Imaginal Progression with ECRI

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Systems Diagnosis

Imaginal Progression

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### Technical vs. Adaptive Problems

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Adaptive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem</strong></td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>messy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solution</strong></td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>requires learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whose work is it?</strong></td>
<td>expert/authority</td>
<td>stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success</strong></td>
<td>fix the problem</td>
<td>make progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude</strong></td>
<td>confidence and skill</td>
<td>curiosity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Multiple Interpretations

Be experimental
Be conflictual
Be open
Zone of Disequilibrium

Too Hot!

Limit of Tolerance

Productive Zone

Adaptive Challenge

Technical Problem

Work Avoidance

Purpose Progress Engagement

Time
How Systems Work

➢ **Evidence:** The symptoms of the challenge

➢ **Patterns and Behaviors**

➢ **Structure:** Beliefs and actions that keep those patterns in place

➢ **Values and Mindsets:** Informed by the stories we tell ourselves, they reinforce the structure we have and work against change.
The system

The system is working perfectly well to achieve the results it is achieving.
Fall in love with the problem

Spend 80% of the time in diagnosis

"These are some great solutions we've come up with, Ed. See if we have any problems they'll solve."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current reality</th>
<th>Desired state</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone has very good intention for the environmental movement but I see group think, Cliques. Hard for newcomers - new ideas are kept at arms length.</td>
<td>Open group, welcoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well intentioned, well meaning,</td>
<td>Need to be more of a mural of what is going on in the streets in Providence and in RI - there are aloof of folx addressing environmental issues and ECRI needs to be representative of that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest intention and effort, but a fear of finding out something - systemic racism. Not only intergenerational, but is being perpetuated. Environmental violence, political violence. Creating distrust.</td>
<td>Will be tough - discussions around power and resources are led by those who are most impacted by it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ONE LAW</strong> from the point of view of those who are oppressed by systemic racism.</td>
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Peer Group Exercise

CHOOSE YOUR OWN BREAK OUT ROOM
Symptoms and problems (Identified last week)

- **Symptoms**
  - ECRI is predominantly white.
  - Lack of diversity - don't reflect the community.
  - Not using the same terminology. Some based on lived experience, others not.
  - Not crossing paths - ECRI at the statehouse vs. community spaces - it's messy.
  - ECRI tends to focus on state house as the primary place to solve problems.

- **Problems**
  - Taking ownership of these symptoms as reflecting a problem.
  - The problems that are defined need to reflect the symptoms.

- **Not feeling welcome**
- **Difficult to participate**

- **Power structure is in place**
- **Friendships/relationships exclude people**

- **Volunteer board members don't have strong paid staff support.**

- People burn out as volunteer board members really fast.

- Challenge of adding ECRI to existing responsibilities.
Peer-group Exercise

Actions and inactions based on symptoms identified last week (chose two actions/inactions to share)

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Formative Legends, Myths and Mental Models

➢ Indoctrination, rite of passage
➢ Who do they serve?
How do we find the Mental Model?

Discover the story behind the action
Prioritize actions to work with

Have a board with the actions they chose in the groups and the whole group can pick the two “most important ones”
1. Current Mental Model

Myth

We are not rule breakers... When it comes to certain things. Social interaction is not important.

No social interactions during meetings

Same room - same set up for meetings

Result

Action
2. Possible Mental Model

- **Myth**: We are disruptors.
- **Result**: People feel accepted. People are able to...
- **Action**: People will feel like they can move chairs around
Butterfly Effect

We are disruptors
Our next meeting:

➢ Listening Circle:
  ○ With roots in indigenous cultures around the world, **listening circles** provide people an opportunity to speak and listen to each other in an atmosphere of
    ■ Safety
    ■ decorum and
    ■ equality
  ○ **Listening circles** emphasize storytelling for cultivating empathy.
Diagnose The Self
Imaginal Progression

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Language

1. Are we speaking the same language?

2. Do I know what you mean?

I'll have a whiskey, please.

I'm sorry, we don't serve spirits.
Words Matter
Vocabulary

REALITY

EQUALITY

EQUITY

LIBERATION
Implicit Bias
Microaggressions

- **Behavioral** - communicating a message with actions or symbols that display insensitivity to identity stereotypes.
- **Environmental** - lack of representation and diversity, including gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.
- **Verbal** - saying something that may not outright appear to be but is disrespectful or offensive to a marginalized group.
Language and Intent vs Injury

I called Susie a booger-brain after school, and she went home crying.

