

GDES 3062 Design (as) Research

ASSIGNMENT 1: SEARCHING FOR YOUR PERSONAL DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

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Part 1: *To What End?*

RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM INTELLIGENCE & COACHING

The International Coaching Federation (ICF)[1] defines coaching as “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.”

In my relationship system design work, I train and coach clients on Relationship System Intelligence (RSI)[2], leadership and culture development, and actively applying these concepts and skills to a collaborative relationship system design process.

“RSI is the ability to reinterpret an individual’s own experience [Emotional Intelligence] (and that of others [Social Intelligence]), as an expression of the system. The experience is both personal and belongs to the system, uniquely equipping the coach to work with the system’s collective intelligence.”[3]

RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM DESIGN

A relationship system design is a living agreement between people in regards to the human system that is shared between them. This design is intended to strengthen individual and world system awareness, work with non-linear human factors that exist within a system (e.g. emotions, dreams, health, ecology, power and oppression), and prioritize the balance of production with the human systems that enable it.

The relationship system design process addresses two main issues:

1. The energetic space or environment that team members want

- Designing the energetic atmosphere of a system means that if circumstances shift (e.g. the project deliverables change or the car doesn’t start) the atmosphere the team designed to hold the system together, such as the culture of collaboration, still carries over to a new circumstance.

2. How responsibility will be shared

- Designing what the individuals within the shared relationship system can be counted on for is based on the underlying belief that each person is co-responsible to create the experience or culture they want for the team or partnership. Co-responsibility and accountability create empowered and leaderful systems.

Immediate results from designing the relationship system include goal alignment, expectation clarification, agreements on definition and measurements of success, articulating system

strengths and challenges, brainstorming strategies for change and growth, and creating protocols to work with conflict.

Long term impacts from relationship system design are an increase in team positivity, discovery of new opportunities and creative resources, strengthening of team identity and resilience, improved agility to work with system diversity and conflict, clearer vision and direction.

Part 2: *By What Means?*

TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

I am credentialed as a Professional Certified Coach with the ICF and I have a private practice where I offer leadership and relationship skills training and coaching. Since I began my design degree at OCAD University I have more formally developed a niche client base in the arts sector. Being with art and design students, as well as being one myself, offers constant opportunities to bring my relationship systems design and creative coaching skills to my individual and collaborative art practice.

PARALLELS TO THE RESEARCH PROCESS METHODOLOGY

Overall, the RSI coach goes through a similar methodological cycle as the research process. RSI coaching, like the research process, begins with defining the context. It is important to begin to know and understand the client, as well as create the foundation to the alliance integral for the work together. This is followed by a review of the relationship system to define scope and gaps, and then applying key findings to a coaching plan that contextualizes how the tools and training planned address the client's goals and clarifies how this will be evaluated. The RSI coaching plan proceeds and the client begins a research process of their own system, debriefs on their findings and strategies on how to address system issues while the coach provides tools and training to support in their relationship system design plan, forwarding action and deepening the learning. The client uses the design work they have done to evaluate their own work and any next steps based on their findings while the coach looks for measurable goals and accountability going forward.

ELEMENTS OF ENTRY FOR RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM DESIGN

The initial RSI coaching session has three distinct elements of the system design process (that do not always occur in a linear way), Designed Team Alliance, Designed Coaching/Leadership Alliance, Discovery & Assessment.

Designing the Alliance in relationship systems coaching demands the focus constantly be held on the team's desired relationship outcomes based on the culture research and designed alliance, while simultaneously maintaining complete flexibility to incorporate shifts.

