

## NOTES

1. This article is adapted from a paper presented at a conference, "Problems of Individual Emergence," at the University of Amsterdam on 20th April 2001.
2. The ISI prefer to use the phrase *Transcendence*. Transcendence here means the ability and willingness of the group to escape from constraints of their current situation to engage in visioning a different future and to start the social system design process.

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## BANATHY'S INFLUENCE ON THE GUIDANCE SYSTEM FOR TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

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### INTRODUCTION

This article is a tribute to the work of Bela H. Banathy. We identify how Banathy has influenced our work on systemic change in education. For Banathy (1996) the crux of systemic change is found in systems design, which is a process that engages stakeholders in conversations on their visions, ideals, values, and aspirations with

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the goal to intentionally create their ideal educational system. Particular attention is paid to how Banathy's theoretical framework has influenced the development of the Guidance System for Transforming Education (GSTE) that we are currently developing (Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr, and Nelson, 1996, 1998, in final preparation) for facilitating systemic change in public school districts. The GSTE offers practitioners an application of Banathy's ideas.

In our discussion we identify the process *values* and the process *activities* that drive Banathy's theoretical framework, and compare these to the values and activities that we have developed in the GSTE. Process values are the perspectives and beliefs that organize our thinking about design (Banathy, 1991), whereas process activities are the specific events that a facilitator, together with an educational community, would use to create their ideal educational system. Banathy's theoretical framework is the *map* for facilitating systemic change in education, and our Guidance System is the key to this map. In any mapping or navigational system, there is always a key that provides the user with the "how to's" to understanding the intricacies of the map. Our key is composed of detailed guidance for implementing Banathy's process values and activities. It is our intention to demonstrate the extent to which Banathy's work has influenced the development of our Guidance System for facilitating systemic change in public school districts.

## PROCESS VALUES

Process values are the intrinsic qualities that ground and guide the collective set of beliefs that we share and uphold as we travel through a journey in creating a better educational system for our communities. Whereas values ground our beliefs, in turn, process beliefs define in large part both the nature of what is designed and how it is designed based on the guiding beliefs about process.

Process values provide direction and motivation for the design journey; they are what keep the community together. Without values and beliefs for the process, a

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Process Values**

Banathy Process Values (1-4 are from Banathy, 1991, pp. 174-175; 5-6 are from Banathy, 1996, pp. 231 and 238)	The Process Values Underlying the GSTE (Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr, & Nelson, in final preparation):
1. Commitment to Participation	1. Participant Commitment and Responsibility
2. Commitment to Idealized Design	2. Ideal Design
3. Design is Continuous	3. Event 26: Evolve, evaluate, and revise the new system
4. Nurturing Human Values and Human Quality	4. Caring for children and their future, Respect, Social Responsibility, Social Justice, Community, Creativity, Vision, Collaboration
5. Design Community	5. Community
6. Design Conversion = Generative + Strategic Dialogue	6. Conversation

**Table 2**  
**The Full Set of Values Underlying the GSTE**

Caring for children and their future	Time
Systematic Thinking	Space
Inclusivity	Participant commitment
Stakeholder ownership	Respect
Ideal systems design	Responsibility
Capability	Readiness
Capacity	Collaboration
Creativity	Community
Self-criticality	Vision
Social responsibility	Wholeness
Social justice	Language
Coevolution	Conversation
Facilitator	Democracy
Process orientation	Culture
Context	

From Jenlink, Reigeluth, Carr, and Nelson (in final preparation)

community will never be able to overcome the many obstacles in a system change effort. In Table 1 we present the process values that Banathy has advocated, in relation to the values at the crux of our Guidance System (see Table 2). Each of these values is discussed next.

