

Designing Your Life Concurrent Workshop

Discussion Guide

Kathy Davies, Managing Director, Stanford Design Lab

General Discussion Guidelines

Actively engaging with the video's content is central to an effective watch party. Good discussion questions are a major tool. They get people started talking with each other in a way that adds value to their experience of the video. Ask "open-ended" questions. These are questions that don't have "one right answer," and they can't be answered in one or two words like "yes" or "no."

Acknowledge your role at the outset. You likely want to participate in the discussion like everyone else. To reduce the risk of being seen as the "expert," acknowledge your role as a participant, in addition to posing discussion questions. Consider how to address information requests or action items that may arise. (For example: Will you ask for volunteers to research and report back?). Otherwise, people may assume that you'll take responsibility.

Plan an intentional sequence of questions to offer for discussion. The following sequence follows the natural path the mind takes with new information. It's a good idea to start with an "objective" question. Each level of question (1-4) builds on the preceding discussion. It's rare to have time for more than a few questions, so be selective about which questions you plan for your group.

1. **Objective Questions** give participants a chance to focus in on the content. These give everyone a chance to quickly participate from the start. One quick objective question is often enough.
2. **Reflective Questions** call up listeners' impressions, reactions, and thoughts.
3. **Interpretive Questions** get people thinking about the meaning the content holds for them. Making connections between the content itself, and their broader world.
4. **Decisional/Action Questions** stimulate participants to commit to doing something differently or something new (big or small).

See [6 Steps to Hosting a Watch Party](#) for sample questions that apply across many topics using this sequence. You can also engage participants through a relevant exercise or skills practice. (Active engagement is key to people's consolidating what they've learned.) Consider a short discussion first.

Materials Needed for Activities, if desired

Activity	Materials
"30 Circles"	Worksheet available at the end of this discussion guide
Energy Engagement Map	Blank paper or worksheet available at the end of this discussion guide.

Suggested Discussion Questions

Objective Questions:

- What ideas caught your attention in this workshop [Examples: Reframing; “wicked problems;” schemas or assumptions and getting stuck; “best-last effect;” bias for action by making small changes].

Reflective Questions:

- How do you understand the idea of “wicked problems?”
- What was your experience of making something from the circles? What reactions did you notice in your body the first time around? What was different the second time, after Kathy described schemas, assumptions and their impact?
- What reactions did you have when you mapped out your activities over a week and their impact on you? What feelings did you experience?



Interpretive Questions:



- What issues did the idea of [one of the following] raise for you?
 - Wicked problems
 - Design thinking as an *iterative* process
 - Schemas – assumptions that channel one’s thinking
- How could that [same] idea be beneficial to you or someone like you?
- What do you think about managing the flow of your day or week with an eye to activities that energize you and activities that drain you?
- What would be needed in order to embrace a bias for action by making small changes?






Action Questions

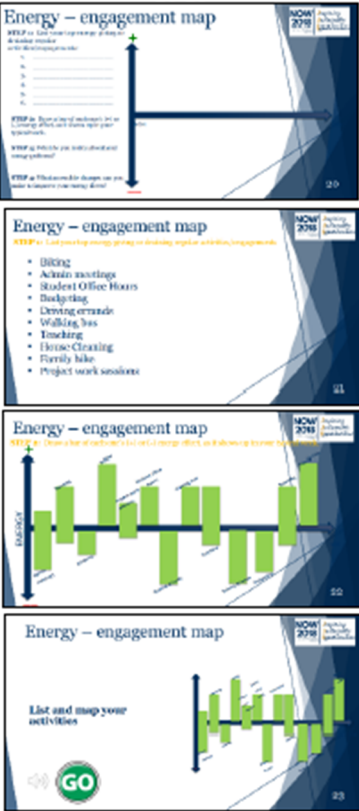

- What actions, tools or ideas do you want to try out after this workshop?
- What would you like to know more about after Kathy’s workshop, and what are some ways to research them?





NOW Conference 2018 Recorded Session Timeline		Session Title: Designing Your Life Concurrent Workshop - Kathy Davies		
Start Time (Format min:sec)	Duration	Slide	Segment Theme or Main Point	Facilitation Suggestions
0:00:00	01:20	<p>1-2</p> 	Introductory Activity: Pair up. Take turns sharing a challenge you faced during the week, while the other person points out the positives that came out of it. This is an example of reframing in design thinking.	If time permits, stop the video and invite participants to work in pairs for 2-3 minutes. REQUIRES ADDITIONAL TIME
0:01:20	02:49	<p>3-4</p> 	You've just used Design Thinking by re-framing an experience. How Design Thinking differs from other types of thinking.	

