Wicked Global Leadership
Block 1

Milton de Sousa

Get to know your team

Introduce yourselves, including:

- What you would like to take from this course
- How you think you can contribute to the team
- Think of a team name that reflects your values

Main learning objectives

1. To enable you to **understand what a wicked problem** is and how it differs from other types of problems.
2. To understand **how corporations can (and probably should) contribute towards solving wicked problems**, including global social and environmental challenges (yes… the SDGs).
3. To **develop your leadership skills with a multitude of stakeholders**, including establishing dialogue, co-creation, creative problem solving, handling conflict, developing and sustaining multi-stakeholder partnerships, systemic change and dealing with complexity.

Learning methods

1. Apply methods from **system change and design thinking** to a current wicked global problem
2. **Close-to-real context** through a comprehensive **simulation** that develops throughout the whole program.
3. Teams **play the role of stakeholders relevant to the problem**. You will need to feel, think and act like the stakeholder you represent. You need to study it with care and commitment.
4. **Co-creation of a solution in mixed stakeholder teams** through a design sprint.

Learning Goals

Knowledge

- Assess the complexity of global leadership from a stakeholder perspective.
- Understand the nature of global wicked problems and effective approaches to tackle them.
- Realize what complex, responsible and servant leadership means in practice.
- Integrate shared value principles into corporate strategy (including the SDGs).
- Define a collaborative framework involving multiple stakeholders to solve wicked problems.

Learning Goals

Skills

- Define approaches towards transformation and decision making under complexity.
- Use humble and appreciative inquiry to solve problems and interpersonal differences.
- Adapt own style to incorporate other cultures while staying authentic to oneself.
- Creatively address dilemmas and conflicts through reconciliation.
- Apply collaborative stakeholder management models to address complex challenges

Attitude

- Embrace complexity as the “new normal”.
- Become more aware of your own cultural biases.
- Be more open towards other cultural values.
- Take more ownership and embrace a responsible leadership style.
- Be more sensitive to the idea of leaving a positive impact.

Key themes

Content
Block 1 Complexity, Complex Adaptive Systems, System Change Theories, and Wicked Problems = the new reality of global leadership **Block 2** Simulation
Block 3 System Dynamics, McClelland Motives, System Archetypes, and System Mapping (causal loop diagrams and connection circles) **Block 4** Collaborative and Systems Leadership, Dilemmas and Paradoxes, Effective Dialogue. Introduction to the challenge to work on (SCQ framework) and stakeholder allocation.
Block 5 Work on challenge (problem definition, problem tree, system and stakeholder map) = stakeholder teams Design Thinking and System Change, Social Innovation **Block 6** Work on challenge (develop a social innovation concept) = mixed teams Change Narratives, Impact Logic Model, Minto pyramid principle
Block 7 Final presentations and discussion **Block 8** Personal Change, Servant leadership (Case Study), Final leadership reflection

Assessment

This course is designed as a leadership development program. As such, **you need to own the learning process**. The assessment includes the following components:

- **Final team presentation (50%):** This will be constituted of two parts, first a pitch of the solution devised in your mixed teams. Second, summarize your key learnings from the entire problem-solving process, including how you integrated the input from the stakeholder teams. Each presentation will last 12 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of Q&A. Other groups will evaluate and vote on the best presentations.
- **Individual reflection (50% of total):** You will prepare a final individual reflection on your key personal learnings from classes (max 1500 words). Rather than just referring to concepts and theories, you should focus on reflective and critical thinking concerning your values, beliefs, skills, behaviours, and future goals. The exercise should be grounded in concrete examples and moments of the class.

NOVA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Understanding Systems

A System… extract lessons

System definition

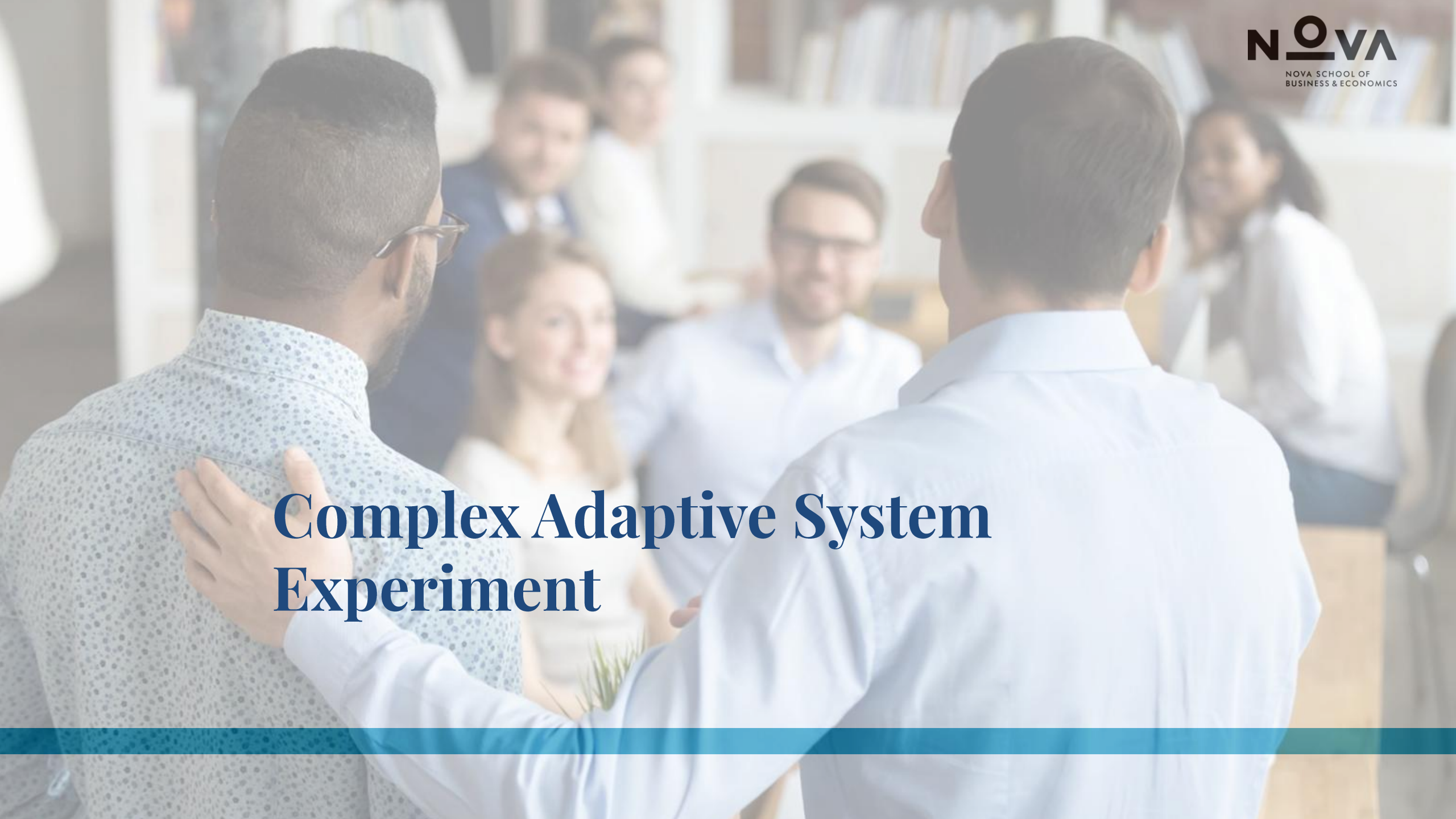
A system is a group of **interacting or interrelated elements** that act according to a set of **rules** to form a **unified whole**.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Key aspects of complex systems

