



Forget Me Not

***From Isolation to Integration;
Urban Interventions for Japan's
Marginalized Hikikomori***

MSc Urbanism Graduation Thesis
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Abstract

Pattern language is used in this research as an analytical tool to study the social and spatial systems of care within Bethel House, a mental health community in Urakawa, Japan. Twenty-two interconnected patterns were identified to describe how reintegration emerges through shared routines, mutual recognition, emotional rhythms, and local participation. Rather than being built around treatment or correction, Bethel's structure is shaped by trust, repetition, and small, voluntary acts of engagement. The method of *tojisha kenkyuu* plays a central role, allowing individuals to reflect on their lived experiences and contribute to the ongoing shaping of the system.

To reach individuals who remain outside this structure, a set of five additional patterns, known as the *Extension Pack*, was developed. These patterns respond to the early thresholds faced by socially withdrawn individuals such as *hikikomori*. They support forms of non-intrusive contact, digital engagement, and personalized pathways into care. The Extension Pack acts as a bridging layer, allowing systems to enter the withdrawn space on the individual's terms.

The full network of patterns reflects a model of social reintegration that aligns with the principles of *machizukuri*, an approach to community-building grounded in shared responsibility, local knowledge, and slow, collaborative change. Using the metaphor of a shape sorter, the research asks how systems might adjust their forms to hold those who do not fit. Rather than requiring people to change in order to participate, it proposes systems that begin by listening, waiting, and staying close.

Keywords: *Hikikomori, Pattern Language, Tojisha Kenkyu, Machizukuri, Social Re-integration, Quality*

Dictionary

M

Machizukuri

(noun)

A participatory approach to community-building and town-making rooted in Japanese planning culture. It emphasizes collaborative processes, local agency, and social infrastructure rather than top-down development.

N

NEET

(noun)

An acronym for “Not in Education, Employment, or Training.” Refers to youth who are disengaged from institutional systems of growth. Often used in policy contexts to describe at-risk or socially withdrawn populations.

S

Scenario Mapping

(adjective)

A planning and design technique used to explore possible futures by building structured narratives or “scenarios.” In the context of the report, it may help visualize how patterns can disperse through space.

Scientometric

(noun)

Relating to the quantitative analysis of scientific literature. Often used in academic mapping to track citations, influence, or research trends. May appear in references to knowledge production or legitimacy in institutional settings.

Shūshoku Katsudō

(noun)

A Japanese term meaning “job-seeking activities,” particularly within the structured transition from university to employment. The pressure to conform to this lifecycle is a contributing factor in Japan's withdrawal phenomena.

C

Central Bank

(noun)

A national institution that manages a country's currency, money supply, and interest rates. In Japan, this is the Bank of Japan, which plays a key role in shaping economic conditions that indirectly affect employment and social withdrawal trends.

I

Interest Rates

(noun)

The cost of borrowing money, typically set by a central bank. Changes in interest rates influence inflation, savings, and investment, and indirectly affect labor markets and youth economic insecurity—factors connected to social withdrawal.

Interpersonal

(adjective)

Describing interactions or relationships between people. Interpersonal dynamics are a key concern in pattern-based care systems, as emotional safety and co-regulation often depend on how people relate to one another in shared spaces.

K

Keiretsu

(noun)

A network of interlinked Japanese corporations, often structured through cross-shareholding and long-term partnership. This business model reinforces group loyalty and collective stability but can also reflect rigid social expectations and hierarchies.

Introduction

Anecdote

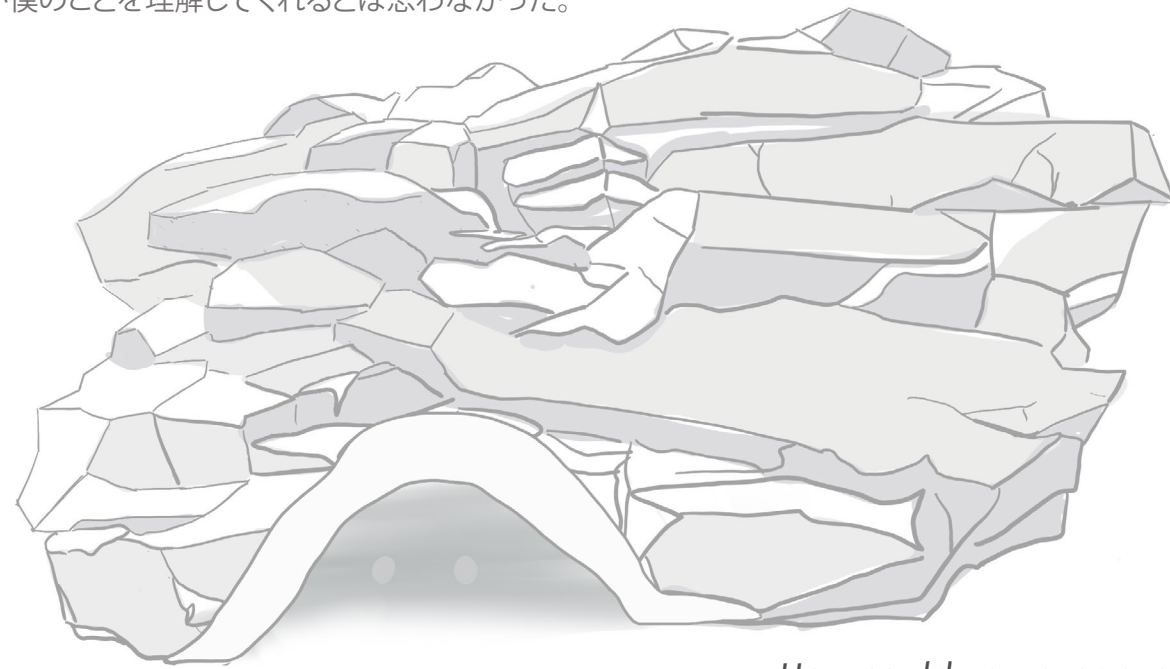
Living in Silence: A Fictionalized Account of Hikikomori in Post-Bubble Japan

