Can I Depend on You?

A methodology for working together in + Changing the world

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“communities of sameness conjure my asthma”

- Guillermo Gómez-Peña

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This independent thesis project has been the development of a methodology of working which is anchored in dependence on one another and collectivist ideals within art and design work. I have taken my community, the Design + Change BA program student body, as a stakeholder throughout this process. The methods are actions and practices which I have been gathering with fellow classmates in conversation. I am using the medium of a conversation which I define not as an exact moment in time but rather a continuous long-term dwelling-with, while also iterating on appropriate tools in facilitating this conversation, in order to take the idea of living and working as a dependent collective and run it through with people, addressing their concerns (and mine) along the way.

The methods are simple, yet their simplicity depends on a mindset which many are fearful of, the group mindset. To learn, live and work as a group with the belief that a group is as strong as its weakest link, points to a certain letting go. It directly touches on one of the biggest individualistic insecurities, that of having to depend on anything but yourself. I see an orientation toward dependence necessary for a + Change-oriented collectivist mindset. However, the task that I have set for myself with this project is not to convince that this is the new, better story we should believe, I am working with our ability to temporarily adopt this mindset, to shift between paradigms.

There is one thing that unites us when we first arrive in the + Change classroom, and that is the faith that a society of fairness is possible. We soon understand that together we are stronger than individually, yet, we find it hard to work with someone who does not share our vision, our utopia, our mindset. So, we drift toward those who do, unintentionally creating a space of division (and oppression), the very thing we are trying to + Change globally. This is the gap that I want this project to bridge, through the assumption that the biggest influence in our + Change system is the individualist paradigm.
INTRODUCTION

This independent thesis project has been the development of a methodology of working which is anchored in dependence on one another and collectivist ideals within art and design work. I have taken my community, the Design + Change BA program student body, as a stakeholder throughout this process.

In its essence, the methodology starts with a set of principles from which methods arise. I have been gathering both the principles and the methods in a process that could be best described as non-linear. A central method that I have used in coming up with (and consequently added to) the methodology itself, is that of conversation. “Conversation” in its Latin origin (conversationem) means “frequent abode in a place” ; it is a space where one listens, one dwells with others. The temporality of this type of conversation is important because it comes from the understanding that a collective of people holds its own negotiation of boundaries over and across time in a non-linear and continuous way.

Ways in which I gathered the principles-methods included: working with another person on both of our theses simultaneously; then, trying to merge two thesis projects into one; working with two other people on one workshop that would encompass our three theses; peer tutoring and small help; cooking for, dwelling with, conversing. In the beginning, I carried out a storytelling workshop on dependence and collectivism within the department, with students from the BA program of Visual Communications + Change, MA and BA Design + Change. I had planned to iterate on the workshop, but this part was hindered by the global pandemic of COVID-19. These methods of conversation, practical prototyping and workshop can be considered a first iteration of the methodology.

The second iteration was in the form of online interviews with people who had pointed out to me the issue of lack of community within the Design + Change BA program and the importance of having one; these people were: alumni of the Design + Change BA program, people who terminated their Design + Change education, current second- and third-year BA students, an exchange student of Design + Change and an Industrial Product Design student from Istanbul Technical University. The interviews were concretely elaborating on the methodology that I was developing, drawing more on lived experience, rather than broad opinions on and traces of dependence and collectivism (which was the case in some previous conversation and in the workshop).

The tools, which I had considered using for conversation and for adopting the methodology included a workshop, an installation, and a deck of cards. The format of a workshop and a temporary installation were not optimal in the event of the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in the final iteration of a conversational tool into a deck of Tarot-style cards. It is ordered into five categories named after the five principles: Stillness, Diverse Collaboration, Taking Care, Working Together and Learning Together. Each category of cards contains methods of working which arise from the said principle. A method would be an immediate action or a routine practice which a group or an individual can take up and reflect on, in this way each card is a guide through one method. The cards, unlike a workshop, do not necessitate a facilitator, thus they embody the idea of a conversation as temporally non-linear and continuous across different people but on the same subject matter.

Since I would be using the term “+ Change” quite a lot, let me elaborate on what I mean by that. One can see “+ Change” as an adjective, describing a project, initiative, even person, which/who tries by creative means to instigate positive change in a community (of humans and/or more-than-humans). This “+ Change” way of working further means a way of working that does not compromise anyone’s wellbeing throughout the process, including the designer. That leads to the bigger question of whether a product/service/system designed in unsustainable conditions for the designer (such as high stress, anxiety and social isolation over a long period of time) is truly a sustainable product/service/system. I would simply answer, “no.” But this question can be left up to you, reader, as you continue along with the story of my thesis project.
**1. DEPENDENCE** Using the word dependence to set the grounds of this project is a designerly choice, rather than a quest to find the word with the most fitting contemporary definition. This choice is used to illustrate the potential of language to transform our thinking patterns which in turn would change the way we do and co-exist. This project points to a certain letting go. The word dependence enhances this release, and further, directly touches on one of the biggest individualistic insecurities, that of having to depend on anything but yourself. The reason I stray away from the term interdependence is for its almost spiritual connotations to a certain oneness of all things living, which, albeit being an important value that this project shares, goes away from the central proposal. It being to allow oneself to view their existence as innately dependent on people, therefore, finding the questions of a purposeful self-existence in the questions for a fair and equal co-existence.

**THE YIN** This project looks at the world as a place in which socio-economically humanity has rewarded itself for its yang, as Ursula Le Guin would put it. In her essay “A Non-Euclidean View” she defines our imagining of utopias as “bright, dry, clear, strong, firm, active, aggressive, linear, progressive, creative, expanding, advancing, and hot,” in contrast to a yin toward which we should collectively redirect our social imaginaries, a “dark, wet, obscure, weak, yielding, passive, participatory, circular, cyclical, peaceful, nurturant, retreating, contracting, and cold” utopia. In accordance with this philosophy of two mutually defining opposites as both necessary for life, this project does not mean to deem independence and individualism unimportant for society, but to plead for turning our gaze in the other direction. The idea of individualistic independence or self-responsibility is the normative narrative instigated and restated by neoliberal economic theory in explaining one’s existence in the world. In allowing this story to shape our lives we create divides between people who we do not understand; because our life is not directly dependent on them, we do not hold stakes in each other’s wellbeing; thus, people who do not agree with us become other singularities untrustworthy by default. On the other hand, the story of our interconnectedness, the meaning of community, brings about depth and trust, which can be most strongly felt when dealing with grief, struggle, and unfulfilled hopes. These two stories co-exist, but we have let the former loose in late-capitalist societies. This project is a set of methods that would help people practice the yin, the story of our interconnected and messy co-existence, leaving the yang in the background as a reminder of its looming weight and an acknowledgement for its necessary presence.
2. THE SYSTEM

It is evident that ecological degradation as well as compromising the working and living conditions of people are essential sacrifices in sustaining the neoliberal economic model. Measures to ensure the sustainment of neoliberalism alongside that of the natural environment have been taken, resulting in the wasting down of the “sustainability” concept, from “nature as externality,” through small reforms as “eco-taxes” up until the current redesign of capitalism: Circular Economy. It seems that after several economic collapses and piling scientific data which correlates extraction of natural resources with ecological collapse, that perhaps, we would redesign the economy whose fundamental logic is that of its endless growth. However, neoliberalism has a convincing story.