1. Order is emergent as opposed to hierarchical,
2. The system's history is irreversible, and
3. The system's future is often unpredictable.

Dooley (1997)



Complex Adaptive System Experiment

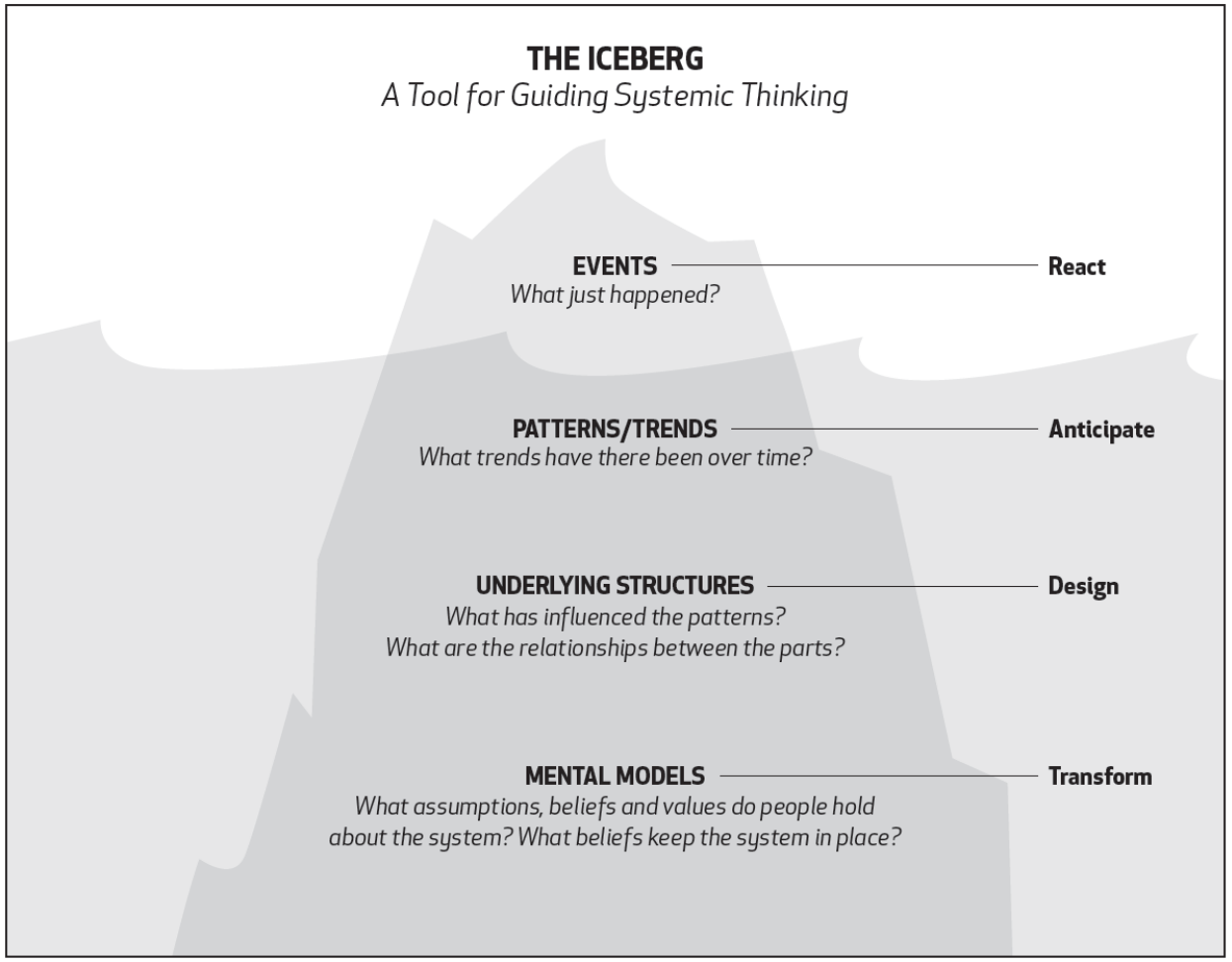
Lead towards complex adaptability by defining…

