amidst their economies
- **People are adverse to change** and if financially secure or wealthy (basic financial security in that basic needs are met e.g. developed country middle class) are loathe to support changes to a system they are benefiting from.

It wouldn't be hard to add some additional CCs to this group of five. For example, some additional ccs on the list of the 5ccs behind our unsustainable economy would likely include:

- Religions don't enough equate/emphasize sustainable production and consumption practices as morally superior
- People do not trust governments or international organizations like the UN to make good changes (more benefit than cost), especially to capitalism/free markets
- Powerful people/organizations that benefit from the status quo have enough political power to prevent change
- People suffering the most from environmental unsustainability have the least political ability to change economic rules and behaviors (namely, the poor)
- Sufficient literacy about environmental trends and solutions



Sustainability Holistic Thinking: Five Critical Causes

Either the 5CCs or the full 10CCs can admirably start the exploration of sets of solutions for the economy's environmental unsustainability. More than 5CCs becomes less manageable for people, but sometimes exploring and managing more than 5CCs is critical for not missing something important.

We've all been through group decision-making exercises where professional facilitators make the group whittle down causes, or solutions, to no more than three in order to promote coherence. Too often, necessary complexity gets abandoned in the process of finding the "top three," resulting in suboptimal solutions.

Dear readers: Please take on these three challenges going forward:

- Look for and act upon solutions to our environmentally unsustainable economy. There is a simple measure of whether we are sustainable or not: the levels of natural capital on the planet – capital that is required for wealth generation (all wealth comes from something of nature being transformed into something of value to humanity). Natural capital is declining – has been for decades but at ever increasing rates. We are in trouble and need to embrace sustainability.
- Apply the 5CC thinking method to your own life's challenges. Don't settle for simple solutions, and always include yourself among the 5ccs of why things aren't going your way (i.e. avoid "victim mentality" at all costs). As Albert Einstein noted: to save the world in one hour, I'd spend 59 minutes understanding the problem and 1 minute on the solution.



- Apply the 5CC method to our leadership – both democratically elected leaders and leaders you follow as employees, partners. Don't fall for single-solution simple-mindedness, especially from politicians. Leaders who can't think and communicate in whole systems like the 5CC system simply aren't worthy of leadership positions. (Don't expect them to articulate their understandings in speeches but look for it in policy prescriptions).

TIMELY ACTION: WISDOM OF COLLECTIVE ALCHEMY



Our Cookbook shows up as US President Trump diminishes sustainability support by the US Federal government (e.g. pulls the USA from the UN “Paris Accord,” the global collaborative agreement negotiated, after years of hard work, to respond to climate change).

The present state of the world demands not only that nations/people remain in such collaborative efforts, but that we find and source many more. The very nature of our global problems—the seemingly intractable, complex, politicized, nonlinear, unsustainable challenges of dysfunctional economic and organizational systems—is ever morphing.

Central to AR, then, is our experimenting with new ways of working within the complexity in any knowledge-production situation. An action-oriented, participative, experimental approach to knowledge-creation is highly desirable.

When quality AR happens, stakeholders within a system learn that they can inquire rigorously into the world. We learn that we don’t need experts to do it for us (though our scholarly training can be quite helpful to ensure credibility). We may, indeed must, think global and act local. We may and must also act global informed by local.

As consciousness of our planetary problems rises and we understand more clearly how global challenges are anchored in local problems (and vice versa), it is better to have more citizens capable of developing practical knowledge – a key outcome of AR.

Conventional scholars who long for more relevance for their work may find it by working with action researchers. We certainly need “conventional science” for its ability to tease out causal relationships and refine existing theories, (as if reality were



also objectifiable), but conventional science is just the beginning of knowledge development and necessary/desirable changes.

Action research, then, takes its place within a diverse field of inquiry. Ecologists warn us against monocultures because resilience and sustainability are a product of diversity. If knowledge creators of all species could learn to self-organize we might effectively nudge complex adaptive systems in better, rather than worse, directions.

*Timely Action:
Wisdom of
Collective Alchemy*

TRANSFORMATION RECIPE: A SUMMARY OF THE COOKBOOK APPLIED TO AN URGENT, COLLECTIVE, BUT UNDER-ORGANIZED PROBLEM



Stakeholders aligned on an intention act most powerfully when they bring willingness to do first person work in addition to second person practice. Starting from a systems-orientation, combing the recipes that Marina Apgar and Steve Waddell provide, stakeholders find alignment of actual projects with reach to policy and decision-making structures— and perhaps helping to design new structures.

