

Collaborative **Action**

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In today's mega complex fast moving world, we need a new way to collaborate, to challenge the traditional binary opposition that plays out between individuals, teams and organisations, we can break the mould through Situational Symbiosⁱⁱ.

Mutuality here is critical, we believe it sits at the heart of social and organisational wellbeing, it requires a mindset of think we can help make better happen. Peoples ethos, what they value and the beliefs, stories that explain those concepts of ethos define the way we work and engage, and we naturally collaborate with people, teams and organisations that reflect the same way we do. There are always some areas of common reflection and for collaboration to flow its key to find it, explore it and build on it, "mutuality" this collective identity delivers long-term sustainable success.

Collaborative Action is a discovery framework that will support you to discover, plan and enact your shared or individual ambitions that are focused on common drivers and motives.



1. Who Am 'I'?

We operate in and need to be aware of our personal and professional circumstances and be aware of the factors that influence our environment such as:

- 2) Internal
 - a) Self-Awareness/Emotional Intelligence
 - b) Personal Environment
 - c) SWOT
- 3) External
 - a) Customers
 - b) Stakeholder – Government, Law, Policy, Society
 - c) Organisational
 - d) PESTLE

2. Who Are We?

An individual, team and organisational identity is influenced by how they/it view themselves against this context, by the messages that they have picked up from the levels of context. Developing a functional 'team' identity is critical to effective teamwork / organisational development. The elements of understanding Identity are:

- a. Self of Self
- b. Self of team members
- c. Team members of Self
- d. Team members of themselves

3. What Can We Do?

Facilitating empowerment is vitally important to business success but if the context & identity are not right or seem overwhelming, we may feel disempowered. The stages of empowerment are:

- e. Reactive
- f. Proactive
- i. Shared Self-Awareness
- ii. Shared Commitment
- iii. Shared development/support

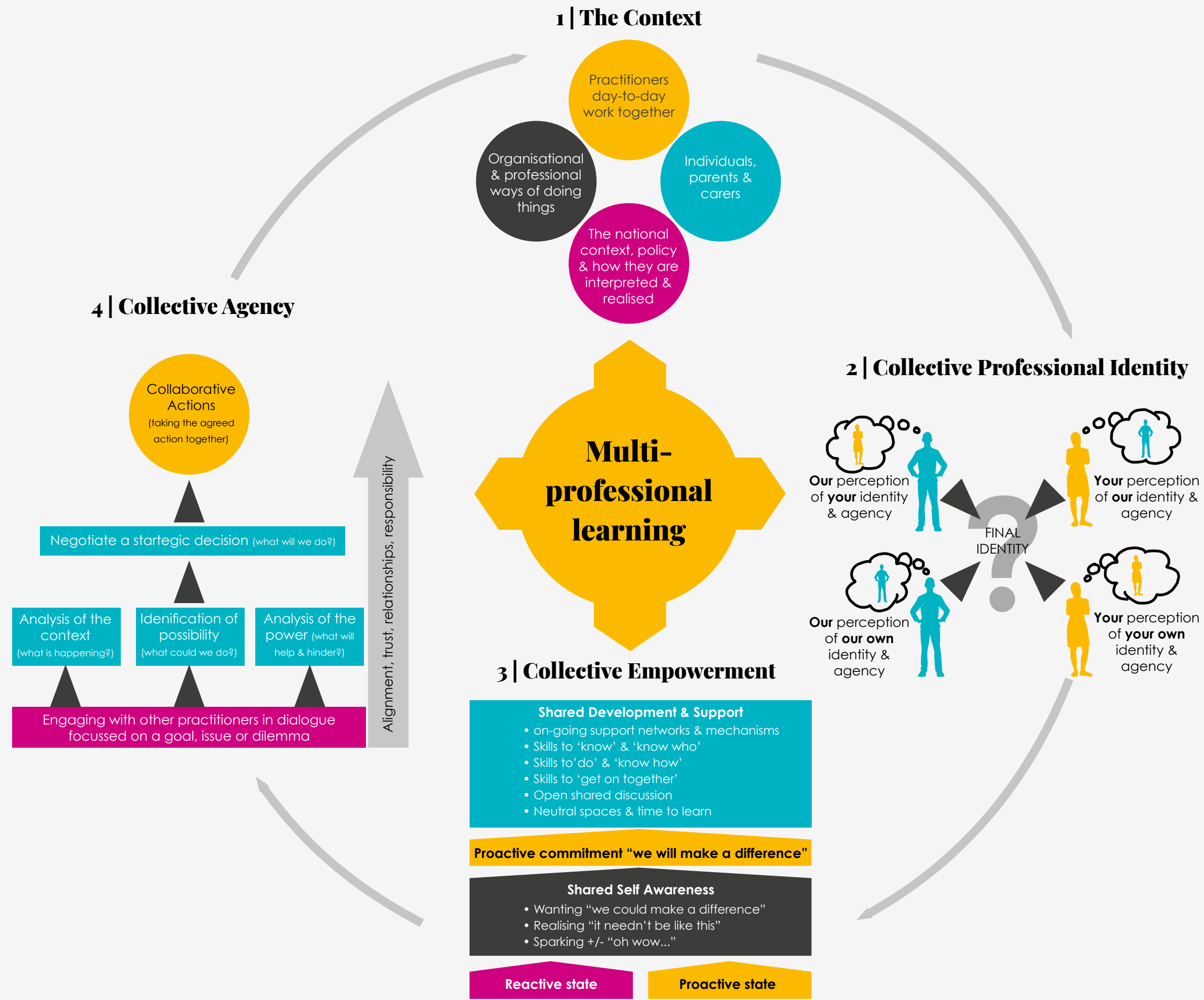
4. What Will We Do?

