WORKING IN COMPLEX SYSTEMS, MEASURING PERFORMANCE, CREATING SAFER COMMUNITIES PART II

#SCSNComplexity

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Welcome
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A Human, Learning, Systems approach to Community Safety

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#HumanLearningSystems

Agenda

10.00	Welcome and introductions
10.15	The Human Learning Systems (HLS) approach
10.50	Q&A
11.20	Break
11.35	Table discussion - what would the HLS approach look like for you?
12.35	Working lunch
1.05	Designing an experiment for HLS practice
1.35	What next?
2.00	Finish

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Introductions

Introduce yourselves to others on your table:

Who are you?

Why have you come today?

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Overview

- What is complexity?

- What does complexity mean for your work?

Human **Learning** **Systems**

- Building a movement

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Complexity

Why is complexity relevant?

Our assertion:

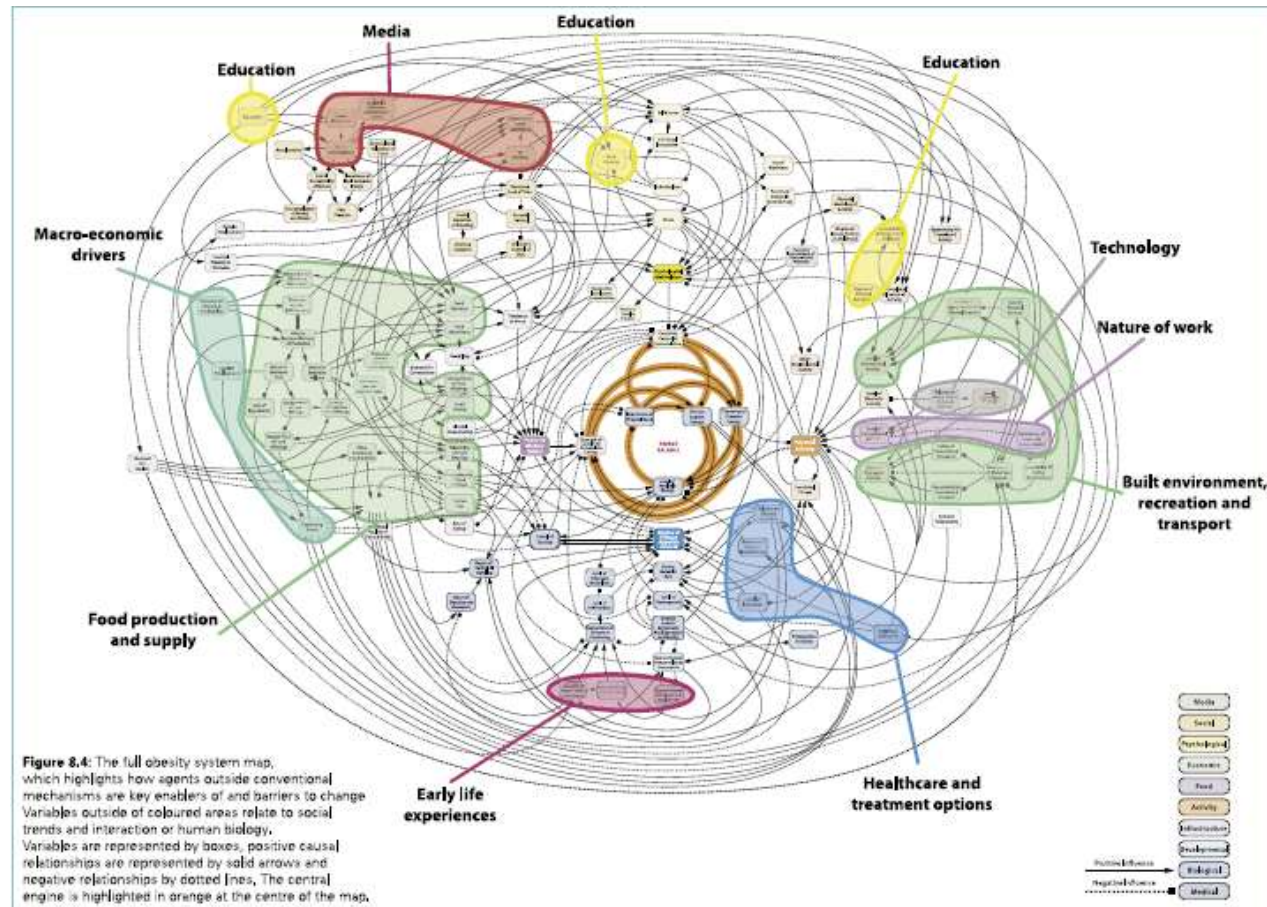Complexity is important because it describes the fundamental processes by which the **outcomes** we care about are made.