How do we start? With our wits about us and with clarity of intention, we must start with ourselves. Listening for connection, for surprise (rather than only rehashing favorite ideas), creating a space for learning together, and emerging evolutionary purpose. Stretching beyond the old rational models (though they have their place), and believing that even small groups of people, when making an effort to align, can do marvels.

In terms of organizing, climate change responses involve shifts in identity and historic patterns of organizations. The old does not just disappear, it is transcended. In the Global Action Network (GAN) example, Steve Waddell describes the importance of shifts in identity: to a new way of thinking and acting.

For individuals coming from what they're used to in work in a business, government, civil society, or academia, aligning requires the difficult first person process of transforming historic identities through a transcendent process. Individuals have their real experience from distinct historic positions; they go through a process of integrating that into a new identity, which focuses on weaving together those historic positions (often historically experienced as in conflict) into a new identity.



Transformation Recipe

Organizationally and as the third person, this involves deep innovation to integrate the historic traditions that distinguish businesses from NGOs, for example, into a new tradition that takes the strengths from each to find an alchemic way to integrate them and to address the weaknesses of each.

In addition to the first-, second-, and third-person interactions, the climate change societal transformation involves this alchemic transformation process with the natural environment. This is the transformational-relational change of people who remember their fundamental connection to the natural environment. The challenge is not just to get the human relations in a new sort of alignment and identity with each other, but to shift their identity to include connection” with the natural environment itself.

Moving from the traditional “mining of nature” to a “co-nurturing with nature” relationship involves a multitude of complex changes, which we will continue exploring indefinitely as part of the on-going existential questions about our purpose and sense of “being.” Of course, the challenge is to do this in a way and at a pace that minimizes the potential for simple, widespread, destructive, collapse of civilization itself, in favor of an alchemic transformation and rebirth.

WICKED MESSSES AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY: AN ATTEMPT AT INTEGRATING KEY ELEMENTS OF COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH



*Wicked Messes
and Sustainable
Society*

The following is a summary stew/goulash/hotpot/bouillebaise that pulls elements together. It may be helpful to review the summaries of the Cookbook chapters in the appendix below.

WHY THE TERM "ALCHEMY?"

Alchemy refers to a medieval practice of transformation. It was practiced by scientists (none greater than Sir Isaac Newton) at the time when, in the West, we had not yet fully dismissed knowledge claims outside the purely rational; there was then an opening to mystical types of knowledge, the kinds still cultivated in indigenous knowledge today.

The connection of alchemy and transformation is well expressed as “transcendence:” the activity of taking two or more perspectives that seem to be in conflict, and integrating them into a higher level of understanding that can include more people and perspectives.

One example of this occurred in the late 1980s when those in Northern/developed countries asserted that population growth was “the problem,” and those in Southern/developing countries asserted that consumption was “the problem.” This was integrated into the concept of “environmental footprint,” that recognizes the truth in both assertions.

Embracing alchemy, allows us as action researchers to reimagine and reintegrate different kinds of “knowledge” beyond polarization. It is a call to become more creative in cultivating knowledge that has a positive impact in the world.



Wicked Messes and Sustainable Society

The term “alchemist” also names the latest (and quite rare) action logic mind-set among adults as measured by developmental psychologists (see the Resource entry on Developmental Mindset and Action Logics). Suzanne Cook-Greuter and Bill Torbert define the alchemist action logic as

“a way of being in the world that is alert to the theater of action, embracing common humanity, disturbing paradigms of thought and action, dispelling notions of heroic action, with a deeply internalized sense of self-knowledge held with empty mind, which sees light and dark, order and mess.”

As the educators in the Cookbook point out, (see Teehankee and Leahy et al) we have inherited commonsense notions of social research (methods such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups), which, though useful, do not engage enough the subjective, the place of passion and energy for change.

In a related manner, when the average person thinks about “knowledge” it gets conflated with “book learning.” The reason for this is well-documented in the philosophy of science that emphasizes the huge impact of Cartesian thinking, which for the past 20 years is slowly, and with much reluctance, being critiqued and replaced.

The action research idea is that knowledge, or better knowing, is practical, it has a “cash value” (as pragmatist William James famously observed), a grounding notion we find timely for climate change as it garners the interests of both neo-liberals and those with a change agenda. Contemporary action research is gaining popularity due to its praxis emphasis.



This combines conventional scholarly concern for understanding the world with the more post-conventional concern for helping transform social conditions. Research with a change agenda comes at a time when, as developmental psychologist Bob Kegan has suggested, most people experience themselves as “in over their heads” when dealing with the complexity of everyday political, financial, and social life. Experiential knowledge defined as “the transformation of experience” brings our interests to self-interest, which—in its authentic expression—includes concern for the whole.

