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Synergies in action: The power of collaboration

THE COLLABORATIVE STRUGGLE: WHY IS COLLABORATION SO HARD AND WHAT MIGHT HEALTHCARE LEADERS DO ABOUT IT?

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COLLÈGE CANADIEN DES
LEADERS EN SANTÉ

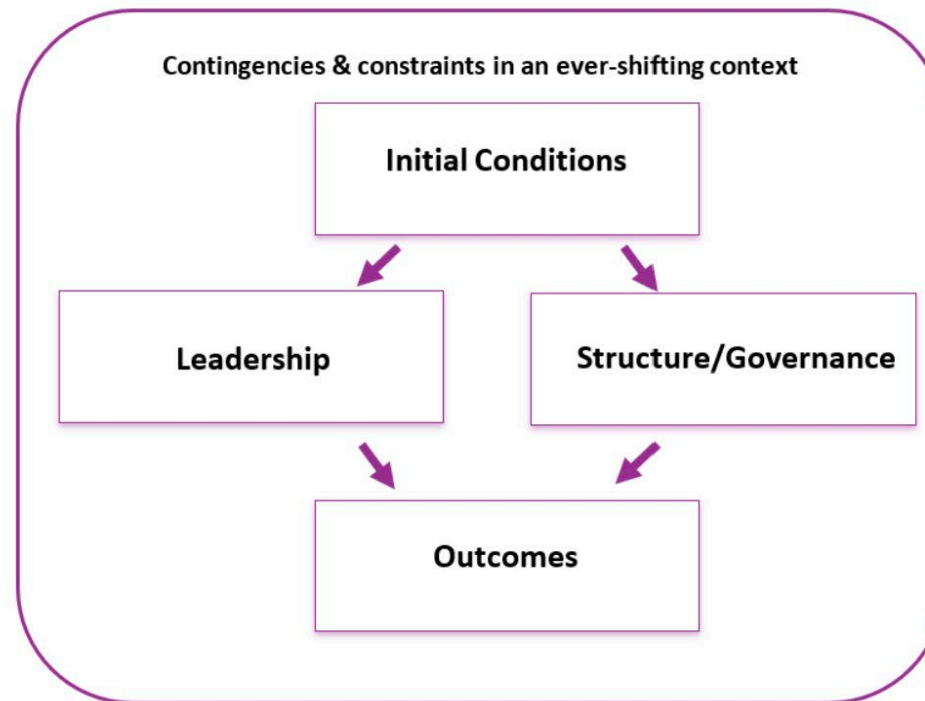


Traditional Land Acknowledgment

If collaboration is so hard, what else is going on?

Collaboration Building Blocks

“Collaboration does not occur in a vacuum”
(Phillips et al., 2000)



Adapted from: Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543-571; Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. M. (2010). Integrative leadership and the creation and maintenance of cross-sector collaborations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(2), 211-230

Leadership

Examples of collaborative leadership qualities. Is a member of the collaborative leadership team skilled in:

- Trust building, self-reflection, and relationship building?
- Creating equitable and transparent processes in terms of how decisions are made?
- Analyzing the system and ascertaining where/how to intervene, given constraint
- Capacity to identify and navigate power dynamics?

Structure/Governance

- Who has authority to make decisions, how are decisions made, and who is accountable to whom for what outcomes?
- For example, would your collaboration work better with a central decision-making body or an inclusive and shared decision-making committee of partners?

Initial Conditions

Environmental Examples:

- Is there a public mandate?
- Are there existing interorganizational networks and/or relationships?
- What is the capacity of partners?

Organizational Examples:

- How supportive is top leadership?
- What resources and/or tools do you have available? (funding, people, space, technology)

Outcomes

- What outcomes might be achieved including: collaborative capacity, future collaborative relationships and processes, collaborative process, political will, and performative outcomes.
- How might outcomes—especially those linked to collaborative capacity—be communicated and evaluated?

