The Institute for Healthcare Improvement

Mission

Improve health and health care worldwide.

Vision

Everyone has the best care and health possible.

Courage

Love

Values

Equity

Trust

IHI's Approach

A Scientific Method for Improvement

IHI develops and applies practical, scientific improvement and management methods to change and sustain performance in health and health systems across the world.

We spark and harvest fresh ideas, create real person-centered results, strengthen local capabilities, and generate optimism and will for change.

Inspire Change

Build Capability

Demonstrate Results

Innovate
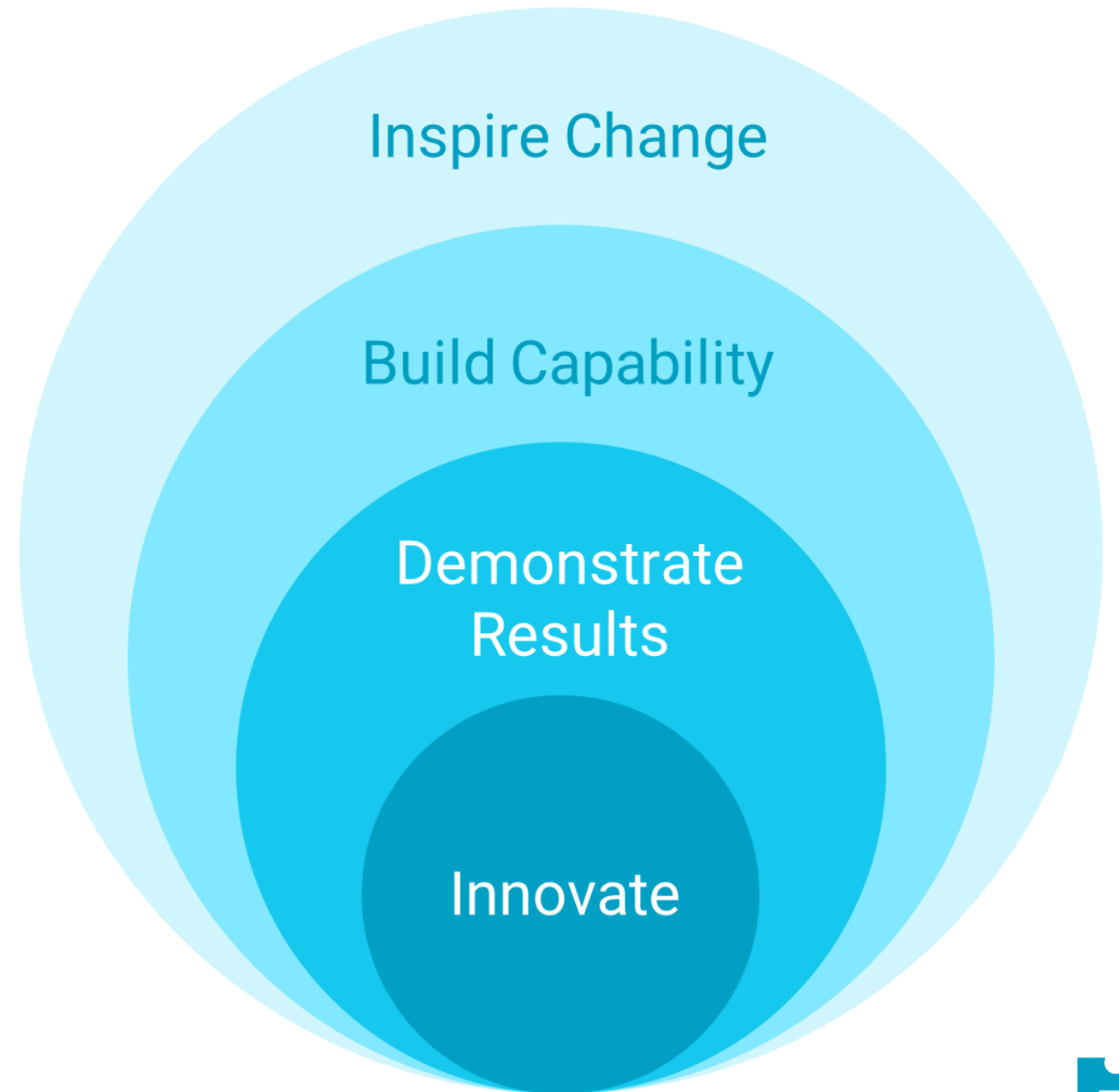
What's an **Adaptive Challenge?**

