

Powering Change:

BUILDING HEALTHY, EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

CALIFORNIA ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTH INITIATIVE

CACHI

...The Next Generation of Health System Transformation

January 2025



**POPULATION HEALTH
INNOVATION LAB**

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AUTHORS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Population Health Innovation Lab designed the curriculum.

AUTHORS

- Emily Christopher, *MPH*
- Sue Grinnell, *MPH*
- Kathryn Stewart, *MPP*

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

(in alphabetical order)

- Terry Amsler, *Indiana University O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Steering Committee Community Voices for Health in Monroe County*
- Kevin deVoss, *Northwest Center for Public Health Practice, University of Washington School of Public Health*
- Kimberley Elliott, *Source Your Magic*
- Janet Heinrich, *George Washington University, Funders Forum on Accountable Health*
- Jeffrey Levi, *George Washington University, Funders Forum on Accountable Health*
- Dana Pearlman, *Leading Change Institute*
- Cheryl Moder, *Consultant, San Diego Accountable Community for Health*
- Tracy Schiffman, *The Trauma-Informed Classroom, LLC*

CONTRIBUTORS

(in alphabetical order)

- Jennifer Brya, *Desert Vista Consulting*
- Jeremy Cantor, *John Snow, Inc.*
- Kristene Cristobal, *Cristobal Consulting*
- Anne Haddix, *Minga Analytics*
- Laura Hogan, *CACHI Program Management Team*
- Andrew Krackov, *Hillcrest Advisory*
- Karen Linkins, *Desert Vista Consulting*
- Barbara Masters, *CACHI Director*
- Michael Miller, *Brown Miller Associates*
- Patricia Powers, *CACHI Program Management Team*
- Stephanie Sario, *Public Health Institute*
- Arpine Shakhbandaryan, *CACHI Program Management Team*
- Susan Watson, *Public Health Institute, CA4Health*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Authors & Acknowledgements	1	How to Use the Curriculum	9
Powering Change Infographic	4	Glossary	14
Why We Made This	5	References	266
How We Made This	6	Competency Framework	270

Modules:



MODULE 1: REWIRING YOUR BRAIN: MINDSETS & SYSTEMS THINKING 21

- ▶ Lesson 1: Introducing Mindsets & Mental Models 26
- ▶ Lesson 2: Systems Thinking 34



MODULE 2: RIGHTING INJUSTICES: OPERATIONALIZING EQUITY 42

- ▶ Lesson 1: What is Equity? 46
- ▶ Lesson 2: Social Determinants of Health & Your Local Context 59
- ▶ Lesson 3: Create an Equity-Driven Culture 66



MODULE 3: HAND IN HAND: FOSTERING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS 74

- ▶ Lesson 1: Identify & Define Partnerships 78
- ▶ Lesson 2: Build Trust with Partners & the Community at Large 87



MODULE 4: SHARPENING THE FOCUS: SHARED LONG-TERM VISION 94 **GOALS & PURPOSE**

- ▶ Lesson 1: Shared Intent & Individual Perspectives 99
- ▶ Lesson 2: Align Priorities to Develop Shared Vision, Goals & Purpose 107



MODULE 5: PIECES OF THE PUZZLE: COMMUNICATING FOR IMPACT 116

- ▶ Lesson 1: External Communication Strategies 121
- ▶ Lesson 2: Internal Communication Strategies 129
- ▶ Lesson 3: Data Communications 135



TABLE OF CONTENTS



MODULE 6: PAYING DIVIDENDS: CO-CREATING LASTING IMPACTS 139

- ▶ Lesson 1: Collaborative Sustainability 144
- ▶ Lesson 2: Financial Sustainability: Right-Sizing Resources to Achieve Your Goals 151
- ▶ Lesson 3: Wellness Funds 158



MODULE 7: SCAFFOLDING FOR CHANGE: BACKBONE ORGANIZATIONS 164

- ▶ Lesson 1: Backbone Roles & Responsibilities 169
- ▶ Lesson 2: Building a Culture for Success 178



MODULE 8: COLLECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY: GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP 184

- ▶ Lesson 1: Leadership Types & Skills 189
- ▶ Lesson 2: Governance 198



MODULE 9: IT TAKES A VILLAGE: CREATING A PORTFOLIO OF INTERVENTIONS 205

- ▶ Lesson 1: Understand & Develop a Portfolio of Interventions 210
- ▶ Lesson 2: Implement, Monitor & Evolve Your Portfolio of Interventions 219