Neoliberalism has been naturalised as the only economic theory which is unbiased, where instead of people, algorithms and the “invisible hand of the market” regulate production and consumption. In ensuring this fairness, people are narrated to be independent of other people and their individual autonomy is further accompanied by slogans such as “you are special” and “find your path.” What happens in reality on a personal level, is a quest for belonging, for finding one’s worth and purpose in their personal career. If life’s building blocks can be condensed to their most essential function, what is left is Labour, Eating, and Rest. This project, adopting a non-normative paradigm for a Swedish individualist context, would affect all three since they are interwoven, however, its focus still remains Labour. That is because within a political economy that reduces you to a replaceable working hand, the amount of labour you can do is the biggest asset you have to sell, thus, you measure your worth accordingly, and in the art and design sphere, in order to become more irreplaceable, you make your life your work. This is delightfully illustrated by an anecdote from Oli Mould upon his visit of a BBC studio where creatives were put to work in the same space without offices, under the assumption that when creatives see each other we consciously and subconsciously will reflect upon the importance of community. In reflecting on the paradigm of dependent existence and collectivism, I assume that one will be more inclined to develop these one-time actions into ongoing practices. These practices would create a sense “groupness” in a counteract to individualist existence and with that alleviate the stress caused by the neoliberal paradigm.

CREATIVE LABOUR AND +CHANGE

Before the start of this thesis project we consciously and subconsciously had been gathering our struggles as fellow students and a few patterns had emerged. The struggles of my community can be put into the categories of creative work, emotional wellbeing and “doing the right thing,” which are found to be interwoven, they cannot be examined and fixed separately, they are to be mended together. Possibly the most urgent issue of this project is concerned with working as a designer, an artist, a creative against an economy that prioritises itself and its own ideology above human and more-than-human life, the resources in which it is ultimately nested in. This thesis is a part of a university program which teaches the values of dependence and fairness while ultimately giving individualist tools of working, such as a grading system. Here it is important to mention that the + Change department has been discussing for several years the inadequacy of the A-F grading system whose removal for the programs would be implemented from the semester following my graduation. However, during my studies, one was more likely to receive a high grade for a fast well-produced product rather than for a string-of-thought-value concept of a systemic model. This seems understandable, taking that the program is situated in late-capitalist Sweden under the label of “design.” To design worlds that question the ethics of a politics of natural laws while giving “solutions” as best as one can in a month (the usual time-frame for a course within Design + Change), is at best a pathetic undertaking and at worst uninformed advocacy for causes which one does not understand. But to design product-services under the implication that they would work in an alternative economic system, within an alternative paradigm, and which further, would not if implemented, be appropriated by the current economy as just another “green product” is simply naïve.
Therefore, in tackling design as eco-social activism, the appropriate first step seems to be creating a culture that supports a mindset of collectivism. Further, above it being a collectivist mindset, it would be the constant negotiation of needs, wants and values; a mindset which economist Soderbaum calls paradigm co-existence, the idea that building an economy of fairness and collectivism necessitates taking in different and at times opposing ideologies as valid, co-existing and the “truth” at the same time. Civic designer Domenico Di Siena shares the same line of thought with the concept of multibelonging which points to both the individual and the closed collective that it is possible and even desirable to identify with different, at times opposing, ideals in seeing that the points of connection between groups of people are more than the differences. Meadows thinks of the power to transcend paradigms as a way to keep in mind that any paradigm is flawed, a tremendously limited understanding of an immense and amazing universe that is far beyond human comprehension.

What could come out of a dependent mindset within the Design + Change Bachelor’s program? Different and opposing paradigms already exist within our community, some more dominant than others, and dependence is present. Initiatives that have come out of our work/project/skills-dependence, however, have been few, and those would die out easily if not for the three regulars that join the meetings. If we take Meadows’s example of leverage points, this project aims to instigate change within the paradigm and transcending the paradigm points of a system. Anything less than making dependence as prominent as it should be within our collective mindset would be insufficient in creating an impactful change.

The grand vision would be a way of working which is concerned with learning, living and working as a group rather than as separate entities within the + Change department, starting with the BA Design + Change student body. On the one hand, it is very simple actions that I will propose: Simplicity of action, however, comes out of a mindset. In that sense, these actions may seem undesirable, impractical and a hassle to anyone who has come to work for themselves by themselves. Even when that is not the case, the majority of Design + Changers do prefer to work collaboratively, what usually happens within working in the program is that these collaborations manifest in groups of similar people, what George Monbiot calls “a bonding community.” Apart from creating a division within classes, these bonding communities are becoming very narrow in their understanding of working and being a collective; instead of a big community of various paradigms, the space becomes divided into small groups each with their own paradigm and little opportunity for multibelonging. The antipode to a bonding community, in Monbiot’s words, is a “bridging community,” one where individuals with different values and ways of living come together to create a shared culture.

There is one thing that unites us as a class when we first arrive in the classroom, and that is the faith that a society of fairness is possible. We soon understand that together we are stronger than individually, yet, we find it hard to work with someone who does not share our vision, our utopia, our mindset. So, we drift toward those who do, unintentionally creating a space of division (and oppression), the very thing we are trying to + Change globally.

This goal is the most honest I could have set for this project, and it does come with a general flaw of being hard to achieve. In Meadows’s words: “the higher the leverage point, the more the system will resist changing it.” One way to read her model is in that one has to analyze a system through all of its leverage points and building blocks, in order to intervene in a way that is understandable, actionable and practicable. These three words were the framework in which Rory Thomson, a collaborator in this project, and I conducted a project on making economic theory understandable, giving tools that make alternative ways of working and living communally actionable, and conducting workshops in different institutions, a community center and a private high-school, with the aspiration to make these actions practicable over the long term. The way in which we approached our current collaboration was as a continuation of this past project. Where in this past project we began with the assumption that people would be looking for ways to practice a collectivist dependent lifestyle in an individualist society, within our two thesis proposals, we would emphasize the importance of collectivist dependence for the social-ecological resilience locally and globally, and expand on the part of action and practice by collecting an archive of tools, methods, and + Change projects from artists, designers and activists around the world.
3.