A Simple (Technical) Challenge

A Complicated (Technical) Challenge

An Adaptive (or Complex) Challenge

ZAID HASSAN   Foreword by **JOI ITO**
Director of the MIT Media Lab

THE
SOCIAL LABS
REVOLUTION

A NEW APPROACH TO SOLVING OUR MOST COMPLEX CHALLENGES

I HARVARD BUSINESS PRESS I

The Practice of
ADAPTIVE
LEADERSHIP

**TOOLS
AND TACTICS**
*for Changing
Your Organization
and the World*

RONALD HEIFETZ I ALEXANDER GRASHOW I MARTY LINSKY
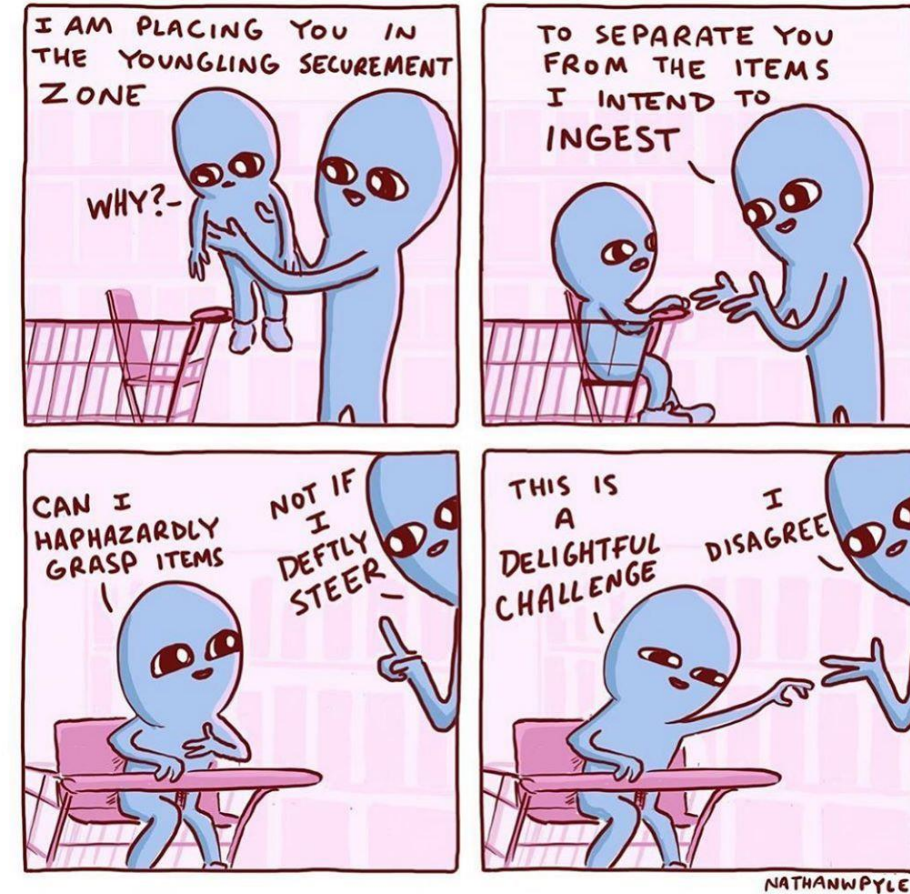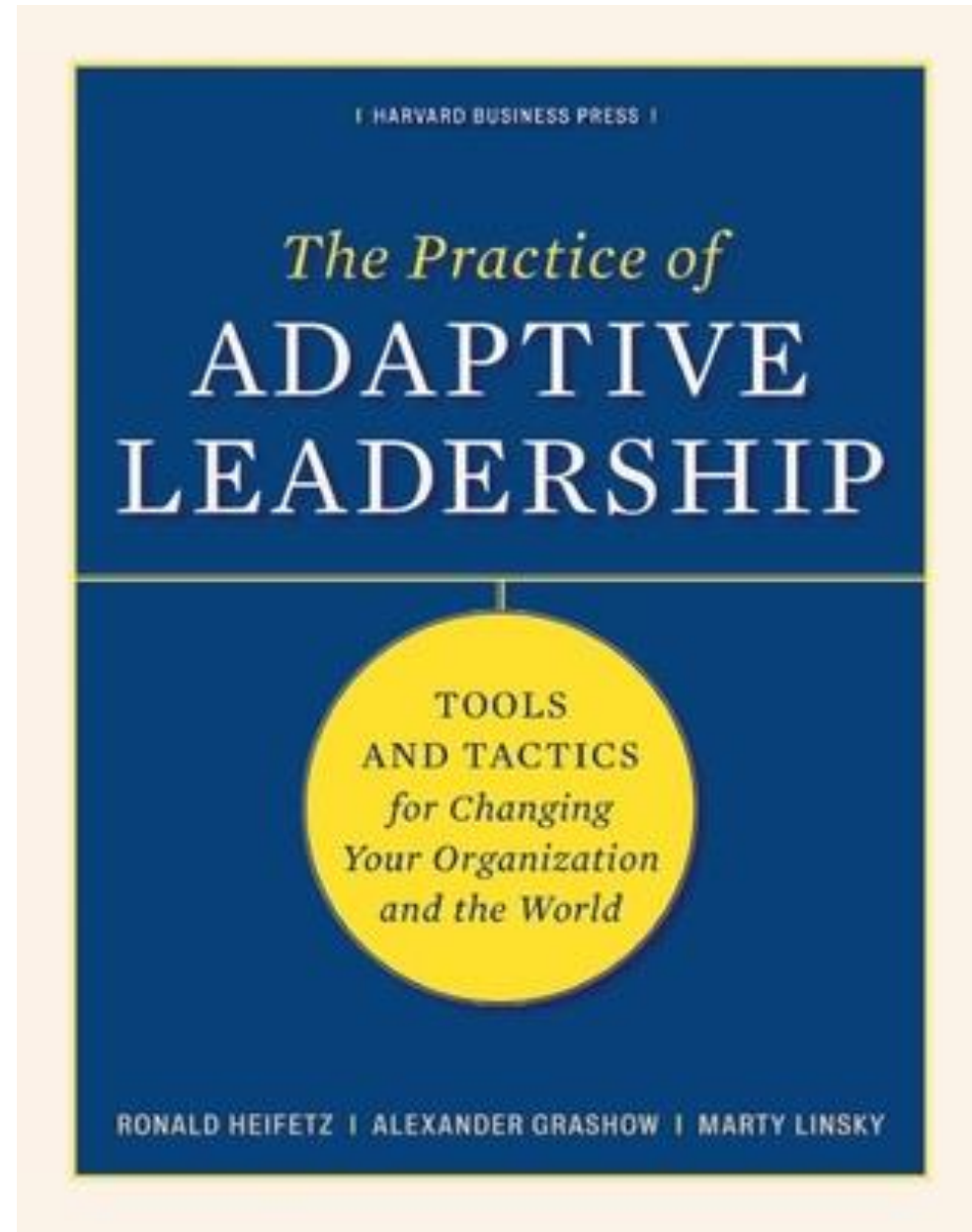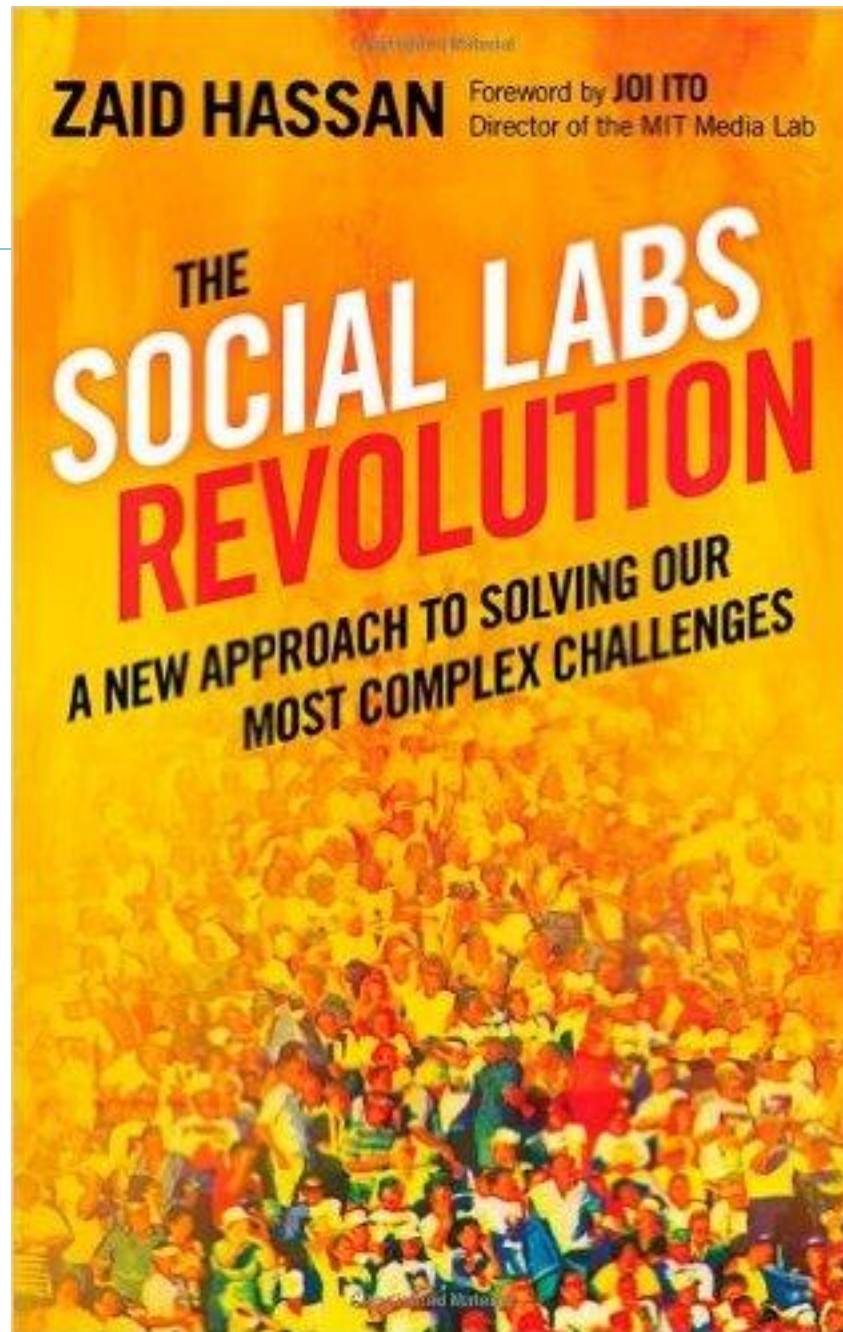
Let's unpack this a little…