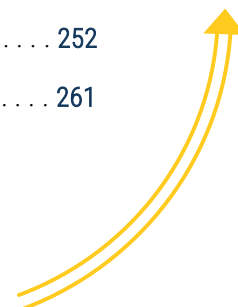
MODULE 10: KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES . . . 225

- ▶ Lesson 1: Financial Management 230
- ▶ Lesson 2: Fundraising 237
- ▶ Lesson 3: Creating a Business Plan 242



MODULE 11: MEASURING CHANGE: DATA COLLECTION, APPLICATION & SHARING. . 247

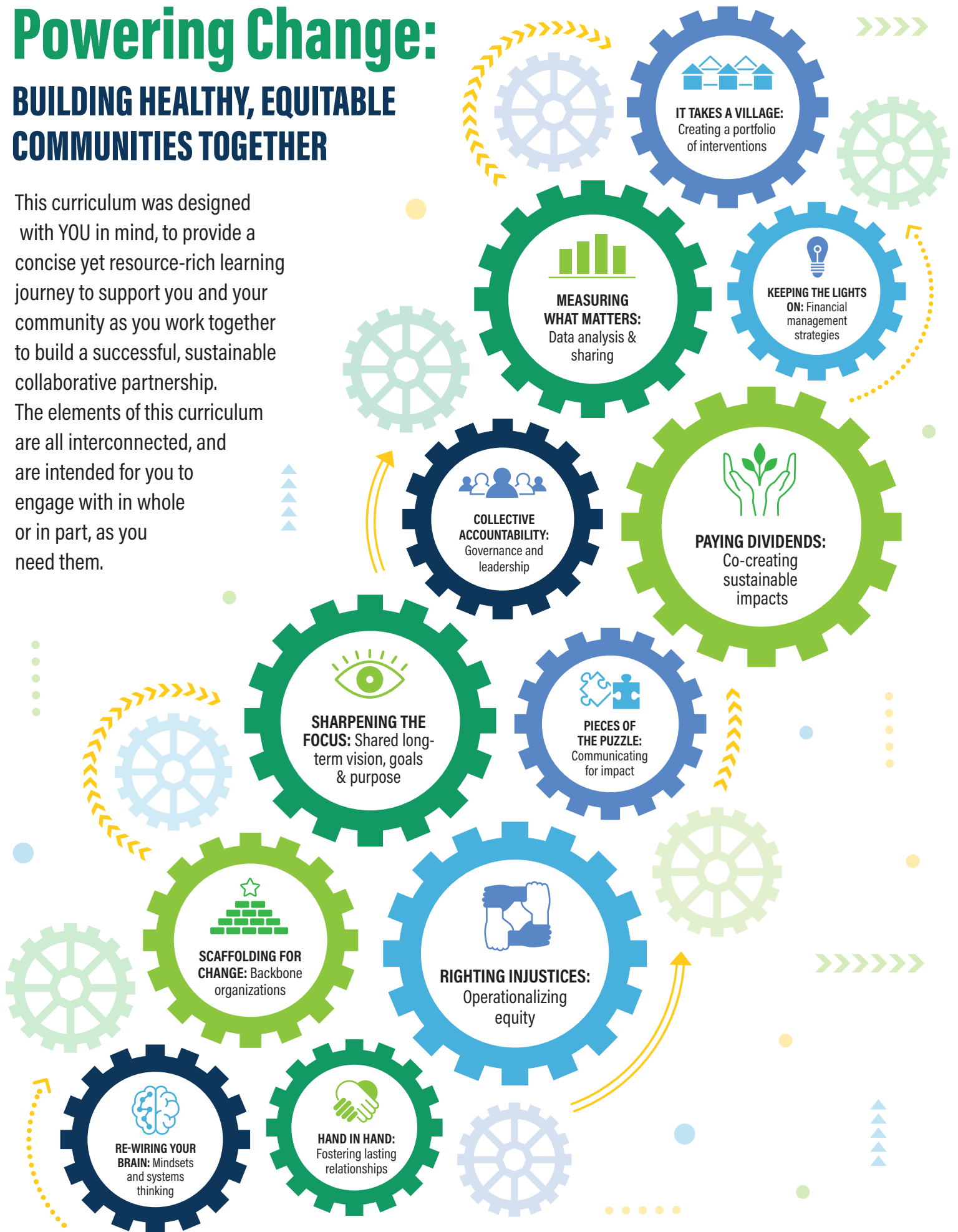
- ▶ Lesson 1: Data Collection, Understanding & Application 252
- ▶ Lesson 2: Data Sharing 261



Powering Change:

BUILDING HEALTHY, EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

This curriculum was designed with YOU in mind, to provide a concise yet resource-rich learning journey to support you and your community as you work together to build a successful, sustainable collaborative partnership. The elements of this curriculum are all interconnected, and are intended for you to engage with in whole or in part, as you need them.



