

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

Random Attractor

Random attractor patterns emerge when a number of interdependent patterns emerge simultaneously.

Observe a Random Attractor:

Examples might include:

- A community that is unstable due to conflicting religious, economic and political patterns
- Family dynamics when an adolescent's needs for freedom go against a parent's desire to keep them safe.

Decide when to Respond to a Random Attractor:

- When you are trying to balance inside and outside.
- When you are trying to build partnerships.
- When you are trying to hold groups together.

Act – Responding to a Random Attractor:

- Act with others to “unbraid” the conflicting patterns and help people to work through them individually.
- Identify a larger issue that everyone can commit to that goes beyond the multiple patterns that have them stalled out.

Examples from Asset-Building Settings:

In one community, the school sports teams, to make use of playing field availability, scheduled practices across all out-of-school times, including, on occasion, Sunday mornings. The ministerial group in town had been complaining to the school board, without much success.

Finally, the ministerial group, whose members were part of the local asset-building initiative, came to a school board meeting with the list of Developmental Assets and began by discussing how participation in sports built many of the assets that young people need. After articulating specific assets built through these team activities, they pointed out the other assets that were built through time spent in religious groups. Saying that the more assets young people had, the better, they paused and pointed out that Sunday mornings were the few hours a week they had to build the assets they felt responsible for.

The coaches and school board agreed to avoid scheduling practices on Sunday mornings, since they were all trying to raise healthy young people.