Action Research is among the research perspectives that specifically makes space for learning from experience in a way that is developmental and collective. Contemporary AR urges scholars to integrate objective and subjective voices, i.e. first, second, and third person inquiry/practice. Some action researchers—especially those informed by adult developmental theory—actively facilitate conditions that are intended to be developmental for learners.

This is done in the belief that if more people are enabled to develop toward later stages, there will be a positive influence on the development of a more sustainable society. For example, at the Business School of Lausanne’s doctoral program on sustainability leadership, personal development is integrated with an AR curriculum.

Emphasizing experiential learning practices opens space to recognize our creative sides at a time when we can no longer afford to be reactive. The value of turning to creative and arts-based methods lies, as Catherine Etmanski and Kathy Bishop describe, “in offering a range of possibilities for promoting embodied, sensory experiences, building empathy with multiple audiences, and opening new ways of seeing, being, doing, and knowing.”



Wicked Messes and Sustainable Society

Engagement with the arts is integrative. Not a bad thing when dealing with what some psychologists suggest is the paralysis that ensues when citizens understand about the potential catastrophes implied by global change.

The AR approach illustrated in *Cooking with Action Research* exemplifies the kind of social transformation seen inside a variety of professional practices that may have implications for climate change transformation. To take this book's example from healthcare, we see the institutional reform facilitated through learning platforms combining new knowledge and coordinated action among groups of stakeholders who make up the systems.

Svante Lifvergren and Danielle Zandee share a compelling account of the successful large-scale transformation in which Svante was intimately involved for over a decade in Sweden. Developed as a patient-centric system with mobile teams of healthcare providers going to patients and de-emphasizing hospitals and doctors' offices, over a decade later, it has exceeded expectations with cost-reduction, patient satisfaction and health outcomes, enough to become a model for a national roll-out to all of Sweden.

At the heart of the work was gathering stakeholders in learning platforms that convened patients, healthcare nurses, and physicians, along with administrators to understand and intervene in their system as they gradually moved it from doctor-centric to patient-centric. The learning platforms were also springboards to multiple experiments with healthcare improvement, which allowed for the successes from the trial and error to be amplified.



Wicked Messes and Sustainable Society

In the healthcare example, we see success grow from the action research orientation that is both difficult and transformational. Indeed, it is difficult precisely because it is transformational!

“Attractor” is a term from complexity thinking: it is the “something” around which a new system organizes itself. In the healthcare account for example, the stakeholders took the patients’ perspective, making the patient the attractor of the new system. That was a fateful choice that allowed for a fundamental shift in their shared health-care system.

This departure from “cure and care as usual” created a really different starting point for change. In systemic terms, making the patient an “attractor” gives a unifying and energizing focus for all stakeholders. This allows for new patterns of conversation and action that may take their system into entirely new directions. Doing this gave voice to the experiences of the patients and made their journey through the system the key attracting principle that inspired all development activities.

The account also telescopes the practices of action researchers that emphasize reflexivity, as well as partnership and participation. By “partnership and participation,” action researchers are referring to the quality of the relationships with primary stakeholders and the extent to which all stakeholders are appropriately involved in the design and assessment of inquiry and change.

By “actionable,” they refer to the extent to which work provides new ideas that guide action in response to need, as well as our concern with developing action research crafts of practice in their own terms. By “reflexive,” they mean the extent to which the self is acknowledged as an instrument of change among change agents and partner



*Wicked Messes
and Sustainable
Society*

stakeholders. By “significant,” they mean having meaning and relevance beyond an immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and wider ecology.

What might this alchemical stance mean for responding to one of the wicked problems of our time? Our sustainability crisis?

WORLD TRANSFORMATION AND ACTION RESEARCH



*World
Transformation
and Action
Research*

It is both exciting and useful to wonder what will be different when action research becomes sustainably “mainstream.” How would knowledge-creation enterprises and policy-making work in this new world? How would our organizations, stock markets, and governments operate? How would the G-8 function, the UN? Might the institutional, community, and ecological decay we have seen in this lifetime be addressed constructively, collaboratively? We invite you to think in those terms as you work with the Cookbook. And we invite you into proactive AR+ communities so you have support with your efforts.

The Entry on Wicked Messes offers one summary of action research cooking applied to the global challenge of climate change. We end with an invitation to locate yourself inside the global system - as yet under organized - of Transformation. We can conceive of transformation of transformation as the system of people and practices that together make up a better world, a world that works for all of us (not leaving out other species...or indeed anyone or anything). And this is why we adopt the action research orientation: Because there is a need and an opportunity, for co-creating a better life together.