When teams feel empowered, they act, they have the ability to be aware, to make choices and to act together. Trust, relationships, communication and accountability support agency. These vital aspects of team development are:

- g. What is happening?
- h. What can we do?
- i. What will help/hinder?
- j. What are we going to do together?
- k. Action

Our approach to team development: collaborative action:

We use situated and experiential learning to promote the four aspects of collaborative action. Teams are often tempted to jump straight into ‘doing’, into the action stage, but our experience has shown that working on the earlier stages of contextual awareness, identity formation, and empowerment are critical to success. When all these are in place, teams act collaboratively, sense that they have the ability to be masters of their own success and achieve collaborative advantage.



Taking collaborative action to its next natural step, we and where in fact it was developed as a system-based paradigm in integrated care. Being clear about each players context and lens of experience, the collective identity or miss identity as a group, in particular attention must be paid to creating a shared purpose and clear mission narrative.

This removes the first barrier or disempowerment, do not underestimate the necessity of collective empowerment, it continues to require good functioning at a team position, low hierarchy, trusted vulnerability, challenge and debate that leads to commitment even is not all fully agreed, that leads to open accountability. Building these foundations and pillars creates energy, momentum and action to collective agency.

‘Agency’ refers to the intentional choices and actions of an individual in the world. It is often referred to as human agency or personal agency to discriminate it from ‘agencies’. Agency ‘implies the ability of individuals or groups to act on their situations, to behave as subjects rather than objects in their own lives, to shape their own circumstances and ultimately achieve change’. This involves awareness, choice and action.

Wellbeing is feeling good and functioning well (Aked et al., 2008).

Agency is taking control of our lives and as Ledwith (2011) said, “when people have control over what is happening in their lives (agency), their health and wellbeing improves”.

Social justice is the relation of balance between individuals and society measured by comparing distribution of wealth differences, from personal liberties to fair privilege opportunities.

Social justice is created by the ‘structures’ in the world. These are the systems, laws, rules, social norms, etc. that both constrain and enable our agency