An Adaptive Challenge - a social situation that meets the following criteria:

	In plain English…
1. The situation is **emergent**	Adaptive Challenges have many components that are always Changing. So there is no way to know what the situation will look like in the future.
2. There is a **constant flow of information** to negotiate	Adaptive Challenges have new information and sources of information continually available.
3. Actors are **constantly adapting their behavior**	The people, organizations, and systems involved are continually adjusting what they do, often without consulting with others working on this

Source: Hassan: The Social Labs Revolution

Report Out

Please raise your hand if at least one of your projects or an aspect of your work involves addressing an adaptive challenge/ complex problem:

➤ What is the adaptive challenge (name it)?

➤ How does it meet the criteria for being an <u>adaptive or complex</u> (rather than a technical) challenge?

Why Tackling an Adaptive Challenge as if it were a Technical Challenge is Disastrous!

"The most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems."

Ron Heifetz, The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

Type of Problem or Challenge	Problem	Solution	Who's Work	Type of Work
Technical Example	Broken Arm *Problem is Clear*	Set the Arm in a cast *Solution is clear*	Doctor *Expert*	One proven fix *Expert Fix*
Adaptive Example	Reduce % of people with pre-diabetes who develop diabetes *Causes of problem are <u>not</u> clear or vary*	Requires learning of root causes, factors and opportunities *Solution is <u>not</u> clear*	Many people. Orgs. & systems including people with pre-diabetes *Multiple Actors*	Many ideas could contribute to a solution *Experiment to make progress*

Technical Challenge

✓ Is clearly defined
✓ Can be solved by experts
✓ Can be resolved in short(er) time spans
✓ **Can be issued by edict**
✓ Is solved by authority/leadership or delegates
✓ Requires informative learning, but basic perceptions remain the same
✓ Faces less resistance

Adaptive Challenge

✓ Is harder to define
✓ Must be solved by people, not experts
✓ Has long-term outcomes
✓ **Requires changes in attitude, beliefs, behaviors**
✓ Requires collaboration
✓ Requires transformative learning & shifts in perceptions
✓ Faces more resistance

Adapted from Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading (R. Heifetz and M. Linsky)

Common Responses to tackling Adaptive Challenges/Complex Problems

- Someone (else) should really do something about this problem
- That wouldn't work for us because…
- We can use better monitoring and compliance to control this and improve the situation
- If only they did what we/our report told them to do, we would have solved the issue already
- We tried something like that before and it didn't work
- By following the detailed workplan that our panel of experts produced, we can solve this!
- We don't have the resources/people/expertise needed to do this
- If we take this on and fail, we'll put our funding/reputation at risk
- There is too much about this that we can't control
- Let's meet to discuss and plan this out fully before we decide to do anything
- We need to get all stakeholders to buy-in before we can tackle this
- We are just not ready to take this on
- We've always done it this way!

Tackling Complex Challenges

- These mindsets are connected to and feed off each other

- Trying these Mindsets will allow you to get started

- Embracing these mindsets will keep you energized and allow you to be resilient

- You can cultivate these mindsets in yourself and others

- These mindsets are powerful tools within themselves

- The methods and tools you will learn throughout this initiative, including the Model for Improvement, will work even better if you cultivate these mindsets

Cultivating a Growth Mindset

Based on the work of Carol Dweck

Graphic Courtesy of Community Solutions

Carol Dweck's 4 Options (and what the research says)