Goal = For you to leave with...

- Knowledge of relevant concepts from the collaboration literature, which will abet in making sense of collaborative experiences.
- Application of collaborative concepts to participant's own practice, leading to a deeper understanding of the reasons behind collaborative challenges.
- Strategies for overcoming key collaboration challenges.
- Connection with others with similar interests and challenges, with the potential for longer term professional connections.

Agenda

- Grounding in relevant concepts from the collaboration literature
- Sharing your collaborative story, with identification of challenges (small group)
- Identifying themes & mitigation strategies for top challenges (whole group)

Collaboration

- Both a *process* and the *outcome* of coming together, building, crossing, and re-creating new norms and expectations (Walsh, 2024)
- Increasingly expected, especially in response to wicked problems
- Happens at different scales and for different purposes. E.g. group practice setting, interprofessional teams, patient and community engagement, system/societal coordination and transformation
- Elements (Gray & Purdy, 2018):
 - The actors are interdependent with respect to the problem or issue, and none of them can solve the problem on their own
 - It is an emergent process that uses shared rules, norms, and structures
 - It involves constructively wrestling with differences using formal and informal negotiations and consensus-building to find trade-offs that create value for all
 - Partners bring different competencies and need to respect and learn from each other's expertise
 - Partners assume joint risks and responsibilities for the outcomes of their joint efforts.

Collaboration is challenging

“The context for collaboration is complex and challenging—typically characterized by an absence of clarity around purposes and problems; different value orientations, frames and systems of belief; unclear, multiple, shifting or conflicting goals; lack of precision around personal and organizational roles and responsibilities; differences in interpretation over what constitutes “success”; variations in culture and language; multiple accountabilities and performance management regime; and conflicts between different modes of governance.... managing in this context is complex and the working life of any type of boundary spanner is replete with paradox, ambiguity, and tension ”



Williams, 2012, p. 146

“The normal expectation ought to be that success will be very difficult to achieve in cross-sector collaborations, regardless of leadership effectiveness ”



