The degree to which a movement will actually reshape society often hinges on the real time practices of that movement—the way the people in that movement individually and collectively embody the core values and new culture at the heart of the movement.

— Movement Strategy Center
We envision a future where all children experience a meaningful daily connection to nature.
We believe a network approach — a new way of working together — will accelerate a change in our society and culture, bringing nature back into our everyday lives as individuals, families, and communities.
Our work is also grounded in research by Jane Wei-Skillern and four principles of collaboration success:

- Trust not control
- Humility not brand
- Node not hub
- Mission not organization
What we need most is self-replicating cultural change. That happens when individuals, families or small groups of people take the kinds of actions so enticing that other people want to replicate them.

— Richard Louv
A Network Approach to Social Change
Through networks,
we have the potential to change how we live and work in this world – a new form of being aligned with nature.
In nature, everything is related and works together.
To connect children with nature, we all need to interact like nature: collaborating as diverse peers in a web of support.
THAT CALLS FOR TRANSFORMATION

From hierarchy to peers
THAT CALLS FOR TRANSFORMATION

From conformity to appreciation of difference
THAT CALLS FOR TRANSFORMATION

From control to a web of support
Each of these shifts is accelerated by a network approach.
Organizational Approach
• Useful for simple problems
• Leaders direct action
• Planning and goals
• Individual & committee work
• Agreement needed

Network Approach
• Useful for complex problems
• Leaders encourage others to initiate and act
• Lots of innovation, experimentation and learning
• People work on collaborative projects they care about
• Agreement not needed to act
Networks

are sets of relationships and the patterns they create that influence the quality of communication and the likelihood of collaboration and innovation.
NETWORK TYPES: FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION

Centralized

- Networks embedded within and between organizations
- Membership organizations
- Multi-hub networks – affiliate models

Decentralized

- Intentional networks
- Networks of networks

Catalyzing Networks for Social Change, Monitor Institute and GEO
INTENTIONAL SOCIAL NETWORK

• Decentralized Core to Expand Leadership & Diversity
• Overlapping Clusters of Action
• Strong Periphery for New Ideas & Expansion
QUESTIONS

What kinds of networks are you part of?

What questions do you have about a network approach?

What would you like to learn about networks?
Essential Elements
Developing Social Change
Networks that Work
CREATING AND SUSTAINING NETWORKS: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

CONVENING WITH Intention

HELPING PEOPLE INITIATE Act with Others

CREATING AND EXPANDING Quality Connections

SUPPORTING THE Network

HELPING PEOPLE INITIATE Act with Others

CREATING AND EXPANDING Quality Connections

SUPPORTING THE Network

CONVENING WITH Intention
Your Intentional Network needs to focus on a shared (or overlapping) issue or vision or purpose.
A network that looks like this by adding new people and connecting those not currently connected.
Helping people initiate and act with others

Networks organize multiple actions that:

• Come from people’s passion
• Support experiments for breakthroughs and learning
• Develop flexibility to respond to new opportunities
Self-organizing is, without a doubt, the aspect of networks that is most likely to bring transformation.
This element includes:

- **Communication systems for the quick flow of information and resources**
- **Spaces for the development of network values**
- **Opportunities for collective sense-making**
What is most challenging?

Which of the elements — connecting, collaborating, convening or supporting — is strongest in your network?

What do you want to learn most about?
Network Leadership Roles
Building Your Intentional Network
Learning to lead with a network mindset is not as simple as acquiring a new skill. Often our deeply held ideas about leadership collide with new ways of leading that are more distributed, relational, and interdependent.

Those who lead with a network mindset practice openness and transparency, let go of controlling outcomes, and believe in the leadership potential of everyone.

— From Networks & Leadership, Deborah Meehan
Network weavers are aware of the networks around them and explicitly work to make networks healthier. As many people as possible need to fill these functions!

Leadership Functions:
• Facilitating
• Connecting
• Coordinating
• Supporting
Which of these network functions do you fill?

What would you like to learn more about?
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Network Facilitating

Convene People
Network Facilitating

Help determine purpose and structure
Listen to the field and develop the collective intelligence of the network
Notice what is emerging: ideas, experiments and opportunities
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Network Connecting

Volunteer interested in youth leadership

Foundation interested in youth nature leadership

Innovation!

Close triangles
Have generative conversations
Network Connecting

CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Help people map and understand their networks
Develop and support diverse leadership
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Network Connecting

Build individual and collective capacities
Catalyzing, Coordinating & Celebrating Collaboration

Cluster and convene people with similar interests
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Catalyzing, Coordinating & Celebrating Collaboration

Try out small acts or collaborations in your community
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Catalyzing, Coordinating & Celebrating Collaboration

Celebrate Successes
Supporting the Network

Try out new communications
Supporting the Network

96 of your friends are here!
Connect and discover great projects together.

KICKSTARTER

Discover
Start a project

Explore new ways to get resources
Supporting the Network

Set up network training, community of practice or learning group
CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Supporting the Network

Network Behaviors Dashboard
This survey is to help you think about and strengthen network behaviors and values.

1. I am open to new ideas.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly disagree   Strongly agree

2. My organization is open to new ideas.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly disagree   Strongly agree

3. I enjoy diversity in my life: people, ideas, places.
   1 2 3 4 5

11. It’s easy for me to let go of control.

Try out tracking tools
Which of these network functions have you tried?

Which do you most want to learn more about or try out?

Which is most challenging?
Culture and social change happens at the individual level — in the hearts and minds of those involved. Creating intentional networks contributes to and requires a fundamental shift in values and practice:

1. Focus on mission
2. Build trusting relationships
3. Collaborate generously
4. Take action and help others take action
FIRST STEPS

- Ask more questions
- Share these slides
- Form a learning group
- Try an activity in the Toolkit
What — of all you heard about today — are you most interested in learning more about?
Resources and Acknowledgements
An Introduction to Network Weaving
(use code SPECIAL at www.networkweaver.com)

Network Weaver Handbook, A Guide to Transformational Networks
(use code SPECIAL2 at www.networkweaver.com)
Download and share the recording of this webinar and slides
Access the Network Leadership Tool Kit
Ask questions and continue the conversation by joining the Networks for Social Change Google Group
Continue joining upcoming webinars for this three-part series “Network Building for Social Change” – dates will be announced
Four Network Principles for Collaboration Success, Part 1

Four Network Principles for Collaboration Success, Part 2

Aligning with Nature: Creating a Network Culture
Network Building for Social Change
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