### *Commitment to Participation*

This value states that, important to the success of any long-term change effort, is the act of engaging educational stakeholders in every phase of the change process and encouraging their participation. Banathy recommends that stakeholders be invited to help design and implement the change effort, and that we as facilitators should guide and nurture creativity in individual stakeholders. What Banathy (1991) refers to as "Commitment to Participation," we have labeled as "Participant Commitment". In the GSTE, stakeholder involvement requires not only participation, but also critical dialogue surrounding the values, beliefs, and mindsets we hold about education. Together with participation, we believe that it is the *responsibility* of the participants to be committed to the process, and to understand that they are responsible to and with others in effecting change. In the following passage, Banathy (1996) clearly emphasizes the importance of responsibility in designing educational systems:

When it comes to the design of social and societal systems of all kinds, it is the users, the people in the system, who are the experts. Nobody else has the right to design social systems for someone else. It is unethical to design social systems for someone else. Design cannot be legislated, it should not be bought from the expert, and it should not be copied from the design of others. If the privilege of and responsibility for design is "given away," others will take charge of designing our lives and our systems. They will shape our future. (p. 228)

Our goal as facilitators of designing systemic change of education is to empower communities, the users of the system, so that they may assume ownership and responsibility for creating their future systems. To accomplish this goal, community members must become responsible *user-designers*. According to Banathy (1991):

The notion of USER-DESIGNERS is based on the belief that systems design is most successful, it is most viable and productive, and commitments to implementing the design are most binding, when it is directed by the users of the future system rather than by outside experts. (p. 166)

It is extremely important here to distinguish between authentic user-design and the sort of user-design in which users are merely "consulted" but decisions are still made by those at higher levels of organization. There are many stories of such stakeholder roles, which serve to create cynicism rather than responsible action on the part of front-line users (Daresh, 1992). What Banathy is describing in his discussion of user-design is ethical engagement with users in the creation of their *own* systems.

#### *Commitment to Idealized Design*

According to Banathy (1996) "in the ideal systems design approach the target is always the ideal. The target cannot ever be less than ideal. Design is a journey toward the ideal" (p. 194). We support Banathy's notion that, for any systemic change process to succeed, it should seek to envision and create an ideal system. This value requires a shift in the way we think about current educational systems. It requires that we intentionally seek to think "outside the box" and ask questions such as: "with unlimited resources, what would my educational system look like?" The people who commit themselves to a process of continual envisioning and revising, must be people who "think future—act now" (Banathy, 1991, p.165).

Designing an ideal system is one of the key process values found in the Guidance System. We should value the ideal, and more importantly we should value the process or the journey we take to forever strive for that ideal. We may never reach the ideal, but it is the dreams and aspirations we share and act upon that will bring us closer to the ideal educational systems we seek to create for our future, for our society, and for our children.

#### *Design Should Be Continuous*

Banathy (1991) tells us, "As we move toward the realization of that ideal, the environment and the situational context in which we operate will change" (p. 175). Therefore, as time evolves we will be continually changing and redesigning what we have envisioned to be the ideal. We should not be surprised if we never reach what we envision as our ideal educational system. We should embrace the journey and the process we create to pursue the ideal. Within Event 26 of the GSTE, we clearly state that, "as the new system evolves closer to the ideal, new possibilities and problems will emerge, so it is wise to periodically revisit and revise the ideal design as well" (Jenlink et al., in final preparation).

#### *Nurturing Human Values and Human Quality*

According to Banathy (1991), as user-designers we must "consider the system we design to be a human activity system in which human beings are the most valued and are the ones to be served by the system" (p. 175). At the foundation of the GSTE are values that embrace human beings as the most important element of any systemic change effort, and they include caring for children and their future, respect, social responsibility, social justice, community, creativity, and collaboration. These guiding values provide a center (or foundation) to the "guidance system, a center from which to design the systemic change process and a center that mediates the design process to ensure that the ideal created is purposed for all of society" (Jenlink et al., in final preparation). The following is a description of these values, which elaborate on Banathy's focus on valuing human beings in the systemic change process.

**Caring for Children and their Future.** Valuing and respecting young people and nurturing their development should be viewed as important responsibilities for the community to assume. An ethic of caring and a capacity for caring are essential to the nurturing of children. Therefore, participants should view the purpose of their systemic change effort as being to advance human learning and development within a caring community (Noddings, 1992).

**Respect.** Respect begins within each participant, and having a healthy self-respect is paramount to being able to respect others. Participants should value the perspectives, concerns, and contributions of all other participants. Respect is essential to working closely with others in change, and it is an important condition for building trusting and open relationships so important to the process.

