

# Fortifying the Backbone of Safe and Supportive Schools Utilizing an Integrated MTSS Framework



## Nevada Department of Education

Office for a Safe and Respectful  
Learning Environment

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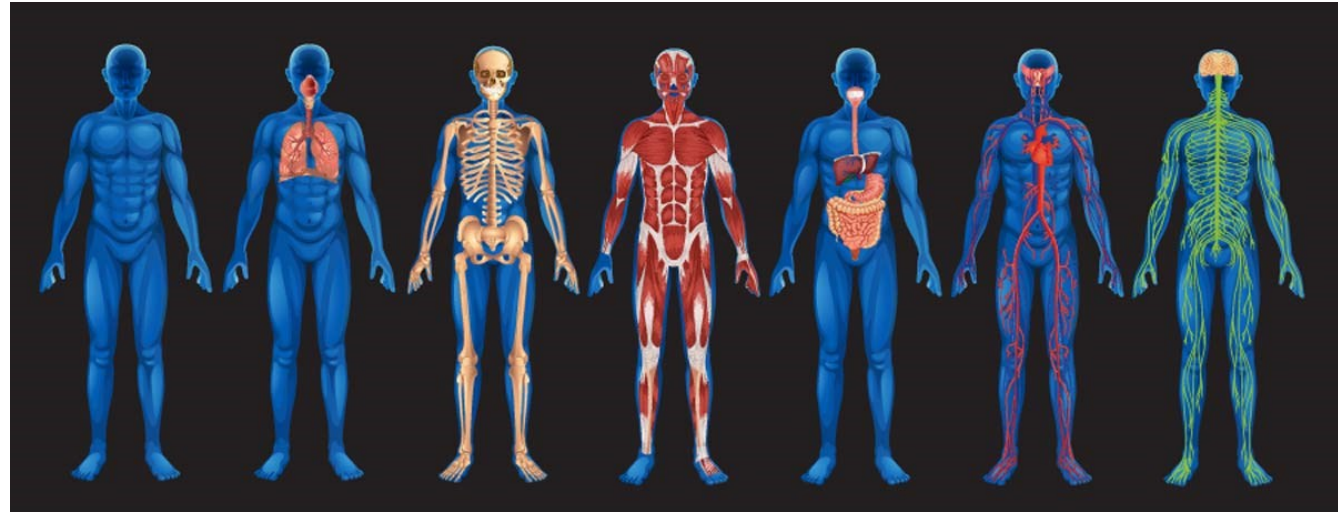
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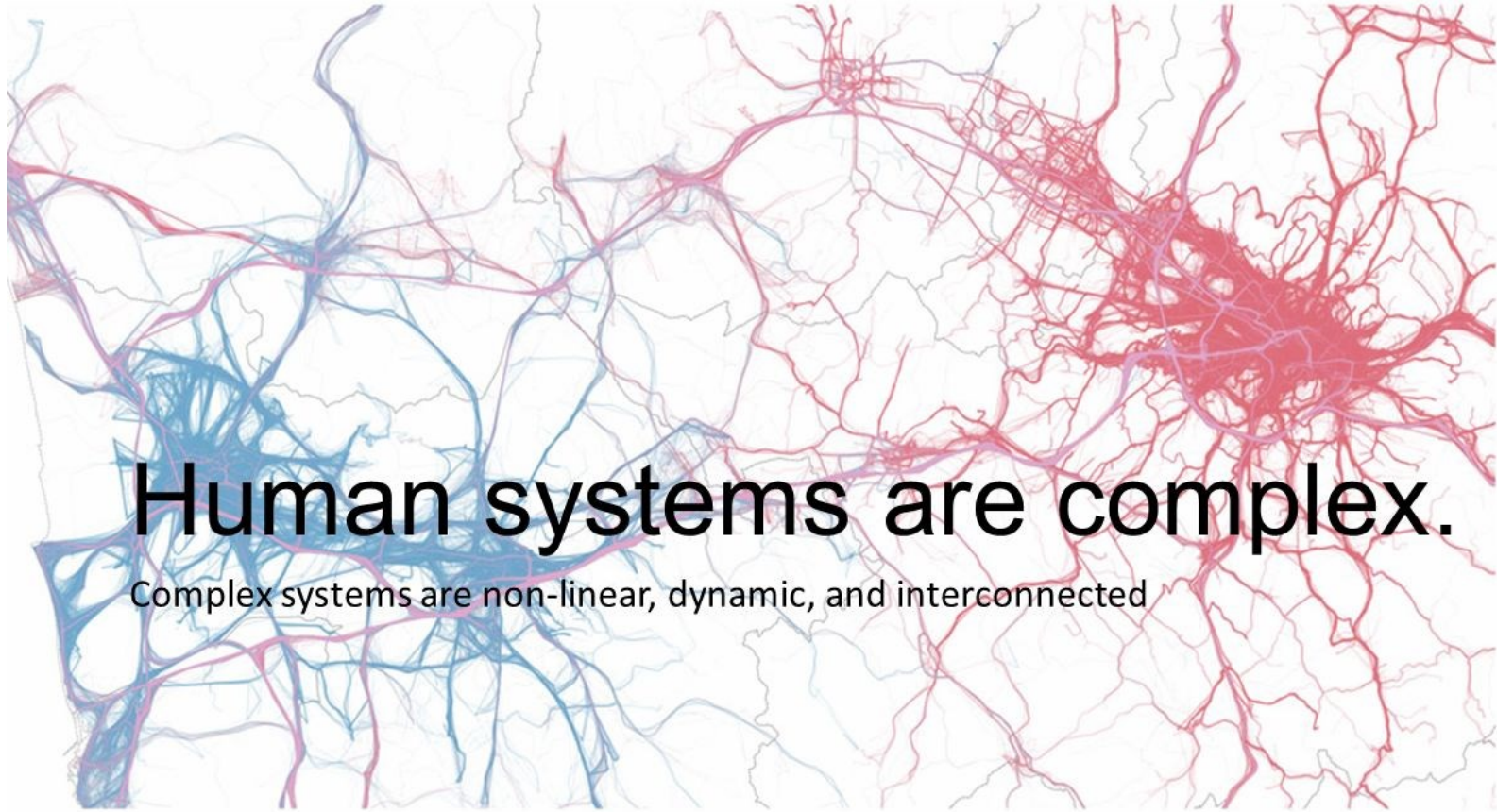
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# Systems of the Human Body