“Being with others helps me not be angry anymore.”

Bethel Literature 1

The following first-person narrative is fictional but informed by real-life experiences. It draws on an interview with a former hikikomori, as well as portrayals from literature and popular culture. While the character is not real, the emotional and social patterns reflected here are grounded in recurring themes identified in the research.

I didn't think you'd understand me
君が僕のことを理解してくれるとは思わなかった。



How could you ever even try?
どうしてそんなことをしようなんて思えたの?

Fig 1 Graphic Representation of Hikiru

In my room, my truth and I sit together in silence. The light coming through the curtains is neglectable, soft enough to forget time.

I haven't left this space in days, or maybe weeks. I don't know anymore. But for the first time in a long time, I can feel something real rising inside me. Not a scream, not a cry for help, but something closer to recognition. A quiet awareness of what this is. Of what I have become.

We don't want to tiptoe

遠回しに言いたくない。

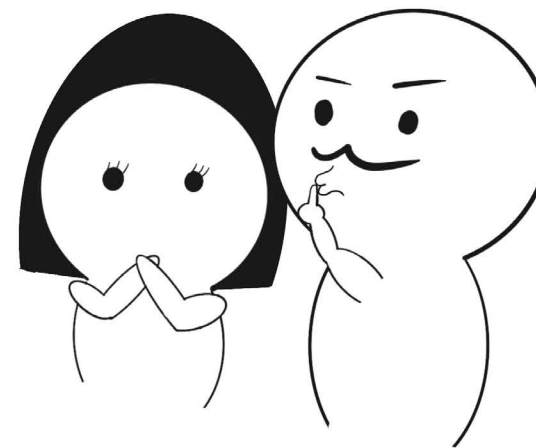
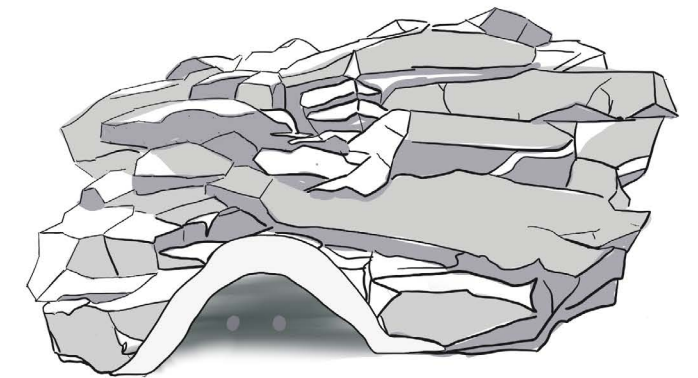


Fig 2 Hikiru's parents tiptoeing around him

My parents are in the hallway. I didn't think they could understand me. How could they even try? I hear their footsteps soften as they pass my door, *careful, slow~*. I know they are tiptoeing. And somehow, knowing that they are walking on eggshells only makes the pressure worse. I don't have the energy for this. It feeds something restless inside me. Not guilt. Not even sadness. Just a deep, dull anger. The kind that sits in your chest and hums like a growling low base.

部屋の中で、私は自分の真実と共に静かに座っている。カーテン越しに差し込む光は、まるで存在を忘れさせるほどかすかで、時の流れさえ曖昧になる。

何日も、もしかすると何週間も、この空間から出ていない。もう分からない。でも、久しぶりに心の奥で何か本物の感覚が芽生え始めているのを感じる。それは叫びでも、助けを求める声でもなく、もっと穏やかで、気づきに近いもの。これは何なのか、自分が何になってしまったのか、そのことへの静かな理解だ。



I don't want to hide
もう自分を隠したくない。

両親が廊下にいる。私のことなんて分かるはずがないと思ってた。どうして、どうやって、分かってもらえるのだろう?