**Social Responsibility.** Community members and other participants in the systemic change effort must embrace the responsibility not only for social change within the culture and community, but also for ensuring that marginalized youth and stakeholders are included in the change effort. Social responsibility speaks to the need for addressing issues of diversity as well as seeking to ensure that the collective ideal (set as the guiding point for systemic change) addresses societal challenges and political issues while simultaneously serving to mediate issues of power.

**Social Justice.** The facilitator and participants in the systemic change effort are the guardians for creating an educational system that is just—a system that recognizes that the underprivileged and marginalized citizens must be included, not only in the design process, but also in the realized opportunities of a better school and a better system of learning. Social justice, as an essential belief in systems design, speaks to deconstructing existing social structures that serve disadvantaged individuals and communities of difference. It represents the most compelling reason for engaging in design.

**Community.** Community differs from a group or collective team. Whereas groups or teams are used as a means to an end, community is a state of being and becoming

a whole. And having a sense of community, which may be possible with a group or team, is different than being a community. Community refers to an open honesty and deep commitment by people to learn together and make each other's conditions their own. Community in a normative sense of the term, is an association of people, mutually and reciprocally involved with each other, caring for each other, aware of the human effects of their actions upon those within and outside the association, committed to being responsible for those effects. When stakeholders move toward being in a community of action for change, the building of community is a future-oriented process of inquiry to sustain the continued growth of people. Participants should understand the importance of creating and sustaining community as a key to fundamental systemic change.

**Creativity.** The importance of the spirit of creativity and the generative nature of creativity are central to design—design is creation. Creativity pushes at the boundaries of the current system as well as the boundaries of the human mind. In this sense, creativity is at the center of systemic change. Creativity depends on communication, and communicative action is integral to addressing the challenges facing society (Bohm & Peat, 1987; Banathy, 1996). Enabling all stakeholders to engage in creative acts is a valuing activity that acknowledges the value and worth of individual and collective participation. The generative nature of creativity and the energy of diverse perspectives strengthen the design process, and in turn enhance the “goodness of fit” between the new educational system and the purpose for which it was designed.

**Collaboration.** Collaboration is a process of sharing relationships wherein participants feel safe in exchanging their knowledge and experience. Collaboration is essential to effecting strong teams and ensuring viable group dynamics. Collaborative relationships are interdependent in the sense that individuals form as collectives with the purpose of effecting the efficient attainment of stated goals. Collaboration can act as a springboard for creating a community of stakeholders who share a common purpose of fundamental change.

These values of the GSTE—caring for children and their future, respect, social responsibility, social justice, community, creativity, and collaboration—reflect Banathy's emphasis on nurturing human values and human quality.

### *Design Community*

Banathy (1996) defines a design community as people with a common interest and purpose to design their system. Banathy further states that the essence of the design community is “the degree of effort they devote to attain the purpose, the degree of their commitment to it, and the degree of their commitment to each other” (Banathy, 1996, p. 231).

It is not naïve to consider that, when respected and empowered, all stakeholders, even those with very different views and values, may come together and work through their differences toward a place of agreement. This can happen in the milieu of a community. Communities share not only interests, but also activities. They are en-

gaged in the generative activities of design and creation. Within these activities comes a sense of commitment to one another, and the single-issue interests with which individuals may arrive at design activities are often laid aside in the hopes of finding a common plan that can move the entire community toward social justice goals. Because this community is made up of those stakeholders who will be primary users of the new system, the design community is the site of user-design activity. The GSTE places considerable emphasis on building a design community.

### *Design Conversation*

Design Conversation is a communicative method “appropriate in pursuing the disciplined inquire of social systems design in groups” (Banathy, 1996; p. 218). The importance of this communicative method, in large part, is its focus on creating an “ideal” of a new system and then enabling the “ideal” to be translated into reality. Design conversation, as Banathy (1996) notes, is a combination of generative dialogue and strategic dialogue that “composes a comprehensive method of social communication that is the most viable to use in a designing community” (p. 218). Generative dialogue seeks to create a “common frame of thinking, shared meaning, and a collective worldview” (Banathy, 1996, p. 215). Strategic dialogue “focuses on specific issues and tasks, and it is applied in finding specific solutions in organizational and social systems settings” (Banathy, 1996, p. 218).