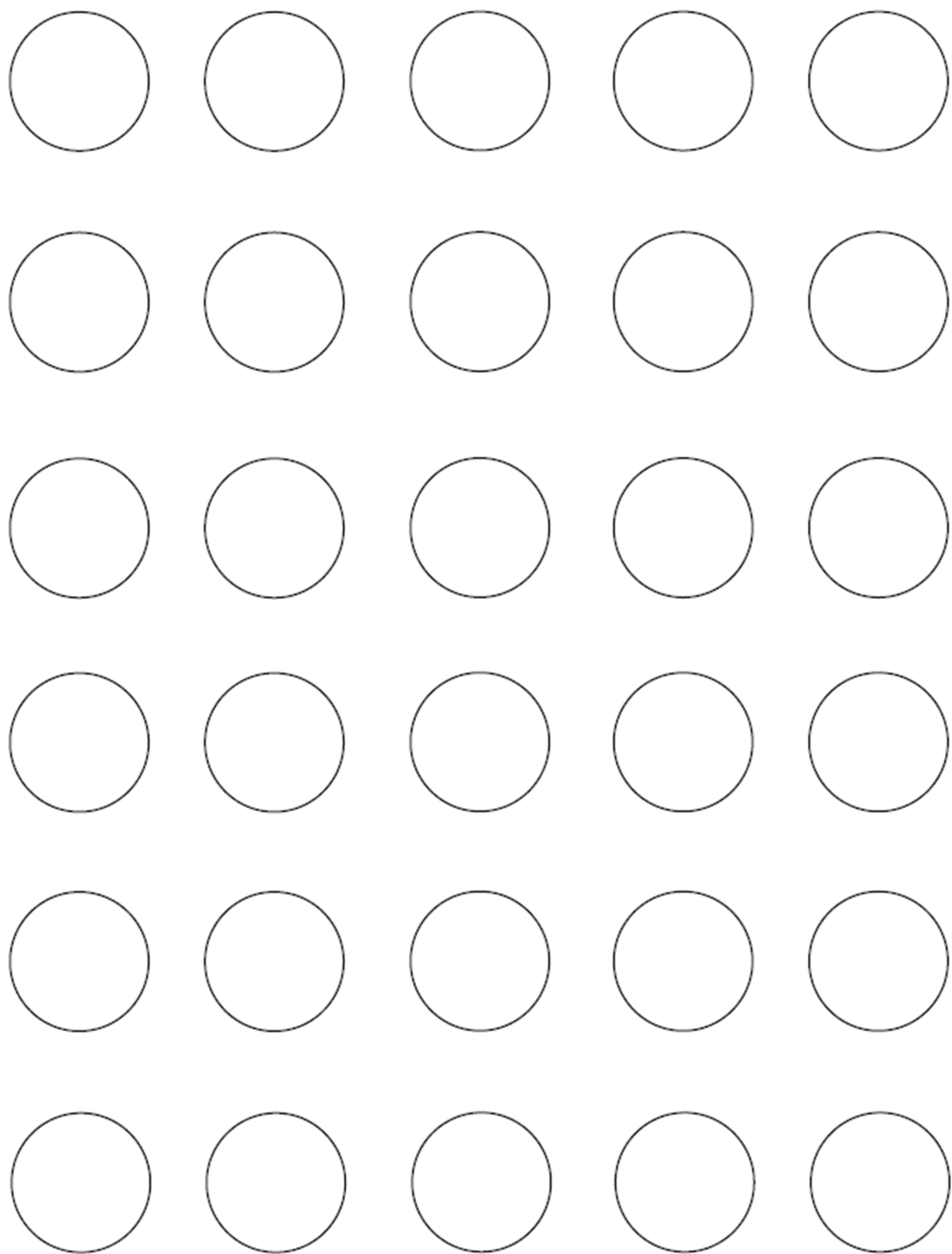
0:04:09	01:10	<p>5-6</p> 	<p>Design Thinking is particularly good for solving "wicked problems" - problems that haven't been solved before, that need innovation, and can potentially change as you work on them. Moving forward from wherever you are at the moment.</p>	
0:05:19	02:31	<p>7-9</p> 	<p>"Design Your Life" refers to design thinking process + a framework specifically for life design. Iterative process: Accept --> Empathize --> Define --> Ideate --> Prototype --> Test. In life design, the problem has to be one that matters to you...you must be willing to work on it; and you'll need support along the way.</p>	

