

HOW TO DESIGN TRANSITION LEARNING EXPERIENCES?



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1. Introduction

What?

This hand-out is about how to design and deliver learning experiences that serve the transition. The domain is Training and Capacity Building.

Why?

Learners of all ages need opportunities to develop the capabilities to live more regeneratively, embrace healthier lifestyles and contribute – both individually and collectively – to the just transition.

We need new approaches to learning. The way we design learning experiences needs to guide practitioners towards taking creative and participatory approaches to face complex challenges. It needs to make the skills, knowledges and practices sink into the body and uplift and inspire simultaneously. In a way, what we learn is secondary to how we learn it and how we can successfully integrate it into subsequent practices in daily life contexts.

Who?

Potentially anyone interested in creating empowering and uplifting learning experiences, but in particular trainers, educators, facilitators, mentors and coaches, or people with some permaculture or ecosocial design experience.

2. Preparation

Use a design method

You can use whatever design method that works for you, but here is a pattern that is quite adaptable to various situations. One of the positive things about it is that it is an empty framework and therefore can be suitable for many different situations. Here are a few patterns that you might use (see below à transformational design + systemic wheel) – there are many others, of course!



Plan the experience

Get the logistical details right. Organisational design needs to consider the following questions:

- How do we define success of the offering?
- Who is the offering for? Is there a correspondence between target groups and offering?
- Is there a need for it? How do you know?
- How can you ensure that people will go forward to reserving a spot and going through with the offering? What is in it for them (practice, certificate, community ...)?
- What kind of format would suit them (residential, online, hybrid...)?
- What other co-facilitators need to be brought in? What are their roles in design, delivery, and evaluation?
- Depending on the format, is there a sufficient pool for participant recruitment locally?
- Who is taking the financial risk? What price are participants/target groups willing to pay for the offering? Is the offering viable or does it need additional funding?
- What are the terms and conditions for ticketing? How do you include economically disadvantaged people?

Balance input and co-creation

- What is the vision/mission/aim of the course?
- What do we know about transformative spaces (and how to create, hold, open, and close them gracefully)?
- How to get the right people involved?
- Do the co-facilitators have all the skills it takes? If not, what is missing and how can we integrate it into the course?
- How can we both provide value and have an open-ended enough format so that co-creativity can happen within the course?
- How do we cater for different learning styles and academic levels in our formats?

3. Implementation

Gather expectations

- At the beginning of the experience, create a safe space and gather expectations and hopes/fears. Address whatever undercurrents there may be.
- Facilitate the experience and hold it like a baby.
- Get a co-facilitator and discuss beforehand and afterwards any potential critical tricky points and what should happen should your approaches diverge (and they will). These briefings are very important.



Perform temperature checks throughout

- If need be, adjust the course, give the participants more space, energise, connect, calm, uplift. Let people connect, true co-creation happens in the interstices and on the edges.

Create a closing that leaves a bit of air

Do some on the spot evaluation about what happened, what did not happen and what could happen next.

4. Follow-up

Gather targeted feedback from co-facilitators and participants that helps you improve the experience next time around. Adapt and evolve. Rinse and repeat...

5. More information

- The Systemic Design Practice Wheel: <https://emmablomkamp.com/practice/>
- The Systems Leader's Fieldbook: <https://www.systemsfieldbook.org/>
- Becoming a Regenerative Practitioner Field Guide: https://www.clearegeneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Regenerative-Practitioner-Field-Guide_2018_7.26.pdf
- Learning Ecologies: <https://www.learningecologies.uk/>
- Community Catalysts Curriculum: <https://www.catalysts.community/curriculum-1p-en>
- Community Climate Coaches Approach: <https://communitiesforfuture.org/community-climate-coaches/>
- Activating Community Transformation Model: <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/activating-community-transformation>
- Resources of the BLAST Project (Blended Learning for the Social-Ecological Transition): <https://communitiesforfuture.org/transformation-blended-learning-blast/>
- **Mini-guides of CELL (other language versions or other topics), see <https://www.cell.lu/toolbox>**

