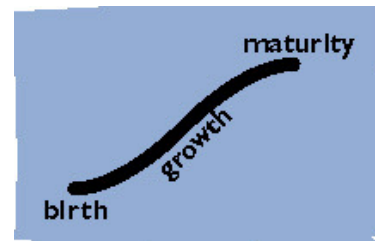


The Phases of Collaborative Change

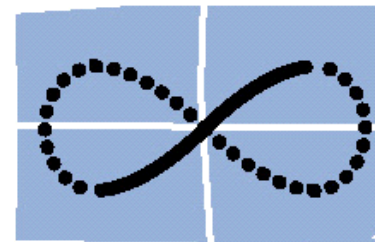
MAIN IDEAS

- 1 **Collaborative Efforts have Eco-Cycles** (rather than life cycles): these include development, growth-and-conservation (the performance loop) and creative destruction/release and exploration (renewal loop).
- 2 **The Entire Eco-Cycle is Critical:** a successful performance loop begins with a solid renewal loop (i.e. creative destruction/release and exploration).
- 3 **Situational Leadership:** leadership and management styles, organizational culture and resources) should 'fit' the unique phase or area of work.
- 4 **Resilient – vs Sustainable – Collaborative:** the importance of continually adapting and reinventing (rather than sustaining) the collaboration to reflect the demands of different phases and internal and external changes.
- 5 **Natural Attrition:** not all collaborative efforts are robust enough to make it through the entire eco-cycle and should be discontinued in order to create space for more robust efforts.
- 6 **Patch Dynamics:** collaborative efforts are more resilient when they are partly operating in all four phases or area of the eco-cycle.

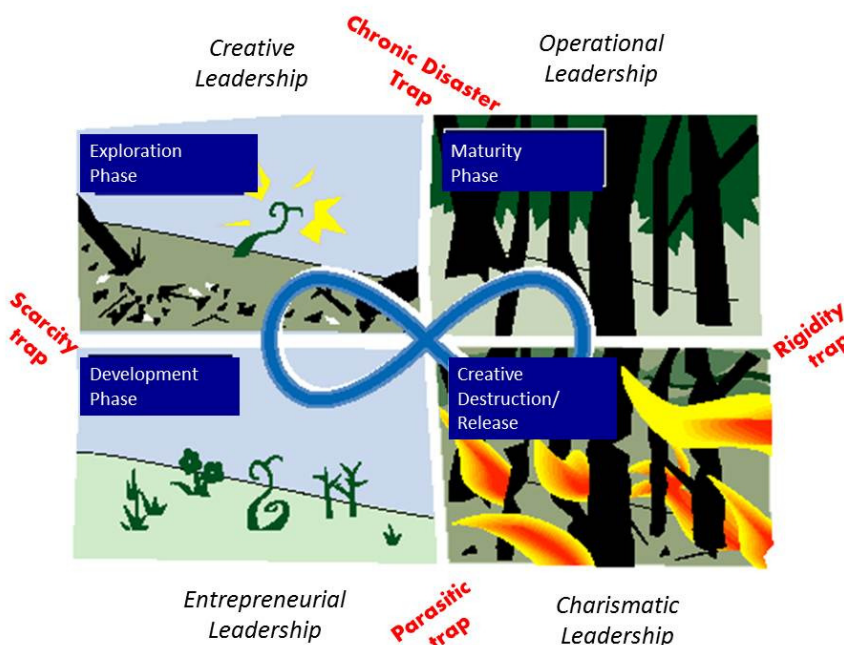
Two Loops, Four Phases of Collaborative Change



The Performance Loop



The Renewal Loop



RESOURCES

From Life Cycle to Eco-Cycle by Brenda Zimmerman. Webpage.

<http://www.plexusinstitute.org/edgware/archive/think/main/aides9.html>

Phases of Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Poverty. Webpage and Podcast.

http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s61_VC_2009g.html

Crisis & Renewal: Ethical Anarchy in Mature Organizations. David Hurst.

<http://www.davidkhurst.com/Crisis-and-Renewal.pdf>

Can this Collaboration Be Saved? Paul Mattesich.

<http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/129/savecollab.html>

Accelerating Our Impact: Philanthropy, Innovation and Social Change. Katharine Pearson.

<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/resources/publication/accelerating-our-impact-philanthropy-innovation-and-social-chang>

Phases of Collaborative Efforts

	Exploration	Development	Maturity	Creative Destruction/Release
PURPOSE	To expand the number of innovative ideas in a way that improves the conditions for their successful development.	To develop a pattern of working together that turns promising ideas into effective strategies.	To conserve a pattern of working together on proven ideas to tackle an issue.	To release pattern of working together on non longer productive ideas to clear the way for new vision, relationships and directions to emerge.
LEADERSHIP STYLE & GROUP CULTURE	Creative, inclusive and mission-driven.	Entrepreneurial, adaptive and outcome driven.	Management-focused, operational, risk-sensitive & productivity oriented.	Charismatic, visionary and values-based.
MEMBERS	Large, diverse, often unusual mix of participants, with stable core group.	Smaller number & variety of members focused on particular areas of work.	Highly specialized regularly participating members.	Smaller number of core members, highly relational.
STRUCTURE & PROCESS	Informal, time limited, overlapping, loose task groups and teams. Multiple layers of participation.	Tasks, roles and relationships become explicit. Patterns emerge for process and structure.	Hierarchical structure, standardization, institutionalized roles and procedures.	Informal, loosely connected, flat, eclectic and sporadic connections.
ACTIVITIES & PRODUCTS	Community conversations. Idea generation. Best practice research. Experiments. Simulations. Planning. Developmental Evaluation.	Pilot projects & prototypes. Adaptive planning. Begins with formative evaluation ends with summative evaluation.	Preparing, monitoring and adjusting detailed workplans. Performance measurement.	Reflective learning. Scanning of trends. Relationship building with key stakeholders. Visioning.

Transitional Traps in Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Poverty

Traps	Description	Typical Challenges
SCARCITY	The group struggles to 'birth' something likely to lead to outcomes and garners the support of the larger community.	The ideas are not compelling. Underdeveloped decision-making process & criteria. Members disagree on which options to pursue. Members have insufficient credibility. Energy spread too thin across many directions.
PARASITIC	The group seem unable to sustain or grow their work because it is 'parasitic' on the host(s) that gave it birth.	Over reliance on key – often founding – members of the group. Dependence on start-up pool of resources. Approach works well only at a certain scale or in unique context.
RIGIDITY	The group is unable or unwilling to change or dismantle an approach that no longer fits the evolving context in which they operate.	Psyche of immediate return. Fear of uncertainty. Self-Interest. Lack of clear exit rules. Concern about perception of failure. Pressure to continue by entrenched constituency (e.g. 'too big to fail').
CHRONIC DISASTER	The participants find themselves 'spinning' and unable to get traction on a compelling new vision and set of values for reducing poverty.	Inability to let go of the past. Weak trust amongst members. Difficulty in agreeing on shared vision and values. Volatile environment.