If we fail to understand and embrace complexity, we will not be able to create the outcomes we seek.
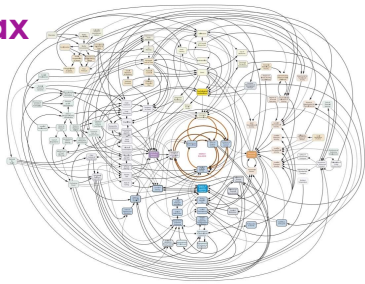
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Complexity

We know we are in **complex** territory when:

• there are a **variety** of strengths and needs, and these look different from different perspectives

• when outcomes are being produced by **many factors interacting together in an ever changing way**

• when people are working in systems that are **beyond the control** of any one of the actors in the system
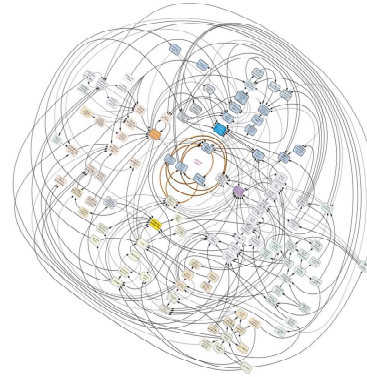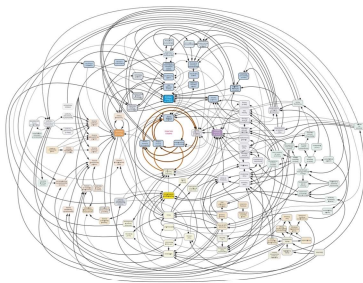
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Figure 8.4: The full obesity system map, which highlights how agents outside conventional mechanisms are key enablers of and barriers to change. Variables outside of coloured areas relate to social trends and interaction or human biology. Variables are represented by boxes, positive causal relationships are represented by solid arrows and negative relationships by dotted lines. The central engine is highlighted in orange at the centre of the map.
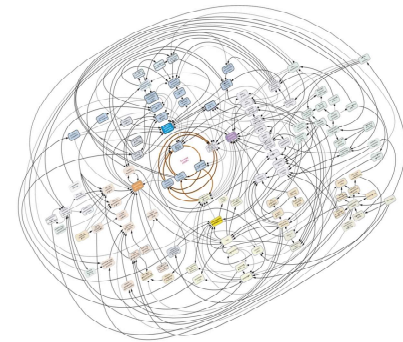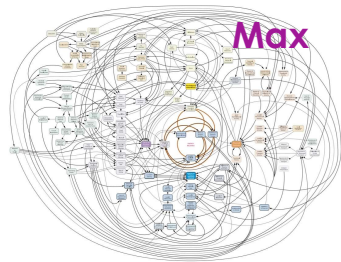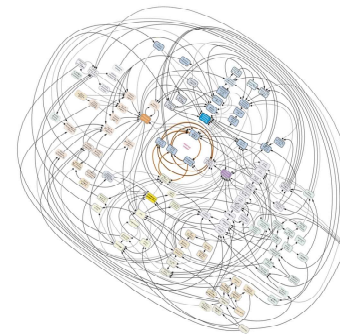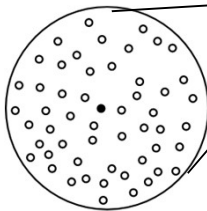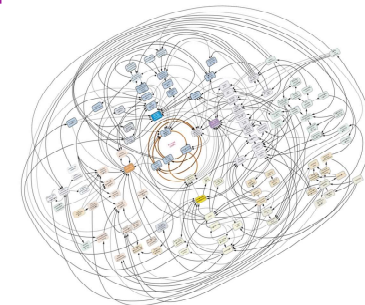
Human Variety