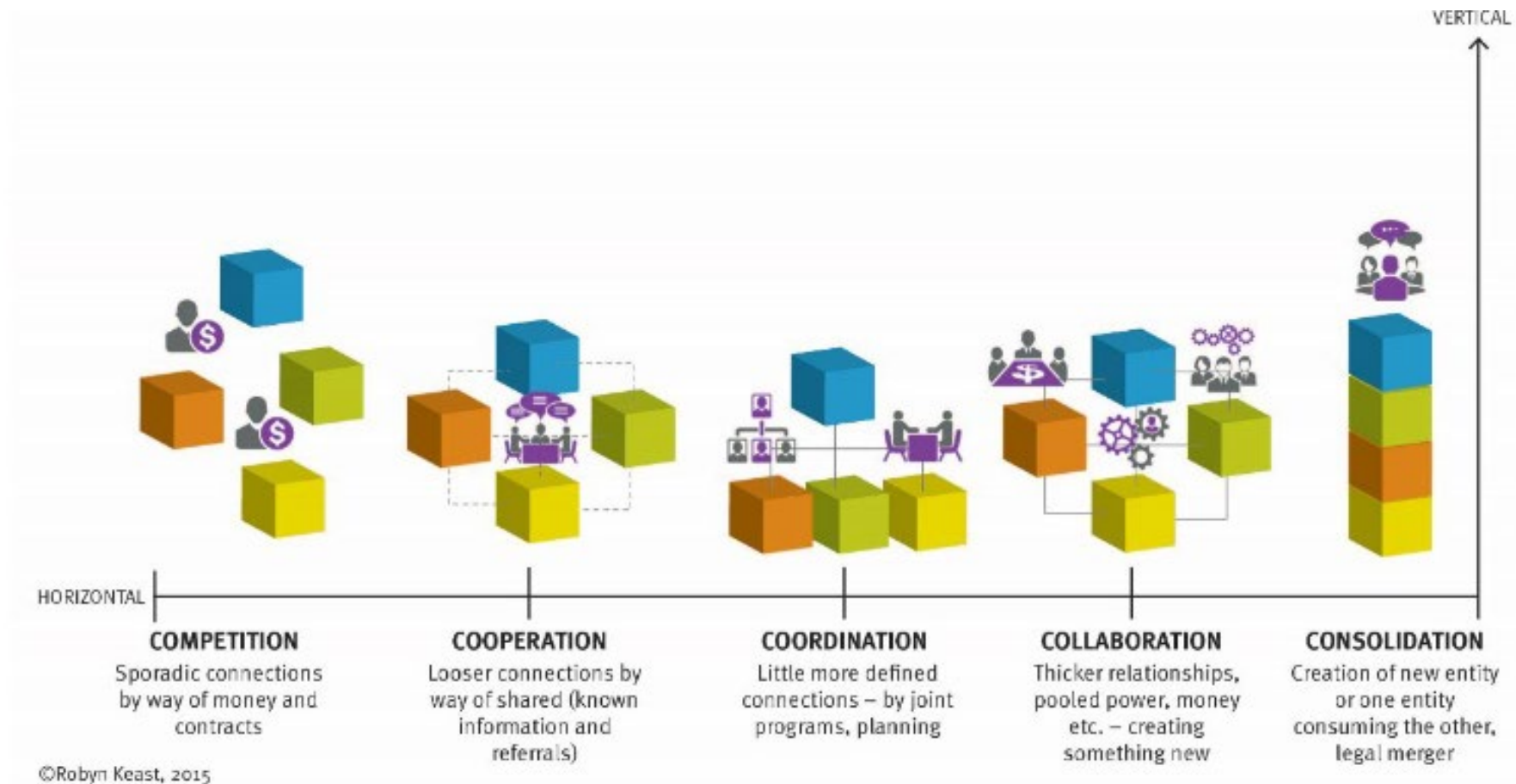
Crosby & Bryson, 2010, p. 227

“If you crave a working life that is consistent, regular, organized, low risk and uncomplicated, the life of a boundary spanner is not for you ”