足音が、私の部屋の前を通るときに静かになるのが聞こえる。慎重に、ゆっくりと——そう、つま先で歩いているのが分かる。それが分かるだけで、なぜか余計に息苦しくなる。

今はそんな気遣いに応える余裕なんてない。その優しさが、むしろ何か落ち着かないものを呼び起こす。罪悪感でも、悲しみでもない。胸の奥にどっしりと居座って、低く唸るように響く、鈍くて深い怒り。そんな感情だけが、そこにある。

Every word that's said
to him becomes a monstrous fire

彼に向けられる言葉は、すべて凶暴
な炎に変わる。

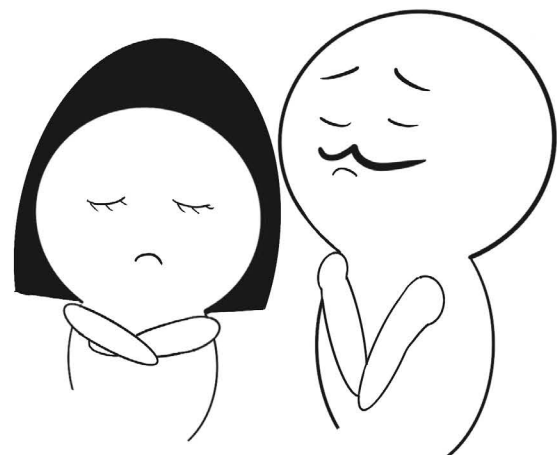


Fig3 Hikiru getting angry at his parents

My name is Hikiru, though that detail hardly matters. This story isn't just mine. I'm just one of the estimated **1.46 million** Hikikomoris in Japan (Yeung, J., & Karasawa, M., April 7, 2023). That's about **2% of Japan's workforce** (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2023), but numbers aside, what truly matters is the silence. The seclusion. The fact that every day life can be so draining.

The silent battles unfolding in rooms like mine all across the country. You can label it what you will: Hikikomori, Withdrawal, Social excludes. But none of those words quite capture the reality of living through it.

僕の名前はヒキル。でも、そのこと自体にはあまり意味がない。これは僕だけの物語じゃない。僕は、日本に推定146万人いる「ひきこもり」のひとりに過ぎない(Yeung, J., & Karasawa, M., April 7, 2023)。日本の労働人口のおよそ2%にあたる数だ(Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2023)。でも、数字なんてどうでもいい。本当に重要なのは「沈黙」と「隔離」。そして、日常生活がどれだけ人を消耗させるかということ。

全国の僕のような部屋で、静かな闘いが日々繰り広げられている。「ひきこもり」、「社会的撤退」、「排除された存在」——呼び方はいろいろあるけれど、どの言葉も、この現実を生きるという感覚を正確には言い表せない。



Fig4 Millions of Hikikomori

Can you relate? being just one among many. One of countless young people who vanished quietly, slipping through the cracks without notice. Gender doesn't matter. Background doesn't matter. This can happen to anyone. I think it could be pressure? But I don't work or study anymore. Plus, somehow I don't believe my body can handle social interactions anymore.

In Japan, we're taught that there's a right way to live. A correct order of things. Study hard, get into a good school, find a job, move up, marry, conform. Deviate from that path, and you become a problem. A burden. A ghost in your own home.

And I get it, I know what to do. I know how. I grew up hearing the same message over and over: work hard, study hard, and follow the system. If you did, success was guaranteed. Find a company, and it'll take care of you for life. Climb the ladder, and you'll be fine.

I just can't get myself to do it.

Especially I know my parents will say something. They always do have something to say.

Sometimes I ask myself, when did I start to disappear?

共感できる？
無数にいる若者の中のひとり。
誰にも気づかれず、静かに消えていったそのひとり。

性別なんて関係ない。
どんな家庭で育ったかなんて関係ない。
これは、誰にでも起こり得ること。

たぶん、プレッシャーのせいかもしれない。
でも僕は、もう働いてもいないし、勉強もしていない。
それに、もう自分の身体が人と関わることに耐えられないような気がする。

日本では、「正しい生き方」があると教えられて育つ。
勉強して、いい学校に入り、就職して、昇進して、結婚して、周りに合わせて生きていく。
その道から外れたら、「問題」とみなされる。
「迷惑者」。
家の中にいる「幽霊」みたいな存在。

分かってるんだ、本当は。
どうすればいいかも、やり方も知ってる。
小さい頃からずっと聞かされてきた。
「努力すれば報われる」
「勉強して、働いて、ちゃんと生きろ」って。

会社に入れば一生安泰。
出世すれば大丈夫。
そう信じて頑張ってた。

…でも、どうしても身体が動かない。

特に、両親が何か言ってくるのが分かってるから。
いつだって、何か言いたがる。

時々、自分に問いかけるんだ。
「自分はいつから消えていったんだろう？」って。

Problem Field

YEAR
1970s

History, Mindsets, and Development Structure

History, Mindsets, and Development Structure. Japan's current state of development is largely shaped by its national mindset. A mindset that was forged from war, defeat and reconstruction. The country after World War II began embracing an economic ideology that embracing *developmentalism* (Yamamoto, 2012).