Max

Rob

Toby

Mary-Lee

Dynamic complexity

Max

Rob
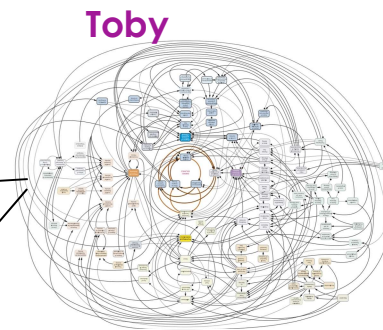
Toby

Mary-Lee

Let's play a game…

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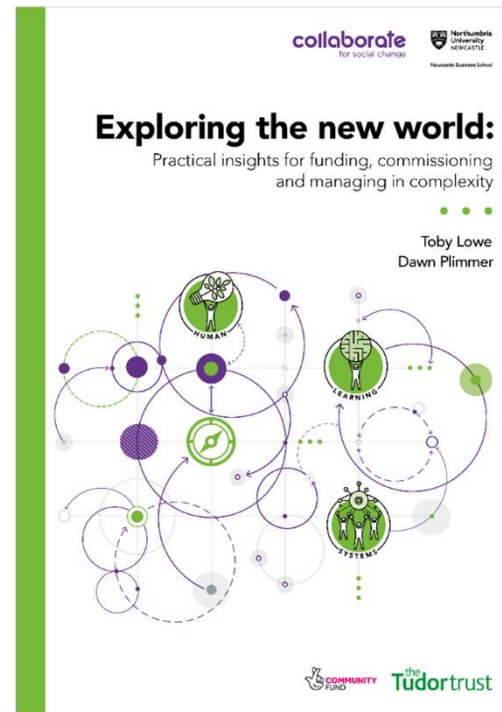for social change

Implications for Performance Management

OUTCOMES ARE NOT DELIVERED BY ORGANISATIONS!

The outcomes we desire are emergent properties
of complex systems

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What does complexity require of us?

- The capacity to respond to **variety** – each person's strengths and needs are different

- The ability to **adapt to change** – the context in which social interventions are undertaken constantly changes

- The ability to **shape systems** whose behaviour can't be reliably predicted, and which no one controls

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Left cover:

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A Whole New World:
Funding and Commissioning in Complexity

• • • •

Annabel Davidson Knight
Toby Lowe
Marion Brossard
Julie Wilson

Newcastle University Business School   kite Centre for Knowledge, Innovation, Technology and Enterprise   DC Digital Civics

Right cover:

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Northumbria University NEWCASTLE
Newcastle Business School

Exploring the new world:
Practical insights for funding, commissioning
and managing in complexity

• • •

Toby Lowe
Dawn Plimmer

HUMAN   LEARNING   SYSTEMS

COMMUNITY FUND   the Tudor trust

Key ideas

Funding, Commissioning and Managing in complexity involves:

Being **Human** to one another: put on your **VEST**

Learning and adaptation: improvement requires

continuous learning

positive outcomes – be a System Steward

Systems: Nurture healthy systems to create

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Human

To be Human, put on your VEST:

- Respond to **Variety** of human need and experience
- Use **Empathy** to understand the life of others
- View people from a **Strengths-based** perspective
- **Trust** people with decision-making

For Funders means:

- Long term funding
- Funding without Performance Measures/KPIs – "core/unrestricted funding"
- Fund those organisations you trust to build effective human relationships with people – e.g. Plymouth – £80m, 10 year Alliance contract

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Human

= Social action is Bespoke by Default

Each human being is recognised as having their own strengths and needs.

The job of social interventions is to:

- Hear and understand those strengths and needs through forming relationships with people

- Respond appropriately to those strengths and needs

"liberating" workers from attempts to proceduralise what happens in good human relationships, and instead focus on the capabilities and contexts which help enable these relationships"

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Learning

Current view: Learning is a phase in social innovation

- Learn & experiment.
- Find "what works"
- Do more of that
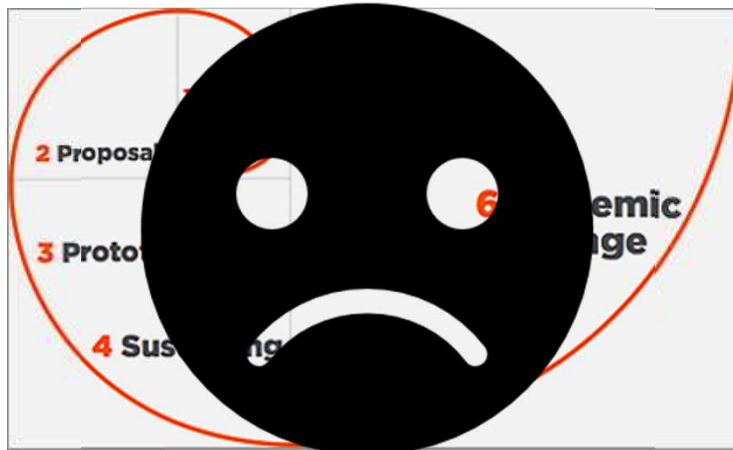
Young Foundation,
Stages of Social Innovation

Learning

In a complex environment, **learning is a continuous process**

There is no such thing as "what works" – because "what works" is always changing.

"What works" is a continuous process of learning and adaption.

= funders and commissioners are "purchasing" the capacity for organisations to **learn and adapt**.