We cannot continue as we are in our unsustainable ways. At this moment in history this means we are called to transform our systems and lives toward a sustainable world. So like so much action research we close here with a call to action - social contagion - proliferation of transformation. And because we incite good action research, we add a note on tools so that words about the problem connect to experimenting for



World Transformation and Action Research

moving forward.

TRANSFORMATION TOWARD A WORLD THAT WORKS FOR ALL CREATION

We mostly ignore, experientially, how emergent and interactive our world is (too many of us have drunk the Cartesian “Kool-aid” that limits, indeed reduces and impoverishes, our sense knowledge to individual rationality). The result has been fragmentation, a sense of isolation and as manifest in the wider world, natural systems decline. We continue to treat ourselves and natural processes as atoms, much like billiard balls, as if subjectivity doesn’t matter, as if the “system” has nothing to do with intersubjectivity. As we learn to grapple with the implications of relational subatomic swirl, it is now timely to re-conceive humans and systems coordination as webs of collaboration--the basic orientation of action research--rather than heavy-handed social engineering. There is an invitation here to re-imagine transformation as a collaborative potential, consciously directed toward optimizing our natural and human systems of intelligence, care and creative mystery.

Being in life as part of life is hardly new. In fact it is the heart of indigenous knowledge and wisdom traditions the world over, consider the “7th generation” principle taught by Native Americans who encourage every decision, be it personal, governmental or corporate, to consider how it will affect our descendants seven generations into the future. But Modernism, while providing a great leap in material well being has impoverished our sense of belonging to life.

Calls to transformation are now calls us to remember this ancient wisdom as we “upshift” our assumptions, worldviews, processes and practices to find a more adap-



World Transformation and Action Research

tive fit with reality. What might that mean for us as action researchers?

In Pedagogy of Hope, Paolo Freire writes: “we cannot get there from there, we get there from here.” If there is a sustainable world, transformation starting here starts with me, you, us, in the experience of now.

Transformation calls us to realize that - individually - we are the ones who have been keeping the old maladaptive system alive. We have done this by keeping our personal and professional selves separate, our deeply valued views unrealized in everyday life. Too often we have been afraid and, moreover, we have not fully grasped the power dynamics that keep the current system in place. We’ve been afraid - often for our lives - to claim our personal power and to confront the shadow dimensions of how we use or are used by power.

Transformation now calls us now to bring our fragmented lives together, and to also invite others to do so - despite being afraid. Be it our fear for our reputation or for literally our lives, we likely nonetheless sense the liberation of a new way and may feel called toward acting informed by transformational intention.

Transformation involves the transformation of power (note that power is not only to be thought about as power over but importantly as power with) - so we must become more savvy about power, and admit how we’ve also been colluding in status quo power hierarchies.



*World
Transformation
and Action
Research*

ECOLOGY OF LEARNING & TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES

From the opening of Volume I of the Cookbook, we have asserted and illustrated how Action Research offers an orientation to transformative knowledge creation that is capable of responding to the challenge of transformation toward a more sustainable world. In the context of Transformation Action Research this means inquiry with stakeholders, not about them, for them, but with them, using transformative practices that help rewire the context, by bringing cycles of action and inquiry to dialogic spaces from which new experiments arise.

Transformative learning occurs when we are purposeful in our learning. We agree with the spirit of inquiry of Louis Pasteur when he said that “Learning requires a mindfulness and intention to take in data and information in an on-going manner... Chance favors the prepared mind.” As the following figure suggests we enter into multiple ways of meeting and learning in which relational space gives rise to rich concepts that can be experimented with in cycles of practice and inquiry.

There are an overwhelming number of tools to support large systems change analysis and organizing events. Which methods and tools are appropriate for use at what times in the transformation process? How should they be used?

Much has yet to be, and should be, written-up and shared from the world of transformative practice. We can also point to the appetizers of it through the Cookbook with reference to post conventional inquiry, e.g., emphasizing first person inquiry that we place at the heart of new organizing (See Por, Bradbury and Uldall in Volume I), the use of the Arts and Action Research, see Etmanski & Bishop). What transformative



*World
Transformation
and Action
Research*

practices have in common is that they complement our otherwise conditioned focus on propositional knowledge - on frameworks & conceptual maps. Transformative practices emphasize embodiment, heart, hands.

An important sign that transformative practices are in play is that there is a significant reduction in “being in the head.” There is likely a significant reduction in wordiness and expressing individual opinions. There is more silence and artistry. The latter allows collective knowledge to arise and be used. We hope - even expect - that future volumes of the Cookbook will include much more on transformative practices as more of us engage in experimenting.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOOLS

In order to co-create our sustainable world we must deeply know that we are not separate from - and therefore cannot fragment - our natural, technical and cultural contexts. Much as Nobel Prize winner Percy Bridgman suggested, “there is in fact no scientific method as such, but the vital feature of the scientist’s procedures has been merely to do their utmost, no holds barred.” This applies to all efforts in Action Research and in choosing tools as we step into transformations. In the following table by Steve Waddell, we see one cut at how to select tools. This matrix locates action research itself as a tool!