WHY WE MADE THIS

The work of **Collaborative Partnerships**, previously called **Multisector Collaboratives (MSCs)** in this curriculum, is a radical shift away from “business as usual.” These collaboratives take a systems approach to their work and are driven by a common goal and accountability to the communities they serve. There is no road map for this complex and constantly evolving work.

The Powering Change: Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Together curriculum was created to support the development and operations of health-focused MSCs. We highlight many of the excellent resources available in this space to provide a concise yet resource-rich learning journey to support MSCs and their communities in working together to build a successful, sustainable collaborative. Initially Powering Change was developed in response to the need by California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI) to enhance the ongoing operations of current **Accountable Communities of Health (ACHs)** as well as to assist new collaboratives in becoming ACHs. The curriculum also has broader applicability to collaborative partnerships in general. The development of this curriculum was funded by CACHI.

Upon the successful completion of the Powering Change curriculum, you will have learned skills to build a sustainable culture, nurture relationships, navigate complex challenges and co-create solutions with your partners. You will have created a number of products to support the continued operations of your collaborative.

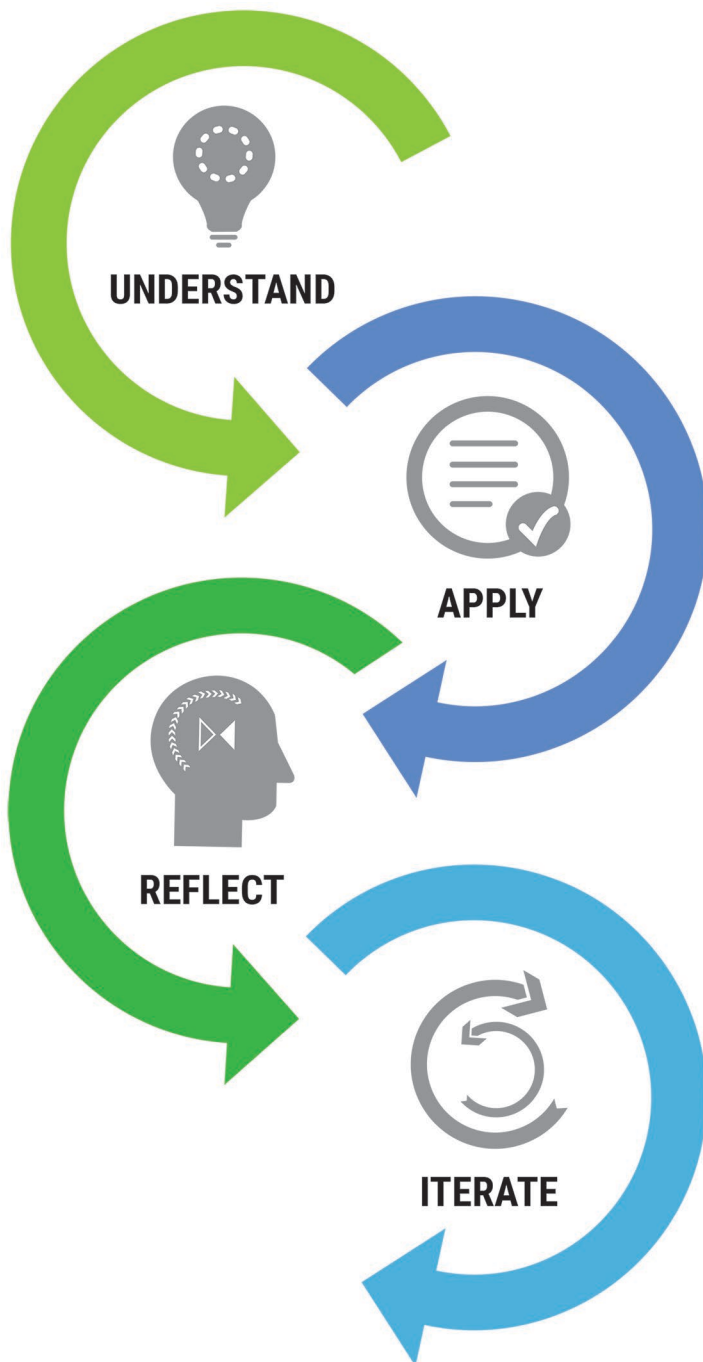
At the Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL) we seek to catalyze and accelerate community efforts to enhance equity, well-being, and systems through innovative training, research, and technical assistance.