- ✓ Integumentary
- ✓ Muscular
- ✓ Skeletal
- ✓ Nervous
- ✓ Circulatory
- ✓ Lymphatic
- ✓ Respiratory
- ✓ Endocrine
- ✓ Urinary/Excretory
- ✓ Reproductive
- ✓ Digestive





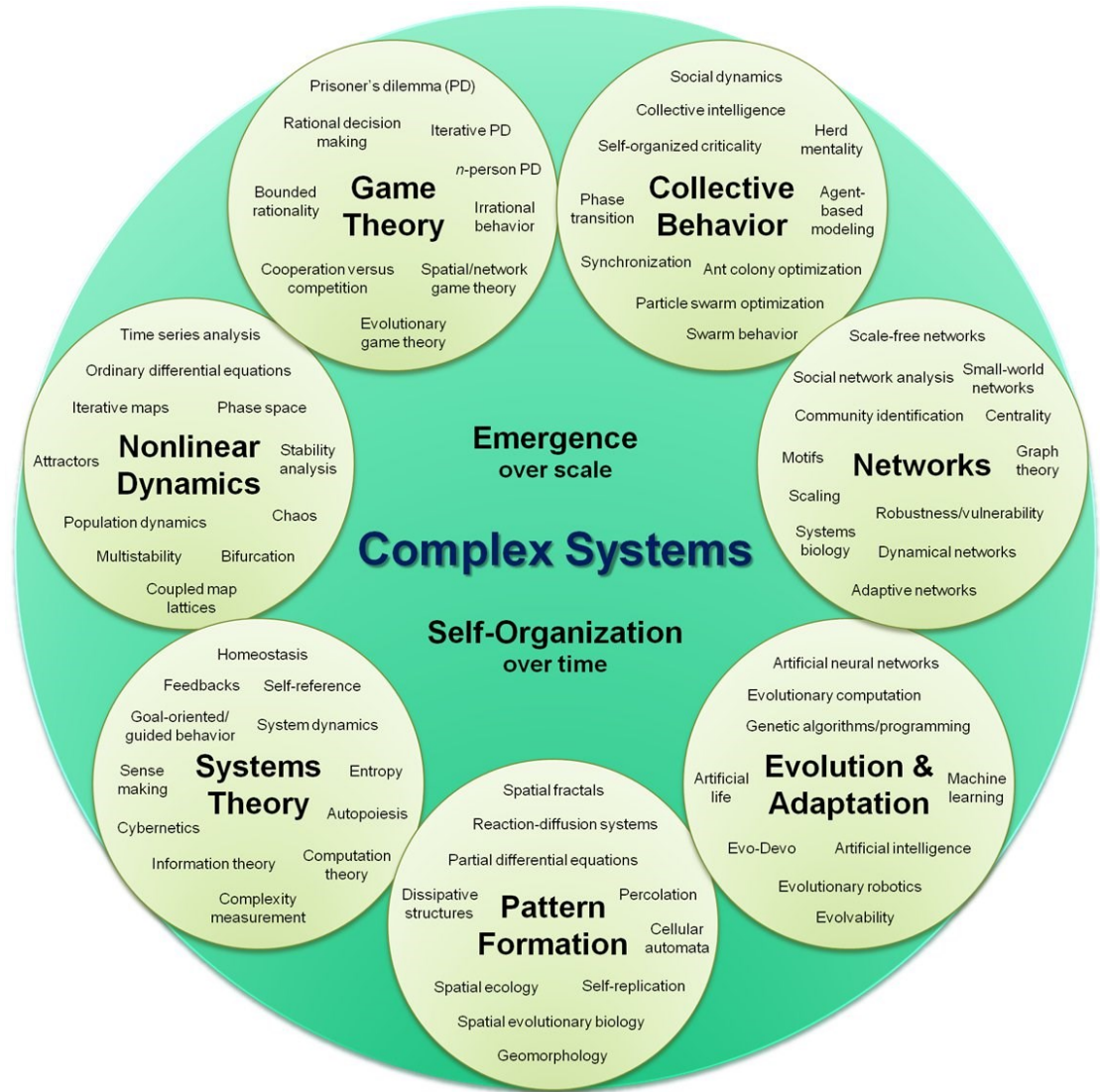
# Human systems are complex.

Complex systems are non-linear, dynamic, and interconnected



# COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS

Complexity in **complex adaptive systems** refers to the potential for emergent behavior in **complex** and unpredictable phenomena. Examples of **complex** adapting **systems** include the economy, ecosystems, the human brain, developing embryos and ant colonies. Each is a **system** with a network of many agents acting in parallel.





