



Closing the Doors with Grace: Terminal Stage

We are hosting this workshop from the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including that of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation.

Host & Co-Presenter



Maria Turnbull

Associate Executive Director
Vantage Point

Special Guest



Jennifer Bonnett
President & CEO
Nonprofit Lifecycles Institute

∴ vantage point is on a mission to...

Transform Not-For-Profit Organizations

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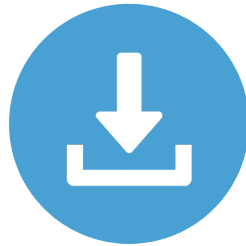


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RESOURCES



BLOG



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Webinar Tools

- Chat box
- Non-verbal feedback
- Please un-mute yourself
- Q&A
- Slides & handout by email

This session **WILL** be recorded



Learning Outcomes

- Identify the diagnostic characteristics and the performance outcomes of a terminal stage not-for-profit
- Articulate the principal challenges, and identify next steps, in leading an organization effectively through the terminal stage

⋮ The Nonprofit Lifecycles Institute



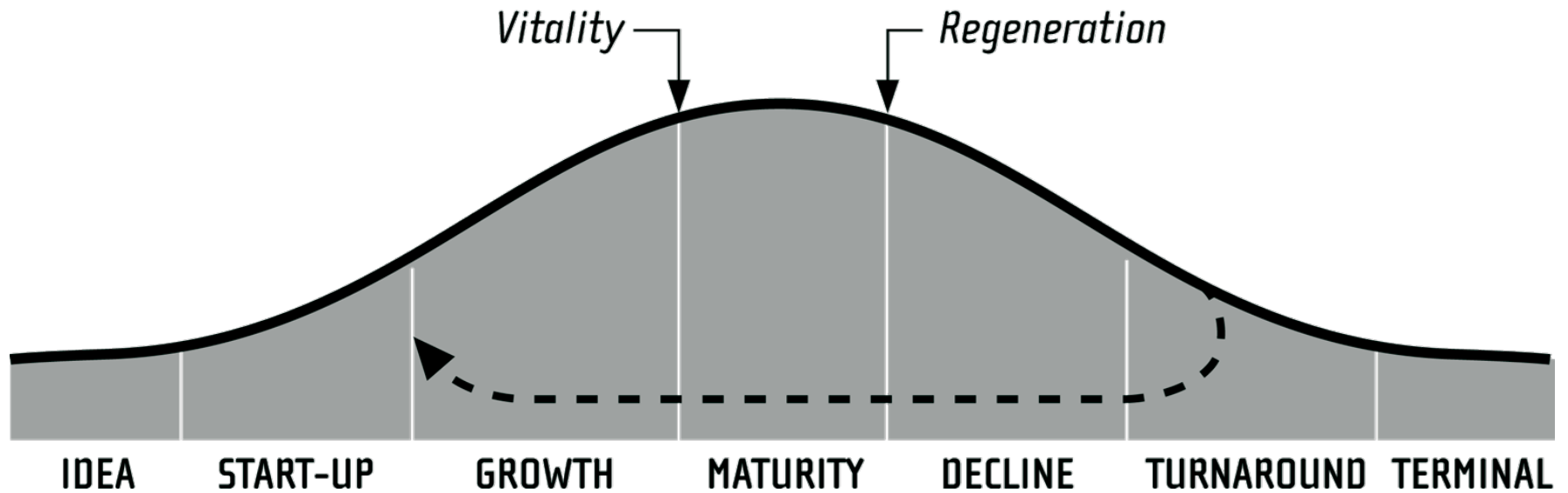
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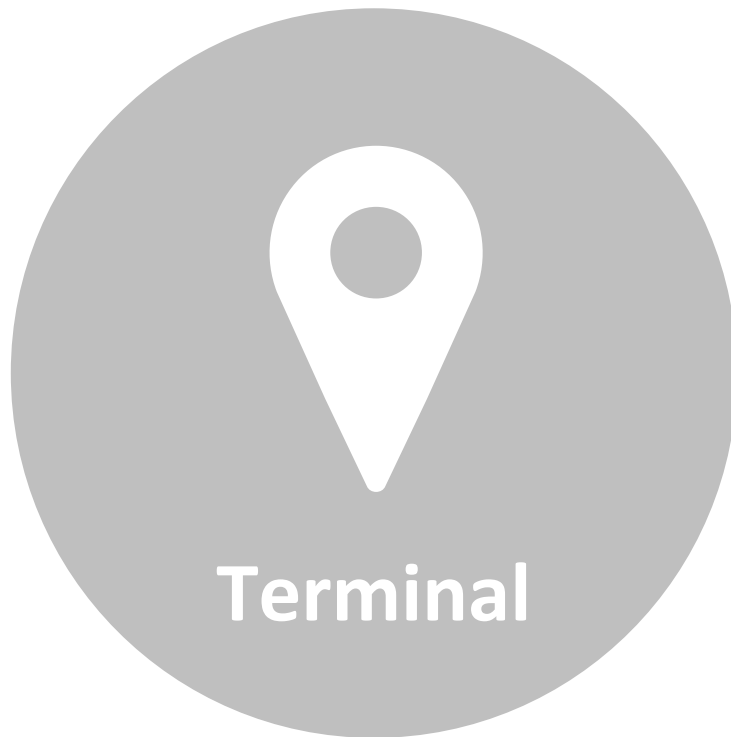
Not-For-Profit Lifecycle Stages



