



June 2021

Dear friends and colleagues,

Ten years ago, my friend and fellow consultant Curt Lindberg attended a workshop we held at Dartmouth on interventional applications of relational coordination (RC), and from there he was off to the races. Curt has long been a complexity science maven. He was a founder of the Plexus Institute and was instrumental in my own learning about a profound new theory, Complex Responsive Process, which focuses attention on how patterns of meaning (e.g., memes, intellectual capital) and patterns of relating (e.g., power relations, culture) arise, are sustained and spontaneously change in the course of back-and-forth human interaction, all without anyone's direction or control (it's self-organizing). The practical implications of this theory for organizational change align with those of Process Consultation, namely, help people learn to reflect together on what they are doing in the here and now of each moment as they work together so they can be more mindful and intentional about the micro patterns they are enacting.

Curt **recognized** the utility of RC as a useful framework for helping people observe and talk about their interactions, enabling them to better manage their interdependence and thereby improve performance. He and his clients at the Billings Clinic found an opportunity to try it out, and the rest was history. In a just-published paper, they describe their experience, starting with an intervention in an ICU – co-created with the staff – that succeeded and then spread across the organization, contributing to a change in cultural patterns.

What's **more**, Curt and his colleagues conducted interviews with the original participants to find out what impact the RC project had on them. The results were striking. Participants reported that they learned to see their work from a systems perspective and thus had become more inclusive, seeking out and valuing perspectives other than their own. They also felt that RC had stimulated important professional development and enhanced their engagement with and commitment to their organization. That's some impact! You can read the full story in this [open access reprint](#). (Full disclosure: I helped with the qualitative design and analysis so they graciously made me a co-author, but I was not involved in the intervention.)

If you're **interested** in learning more about how to conduct RC-informed interventions yourself, my dear friend and long-standing consulting partner Diane Rawlins and I are conducting a workshop "Advanced Methods for Improving RC" September 22 through 24 (1-5 pm EDT each day) on Zoom. Details and online registration are available [here](#). Please note that this is not the original workshop about interventional applications of the RC survey, which is still available. (You can find information about that program [here](#).) The new workshop is entirely about interventions; there is little overlap in the content of the two programs. If you want to take both you can take them in any order, the sequence does not matter.

Congratulations to Curt and his colleagues for an exemplary project; I hope the story of their experience will be useful to you. And Diane and I hope you'll join us for the online workshop in September. Meanwhile enjoy summer – take a breath! – and thanks for what you do to make the world more relational.

Warm regards,
Tony

PS: My **deepest** thanks to the astonishing number of you who responded to [my last blog](#) with beautiful words of comfort and support and stories of your own. That meant so much...

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