THE WHAT AND THE HOW

I had not found it helpful to differentiate between a “what” and a “how” for some time, until I realized that ideating and making using the two questions simultaneously has led to many confusions and ineffective work, rather than possibilities and a holistic overview as intended. For the purpose of my own understanding, if we imagine the “what” to be a door handle, the “why” would be pushing it down. In other words, the “what” is the product, the “how” is its affordance. This project defines the “what” as “a new way of working,” the “how” then becomes “awareness” and “care.” In this way, it has become easier to define my purpose with this thesis (to make the “what”) and to map out anticipated further progression (to give possibilities to the “how”).

THE WHAT

CONVERSATION

Conversation:23

mid-14c., “place where one lives or dwells”

conversari “to live, dwell, live with, keep company with”

Liminal space, this is what R.* calls 2-6am. I call it everything in between work and life, a time when one exists, which in a hectic contemporary life would coincide with the time when one reflects, unravels. It is a Wednesday afternoon, sometime in April, a time when one finally sees sun in the gloomy Swedish city of Växjö and is sedated by it amidst the stress of “the deadline.” L. and I go for a run. A run is supposed to be a light social activity, physically demanding, perhaps, but still socially light. Well, our runs were this spiritual cleansing ritual where alongside a race over moss-covered soil, we would talk (shout) about traumatic experiences and interpret the previous night’s dreams. This was one of the liminal spaces that I have enjoyed dwelling in for the past three years, because it is where I learned about discrimination, oppression, racism... not the angry, saturated evils, but the soft, long-term and messy evils, systemic oppressions that are so ingrained in one’s experience that they cannot distinguish them from their personal traits. Am I a bad person? Am I the oppressor, or the oppressed? There has been many of these instances, and they would likely occur when someone asks with seeming nonchalance if you would like to take a walk, have a tea break, cook together. This seeming nonchalance is the package of stress and anxiety; it is how most of us ask for help.

I guess what I am trying to show rather than tell with this past paragraph is: be in your community, really live in it and learn. To identify issues, you have to be still and listen, you have to be a child that meets the world for the first time. You may try to alleviate the situation, find a quick solution, and that could do for awhile. However, with time you will notice the same patterns emerging in different instances, within people from different backgrounds and if you have lived in the community long enough, you will find the same experiences in people who had not even met each other. These bad experiences then from personal issues become systemic oppressions. There is not a right way to solve complex issues, but there is a way to start identifying the composition of global, local, communal systems one conversation at a time.

*names have been changed
In the beginning of the project I facilitated a workshop on the topic of dependence. The seven participants (ranging from the 3rd year BA design, 2nd year MA design and 3rd year Visual Communication + Change) were each given a sheet of paper. After having explained briefly why I see storytelling as the start of a curated conversation about communal dynamics, I asked the questions: Who are you dependent on in the + Change department? Who do you (not) let yourself be dependent on and why? Can people depend on you? The participants were given 10 minutes to write on these questions. A suggestion was to think of a moment in time, a story. Afterwards, we had a round of sharing where each person could share a story or their thoughts on the questions. This resulted in us concluding that there is no such thing as independence, some people questioned who is included in the community and who is not, are more-than-humans included? Others shared their struggles with not having anyone to depend on, of feeling stagnant in the classroom, of feeling constant stress. A participant shared their aversion to group work, since they had recently had to depend highly on someone who did not show up on a project. It was an emotional experience, yet people were not reluctant to sharing. After the workshop I aspired to do more of them, for longer and with more creative writing tasks such as script-writing and storyboarding for moving images.

A part of developing methods of working collectively was the practice of trying it out for myself/ourselves. For a short collaborative moment of less than a month, Rory Thomson and I began an exploration of working on two theses together. While I was working with dependence on one another, his thesis project revolved around prototyping public participation for strengthening a local economy and envisioning ways to think about and approach a crisis as a critical point of choice. After a week of working for a day or two on one project and shifting to the other, both of us felt as if we had doubled our work instead of created a collaborative space for synergy. A week of planning for an installation in the department, planning for interviews and a workshop came to a halt. Just as we had sent out the information about interviews to fellow classmates, the university switched to digital education. Alongside managing the work on our two theses Rory and I were joined by Laura Fähndrich in the planning of a storytelling workshop which would encompass our three separate projects, which also could not occur. The emotional turmoil around the pandemic, alongside pressing deadlines and the impossibility to continue on this project as we had planned, slowly and steadily hindered our collaboration until we started looking at our projects as independent of each other. This was a truly experimental way of approaching dependence, and I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to try it out. The reflections from these few weeks fed further interviews and conversation in my process. The following week we decided to merge our theses projects; they shared many qualities, most importantly, the criticism of work under capitalism, human wellbeing, and the development of societal support structures. It was a hard task, however, there was no more internal stress about doing too much or not enough and we had finally achieved a state of flow.
To elaborate on the abovementioned workshop, Laura’s thesis project worked with the topic of multi-specie interdependence taking fermentation, the practice of it and the community around it as inspiration. We drew on the similarities between our separate thesis topics resulting in a workshop on the alienation from cooking and eating food, the notion of “saving” and “wasting” time and the importance of doing so together. A central part of it was a food performance which brought risks with a virus in flourish. The workshop consequently did not occur, yet the experience of compromise that comes with collaboration brought insights into the further development of the methodology for dependence.

Living for and from others

We come to the part of the story which has been evident throughout, albeit not explicitly elaborated on. I have been living within the + Change community, more specifically the BA program situated in Växjö, which has a separate culture from the MA and Visual Communication + Change programs. I situate myself in the role of a designer within this culture which we have created across the BA Design program. And this role necessitates me being a gatherer of stories, a listener. It is not a designer role specifically reserved for one person, but it is the kind of designer that anyone can be, if they allow themselves to live as a “we,” to be dependent on a group of people. To live within a community is to live as a community; to design for a community then becomes a question of uncovering the actions and practices which help or have helped when it comes to remedying any issue that you are tackling. It is important to distinguish this project from the countless literature and tools on “training the creative muscle.” The concepts of creativity and innovation are concerned with fixing, whereas when dealing with complex issues a very small part of one’s work would deal with answering and fixing, the majority of what one would be doing is to ask. This dependent methodology holds an appreciation for learning and discovering above creating the new. As previously mentioned, the new, creative, bold and bright yang takes a step back for the messy, cold, retracting yin to take up space.