1. Permeable boundaries
2. Significant differences (law of requisite variety)
3. Transformative exchanges

Olson & Eoyang (2001)

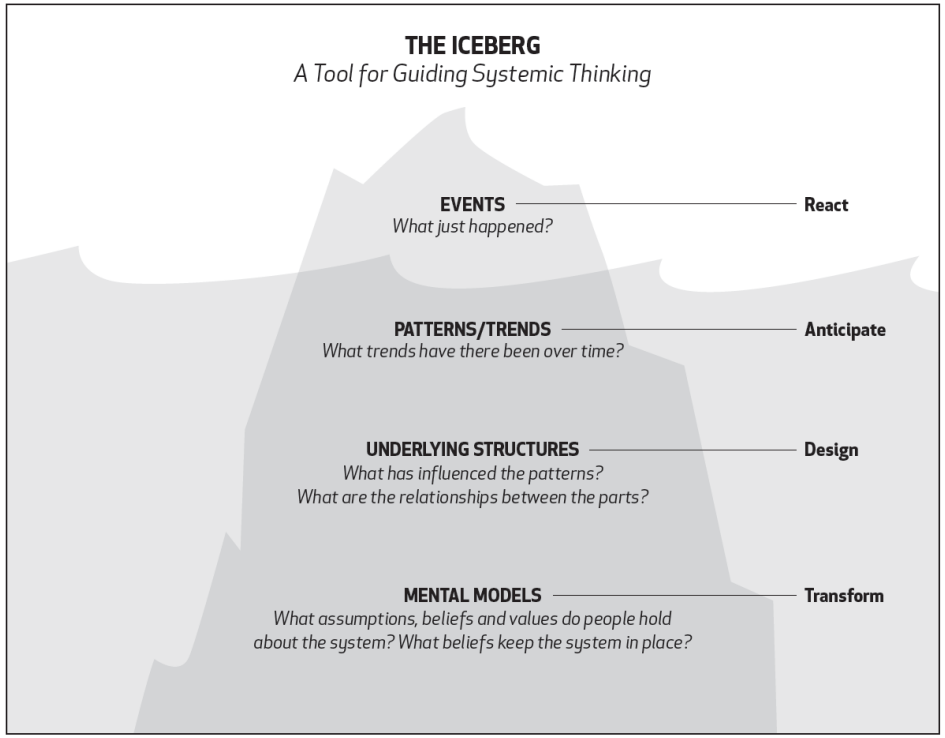
Tales of empathy, compassion, and systems

