



DIGITAL LIFE COLLECTIVE

ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

DIGITAL
LIFE
COLLECTIVE

OUR ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES



Principles align and bring us closer together. Principles shape and unite us—they provide guidance through the treacherous marshes of opinions, biases & prejudices. Yet, principles are not rules, policies, or procedures. They are not here to bind or constrain.



OUR ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES



Principles are here to open up a space at the intersection of playing, learning, and working. They are here to name common ground to stand, build & grow the Collective upon. Because once we have created that space, once we have built that common ground, once we have found our dance moves, only then can we unlock the true purpose & possibilities of the Collective.



OUR ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES



If we can align on these principles, a long-awaited transformation can take shape, moving us swiftly from the "me" into the "we" domain and enabling our transformational digital capacities, ways to connect and to stay connected, and ways to tap into our newfound collective memory and intelligence.





Finally, ask yourself, what happens when we start being able to use these capacities with greater intention? What happens as we learn to co-create tools and platforms with those highest intentions designed into them?

We hope you are as inspired as we are and accept our invitation to dance.



STRIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is about enabling people to ask and answer questions openly, creating mutual understanding. It is about making their skills, knowledge and ideas visible and accessible to all (based on a definition by Oscar Berg). Complexity is not locked away, but in the background, giving us effective choice about what we want to see, being it an accessible overview or the full details. This fosters a working environment where people can find what they need, when they need it, without asking permission. What they see and don't see is then solely based on their own needs, activities and interests. This makes the Collective work more effectively.



FOSTER SERENDIPITOUS ENCOUNTERS

John Hagel, consultant and author, defines serendipity as “unexpected encounters that surprise and delight.” Serendipitous encounters cannot be prescribed or staged, but the right conditions or techniques can be used so that we can increase the quality and the chance of these unexpected encounters. Conditions may include a positive attitude & framing about flow and opportunity, working to find what works. An open and transparent environment that encourages and rewards sharing is critical to the occurrence of serendipity.



EXPERIMENT GENEROUSLY



The Collective values experimentation, with lots of iterations and exceptions. The Collective supports and enables experimentation through "labs" and "workgroups", temporary spaces that allow participants to prototype ideas and share findings ongoingly with anybody who is interested.



USE AND SHARE

As we find and use Tech We Trust as a set of shared services to the entire Collective, we are able to communicate more effectively and develop better products (e.g. content or our own tools). For example, our team chat space brings people around the world together, and the use of a shared content publishing platform allows anyone to create and publish content for the website. This not only helps people work together better, it allows distributed learning. In this collective approach, the time and energy needed to progress along a learning curve is spread across the Collective - anyone who has learned how to use them can now help others get started (commonly referred to as See-Do-Teach or Monkey-See-Monkey-Do).

TECH WE TRUST



DECIDE THROUGH CONSENT

Consent implies agreement to a course of action commonly characterized by comfort with the general direction though not necessarily with all the specific details, i.e. you do not have to fully agree, but instead you are able to work toward the aims of the decision. As a participant in a consent-based process, you have the capacity to block a decision, however, no one member can block an action of the Cooperative.



DON'T TELL ANYONE WHAT TO DO

No one here has a “boss”, and as members, we negotiate responsibilities with our peers. Each member is responsible for finding the right people to make decisions, and for using the right tools to do his work (see Use and Share Tech We Trust Principle). When we lead, we remember to ask what we need from each other. Even though nobody can tell anyone else what to do, responsibilities taken on are taken seriously. We may not work for any ‘ONE’, but we do work for each other. The Collective strives for a high degree of coordination.



DISTRIBUTE DECISION-MAKING TO

The Collective relies on the ability of a person to make his or her own decisions, and we encourage making decisions that can be made without seeking permission, while taking responsibility for observing and responding to the outcomes. The "edge" is defined as those circles, groups or labs that are "closest to the action", i.e. in direct contact with clients or developers or funders. Operating this way, both power and resources are better distributed.

THE EDGE



WORK IN INTERCONNECTED NETWORKS

There are many organizational forms out there and the Collective is focusing on two of them, namely the network and the team, avoiding excessively hierarchical structures. While networks "naturally" exist in all organizations, and do include hierarchies, we want to design the Collective with network principles in mind, e.g. that anyone can connect with anyone else, the connection can go both ways, and as projects expand, people change and reorganize based on interests and needs. Ideally, this allows communication among the various active projects within our Collective and you see what you need to when you need to, without becoming overwhelmed. A team that's gotten too large can 'nest' one part inside the main, or divide in two, like a cell.



ADDRESS INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS



MAYBE

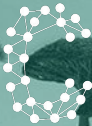
© Brenttman

Keep eyes, ears and minds open to contradictions between what is said, or done, in different places or by different people in the organisation. Let them be freely and openly discussed. The process of addressing the contradictions does not guarantee resolution, but it always carries potential for learning, and therefore this should not only be open, but also be documented for later reflection. We accept conflict and contradictions as part of the way people work together, and we strive to learn from them.