Working for and from others

For all of the times when someone has held a camera for another, has read and edited another’s written text, for when several of us gather for impromptu peer tutoring, there has been a sense of groupness and community. These small helps, which turn out to be crucial for the completion of a task or project, are what continued to inspire me in the darkest periods of unravelling the issues that come with being a + Change community. These acts hold low stakes for the helper and are of an immense importance to the helpee. There is no amount of exchange that needs to happen, even though it oftentimes does, thus they become an example of dependence and trust that everyone has practiced at some point and can continue to practice.

Interviews

While the conversations that have happened and keep happening focus broadly on the boundaries of living and working life, dependence and collectivism in the creative sphere, and the future of design, I felt a need for a structured conversation strictly on the methodology and its principles. In order to receive this feedback and ideate further with people, I prepared an interview of 18 questions, alongside personal notes on possibilities of the principles and methods. I interviewed 7 people in the span of a week, each talk took about two hours, the range of participants was: 3 third-year BA students, an alumna of the BA, a student who left the BA, an exchange student of Design + Change, and a design student from another university. These talks stretched the concept of a methodology in different directions; while some people focused on what makes a community, on dependence, others were more practical with the specific methods that have helped them, and some ideated on the possibility of remote facilitation like a guide or a toolkit. During the process of making and executing the interviews I was influenced by an advice we had received from a lecturer, Anette Lundebye, on how to facilitate people: be over-prepared and understructured. This guidance allowed for the stretch of the project without my feeling of having taken a step back or deviated from the agenda. Another thing that Anette teaches is: whoever comes is the right person, whatever happens is the right thing to happen.
The What: A Methodology

// Principles

METHODOLOGY

What I have designed, in other words uncovered and collected, is a methodology for creative work in collectives and groups, starting on the basis of dependence and trust on one another. For dependence to be safe and fair for all included it necessitates trust. The methodology is guided by five principles. As the project can be seen as a work in progress and continuous negotiation, these principles can be expanded on, as well as the methods that emerge from them. They do not have a specific order or hierarchy of importance, however, the first three can be clustered together, so that their differences can be more prominent since they could be understood in a similar way.

An important thing to mention is that this method necessitates a space and time for the conversation to be had, continuously even, if needed. It might require a facilitator, and definitely, experimentation. There is no right answer in the end, however, it is safe to assume that bridging groups would create a holistic overview of a problem and its solution as opposed to the one-sided band aid of a bonding community. Therefore, my suggestion with this project is, in times of uncertainty, create groups of diversity rather than sameness.

PRINCIPLES

1. Diverse Collaboration

Diverse collaboration leans on the theory of “bonding” versus “bridging” social capital. Indeed, it has been mentioned to me in conversation over the years before I had looked at the bonding/bridging theory, that some would like to see diversity within group work in the Design + Change program. This potential diversity has been explained as one where efficient, fast designers and slow, wandering ones can be paired together in group work. Another wish for diversity in group work has been to pair North Europeans with “the rest of us.” Product-oriented with process-oriented, collectivists and individualists, and more.

Now, finding a way to comprehensively assess the factors of diversity that create unhealthy divisions and bonding communities, and further design a system that would group people in the desired (bridging) way, would be a project of its own. Critically looking at it, it might not be that desirable after all. For lack of time and ambition, I am proposing awareness and care as a substitute for the aforementioned imagined system. The method that stems out of the principle “diverse collaboration” is simply being aware of the fact that in an internationally diverse community bonding groups are more likely to happen by default. The step after awareness would be care for those who express their dissatisfaction with current arrangements and request changes. At least two of the aforementioned in the previous paragraph conversations have stemmed from instances where the people I talked to had stood up in class questioning group arrangements and had not been heard. This leads me to believe that the human ability of compassion, if used, would give more results than any systematized way of grouping people.

2. Learning Together

Learning together is something with the closest link to skills sharing. It is an area of study/work/life experience that easily becomes economic. A formal exchange in this instance is not necessarily bad, it can be liberating for people who would otherwise feel inadequate with responding to someone’s big effort and time into them. A working skills sharing system would be a very strong project in aid of the Learning Together principles; indeed, it takes time to develop and greatly depends on participation, apart from that, it was not my intention to create such a system within the scope of three months.

The principle of Learning Together makes an important statement within the dependence methodology: a community economy is all about negotiations of boundaries and resources (one of which is our labor). This principle is at odds with the others, since instead of it being in support of the collective, it is in support of individuals by individuals.
Working Together is interwoven with Diverse Collaboration. In its core it is about the removal of an inherent hierarchy that can become present within bridging-group work. In the process of uncovering methods of Working Together, I found it useful to look at the action in categories of time:

A) same people at the same time; this category points to traditional group work where people come together, find a common topic and execute a project on it;

B) different people at a different time; this category talks about an envisioned database of + Change projects that can be taken up by anyone for further work and development. It was inspired by a classmate who took up a past project of theirs from a year before and worked on it in a team afterwards. During the process of revisiting, the project became a commons, it was not “owned” by the person who had started it and they had no veto over what would happen. A similar process occurs every year with the + Change exhibition at the Stockholm Furniture Fair, where the whole class of second year BA students complete a collective design pedagogy experience which has no division of ownership. These processes have had a valuable contribution to a dependent way of working, so I made an effort to concretize what it was about them that should be enhanced and suggest methods that could make it practicable for others;

C) liminal time: the non-productive time is also productive; this category could be described as the healthy way to let one’s personal and work lives be one, since the stress one experiences over a long winding design process seeps into one’s personal life, and vice versa, the stresses and joys that come from a time of rest, play, domestic and emotional labour permeate our work-life. It is one of many ways to see a co-worker or a classmate as a complex thinking-feeling mind rather than a productive machine from 9 to 17 and a human at any other time.

3. Working Together

4. Stillness

A fast-paced education and a slow intuitive approach can seem contradictory. I had referred to Stillness as Slowness in the beginning, I had assumed there is a way to find a balance by retrieving one’s slowness amidst a fast-paced schedule. What became clear during the interviews was that instead of methods for slowing down, people had found it important to give space to stress, to allow for uncertainty, sadness and other unpleasant thought-feelings that arise from the situation. “Stillness” here is not in opposition to “fastness” (as “slowness” would be); it recognises the importance of fastness but also the fact that fastness in one of the easiest things one can overdo. This is the principle that encompasses the idea of retrieving to the yin, which I have previously elaborated on. Moreover, I use “stillness” instead of “balance,” even though they would be interchangeable in the meaning that I am proposing, as a nod to this poem from Tao:

The myriad creatures all rise together
And I watch their return.
The teeming creatures
All return to their separate roots.

