



**CREATING THE FUTURE**  
Change the Questions, Change the World!

# **Organizational Structure as a Vehicle for Propelling Mission Success**

**A Proposal for  
Blowing Things Up  
and Starting Over**

**by Hildy Gottlieb  
October, 2018**

**DRAFT**



## CREATING THE FUTURE

Change the Questions, Change the World!

October 8, 2018

Dear Reader:

The white paper you are about to read is a working draft, for purposes of review and discussion.

As such, we hope you will share your comments and thoughts, both about the paper itself, and also about the approach we are about to begin experimenting with.

- Is the paper clear? If there are places that need clarifying, please let me know.
- Are there places where a graphic would be helpful? (The graphics here were all done by me, and I'm not a graphics person – I'm a word person! If you envision a graphic element that will help clarify or help the flow, please share what you are envisioning, in whatever way makes sense to do so.)
- Are there other people you know who are experimenting with these same questions? Please introduce us!
- Are there questions I didn't ask here? (Please ask and answer them!)

We also ask that you not share this paper widely, as it is an early draft and we want to be sure it has been reviewed by our peers before it sees wide distribution. (You will see how early this draft is when you see the formatting of what will eventually be footnotes, as well as the cryptic author's-notes-to-self that serve as the bibliography and citations page.)

Mostly, I hope you will get involved as we begin building this structure. Because this is some of the most exciting work this team of organizational design geeks has ever been part of. And we hope you will join the fun!

With much appreciation,



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# 1 – Introduction

If there were no such things as organizations as we know them,  
what would we build as vehicles for  
creating the humane, healthy, vibrantly thriving world we want to see?

That is the question we have been grappling with at Creating the Future. What began in 2015 as a simple discussion about recruiting new members to our board of directors has led to 3 years of research, inquiry, and discussion with people around the globe, focused on that far larger question. What sort of organizational structure would propel our mission forward?

From that deep inquiry, we are ready to take action, to experiment with not only answering that question, but building the structure.

This white paper is an invitation for you to join us on that journey.

## What's at Stake

“Why, when we humans have such a great capacity for caring, consciousness, and creativity, has our world seen so much cruelty, insensitivity, and destructiveness?”

~ Riane Eisler, *The Real Wealth of Nations*

If you are reading this paper, you are probably involved in social change in some way. You may work at a foundation or capacity building organization, focused on enhancing the capacity of social change organizations to accomplish amazing results. You may be the leader of an organization yourself, or a consultant who helps organizations be the best they can be.

Whatever role you play, if you have felt the frustrating push-pull of Riane Eisler's words above, you are not alone. Many of us feel as if the very survival of the planet is at stake, along with the various species (including humans) who depend on that planet. Every day, as we read the news, we feel we are losing more and more ground in the effort to live peacefully and joyfully with each other.

To those of us whose daily lives are spent working to create a better world, it feels like what is at stake is EVERYTHING.

The frustration in Ms. Eisler's words resonate throughout much of the social change arena. The United States alone spends millions (and perhaps billions) of dollars annually on increasing the capacity of social change organizations to do their work. And yet for all those decades-worth of efforts to make organizations more effective, we are not seeing the world become a significantly more humane or healthy place to live.

## Who We Are and Why This is So Important to Us

“We cannot solve our problems with the same **thinking** we used when we created them.”

~ Albert Einstein

These questions of effective systems change are not merely theoretical or philosophical at Creating the Future. That is because **systems change towards a more humane world is our mission.**

Rather than focus on any system in particular, our work is at the meta level of systems change itself. Our mission focuses on the processes by which people change the systems in which they find themselves, so that those systems can be realigned, to bring out the best in people.

***Our mission:***

A grand experiment to see how much more humane the world could be in just 10 years' time, if the systems we all encounter are bringing out the best in us.

What do we mean by *systems*? Broadly defined, systems are just *"the way we do things."*

Some of those systems may be codified into laws and procedures and policies, while some are cultural norms. If you encounter the comment, "That's not how we do it" or "That's just the way we do it" – those are systems at play. And Creating the Future's mission is to shift "just the way we do things" so that those systems guide us to be our best selves.

At the core of Creating the Future's systems changing work is this seemingly self-evident cause-and-effect reality: *Our actions are determined by our thoughts.*

Thoughts → Actions → Results

If we want significantly better outcomes, we need to change more than just our actions; we need to change the assumptions and questions that guide those outcomes. Albert Einstein's words ring true: *"We cannot solve our problems with the same **thinking** we used when we created them."*

That different thinking is at the core of the Catalytic Thinking framework that guides everything we do at Creating the Future. That framework is also our mission, as we are experimenting to see what happens when the questions at the heart of that framework are guiding all aspects of day-to-day life. From there, our work is to share what we learn, so that we can all change the systems within which we find ourselves – which is why we have assembled this paper!

Our urgency in addressing the question of organizational structure comes from the 10-year clock we have put on our mission. That ticking clock leads us to seek the most effective means possible. It leads us to challenge assumptions that any system or institution or approach must remain the way it is. If there is reason to believe there could be a more effective way of creating a more humane world, we see it as our duty to experiment to find that better way. And importantly, we see it as our duty to share what we learn, so that the entire field of social change can adapt more effective approaches to the work we all do.

Which brings us back to the question that began this paper.

If there were no such thing as organizations,  
what would we build  
as vehicles for supporting and bringing forth  
the world we want to see?

**Breaking it Down**

To find the answer to that question, we have used the lens of Catalytic Thinking\*. Starting in 2015, knowing that any action we take will be the cause that creates future effects, Creating the Future's board spent many meetings delving into the question, "What could the structure of a social change organization make possible? And possible for whom?" We then spent many more months asking about the conditions that would lead to that success.

\* **Catalytic Thinking** is a set of practices that makes it easy for people to bring their best selves to any situation. That framework is exemplified throughout this paper. You can find more information here <https://creatingthefuture.org/core-philosophy-values/>

We have researched and discussed. We have considered the difference between the results of movements vs. organizations.\* We have spent a full year codifying what our values look like in action, knowing that “Being the change we want to see means walking the talk of our values.” \*\*

\* **Building Movements, Not Organizations** @ SSIR [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/building\\_movements\\_not\\_organizations](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/building_movements_not_organizations)

\*\* *The Pollyanna Principles*, by Hildy Gottlieb 2009

You will find all those discussions referenced in this paper.

Having described the outcome we are seeking – an organizational structure that propels social missions forward in every way – this paper will first describe the current situation in the social change arena, and the efforts to achieve those outcomes that have been attempted to date (Part 2). From there, we will examine the science that explains why those efforts have not significantly enhanced results out in the world (Part 3).

In the second half of this paper, we will consider the conditions that are necessary for achieving the results we want – the dominoes that must be placed in line to trigger those results (Part 4). We will then explain the structure we are beginning to experiment with, to create those conditions (Part 5), including our plan for what’s next and how you can be part of that (Part 6).

What you will find as you read through this paper is that effectiveness in creating social change is not about a particular organization having a particular set of skills or assets or problems. Instead, effectiveness in creating social change has to do, first and foremost, with the assumptions – the thinking – that undergirds the structures and systems we use for creating that change.