Conversation is central to the GSTE and the activities that comprise it. Design conversation is both method and medium for designing a new system (Jenlink & Carr, 1996). The process of design is premised, in large part, on dialogue and design conversation that ensure inclusive participation of those who are the beneficiaries and users of the system being created. In the context of educational systems design, conversation is:

... viewed largely as a communicative action, providing a medium through which participants in the design process may engage in a multi-dimensional inquiry leading to the creation of a new system. Design conversation is not a singular type or form of social discourse, but rather a dynamic system comprised of different forms of discourse, each with a particular purpose and mediational importance as a semiotic tool in the system design activity. (Jenlink, 2001, p. 352)

The Guidance System is premised on design conversation as a “disciplined inquiry grounded in systems philosophy, theory, and thinking and practice” (Jenlink & Carr, 1996, p. 34). Situating design conversation in the context of educational change, this discourse “focuses on a change that transcends both systemic constraints within the [educational system] and the constraints of a narrow, traditional view of how change should happen” (Jenlink & Carr, 1996, p. 35). In the GSTE, design conversation is the medium for communication as well as the infrastructure that supports and enables the participation of individuals in each of the activities that culminate in the design of a new system.

The various activities in the GSTE are discourse based and require the direct and authentic participation of those individuals who use the system. Importantly, there are different types of conversation that are integral to the overall design process,

**Table 3**  
**Comparison of Process Activities**

Banathy (1991, p. 165) suggests that the systematic design process requires:	Corresponding activities from the Guidance System
A. Understanding Systems Design	Phase II: Prepare the Initial Core Team Event 7: Capacitate the initial Core Team in systems design
B. Developing Capability and Competence in Design	Phase II: Prepare the Initial Core Team Event 6: Create the Core Team dynamic Event 7: Capacitate the initial Core Team in systems design Event 9: Identify competing change efforts Phase III: Prepare Expanded Teams for the Process Event 13: Expand and build the Decisioning Team Event 14: Select and build the Design Team Event 15: Capacitate and enculturate the Design Team Notes: • Core Team: Banathy calls this "Design Leadership" (p. 166) • Design Team: Banathy calls this "Design Action Teams" (p. 167) • Decisioning Team: Banathy calls this "Design Action Teams" (p. 167) Continuous Event H: Develop skills in systems thinking Continuous Event N: Develop design skills
C. Developing Organizational Capacity for Design	Phase III: Prepare Expanded Teams for the Process Continuous Event B: Build and maintain political support Continuous Event D: Develop and sustain appropriate leadership Continuous Event J: Develop group-process and team-building skills Continuous Event P: Build and evolve community Continuous Event Q: Foster organizational learning Continuous Event R: Build an organizational memory
D. Generating Willingness in the Community to Support Design	Phase II: Prepare the initial Core Team Event 10: Evaluate Openness to Change Continuous Event C: Sustain motivation Continuous Event E: Build and maintain trust Continuous Event Q: Communicate with stakeholders (two-way)
E. Planning the Design Inquiry	The GSTE is a tool to help stakeholders plan for engaging in the design inquiry Event 8: Design Events 9-11 Event 12: Design the process for expanding the Core Team Event 15: Capacitate and enculturate the design team Event 16: Redesign the change process Event 25: Develop an implementation process for evolving to the new system

including dialogue, discussion, and design. It is important for participants to understand how each contributes to or takes away from the process, and importantly how each reflects a valuing of human values and participant involvement. Knowing the right time for the correct type of conversation is critical to moving forward in the design process (Jenlink et al., in final preparation). Design conversation integrates different types of conversation to ensure a communicative method focused on nurturing human values and human quality while enabling the participants to generatively create an "ideal" of the new human activity system and then translate the "ideal" into reality.

From previous discussion, it should be readily apparent that Banathy's values about the systems design process form the foundation of our Guidance System, and we are eternally grateful for his influence.