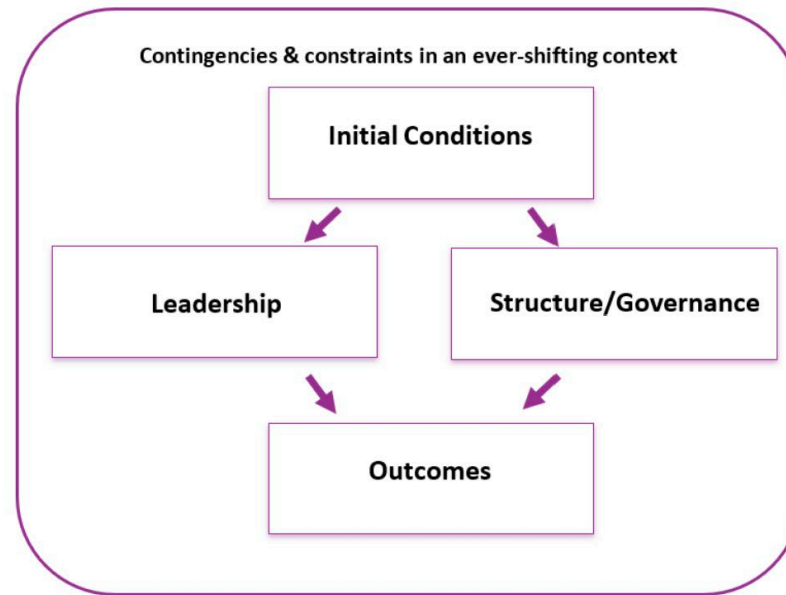
Williams, 2012, p. 145

Collaboration not the Only Form of Interaction



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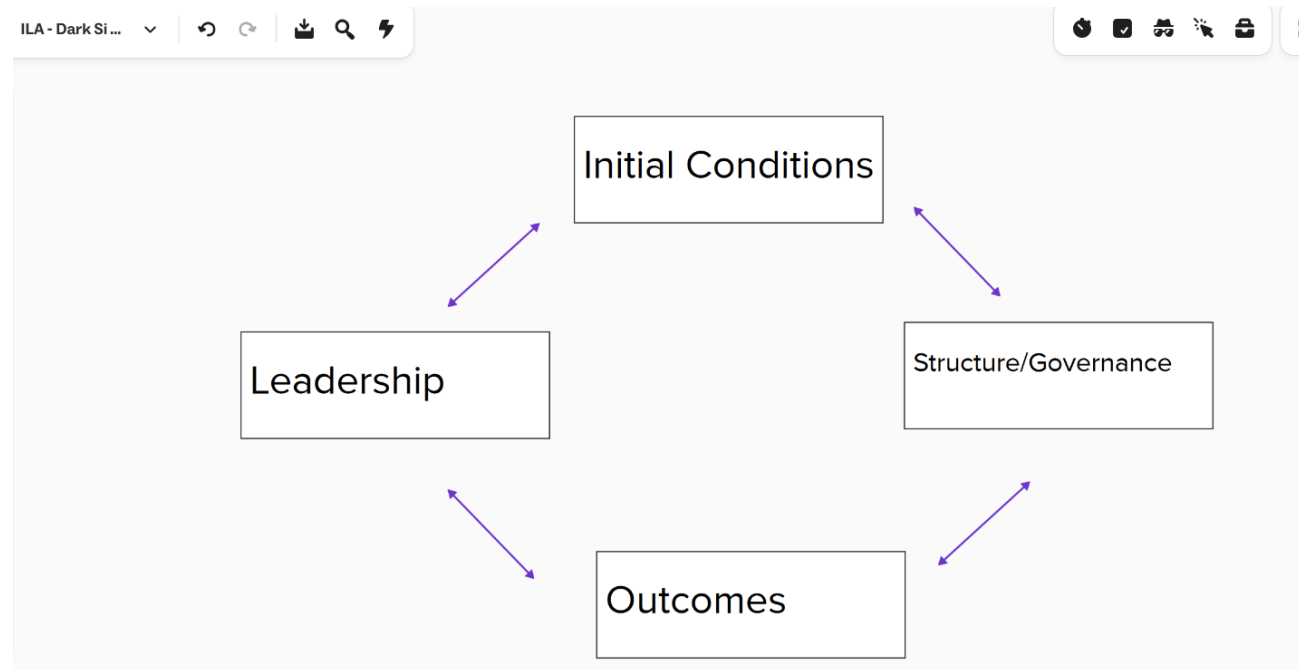
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Your turn: Group of 2-4

- Identify a collaboration in which you have been engaged.
- What successes and challenges did you experience? How do they map on to the model shared by the facilitator (initial conditions, outcomes, leadership, governance)
- Do insights emerge from your story that fall outside of the categories discussed?

Identifying Themes



- <https://app.mural.co/t/anthonystest9702/m/anthonystest9702/1731030267733/7ab74c710039bde8f365e8020783c720e7f7f9b?sender=u5a4902829dcfef083d687180>

Mitigation Strategies? (return to small groups)