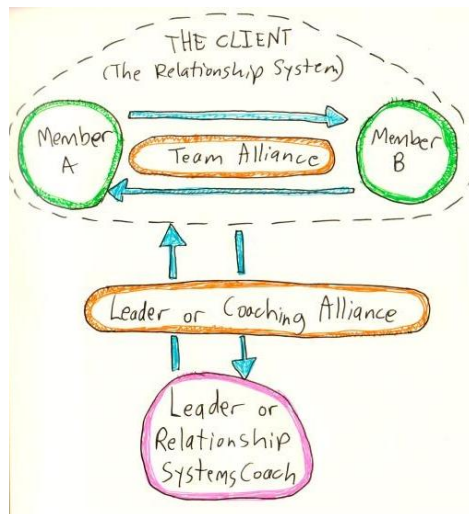


Diagram of Designed Team Alliance & Designed Coaching Alliance

DESIGNED TEAM ALLIANCE

- Creating the intentional energetic atmosphere between the team members by asking:
 - What is the culture the team wants to create together and how would they know they had that?
 - What would help the partnership/team flourish?
 - How does the team want to be together when it gets difficult and how would they know they had that?
- Creating co-responsibility by asking:
 - What can each of the team members be counted on for?
 - What is the partners/teams commitment to one another?
- Creating behavioural agreements by asking:
 - What are the ground rules around conflict, decision making, and other team behaviours?

DESIGNED COACHING ALLIANCE OR DESIGNED LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

- This is designed between the coach or leader working with the team and includes discussion and agreements around:
 - Logistics (time, fees, agreements)
 - Education around relationship systems coaching
 - Clients agenda - the desired outcomes and how would they know those outcomes were met
 - Designing the atmosphere in the coaching session - how does the team want the coach to be with them (e.g. challenging in service of growth)
 - Ground rules for coaching (e.g. no secrets between the coach and individual team members; everyone is partially right - not one perspective defines the truth)

DISCOVERY & ASSESSMENTS

Once the team and coach alliance are designed, the system entry moves toward clarifying coaching goals and outcomes, values, and other discovery data that is driving the relationship system coaching engagement. There are both formal and informal assessment tools used to aid in discovery of what is trying to happen for the system and what tools and skills will be most useful to apply with any particular system. During initial interviews, culture assessments and during the systems entry phase, red flags and ethical dilemmas are assessed.

- Discovery and Assessment Process
 - This design includes addressing:
 - Any ethical issues, red flags or need for referrals
 - The team's primary focus, values and relationship goals
 - Team vision
 - Team/relationship purpose
 - What is the relationship yearning for?

Part 3: *To What Degree?*

The relationship system design process embodies the core coaching competencies, as defined by ICF:

- Establishing the coaching agreement
- Co-creating the relationship
- Active listening
- Powerful questioning
- Direct communication
- Creating awareness
- Designing actions
- Planning and goal setting
- Managing progress and accountability

During the Designed Team Alliance and Designed Coaching Alliance, how success of the relationship system design work will be measured is identified by the team itself. By consciously designing the aspects of the relationship system, the team empowers themselves, the coach and the coaching process to support their system design work, implementation, and relationship goals.

Part 4: *Why do I do what I do?*

On a personal level, I believe in integrating as many of my passions in a cohesive work-life-play balance because I get to be authentic and bring my whole self; one that's living my life values and purpose in an active way. I don't see art and design methodologies being brought with human development work and I am motivated to contribute to this area and learn to share the work I am doing.

The design work I do takes a stand which values the human experience and how that impacts a whole system. I believe that by empowering people to take shared responsibility for our shared world, oppressive behaviours that persist and the power that is used irresponsibly or abused are consciously addressed as a group, small or large, on some level. And to me this means that work the world needs to do is happening. It starts with individuals taking responsibility for the system. I don't have the answer about how to make the world better. I believe we all hold a piece of the answer and we will only become aware when we listen to even the most challenging of perspectives.

My design work helps to facilitate that all the voices even the most marginalized and unpopular are heard. When we improve our ability to share responsibility, be aware, navigate through conflict and work with diversity inherent to systems - the changes that are trying to happen will serve to empower us as humans and will not be something to fear or control. This is my world work[4] and I strive to bring it to as many possible areas in my life system that call me.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. "The Gold Standard in Coaching | ICF - Core Competencies." Accessed July 16, 2021. <https://coachingfederation.org/core-competencies>.
2. "RSI™ - CRR Global." Accessed July 16, 2021. <https://crrglobal.com/about/rsi>.
3. "Training - CRR Global." Accessed July 16, 2021. <https://crrglobal.com/training>.
4. "Deep Democracy - Amy and Arnold Mindell World Work is .." Accessed July 16, 2021. <http://www.aamindell.net/worldwork>.