

Different Way of Seeing & Leading- Asset Building in Complex Systems

Periodic Attractor

Periodic attractor patterns emerge when events or behaviors happen in more or less equal intervals over time and space.

Observe a Periodic Attractor:

What events or behaviors keep cycling around?

- An annual picnic, parade or other community event.
- Monthly meetings of your initiative or committee.
- The same response from community members when a negative event concerning young people occurs.

Deciding when to Use a Periodic Attractor:

- When you want to shift community responses to a reoccurring problem or issue.
- When you want to create recurring reminders of key messages.

Act – Using a Point Attractor:

- Find ways to amplify the periodic attractor if the pattern it produces is productive.
- Find ways to damp the periodic attractor if the pattern is destructive.
- Create a periodic attractor as a way of bringing people together regularly.

Examples from Asset-Building Settings:

Children First, an initiative in St. Louis Park, MN hosts an annual Ice Cream Social in May. Sebastian Joe's always supplies the ice cream. Everyone is asked a question about the assets and given a flyer with the 40 Developmental Assets on one side before their hand is stamped, indicating that they can get a free ice cream cone. The free ice cream in the park is the periodic attractor and learning about assets is coupled with it.

Asset Builders of The Summit in Colorado hosts an annual essay contest for local young people. The topic always has something to do with the Developmental Assets. Essays are shared with the community in a variety of ways, giving community members a chance to think about assets and see them through the eyes of their young people.