*Simply put, to create systems change that will create a more humane world, we need systems that are intended for that purpose.*

That is the organizational infrastructure we intend to build, creating the path while we walk it. And that is the journey we invite you to be part of, in real time, with every step aiming at the healthy, humane future we all want to see.

### **A note about the people leading this change**

Before diving in, I want to acknowledge the people who have been championing this inquiry, Creating the Future’s board of directors. Our board is comprised entirely of self-defined governance and organizational development geeks. The experience and knowledge each of them brings, from their decades of exploration of these issues, has led our quest for a better way.

Dr. Angela Eikenberry is a Fulbright Scholar and a professor in the School of Public Administration at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, teaching nonprofit leadership and governance.

Karl Wilding is Director of Public Policy at the National Council of Voluntary Organizations in the U.K., having formerly headed the organization’s division of Policy, Research & Foresight.

Before Justin Pollock became an organizational development consultant, he was Chief Operating Officer at Maryland Nonprofits, the organization that developed and has led the charge for a nationwide Standards for Nonprofit Excellence program.

Dimitri Petropolis, co-founder of Creating the Future, worked for two decades as a consultant to boards of directors throughout North America, co-founded the first Diaper Bank in the U.S., taught as an adjunct professor at the Duquesne University Masters Degree Program in Community Leadership, and spent 10 years as an economic development consultant to U.S. Native American tribes.

And lastly, our attorney, Ellis Carter, has been practicing in the area of tax exempt organizations for 20 years.

Past board members who have been part of this 3-year journey have had similar pedigrees, including a Foundation CEO and a teacher of social enterprise at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business.

My own background includes 25 years of consulting to community benefit organizations in the areas of governance and strategy; developing the Masters in Community Leadership program at Duquesne University; co-founding the first Diaper Bank in the U.S. (with Dimitri Petropolis); and authoring several books on nonprofit governance, which continue to be used as texts on university campuses around the world.

Our work in designing the organizational structure described in this paper derives from our having dedicated decades of our lives to furthering social missions. And mostly, it derives from our understanding that the systems we all encounter every day were created by humans. And because of that, we humans can change those systems.

## 2 – Organizational Effectiveness in Creating Social Change: What Has Been Tried

At the heart of all efforts in the social change arena, whether traditional efforts by nonprofits and NGO's or more recent efforts of social enterprises and socially conscious businesses, is the desire for life on this planet to be joyful and humane, healthy and thriving. And whether focused on small systems change – perhaps the dynamics within an individual family – or sweeping, societal systems change, those results are far more likely if the systems we use to create that change reflect the world we want to see.

And while logic tells us that change is most likely to happen when means reflect the ends we want to see, the reality of daily life in the social change arena is often just the opposite.

When the board of a domestic violence organization is so abusive that the staff unionizes...

When social enterprise students take 8 classes on how to run successful businesses, but no classes on what it actually takes to create social change...

When the main revenue source at a fundraising event for a recovery group is the sale of alcohol...

When a school system wants children to be kind, but treats its teachers like faulty widgets in a worn-out machine...

I am not going to allow anybody to pull me so low as to use the very methods that perpetuated evil throughout our civilization.  
~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In a paper published 40 years ago in the *Academy of Management Journal*, Dr. Steven Kerr labeled this phenomenon *The Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B*. \* Observers of social change efforts around the world will recognize that phenomenon, as the very systems that social change organizations rely upon seem to thwart change at every turn. Whether it is the way boards operate and what they do, the way we think about and steward resources, the way decisions and plans are made, or any other number of issues, leaders of social change efforts often feel that the systems are stacked against creating any meaningful change in their communities.

\* See “On the Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B” by Steven Kerr, *Academy of Management Journal*, December 1975. <https://www.ou.edu/russell/JGcomp/Kerr.pdf>

Fixing social change systems has become a huge industry. From capacity building organizations to universities that teach nonprofit management and social enterprise, from lone-wolf independent consultants to giants like McKinsey and Deloitte – a lot of people owe their livelihood to fixing the problems social change organizations experience.

In their sincere quest for social change efforts to create the better world they envision, influencers in the field have promoted new ways of doing the work. Along the way, many of those new approaches become trends, and many of those trends eventually make their way to being called “best practice.”

To fix the problem of boards, there are lists of roles and responsibilities. There are memes like *Governance as Leadership* and *Policy Governance*. Those trends have recently been joined by the trend to *flatten* organizations with *distributed leadership* (e.g. Holacracy). There are governance models built around circles, around committees, around community engagement.

Fundraising trends are even more pervasive, as fingers universally point to “not enough money” as the reason for “not enough results.” There are proprietary systems like Benevon and people-driven systems like Donor-Centered Philanthropy. There are software programs that turn people into acronyms like LYBUNTs (people who gave *Last Year But Unfortunately Not This year*) and SYBUNTs (people who gave *Some Year But Unfortunately Not This year*).

The trend toward social enterprise comes, in large part, from that search for sustainable funds. The mantra of *Doing Well by Doing Good* states that one can simultaneously fund social change initiatives AND make a good living doing so – that the road to personal wealth can also be the road to social change.

The precursor to the social enterprise trend was the “run like a business” trend. From marketing to human resources, to programs being seen as “profit centers” that should pay for themselves, to the desire to get business people on boards of directors... social change organizations have been bombarded for decades with the purported benefits of running like a business.

Foundations and philanthropists go through phases and trends as well. Several decades ago the push was towards evaluation and measurement and logic models, with funders requiring evidence that their short term funding of an individual organization was contributing to changes in large scale social problems. Around the same time, we saw the collaboration movement, where foundation grants began requiring that more than one party sign on the dotted line. Those themes have been combined (while not forsaken) into the Collective Impact and Impact Philanthropy movements.

Running concurrent to these trends is the move to impose standards. In the U.S., the Standards for Excellence originally developed by the Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations (later Maryland Nonprofits) have been promulgated by similar organizations across the nation, with many foundations turning those standards into checklists for their grant-making. Similarly, the foundation world itself has adopted standards for their own excellence in philanthropy. In both cases, the standards focus on operational effectiveness, under the assumption that operationally sound organizations are the key to improving communities.

Even accounting, one of the oldest professions in the world, has not been immune to the changing winds of these trends. The drive to hold organizations to a standardized (and very low) ratio of “indirect” funds compared to “direct” program funds, has now seen the pendulum swing to the opposite side, where the very people who called for low overhead investment are asking forgiveness, encouraging funding of the very operational functions they previously eschewed.

What becomes clear is that the influencers in the social change arena – funders, teachers, thought-leaders - are all striving to find the key to creating the change we all sense is possible. Everyone in this realm wants things to work smoothly. Everyone wants the systems we use to pave the way for accomplishing great results.

Social change advocates are doing their best to find solutions to the frustration so many people throughout the sector feel.

And still those attempts have come up short.