The development model is a *state-centred* approach. Believing that tight cooperation between government *ministries*, big corporations (*keiretsu*), and *banks* is trustworthy in economic planning. This post war paradigm shift is in favour of efficiency and productivity, prioritizing rapid industrialization, infrastructure expansion and export driven growth. Shaping policies, institutions, and social structures across generations. (Vibhu Jain & Yuko Okazawa, 2017a, 2017b; Xu, 2019). It's a political-economic hierarchy in which local governments and industries conform to centralized plans (Vibhu Jain & Yuko Okazawa, 2017a).

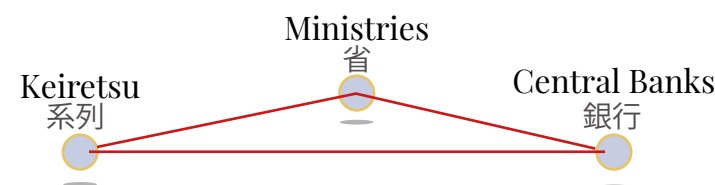


Fig 5 State-central Collaboration

For a time, this produced remarkable results. This model helped Japan's *industrial era* grow rapidly from the 1950s to the 1980s. Where Japan became the world's second-largest economy, with urban skylines rising as symbols of postwar rebirth by the late 1960s.

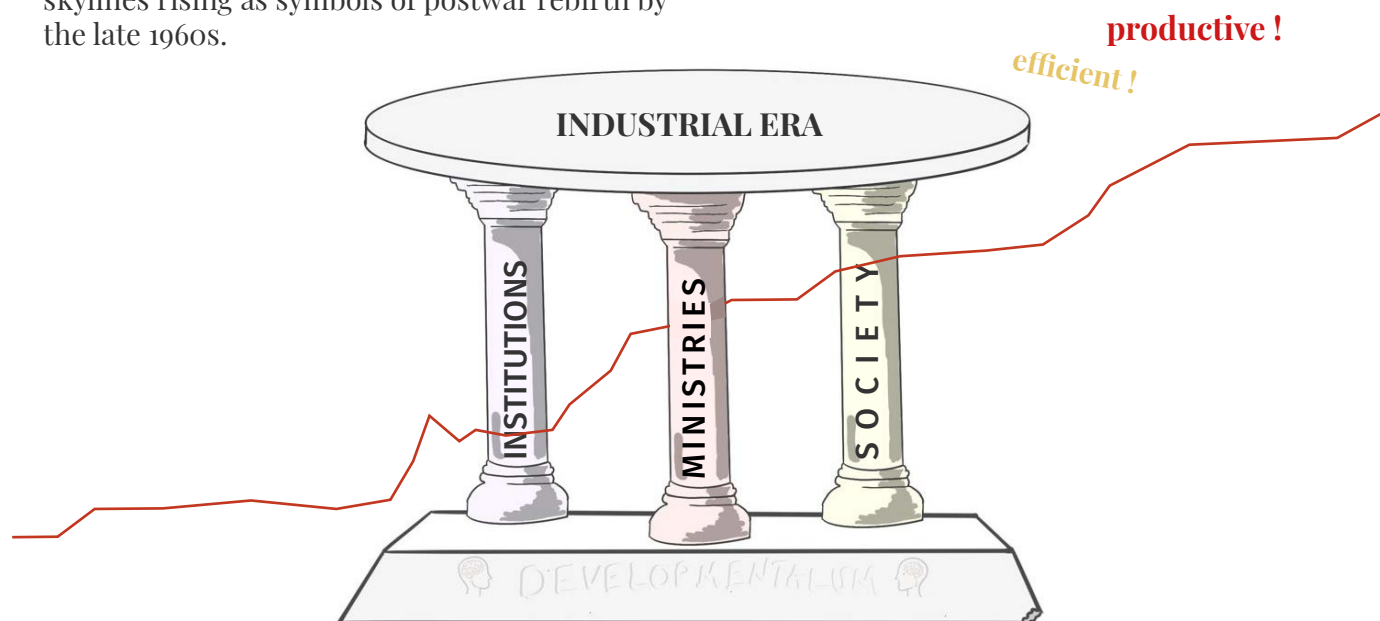


Fig 6 Influences of the Developmentalist mindset

Industrial Era: Completed - Advancing to the Next Level

YEAR
1980s



By the 1980s, Japan had shifted into a *post-industrial* economy, leaning to real estate, finance and service based industries, as replacements for factories as main source of national wealth. Japan's success in globalization has not gone unnoticed. Internationally, Japan came under growing pressure. From the U.S., Japan particularly saw this through the Section 301 trade actions. Which is often enforced through Tariffs, sanctions, and other kinds of negotiations. This was also paired with the Plaza Accord of 1985, which forced the yen to appreciate (Ryan, 1995; Zeng, 2004). Meaning the yen became stronger compared to other currencies, making Japanese exports more expensive and less competitive (Tsutsui & Mazzotta, 2015). This meant that Japanese goods became more expensive overseas.