1. Your intelligence and abilities are something very basic about you that you can't change very much.

2. You can learn new things, but you can't really change how intelligent you are.

3. No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit.

4. You can always substantially change how intelligent you are.
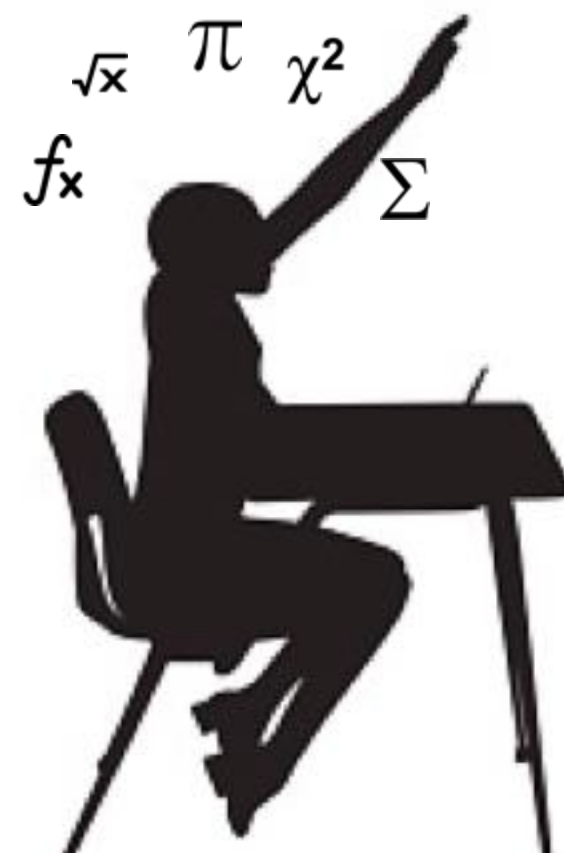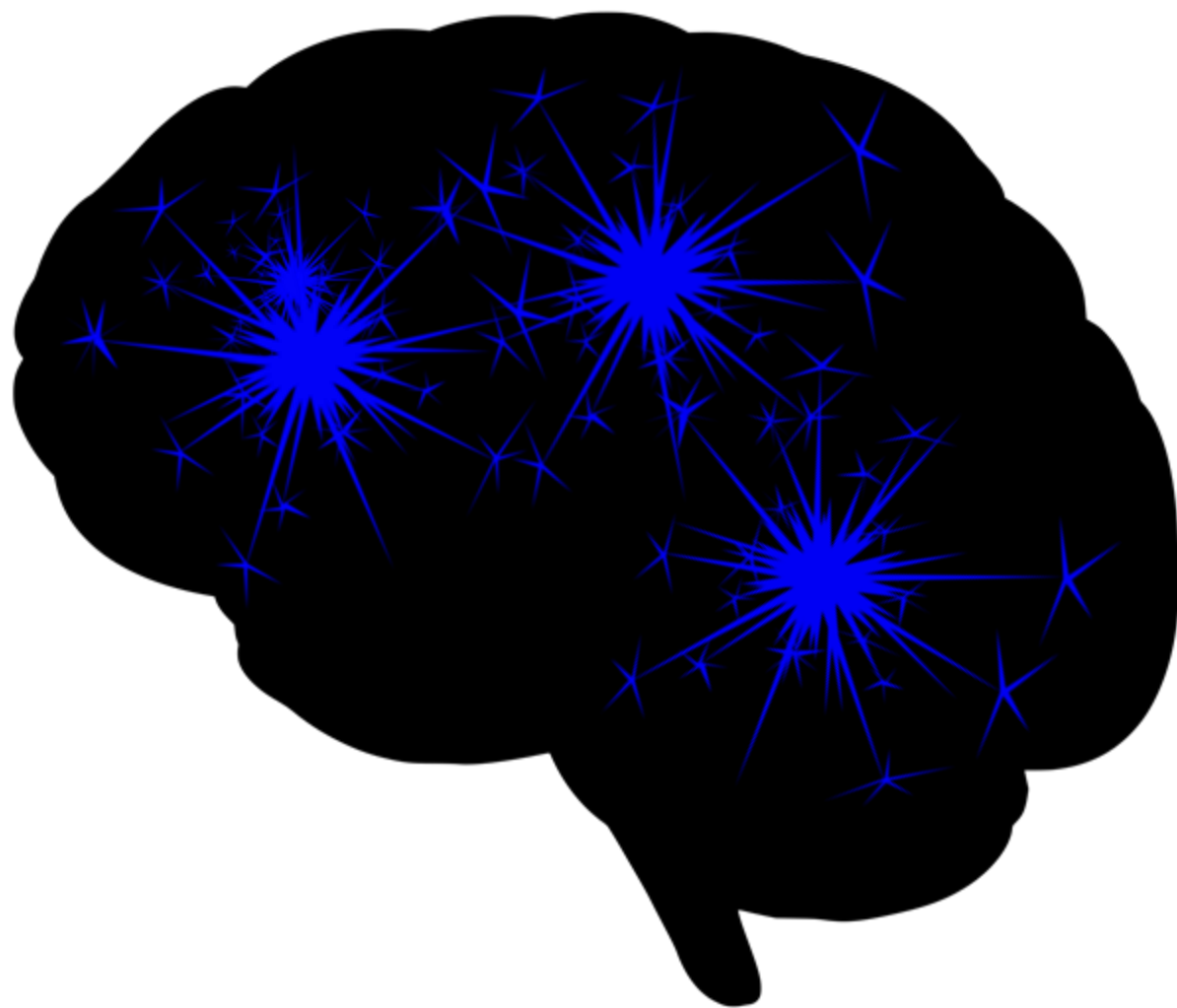
Strategies for Cultivating a Growth Mindset

- Learn to hear a fixed mindset in yourself and others

- Make an effort to add "yet" to statements that otherwise end in failure (e.g. instead of "I can't figure out how this works" reframe as " I haven't **YET** figured out how this works"

- You can prime yourself and others to tackle a complex challenge using the growth mindset by remembering something you couldn't do (or do well) in the past that now you are good at

- Remember that groups who believe they can improve, are able to stick with a problem and are resilient in the face of setbacks

- Remember that the power of a growth mindset is supported by science

Or Just Watch This Video

[The Power of a Growth Mindset](#)

Growth Mindset Discussion

- Take 2 minutes in pairs or triads to discuss:

  - One thing that you used to be horrible at, that you became proficient (or expert) at with time and practice

  - 1 area in which you can cultivate a growth mindset in yourself and/or others in your current work

- Now let's discuss how the Growth Mindset could be applied to Equity in OC

Failing Forward

To Make Progress on Adaptive Challenges

Embracing
Failing Forward

Typical (Technical) Views of Planning, Success & Failure

- If we plan enough, we won't make any mistakes

- If we follow our workplan, we will be successful

- Our experts' recommendations now just need to be implemented

- We shouldn't begin work until we have figured everything out

- If we make a mistake, we risk our reputation, funding or worse

- We can't afford to make a mistake because we work with people

- If we do make a mistake, we should hide it (or blame others)

- Only share our successes

- Get it right the first time!