*World
Transformation
and Action
Research*

TABLE - *Transformation Tools, Source: Steve Waddell*

TOOL CATEGORY	PURPOSE	EXAMPLES (illustrative, not comprehensive)
Systems Mapping	Develop an understanding of the change system and its dynamics	Social Network Analysis, System Dynamics Analysis, Value Network Analysis, Strategic Clarity Analysis, Systemic Change Matrix, Web Crawls, and SenseMaker
Foresight, Scenarios	Create alternative views of timelines and possibilities	Trend Projection, Problem-Focused Scenarios, Actor-Centric Scenarios, Reflexive Interventionist/Multi-Agent-based Scenarios
Intra-Meeting Processes	Generative dialogue, honoring differences/commonalities	Process Facilitation, World Café, Open Space, Charrettes, Wisdom Circles, and 21 st Century Town Meetings
Collective Action Processes	Develop action that transcends differences	Future Search, Consensus Conferences, Sustained Dialogues, Appreciative Inquiry, National Issue Forums, Public Conversations, Theory U, and Rapid Cycle Prototyping
Social Media	Connect large numbers of people and organizations	Avaaz, U-Tube, MadMundo TV, MOOCs, Crowdfunding, Facebook, Kickstarter, and Razoo
Learning Processes	Invent and build capacity	Action Research/Inquiry/Science, Learning Histories, Learning Journeys, and After Action Reviews



*World
Transformation
and Action
Research*

TABLE - *Transformation Tools, Source: Steve Waddell*

TOOL CATEGORY	PURPOSE	EXAMPLES (illustrative, not comprehensive)
Assessment Processes	Understand how to do better	Developmental Evaluation, Outcome Mapping, and other Mapping
Visual Analytics Big Data Collection	Understand the change field	Analysis of spatial relationships, text and concepts, time/trends, and objects' relationships

Conscious World Transformation toward sustainability is already happening. We see the resurgence of the “feminine” in practices that are transforming our lives e.g., in the local and sustainable food movement, kinder parenting practices and child-centered education. From a systems perspective the structural interplay of policy, technology, finance, services and a shift away from materialists consumer behavior is required for sustainable transformation. Therefore starting where we are and cooking together our action research in the following areas is what’s called for:

- Visioning
- Organizing
- Learning
- Measuring
- Financing
- Advocating
- Experimenting

IV. NOW WHAT?



AN INVITATION

Action researchers don't work (or cook) alone. We can't. Yet often we do not have the community we need close by.

If you are Interested in “cooking together” in your own system or interested in learning more about the key principles and practices associated with the work described in community with like-minded practitioner colleagues, please check out the [AR+ Co-labs](#)

The Co-labs are intended to make available the power of global community, using online “cooking” platforms. We invite you to join us. Let's see what we can accomplish together.

AR+ CO-LABS foster friendly, person-centered spaces as dynamos of good action research in different domains, from education to healthcare, inter-personal relationship, to sustainable organizing.

CO-LABS invite participants to work within the collaborative spirit of action research. Each co-lab supports a learning orientation, bringing scholars and practitioners together, prioritizing mutual benefit and cultivating both current work and the next generation. We inquire/ practice in an integrated way that includes personal/ first-person, interpersonal/second-person and impersonal/third-person inquiry/practice.

Participation in our programs is by donation.

Let's get cooking!

Bon Appetit!



V. APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF THE STORY CHAPTERS VOLUME 1: COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH. STORIES AND RESOURCES FOR SELF AND SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION



COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH

STORIES AND RESOURCES
FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



**HILARY BRADBURY
AND ASSOCIATES**

In **Action Research and the Sustainability Imperative**, Christopher Juniper, a sustainability economist and president of the AR+ board, offers a foreword from the perspective of a change agent not yet familiar with the actual practice of action research. Juniper assesses its value for addressing our sustainability imperatives. The book starts, therefore, in addressing itself beyond the choir of action researchers to a larger community of organizers and change agents who care about creating a more sustainable world.

In **How the Apprentice also becomes a Cook: An Invitation to the Action Research Table**, Latin American action researchers, Danilo R. Streck and Oscar Jara Holliday, offer a preface that includes a perfectly selected quote from Paulo Freire:

“the act of cooking, for example, presumes some knowledge concerning the use of the kitchen: how to turn on the oven, how to regulate the temperature, how to deal with certain risks of fire, how to harmonize the use of different spices in an attractive and delicious synthesis. In the practice of cooking the apprentice confirms some of his/her knowledge, corrects others, and so the apprentice becomes a cook.” (Freire 1997: 23)

They thus welcome all action researchers, from novice to chef, to be creative with the emancipatory and creative spirit that inspires the democratic spirit of action research the world over.