To make up for lost export demand, Japan pumped money into the domestic economy, a move called liquidity injection. Flooding the system by adding more cash and credit, to encourage borrowing and spending. One way they did this was by encouraging real estate development as economic booster. Through the developmentalist mindset, housing, labor, welfare, and urban development were not approached as social rights but as tools to achieve productivity and competitiveness, national economic goals. (Mori et al., 2001; Xu, 2019). Meaning with easy credit and deregulated developments, the government made it easier and cheaper to borrow money, which led to a construction boom, especially in Tokyo and Osaka (Xu, 2019). Land and stock prices soared, and the *economic bubble* was formed, a period where asset prices rise far above their real value.

Eventually, the market corrected itself in 1991, and the land and stock prices collapsed, in what we now refer to as the *economic bubble burst*. The construction boom oversupplied too many and too quickly. The asset prices, of land and stocks, became dangerously inflated. The value of them crashed almost overnight, erasing massive amounts of national wealth. The consequences were huge: companies went bankrupt, banks were left with bad loans, and the economy froze. This marked the beginning of Japan's "*Lost Decades*", a long period of slow growth and stagnation (Mori et al., 2001).

Fig 7 Nation wide Multi Scalar Affects

Rescue Attempts: Policy, Delay, and Structural Limits

YEAR

1990s

After the bubble burst, the Japanese government moved slowly and cautiously. Policy makers feared financial panic, choosing a strategic response of *forbearance and enablement*. They allowed unstable banks and companies to avoid dealing with their losses, hoping things would recover on their own. Instead of letting failing institutions go bankrupt or forcing them to clean up their finances, they let them continue operating. This avoided panic but delayed real recovery (Mori et al., 2001). The central bank, Bank of Japan (BOJ), often seen as the puppet master of the nation's economy, its role isn't to earn a profit, but to oversee and guide the nation's economy. This public institution sets the rules and policies that all other banks must follow. The BOJ's main goals are to keep the economy growing, ensure people have jobs, and maintain stable prices without too much fluctuation.

To influence the economy, the BOJ "pulls strings" that guide how people and businesses spend money. One of the most important of these strings is the interest rate. In an effort to stimulate the economy, the Bank of Japan lowered interest rates to nearly zero and increased liquidity, essentially making money more available.

But even though money was more available, other banks didn't want to lend and businesses didn't want to borrow. This breakdown is known as a *broken credit transmission mechanism*. It means that although the central bank made credit easier to access, the policy didn't effectively reach consumers or companies, an unsuccessful *monetary stimulus*.

The government also introduced *fiscal stimulus*. Using public money to create jobs and support spending, often through big public works like roads, bridges, or housing. This continued even as population growth slowed and demand dropped. Leading to an oversupply of housing (Xu, 2019). But without real demand or structural change, these short-term efforts mostly postponed problems.

Meanwhile, banks that should have closed were kept alive artificially. These became known as zombie banks. Institutions that are technically dead but continue operating thanks to *fiscal* support. They didn't lend much, and they blocked new businesses from entering the market. Over time, this zombified the economy, making it harder for growth and innovation to return (Mori et al., 2001).