Goodness, why'd you do that? I dunno. I was just teasing.

It sounds like you hurt her feelings.

I didn't mean for her to take the insult personally.
The Axe Forgets what the Tree Remembers
How to move forward

1. Ask for clarification or repeat what you heard before responding (if you choose to)
2. Recognize that you are in control of your own emotions and reactions
3. Remember that it’s not your job to teach
4. Find support from someone or a group of people that you trust to share your experiences with

1. Remember that you can’t dictate how someone reacts to your responses
2. Sincerely apologize
3. Learn about structural racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of discrimination
4. Forgive yourself and move on
5. Support others
What are the roles that come up in groups? Double-click a post-it note to edit.
Debrief of Listening Circle

- Talk about the experience
- Do not discuss what others shared
Shame

Feeling trapped, powerless and isolated.

Thinking: “I am bad”

Brown, 2016.
Shame Antidotes

Empathy, connection, power and freedom.

Explore:

1. Personal vulnerability
2. External factors
3. Connecting with others
4. The feelings of shame themselves

Brown, 2016.
Many reasons why: because we deeply care, our heart is in it, race & environment are connected, and the movement is younger.

**ECRI is the only voice for**

- To help ECRI achieve its potential with environmental justice capacity building, policy advocacy, organizing.
- Institutional memory is important; you don’t want to lose the things you do well as you move forward.
- Care about Conservation and it can only be done sustainably through coalitions like this one.
- Believe in working together for environment; all of us; can improve the current ECRI.

**To help move the system from the outside in.**

**ECRI to be more impactful for environmental justice.** It’s important to work together -- this involves all of us. Thus, equity is integral to accomplish our goals.

**ECRI is the best suited organization to create a unified voice for EJ and traditional environmentalists.**

**To be part of the effective environmental community.**

I enjoy the intentional perspective we have taken thus far...want to see more of the EJ work...I live in an EJ zone, so it’s both personal and professional. I see the black soot on my windows. Intense safety issues. We all deserve better.
**SYMPTOM TO PROBLEM**

Step 1 is NOT defining the problem:

We usually start decision making processes by stating the problem but the REAL step 1 is to LIST the symptoms of the problem, the things you can see, the current reality, these are factual things everyone can agree on.

Step 2 - DEFINE the problem. Once you can agree on symptoms, verbalize the problem, the thing we want to change.

*It is ok to go back and forth between the columns and rows until yes/your group can agree on a problem.*
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<td>people representing the organization they work for rather than being themselves</td>
<td>how is feedback used? what happens when input is collected?</td>
<td>clique-y-ness/in group vs out group</td>
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<td>it's not fun</td>
<td></td>
<td>no follow-through</td>
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<td>extractive dynamics when ECRI organizational members are there to get something for their job</td>
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## Explore the why

For each symptom ask yourself why? Why is this happening? What are we, as individuals, communities, and society doing or not doing to keep the structure supporting this symptom in place?

Choose one or two actions that, if changed, would have the largest impact on the symptom and the problem. When choosing high impact actions, consider who needs to do the work: individuals, communities or society and choose according to your circle of influence as well as impact.

### Problem

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<td>Meeting room input conducive to getting business done, but no social interaction, space is cramped.</td>
<td>Look for a different room/location.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Try different arrangements of tables, based on primary gender – speaker or legislation.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Meeting time – people come in when work and leave as soon as it’s over.</td>
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how to make personal/political shifts that align with changing dynamics
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**meeting environment is not welcoming**

**zoom environment makes it difficult for members to concentrate and get work done (i.e. at home, multi-tasking, etc)**

**acknowledge that and give ourselves more time to work in zoom**
Explore the why

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<td>- leaders in ECRI introduce themselves and talk to everyone they don’t recognize and let them know how to get in touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling invisible - like one’s opinion is not valid, not taken into consideration</td>
<td>- hand everyone an agenda personally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White dominant space</td>
<td>- how the agenda is designed, ensuring there is clarity around the agenda items, if there is pre-reading needed, if there will be an opportunity to connect with presenters for any purpose intended, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White men taking up a lot of airtime in discussion</td>
<td></td>
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