Iceberg model



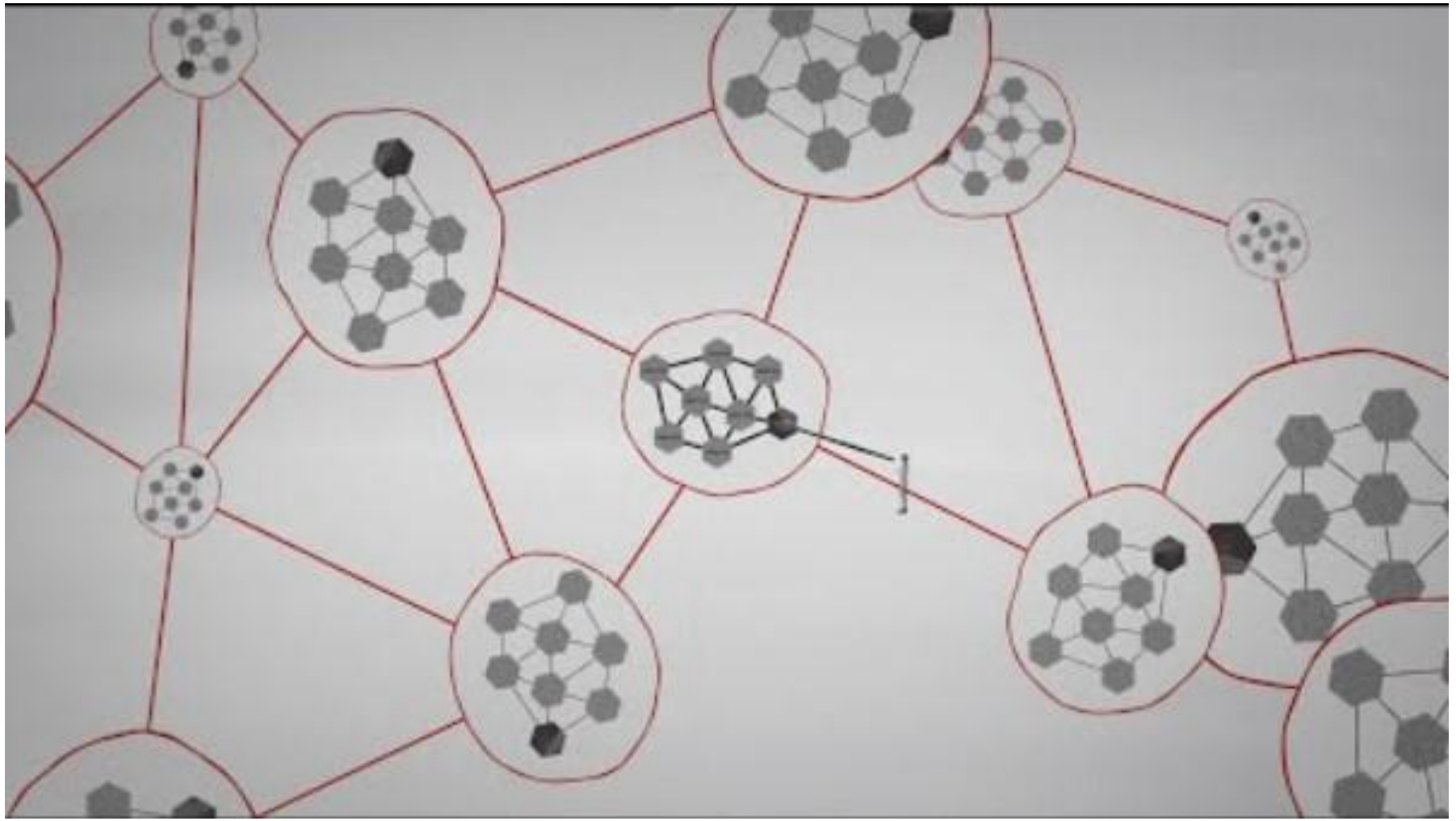
Ethics of Care

1. Attentiveness
2. Responsibility
3. Competence
4. Responsiveness



Joan Tronto

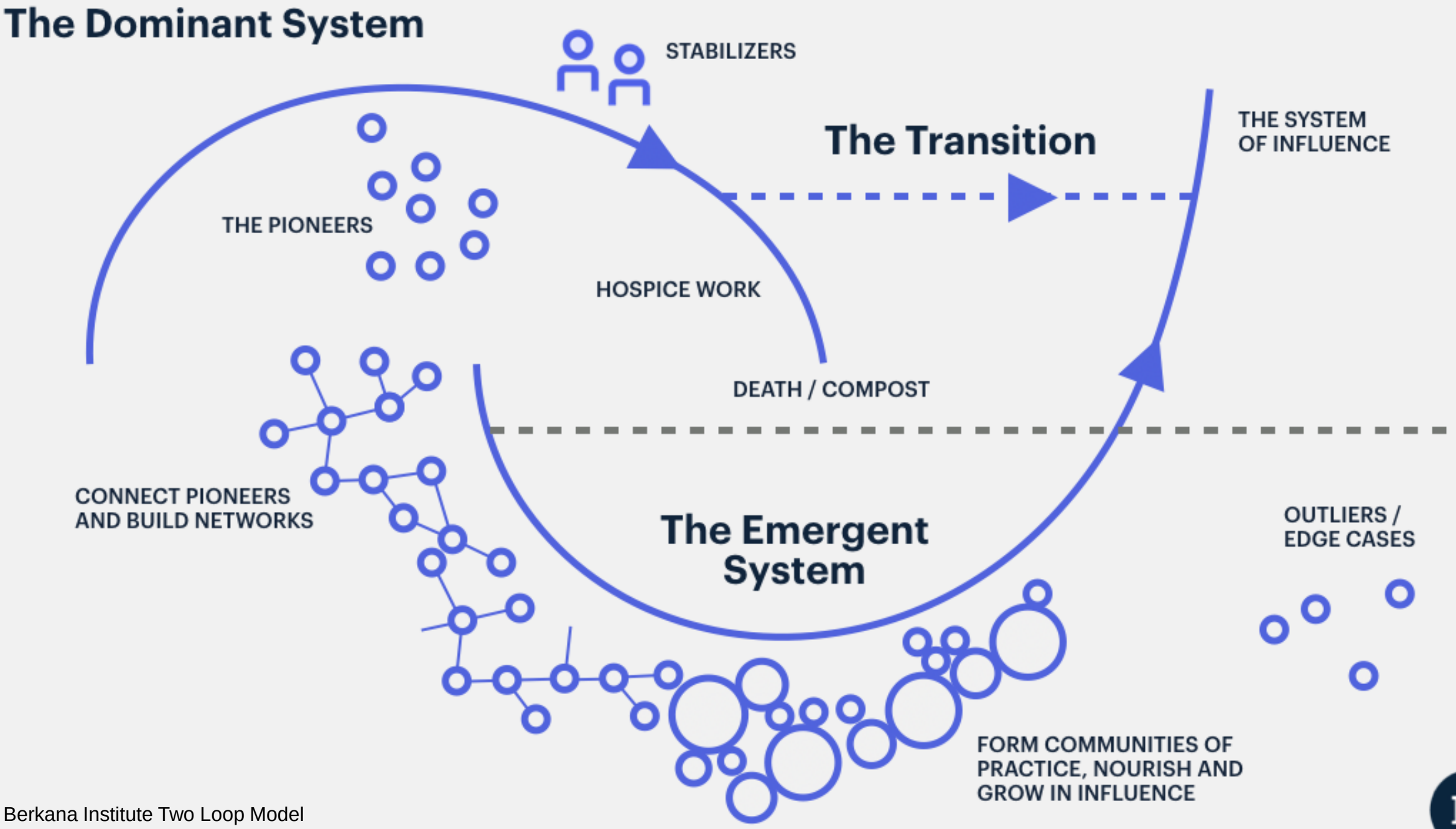
Haier… a case of a Complex Adaptive System