We trust that our Powering Change curriculum will help you to build these capacities within your own organization. For a fee, the Population Health Innovation Lab offers consulting services related to this work, including implementation support, facilitation, workshops, learning labs, and strategic advising. We would love to hear from you! To learn more about consulting options, or if you have any questions or comments, contact the Public Health Institute’s Population Health Innovation Lab at info@pophealthinnovationlab.org.



HOW TO USE THE CURRICULUM

Each of the eleven modules contains two to three lessons on different topics. Lessons are divided into four sections: Understand, Apply, Reflect, and Iterate.



UNDERSTAND

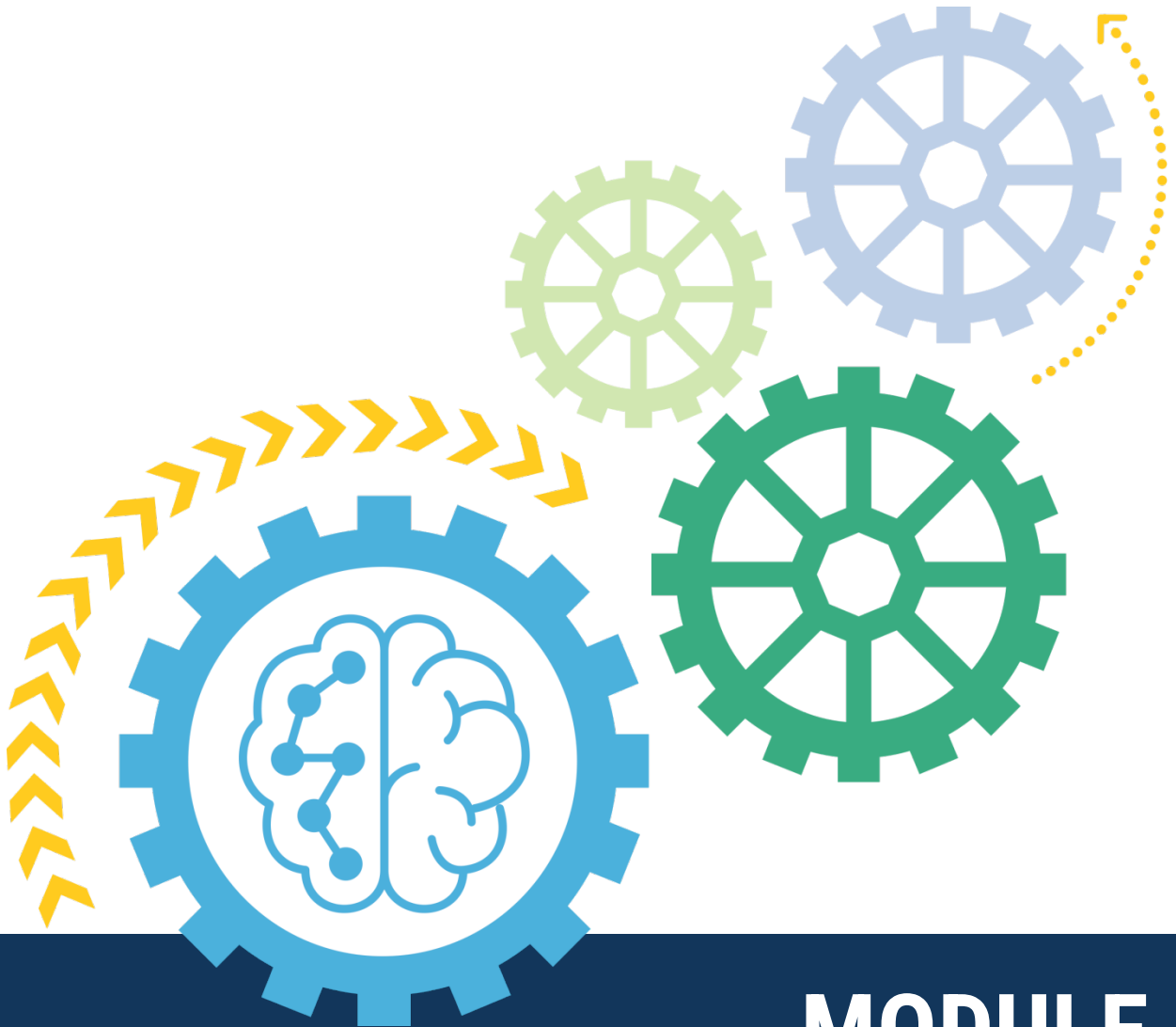
contains background and explanatory information about the concepts within the lesson.

