

Sourced Design Foundation

The Sourced Design principles are rooted in three core principles. The first two principles address the structure of the design, while the third applies to the interactions that take place within it. With that said, this design is like a fractal, with the smaller parts of it mirroring the whole. All three principles are occurring at once, both at the larger structural level, and at the micro-level in relationships within and between people, and within the internal structures and practices.

Here's an example. Having a strong core identity as a learning community, and pathways for communication to flow between the learning community and the larger community, makes for a strong, interdependent and identified learning community and a richer community at large. At the same time, a curriculum within that learning community can strengthen the core identity of a single person, readying them to receive feedback, and therefore strengthening the relationships they have within themselves, and with their community. The principles of core identity formation and developing pathways for feedback through strong relationships can be applied to the design structure, the community, and/or to an individual person.

These principles guide a community in developing the structure needed to foster vitality within each person, the community, and with the Earth. The three guiding principles are as follows:

- A strong core identity allows something to strengthen through the feedback it receives.
- Feedback is constant and pathways for communication are essential for growth.
- Relationships are the bridge between the entity and the external world allowing feedback to flow between the two.

With a strong core identity, an entity can strengthen and adapt to the feedback it receives. From this strong center, and the flow of diverse information, interdependent and therefore healthy relationships are formed. Relationships hold this interchange between identity and feedback, leading to creativity, emergence, and healthy development.

With strong, interdependent relationships, so much is possible. At Springhouse, this design has brought forth a healthy and vibrant community of true belonging where individuals are committed to an ethic of care for each other and the planet.

QUESTIONS FOR DESIGNERS:

- Does your current learning environment have a vision, mission, and central values that the curriculum and cultural practices stem from? If so, what are they?
- How does your learning community, or the one you hope to create, create pathways to receive and give feedback; both within and outside of the learning community?
- How do you tend to relationships in your community? Are those relationships intergenerational? Does your learning community connect with the larger community it is embedded in?

BUILDING A HOME FOR VITALITY

These principles guide designers as they begin the process of building a new educational design. These principles are defined enough to be usable, but vast enough to respect the diversity of people and place.

CORE IDENTITY FORMATION

Telling the Origin Story

Whether we are talking about a person or an organization, the spark is where it starts. Knowing and sharing the story of that spark allows us to stay connected to the essence of the design while also possibly revealing the needs of the larger community that could be met by this learning community.

Some questions to consider:

- What is your spark?
- What is the spark of your emergent learning community?
- Why do you think this spark is emerging now in this context?
- What need is this organism meeting?

Explore and Identify Core Life Giving Values

What is at the core matters when it comes to design.

Some questions to consider:

- What matters most to your community?
- What do you value? What are your top five values as a learning community?

Articulate a Common Purpose: Clear Organizational Vision and Mission

Having a common purpose is unifying, providing the safety needed to allow for greater diversity.

Some questions to consider:

- What is your vision for your learning community?
- How will you walk toward that vision? What is your mission- the steps you will take to embody the vision?

COMMUNICATION: DEVELOP PATHWAYS FOR FEEDBACK

As the model is developing its core identity, feedback loops are developed to connect the organization to the larger community and to connect people within it.

- Identify core groups serving the mission and develop pathways to give and receive feedback.
- Cultivate an experimentation mindset
 - As feedback comes in, skills are needed like:
 - Openness: Welcoming Information
 - Discernment: Listening and Choosing
 - Developing listening and discernment skills for clarity to best serve common purpose
 - Adaptability: Navigating Difficulty
 - Skill building to meet chaos and complexity are needed
- Create sustainable structures for feedback to continue to be received

RELATIONSHIPS

Through relationships, we connect and we pass information. Whether this is between two people, or a learning community and the larger community they are a part of. The more each entity is defined, the more interdependent relationships are. Interdependence leads to freedom where connection is honored, autonomy is respected, and creativity flourishes. Relationships whether within the community or interconnected with the larger community, relationships are the bridge by which information and feedback can flow.