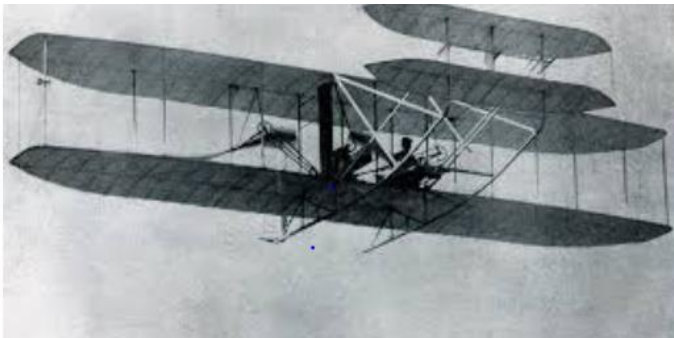# What if we applied to other complex challenges?

Learning to ride a bike
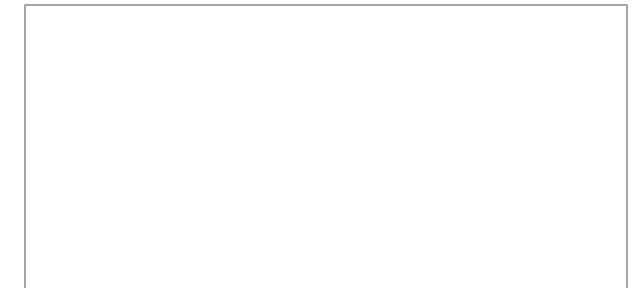
Developing a new medicine

Developing software

The Wright Brothers and the first airplane

Learning to play an instrument

Insert Your Initiative Here!

What is "Failing Forward"?

Failing Forward is a mindset that acknowledges:

- We cannot plan our way to improvement of an adaptive challenge, **we must experiment**

- Virtually all innovation, improvement or acquisition of a new skill **requires that we both make mistakes and learn from them**

- **Mistakes are to be embraced** as long as we have learned something from which we might **improve on our next attempt**

- **Mistakes are to be shared** as openly as our successes (we can learn just as much, if not more from "failures")

Characteristic	Failing	Failing Forward
Motto	Get it Right the First Time	Experiment, fail (quickly) and improve
World View	Solving problems is like baking a cake	Solving problems is like raising a child
Government Solution	Implement our Experts' Recommendations	Partner with us to figure out solutions over time
Beginning Premise	If we plan enough, we can get it right	we can figure it out over time by testing our ideas, tracking our progress and putting in place a process for improvement
Implementation Protocol	Follow the long-range strategic plan, work plan or expert panel's recommendations	Long-term goals but short-term planning. Test idea, iterate/improve as needed, and chart new course if called for
Use of Data	Data is used for judgment - to report on past activities	Data is used for learning/improvement - to test ideas, guide activities and inform decisions
When things go wrong…	Hide mistakes and/or blame others (they didn't do what we told them to do)	Ask – What can we do better next time? Share mistakes, celebrate them as critical learning, refine initial ideas or develop new ideas
Follow-up from mistakes	Increase intensity , continue doing the exact same thing or stop doing it entirely	Next step is dependent on lessons learned

Remembering Failing Forward

Failing Forward Discussion

- In pairs or triads, think about a time you have made a mistake in your current work and lessons others could learn from this.

- Let's discuss some of our fail-forwards and learn from and with each other!

Adopting a Bias Toward Action!

Graphic Courtesy of Community Solutions

Inequitable outcomes for
Orange County is what
happens while you're busy
making a 10 year strategic
plan to reduce inequities

Life is what happens to
you while you're busy
making other plans

- Fiction John "Beautiful Boy" Problem Solving Expert
- John Lennon, "Beautiful Boy"

Cultivating a Bias Toward Action

"It's a terrible thing, I think, in life to wait until you're ready. I have this feeling now that actually no one is ever ready to do anything. There is almost no such thing as ready. There is only now. And you may as well do it now. Generally speaking, now is as good a time as any."

Hugh Laurie, Actor

Complex Challenges by their nature are...

- impossible to fully plan for

- always changing

But in spite this (or because of this), we have to embrace a Bias Toward Action

Just Start…

- **Despite Outstanding Research or lack of "evidence"**

- **Despite Unanswered Questions**

- **Despite Not Knowing the "Solution(s)"**

- **You can learn your way into solutions**

- **Because what you come up with will be better than what currently exists**

Work With and Steal Shamelessly From Others
(and give Them Credit)

- Likely someone from your sector has solved the problem or a piece of it

- If not, likely someone from your sector is currently trying to solve the problem

- If not, likely someone from your sector has tried to solve the problem and has failed (and you can learn from them and/or work with them)

- If not, someone from an adjacent sector has worked to solve a similar problem

- If not, someone from a completely different sector has worked to solve a problem that could be helpful with the problem you are facing

- We NEVER need to work in isolation!