In **Healthcare Transformation: Action Research Linking Local Practices to National Scale**, Svante Lifvergren and Danielle Zandee describe a successful



COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH

STORIES AND RESOURCES
FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



**HILARY BRADBURY
AND ASSOCIATES**

large-scale experiment with transforming healthcare delivery in Sweden. It developed in a patient-centric fashion, convening key stakeholders of the healthcare system in learning platforms. The results exceeds expectations with massive cost reduction, an increase in patient satisfaction and their health outcomes, as well as reduction in stress for the healthcare delivery teams.

In **Institutional Entrepreneurship: Transforming Management Education for Participatory Human Development in the Philippines**, Benito Teehankee describes bringing action research into the curriculum of his university's undergrad and MBA programs in the Philippines. The work to engage all faculty and administration as well as managing the complexity of students' projects helps us appreciate the sustainable revolution that facilitates the spread of action research.

In **Educating the Action Research Scholar-Practitioner**, Martin J. Leahy, Aliko Nicolaides, Catherine Etmanski, and Kathy Bishop, each graduate level professors in different North American universities, describe teaching students how to do action research so that their students can produce impactful knowledge of value in their professional lives. Naturally, they do so by bringing an action research orientation to the effort.

In **Action Research for Environmental Sustainability: Facilitating Individual and Collective Journeys**, Marina Apgar and Will Allen describe how they build sustainable action research social process capacity in their work in international development. This account offers a rich description of an alternative (and a complement) to conventional LogFrame approaches in development which demand goal setting often in advance of stakeholder input. Their work therefore augments



COOKING WITH ACTION RESEARCH

STORIES AND RESOURCES
FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



**HILARY BRADBURY
AND ASSOCIATES**

the common single loop, short-term-fix change approach with a longer time horizon of helping people help themselves sustainably.

In **Transformation Action Research at Large Scale: Global University for the Future as a Global Action Network**, Steve Waddell and Oguz Baburoglu offer grounded utopian thinking to help reimagine the socio-political architecture capable of allowing organization around complex global problems (such as climate change) at the requisite scale. They combine their efforts with Steve's Global Action Networks and Oguz's University of the Future to suggest a model that can get us from our current fragmented social architecture toward the kinds of collaborative, large-scale organizing needed to address systems level issues for which, to date, the United Nations seeks to fill the yawning gap. The University of the Future organized as a Global Action Network in effect democratizes the global organizing needed for us to flourish in an increasingly interdependent global village.

In **Future Organizing: Connecting Self and Systems Transformation**, George Pór, Hilary Bradbury, and Bjørn Uldall offer grounded utopian thinking to reimagine the future workplace and with it, organizing in general. Connecting purpose and structures of interpersonal power allows for our human creativity to rise, and with it our capacity as organizational and business leaders to respond sustainably to social needs.

In **Relational Action Inquiry: To the Heart of the Learning**, Hilary Bradbury and Shakiyla Smith flesh out the personal and interpersonal skills and mindsets required for action research to be developmental and ultimately transformative of self and community.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE AUTHORS



Will Allen, PhD. is an independent systems scientist, Action Researcher and evaluator. He has more than 25 years of experience in sustainable development and natural resource management. Through his work he seeks to bridge local, indigenous and organizational perspectives, and help diverse groups work together to develop a shared understanding around goals, actions and indicators. He also developed and manages the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) website – <http://learningforsustainability.net> - as an international clearinghouse for on-line resources around collaboration and innovation processes. He has worked in both national and international research organisations, and brings experience from working with a wide range of different end-user stakeholder sectors. He may be reached at willallenz@gmail.com



J. Marina Apgar, PhD is a research-practitioner who is passionate about understanding and facilitating the creative space between research and learning processes and development outcomes through engaging in complex adaptive systems. She has spent over 10 years working directly with indigenous peoples and social movements in Latin America on local resilience and adaptation initiatives building transdisciplinary methods. Through her work with the Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Assessment initiative, she has also supported engagement of indigenous and local peoples and their knowledge systems in global policy processes such as the UNFCCC seeking more transformative systems change. She recently led the design of participatory Action Research as the main implementation and learning strategy for a multi-partner CGIAR research program in five countries through her role as Knowledge Sharing and Learning scientist at World- Fish. She is currently research fellow with the participation research cluster at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK.