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Learning

"intended learning"

(we know what 'good' looks like, we want you to know it too)

vs

"emergent learning"

(what 'good' looks like keeps changing, we all need to keep up)

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Emergent learning

Sahana Chattopadhyay

https://medium.com/activate-the-future/six-enablers-of-emergent-learning-a1b9390279a6
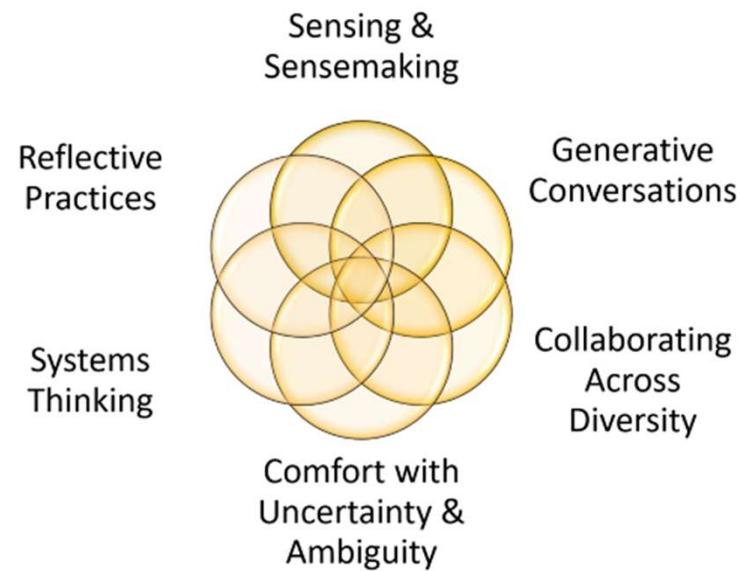
Learning

Learning is enabled by:

- Funding for learning, not 'results'

- Creating a learning culture:

  - Removing competition

  - Creating a positive error culture

  - Formal and informal spaces for learning

- Using data to learn

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Learning

Campbell's Law:

'The more any **quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making**, the more subject it will be to **corruption pressures** and the more apt it will be to **distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor**.'

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Systems

Who looks after the health of a system?

Role of System Stewards

Systems

System Stewards

What does a healthy system look like?

[System Behaviours (via Lankelly Chase Foundation):](#)

Perspective
- People view themselves as part of an interconnected whole
- People are viewed as resourceful and bringing strengths
- People share a vision

Power
- Power is shared, and equality of voice actively promoted
- Decision-making is devolved
- Accountability is mutual

Participation
- Open, trusting relationships enable effective dialogue
- Leadership is collaborative and promoted at every level
- Feedback and collective learning drive adaptation

Do you know what the relevant system(s) look like?

- Who are the relevant actors?
- Do the actors in the system recognise it as a system?
- What are the relationships between those actors?

How do you know what the state of play with your system is?

- Who is acting as a **System Steward**?

Building a Movement – what's happening?

Research into what HLS practice looks like
e.g. Tudor Trust – what does it mean to be an HLS funder?

What are the implications for VCS organisations?
IVAR

Experiments in HLS practice
Plymouth, Liverpool, Nottingham, Surrey, Gloucs, Cornerstone and more…

New funding approaches
Save the Children, Ashoka, Losing Control

Building a Movement – what's happening in Scotland?

- **Active experimentation** – providing advice and support to actively test and embed – places or on thematic issues

E.g. Cornerstone Commissioning Test sites, Funders

- **Connecting for collective bravery** – provide courage and solidarity to dispersed changemakers – learning communities

E.g. Corra's People in Place programme, SCSN, KIN commissioning group

- **Working with an enabling national context** – learn and challenge – Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, regulators, membership bodies

E.g. Reform of Adult Social Care, CCPS Commissioning and Procurement, Firestarter

We need your ideas!

- **Active experimentation**

What existing programmes or projects could HLS practice help support?

Do you know places who could benefit from bespoke support?

- **Connecting for collective bravery**

Are you part of a network which would value exploring HLS approaches together?

What new groups could be useful to establish?

- **Working with an enabling national context**

Are there particular policy or regulatory developments where an HLS approach could be valuable?

What can you do?

- Use **the language of Human Learning Systems**

- Act as a **champion**. How can use your leverage with others?

- **Explore** funding/managing in an HLS way. Where would you start? (this afternoon...)

- **Join with others**: "Complexities" group

https://khub.net/group/complexity-friendly-system-oriented-commissioning-pilot-project

- Over 300 leaders from across the world (mainly UK)
- Resources from other places
- Forum to ask questions

Questions?

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Coffee Break

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Table discussions

What would an HLS approach look like for you?

