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**Active Learning session on Assessing your Network**

Notes to accompany slides

# Introduction

Following a learning opportunity within the Q community on Network Weaving there was an interest from those who had attended in how we could share the ideas and tools more widely. This website offers the link to the Network Weavers handbook as well as an opportunity to sign up for the newsletter and connect with others interested in Network Weaving. <https://networkweaver.com/>

It was clear to those not familiar with the term Network Weaving that some introductory workshops to share ideas and invite curiosity would be helpful. The Active learning session on ‘***Assessing your Network’*** is one response to support that. We are grateful to June Holley and Kristin Johnstad for their support and wisdom. June wrote the Network Weavers Handbook and Kristin was one of the lead trainers in the Network Weaving Learning Series.

Following the Network Weaving Learning series, a Nurturing and Weaving Networks Special Interest Group was established within the Q Community. We welcome guests as well as members of the Q community <https://q.health.org.uk/community/groups/nurturing-and-weaving-networks/>

We were also delighted to connect with Hexitime <https://hexitime.com/> and create space there also for those interested in learning and sharing skills and ideas around Networks and Network Weaving. <https://hexitime.com/activity/contribute-to-the-nurturing-and-weaving-networks-special-interest-group>

The following offer the worksheets discussed at the Active Learning session, there is also an overview of the slides used which are also shared within the document section of the Nurturing and Weaving Networks SIG in case anyone would like to share them with their Networks or colleagues. We are happy for these materials to be shared freely; all we ask is if you please mention the original sources. Following the session, we updated the slides to reflect the richness of the conversation and wisdom in the room.

**Please read these notes along with PowerPoint presentation on ‘Assessing your Network’.**

The aim of this FREE resource is to create interest, curiosity, and awareness of the ideas offered by Network Weaving and the importance of nurturing ourselves and our Networks in the hope it inspires people to go on to learn more and to share that learning with others. Assessing our Network is one idea which can help support this. These resources can be used many ways; as a learning aid for someone involved in a Network, an established Network seeking to see if there is anything which may be helpful for them. A Network just setting up and looking for ideas which may help make the group a success.

# Opening slide (one)

There is an opening slide to display when the group begins and people arrive, or settle down to watch online, they can see what the session is going to be about and provides the link to the source of the Network Weavers Handbook written by June Holley [networkweaver.com](https://networkweaver.com/) Before delivering any awareness raising session on Network Weaving please visit this site and familiarise yourself with its contents and the Network Weavers Handbook. You do not need to read it cover to cover, simply connect with it as a resource so you have a sense of what it is when you are referring to it.

# Introduction Slide two

This provides participants with an overview of the session.

# Slide three Invite people to take a couple of moments to bring their attention to the moment. The aim of this is to promote self-care as well as acknowledging that people have many priorities and that we cannot do everything at once, only many things, one thing at a time. The one thing people are invited to bring their focus to at the present is the active learning space. There are many ideas and resources online which you can use, pick something which you feel comfortable to share, it could be talking through a breathing exercise or showing a video. Visit [www.cope-scotland.org](http://www.cope-scotland.org) for some ideas you may find of interest. You may choose to introduce this by saying

***‘’Most of us have a lot going on which can be distracting. For the next few minutes, we are going to bring our attention to the now. While we take a moment to pause, there is nothing else to do, and nothing else to think about’’***

This activity can also be helpful for creating a safe space where people feel nurtured and may be more likely to share and connect. It is worth sharing with people that for all the session offers opportunities to share views, people only need to do that if they want to. If they do not want to share openly this is fine, but you would suggest reflecting on the answers privately may also have value in becoming more aware of our Networks and the idea of Network Weaving and how we assess our Networks. This is a confidential space to share, however, no one is expected to disclose information which may be sensitive. The discussion is around raising awareness of this resource around assessing Networks and how to create a safe space to use it to best effect.