### PROCESS ACTIVITIES

Process activities refer to the specific steps that a community should follow when undergoing a systemic change effort. Banathy outlines a series of activities for engaging in the systems design of an educational system. Table 3 presents Banathy's process activities that have influenced the activities found in our process for facilitating systemic change. Our activities are clustered into events, which are of two types: continuous and discrete. Continuous events are those that should be attended to throughout the design process (see Table 4). It is important to continually engage in these ongoing activities in order to sustain systemic change as the old system is transcended and the ideal system is realized. It is important to consider that:

Given the dynamic and complex nature of activities forming events and interlinking

**Table 4**  
**Continuous Events of the GSTE**

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|--|
| A. Evaluate and improve the change process                     |
| B. Build and maintain political support                        |
| C. Sustain motivation  |
| D. Develop and sustain appropriate leadership                  |
| E. Build and maintain trust                                    |
| F. Evolve mindset and culture                                  |
| G. Periodically secure necessary resources                     |
| H. Develop skills in systems thinking                          |
| I. Periodically and appropriately allocate necessary resources |
| J. Develop group-process and team-building skills              |
| K. Build team spirit   |
| L. Engage in self-disclosure                                   |
| M. Engage in reflection  |
| N. Develop design skills                                       |
| O. Communicate with stakeholders (two-way)                     |
| P. Build and evolve community                                  |
| Q. Foster organizational learning                              |
| R. Build an organizational memory                              |

**Table 5**  
**Discrete Events of the GSTE**

**Phase I: Readiness and capacity**

- Event 1: Assess and Enhance your Readiness to be a Facilitator
- Event 2: Establish or Redefine a Relationship with a School District
- Event 3: Assess District's Readiness for Change and Negotiate a Formal Agreement
- Event 4: Assess the District's Capacity for Change

**Phase II: Prepare Core Team**

- Event 5: Select the Participants for the Core Team
- Event 6: Create the Core Team Dynamic
- Event 7: Capacitate the Initial Core Team in Systems Design
- Event 8: Design Events 9-11
- Event 9: Identify Competing Change Efforts
- Event 10: Evaluate Openness to Change
- Event 11: Evaluate the Existing Cultural for Change
- Event 12: Design the Process for Expanding the Core Team

**Phase III: Prepare the Expanded Teams**

- Event 13: Expand and Build the Decisioning Team
- Event 14: Select and Build the Design Team
- Event 15: Capacitate and Enculturate the Design Team
- Event 16: Redesign the Change Process

**Phase IV: Design a New System**

- Event 17: Evolve Mind-sets About Education
- Event 18: Explore Ideal Beliefs and Assumptions about Education
- Event 19: Select and Build Multiple Design Teams
- Event 20: Explore Ideal Visions Based on Common Beliefs
- Event 21: Develop a System for Evaluating the Results of the Change Process
- Event 22: Design a System of Functions for each Ideal Vision
- Event 23: Design the Components for Accomplishing each Function
- Event 24: Design the Administrative and Governance Systems

**Phase V: Implement and Evolve the New System**

- Event 25: Develop and Implementation Process for Evolving to the New System
- Event 26: Evolve, Evaluate, and Revise the New System

between discrete and continuous activities over time, a facilitator (and eventually all the participants) need to constantly monitor the continuous needs of a systemic change. process and bolster those needs that fall below a critical threshold. (Jenlink & Reigeluth, 2000, p. 16)

Discrete events are those that occur at distinct points during the process of facilitating school transformation (see Table 5). They may be understood as important transition points in the process (Jenlink & Reigeluth, 2000, p. 10). Discrete events have a natural order during the process. However, rather than demonstrating a linearity, these events may occur simultaneously, depending on the contextual setting and readiness of the stakeholders. Also, discrete events may demonstrate some recursive nature during the process. For example: 1) when multiple teams are developed during the process, 2) when new members join existing teams and there is a need to

develop systems design capacity and competency, and 3) when the design and redesign of events and their corollary activities occur as part of the transformation process.

The discrete events and their corollary activities are clustered into phases that are interdependent, one phase with another, as well as interlinked with continuous events. These activities are discussed next.