Returning to one’s roots is known as stillness.
This is what is meant by returning to one’s destiny.
Returning to one’s destiny is known as the constant.
Knowledge of the constant is known as discernment.

... Woe to him who wilfully innovates While ignorant of the constant

5. Taking Care of People’s Wellbeing

A rather explicit principle, which packages the notion of prioritising the wellbeing of people over production. It is a principle that could guide both group work and communal living, when there needs to be a choice made between a negotiation of boundaries or negation of such for the sake of keeping up with the deadline. The methods that arise from this principle are concerned with long-term continuous discussion, rather than a one-time solution. In this way, a common understanding of valuing people’s wellbeing becomes intrinsic, and when that boundary needs to be crossed, it is done so with awareness and care.
3.2 THE HOW

AFFORDANCE

As mentioned “the how” is the way in which people would access the methodology and use it. The process of making “the how” can be parallel to making “the what,” as is the process of workshopping and conversation. On the other hand, it can be a completely separate process, as it happened to be after the COVID-19 pandemic with visualizing the principles-methods and need for dependence without much participation from people in the form of an installation and toolkit.

I have been making small tryouts of “the how” in the different shapes I see it could take, at the same time as giving shape to the methodology itself. Thus, I would like to emphasise the importance of “the what” above that of “the how” in my process, since what I had assumed could happen did not due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These are some of the tryouts of an alternative to a workshop and conversation. In all the cases I have tried to be a facilitator, a guide even if from a distance and across time.

If I would have the chance to continue on this project after the COVID-19 pandemic, I would center it around workshops. At the start of the thesis, workshops were intended to be both the means and the ends of the project. I see a workshop set in the right space, mood and with intention as a most powerful tool for Social Acupuncture. More than that, workshops are a curated time-space for a conversation that one might otherwise not have. They give importance to a topic by creating the time and space for it, while implying participation, the very thing needed for complex communal and societal problems’ unravelling.

The workshop as a Thing is a space for debate and discussion, an assembly, which if implemented regularly, could solve incoming problems continuously. This led to the idea of a “dependence awareness” day or hour, much like the so-called “Tuesday meetings” in the + Change department. An hour of a day set aside for an assembly where the central topic would be the mental health of students (and staff), issues with internal networks for support, and how to improve dependence on each other.

As it happened, I only had the chance to conduct one workshop, which albeit useful for the methodology, did not reach as many people as the project would intend to; further, it being in the initial stages of the project, the workshop did not encompass all that the topic has to offer.

The idea for an installation came while ideating with Rory T. on a way to present our joint projects. We both valued participation, but there was another factor that emerged: How would this project (product/service/system) solve continuous, coming problems? Starting from the idea that workshops might not be sustained over time if we were not present as facilitators, we came to the agreement that an installation in the space could work both as a tool for us to facilitate a workshop and as something to leave within the space that could be used after us.

Our collaboration ended, but I looked at ways of establishing the installation for this project. Dependence can be looked upon as a communal or personal characteristic, whose necessity is changing with time and circumstances. In that way, the project’s tangible outcome in the form of an installation would aspire to help insofar as there is a problem within the community or personally; and in any other instance it would take up enough space to feel present in the room without interrupting the everyday flow. The need for dependence is always present (but invisible), that is why the physical outcome of the project should also embody the idea of constant presence (while making the need visible). The idea of an installation looks at the need to visualise, give structure to and make tangible the dependence we could have on each other as students if we let ourselves do so.
The first prototype of the installation was very low fidelity, the posters were made out of cardboard and charcoal and hung from the ceiling using paper tape. A rectangle was marked with paper tape in which two chairs were placed with the poster: “(designated spot to) TALK ABOUT YOUR PROJECT WHEN YOU ARE STUCK.”

Since it was put up for a weekend in a university building at the time of social distancing, this low-fi prototype did not get much attention, but it did help me visualize the overall effect that I wanted for the first layer of the installation. I had further taken inspiration from Touchable Stories, a team which develops installations in space in materialising the aspirations and dreams of a community. They collect stories and feelings of the community transforming them into an immersive experience, a sort of museum space where the intangible or covered becomes visible. What Touchable Stories do is take an unused space and turn it into a permanent installation, which would be an example of what I would aspire to do in this project, however, for lack of such a space the installation would have to be temporary. This temporality would not be of concern any other time beside that of a time of digital education. The installation then becomes rather than a Thing as in a tool that connects and gathers, a “thing”: stuff placed in a space.

A smaller way of intervening, which would serve as a Thing in a space would be a toolkit. The toolkit, unlike a workshop, does not necessitate a facilitator, thus it embodies the idea of a conversation as temporally non-linear and continuous across different people but on the same subject matter, dependence. For the continuation of the project in materialising the dependence methodology, I assembled tools which would work in guiding a group towards the practice of dependence.

This toolkit consists of cards which are to be pulled from the deck in times of distress and uncertainty, or in the beginning and end of a process, a day, a group work. They come with a written guidebook explaining the meaning of each card in about 200 words. In the making of the cards I managed to gather all of my research into bite-sized chunks of information. The methods are represented visually through symbolic imagery on the cards and verbally in the guidebook.

The deck of Tarot-style cards is ordered into five categories named after the five principles: Stillness, Diverse Collaboration, Taking Care, Working Together and Learning Together. Each category of cards contains methods of working which arise from the said principle. A method would be an immediate action or a routine practice which a group or an individual can take up and reflect on, in this way each card is a guide through one method.

Apart from the cards, the toolkit would contain stickers with slogans and similar visuals to the cards. These stickers would be used as reminders of the principles, as a way for people to express their solidarity for one another and their sense of “groupness.”

Another tool is a zine which two of my classmates made in a course titled Gender and Norms which criticises academic culture within art disciplines and the importance of peer support.
CONCLUSION

This thesis project has been a research on dependence through a design journey of defining how to work as a designer + Change. The term “+ Change” here can be seen as an adjective, describing a project, initiative, even person, which/who tries by creative means to instigate positive change in a community (of humans and/or more-than-humans). This + Change way of working further means a way of working that does not compromise anyone’s wellbeing throughout the process, including the designer.

I began this quest by arguing for a definition of design + Change which necessitates working with others, since the conversation of instigating fairness and equity would have to include all individuals concerned. The question then was to find ways of working with others in this + Change way. Through continuous conversation over the span of my residing in the BA Design + Change program as well as interviews and tryouts specific to the timeline of this project, I managed to gather principles and methods for working which comply with the + Change agenda. These principles and methods form a methodology which stems from an attitude of dependence on each other: the attitude to learn, live and work together as a collective whole and not as separate entities in a space.