Developmental Stages and Capacity

“A stage is a **developmental period** when characteristic patterns of behavior are evidenced and certain capacities become established.”

⋮ Lifecycle Stage: Terminal



The stage when an organization has neither the purpose, the will nor the energy to continue

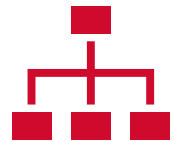
Contemplating terminal...



Mission



Market



Management



Money



Energy

Capacity in Terminal stage

Program: Programs are unreliable, unsteady, and seriously under-funded

Management: Staff and management have dwindled to a handful and possibly may be working without pay

Governance: Board has lost its collective drive to continue and may exist in name only

Business Model : The organization is most likely out of money and may have accumulated deficits

Systems: Systems have been abandoned. Organizational decisions and general workflow happen on an ad hoc basis

Common Challenges

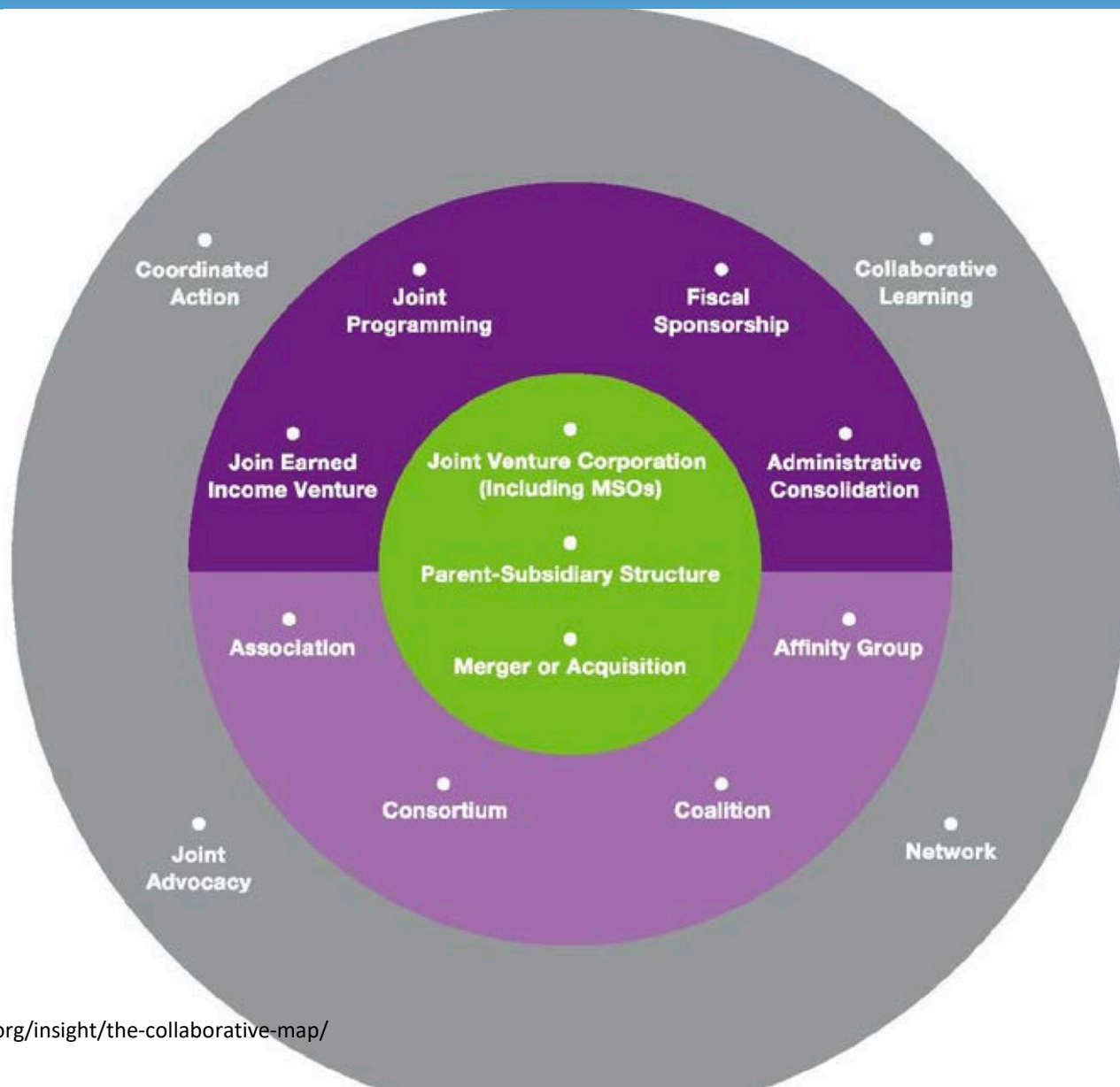
- Accepting responsibility for organizational renewal or termination
- Resisting the urge to blame others for terminal situation
- Communicating termination plans to clients and making appropriate referrals
- Closing up shop in an honorable manner, worthy of the care in which the nonprofit was founded

Leading for success through terminal...