# Slide four

Human relationships are complex, and Networks are made up of people and the relationships between those people will have an impact on the Network. However, this brief workshop is exploring ideas to assess and improve the health of the Network itself as opposed to assessing human relationships. The slide shares this point.

# Slide five

Offer some ideas around the value of assessing our Networks

# Slide six

Offer some ideas around challenges to assessing our Networks. This can also include time, where it has value, perhaps rather than do all the sections of an assessment focus on the one or two areas which the Network want to start with first

# Slide seven

We recognise that there is often more to do than time to do it. This can make it a challenge investing time in assessing and developing our Networks as there is so much more to do. This slide offers some ideas which may be helpful to finding time.

# Slide eight

Offers other ideas which may be helpful to overcome the challenges of assessing your Network.

# Slide nine

Introduces June Holley’s Network assessment. It is important to share, when we are working through this assessment, we are considering one Network but looking at the Network through different lens which is helpful for identifying areas for development as well as areas of strength. You may be a member of many Networks, however, for each Network do a separate assessment as they will each have their own characteristics Appendix E offers a resource to help identify areas for attention and learning.

# Slide ten

This slide covers the areas that the Relationship Network assessment covers, a copy of the full assessment is attached as Appendix A

# Slide eleven

This slide covers the areas that the Action Network assessment covers, a copy of the full assessment is attached as Appendix B

# Slide twelve

This slide covers the areas that the Intentional Network assessment covers, a copy of the full assessment is attached as Appendix C

# Slide thirteen

This slide covers the areas that support for the Network assessment covers a copy of the full assessment is attached at Appendix D

# Slide fourteen

This slide invites people to pause and consider the role of Network Guardians and their importance for a healthy Network and shares the results of one survey on the prevalence of Network Guardians in that group

# Slide fifteen

This slide covers the 4 Network Weaver roles as shared in June Holley’s Network Weavers Handbook

# Slide sixteen

This slide offers another tool to assess Networks and further information on this can be found in the document section of the Nurturing and Weaving Networks Special Interest Group which is available here <https://q.health.org.uk/document/network-maturity-matrix-another-tool-for-network-assessment-from-source4networks/>

Please log in as a guest if you are not a member of the Q Community.

# Slide seventeen

This slide offers an overview of the 8 dimensions of the Network Maturity Matrix

# Slide eighteen

This slide invites participants to go into groups and discuss what has been shared and how relevant they feel it is for their experience as well as sharing with each other additional ideas, tools and resources they are aware of which help assess and promote the health of their Networks

# Slide nineteen

Please feel free to add any local contacts. The slides were prepared by Hilda Campbell of COPE Scotland and if you notice any glaring errors or omissions, please email [hilda@cope-scotlnd.org](mailto:hilda@cope-scotlnd.org) in order that this can be addressed where possible

If this is being carried out within an existing Network, it is worth exploring ideas beforehand around how to create a psychologically safe space so the successes of the Network to date can be celebrated while working on the areas where the Network could develop further. Network members need to feel safe to have these conversations and not criticised. You may choose to offer Network Members the assessment forms and collate the results anonymously then having done this see which areas scored the lowest and invite the members to select 3 of those areas to work on first. See Appendix D. Liberating Structures [www.liberatingstructures.com](http://www.liberatingstructures.com) is worth a visit where easy-to-learn microstructures that enhance relational coordination and trust are shared.

# Appendix A Assessing Your Network **The Relationship Network**

For each of the following characteristics, circle ONE number from 1 to 5 that best describes the current state of your Network. If you don’t know where your Network fits on any circle DK (Don’t Know).

Not enough energy Lots of energy

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Network not inclusive Diverse groups are represented

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Lack innovative ideas or innovation Access to innovative ideas

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Need more resources or expertise Good access to resources/ expertise

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Too few people in the Network Enough people in the Network

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Lack of Network leadership Many Network Weavers

DK 1 2 3 4 5

People do not know each other People know others in the Network

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Cliques are divisive, territorial Clusters are working well together

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Low trust High trust

DK 1 2 3 4 5

# Appendix B Assessing Your Network **The Action Network**

For each of the following characteristics, circle ONE number from 1 to 5 that best describes the current state of your Network. If you don’t know where your Network fits on any circle DK (Don’t Know).