In pairs, pick one of these questions to discuss for 40 minutes:

Human: What would a VEST (Variety Empathy Strengths & Trust) approach look like in your organisation?

Learning: How can your organisation learn and adapt to a dynamic world?

Systems: What is your role in creating healthy systems?

Then for **20 minutes**, share what emerged from your conversation with others on your table

Lunch:
Find a group to design the start of your HLS exploration

The life-cycle of HLS practice
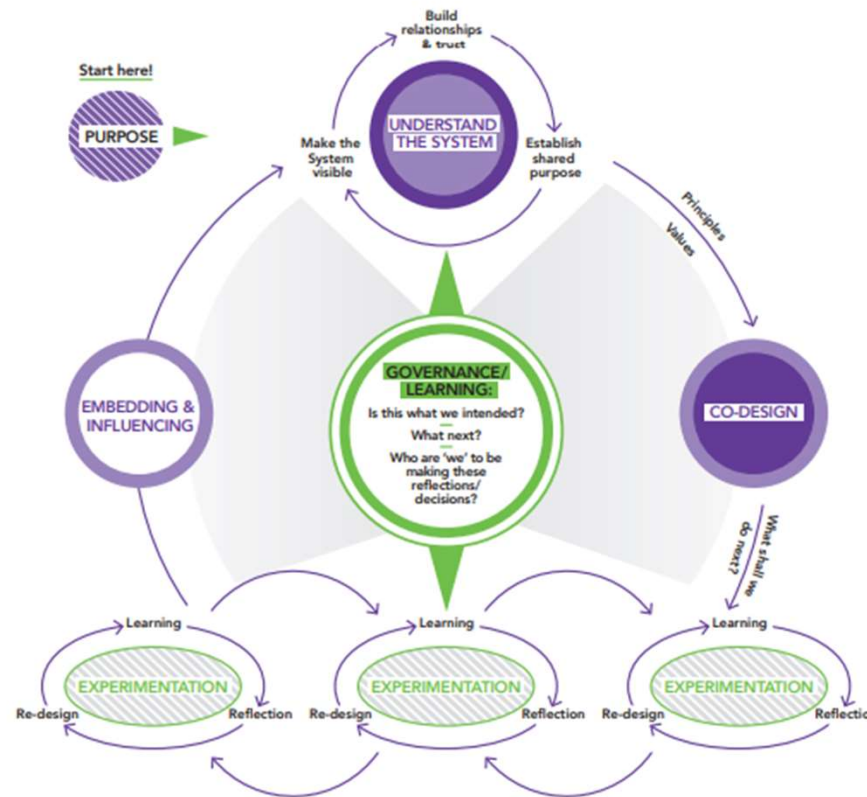
Exercise

In small groups:
- What is your system's de facto purpose?
- How will you 'understand the system'?
- **30 minutes**
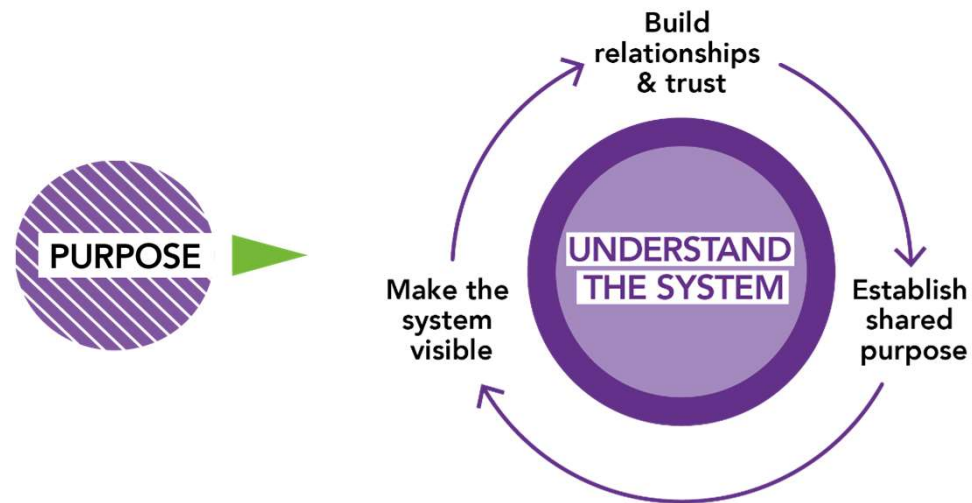
What would an HLS approach look like for you?

In pairs:

What will you do next?

What help do you need, and from whom?

10 minutes discussion in pairs
1 minute to share

Thanks for listening

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Close

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SCSN Learning

Publications & Resources