APPLY

involves putting into practice learnings from new resources or those within the Understand section.

REFLECT AND ITERATE

should be considered together and contain some prompting questions to ensure that what you are learning is ingrained into the ongoing work of your MSC. The content for both the Reflect and Iterate sections is largely the same for each lesson. This is intentional. Active reflection and evolution of your approach is key to building an effective and sustainable collaborative.



MODULE 1

REWIRING YOUR BRAIN

MINDSETS & SYSTEMS THINKING

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REWIRING YOUR BRAIN

Mindsets & Systems Thinking



OBJECTIVE

Learn new ways of thinking to approach complex problems and strategies for applying these practices.

LESSONS IN THIS MODULE INCLUDE

- 1) Introducing Mindsets & Mental Models
- 2) Systems Thinking

AT THE END OF THIS MODULE YOU WILL HAVE

- ▶ A suite of mental models and mindsets to inform your approach to your work, and strategies to apply them.
- ▶ An understanding of systems thinking and the tools to incorporate this practice into your collaborative.
- ▶ An understanding of change management and its application.



***“Everything you need
to accomplish your goals
is already in you.”
~ Martin Luther King Jr.***

If you are interested in further coaching on this topic, please contact:

Sue Grinnell, MPH,
Director
Population Health Innovation Lab
sue.grinnell@phi.org
pophealthinnovationlab.org

Dana Pearlman, MA, MSc,
Social Change Facilitator
danapearlman@gmail.com
danapearlman.com



PHIL FINDINGS



Findings

The Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL), in partnership with the Center for Community Resilience at George Washington University, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, evaluated the Resilience Catalysts (RC) in Public Health program. RC is a national program which helps local health departments (LHDs) address structural racism and inequities by providing training, technical assistance, and support for equity-focused partnerships. The evaluation used both qualitative and quantitative methods to identify key aspects of the RC process and technical assistance that help LHDs implement Public Health 3.0, which focuses on collaboration and addressing social determinants of health. The findings also provide insight into the early impacts of the RC program. Key results include:



Recommendations

- ▶ **Community-Centered Mindset:** A community-centered mindset rooted in inclusive collaboration builds trust, fosters shared ownership, and ensures sustainable outcomes. While not a formal RC step, 89% (n = 8) of Cohort 1 and 2 sites emphasized community engagement as vital for success, stressing the need to include diverse perspectives and equity-driven approaches.

- ▶ **Systems Thinking as a Core Approach:** The RC process emphasizes recognizing interconnected factors influencing equity and resilience. Tools like root cause analysis and group model building help uncover systemic barriers, amplify community voices, and strengthen cross-sector partnerships, driving inclusive, equity-focused solutions.
- ▶ **Shifting Perspectives to a Systems-Level View:** Adopting a systems-level approach helps address structural inequities and systemic racism while fostering holistic solutions to complex challenges. RC technical assistance supported sites in identifying root causes, broadening perspectives, and building cross-sector collaborations to improve health outcomes.
- ▶ **Leveraging Contextual Factors for Growth:** RC success depends on adapting to local contexts, including cultural norms, political climates, and infrastructure. Tailoring the RC process to community needs—such as adding activities or adjusting methods—can address barriers and ensure sustained impact, particularly in diverse or under-resourced settings.
- ▶ **Outcomes Through a Systems-Oriented Mindset:** Adopting a systems-oriented perspective can lead to transformative outcomes, such as strengthened cross-sector partnerships, deeper understanding of disparities, and increased capacity to address systemic challenges while fostering community resilience.
- ▶ **Addressing Systemic Racism Through Community Engagement:** Addressing systemic racism requires transparent self-assessments, inclusive conversations, and collaborative problem-solving. RC technical assistance helped 78% (n = 7) of sites deepen their understanding of inequities, highlighting systemic factors like housing, transportation, and economic instability as key contributors.
- ▶ **Need for Clearer Measurement Indicators:** Clear, measurable indicators are essential for evaluating progress in equity, resilience, and community empowerment. Clear and comprehensive onboarding, robust frameworks for data collection, and dedicated technical assistance staffing are recommended to strengthen engagement and implementation outcomes.

Lesson 1: Introducing Mindsets & Mental Models

OPENING QUESTIONS

Discuss these questions with your team members before beginning this lesson.

- ▶ When you have the opportunity to learn something new, what is your approach?
- ▶ How do your worldviews shape decisions and perspectives?
- ▶ When you engage in dialogue with others who have different perspectives, thoughts or opinions from you, how do you typically respond?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- 1) Describe different mindsets and how they can be applied to your work as an individual and with partners.
- 2) Learn strategies for using mental models and mindsets, integrating them into your decision-making processes and daily activities.



LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

UNDERSTAND

MENTAL MODELS

All individuals have an existing set of mental models. A **mental model** explains “how someone thinks about the world around them.”³ These are typically set patterns of thinking derived from one’s background, environment and other experiences. The way we consider and respond is determined by our thoughts and as a result influences how we behave and or react to the world, our work, our families, and so on.

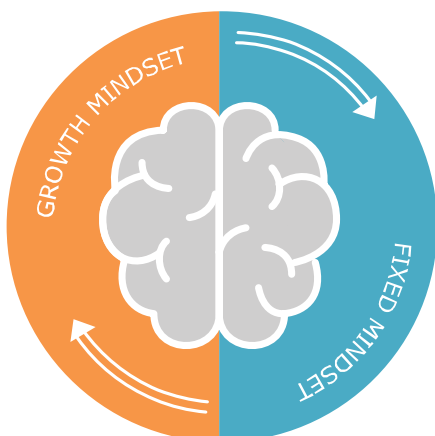
MINDSETS

“**Mindsets** are a way of thinking, disposition or frame of mind. Your mindset is a collection of thoughts and beliefs that shape your thought habits.”³ These thought habits affect how you think, what you feel, and what you do. Your mindset impacts how you make sense of the world, and how you make sense of you. These habits can be either positive and or negative.

Adopting a new mindset can become a powerful choice. The mindsets you and your partners bring to the table can create an influential impact on the outcomes and progress of your collaborative partnership’s (MSC’s) work. In MSC development, awareness of current mindsets and dedication to being open to exploring new approaches is a path that has proven effective. Choosing to explore, be flexible and include a variety of mindsets throughout the evolution of your efforts can open paths to deeper possibility and innovation.

Adopting a growth mindset, in which you believe that a person’s most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work - brains and talent are just the starting point - is the first step on the path toward a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

The alternative to a growth mindset is a fixed mindset. In a fixed mindset people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. This mindset is not helpful in shifting your mindset and driving progress.





LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

Review the information and the videos on mindsets as a starting point for understanding how we think about things and how you might approach them.

 [ACH Start- Up Guide: Flexible Mindsets](#)

 [IDEO Design Kit: Mindset Videos](#)

 [Carol Dweck: A Summary of Growth and Fixed Mindsets](#)

 [How to Tap Into a Growth Mindset and Crush Your Goals](#)


SPECIFIC MINDSETS

One mindset that is particularly important at the outset of the formation of your collaborative is the ability to pivot. It is not uncommon for groups to come together around one issue and as they learn more about the issue and surrounding factors, realize that the root cause may be different than originally thought. There may be tension on the group when some recognize the original path is not what is emerging. Being able to name this issue and creating a safe space to discuss what is emerging will be important.


 [Learning to Pivot](#)

 [How and When to Pivot](#)


Equity, diversity and inclusion mindsets must be a key part of your personal approach, as well as the work of your collaborative and partners. Equity is covered in Module 2. The below are two short videos to introduce these important concepts.

 [Defining Diversity and Inclusion](#)

 [Racial Equity Mindset](#)


 [Module 2: Righting Injustices: Operationalizing Equity](#)

The decisions and choices we make can often get clouded by emotional, irrational, and confusing factors. This short article highlights some of the mental lapses that show up most frequently in our lives.

 [5 Common Mental Errors that Sway You from Making Good Decisions](#)

Intentional and effective listening is an important component to effectuate the impact of your mental models and mindsets. Review the Four Levels of Listening framework discussed in Module 5 (and linked again below) to learn about how listening helps people to create deep and lasting change.

 [Framework: Four Levels of Listening](#)

 [Module 5: Pieces of the Puzzle: Communicating for Impact](#)

- [Lesson 2: Internal Communication Strategies](#)

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

APPLY


“Successful leadership depends on the quality of attention and intention that the leader brings to any situation.”

~ Otto Scharmer

BLINDSPOTS

The notion of blindspots comes from the idea that leaders know what and how they do what they do, but they may not know why they do it. Often leaders do not understand and/or are blind to what is needed to support deep leadership and change. Understanding the origin and intention of your actions as a leader can be equally important to the actions themselves.

Review the following information to better understand the blind spots of leadership.

 [Otto Scharmer's The Blind Spot of Leadership: Prescensing as a Social Technology of Freedom](#)

Watch this short video of Otto Scharmer discussing Uncovering the Leadership Blind Spot with a team of your partners. As a group, explore the discussion prompts on the Discovering Blind Spots Discussion Guide.