*Understanding Systems Design*

As a prerequisite to engaging in systemic change, Banathy (1991) urges that the community first develops thorough understanding of systems design and recognition of the power it offers for transforming education. This process begins with creating an awareness of the mismatch between the changing needs of students in our complex society and the services presently offered by the current educational system. This awareness underscores the need for new educational systems, creating an incentive for systemic change. The design community is then ready to develop "an understanding of how design can respond to this need, and what design is and how it works" (Banathy, 1991, p. 165).

In event 7 of the GSTE, gaining an understanding of systems design begins as members of the initial working group of the design community, the Core Team, explore their personal mindsets toward change and consider possible alternatives. They also begin to read and study about systems theory and educational system design in preparation for engaging in self-inquiry and team discussions. They are provided guidelines for engaging in reflective practice and meaningful conversations to facilitate construction of shared meanings and understandings of the core concepts of systems thinking and design.

*Developing Capability and Competence in Design*

Once an understanding of systems design has begun to develop, Banathy (1991) then advocates creating a community of user-designers. The mission of these user-designers is to proactively create the future by designing it, based on their vision of what is required to meet the needs of future users of the system. In order to do this, change participants need to develop a capability and competence in systems design. Yet, as Banathy (1991) points out, "the acquisition of competence in systems design is not on the agenda of our education professional development programs" (p. 166), and he gives the challenge for these programs to be developed.

In answer to this challenge, in event 7 we provide guidance to prepare the Core Team for developing this competence and engaging in systems design. This is achieved by helping them gain experience in the practical application of systems theory in educational systems design. The Core Team engages in authentic activities that assist them in developing the ability to translate systems theory into systems practice through design. This begins with redesigning events 9-11 of the Guidance System for their particular needs and progresses through the redesign of subsequent events before entailing the design of their ideal educational system.

### *Developing Organizational Capacity for Design*

Banathy recognized that successful systemic change requires more than competence in systems thinking and design, that it also requires organizational structures that support systems design. This prompted us to incorporate into the GSTE certain events to build such organizational capacity. Since we view the building and maintaining of such capacity as a never-ending process, this is accomplished primarily through "continuous" events that address building and sustaining political support (event B), leadership of empowerment (event D), sound group dynamics (event J), sense of community (event P), organizational learning mechanisms (event Q), and organizational memory (event R). Of course, each of these continuous events is initiated in a discrete event. For example, political support is initially built by including leaders of all the stakeholder groups on the Core Team (event 5) and later on the Decisioning Team (event 12), and sound group dynamics are first developed in the Core Team retreat (event 6) and later in the Decisioning Team retreat (event 13).

Leadership for a systemic change effort must be the kind that empowers and facilitates, rather than controls and directs the participants in the process. Therefore, leadership needs to be cultivated throughout stakeholder groups, not just in an elite leadership. The GSTE encourages this to be done throughout the entire transformation process. Organizational learning is one of the most powerful forms of organizational capacity for systemic change, for it represents a level of collective learning that transcends all the personal learning that occurs within the organization, and it enables the organization to continuously improve its policies and practices. And organizational memory allows the organization to benefit indefinitely from its history of learning and experience.

Banathy provided many insights to help us build guidance into our Guidance System for all these kinds of organizational capacity.

### *Generating Willingness in the Community to Support Design*

Developing organizational capacities alone is not sufficient for true engagement in design activities and processes by stakeholders. Those capacities are a necessary, but not sufficient condition. Indeed there must be an underlying agreement that a community *wishes* to engage in the process of design, and also an acceptance that the purpose of designing their system is in alignment with the foundational values associated with idealized design, such as those we have outlined previously. Banathy (1996) identifies this willingness as a more pervasive "design enculturation." He outlines a process to bring a community, an entire society, into realization of the importance and necessity of design cultures. "It is not only selected designing communities that need to be empowered by design learning; we must also find a way to incorporate design culture into the culture of each and every community and into the overall society" (p. 243). This enculturation then motivates a community through dialogue, contemplation, and further exploration of values.