I have found different ways of translating this methodology so that it is practicable. From the way of conversation, which I consider to be a long-term dwelling with, to means of facilitating this conversation in the format of a workshop, an installation, and a toolkit.

Due to considerations that came with the current COVID-19 pandemic, I managed to complete the assembly of a toolkit, however, I take the possibility of conducting workshops still as the most preferable one. The methodology has been assembled into a deck of Tarot-style cards which comes with a written guidebook. The methods are represented visually through symbolic imagery on the cards and verbally in the guidebook. This deck is part of a toolkit which further includes stickers which are to be used as reminders of the principles and as a way for people to express their sense of “groupness.” Lastly, the toolkit contains a zine made by two other classmates which criticises academic culture within art disciplines and the importance of peer support.

The methodology outlined within this thesis project could be seen as universally applicable, yet it still adopts a non-normative mindset in the workspace, assuming that the norm is capitalism. Moreover, it was specifically designed for the context in which I have situated myself, the BA Design + Change program; which situating is an important aspect of my project, since this specificity has helped me reach a clearer definition of collective dependence and a more concrete practical application of this definition, by being the local context in which I dwell in with human others.


13. ibid.

14. ibid, 11.


19. ibid.


32. ibid.


APPENDIX
APPENDIX 1 / INTERVIEW SAMPLE

On taking care of students’ emotional wellbeing and mental health:

What caused stress and anxiety in the d+c learning environment?

What rituals/traditions (these may also have been short-lived) that happened in the classroom helped alleviate your stress?

Were there people and initiatives that helped with the cause of the stress? Who were they and what did they do for you?

Was there a time when someone needed your time and attention but you couldn’t give it. Could you redirect them to an authority or to a peer that could be there for them?

What about an organisation like Depå?

Do you think there should be a designated person to go to specifically for wellbeing that is not a part of the mental health office? Someone you can go to immediately?

On student projects as a commons

What do you think about the idea of having people’s projects as being open-source, so that anyone can continue on any project? (a bit like the Relay module but over the span of years and courses)

How did it work to continue on someone else’s project? (if you have experience with that)

On diverse collaboration, working and learning with others (from group-work, to peer tutoring, to explaining):

What is the difference between good and bad group-work?

Do you find yourself taking on a role in group projects? What role is that? Is it comfortable for you? Do you feel like it is not a conscious choice?

How often have you felt the need to reach out to others for learning (e.g. reading a text together, explaining a theory, learning a skill)?

Could you reach out and did it work out?

Has anyone reached out to you for a skill?

When working individually what has helped bring more depth, complexity and perspectives to your work?

If you have taken design courses from outside + Change, did you find it useful to work with people from across schools and years of study? Alternatively, you can answer the same question if you have worked on a project with people from across different years in + Change. Do you think that the program of Design + Change could benefit from putting students in the situation of working across years? Would it work? Why (not) and how?

On slowness:

The pace of this education is very rushed but we talk about slowness and intuition. Have you managed to find a balance in this? How?

Has there been an initiative or person that helped with that? What did they do/say?

Do you find the fast pace useful in any way?
Diverse Collaboration
1. try to collaborate with a person from a different class
   pros
   - knowledge of what is to come and a revisiting of what was before, a way to identify structural problems
   cons
   - too little time to attempt it all the way
   - The design +change course passes through ethical and philosophical themes that you will come across throughout your life. The way in which the modules are structured leaves little time for rest and unpacking, ultimately pushing you to leave one big subject for the next. As a student in the second or third year it might be useful to collaborate on a project with somebody going through a module that you have already passed in a previous year. It could also be very fruitful for a student who is just encountering the topic to learn more from another’s research. Since there is so little time for a module and so much to do that it leaves you stressed, attempting this quest all the way would be a challenge. If it is seen too burdensome, this card can instead take this card as a reminder to reach out to classmates across the years for small help with peer tutoring, holding a camera, or just a snack break. This is also a way to find out what things are personal struggles and what are structural problems; and within a dependent community the personal struggles are collective.
   2. talk to someone outside of the department about your project
   pros
   - perspectives
   cons
   - managing difficult emotions
   That person of choice could be all the way from moms to the engineer to a student who has already passed in a previous year. That person of choice could be all the way from overly academic/ design-oriented to being able to turn it from overly academic/designerly language -- you would be surprised how easily you can turn it from overly academic/designerly language to using this new-found language to package a commonsensical idea. It is the hardest to unpack seeing how we are all exploring as humans, and to find differences within these approaches of these explorations. It could help you define the questions: What is a designer? And what is design? (if you manage to do so, you can always shoot me a message with the answer)
For all the good that this process could bring, there is an amount of difficult emotions that might come up. You could get frustrated, sometimes defensive. You would be in a community where everyone understands you implicitly to a new world of ‘over-explaining’ and 'derailing’. Be humble about your approach, curious about what the other has to share, and if it gets too much, leave the conversation. Yet, don’t be afraid to try it!
3. inherent hierarchy in your group?
   pros
   - diversity of what was before, a way to identify structural problems
   cons
   - the group work)
   - a sharing circle (on feelings in general)
   pros
   - understanding and compassion
   cons
   - takes a little time off the busy and important day
   This card prompts you to sit together and talk about your feelings. Do so in a way in which everyone can share without interruption. You can always offer support and compassion right away -- sometimes our feelings are directly tied to issues that can be solved with collective action in support of the hurting person. Other times, all one can do is listen. This is the easiest way to treat each other with kindness and compassion. One can often “read the room” for difficult emotions such as stress and irritability, but knowing when to speak up soon enough or pace.
   - 3. take a break
   pros
   - rest!
   cons
   - too much of everything: bad, I guess (but if you feel like you need a break you probably do)
prompt to approach a person as a teacher, to receive their knowledge and perspective, and to criticise it only after you have understood it.

To listen without judgement means to keep asking questions until you understand the other side. It comes from a curiosity to learn.

Alternatively, the card encourages you to recognize if you are getting the same in return. Are you being kind to the other person only waiting for you to finish in order for them to speak? Members of groups who are used to being listened to can take your curious approach for granted. A remark on that should be enough to make the other person aware of how they are being spoken across. Accept that they will take time to change their behavior, as well as that you don’t need to micromanage them every step of the way. If this lack of listening without judgement persists, it becomes a larger discussion on prejudice and oppression. It is then not simply a change of behavior but a change of mindset. This understanding will not be easy for institutions (with methods to have them, such as these cards) are an effective way of introducing the topic.