### 3 – The Science Behind Why Organizational Change Efforts Have Not Worked

When every member of an ecosystem is exhibiting the same problems, we can either treat the symptoms of each individual, or we can look at the ecosystem as a whole, asking, “What’s really going on here?” That question leads us to look at the scientific realities of the ecosystem within which all this capacity building activity is taking place – the physics and math, the brain science and behavioral psychology, and the basic economics that describe the world we live in.

Those sciences describe the building blocks of all phenomena, which would obviously include the question of what creates (or fails to create) change.

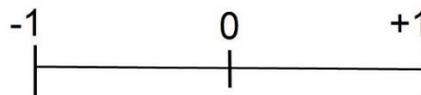
#### The Physics and Math of Efforts to Fix Social Change Organizations

What do physics and math have to do with organizational systems for propelling missions forward? Just like every other phenomenon in the world, social change efforts are depending on the basic physics of cause and effect.

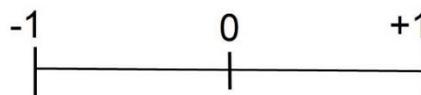
Cause-and-effect tells us that things don’t just happen out of nowhere; everything that happens is the result of a snowball rolled down the hill in the past. And every action we take, no matter what we choose, is rolling another snowball down another hill.

**“Each and every one of us is creating the future every moment of every day, whether we do so consciously or not.”**  
 ~ *The Pollyanna Principles*

From there, the grade-school math of negative numbers shows us that *the power of causality begins with where we aim.*



In this simple equation  $-1+1=0$ , we can see a direct relationship to change initiatives, whether it is an initiative to alleviate poverty or an initiative to fix a broken board of directors. That equation tells us mathematically that **eliminating something negative does not create something positive; eliminating a negative gets us to zero.** To create a positive situation, we must aim beyond stasis (zero) – we must aim higher.



- Poverty
- Eliminating Poverty
- An Equitable World
- Broken Boards
- Fix boards
- Organizations creating the world we want

Obviously we must solve problems as one of the many pre-conditions to creating the world we want. But if we only aim at solving problems (0), we can never achieve greatness (+1); the best we could do is to eliminate badness (fix the board, raise more money). Because **it is mathematically impossible to create a positive situation by reacting to a negative situation.**

This simple equation also shows us that we can't just leap from zero to +1; we must create the conditions that will get us there, adding step by step until we arrive at the goal.

Through the lens of physics and math, therefore, we see that ***in order to achieve the +1 goal of “organizational systems that propel the mission forward,” we must aim at that +1 goal, and we must create the cause-and-effect, step-by-step conditions that will lead us there.***

The Catalytic Thinking framework incorporates this scientific reality as its first core tenet:

**Tenet #1:** *Our power to create significant results lies in our power to create favorable conditions in the direction of our dreams.*

## **The Brain Science & Behavioral Psychology of Efforts to Fix Social Change Organizations**

What do brain science and behavioral psychology have to do with building organizational systems that propel social missions? Just like every other phenomenon that includes humans, social change efforts originate in our brains.

Basic neuroscience teaches us that the survival regions of our brains are our bodies' first responders, receiving messages of potential danger long before we have time to think about them.

If those survival centers feel threatened, they immediately release chemicals like adrenaline (to get us moving out of danger, to help our eyes focus myopically on that danger) and cortisol (to slow down unnecessary functions like digestion, so that all energy can go to escaping danger).

For this discussion, let's focus on just two of those survival reactions.

One way in which adrenaline creates the conditions for our getting out of danger is to dilate the pupils in our eyes, narrowing our field of vision to create laser focus.\*

\* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrenaline>

This is important for our thought-processing systems, because our brains are visual machines, constantly translating what we see into thoughts we can use.\* When our survival brain is triggered, our ability to see the whole of a scenario narrows; we have to work extra hard to see anything beyond the immediate problem. This is an automatic chemical response over which we have no control once that survival mechanism is triggered.

\* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3667661/>

In addition to the heart-pumping effects of adrenaline, when our survival mechanisms are triggered, the chemical cortisol works to slow down unnecessary functions, so our brains can keep that laser focus and use all our energy for escape. One of those seemingly superfluous and energy-draining activities is access to the frontal lobe – access to our ability to reason through anything more complex than just running away. Psychologist Daniel Goleman talks about this as the Amygdala Hijack, noting “The [amygdala] responds to an event more quickly than the thinking brain. The most primitive survival response, if it perceives an emergency, it can take over the rest of the brain before the neo-cortex (the thinking brain) has had time to analyze the signals coming in and decide what to do.” \*

\* “The prefrontal cortex is the brain region most sensitive to the detrimental effects of stress. Even quite mild acute uncontrollable stress can cause a rapid and dramatic loss of prefrontal cognitive abilities, and more prolonged stress exposure causes architectural changes in prefrontal dendrites.” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2907136/#>

Interview with Daniel Goleman is here <http://www.shareguide.com/Goleman.html>

In the words of anthropologists E.N. Anderson and Barbara Alice Anderson, “In the face of fear, reason is the first brain function to go and the last to be restored.” \* If you have been afraid or under stress, and have thought to yourself, “I am not thinking clearly!” that is not only true, it is the natural way your brain works.

\* From “Warning Signs of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective” <https://is.gd/YourBrainOnFear>

As if those two facts are not convincing enough, it is important to note that our brains do not function differently if we see something that is actually there vs. seeing it “in the mind’s eye.” FMRI scans show the same parts of the brain lighting up if we actually have something scary happen to us vs. imagining that thing happening to us.\*

\* See “Does Your Brain Distinguish Real from Imaginary” by David R. Hamilton, PhD <http://drdavidhamilton.com/does-your-brain-distinguish-real-from-imaginary/>

This is why we wake up from a nightmare, covered in sweat, heart racing and arms flailing. Our brains don’t realize that scary thing isn’t physically present.

What becomes clear the more we study the human brain is that reacting to problems – focusing on what is wrong and feeling uncertain about what will actually work to make things ok - our survival mechanisms reduce our ability to see the forest for the trees and cut off access to our capacity for reason and creativity, simply because our brains FEEL threatened.

This scientific reality also makes clear that the path to being our most rational, creative, compassionate, and wise is a path that bypasses those survival mechanisms. **When we feel safe, confident, secure... those survival mechanisms are more likely to stay quiet.**

So then, what leads us to feel safe enough to think clearly and creatively?

In Part, we will feel safer when we can see the whole picture, seeing our narrow problem in the context of the whole, to understand the interrelationship of all those interwoven conditions. In part, we will feel safer when we feel accepted, when trust is the norm.

We will also feel safer when we know what to expect, understanding the systems we’re operating in, and fitting in by meeting those expectations. This is why it is so hard to buck systems. Even when we know the system is no longer serving our needs, our need for predictability and for fitting in lead us to stick with the devil we know rather than risk the uncertainty and ridicule of going against the grain.

“Individuals will go where systems lead them.”  
~ The Pollyanna Principles

When we fear for our survival, we humans make reactive, short-sighted decisions. When we are at our best, we are capable of flying to the moon and beyond.