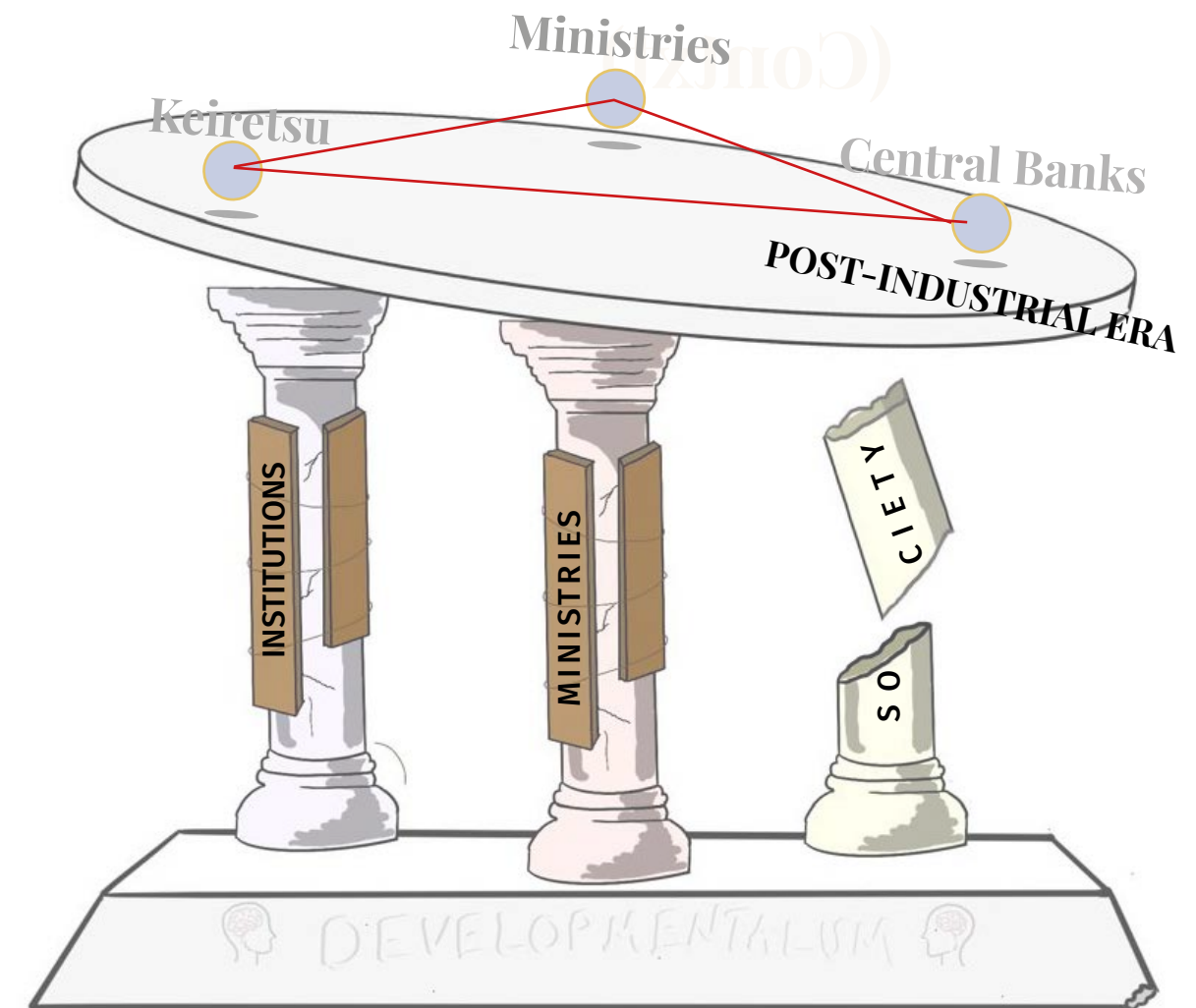


Fig 8 Attempts to rescue the crumbling structure

Positioning

(Societal Structure)

Economic Impacts on Society; Personal to Systemic failure

The bubble pop in 1991 had societal consequences. Traditional employment routes shrinking and job security fading, the youth during the lost decades experienced heightened pressure and declining opportunities. An Editorial Perspective (Li & Wong, 2015) argue that the societal transition; marked by a loss of societal structure, identity, and purpose for adolescents, facilitated the emergence of hikikomori. The social withdrawal of youth was no longer merely a personal psychological issue but a symptom of failed systemic adaptation; A critique on the structural stability of their Post Industrial society.

Beyond Culture: A Societal Phenomenon

Early Research, including Saitō's, tend to side on Japan's cultural elements of shame, group conformity and family dynamics, as attributes to the phenomenon. More recent literature challenges the notion that hikikomori is a uniquely Japanese mental disorder.

International investigations have found evidence of hikikomori-like cases in South Korea, Hong Kong, Spain, and the US (Kato et al., 2012; Neoh et al., 2023). This cross-cultural presence reinforces its social and structural foundations.

Tamaki Saitō was among the first to coin and frame the Hikikomori phenomenon as culturally bound, rooted in parental overprotection and academic pressure (Norris, 2014), a personal psychological issue. However, the cracks in the rigid education-to-employment transition (*Shūshoku Katsudō* [就職活動]) began to make such withdrawal seem like a rational, response to an unforgiving system.

The most significant shift came with a scientometric review of 20 years of hikikomori research (Neoh et al., 2023). The scientometric review revealed that although initial studies focused heavily on Japanese identity and social values, newer research considers interpersonal relationships, economic insecurity, and the influential role of technological developments as central contributors. Concluding that hikikomori should be seen as a society-bound phenomenon, as well as a cultural one.

