

GUIDE

TASK PROCESS RELATIONSHIP

People:	Ideally everyone in your group
Time:	Varies
Resources:	This guide sheet and a place to meet

How can this help us?

Most groups spend most of their time and attention focused on getting stuff done i.e. tasks. This is usually at the expense of paying attention to the:

- Processes our group needs to be able to relate and function healthily and effectively
- Relationships that underpin how effective, nourishing and enjoyable our group is

Working in groups can feel challenging, frustrating and sometimes not worth the bother!

Transforming how we organise ourselves in groups is one of the greatest challenges of our times. It requires much patience and humility and a willingness to open our hearts to courageous conversations and conflicts that can at times feel very uncomfortable and counterintuitive. And yet, what is required of us in these times is a willingness to turn towards these more uncomfortable dynamics and feelings with the compassion, curiosity, humility and courage that underpin a true embodiment of the collaborative ways of working we are aspiring to.

The guide:

Parent-less children

Most, if not all of us have grown up in hierarchical and patriarchal family units, education systems and work places, meaning we have become conditioned to operate in a hierarchical way.

This means those of us committed to co-creating new collaborative ways of relating, organising and sharing power in groups are like parent-less children: unsure of what we are doing and mostly without elders around us to learn from. We need to have compassion for ourselves, and those we are collaborating with, rather than beat ourselves and each other up for not getting it all right straight away. Transformation of this magnitude takes time - generations in fact and requires us to pay attention to group dynamics, as well as getting stuff done.

There are a multitude of elements and dimensions in this move away from hierarchy and Patriarchy that make it particularly important that we devote as much time and energy to processes and relationships, as we do to getting stuff done (tasks).

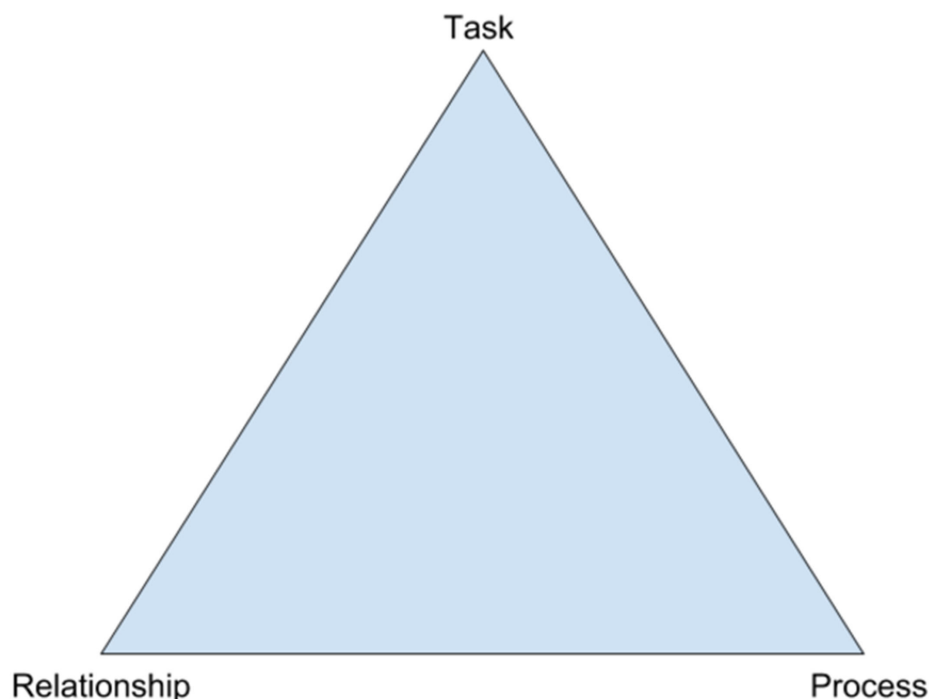
GUIDE

These include:

- The complications that come with being volunteer-run rather than run by paid employees, for example limited resources and capacity and a tendency for some group members to exhibit less accountability and be less reliable than when being paid
- Limited experience of how to make decisions outside of a hierarchical management structure
- Limited skills, experience and awareness around how to communicate in a way that supports collaborative group working
- Limited self-awareness of our behavioural tendencies in groups - and particularly our relationship with power - and how this impacts others and the group as a whole
- Limited knowledge and experience of integrating processes and structures into a group that support collaborative working rather than hierarchy
- Experiencing time exclusively as linear (at the expense of cyclical and deep time) which creates a sense of urgency and a prevalence of excessive 'busyness' resulting from a strong work ethic and because for many of us, to stay still, rest and reflect risks revealing feelings we would rather not feel

These aspects of group life are a natural by product of being right in the epicentre of our collective transition from hierarchy to more collaborative, fair and life-enhancing ways of co-existing on this precious earth. It is these dynamics that can lead to both chaos, conflict and overwhelm that often prevent us from prioritising time for supporting group processes and our relationships – ironically the very things we need to be able to create the nourishing context required for this Transition.

The Purpose of the Task-Process-Relationship model



Cont:

This simple model acts as a reminder that the success of our group depends on us devoting as much time to developing and fine-tuning the processes and relationships that form the bedrock of our group and its success – as we do on getting stuff done (tasks). We can do this by making sure we give equal time to processes/relationships and tasks in our meeting agendas, yearly work plans, personal work plans and away days / strategy sessions.

We have the following guides to help with this in our 7 essential ingredients section:

Decision Making – Guide: <http://transitionnetwork.org/resources/decision-making/>

Offering and receiving feedback – guide:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/resources/offering-receiving-feedback-guide/>

Group and personal sustainability – Inner Transition Activity:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/resources/group-personal-sustainability-inner-transition-activity/>

Inner Transition activities for meetings:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/resources/inner-transition-activities-meetings/>

Understanding and integrating Inner Transition: Creating Healthy Human Culture – Inner Transition Guide:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/resources/understanding-integrating-inner-transition-creating-healthy-human-culture-inner-transition-guide/>

Organisational Culture

At Transition Network we:

- Have a staff meeting once a month and this alternates between a 'Doing' meeting, which is a standard task-focused meeting, and a 'Being' meeting which allows space to pay attention to relationships and processes by communicating how we are feeling and exploring any issues that are arising and identifying what processes could be supportive (and then taking this to the Doing meeting)
- Took 9 days out during January, February and March 2016 to reflect on what has happened (tasks); how things have felt – when things have felt joyful and celebratory and/or when there has been hurt, frustration and/or conflict (relationships) and; what processes we have in place to support us in both our tasks and our relationships (processes)
- Use a Sociocratic 'decision-making by consent' process which all staff members understand
- Have a 'Keeper of the Heart' role in each meeting to ensure that someone is paying attention to feelings and how we are relating and communicating with each other

More support:

For more support and information on delivering practical projects go here:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/do-transition/starting-transition/7-essential-ingredients/practical-projects/>

Check out the 7 essential ingredients of Transition here:

<http://transitionnetwork.org/do-transition/starting-transition/7-essential-ingredients/>

This document is released under <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>