Oguz N. Babüroglu is a core faculty member in the School of Management at the Sabanci University in Turkey. He studied operations research when he was at University of Sussex and at University of Lancaster in UK and received his PhD from the Wharton School of University of Pennsylvania in social systems sciences. He is one of the first practitioners of Action Research in Turkey; a pioneering consultant in the development and implementation of micro-democratic communities and participatory decision-making processes. His practice with “the Search Conference” has had a direct influence on the democratization of many organizations in Turkey. Thanks to the impact of these processes The “Collective Mind-ortak akil in Turkish” and “The Search Conference-arama konferansi in Turkish” have become familiar terms in Turkey. He is currently an advisory board member of four Journals; Action Research Journal, International Journal of Action Research, Journal of Systems and Behavioral Science and Journal of Vocational Education.



Kathy Bishop is an Associate Professor and the Program Head for Royal Roads University’s Master’s of Arts in Leadership, one of Canada’s largest graduate programs promoting leadership development. She teaches foundational leadership theory and advanced Action Research in online, blended, and face-to-face settings. Kathy has a background in adult education, experiential and arts-based leadership and learning, social work, and personal and organizational leadership. As a scholar-practitioner with her own consulting business, Kathy also specializes in facilitation and strategic planning for leaders and teams within various businesses, government agencies and not-for-profit organizations. In addition to a published peer-reviewed journal article defining a multiple ethics paradigm to guide research-based theatre/applied theatre



work, she has written and published two books on personal leadership: *Vision! Passion! Powerful Action! The World on Your Terms* (2005) and *Vision Crafting* (2001). She may be reached at kathy.bishop@royalroads.ca

Hilary Bradbury, Ph.D., is a scholar-practitioner focused on the human and organizational dimensions of creating healthy communities. A professor of organization studies since 1998 (Case Western, USC and OHSU), today she is editor-in-chief of *Action Research Journal* (Sage). Hilary was born and bred in Dublin, Ireland and educated at Trinity College proceeding to Divinity Schools at Harvard and University of Chicago. She earned her PhD at Boston College's School of Management with a focus on change and transformation. Author of numerous journal articles and editor of the successful *Handbooks of Action Research*, her latest book, is *Eros/Power: Love in the Spirit of Inquiry* (Integral Publishers, 2016, with Bill Torbert). Hilary is the convening hubstress and CEO of AR+, the global virtual community for participatory Action Researchers "accomplishing more good together." AR+ convenes community of practice 'co-labs' in support of participative inquiry/practice in education, health-care, development, relational action inquiry and organizing. Hilary, who enjoys formal affiliations with the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Business School Lausanne (BSL) and California Institute for Integral Studies (CIIS), was named 2018 Jubilee Professor at Chalmers Institute of Technology, Sweden. In addition to her work as a scholar, Hilary is a member of the teachers' circle at Zen Center of Portland. She may be reached at hilary@hilarybradbury.net



Catherine Etmanski is Director and Associate Professor in the School of Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University in Victoria, Canada. With a background in adult education and popular theatre, Catherine is passionate about social and environmental justice and seeks to incorporate creative elements into her research and teaching. She has published about environmental praxis, teaching participatory research, and the use of arts-based methods in promoting dialogue and democracy. Her recent books are titled, “Food leadership: Leadership and adult learning for global food systems transformation” (Sense Publishers, 2017) and “Learning and teaching community-based research: Linking pedagogy to practice” (University of Toronto Press, 2014). She may be reached at catherine.etmanski@royalroads.ca



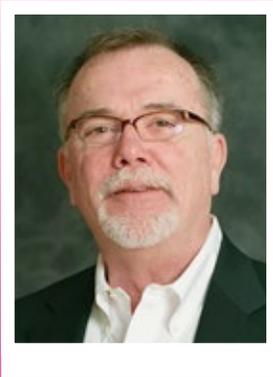
Svante Lifvergren, MD., Ph.D., is Quality Development Director at Skaraborg Hospital in Western Sweden. He is also a faculty member of the Division of Service Management and Logistics at Chalmers Institute of Technology in Gothenburg where his research is mainly performed within the Centre for Healthcare Improvement (CHI). A pulmonary physician by training, Svante is the author of numerous studies about healthcare systems transformation. On a day-to-day basis Svante is personally engaged with facilitating patient-centric learning platforms with direct impact at the local and, increasingly, at the national level of the healthcare systems of Sweden. In his spare time Svante leads the healthcare domain of the Action Research journal where he is associate editor. Svante may be reached at svante.lifvergren@vgregion.se