In order to achieve our uniquely human potential, therefore, ***the organizational systems we rely upon must mindfully quiet the survival brain, allowing us to be at our best as often as possible.***

The Catalytic Thinking framework incorporates this scientific reality as its second core tenet:

**Tenet #2:** *The most favorable conditions begin and end with bringing out the best in people vs. focusing on stuff (money, food, education).*

## The Economics of Efforts to Fix Social Change Organizations

That brings us to economics, the study of making sure we have what we need.\* And when it comes to what social change organizations believe they need, #1 on the list is usually “more money.”

\* The etymology of the word *economics* harkens back to the ancient Greek words for the management of a household. Online Etymology Dictionary [https://www.etymonline.com/word/economic?ref=etymonline\\_crossreference](https://www.etymonline.com/word/economic?ref=etymonline_crossreference)

Children in our modern world grow up with the innate understanding that money is a scarce commodity, used to exchange what we have for what we want. As a tool for exchange, money is not ultimately what we need; we need what the money buys us – real resources like cars and houses and expertise. Those real resources are NOT scarce. They are all around us, and they are easy to share.

Here is where physics and math and brain science and economics come together to explain why efforts to enhance social change have proven inadequate.



When scarcity triggers our brains’ survival mechanisms, the release of cortisol leads to self-defeating decisions in the short term. In the long term, that ongoing scarcity stress becomes a cause-and-effect chain reaction, a feedback loop that has actually proven to lower IQ. \*

\* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/making-sense/analysis-how-poverty-can-drive-down-intelligence>

Scarcity’s sister is competition. And while competing for the ends often provides drive and determination (e.g. billionaires like Richard Branson, Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk racing to space), competing for the means to survive (competitive funding from Pitch events to grants) leads to every symptom of living in survival mode – lack of trust / suspicion, lack of sharing, lack of vision.

That difference between competition for means vs. ends becomes a critical factor when we realize that the organizational structure upon which social change depends – whether a corporation or sole proprietorship - was not intended for social change, but for business. In business, money is not just the means to an end, but the desired end itself. However, in the social change arena, money is solely a means.

Further exacerbating that scarcity mindset is the legal and fiduciary mandate that comes with being a corporation. Those fiduciary duties of care and loyalty are NOT to the people who will benefit from the organization’s work, but to the organization itself. It is no surprise to hear board members eschew core values when money is at stake; that is actually their job! All of which keeps that feedback loop constantly firing.

***The result is that the community benefit sector’s scarcity mindset is hard-wired into the very structure that supports our work.***

In order to achieve what is possible, therefore, the organizational systems we rely upon must lead us towards what is abundant and easy to access – those real resources that are easily shared.

The Catalytic Thinking framework incorporates this economic reality as its third core tenet, the economic principle of **Collective Enoughness**:

**Tenet #3:** *Together we have everything we need; it is only on our own that we experience scarcity.*

## **Summary – What Science Tells Us about Enhancing the Capacity of Social Change Groups**

Combining all these scientific disciplines, we see that our efforts are more likely to succeed if they...

- Aim at the future we do want (causality, math, brain feeling happy) *vs. fighting what we do not like about the present*
- Create a visible cause-and-effect path to the future (causality, brain science) *vs. guessing / brainstorming what might work*
- Keep the brain feeling safe in an environment of trust – focusing on people knowing each other as people (*vs. getting right down to business*), creating systems aimed at bringing out the best in us (*vs. systems of punishment / seeing people as risks to be managed*), addressing the whole picture, seeing the context of the narrow issue within the larger ecosystem (*vs. reacting narrowly*), aligning actions with core values (*vs. rewarding behaviors that go counter to building the equitable, inclusive, openly sharing world we want to see*).
- Ensure that the people doing the work have all the resources they need (*vs. living in constant competition for scarce resources*).

Further, efforts that do not take these approaches are more likely to not only struggle, but to actually worsen the very conditions they are seeking to fix.

Looking at the list of capacity building efforts that have been applied over the past several decades (pages 5-6) ...

Are those efforts creating what is possible? Or are they reacting to what is wrong, in the mathematically impossible hope that eliminating that narrow negative condition could lead to something positive and powerful?

Are they rooted in trusting people and creating safe spaces where they learn to trust each other? Or do those efforts assume the current hierarchical system as the norm, rooted in the assumption that people need to be managed and led?

Are those efforts rooted in sharing resources, or in the scarcity that rewards competition and going along with the power dynamics of “He who has the gold makes the rules”?

Are they aimed at building strong communities, teaching us to share what we have and what we know, in order to build a better world? Or are those efforts aimed at building strong organizations, hoarding what we have and what we know, to ensure we can survive?

Are those efforts aimed at having the entire field learn what works, or do they focus on individual organizations learning from their own work, keeping that learning to themselves in the name of maintaining a competitive advantage?

Through the lens of science, we begin to see why all the well-intentioned fixes have not resulted in the conditions we want to see – why both organizations and communities have continued to struggle, despite all those efforts to accomplish more. Those capacity building efforts have been seeking to strengthen structures and systems that were never intended for the purpose of changing the world. Further, those efforts have unintentionally maintained and fed the demons of reactivity, suspicion and scarcity. By seeking innovative actions without changing the thinking that goes into those actions, we have indeed been rewarding A while hoping for B.

With so much at stake, it is time for a different approach.

## 4 –Aiming High & Creating Conditions for Mission Success

As we begin to explore what *would* work to propel social missions forward, let's start by aiming beyond "fixing." Let's aim at the +1 of a great result.

What is the high potential outcome we want to aim our new organizational structure at creating? And what are the cause-and-effect conditions that would lead to that outcome?

Until we know what high potential outcome we want, ideas for what a structure might look like are simply brainstormed guesses, ideas generated in a vacuum. Until we know which dominoes will lead to the desired result, how will we know which actions are most likely to knock down that final domino?

In this section, we will use Catalytic Thinking to aim high and establish the preconditions for that success.

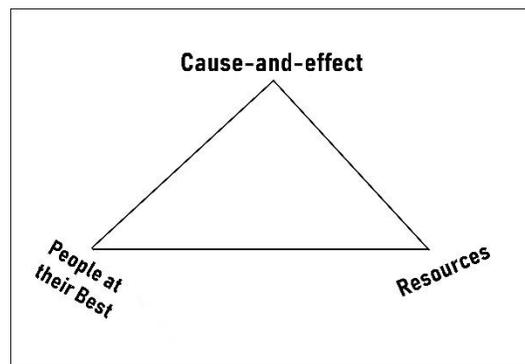
### **A note about our approach to the question of organizational structure:**

You will note that this section will make no mention of existing systems and functions. We do understand the desire not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. However we also know that if the current reality is where a conversation begins, that conversation will by definition be reactive, assuming we have a "something" to which we must react. Those existing systems become the proverbial hammer, through the lens of which everything looks like a nail.

The approach our board has taken has not been about adjusting or expanding upon anything. Instead, we have been asking the question posed in the very first line of this paper:

If there were no such thing as organizations as they currently exist – nonprofit or for-profit social enterprises – what would we build?

We have asked that question with the knowledge that the 3 core tenets of Catalytic Thinking, rooted in the range of sciences that describe how things work here on earth, are like the 3 legs of a stool. If one of those legs falls short, the stool will topple.