Banathy's understanding of the importance of design enculturation and motivation for design activities helped us evolve our own thoughts on how this process might take place. We focused on building this motivation in event 6 (Core Team retreat), where we pay attention to understanding motivation and its importance,

assessing motivational needs, identifying environmental motivation factors, and creating a program for enhancing motivation and willingness to engage in the hard work of design.

These may sound like potentially straightforward tasks, or ones that we should assume would be present, but this would miss the essential nature of willingness and motivation to design within communities. Our society has evolved into a culture heavily reliant on experts and therefore reluctant to engage in any activity that may be seen as "someone else's job." This only heightens the need for careful motivation building. There are many convenient ways that communities and stakeholders avoid the responsibility of creating their own systems of human learning. And, in fact, there is a danger for any community willing to take on the task of such a design activity. If *they* design it, then whom will they blame if it doesn't work? Rather than blaming or jumping on new bandwagons, they must then commit to designing an improved system based on their original, agreed-on values. All of this requires a strong commitment to the community, to the learning system, to the vision, and to the goals of social justice.

This part of the process is carefully attended to and not taken lightly in the GSTE. Garnering community responsibility for design is accomplished through community conversations, field trips to see other idealized designs, and community-building activities. We also recommend a retreat, along with motivation assessments. It cannot be overemphasized that this is an essential aspect of the Guidance System.

### *Planning the Design Inquiry*

Mapping out the design inquiry represents the next level of activities in Banathy's design process. Banathy (1991) suggests that these activities involve "the arrangement of design tasks into an integrated system of inquiry" (p. 168). Banathy (1991) suggests that prior to beginning the design journey (or inquiry), it is important to map "the terrain of departure" (p. 155). In the GSTE, we have organized a number of activities for the user-designers to map the design inquiry system at different stages of the transformation process. These activities follow the processes envisioned by Banathy.

In the GSTE, the initial work of mapping the problem situation and informing the design inquiry is carried out by the Core Team (Jenlink et al., in final preparation). As a transitional point in the Guidance System, event 8 (design events 9–11) is a set of activities that informs the mapping of the design inquiry as user-designers examine the school system and community. This is a critical juncture for the user-designers in that they take primary responsibility first for designing a set of activities and second for using the activities to examine the contextual setting in which the design inquiry system will be situated. Event 8 guides the user-designers to begin to create a knowledge base as well as a process map for design inquiry, a knowledge-building process consistent with Banathy's (1991) idea of creating an "organized knowledge" (p. 155) of/for design. The sequence of events (and corollary activities) related to the process mapping outlined in event 8 includes: identify competing change efforts (event 9), evaluate openness to change (event 10), and evaluate the existing culture for change (event 11). Each of these events serves a specific purpose and contributes

to an understanding of the perspectives that have historically affected change efforts.

Banathy (1996) suggests that the "systems design approach seeks to understand the problem situation as a system of interconnected, interdependent, and interacting problems" (p. 19). Understanding the contextual setting, through the guided activities designed in event 8, enables the user-designers to understand the complexity of the problem situation. More specifically, as Banathy (1991) suggests, it is important to understand different perspectives that will influence or guide the design inquiry.

Subsequently, event 12 in the GSTE facilitates the Core Team in designing a process for expanding the Core Team. This expansion process brings into existence two types of teams: a design team and a decisioning team. The decisioning team is relatively large (20–25 people) so as to have broad stakeholder and power-broker involvement, and this team has as much decision-making authority as the school board can and will empower them with. In contrast, the design team is a much smaller group (8–12 people) of respected innovators and creative thinkers who can devote much more time to designing a new educational system for the decisioning team. Event 12 is an opportunity for the Core Team to design the process by which it will expand the involvement of multiple and diverse stakeholders in the transformation process.

According to Banathy (1991), the next step in the mapping process entails "designing the inquiry system" (p. 169). This begins by defining the type of system the designers wish to create, for, as Banathy notes, this is "prerequisite to selecting the design approach, methods, and tools appropriate to the design of the selected system type" (p. 169). Two types of criteria inform the selection of design methods: external and internal. External criteria guide the selection of methods with general validity in view of the type of system as well as methods that provide a sound theoretical base and evidence of successful application. Internal criteria for method selection assess for "goodness of fit" as provided for by exploration of alternatives, provision for flexibility and experimentation, enabling of feedback and feedforward, and promotion of continuous synthesis. Finally, Banathy (1991) suggests that the user-designers organize approach, methods, and tools into a design inquiry system.