 [Uncovering the Leadership Blindspot](#)

 [Discovering Blind Spots Discussion Guide](#)

LADDER OF INFERENCE

Most people do not realize that they have come to a conclusion about the world around them as it happens fairly quickly. The Ladder of Inference describes the automatic thinking process that we all go through, usually without even realizing it, to get from a fact to a decision or action. The ladder of inference is a tool, first developed by Chris Argyris, that provides a structured way for us to reason as to why we don't usually remember where our deepest attitudes or deep-seated behaviours came from. The data is long lost to memory, after years of inferential leap. Before long, we come to think of our longstanding assumptions as data, but we are several steps removed from data. Becoming aware of our own mental models and ways of thinking begins with self awareness and cultivating the ability to have conversations that balance inquiry and advocacy, where people expose their own thinking effectively and creating a space for open dialogue and learning. Explore the following resource to learn guidance on how to reframe your mindset for meaningful dialogue.

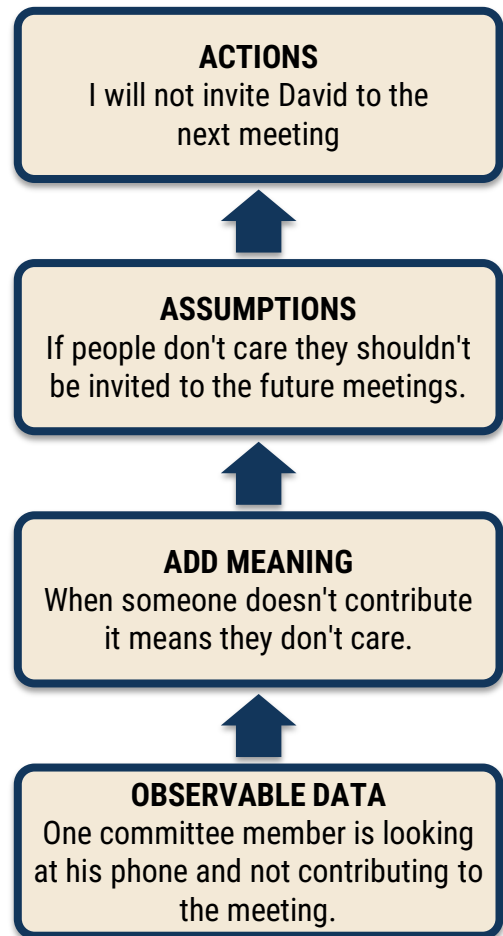
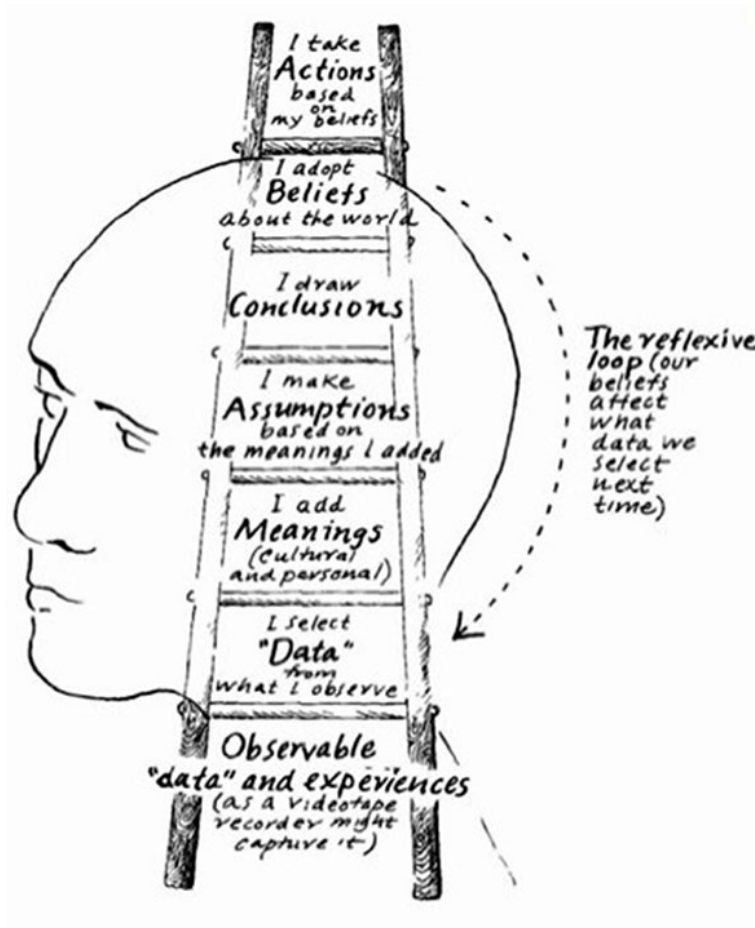
 [Meaningful Dialogue](#)

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

The thinking stages can be seen as rungs on a ladder with examples are shown below. Also visit the linked resource for a more in-depth explanation.