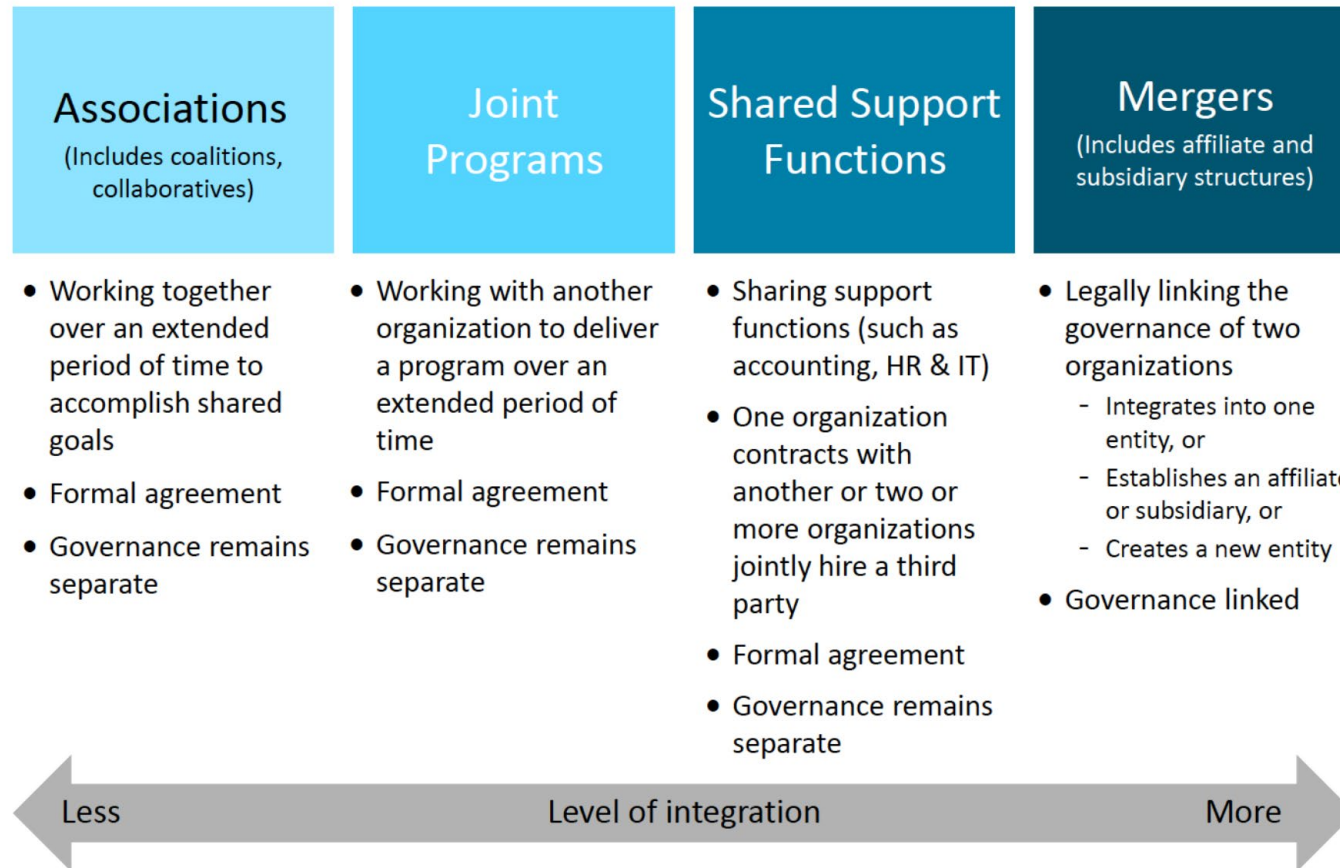
Organization accepts responsibility to close operations in a manner respectful of its past

1. Timeline
2. Communication
3. Finances (e.g, managing debt and budget)
4. Legal and other external advisory support
5. Celebrate
6. Continue your impact...

Strategic Options



Four types of formal collaboration



Strategic Options

Define what's most important.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is our core purpose? What problem are we trying to solve or new reality are we trying to create?
- Is this core purpose still relevant in our current environment?
- What's our unique value? Are there things that we are doing that no one else is doing, or doing as well?
- If we were to close down, what needs or gaps would be created, and which colleague organizations would be best positioned to fill those gaps?



Assess our options.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Do we have the option of continuing to exist as an organization (or program)?

If yes...

- Would continuing as an independent organization be the best way to serve our core purpose?
- Are the considerations that prompted this conversation about possible closure likely to change?
- Are there other options that would enable us to serve our core purpose more strategically?
- Do we have options for strategic partnership today that we may not have in the future?

If no...

- Are we ready to begin formal planning for our closure, which may include transferring our assets (programs, capital, personnel) to another nonprofit?
- If not, what's holding us back? Will delaying formal planning for closure expand or limit our options for legacy planning?

- Board conversation starters:
 - [Closing down](#)
 - [Strategic alliances/restructuring](#)
- Further reading
 - [Better Together Fund Resource Library](#)
 - [Arizona Together for Impact](#)
 - [Communicating During a Crisis](#)
- On the technical
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/not-for-profit-organizations/societies/dissolve-society>

1. How do you even start engaging in these discussions? I find most organizations won't even discuss the option of closing.
2. I am not anticipating my organization closing any time soon, but many others in our space have shut down and will shut down as a result of COVID and other external factors. I want to understand how to best work with them, and potentially support their clients.



Thank you

Join us for our next learning opportunity.

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