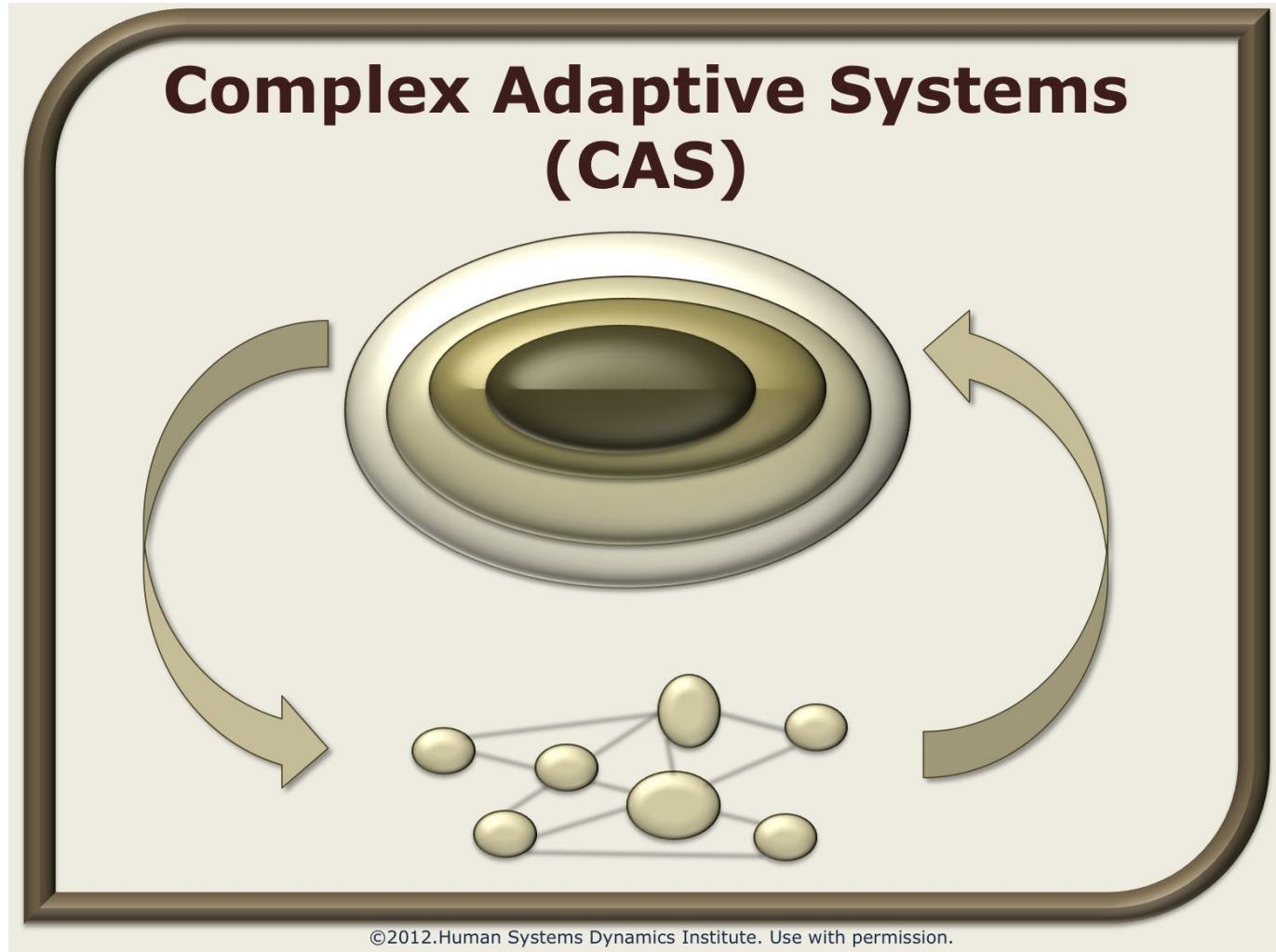
# Initiative Fatigue

*When the number of initiatives increases while time, resources and emotional energy are constant, each new initiative no matter how well conceived or well intentioned – will receive fewer minutes, dollars and ounces of emotional energy than its predecessors - ASCD*



# Complex Adaptive Systems

A complex adaptive system (CAS) is defined as “a group of semi-autonomous agents who interact in interdependent ways to produce system-wide patterns, such that those patterns then influence behavior of the agents.”  
*(Dooley, 1996)*



# Layered Systems

Chaotic: No relationship between cause and effect at systems level

Simple: The relationship between cause and effect is known

Complicated: Relationship between cause and effect requires analysis, investigation , or expert knowledge

Complex: Relationship between cause and effect can only be perceived in retrospect

# Building a System Structure

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# MTSS Components are also essential for integration.