1. Touring is about making decisions within your project or issue, clearing out concepts and looking at the sides that you haven’t yet. A well-devised project is one that is looked through many different lens. In academia, touring (from supervisors and mentors) is usually under a very small amount of time for what a good tutoring session requires. In the optimal case, one should be able to answer most of the questions of the discussion (or monologue) during the touring session, instead of just coming out of it jarred with possibilities and ambiguous questions. A tutoring session is about understanding your issue through talking while the other person asks questions to understand it. In that sense, anyone is capable of tutoring, they just need to know what you need from them and have in mind that it might take an hour or two for a full session.

2. People in your close circles with whom you already share a language would be the easiest to approach and would “get the job done” the fastest. It is always useful to talk to people from the outside of your discipline, community, etc., but this card rather prompts you to seek guidance with people who know you and your project. The more peer tutoring sessions you have together, the more they will understand and help you.

3. This card asks you to seek this guidance from people around you instead of living and working by yourself and waiting for a structured institutional counselling system. Tutoring is about making decisions within your project or issue, clearing out concepts and looking at the sides that you haven’t yet. A well-devised project is one that is looked through many different lens. In academia, touring (from supervisors and mentors) is usually under a very small amount of time for what a good tutoring session requires. In the optimal case, one should be able to answer most of the questions of the discussion (or monologue) during the touring session, instead of just coming out of it jarred with possibilities and ambiguous questions. A tutoring session is about understanding your issue through talking while the other person asks questions to understand it. In that sense, anyone is capable of tutoring, they just need to know what you need from them and have in mind that it might take an hour or two for a full session.

4. People in your close circles with whom you already share a language would be the easiest to approach and would “get the job done” the fastest. It is always useful to talk to people from the outside of your discipline, community, etc., but this card rather prompts you to seek guidance with people who know you and your project. The more peer tutoring sessions you have together, the more they will understand and help you.

5. go for a walk-talk with a peer

pros guidance, deeper understanding of your situation
cons you need to be aware that it takes time

This card takes you out to the nearest forest, park, or empty street with a peer to talk. Make sure that it is a space that does not clutter you with information, for that reason, forests and parks are a good idea. It is very simple and it may look like it would take an hour to talk, but it is a valuable undertaking in itself. Take this chance to not be stuck in your place but to roam around while talking. In many ways, this talk might overlap with a tutoring session, since most of stress comes from work. Let it be a space and time for whatever needs to come out, and approach it with no expectations.

6. organise tuesday meetings for at least four weeks

pros community bonding
cons organisation needs some work

People in your close circles with whom you already share a language would be the easiest to approach and would “get the job done” the fastest. It is always useful to talk to people from the outside of your discipline, community, etc., but this card rather prompts you to seek guidance with people who know you and your project. The more peer tutoring sessions you have together, the more they will understand and help you.

7. opening discussion for guidance. If you know that there is interest from others in the same subjects, perhaps you can make a request for a lecture or workshop to all college students.

8. have a dependence awareness day

pros appreciation and awareness of the dependence we have and could have on each other
cons a bit (a lot of) organisation

A dependence awareness day could be anything from a day off with your group or an organised event where different people get together in hostting workshops and lectures around dependence. This card prompts you to take a day off to meditate on this topic and perhaps have a small ritual with yourself, friends, and community. A dependence awareness day need not be an annual event, and it could be implemented once a month as a part of a week’s schedule. This card encourages you to take a day off to meditate on this topic and perhaps have a small ritual with yourself, friends, and community. A dependence awareness day need not be an annual event, and it could be implemented once a month as a part of a week’s schedule.

9. is literature too incomprehensible?

pros deep rather than surface learning
cons acknowledging your personal struggles as universal requires strength

Much of the academic and philosophical literature that we have to learn in a university is hard to comprehend as a concept, let alone when it is a mass of complicated and inaccessible language which we have yet to come across. This was something that could be accessible to anyone who wants to receive it. This card asks you. Do you understand what this last text they assigned you was about? Did you kind of get it and you decided not to think about it, or will you still pass anyway?

Acknowledging your personal struggles as universal is very hard introspective work and it requires the strength and perspective and approach it with no expectations.

10. too little tutoring? ask for more

pros more and better guidance from teachers
cons it may still not be helpful

Tutoring is all about guidance for you within your project and issues. Oftentimes, there is not enough time to get constructive feedback from teachers, putting both us and them in a situation where we have to make a choice between what to omit and what to focus on. Tutoring sessions then become less informative and giving, and more structured and restrictive. How for unpacking, resting, and reward system. It is very helpful to take a day off to meditate on this topic and perhaps have a small ritual with yourself, friends, and community. A dependence awareness day need not be an annual event, and it could be implemented once a month as a part of a week’s schedule.

11. “procrastinate”

pros kindness to yourself
cons self-deprecation, guilt

This card is very similar to “a take a break” card, but instead of a prompt for a break, it is an acknowledgement for your efforts. You have been working hard on questioning and criticizing past notions of yourself and of the societies and communities you are a part of from and dwell in. You are learning constantly, and creating, this takes much effort and is often accompanied by intense feelings of grief, guilt, shame, realisation, euphoria. If you feel like you have been procrastinating, if you have been staring at the ceiling, or doing things unrelated to the task at hand, or instead of “what were supposed to”, this card is saying: Go! You! This is not procrastination, this is your body telling you that it needs time for unpacking, resting, reward system. It is very helpful to take a day off to meditate on this topic and perhaps have a small ritual with yourself, friends, and community. A dependence awareness day need not be an annual event, and it could be implemented once a month as a part of a week’s schedule.

12. having a shared tea/coffee/snack corner

pros a place of nurture and care for each other
cons it needs regular attention, care and filling up

Having a shared food and beverages corner is very simple yet so giving. During dark winter days and gloomy autumn, a comfortable food corner is a haven. Food is basic and often we forget to nurture ourselves properly out of too much work. Self-deprecation and self-punishment come out of highly individualised labour and reward system. It is important to sleep, take breaks, cook and
1. teach somebody a skill (one on one), and ask them to teach you something in return

2. make a lecture/ workshop on something that you know about and want to share

3. ask a teacher (someone with more experience) about an art/design projects related to what you're currently doing

4. practice teaching

5. don't create, discover pros: openness and empathy; a less stressful approach to being a designer

6. questionings of design/art as a discipline

7. There are countless methods and books on being a designer, so you are not alone.

8. If you feel like you need a break you probably do.

9. If you feel like you need a break it's probably you need one.

10. This card asks you to acknowledge the possibility that you are designing with a community, you will often be encountering innovative solutions for teaching because you find it hard to look at something you already know, and often, receiving new perspectives. This card asks you to objectively look at your strengths, interests, and knowledge. If something new is not for you, this is your green light to plan a teaching session. It could be from a lecture at a weekly ("Tuesday") meeting to a small get-together. If you decide to hard to look at yourself as a professional in any sphere, don't let that stop you. Plan a teach-together and learn together event on a topic of your interest.

