SymmaSys—Wiser Together

/temporary working name/

a socio-technical platform
for unleashing the power of mutual learning
among people, organizations/communities, and social systems

Concept, version1.1
/work-in-progress, 15-Nov-2020/

What is in the name of our project?

If humankind doesn't find a way out from our intertwined global crises piling on top of each other, then the doomsayers may just become right. Alternatively, we need to develop global-scale collective intelligence (CI). Where would *that* come from?

The starting point is to recognize that every organization/community is a network of conversations. Their collective intelligence is not an independent substance but an emergent property of those conversations. If and when we'll have a global-scale collective intelligence (an open and truly global mind), it will grow out from the network of conversations among its constitutive elements if they have the requisite scale and coherence

The evolutionary novelty of the emergent global mind is to enable planet-wide distributed cognition. That's what is needed to facilitate mutual learning among people, organizations/communities, and social systems?

Nora Bateson came up with a powerful distinction, *symmathesy*, the Greek word for learning together, with a rich meaning:

"Symmathesy (Noun): An entity composed of contextual mutual learning through interaction. This process of interaction and mutual learning takes place in living entities at larger or smaller scales of symmathesy.

Symmathesy (Verb): to interact within multiple variables to produce a mutual learning context." —Symmathesy: A Word in Progress

Connecting our generative conversations in symmathesy, we can become wiser together.

SymmaSys, short for Symmathesy Systems will be a socio-technical platform, complete with process framework and guidelines for enabling large-scale symmathesy both as a noun and a verb.

SymmaSys Commons

This will be a self-governing, not-for-profit alliance of people generating the knowledge commons of content and code for the SymmaSys platform.

Broad-brush roadmap

Developing global-scale collective intelligence (CI) is a highly ambitious project, comparable to putting a man on the moon was in the'60s of the past century, which will require the collaboration of 1000s of people and orgnizations.

Compared to that mission, SymmaSys—Wiser Together is a relatively small-scale scaffolding that consists of three stages, three learning expeditions building on each other. In the Product Development phase they are represented by three use cases:

Use Case 1 - **Intrapersonal Learning Expedition**

Focus: idea emergence

Use Case 2 - **Interpersonal Learning Expedition**

Focus: intergenerational knowledge development

Use Case 3 - **Intergroup** Learning Expedition

Focus: boosting collective intelligence

At the latter stages of the Development Roadmap, as our team, resources, and network grow, we will work with a number of [essential use cases](#) in each of the three kinds of learning expeditions. Those use cases will describe the interactions between the intent of the case's main stakeholder and a system to realize it, in a simplified, generalized, abstract, and implementation-independent way that is complete, meaningful, and well-defined from the point of view of users.

The roadmap of each learning expedition leads from early proof of concept (PoC), through subsequent iterations, to our MVP.

Research & process methodologies

Idea Emergence

Idea emergence is a hypermedia-enabled [ideation](#) process, a core component in Nick Milo's [Linking Your Thinking](#) framework. A short introduction to idea emergence is presented in this [tweet](#) [thread](#). There's a more in-depth presentation of it in [this](#) video.

Generative Action Research for Transformation

Generative Action Research for Transformation (GART) belongs to the family of participatory action research methodologies. It combines the principles and practices of Generative Action Research introduced by George Pór in 2014, and Action Research for Transformation (ART) developed by Hilary Bradbury in 2019.

Given the magnitude of organizational, environmental, and societal challenges that are to be addressed, the SymmaSys—Wiser Together R&D will be supported by GART that is conducted in expanding, cumulative circles of involvement.

Theory U

....

Tools we consider

For supporting idea emergence in the prototyping work, leading to our Minimum Viable Product, we'll use Obsidian, a hypertext platform well-suited to the task. It has a Brain-like graph view, application programming interface (API), plugins, and an enthused global community of users and developers.

Obsidian is already being used for the development of subsequent versions of this Concept draft and their evolution into the forthcoming SymmaSys—Wiser Together whitepaper.

Obsidian is exquisite for individual ideation but it's not a multi-user system. That limitation won't be too difficult to overcome because SymmaSys participants can use Obsidian's files stored on their computer in the highly-portable Markdown format that is gaining popularity.

For the SymmaSys platform's multi-user component we will use Discourse, a Markdown-based collaboration systems, and eventually, the open-source CodiMD,

Partnering with SymmaSys—Wiser Together

Catalyzing humanity's Phase Shift to its next evolutionary plateau requires the systemic wisdom of all people, organizations, and social movements aligned with the intent of civilizational renewal. SymmaSys—Wiser Together is ready to bring a significant contribution to that need but, given the magnitude of the task, it can't do it by itself.

We plan to develop partnering relationships with people and organizations, who feel inspired by our call and have sufficient commonality and complementary differences with us.

We are already in collaboration conversations with the Collective Intelligence Collaboratory and people from the Open Global Mind (OGM) community. OGM is a project

to nurture collaborative sensemaking worldwide, that we may make wiser decisions together and fix the world's thorny problems.

Watch this space for updates and news, including the forthcoming announcement of the project's website.