# Conditions for Integration

## Achieving Large-Scale Change through Collective Impact Involves 5 Key Conditions for Shared Success

### Common Agenda

All participants have a **shared vision for change** including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions

### Shared Measurement

**Collecting data and measuring results consistently** across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable

### Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Participant activities must be **differentiated while still being coordinated** through a mutually reinforcing plan of action

### Continuous Communication

**Consistent and open communication** is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation

### Backbone Support

Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to **serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies**

# Role of the State Education Agency in School Based Mental Health



## Backbone Effectiveness: 27 Indicators

<b>Guide Vision and Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners accurately describe the <b>common agenda</b></li> <li>Partners <b>publicly discuss / advocate for</b> common agenda goals</li> <li>Partners' <b>individual work is increasingly aligned</b> with common agenda</li> <li>Board members and key leaders increasingly <b>look to backbone</b> organization for initiative support, strategic guidance and leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Support Aligned Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners <b>articulate their role</b> in the initiative</li> <li><b>Relevant stakeholders</b> are engaged in the initiative</li> <li>Partners <b>communicate and coordinate</b> efforts regularly, with, and independently of, backbone</li> <li>Partners report increasing levels of <b>trust</b> with one another</li> <li>Partners increase <b>scope / type of collaborative work</b></li> <li>Partners improve <b>quality</b> of their work</li> <li>Partners improve <b>efficiency</b> of their work</li> <li>Partners feel <b>supported and recognized</b> in their work</li> </ul>
<b>Establish Shared Measurement Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared <b>data system</b> is in development</li> <li>Partners <b>understand the value</b> of shared data</li> <li>Partners have robust / shared <b>data capacity</b></li> <li>Partners <b>make decisions</b> based on data</li> <li>Partners <b>utilize data</b> in a meaningful way</li> </ul>
<b>Build Public Will</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members are increasingly <b>aware</b> of the issue(s)</li> <li>Community members express <b>support</b> for the initiative</li> <li>Community members feel <b>empowered</b> to engage in the issue(s)</li> <li>Community members increasingly <b>take action</b></li> </ul>
<b>Advance Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target audience (e.g., influencers and policymakers) is increasingly <b>aware</b> of the initiative</li> <li>Target audiences <b>advocate</b> for changes to the system aligned with initiative goals</li> <li>Public <b>policy</b> is increasingly <b>aligned</b> with initiative goals</li> </ul>
<b>Mobilize Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funders are asking nonprofits to <b>align</b> to initiative goals</li> <li>Funders are <b>redirecting funds</b> to support initiative goals</li> <li><b>New resources</b> from public and private sources are being contributed to partners and initiative</li> </ul>



# Top Takeaways

- Individual organizations struggle with integration without intentional support assisting with collective impact.
- Build systems that bring out the best in employees and learners across state, district, and school systems.
- SEAs and partners can and should shift focus over time with lessons learned from the field.
- SEA partners need ongoing assistance with data—make using data for decision making easy.
- External communications, building public will, and advancing policy are common SEA challenges and actions.

# NEVADA'S FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

- MTSS Components:**
- Teaming
  - Data based decision making
  - Tiered supports
  - Instruction as prevention
  - Screening
  - Evidence based practices
  - Progress monitoring

- System of Care Values:**
- Family driven
  - Youth guided
  - Culturally & linguistically appropriate
  - Individualized & community based
  - Evidence based services & practices

- Intervention Plan**
- Tiered supports
  - Evidence based programs/practices
  - High-fidelity Wraparound

- Screening/Assessment**
- Data-based decision making
  - Progress Monitoring

**Integrated Student Support Team**

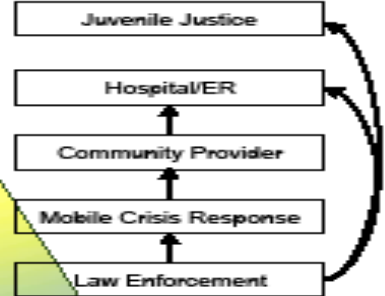
- Parents/Guardians as Partners**
- Effective communication
  - Consent & Release of Information