<p>0:07:50</p>	<p>00:50</p>	<p>10-12</p> 	<p>Activity Instructions: Sheet of paper with 30 circles on it. Turn the circles into something, in whatever way you want. GO. (Presenter played fast-paced music during the activity.)</p>	<p>OPTION: A blank for this activity is included in the discussion guide. Stop the video & give participants 2 minutes for this activity if your time permits. A distraction (such as fast, unrelenting music) heightens the chance for participants to experience a level of stress or "stuckness" ADDS 2 MINUTES</p>
<p>0:08:40</p>	<p>07:05</p>	<p>13-16</p> 	<p>Asked what people drew. What was it like to get "stuck?" This exercise demonstrates schemas (aka assumed rules, or how we decide to define the problem). Upon becoming aware of schemas, do the activity again to demonstrate how it feels to get "unstuck" when figuring out a problem. 2nd round - GO</p>	

		<p>Go again!</p> 		<p>OPTION: Add 2 minutes to do the activity again. ADDS 2 MINUTES</p>
0:15:45	02:02	<p>17-18</p> <p>Stop!</p>  <p>Takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is what "getting stuck" feels like. - This demonstrates how "stuck" happens and feels. - It is part of what we call "Design Thinking" 	<p>Debrief - Asked for people's experience and examples from 2nd round. This was a "felt experience" of Design Thinking.</p>	<p>If participants did the activity, it is important to invite discussion about what was different from the 1st time to the 2nd time after Kathy's debrief. ADDS 5 MINUTES</p>
0:17:47	00:38	<p>19-20</p> <p>Bias to action</p>  	<p>Let's talk about things you can take away and use from this workshop. We'll do an exercise to go after "low-hanging fruit," a pathway for making small changes that can make a difference.</p>	

<p>0:18:25</p>	<p>04:03</p>	<p>20-23</p> 	<p>Introduced Energy-Engagement map by sharing her own example. Mapping out each activity's effect on your energy. Identify which things give you a lot of energy, and which things drain you, then come up with accessible changes to maximize energy-replenishing opportunities, order activities in accordance to best-last effect, etc. FILL OUT YOUR GRAPH - GO.</p>	<p>OPTION: Discussion guide includes a blank worksheet. Optional to bring blank copies & allow participants 5-7 minutes to fill theirs out after slide #23. ADDS 5 MINUTES OR MORE</p>
<p>0:22:28</p>	<p>06:32</p>		<p>There is valuable data in our maps. Kathy points out examples from her own, including "best-last effect." She describes tweaks she's making to improve the design of her week. Instructs participants to do the same analysis and I.D. a few changes to try out. "Set the bar low." GO</p>	

0:29:00	00:58	25-26 (differ only re Person 1 & 2) 	Instructions for sharing observations from energy-engagement map activity in pairs. Share energy engagement map and reflections with each other. Listener, please reflect back what you hear and comment on map and notes. GO	OPTION: ADD 5 MINUTES for pairs to discuss.
0:29:58	02:02	27 	Debrief of sharing maps. Recap themes of managing your energy rather than time, importance of sequence; correlation between energy, engagement & meaning. (autonomy, mastery & purpose lead to meaning-making.) Use these concepts to design your life!	
0:32:00	00:48	28 	You did it! Started building your way forward. Be curious, talk to people, try new things. You will learn more as you go!	
0:32:48	00:36	29 	Thank you! If you want more, see the Designing Your Life book, workbook, and workshops.	
0:33:24	n/a		End	
Total	0:33:24			



Energy – engagement map

STEP 1: List your top energy giving or draining regular activities/engagements:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

STEP 2: Draw a bar of each one's (+) or (-) energy effect, as it shows up in your typical week.

STEP 3: What do you notice about your energy patterns?

STEP 4: What accessible changes can you make to improve your energy flows?

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