NURTURE ANTI-FRAGILITY

Coined by Nassim Taleb, anti-fragility is a property of systems that increase in capability and resilience as a result of stressors, shocks, mistakes, or failure (Wikipedia). Taleb emphasises that "anti-fragility is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the anti-fragile gets better." The Collective sees anything we do in light of anti-fragility - are we getting better or stronger with this platform, this size, this process or this strategy? If not, let's rethink it!



Behind the Scenes Look of Creating our Principles for the Collective

June 20, 2017

Governance Working Gp

ben_roberts 1:18 PM

@channel Good conversation today with Michael, Joachim, and Jim. Notes are on our Main Doc. Building on earlier conversations.

It started with a conversation...

ment
toch
as our
bin naming
e will
time" by our

deadline. All of these will be documented here. As research for the principles list, we will be reaching out to various experts, based on joachim's governance matrix, as detailed in our notes (@mwl we nominated you by research Wirearchy ntrnrlnclct)

Governance Approach, Principles

General Approach

..shifted to a matrix...

Power of Pull
John Hagel (2010)
How Small Moves,
Swiftness Made, Can
Set Big Things in
Motion

employee-owned,
self-managed

Wirearchy
Jon Husband (1999)
Hierarchical
Systems: Driven by
Research

Sociocracy
Gerard Eidenburg
(1998) & Sociocracy
Autonomy (Michel)

our heterodox approx

..interspersed with interviews...

..paused with an interim report...

ance Working Group DRAFT Report

2017-07-01

Self-Management Principles & Processes

- Nobody can tell anyone what to do.
- Everyone responds to all requests.
- A contract between the individual and the collective commitment to fill roles and lead responsibilities

..expanded with new principles..

[Ben, 6/25] Here's are my notes the principles of self "pure" form:

Two main ones: 1) don't use force and 2) keep your cards the following:

- Honor the voice of every single member. There is

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- BE PURPOSE-DRIVEN
- NETWORKS OVER HIERARCHY
- EXPERIMENTATION OVER PLANNING
- DEFAULT TO OPEN

..contracted with fewer principles..

FOLLOWING A PLAN

5. DEFAULT TO OPEN

@mklmklmkl // AUGUST 17 September 2017

DIGITAL LIFE COLLECTIVE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- CONSENT OVER CONSENSUS
- AUTONOMOUS DECISION MAKING AT THE EDGES
- EXPERIMENTATION OVER PLANNING
- RECIROCITY OVER RELEGATION
- NORMS OVER RULES
- FOSTER SPONTANEOUS ENCOUNTERS
- TRANSPARENCY OVER OPAQUENESS
- NOBODY CAN TELL ANYONE WHAT TO DO
- WHERE YOU ARE IS NOT WHO YOU ARE
- PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN CIRCLES

..expanded to more principles..

WHY PRINCIPLES?

PRINCIPLES BRING US CLOSER TOGETHER AND A SHAPE US AND UNITE US—THEY ARE HERE TO GUARD TREACHEROUS MARSHES OF OPINIONS, BIASES & PRINCIPLES ARE NOT RULES, OR POLICIES OR PRI

..included why we do all this..

..organized in Kumu..

Principal - Contracts & Commitments (?)

Proposed by: Michael (source DK)

Proposed text: We make commitments, and keep or renegotiate

..re-started with a new process..

Also, we have this principle (from below):

- A contract between the individual and the collective commitment to fill roles and lead responsibilities

Reactions:

[Ben]

July 1, 2017

Governance Working Gp

mwl 10:08 AM

..followed by more discussions..

ben_roberts 10:08 AM

Just catching up here, @joachim, @jmscarver and @mwl... I'm disappointed and frustrated that the process you requested me to initiate went off the rails. I thought it was a clean and clear way to see if we could arrive at a short

OL PRINCIPLES.xlsx

..ranked in a spreadsheet..

July 11, 2017

Governance Working Gp

mwl 12:30 PM

If 4, 15 & 16 are likely discards on the current scoring, are we considering just 3, 7, 8 and 10?

..found some order in chaos..

ben_roberts 10:06 AM

The two principles you name are not the ones I'm suggesting are better served in some other way. Rather, those DO strike me as principles we can declare: that will guide our decisions

INFORMATION CAN TAKE IN AND ENABLING OUR AND TO STAY ACTIVE MEMORY AND

..included the Collective..

Christina Bowen 4:08 PM Today

I like that idea. Start with the individual, which should be easier for people to identify with initially, and work up to the collective, emergent

DISTRIBUTE DECISION

..until it was all ready (kind of)..