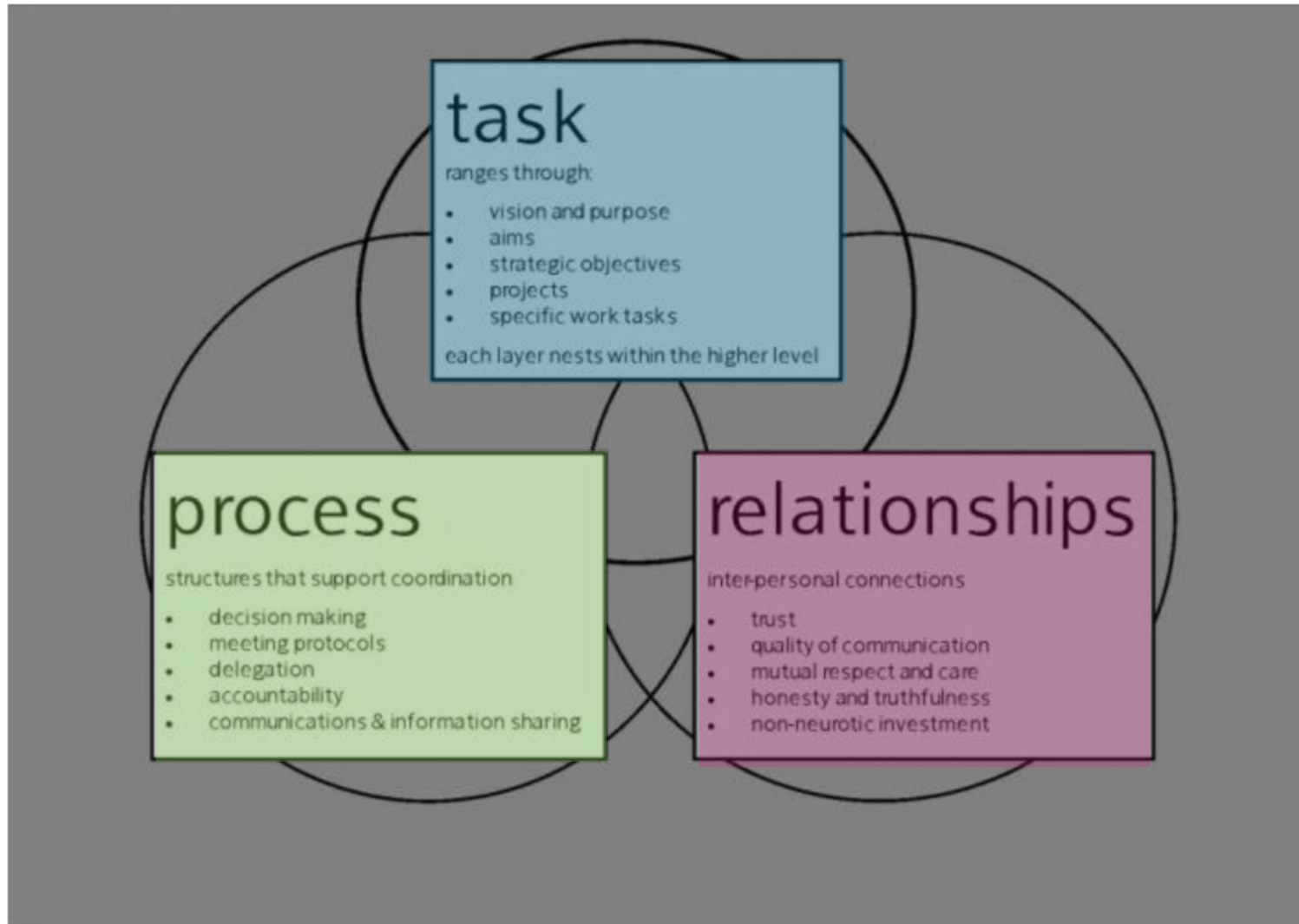


TASK - PROCESS - RELATIONSHIPS

to be considered when working in a group



Biggest thanks to the Ulex project and their “regenerative Activism” trainings for the content in this resource.

Task is often the basis for our coming together. It ranges from vision down various layers to the specific actions we need to take day to day. But attending well to this sphere involves asking: How clear is our sense of purpose? Is our vision really shared? And how well do we develop the strategic pathways that can carry us from here to there? In most activist circles task is omnipresent in awareness, pressing on us at all times. How do we balance short term and long term objectives? Is the sustainability of ourselves and the organisation folded into our understanding of our task? And how well do we balance ‘task time’ with ‘development time’?

Process refers to the structures that support coordination –things like decision making, meeting protocols, methods of communication, etc. Often people are conscious of how process has a strong bearing on how well we empower each other, on whether we embody core values such as inclusivity and respect for diversity. At times however, especially for the process-geeks among us, process can become an end in itself. It is also important to beware fetishizing certain types of process and become versatile in applying processes and structures that are appropriate to the task at hand.

Relationships is the sphere that often gets most neglected (although this can be very culturally specific). Often, no matter how good our process is, or how clear we are about what we are trying to do, unless we attend to the quality of relationships in our groups our efforts will be undermined again and again. Sadly we can feel there is insufficient time to attend to this dimension outside of the very instrumental nature of our working relationships. But by taking more care of this sphere we can create conditions that really allow our work to flow. How well do we take each other into account? How conscious are we of the needs people have? How attentive are we of the impact our ways of communicating have on each other? In attending to this qualitative dimension we can begin to really embody some of the life-affirming values we struggle for in the world.

It is useful to reflect on the balance of those three elements in our organisations and groups. It might be that at times we will need to attend more to one of the elements (i.e. to task when a deadline is close or to relationships when a conflict is brewing), but we need all the elements to be able to work effectively and stay engaged in a sustainable way.