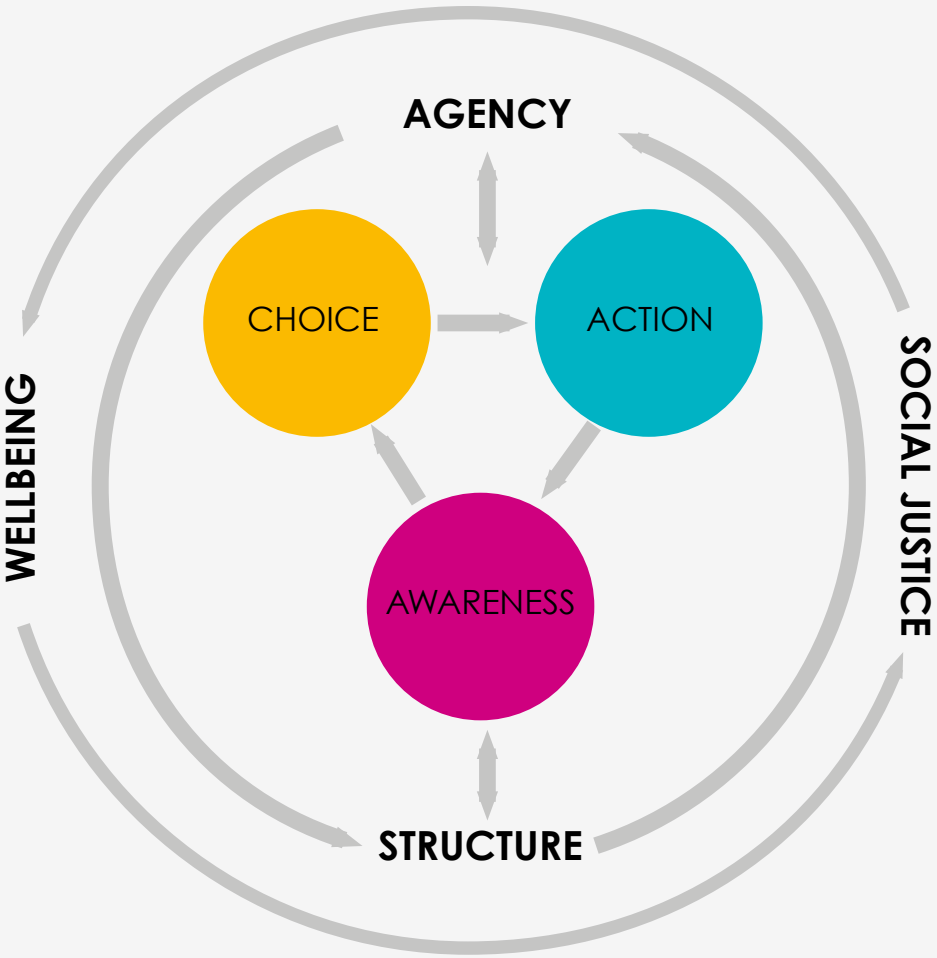
Empowerment is about a person’s sense of power. It includes multiple sources of power such as knowledge, roles, positions and resources.

We cannot empower people as it is an intrinsic process (Maynard, 2011). As professionals we can support and facilitate this process, providing conditions that spark a process enabling people to develop their empowerment. Enabling empowerment is therefore central to the practice of wellbeing development. We define this process of empowerment in three clear phases:

• **Awareness** – this is a catalytic process, sparking new thought or realisation, and wanting. Some people call these lightbulbs! The outcomes of which are increased consciousness of ‘this is who I am’, ‘this is what I like and dislike’, ‘this is what I am good at and not good at’ and ‘this is what I want and don’t want’.

• **Choice** – this is the gaining of control and a commitment to a change process; to commit to using personal power to achieve personal gain. This catalyses a pro-active process of finding solutions to ‘how’ we get what we want.

• **Action** – this is mobilising power into agency by taking action and making change. Agency is not a one-off change; it is transferring learning of how we do this into multiple areas of our lives: continuously gaining more awareness, more choice, and taking more actions – sustaining our agency towards greater wellbeing. We have agency, we feel good and are functioning well. This is regarding oneself; both in and for society, as well as collective.



Ref: Stuart (2012) Collaborative Agency in the Children’s Workforce, University of Lancaster PhD.

ⁱBinary opposition – is a pair of related terms or concepts that are opposite in meaning. Binary opposition is the system of language and/or thought by which two theoretical opposites are strictly defined and set off against one another. It is the contrast between two mutually exclusive terms, such as on and off, up and down, left and right.
ⁱⁱThe planned interaction between two separate individuals, teams or organisations to cooperate together to mutual benefit.

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growth & transformation,
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