**SCHOOL**

**Referral**

- Partnerships (System of Care)**
- Community Providers
  - Mobile Crisis Response
  - Juvenile Justice
  - Child Protective Services
  - Parent/Community Organizations

→ = Individualized supports continue for as long as additional supports are needed, as indicated by progress monitoring & data



SafeVoice MDT

NVCANS supports planning, services, & outcomes

Pre-existing MOU for data & information sharing

**No Wrong Door – Referring Sources May Include:**

**At School:**

- SafeVoice
- Universal Screener
- Educator concern
- Parent/Guardian
- Student
- Behavior
- Attendance
- Mental Health

**In the Community:**

- Community Coalitions
- Community MH Providers
- Parent Advocacy Groups
- Child Protective Services
- Juvenile Justice
- Law Enforcement
- Mobile Crisis Response Team

**Universal Services Promote Prevention & Early Intervention**

**Academic:**

- High Expectations/Rigor
- Differentiated Instruction
- Comprehensive Student Supports (Counselors & Psychologists)

**School Climate:**

- Surveys (students, parents, & educators)
- Violence & Risk
- Threat Assessment
- Anti-bullying laws
- SafeVoice

**Behavior:**

- PBIS
- Restorative Practices
- Trauma Informed Schools
- Zero disproportionality

**SEL/SEAD:**

- For students and educators
- Preservice training
- Professional development

**Mental Health:**

- Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)
- Signs of Suicide (SOS)
- System of Care
- Social Workers in Schools (SWxS) state block grant

**Equity as Our Foundation: "All Means All"**



# Signs of Initiative Fatigue

- Overwhelm
  - Can be accompanied by physical symptoms
  - Increased stress and/or anxiety
  - Lack of patience
  - Extreme fatigue
- Apathy
  - Feelings of disempowerment
  - Emotional or physical Withdrawal
- Frustration
  - Conflict or animosity between colleagues
  - Verbal outbursts
- Atypical Attrition
  - Educators leaving profession prior to normal life-cycle of employment



# Strategies to Avoid Initiative Fatigue

- Use data to determine what IS working, and more importantly, what is NOT
  - Use Data to make decisions include ALL members of community in the decision making process to pursue a new initiative
- Communicate with transparency, sincerity and active listening skills
  - Process current initiatives/practice and ways in which the new initiative may complement or support current practice
- Emphasize INCREMENTAL implementation
- Use MTSS framework
  - Including targeted support





# Strategies through the MTSS Lens

Incremental  
Integration

Implement

provide  
intensive  
support for  
individual  
students

small groups  
used to address  
needs and provide  
targeted support

Pilot

test group to pilot, then  
share results to all

Introduce

gather perspectives from ALL

communicate the WHAT  
and WHY of initiative to  
ALL

# Example of Integration

If Restorative Practices is the new initiative and SEL and PBIS have already been implemented, then begin to incorporate restorative practice circles to:

- discuss, promote and develop social and emotional skills
- provide opportunities to recognize positive behavior
- build community, trust and practice active listening



# Design Strategy Specific to Your Needs

- Consider challenge... Then reframe it to answer...
  - What would good look like?
  - Use this as your starting place.
- Establish conditions for success
  - What do those involved need to feel, believe, experience, be assured of in order to move forward?
- Reverse engineer by asking: What would it take?
  - And what would that take? Keep asking, processing and solution-seeking until a tangible objective is reached

- It can look like this....

# Reverse Engineer Design

Challenge: Integration of new initiative...  
Staff is resistant

Reframe:

What would good look like?

What do they need to know, feel, experience, be assured of?

○  
=  
Tangible Objective







# For More Information

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