Japan Stocks

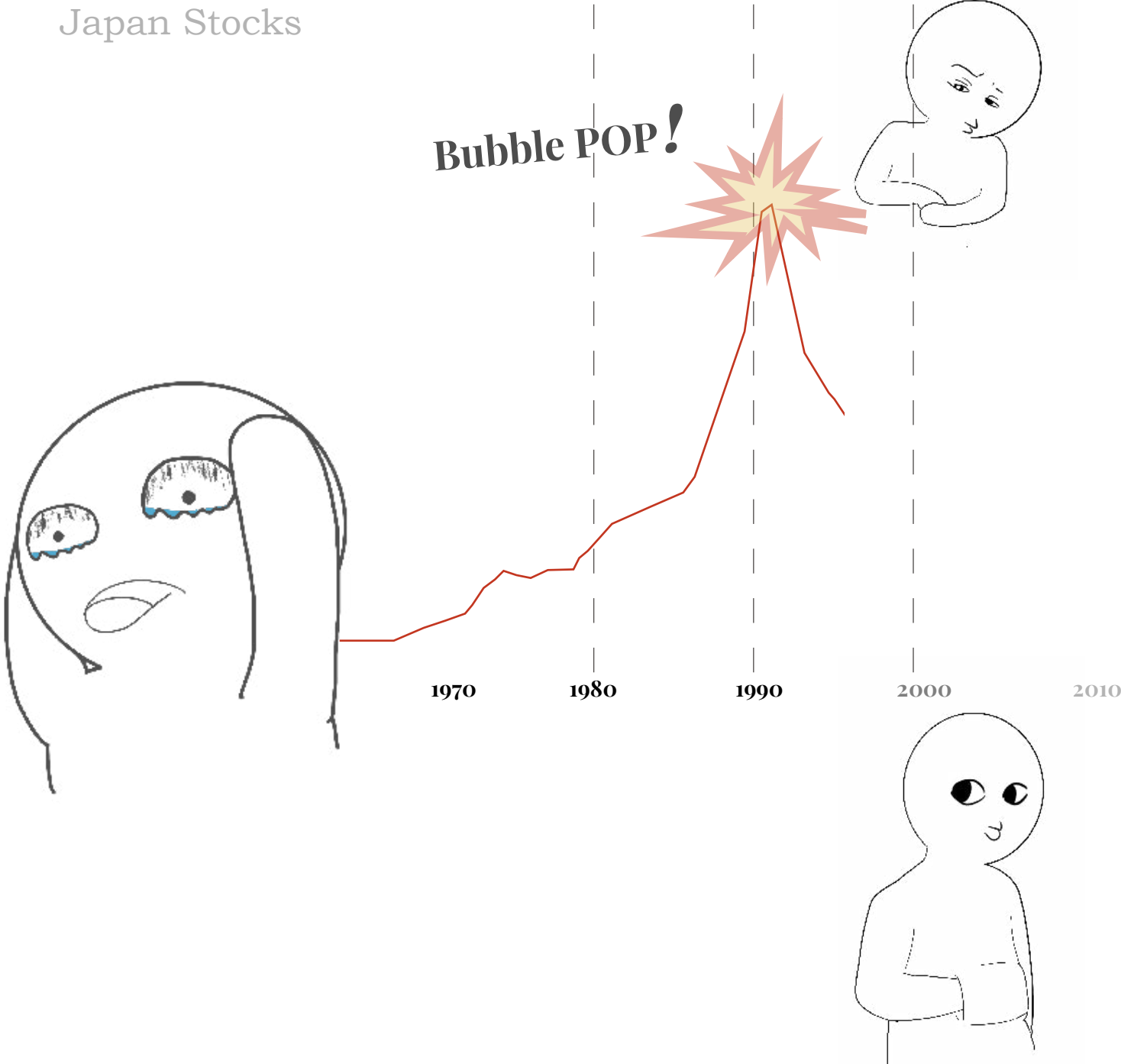


Fig 9 Economic down turn Societal Impacts

What is Hikikomori?

Hikikomori is defined as a condition characterized by extreme social withdrawal, in which individuals isolate themselves at home for six months or longer, avoiding school, work, and social interactions. Coined by Tamaki Saitō in the 90s, characteristics include avoidance of interpersonal relationships, emotional distress, dependency on parents, and a profound fear of failure in societal roles (Li & Wong, 2015; Norris, 2014). According to (Kato et al., 2012), the Japanese standardized diagnostic criteria in Japan typically include three elements: prolonged *social withdrawal* lasting at least six months, marked *functional impairment* in daily living, and *exclusion* of other *psychiatric disorders* or major depression unless hikikomori behaviour is the primary concern.

Recent International research has demonstrated that hikikomori-like behaviours also appear in South Korea, Hong Kong, Spain, and the United States (Kato et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2022).

This expansion has led scholars to acknowledge the lack of universal criteria, focusing on prolonged physical isolation and severe social detachment, regardless of cultural background. Further research has also emphasized that *interpersonal relationship difficulties* are core to hikikomori across contexts, suggesting that the phenomenon reflects broader global patterns of social and emotional *alienation*, especially among youth (Yong & Nomura, 2019). Therefore, while rooted in Japanese society, hikikomori has evolved into a globally recognized psycho-social condition that challenges traditional distinctions between psychiatric disorder and social pathology.