Not much collaboration Lots of collaboration between organisations

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Do not recognise opportunities Opportunities are easily recognised

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Disorganised /little action Lots of action generated by Network

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Self-organised projects fall apart Self organised projects are effective

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Do not follow through on projects People follow through on projects

DK 1 2 3 4 5

People seldom take initiative People take initiative to start new projects

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Few projects include new people Most projects involve new people

DK 1 2 3 4 5

# Appendix C Assessing Your Network **The Intentional Network**

For each of the following characteristics, circle ONE number from 1 to 5 that best describes the current state of your Network. If you don’t know where your Network fits on any circle DK (Don’t Know).

Network does not see itself as a Network Network sees itself as a Network

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Leadership is autocratic and controlling Leadership is open and facilitating

DK 1 2 3 4 5

The Network has no set goals/purpose The Network has clear goals/purpose

DK 1 2 3 4 5

There is no governing group Network has clear governing group

DK 1 2 3 4 5

# Appendix D Assessing your Network **Support for the Network**

Communication not flowing Communication flows well in the core

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Communication not flowing Communication flows freely throughout Network

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Not much understanding Good understanding of Network approaches

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Do not have skills needed Do have good networking and collaboration skills

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Not much learning/breakthroughs Many breakthroughs much learning

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Does not use social media Network use social media to improve communication

DK 1 2 3 4 5

# Appendix E **Priorities for Your Network**

Check the three that you feel need the most attention in your Network right now. Circle three that you would like to learn more about.

1. not enough energy

2. network not inclusive

3. lack of new ideas or innovation

4. need for more resources or expertise

5. too few people in the network

6. lack of network leadership

7. people don’t know each other

8. cliques are divisive, territorial

9. low trust

10.not much collaboration

11. not aware of opportunities

12. disorganized, little action

13. people don’t follow through

14. people seldom take the initiative

15. few projects include new people

16. network doesn’t see itself as a network

17. leadership autocratic, controlling

18. the network has no set goals or purpose

19. there is no governing group

20. one group does most of the work

21. not taking time to build relationships

22. money not allocated fairly

23. communication not flowing well

24. not understanding a network approach

25. people don’t have networking or collaboration skills needed

26. not much learning happening in network

27. network does not use social media or the social web

Thank you for helping weave Networks as together we achieve more than we ever could alone. For Further reading

COPE Scotland a charity committed to working with others to help reduce suffering and improve wellbeing

[www.cope-scotland.org](http://www.cope-scotland.org)

Hexitime a community to learn and share ideas around health and care improvement

[hexitime.com](https://hexitime.com/)

Liberating Structures offers easy-to-learn microstructures that enhance relational coordination and trust

[www.liberatingstructures.com](http://www.liberatingstructures.com)

Network Weaving and the Network Weavers Handbook

[networkweaver.com](https://networkweaver.com/)

Source 4 Network [Source4Networks](https://www.source4networks.org.uk/images/site/files/Maturity_Model_Matrix_v2_071216-FINAL.pdf)

The Network Maturity Matrix [Network Maturity Matrix](https://www.source4networks.org.uk/images/site/files/Maturity_Model_Matrix_v2_071216-FINAL.pdf)

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (The Alliance) The national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations in Scotland.

[www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/](http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/)

The Q Community

Hosted by The Health Foundation [q.health.org.uk/](https://q.health.org.uk/). The Q Community is a connected community working together to improve health and care quality across the UK and Ireland

The Q community has many Special Interest Groups (SIG) including those interested in Network Weaving e.g., <https://q.health.org.uk/community/groups/nurturing-and-weaving-networks/>

Again, thank you for reading and being part of helping build a kinder world.