Complex (Adaptive) Systems... things to remember

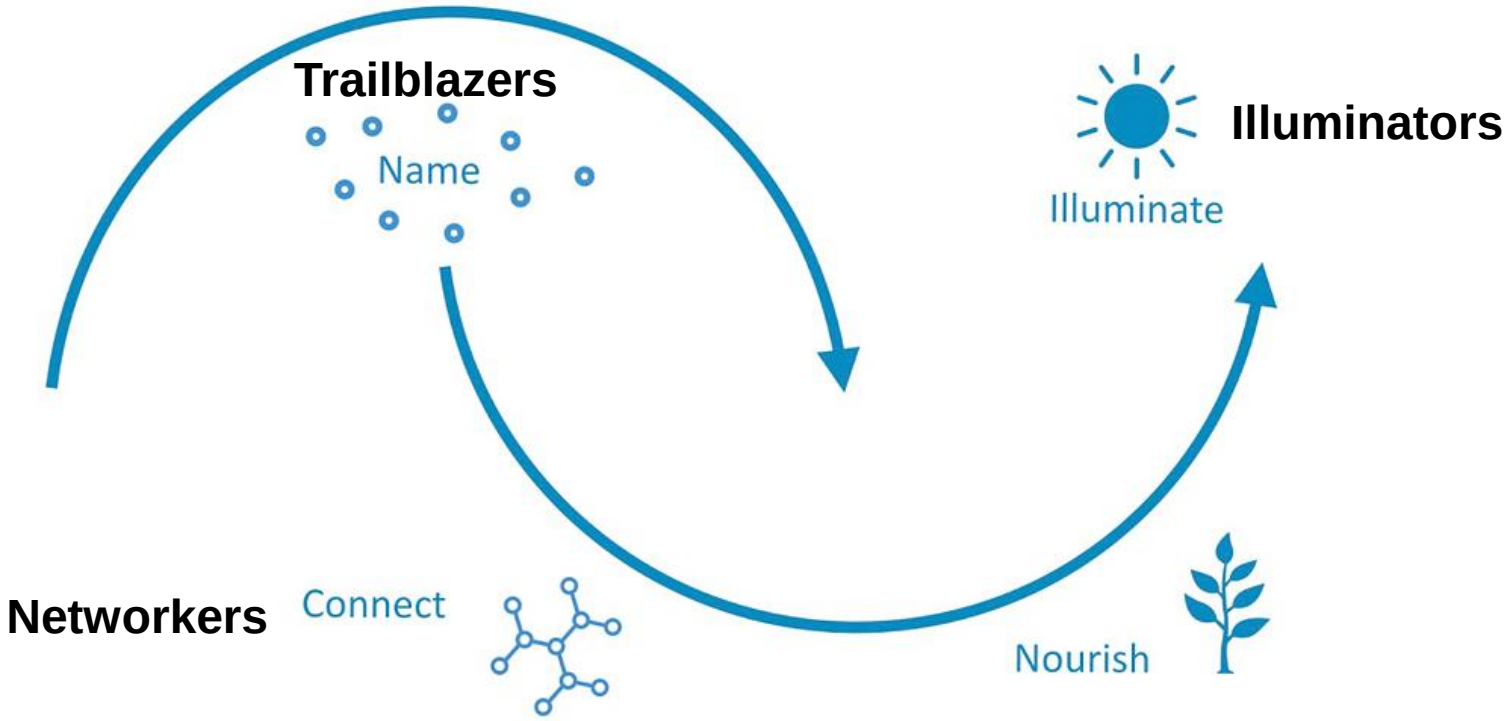
1. Non-linearity (simple rules can lead to complex behavior)
2. Holism (understanding relationships and patterns, not just the parts)
3. Shared purpose can lead to collective intelligence
4. Permeable boundaries, the law of requisite variety, and transforming exchanges
5. Detect hidden trends, structures, and mental models (immerse yourself)
6. Attentiveness, Responsibility, Competence, and Responsiveness
7. The importance of complexity and systemic leadership

A System Change Model



Berkana Institute Two Loop Model

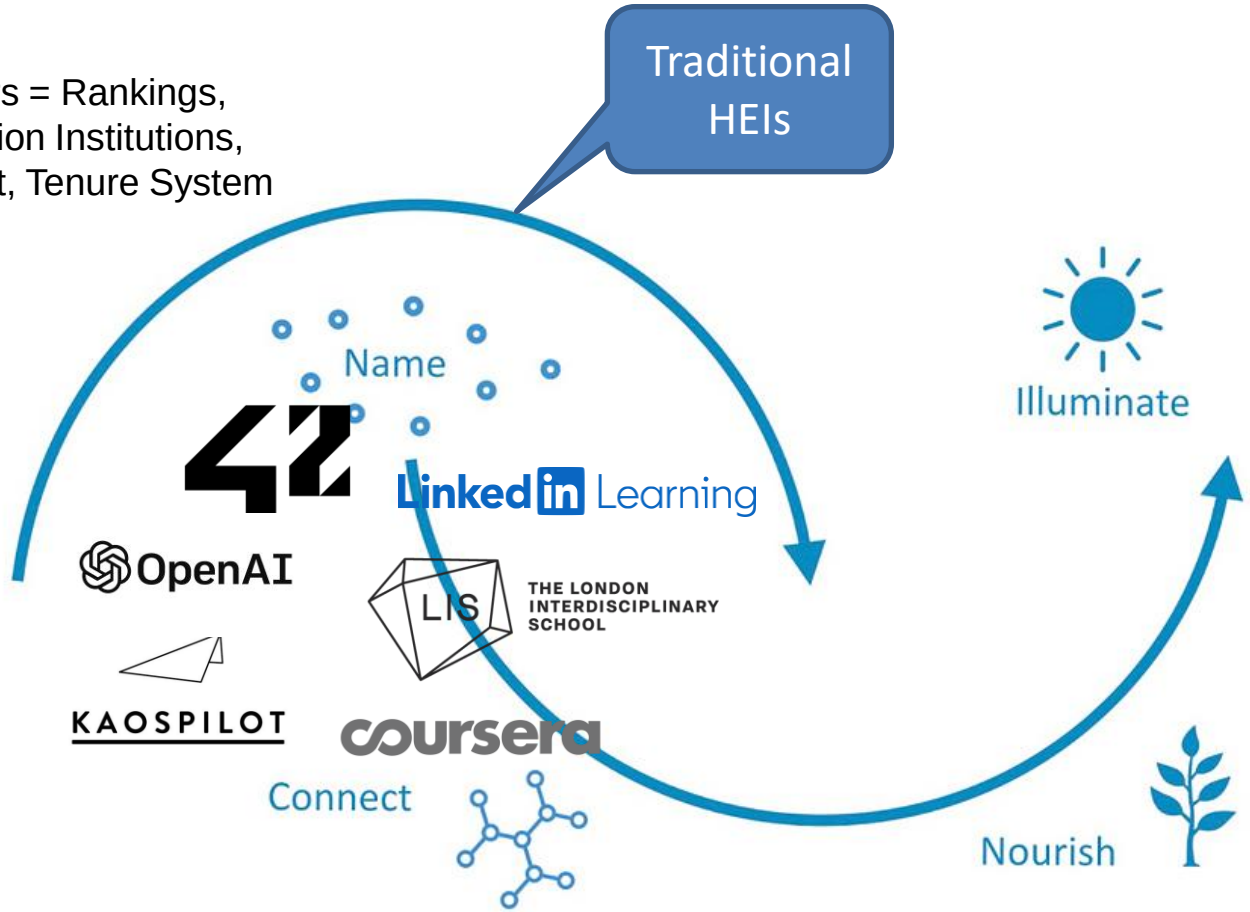
4 system leadership actions to nudge change



Berkana Institute Two Loop Model

The case of Higher Education in Europe?