And so we have reached for what is possible. We have examined the cause-and-effect conditions that would lead to those results. And we have devised preliminary plans to create those conditions, aiming our actions like dominoes towards the results we want.

As our plans move from "preliminary" to detailed actions that will build out our organization's structure, then and only then will we consider whether there are strengths we already have to build upon, to help us create our conditions for success

## Aiming for +1

During the initial discussions of our restructuring, our board discussions focused a great deal of time on both the high potential outcome we wanted to see, and the conditions that would lead to that outcome.

The ultimate outcome has been this:

Our organizational structure will be an **active participant** in broadly sharing approaches that bring out the best in people. \*

\* The outcomes noted in this section are all from this January 8, 2016 summary post

<https://creatingthefuture.org/building-a-thriving-organizational-ecosystem/>

As our board and community members\* discussed what that might look like in practice, metaphors sprouted like weeds after a spring rain, as attendees tried to wrap their brains around a construct none of us had ever seen and could only imagine in our mind's eye.

\* Because our board meetings are open and participatory, there are frequently participants in the discussions who are not board members. Watching the meeting, one can never tell who is actually on the board. That open invitation leads to more inclusivity and richer discussions. See <https://creatingthefuture.org/being-open-a-6-month-review/> for more details, and [http://blog.glasspockets.org/2015/04/wilding\\_pollock-23042015.html](http://blog.glasspockets.org/2015/04/wilding_pollock-23042015.html) "True Board Engagement: How Openness and Access to Board Conversations has Changed Creating the Future," by Justin Pollock and Karl Wilding, Foundation Center Blog, April 23, 2015

*"Towards the end of our meeting, Alex Budak smiled as he listed the following analogies and metaphors he had heard during the discussion: Jazz musicians, Linux, libraries, USB sticks, a petri dish, Wikipedia, the search for aliens, the open source movement. In addition to that list of images, the language each person used to gather their thoughts was also peppered with metaphoric imagery – words such as "ripples in a pond" and "viral" and "carrot and stick." \**

\* See <https://creatingthefuture.org/structure-as-an-active-participant-in-organizational-success/>

In a subsequent meeting, the metaphor of an ocean ecosystem helped group members all envision the same image. In the ocean, myriad different ecosystems create homes for creatures with significantly different needs. But in the end, they are still all in the ocean.

Most recently, the analogy that has held sway is that of a prize-winning racecar, where the shape of the windshield, the inflation of the tires, the mixture of the fuel, and every nut and bolt are all aimed at the singular goal of creating the conditions for winning.

From that big picture of a structure that, in every way, supports and propels our mission forward, our board and community members described more specifically what that structure would accomplish:

- The structure would actively create and hold the space for the viral spread of ideas and approaches that bring out the best in people.
- The structure would actively create and hold the space for people to take action to accomplish that mission.
- The structure would actively model our values in action, through the practices of Catalytic Thinking.

## From Aiming High to Creating Conditions for Success

The next set of questions our board and community members addressed centered on the cause-and-effect conditions that need to be in place in order for all those aspects of accomplishing our mission to be realized. What would people need to have, for the structure to support their work in that way? What would the structure need to have or be, in order to meet those needs?

**The structure would need to be reliable yet flexible**, so that we are not always having to reinvent it (too rigid) yet strong enough to support our outcomes - a dynamic, living container where activities happen. One of our community members, Kent Schell, shared the image of “dynamic, ongoing circles of exchange.” That space would provide...

- Freedom and flexibility to work and invite others in
- Just enough structure that it doesn't get in the way and become about the structure
- Led by function and process (vs. centralized power and “the way we've always done things”)

**Built upon a foundation of shared responsibility**, to model the world we want to see. Rather than sitting on the shoulders of a few people, the structure would be built upon the collective strength of everyone involved. Phrases like commons, collective, and shared responsibility came up often. That sense of a large “we” would require...

- Shared language
- Accessible on ramps / ability to plug in
- Open ability to come in and out
- Radical Inclusivity

### **People-centric and Action-centric (vs organization-centric)**

In the words of one of our community members, Stacy Ashton, “You create the structure; we'll create the future!” Many of the participants in our meetings have noted that “organizations don't initiate things; people do.”

- A structure designed with clear intent to give people power / build upon their existing power to take action vs structure serving as a control on that power
- A structure intended to activate people's gifts in ways that are meaningful to them
- A structure that sustains and supports people and their activities (vs sustaining and supporting the organization itself). It's always about the people; never about the thing.
- A structure that emulates the conditions for success found in successful social change movements.\*

\* See “Building Movements, Not Organizations,” in *Stanford Social Innovation Review*  
[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/building\\_movements\\_not\\_organizations](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/building_movements_not_organizations)

An organization's structure can actively accomplish such results. To do so, the structure would need to have systems in place for...

- Values alignment
- Decision-making and strategic direction
- Coordination of activities and relationships
- People-infrastructure – support for bringing out the best in people
- Stuff-infrastructure – everything from administrative support to website support, from resources (including but not limited to money) to legal / regulatory compliance
- Connecting, engaging, inviting, welcoming, network weaving

Our board and community members provided more detail about each of those systems:

### **Values Alignment**

Structure and systems determine the extent to which an organization is consistently walking the talk of its values, in every aspect of the work – all decisions, all actions. That includes (and is especially important regarding) funding, to ensure that the organization's funding mirrors the equitable, humane world that is at the heart of our purpose and values.

**Decision-making and strategic direction**

Structure determines the extent to which all efforts are led / all decisions are made in alignment with our vision, mission and values. That means decision-making that models inclusivity, participation, trusting the wisdom of everyone involved.

**Coordination of activities and relationships**

Structure determines how information flows. It determines whether work flow is facilitated and coordinated to bring out the best in each other AND in the work everyone is doing.

**Infrastructure support to bring out the best in the people**

Structure determines the extent to which trust relationships are developed, nurtured and supported – between the people and the organization, and between the people and each other. Structure also determines the extent to which trust is built around financial relationships, work flow relationships, new partner relationships, and other strategic and practical relationships. In addition, structure determines the extent to which people are learning together and from each other, supporting each other in decision-making and all other aspects of their work.

**Infrastructure support for the “stuff”**

Structure determines the extent to which people have what they need to support their work. That includes “stuff” like administrative support, website support, identifying and securing resources (including but not limited to money), legal and regulatory compliance support, engagement and PR support.

**Connecting, engaging, inviting, network weaving**

Structure determines the extent to which people will feel invited to connect to Creating the Future’s work and to each other. And it determines the extent to which those connections will bring out the best in everyone involved.

Organizational systems aligned around consistently bringing out the best in people in every functional aspect of the organization. A structure that is open and participatory, eliminating walls between “inside the org” and “outside in the world.” An organizational focus on exploring, experimenting, and learning, and especially a focus on documenting and sharing what is learned as one of our most important indicators of success.

These are the favorable conditions that Creating the Future’s structure will strive to create, so that the very structure of the organization is that well-oiled racecar, propelling us to accomplish our mission.