Bias Toward Action Discussion

- Working by yourself develop a list of 2 or more things that you've put off starting (for various reasons) that you can do to move your work forward when you get back to your office or home

- Let's discuss how we might cultivate a Bias Toward Action in our work in Orange County!

From a Technical Approach to an Adaptive Approach

Some Examples

Failing Forward Quickly

Lessons from the 100,000 Homes Campaign

Our mission is to create a lasting end to homelessness that leaves no one behind.

We envision a more equitable society where homelessness is never inevitable, inescapable, or a way of life.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

The Challenge:
House 100,000 Chronic and Vulnerable Homeless People in 4 Years

The Solution:
The 100,000 Homes Campaign!

What was the 100,000 Homes Campaign?

- A national movement of 186 communities that worked together to find permanent homes for 100,000 of our most vulnerable Americans experiencing homelessness

- Selected a specific population (segmentation) - chronic and vulnerable homeless who were not well served through existing system

- Run on a robust, virtual infrastructure for sharing successes (Bright Spots) and learning from failures (Failing Forward)

- Rooted in an adaptive approach using continuous quality improvement and iteration rather than a technical approach using fixed model and implementation of a workplan

100,000 Homes Campaign Began With…

- No clue of how we would get to 100,000 (and only a rudimentary Theory of Change)

- A small nonprofit with no experience running a national campaign

- No additional housing resources

- No support from government agencies (effort doomed to fail)

- Limited support from other nonprofits and communities

100,000 Home Campaign Began With...

Inspiration (IHI's 100,000 Lives, Switch Thinking, Adaptive Leadership, Etc.)

An ambitious (impossible?) time-bound goal and the belief that this goal could unleash a sense of urgency and creativity

One intervention (change idea) - Registry Weeks - we believed could make a difference

The belief we could create a community of communities to identify, test, refine and then disseminate other interventions (bright spots)

An understanding that continuous improvement and a learning system could allow us to learn our way to success

A small team willing to take risks

A belief we could bring joy and fun to the work

Primed to make mistakes and **fail forward!**

- Our biggest mistakes AND perhaps our biggest forward leaps involved **data and performance management.**

- First a bit of context…

Data for the 100,000 Homes Campaign

- For the Campaign to be successful, **three things had to be true**:
  - **Communities prioritized** their housing placements for **the most chronic and vulnerable**
  - **Communities Reported all their placements** each month to Community Solutions
  - **Communities Increased** the total number of permanent housing **placements** made each month

Analysis of First 15 Months of Reporting

- The campaign was on track to be the **30,000 Homes Campaign**

- **The Mistake** – while the Campaign had set a national target, **it hadn't set targets at the community level**

- Needed a significant number of new communities to join and report

- Needed campaign communities to more than double their housing placement rates

The Solution: Housing Placement Targets

- **CS would set** monthly **housing placement targets** for communities

- Target to **place 2.5%** of community's chronic and vulnerable homeless population into housing each month

- We told communities that meeting target **would put communities on a path toward ending homelessness** among our most chronic and vulnerable **within 4 years!**

- The one standard data source – **Point in Time Counts (PIT)** would be used as the basis for this target

Forward Because…

- The first time anyone had **framed the data around ending homelessness** (vs. numbers served/placed)