Stabilizers = Rankings, Accreditation Institutions, Government, Tenure System



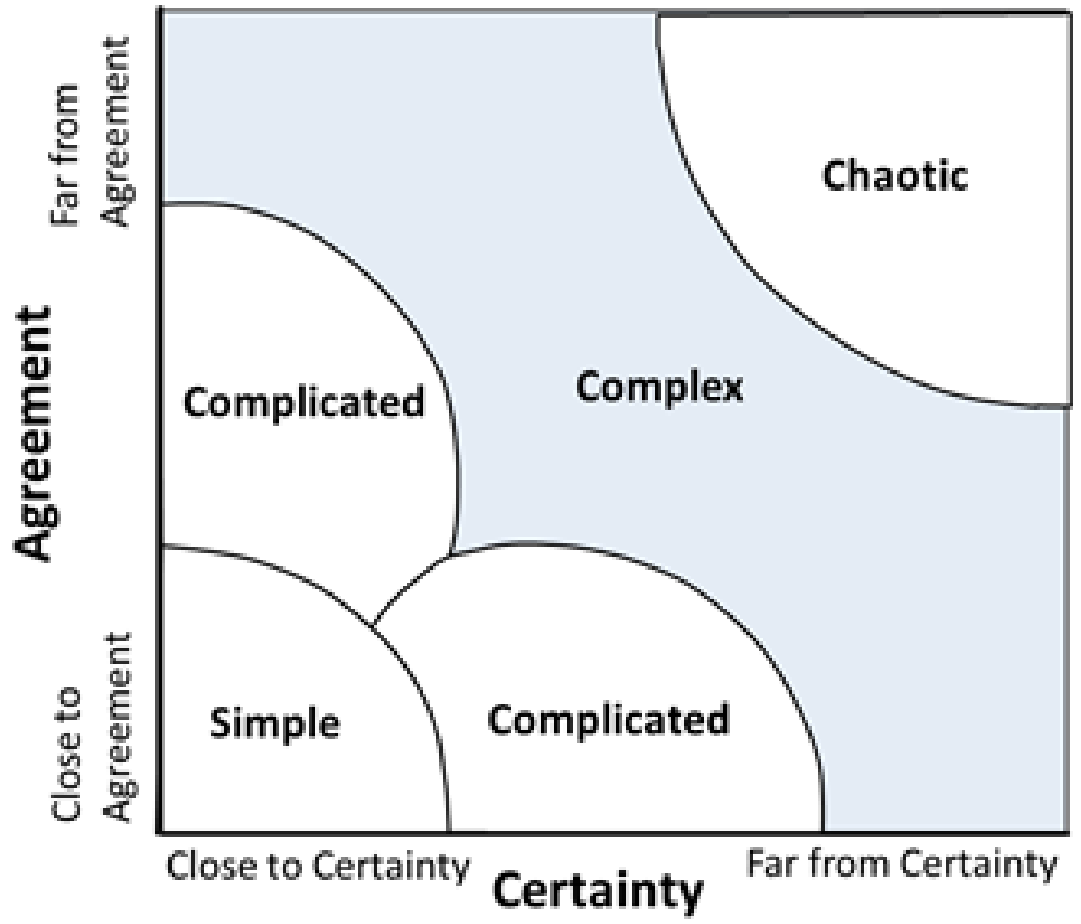
Berkana Institute Two Loop Model

Exercise (1): Examples of system change

1. Identify **one system in your city or country that needs to change** (health, education, energy, etc.)
2. In which position would you place it in the first loop? Who are the **stabilizers**?
3. Can you **name** some pioneers?
4. How **inter-connected** are they?
5. Which institutions are **nourishing** them? How?
6. Are there established players **transitioning**?
7. Use Chat GPT (critically) to assist