## 5 – The Approach We Will Experiment With

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”

~ *Buckminster Fuller*

Following the discussions outlined in the previous section, our board and community members gave the go-ahead to put the pieces in place to create those conditions for success.\* In their own words, knowing what we know about what is possible, and having a mission mandate to experiment, how could we **not** reach for that high potential outcome?

\* <https://creatingthefuture.org/january-2016-board-community-meeting/>

Since that time, we have spent a year codifying the values that will guide this effort, focusing especially on what those values would look like in action. \* And we have spent the better part of another year in conversations with others who are experimenting with organizational structure, as well as discussions with experts on legal and regulatory compliance / fiduciary responsibility. \*\*

\* You'll find the Statement of Our Values in Action here <https://creatingthefuture.org/statement-of-our-values-in-action/>

\*\* See the appendix for a full list of resources consulted for this effort, including interviews and bibliography

Importantly, we have been in ongoing communication with Creating the Future's own attorney, who first and foremost, believes this approach will pass legal tests, and secondly feels excited to see how things evolve in practice.

### **A Structure Rooted in Vision, Values, Trust Relationships, and Collective Enoughness**

What we are proposing is an organizational structure that will provide support for anyone who wants to put Catalytic Thinking into practice to create systems change, in whatever way they define that systems change. Our structure will be a place where they will find both the people and the resources to accomplish that work.

The structure has been and will continue to be designed using Catalytic Thinking. And the decisions and activities that happen within that structure, as well as the way people be with each other, will be guided by Catalytic Thinking.

The following are some of the details we know so far. Being an experiment, we know these details will evolve with further discussion, and as we begin building the structure and learning what is needed along the way.

#### **Purpose: Provide Conditions for Success for the People Working to Accomplish the Mission**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> tenet of Catalytic Thinking focuses on people as the most favorable condition for success. When things succeed, and when things fail, it is not because of the stuff – the policies, the tools, the money – it is because PEOPLE succeeded or failed.

**The primary purpose of our organizational structure will therefore be to create conditions for success for the people doing the work to accomplish our mission.**

In practice, that will mean that the organization will serve as a series of hubs, rooted in Collective Enoughness - providing resources people need to do the work that will accomplish our mission.

That may include (as a starting point) resources to...

- to document and share what we learn about systems change
- to bring out the best in the people (vs. HR)
- to ensure the organization is in good legal and regulatory standing / tax exemption
- to partner / build demonstration projects
- to leverage assets to accomplish as much as possible
- to build and maintain our online locations (website, YouTube, discussion forums, etc.)
- to create ripples and relationships
- to develop faculty and teach Catalytic Thinking
- to research, explore, experiment - a skunkworks environment
- to provide administrative support / basic conditions for success
- to create supportive learning environments (learning sherpas, learner experience sherpas)
- to provide whatever other assistance people need to create conditions for their success, because their success = accomplishing our mission of systems change!

If the organization is a container for people to do work that furthers our mission, while furthering their own mission, the structure will provide all this and more, to ensure people have what they need to succeed.

### **How: A Network of Networks**

The structure we envision will be a **network of networks, where people can find each other and find the resources they need** to create the projects they want to create and do the work they want to do.

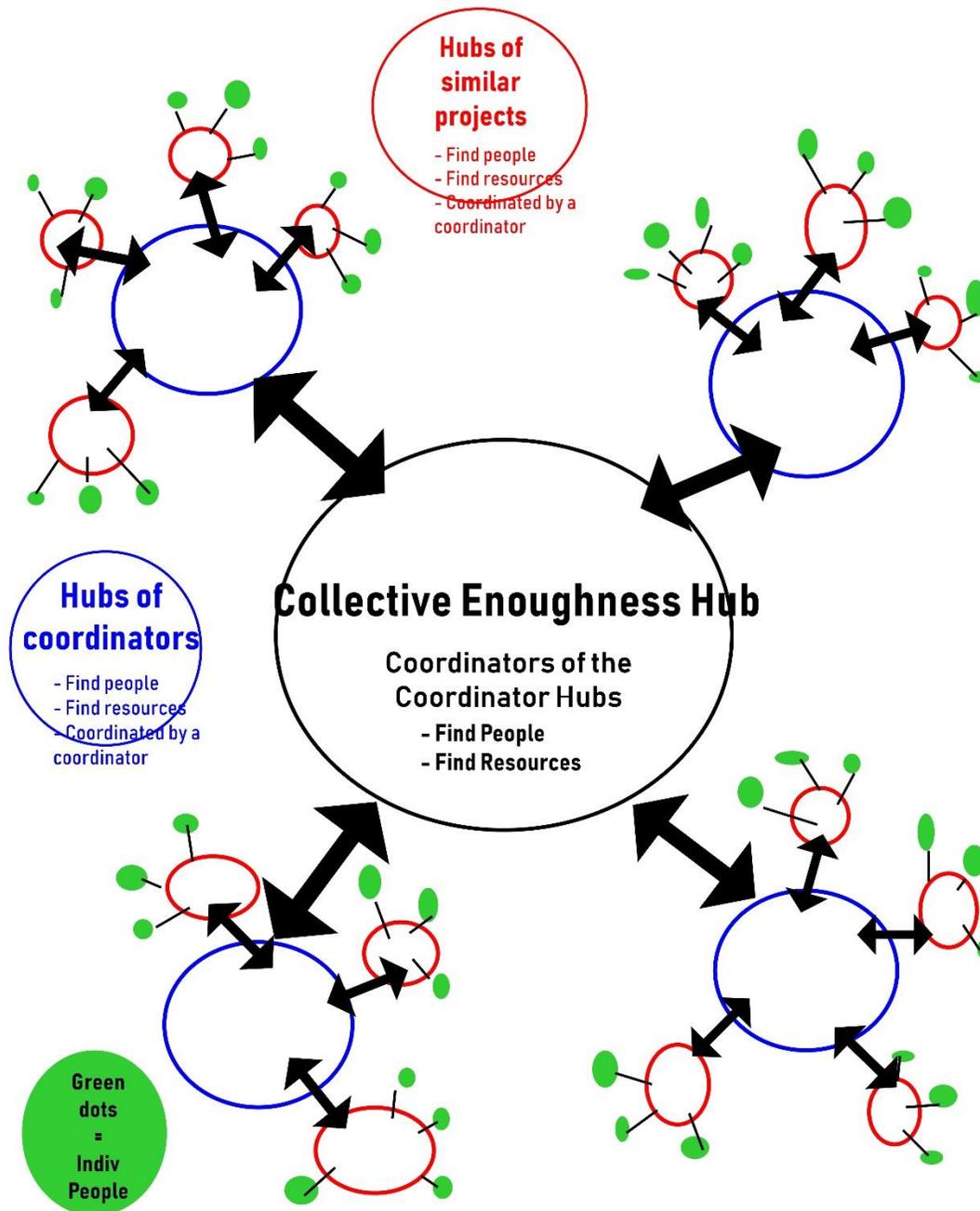
We envision small, human-scale hubs of people doing like-kind work, where individuals can find other people with whom to learn, explore, find support and ideas – AND where individuals can find the resources needed to do their work.

