RISE RECIPE

A Working Recipe for Trauma-Integrating Systems

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A practical framework for designing conditions that support people, relationships, communities, and systems in healing, developing, participating, learning, adapting, and emerging.

[Place existing RISE visual here]

The Central Question

What does a genuinely systemic solution require?

Systemic problems call for systemic solutions. RISE is an attempt to articulate what a genuinely systemic, trauma-integrating solution requires—not simply a collection of individual interventions, organizational policies, or trauma-informed practices, but a configuration of conditions that supports people, relationships, communities, and systems in functioning, healing, developing, learning, adapting, and emerging.

Build resilience while changing what requires resilience.

Supporting people to adapt, recover, develop, and participate matters. So does examining and changing conditions that continually require extraordinary adaptation. RISE asks not only how people and communities develop capacity to navigate adversity, but what systems can do to support those capacities while changing conditions that influence whether those capacities are needed.

Where RISE Comes From

RISE builds on Restorative Integral Support (RIS), which applied Integral Theory to understanding and responding to adversity and trauma in ways that fostered resilience and advanced policy equity. This work contributed to ACE- and trauma-informed programs, broader community resilience efforts, and policy advocacy.

RISE carries this foundation forward while making more explicit the conditions systems need to support resilience, development, healing, participation, and learning. It asks what those insights mean for the

design of institutions themselves—particularly institutions that recognize their influence on the people and communities within and around them.

RIS already recognized the importance of understanding and changing the conditions that influence adversity and resilience. Its implementation, however, relied substantially on appropriately selected and developed leaders who could recognize those conditions, develop their own capacity, and use their authority to change the systems in which they worked.

RISE asks what happens when those conditions become more explicit within the operating system itself—so that the capacity for resilience, development, healing, participation, learning, and adaptation does not depend solely on individual leaders.

This does not mean moving from leadership to systems. It means designing systems that facilitate the selection and development of appropriate leaders, support their ability to function within the responsibilities and authority entrusted to them, and create meaningful opportunities for everyone to participate and exercise leadership within their own roles.

The Integral Orientation

See the Whole Person, Whole Community, and Whole Systems

RISE draws on an integral perspective that attends simultaneously to the person, the relationships and communities in which people participate, and the systems and structures that influence their experience.

Whole Person–Whole Community–Whole Systems is therefore an orientation for seeing, not a sequence of interventions.

Understand Adversity, Trauma, and Resilience in Context

RISE carries forward the understanding of adversity, trauma, and resilience developed through RIS in response to ACEs and Pair of ACEs knowledge.

Questions to ask:

- What has happened?
- What helps people and communities become more resilient?
- What conditions are influencing people's and communities' capacity to heal, develop, participate, learn, and contribute?

From Understanding to System Design

If an institution recognizes that its operating conditions influence people's and communities' capacity to heal, develop, participate, learn, and contribute, the next question is:

> **What conditions need to be present in the system itself?**

This is where RISE moves from an integral understanding of adversity and resilience toward a more explicit consideration of how institutions are designed and operated. The following ingredients describe conditions that help systems support—not undermine—the capacities they seek to foster.

The RISE Recipe: Six System Conditions

1. Select and Develop People for the Responsibilities They Carry

- Formal leaders need to be selected for the responsibilities they carry and developed for the capacities those responsibilities require.
- Leadership is not only a matter of personal qualities; it also depends on clarity, authority, accountability, resources, relationships, and development.
- Leadership development is not limited to formal titles; people throughout a system exercise leadership within the roles they carry.
- People also bring knowledge, experience, capacities, relationships, and potential that systems need to recognize, develop, and make meaningful use of.

Does the system facilitate the selection and development of appropriate leaders, support those leaders in carrying their responsibilities, and create conditions for people throughout the system to contribute and exercise leadership within the roles they carry?

2. Align Responsibility, Authority, Accountability, Resources, and Support

- People cannot reliably be responsible for outcomes they lack sufficient authority, resources, clarity, or support to influence.
- This includes role clarity, decision-making authority, accountability, staffing and material resources, compensation, time, information, relationships, supervision, and development.
- Examine whether people have the authority, information, resources, compensation, time, and support needed to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Consider how responsibilities, qualifications, experience, contributions, and compensation are recognized and aligned.
- Examine how resources and opportunities are distributed, including whether differences are transparent, equitable, and responsive to actual roles and contributions.
- When these conditions are misaligned, frustration, blame, disengagement, and moral distress can grow.
- Responsibility for navigating a system should not routinely become a substitute for the system providing the conditions needed to carry that responsibility.

3. Create Conditions for Meaningful Participation

- Participation is more than consultation or one-time input. It includes opportunities to contribute, question, influence, learn, reflect, and remain engaged over time.
- People enter participation with different roles, forms of knowledge, capacities, resources, and amounts of time; meaningful participation therefore requires multiple pathways.
- Participation is part of agency, relationships, shared purpose, and collective capacity.
- Meaningful participation also depends on whether people have viable pathways to remain, develop, contribute, and have their participation recognized as circumstances change.

4. Build Health and Wellbeing into the Operating System

- Wellbeing is not only an activity people pursue if they have time or energy left. It is part of the infrastructure through which shared purposes are carried out.
- Workload, staffing, schedules, rest, reflection, environment, flexibility, relationships, development, and supportive practices shape people's capacity to participate and contribute.
- This is more than providing wellness resources; the operating system itself needs to support wellbeing.
- The ways systems respond to illness, caregiving, disruption, or changing capacity can themselves become part of the conditions affecting wellbeing and participation.