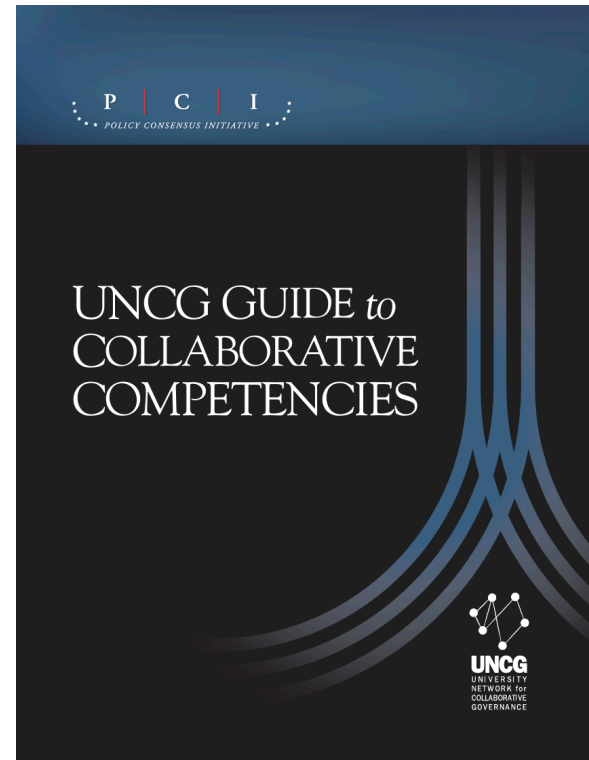
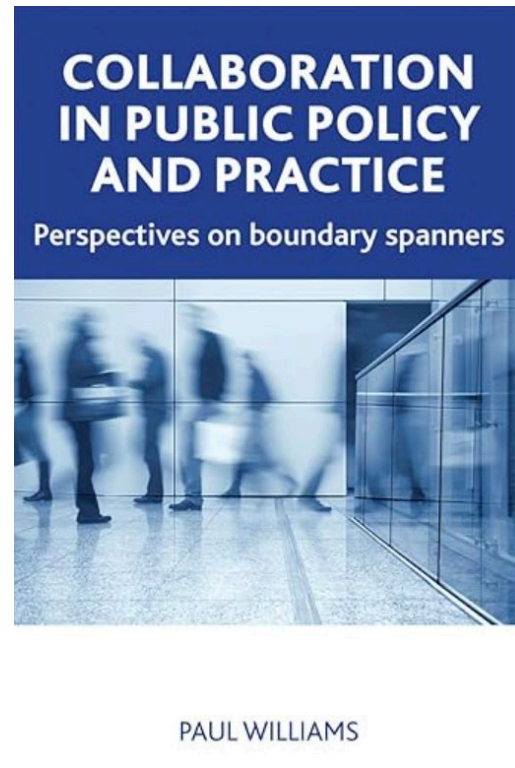
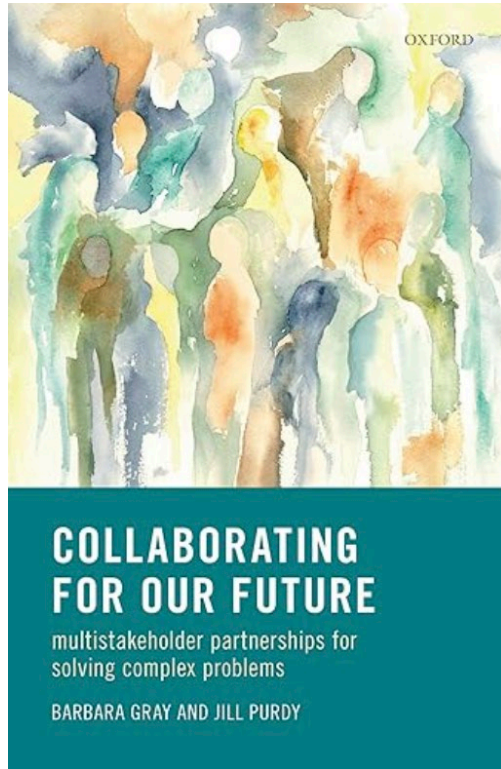
- Based on your experience and the concepts shared during the workshop what might be mitigation strategies for top collaborative challenges?

Debrief and Key Takeaways

References



References



Look here for more references