[Mental Models – Understanding The Self](#)



The Ladder of Inference tool, developed by Chris Argyris; provides a structured way for us to reason as to why we don't usually remember where our deepest attitudes or deep-seated behaviors came from.

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS


LIMITING BELIEFS

Limiting beliefs are thoughts that get in the way of what you think is possible for yourself and can prevent you from being the best that you can be. Thoughts turn into beliefs and are often based on assumptions which may not be real or true. Watch this video and webinar and complete the worksheets individually and/or with your partners.

 [Caitlin Frost: Transforming Limiting Beliefs](#)

 [Caitlin Frost on Limiting Beliefs](#)


Accompanying Worksheets

 [Instructions for Doing The Work](#)

 [Self Facilitation Guide](#)

 [The Work Limiting Beliefs Diagram](#)


 [The Work Partner Facilitation Guide](#)


 [UnStuck Fear The Work 2019](#)

REDUCING BIAS


In your collaborative's work, you will work for and with people of a variety of backgrounds, races and lived experiences. Critical to success in building these relationships and doing this work is an open, unbiased approach. This involves an understanding and compassion for the experiences of others and yourself.

First, learn about what bias is and how it can manifest.

 [Psychology Today: Bias](#)

 [18 Examples of Unconscious Bias](#)

Explore the tools and strategies to reduce bias worksheet below.

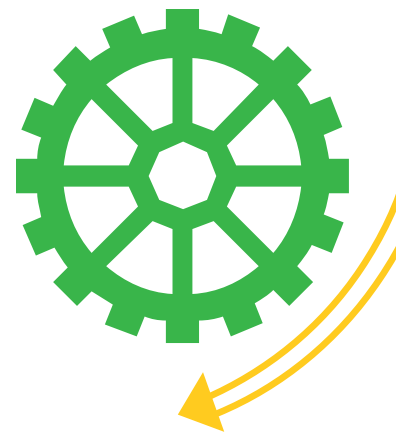
 [Strategies to Reduce Bias Worksheet](#)

 [Project Implicit](#)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR APPLYING THESE LEARNINGS


Host a discussion with your partners on mindsets using what you learned from the readings, videos and tools to lay a foundation from which to approach changing your mindsets and practices.

Incorporate a mindset review into your team meeting agendas on a regular basis. Consider which mindsets are working for you/your team, and which are not. Assess how the application of these mindsets impacts other areas of your work.



LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

Identify one or more “disruptors” on your team who regularly checks the team on whether they are employing mindsets and sticking to “business as usual.”

 [Start-Up Guide: Approaches to Support ACH Work \(Disruptors, p. 5\)](#)

As you move forward with your work, remember that you can pivot if needed!

Ask yourself:

- ▶ What does it mean to shift or pivot our efforts?
- ▶ How might we identify when the chosen path needs to be adjusted?
- ▶ How might we clarify our next move?
- ▶ How might we gracefully pivot our focus to be of greater service?

DIG DEEPER


 [Paradigm-Creating Loops: How Perceptions Shape Reality](#)

 [Simon Sinek: Empathy](#)

 [Human-Centered Design for Innovations in Public Health](#)

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING MINDSETS & MENTAL MODELS

REFLECT



Discuss the following questions with your team. We encourage you to regularly revisit these questions, continually refining your approach as your collaborative grows.

- ▶ What are you learning about your own mindsets?
- ▶ As a result of any of the reflections, where do you need to pivot or approach the work differently?
- ▶ How can you incorporate new ways of thinking?
- ▶ What mindsets or mental models are getting in your way?
- ▶ What do these learnings mean for the broader context of your work, and the work of your collaborative?

Additional practices you can use to support this reflection. For more detail on these resources, visit the 'How to Use' section of our introductory guide.



[Collaborative Reflection Form](#)



[What, So What, Now What](#)




[Pair Reflection Post-Journaling and Solo Presenting Walk](#)



HOW TO USE GUIDE

ITERATE



Schedule a time within the next several weeks to reflect with your team on the practices learned in this lesson you will ingrain in your organizational approach moving forward.

Implement any necessary changes discovered through this process, continually revisiting these questions.