5. Build Relationships That Support Belonging, Trust, and Shared Purpose

- Relationships are conditions for learning, development, collaboration, agency, and participation.
- Systems need conditions for connection, trust, belonging, mutual responsibility, and honest communication—and ways to respond when relationships are disrupted.
- Shared purpose does not require uniformity; multiple perspectives, identities, forms of knowledge, and disagreement can coexist.
- Relationships also extend beyond interactions among people within the system. The relationship between people and the institutions in which they participate can be strengthened or disrupted by how the system responds to change, conflict, harm, transition, and exit.

6. Create Capacity for Recognition, Restoration, Learning, and Adaptation

- Notice what is happening, recognize strengths and disruption, acknowledge harm, restore relationships and participation, learn, and change structures and practices.
- Recognition makes experience and patterns visible. Restoration creates renewed capacity, connection, participation, meaning, and trust.
- Learning informs reflection and development; adaptation changes structures and practices in response to what is learned.
- Recognition can occur at different levels: recognizing that something happened, recognizing a person's experience or contribution, and recognizing the conditions and patterns that produced or sustained the experience.
- Systems need capacity not only to receive information from people's experiences, but to learn from what those experiences reveal and adapt accordingly.
- A system that recognizes but cannot respond, repairs but does not learn, or changes without purpose remains limited in its capacity to evolve.

How the Ingredients Work Together

These ingredients are not independent interventions. Together they create conditions in which people can exercise appropriate leadership, participate meaningfully, develop relationships, maintain wellbeing, and respond to disruption. The system can then recognize what is happening, restore what has been disrupted, learn from experience, and adapt without losing connection to purpose.

The ingredients also call attention to the relationship between people and the larger systems in which organizations are embedded. External resources, expectations, norms, policies, incentives, and other conditions may influence what an organization is able to recognize, support, sustain, or change. These

influences do not constitute additional ingredients; they are part of the context in which the ingredients operate.

These conditions also depend on transparency and meaningful access to information, including visibility into how compensation structures, responsibilities, resources, opportunities, and decisions are distributed throughout the system.

Operating Principles

These principles are not additional ingredients. They describe how the ingredients need to function within a living system.

- **Recognition —** noticing what is happening and making experience, strengths, disruption, and harm visible.
- **Restoration —** repairing disrupted relationships, participation, capacity, meaning, and trust.
- **Integration —** bringing separated people, perspectives, relationships, structures, and purposes into greater relationship.
- **Stewardship —** tending the conditions that allow people and systems to develop and function well.
- **Flexible Fidelity —** remaining faithful to purpose while allowing the forms through which participation and practice occur to change.
- **Learning and Adaptation —** using experience to reflect, learn, and change structures and practices.

Flexible fidelity is particularly important for meaningful participation. Participation cannot remain meaningful if the structures through which people participate are permanently fixed. At the same time, continual change without connection to purpose can undermine trust and coherence.

The Test: Build Resilience While Changing What Requires Resilience

> **Are we building resilience while also changing what requires resilience?**

Resilience is a capacity to support, but it is also information about the conditions requiring it. RIS already recognized the importance of changing conditions; RISE asks how system design can make those conditions more visible and more changeable.

The goal is not to eliminate adversity or struggle. Some challenges are developmental or collective. The question is whether the system is generating unnecessary adversity that people are then expected to overcome.

What the Recipe Creates

The recipe does not produce a fixed “healthy organization.” Its ingredients create systems that can evolve—systems that can respond to changing circumstances without losing purpose.

A system does not need to know every challenge it will face. It needs the capacity to learn from what emerges and to change when existing conditions are no longer sufficient.

Emergence

Not everything can be designed in advance. When meaningful participation, relational capacity and restoration, appropriate leader selection and support, responsibility–authority alignment, and recognition and learning are present, new relationships, capacities, ideas, practices, and possibilities can emerge.

The goal is not perpetual change. It is a system grounded enough in purpose and responsive enough to allow new possibilities to arise.

> **Healthy systems are cultivated rather than controlled into existence.**
>
> **Recognition → Restoration → Integration → Emergence**

Recognition makes visible what is happening. Restoration creates renewed connection, capacity, participation, meaning, and trust. Integration brings separated people, perspectives, relationships, structures, and purposes into greater relationship. Emergence allows new possibilities to arise from that integration.

These are not fixed stages. They recur, overlap, and influence one another.

What Makes the Solution Systemic?

A systemic solution is not simply a larger intervention, a new policy, more stakeholders, or a collection of individual programs.

It changes the configuration of conditions and relationships through which the system operates.

RISE therefore asks whether the system itself is becoming more capable of supporting people and communities to heal, develop, participate, learn, contribute, adapt, and thrive—and whether the system can learn and evolve alongside them.

> **Does the solution change the conditions through which the system operates, or does it primarily ask individuals to function better within conditions that remain unchanged?**

Healthy systems do more than prevent harm. They create conditions in which people and communities can develop, participate, relate, heal, learn, adapt, and become. And they develop the capacity to change when the conditions they have created are no longer sufficient.

Systemic problems call for systemic solutions.

RISE is an attempt to articulate what those solutions can require.