The hubs will be coordinated by people skilled in using Catalytic Thinking to bring out the best in people. And Catalytic Thinking will guide every decision and action taken by the individuals doing the work. That will ensure our values are guiding every decision and action.

Coordinators of those hubs will meet together in hubs themselves, where those coordinators will find people doing like-kind work, to learn and explore with – AND where those coordinators can find the resources they may not have readily available in their own hubs.

And finally, the coordinators of those meta hubs will meet together in the main Collective Enoughness hub. There they will find others doing like-kind work to their own work, and they will have access to the resources they (and their sub-hub coordinators) need to ensure everyone's work is flowing smoothly.

The result will be hubs (and hubs of hub-coordinators) where anyone can go to feel like home – a place where we come to feel nurtured, fed, and supported so that we can go back out into the world recharged and ready.



• People working on similar projects will come together in hubs facilitated by a coordinator/coach using Catalytic Thinking. The job of that coordinator is to ensure individuals have the resources they need, and to connect individuals to each other for support and learning.

• Hub coordinators will gather with other coordinators, to support them in their work as a coordinator/coach, to help identify the resources their teams need, and to keep communications flowing.

• The coordinators of the coordinators will find resources and other people in the Collective Enoughness hub, and to keep communications flowing.

- The Collective Enoughness hub will have teams of people working to provide the specific resources everyone needs throughout the system.

### **How: Decision-making, Leadership, and Direction**

As our board and community members have spent three years discussing conditions for success and the values that will guide our work, not once did anyone mention that people need to be led or managed. In fact, the conditions for success were just the opposite – shared responsibility, shared decision-making, rooted in trust.

Rather than the organization serving as a control over people who are seen as risks to be managed, the organization’s purpose will be to create conditions that facilitate people thriving. Part of the experimental nature of this project is to answer the question, **“If systems are bringing out the best in people, will they lead and manage themselves?”**

**Decision-making will therefore be radically participatory and radically inclusive vs. the representative form of decision-making of the traditional structure.** Rather than the board serving as the representative of our community, our open meeting structure has encouraged and will continue to encourage community members themselves to directly be part of the conversation AND the decisions.

Our bylaws will state that those **discussions and decisions will be led by the Catalytic Thinking framework**, to guarantee that our values are at the core of all our efforts.

And by using a **collaborative decision making platform** such as Loomio\*, decisions will be made by everyone affected by the decision.

\* [Loomio](#) was designed by [Enspirial](#), a New Zealand collaborative of social entrepreneurs that has been a model and inspiration during Creating the Future’s organizational design process.

### **How: The Role of the Board**

If the people doing the work are to have everything they need to accomplish their work, one of those resources will be the knowledge that the organization itself is in good legal standing, that our tax exemption is solidly in place, and that we are complying with not just the law, but with the expectations for financial propriety by those who are being asked to support our work.

That compliance will be the job of our board of directors. And importantly, that will be the **ONLY** job of the board – keeping us legal and compliant.\*

\* See Appendix 2 for excerpts from the board’s June 2015 meeting, where the discussion of our board’s role led to the aha that we had the freedom to explore inventing something new, to be more effective for the needs of community benefit organizations.

The truth about boards is that all the other functions of boards are already being done by the staff at many organizations – planning, decision making, determining the direction of the organization overall. And while many suggest that is the role of the board, the reality is that CEOs of community benefit organizations and social enterprises spend inordinate amounts of time engaging and educating board members, just so the board can know what the staff already knows, often simply rubber-stamping what the staff has already decided.

If all people affected by a decision are participating in that decision, in an open environment that encourages diversity of thought, and if that is encoded into our bylaws and the culture of the organization, then there is no need for representatives to pretend to be in charge.

Creating the Future is, however, a corporation that must follow the laws of the State of Arizona where we are incorporated, and the laws of the U.S. government. Our tax exemption is granted by

the U.S. government and regulated by the IRS. Those entities, as well as those looking to invest in our work, will want to know that someone is making sure we are complying with their expectations.

Interestingly, through our conversations with our attorney, and with a compliance expert from Harbor Compliance\*, we know that there are very few laws detailing exactly what an organization is required to do. If our finances are consistently audited, if our tax returns (Form 990) are filed and publicly available, if we are in good legal standing within and outside the United States where we are incorporated – that's pretty much what is required.

\* Watch / listen to our conversation with Ifeoma Aduba of Harbor Compliance, a firm dedicated to helping organizations ensure their compliance with all laws and fiduciary expectations  
<https://creatingthefuture.org/compliance-focused-board/>

All the rest of what social change organizations expect boards to do will either be handled by staff (as is already happening in most organizations, with most board work being immensely duplicative), or will be addressed through direct, open communication and involvement of the community who will be impacted by our actions.\*

The result will be what our friends at Enspiral call a Minimum Viable Board, focused solely on compliance. \*

\* See the conversation with Chloe Waretini of Enspiral here <https://creatingthefuture.org/reinventing-organizations-as-movements-chloe-waretini-making-change-broadcast/> and the actual Board Agreements at Enspiral here <https://handbook.enspiral.com/agreements/board.html>

## **Summary: Our Proposed Organizational Structure**

*In summary, Creating the Future will be able to depend on an organizational structure that will...*

- have as its prime directive ensuring that people doing the work to accomplish our mission have what they need to do that work, in a way that brings out the best in them.*
- create a mandate for and conditions for sharing what we learn with the whole field so that everyone learns, while demonstrating what is possible when learning is shared (vs. held as proprietary).*
- ensure legal compliance, mission accountability, fiscal accountability, and risk management.*
- ensure participatory decision-making and radical inclusion*

And it will do so via a network of networks, the central hub of which is a place of Collective Enoughness, ensuring that everyone working to accomplish our mission has connection to resources and to each other.

## **6 – What's Next?**

As Creating the Future ramps up its efforts to effect systems change, so that the systems we all encounter every day are bringing out the best in people, it is imperative that we have a structure that will reflect that intention.

During the final months of 2018, Creating the Future's board of directors will adopt this new structure, paving the way for rewriting our bylaws and recruiting a whole new board, focused solely on compliance.

From there, the BIG work will begin: Building out all the infrastructure we've described here. In each of those functional areas, we will be using Catalytic Thinking, to ensure that we are not reacting to potential problems (for example, traditional human resource functions) but are instead reaching for what is possible.

The work in these areas will require the efforts of people who are both knowledgeable AND open to change. It will require the input of partners who want to invest not just their funds but also their dedication to improving their own work, learning alongside us and implementing what makes sense in their own organizations. Because ideally we will be one of many organizations experimenting at the edges of possibility.

As we step into what's next in this emergent and energizing project, we invite you to be one of those partners, learning alongside us, and helping to support this work. \*

\* To be part of this work, please contact us here <https://creatingthefuture.org/contact-us/>

The stakes have never been higher. And we sense the rewards will be just as high.