- Provided a **common metric** for all communities

- Provided a **stretch goal** that was ambitious but achievable

- Communities had to **change their approach/system** to meet the target

- And because…

The Power of a Good Placement Target
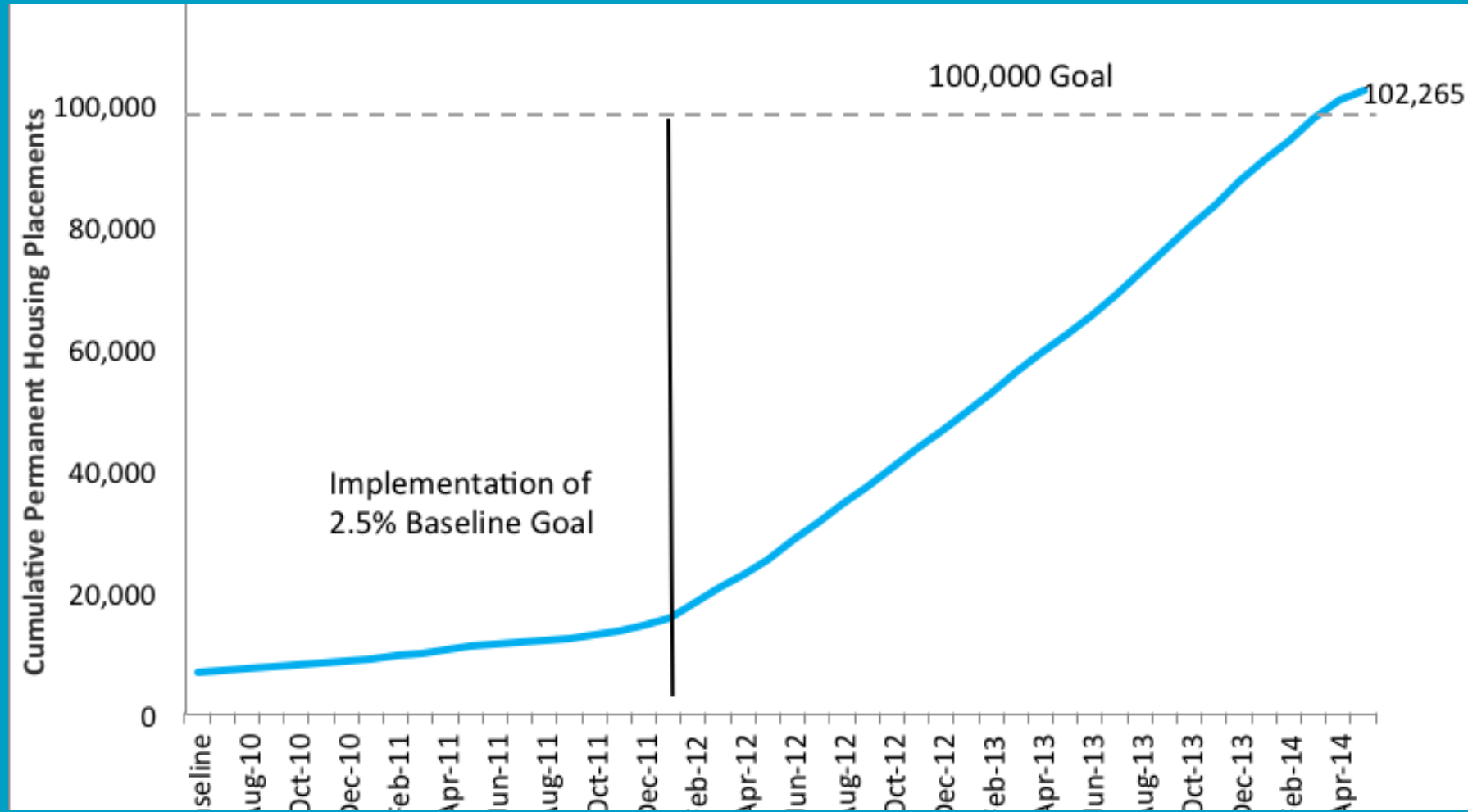
Failing Because...

- The **2.5% rate** when coupled with the PIT would **not put most communities on a pace** to end chronic homelessness within 4 years

  - PIT counts were often wildly inaccurate

  - Inflow into chronic homelessness was higher than the research and conventional wisdom suggested

- We basically **promised** that 2.5% was the magic number

- Campaign **communities believed** that this was true and at the same time, **didn't understand** what this meant

Institute for Healthcare Improvement

Challenge #2:

Understanding the Size and Scope of Homelessness in Each Community

Why Necessary?

- **You can't solve a problem if you don't understand its scope**

- **The 2.5% Target would <u>not</u> get most communities to zero in 4 years**

- Federal Goal of ending <u>Veterans</u> Homelessness by December 31, 2015

- Federal Goal of ending <u>Chronic</u> Homelessness by December 31, 2016

The Solution: Take-Down Targets

- **<u>Take-Down Target</u>** – the number of homeless people (or sub-population) who would need permanent housing to end homelessness (or homelessness among a sub-population) by target date

- Take-Down Target allows a community to know the **monthly housing placement rate** needed to end homelessness **(the pace)**

Chronic Homelessness "Take-Down Target"?

Current # of People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

+

Projected Inflow of Chronically Homeless (through 12/31/16)

=

Your Take-Down Target!

Challenge 3: Developing More Accurate Take-Down Targets

Failing Forward: Attempt 2,096,488

- Stopped using Point in Time data as the primary method for understanding the system

- **Instead**

  - Real-time (daily) total of number of people who are actively homeless using a By Name List (BNL)

  - Real-time data of how many people are entering the homeless system each month

  - Real-time data of how many people are leaving the system each month

  - Counting Down to functional zero (not up to total number of people placed into housing)

HOMELESSNESS IS SOLVABLE

Communities in the Built for Zero movement are proving it.

107
communities are **participating in Built for Zero**

145,000+
individuals housed by Built for Zero communities since 2015

14
communities have **functionally ended homelessness for a population**

65
communities have achieved **quality real-time data**

44
communities have achieved **a measurable reduction**

SEE OUR INTERACTIVE MAP ›

3 Take-aways

1. You cannot plan your way to success with an Adaptive Challenge – you MUST test potential solutions, refine them and scale those that work

2. Adaptive challenges require that you MAKE MISTAKES AND Learn from them!

3. With the right mindset – your fail-forwards can become dramatic leaps forward

We are the leaders that we have been waiting for. We are the social innovators and entrepreneurs that we have been seeking.

Duane Elgin

Thank YOU!

Please evaluate this session

Aim your phone's camera at the code, and a short survey will open. Thanks for helping us improve.