The essence of this card is to remind you that you have something to teach, everybody does. Education should not only be formal, you can also teach and be taught in any sphere to share a few curious facts and create a community. There is something for you to teach and be taught. Take trust in yourself and the support of your community!

11. Teaching is a rewarding process of sharing knowing and understanding what you already know, and how you can, often, receiving new perspectives. This card asks you to objectively look at your strengths, interests, and knowledge. If something new is not for you, this is your green light to plan a teaching session. It could be from a lecture at a weekly ("Tuesday") meeting to a small get-together. If you decide to hard to look at yourself as a professional in any sphere, don't let that stop you. Plan a teach-together and learn together event on a topic of your interest.

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12. Learning Together

13. Teaching is a rewarding process of sharing knowing and understanding what you already know, and how you can, often, receiving new perspectives. This card asks you to objectively look at your strengths, interests, and knowledge. If something new is not for you, this is your green light to plan a teaching session. It could be from a lecture at a weekly ("Tuesday") meeting to a small get-together. If you decide to hard to look at yourself as a professional in any sphere, don't let that stop you. Plan a teach-together and learn together event on a topic of your interest.

The essence of this card is to remind you that you have something to teach, everybody does. Education should not only be formal, you can also teach and be taught in any sphere to share a few curious facts and create a community. There is something for you to teach and be taught. Take trust in yourself and the support of your community!

14. Teaching is a rewarding process of sharing knowing and understanding what you already know, and how you can, often, receiving new perspectives. This card asks you to objectively look at your strengths, interests, and knowledge. If something new is not for you, this is your green light to plan a teaching session. It could be from a lecture at a weekly ("Tuesday") meeting to a small get-together. If you decide to hard to look at yourself as a professional in any sphere, don't let that stop you. Plan a teach-together and learn together event on a topic of your interest.

The essence of this card is to remind you that you have something to teach, everybody does. Education should not only be formal, you can also teach and be taught in any sphere to share a few curious facts and create a community. There is something for you to teach and be taught. Take trust in yourself and the support of your community!
Many of us start an education in the arts with more interest and ambition than knowledge and skills. Maybe you have been stuck for awhile and decided to pull a card for guidance on your next step. This card prompts you to ask a teacher, mentor, or someone with experience in the field about artistic and design-related projects related to what you are currently doing.

Sometimes, projects very closely related to ours can give us a sense of relief but may not inspire us further. In this way, the card calls on you also to consider asking someone whose expertise is far away from your subject, issue or medium. It is always rewarding to hear someone talking about their passion and you might find inspiration in the most unlikely places.

What this card asks you to do is to pick a person who you admire and ask them about projects that they find relatable to you, or inspiring to them. This card can be an encouragement to think of ways of recirculating and keeping active a student-sourced library of references, or to design a system of that sort.

4. post in a social media community. Its idea is to let your friends know what you are currently doing. Sometimes, projects very closely related to ours can give us a sense of relief but may not inspire us further. In this way, the card calls on you also to consider asking someone whose expertise is far away from your subject, issue or medium. It is always rewarding to hear someone talking about their passion and you might find inspiration in the most unlikely places.

What this card asks you to do is to pick a person who you admire and ask them about projects that they find relatable to you, or inspiring to them. This card can be an encouragement to think of ways of recirculating and keeping active a student-sourced library of references, or to design a system of that sort.

5. impersonal silence, no sharing?

pros
- creating a space for learning and collaboration
- understanding the group as a collective organism that lives and dies as a system of that sort.

cons
- building a close collective of people necessitates not only listening but taking action. More often than not, we take an action as a team to alleviate immediate stresses and we do not keep up the discussion and we do not make core changes to deal with long-term oppressive behavior. This card calls on you to examine whether there has been a sort of impersonal silence when you gather with your group, classmates, community. Have there been heated discussions that have come to a halt? Would you find it disruptive if someone brought up a certain issue, since it has already been talked over? If the answer is “yes,” there is a high chance that the people who have initiated this discussion before, now suppress these same feelings because the issue was either dismissed or handled inadequately. Give space for a discussion on feelings and actions by organizing a meeting, or by asking the initiators of previous discussion if they think that the subject was handled properly or if they feel misunderstood.

Stillness

Stillness refers to a state of equilibrium between a fast-paced environment and an internal inclination for slowness and reflection. Too much of anything is bad, but rushing and restlessness are the easiest to do much of and to overlook since they are so ingrained in a culture of fast production and competition.

1. trust

pros
- putting an adequate amount of pressure on yourself and others
- letting go of self-importance

The card of Trust is holding your hand in the process of letting go of doubt in other people.

Having trust in others creates a disposition in them to trust themselves. It is a long process and you would allow yourself slip-ups in figuring out how to give space and importance to others in doing a job that you could easily get done. But also, how to trust in yourself to accomplish the things that others believe to be in your capabilities. Be open and curious as to what you can learn from the other, and trust in your qualities of being a teacher as well.

Trust can be strengthened in many ways, through sharing feelings and experiences, through time spent in dwelling together, through noting and remarking on the qualities of one another. A very simple exercise is to write to each other qualities that you think each person brings to the team as well as the qualities you believe to bring. It is also a very powerful thing to just say: “I trust you.”

Trust is not about putting faith on people, you need to be in your capabilities. It is also a very powerful thing to do this: “I trust you.”

2. rest

pros
- a necessity of any organism
- letting go of self-deprecation

The card of Rest can come up to remind you of the vital importance that rest plays in growing, learning, living. Rest can be both individual and collective. If we are reflective of our bodily experience, we know when and for how long to rest.

This deck contains “take a break” cards which in difference to this card are to be taken as an immediate prompt to take a break. There is a procrastination” card which serves as a necessary action and also what it can bring about, since it can still be a beneficial action just not the one that you are “supposed to do.”

In contrast to this, the Rest card is the overarching idea of resting, of planning for and valuing rest time.

Look back at the past week, then forward to the next and notice the times when you have rested/ would rest. This is for all the planned but also for all the spontaneous times when you would purposely cease to do work and rest. Have these times been permeated by guilt for not working? Have you rested by doing something else that is productive? This card is here to remind you that it is not optimal to wake up tired. In order to be dependable and dependent on people, you need to rest and you need time for yourself.

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