## Appendix 1: Quotes from Participants in the Process

“Boards govern if you haven’t designed something better. This is something better!” ~ *Jane Garthson*

“Through these sorts of systems, we don’t have to worry about accountability. As Chloe [Waretini] describes Enspiral [for example], they don’t have a system for accountability, because they haven’t built accountability as the outcome. The outcome is the relationships, the trust-building. When we build things for the purpose of compliance, those always seem to break, because the requirements and regulatory pieces are all reactive. ‘Because something didn’t work, we put in these stopgaps.’ What Chloe is describing is a system that’s designed to enable relationships to build and enable effectiveness to blossom. It comes back to whether we are framing structures to control or to enable. When we talk about accountability and legal requirements, we’re falling back into control thinking, not enabling thinking.” ~ *Justin Pollock*

“We’ve found it’s more effective to support people vs. holding them accountable. If people are supported you don’t need to hold them accountable. ‘I’ve noticed you didn’t deliver – is there something you need help with?’ You’re held accountable by your social capital with others.” ~ *Chloe Waretini*

“With Catalytic Thinking, the framework is the structure. If Creating the Future is the water, it doesn’t matter where you swim into, it’s still going to feel comfortable to you because you’ll see the values in action, and you’ll understand how decisions are made. The structure may be different over here, but the questions / decision-making will feel comfortable for anyone who steps in at any point.” ~ *Rebecca Hurd*

“The culture would be the same at all points. The setting would be fluid, the positions would not be fixed – it would be flexible. There is no one “at the top” to make decisions about other people; people make decisions about themselves. In an ocean, anything anyone does will ripple, affecting everyone else. This structure will therefore change as people interact.” ~ *Jane Garthson*

“To build an organization that is human-shaped it needs to have human scale. There needs to be coordination across the ocean, for awareness about what each other is doing so we can continue learning from each other, while at same time building and working in smaller communities that can be highly productive because there’s trust and people know each other. The human scale means high trust local networks – an organization that is split into smaller cells that are connected to each other. There is coordination across the ocean, and coordination within smaller communities where people can know and trust each other. Part of the job of the structure, then, is to help strangers find people across ecosystems. Unless you already know someone, what will it take to find who in the network could be helpful to you?” ~ *Chloe Waretini*

“Each of these structural pieces – decision-making, leadership, coordination (of activities, of communication), infrastructure for the “stuff” people need, connection and inviting – all that can be embedded into each ecosystem AND into each program within that ecosystem. It’s fractal. Those functions would be the work of the Education ecosystem in general. And then those same functions would be guiding the individual programs called “doing webinars” or “building online curriculum” or “supporting faculty” or “editing a blog column.” Each of those programs would be self-governed, just like each ecosystem is self-governed, so long as the principles and the values and the framework and the culture are the ocean. In that way, each program can work autonomously, with all the structural “stuff” it needs. And when that “stuff” is more than the program can address on its own, it is already part of that larger ecosystem that exists to support it.” ~ *Hildy Gottlieb*

## Appendix 2: Reflections About Being a Board – from Our Board

At our board's meeting in June 2015, the following question arose:

### What do we need a board for anyway? \*

\* To see that conversation, this link will bring you to the moment that 30 minute discussion began  
<https://youtu.be/m0Nn5w5QuNY?t=1h23m40s>

The following are excerpts from that conversation. What you will hear if you listen to the meeting itself is that this is the moment our board began thinking about a completely different structure for this organization. The energy in that discussion could have powered a small city!

“Historically, my perspective as a board member would have been that discussions of alignment of programs with vision and values and the [Catalytic Thinking] framework would be the role of the board – oversight to ensure that is happening. If that is already happening in the Operations Team, then I don't have a role as a board member.” ~ *Justin Pollock*

“The board's role has been the think tank – the R&D function of our mission. A theoretical laboratory and exploratory space. If our role is to explore that theoretical side of governance conversations, I'm not sure I would call that a board.” ~ *Justin Pollock, Hildy Gottlieb, Dimitri Petropolis*

“One difference is that our work is open. That enables anyone to look at the financials and fiduciary matters. And that creates an interesting cultural shift. Part of the reason for a board taking on that fiduciary role is that traditionally, no one else gets to see those “internal” documents like the financials, which leads to the sense that “someone should be looking at this.” But if it is able to be monitored by anyone at any time, that doesn't require that a board be the ones to monitor it.” ~ *Angie Eikenberry, Dimitri Petropolis*

“How often do we see that it is non-board-members who are way more articulate and better connected to how the vision and values seep into their being than the board members are? And then we spend tons of time and emotional energy trying to figure out how to get those board members to have the same thing that those non-board-members have, who are upholding the values on a day-by-day basis.” ~ *Hildy Gottlieb*

“This is an entire system that just doesn't work! We talk about it over and over again throughout not just this sector, but in the corporate world as well. If you have a system where just about every board in the world needs board development work, then you have a system that doesn't work!” ~ *Hildy Gottlieb*

“For leadership to be strong, there has to be a place for learning and exploration, and there has to be a place where decisions are made and actions are taken. They don't have to be one and the same, but they do need to influence each other. That's the system that seems to be broken – often times boards aren't actually making decisions, NOR are they learning. So it doesn't have to be the same people, but there has to be the capacity to do both things throughout the organization.” ~ *Justin Pollock*

“This conversation makes me think about Michael Pollan’s book *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, describing the food system we’ve created, with layer upon layer of regulation to make sure that we have healthy food, but it is ultimately making us sick. It’s a similar situation. Pollan’s point is to simplify things, that we have over-complicated things. We’ve created this whole organizational structure that ultimately doesn’t get us to the best, healthiest place. We need to get back to the core, the essential.” ~ *Angie Eikenberry, Alex Budak*

“Boards are the unintended consequences of problem-solving. Each one of those regulations solved some problem, but the unintended consequence is that you end up with this anchor that makes you sick. And that’s where boards came from – problem-solving. Who’s going to keep track? Who’s going to be accountable? Making the assumption that something could go wrong, how do we prevent what could go wrong? The result is a system that is not working anywhere, in the corporate world or the community benefit world.” ~ *Hildy Gottlieb*

“What systems might we look to that could achieve the dual roles of learning and decision-making, without being structured as a board, that causes us to think in a certain way and behave in a certain way, because of the traditional expectations that there have been of boards? What system would it take to lead this movement / organization?” ~ *Gayle Valeriotte*

# Bibliography and Other Citations

Reviewers please note – this is a placeholder page, with notes to myself.

## Citations:

- Catalytic Thinking overview video re: 3 questions
- Ifeoma Aduba conversation with Justin Pollock – blog post
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- Enspiral
- Interviews:
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- Papers
  - Board Source paper by Peter Dobkin Hall : A History of Nonprofit Boards in the United States (resource directory in Restructuring directory 2018)
  - Hofstra Law Review: Volume 33 | Issue 1 Article 3 (2004): The Historical and Political Origins of the Corporate Board of Directors by Franklin A. Gevurtz
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  - <https://medium.com/open-participatory-organized/a-manifesto-for-open-participation-60b62d327684>

## Books

HG note - list them all here

- Neuroscience
- Sociology and History
- Economics
- Organizational design