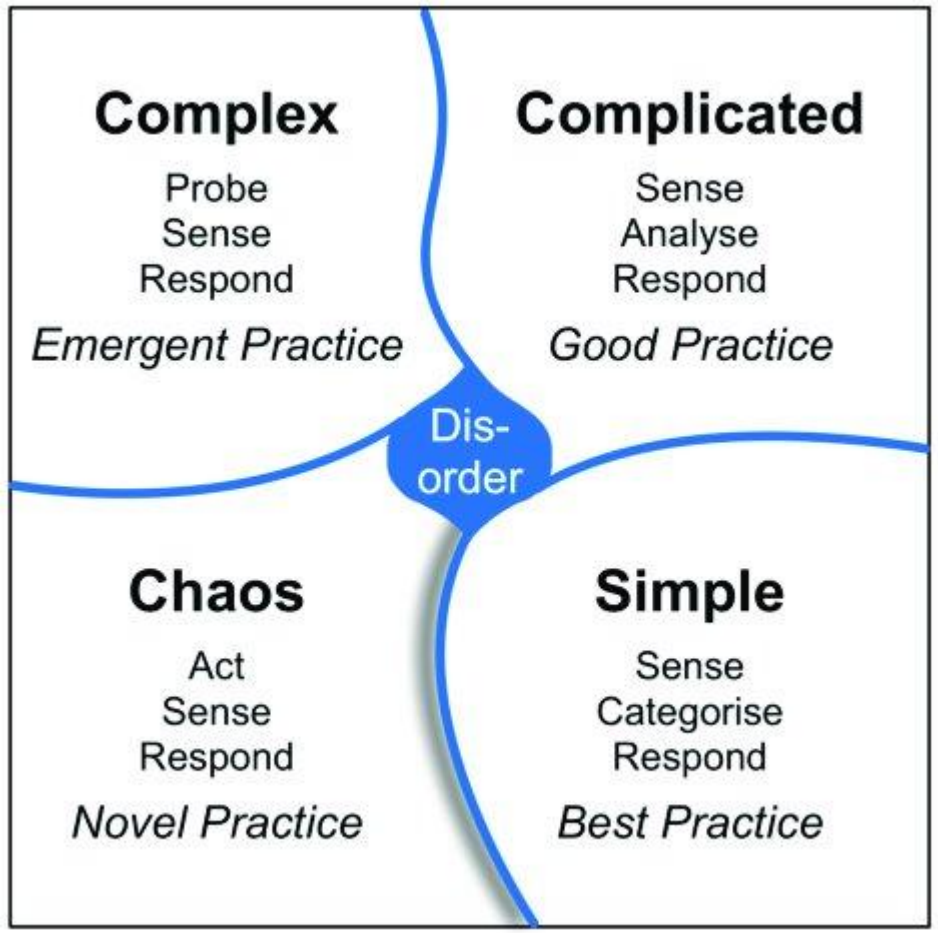
Problems... from simple to wicked

The problem complexity space



Snowden's ontology and problem solving

Hypothesis Driven Experimentation (e.g. Lean Start-Up, System Change, DT)



Hypothesis Driven Problem Resolution (McKinsey 7 steps)

Crisis management

Benchmark

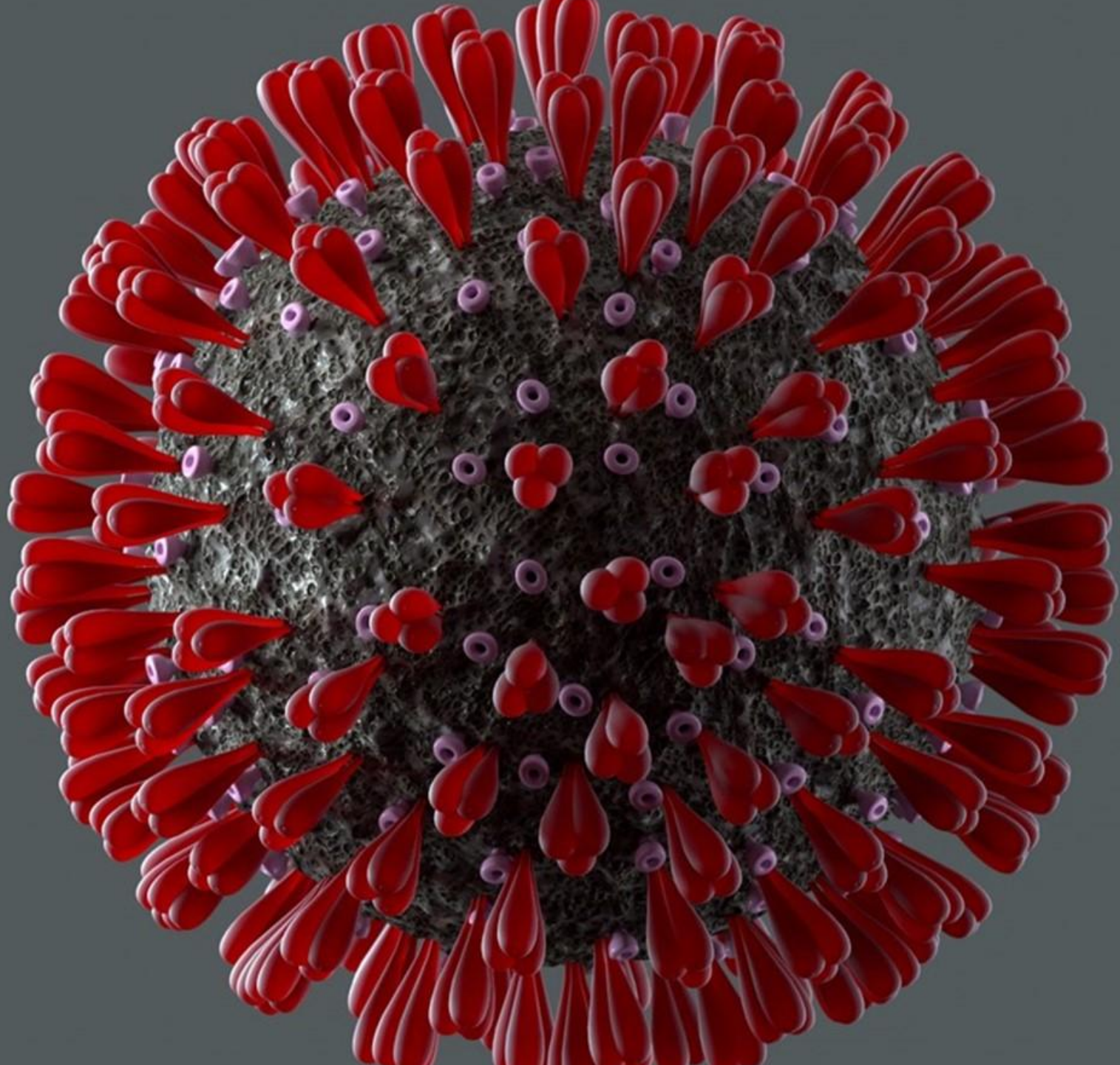
What is a wicked problem?