Jean Hartmann, Ph.D., is a nonprofit strategy consultant located in South Florida, and received her doctorate in organizational leadership from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Her dissertation work focused on enacting paradigm change (changing perspectives and practices) in the social work setting through reflexive awareness. She integrates this form of conscious changing (alongside cognitive and behavioral shifts) as part of her collaborative work with clients, peers, and students. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees for Organization Development Network, and is an adjunct faculty member at the TCSPP. Jean Hartmann has recently joined the AR+ Co-labs, and is excited about engaging in ‘performative’ inquiry as a form of AR to expand research perspectives and transform teaching/learning cultures through mixed media LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jean-hartmann-770728a9/>



Christopher Juniper, ISSP-CSP, has been an international sustainability consultant and educator/system developer for 20 years, an environmental sustainability advocate for 40 years and an economic development manager for 12 years. He currently chairs the board of the non profit ARSECC Network which stewards AR+. More about CJ: www.SustainALogic.com

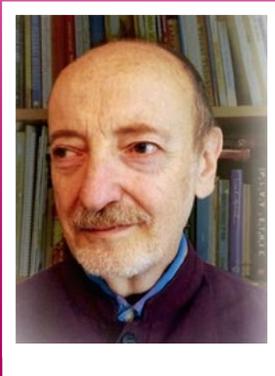


Martin J. Leahy, Ph.D. is a teacher, researcher, and organizational consultant. Dialogical/relational (Buber, Rogers, Freire) approaches to teaching, research, and leadership are the foundation for Martin's practice and scholarship. As OD and leadership development consultant, his early and mid-career work, at two medium-sized national firms, involved engagements with many of the Fortune 500. Twenty years ago, he launched his own consulting firm, committed to serve more not-for-profits. Teaching is a second career. A professor of organizational leadership, he has taught doctoral students in organization and management since 2003, currently as Professor, PhD program in Organizational Leadership, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. He served as his campus Faculty Council Chair and the National Faculty Council Chair. He is the recipient of the school's 2016-2017 Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Teaching. He is the Board Chair of The Gestalt Therapy Institute of Philadelphia. He holds a Ph.D. in Human & Organizational Systems from Fielding Graduate University. He may be reached at mleahy@thechicagoschool.edu



Aliko Nicolaides Ed.D. is Associate Professor of Adult Learning, Leadership and Adult Development at the University of Georgia in the program of Learning, Leadership and Organization Development. Dr. Nicolaides' seeks to optimize vital developmental conditions for adults, groups and systems to learn. Through the past decade of research and teaching, she has developed a theory of learning-within-complexity called 'Generative Learning.' The results show how adults learn from within the complexity so prevalent in this period of liquid modernity. Her work suggests that encounters with persistent ambiguity evoke learning from the potential hidden

within complexity. Dr. Nicolaides pedagogy is grounded in Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI); a methodology which consciously develops adult's collaborative capacity to better respond to the fluidity and complexity of our 21st century. The complex demands of a rapidly changing, interconnected world require new skill sets. CDAI is part of an emerging learning pedagogy that deliberately helps adults adapt to (and ultimately benefit from) this new global paradigm. Aliko may be reached at: alikin@uga.edu



George Pór, is a researcher in collective intelligence and strategic learning partner to visionary leaders in business, government and civil society. He is the Founder of Enlivening Edge, the online magazine and community of “next-stage” organizations, and serving as an evolutionary-Teal mentor to several of them. His teaching and Visiting Research Fellow posts included London School of Economics, Universiteit van Amsterdam, INSEAD, California Institute for Integral Studies, UC Berkeley, and Université de Paris. He is the Director of CommunityIntelligence, a transformation agency based in Brighton (UK). George served as the lead consultant to the “communities of practice” strategy of the European Commission. His clients included: Alberta Research Council, AT&T, Campus of International excellence – Southern Catalonia, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative, Electric Power Research Institute, Ericsson, European Commission, European Investment Bank, Ford Motor Co, Future Considerations, Global Leadership Academy, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, International Center for Organization Design, KaosPilots, Motorola, Procter & Gamble, Shell, Siemens, Swiss Re, UN Development Programme, UNEP/



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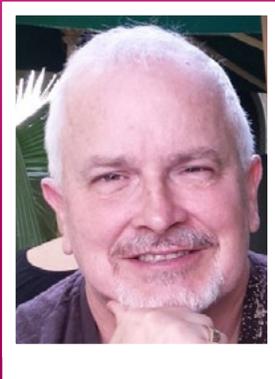


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Bjørn Uldall, Ph.D., has sustained a passion for exploring more meaningful ways of leading and organizing since the turn of the millennium. His quest has included an Action Research Ph.D from UWE, in Bristol, UK. In this he ran a number of collaborative inquiry groups with business leaders, exploring the notion of 'meaning-

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