In the GSTE, event 16 is directly influenced by these ideas of Banathy's. This event, as another transitional phase in the design process, is where the Design and Decisioning Teams, expanded from the original Core Team, assume responsibility as user-designers for designing their own change process. The team(s) begin by redesigning events 17–24 as the next set of activities in the user-guided change process. The user-designers redesign the events for evolving mind-sets about education, exploring ideal beliefs and assumptions about education, creating multiple design teams, exploring ideal visions based on the common beliefs, developing a system for evaluating the results of the change process, designing a system of functions for each ideal vision, designing the components for accomplishing each function, and designing the administrative and governance systems.

After they organize the design inquiry system, Banathy (1991) suggests that the user-designers engage in planning the implementation of the design inquiry, which "brings together all that we have developed in the course of the various 'getting ready' activities" (p. 170). In the GSTE, we refer to this set of activities as developing a plan for evolving to the new system. Here the tasks focus on how to translate

the ideal image of the educational system into reality. It is likely that many aspects of the ideal system will not be immediately attainable. Therefore, Design and Decisioning Teams are responsible for planning to mediate the evolution ever closer to the ideal over time, while trying to minimize incompatibilities between the early elements of the new system and the remaining elements of the old system (Jenlink et al., in final preparation).

As Banathy (1991, 1996) has noted, mapping the design inquiry is a prerequisite to designing the ideal educational system and ensuring a "goodness of fit" between the purposes of the system, the problem situation of the school system and community, and the future of the children for whom the new educational system is designed. Furthermore, implementation is a complex activity system. The successful translation of the user-designer's design of a new educational system rests largely on the integrity of the implementation process. These ideas are all firmly imbedded in our Guidance System.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it should be clear that Banathy has had a powerful influence over our work in developing the GSTE. Process values and activities are the foundation of both Banathy's theoretical framework and our process for facilitating systemic change. We cannot over emphasize the importance of developing process values and process activities to help guide a systemic change effort. We view the GSTE as a *key* to the *map* that Banathy has created to help our society find its way on a journey to transform its educational systems. This article has provided us with a platform to pay tribute to the work of Bela H. Banathy, and for this we are grateful. We dedicate this article to Bela with gratitude and affection.

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## EDUCATION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

### EVOLUTIONARY GUIDANCE AND THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL

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This article honors Bela H. Banathy's work in social systems design and acknowledges his intellectual, professional, and humanitarian gifts to the system sciences community. The author examines Banathy's epistemology of conscious self-guided evolution and how it has influenced the author's thinking and research in design of educational systems, and in particular the study of education's role as an evolutionary guidance system for civil society. Specifically, the author examines Banathy's notions of evolutionary guidance systems (EGSs) and the design inquiry process. Design conversation is elaborated as a communication method for systems design and as a medium for communicative democracy. The concepts of civil society and democracy are examined in depth, providing an etymological analysis of each as a foundation for civil society as an ideal image. Consideration is given to Banathy's ideas of democracy and the New Agoras as ethical systems for the pursuit of conscious evolution. The author presents his considerations for education as an EGS for conscious evolution of civil society.

**KEYWORDS:** *education, civil society, democracy, evolutionary guidance system, social systems design*

The education of a public for citizenship is the foundation of civil society. Civil society is premised on a belief in the democratic ideal, an ideal that embraces the principles of inclusion, association, and deliberation as fundamental rights and responsibilities of a democratic citizenship. At the heart of creating and sustaining a civil society is the fundamental belief that those who most directly benefit from civil society must be directly responsible for creating and sustaining the social and societal systems that comprise a civil society. Creating and sustaining are processes of conscious, self-guided evolution, which is the foundation of designing a future society—a civil society. Such self-guided evolution requires an educated citizenry that

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