"Every problem interacts with other problems and is therefore part of a system of interrelated problems, a ***system of problems***. . . I choose to call such a system **a *mess***"

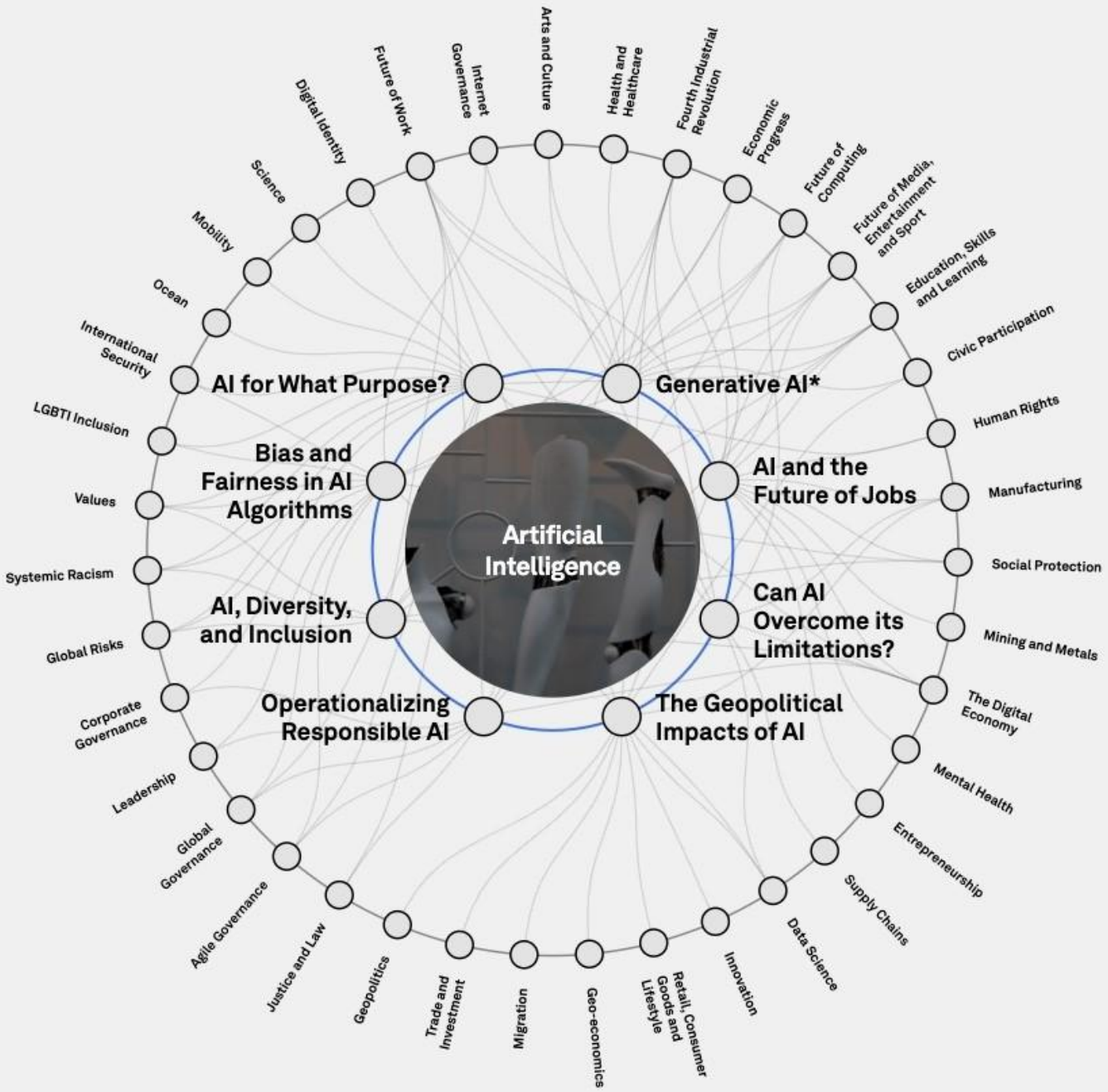
Russell Ackoff (1974, p. 21)

VUCA, a fertile ground for wicked problems

Deregulation
Securitization
Short-term bonus
Cheap Money
Excess Liquidity



Regulating AI?



Source: https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/06/ai-regulation-governance-policy/

Wicked problems characteristics

1. They do not have a definitive formulation.
2. There is no “stopping rule.” They never seem to be really solved.
3. Solutions are not true or false, only good or bad.
4. There is no end to the number of solutions or approaches to a wicked problem.
5. Wicked problems can always be described as the symptom of other problems.
6. The way a wicked problem is described determines its possible solutions.

IT IS OK TO FEEL CONFUSED! EMBRACE COMPLEXITY.

Adapted from Rittel & Webber, 1973

Lessons from Indy Johar

TedX Indy Johar "Social innovation in the real world - from silos to systems"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHnwq2F6204

Lessons from Indy Johar – team discussion

- Empathize
- There is no silver bullet
- Go oblique
- Recognize interdependency
- Build system business models
- Overcome institutional misfit to wickedness
- Adjust accounting rules
- From start-up VC to system financing (e.g. impact bonds)
- Avoid public-private divisions
- Collaborative Leadership
- Engage in the politics of change
- Multi-actor/system-level governance

Complexity is a view problem

“… it only looks complex when you look top-down… it looks complex and intricate to us because we look at it from a god-like perspective… when you are in it, you are actually part of the process”

TedX Indy Johar "Social innovation in the real world - from silos to systems"

How to deal with wicked problems?

- **Broader ways of thinking**: meta-framing, systems thinking, complexity management.
- **Collaboration**: shared understanding & purpose, better solutions, committed implementation.
- **New forms of leadership**: systemic, shared, adaptive, and collaborative.
- **Enabling structures and processes:** flexible, outcome-based, good governance.

Adapted from Head, B. W., & Alford, J. (2015). Wicked problems: Implications for public policy and management. *Administration & society, 47(6), 711-739.*

Wicked problems require ongoing evolving solutions

"You don't so much 'solve' a wicked problem as you help stakeholders negotiate shared understanding and shared meaning about the problem and its possible solutions. **The objective of the work is coherent action, not a final solution**"

Conklin (2007)