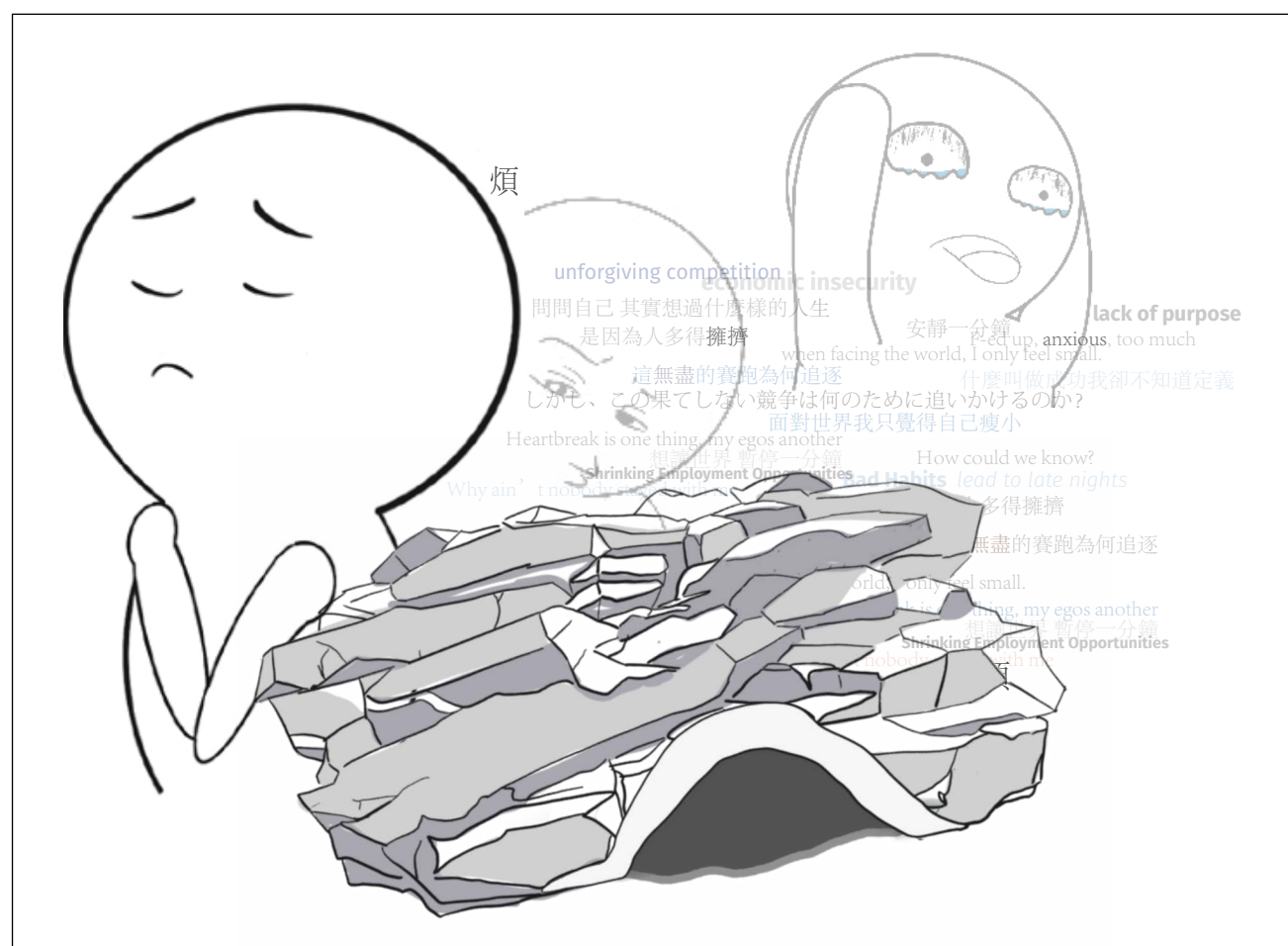


Fig 10 Graphic representation of the Hikikomori Phenomenon

Through the lens of a Hikikomori

Why do some people become hikikomori's and the others don't? Not everyone who is employment disadvantaged or socially excluded a hikikomori. Then when do some take up this form while the others don't.

A big part of it is how we perceive the world. Hikikomori individuals experience the world through a lens of profound fear, distorted social expectations, and defensive withdrawal. Hikikomori often perceives societal interaction as a high-risk tasks associated with humiliation, failure, or unbearable judgment (Li & Wong, 2015; Yong & Nomura, 2019). To quote an ex-hikikomori "It's like my social battery, motivation, and will to live, is always scrapping the bottom of the barrel". When a sense of threat is picked up, their internal world becomes dominated by avoidance, hyper-vigilance, and or mistrust of social engagement.

Furthermore, recent cognitive perspective studies shed light on deeper processes shaping their worldview. A paper on the relation between Spatial cognition, social cognition and individual differences in the Built Environment, shows how disruptions in how individuals perceive physical space also impact how they navigate social relationships (Proulx et al., 2016). One of the core contributors to the Hikikomori Phenomenon. For hikikomori, ordinary social environments, e.g. school corridors, public streets, or workplaces, become cognitively mapped as threatening or unsafe.

Spatial anxiety overlaps with heightened interpersonal distrust of fear, leading to a world perceived as fragmented, unpredictable, and hostile. Perceiving even neutral social environments as threatening (Lin et al., 2022). This all plays out in the automatic subconscious mind within split-seconds. Thus, hikikomori's withdrawal is not merely emotional or psychological, it is rooted in a deeper cognitive misalignment. A world where space, self, and others are perceived through layers of fear and distortion, making retreat into isolation a psychologically rational choice, even though maladaptive.

As the previously mentioned paper on social and spatial cognition in the built environment explains: "Who we are might be integrated with where we are, and impact how we move through space. Individuals vary in personality, navigational strategies, and numerous cognitive and social competencies." (Proulx et al., 2016). This perspective helps explain the contrasting personalities that hikikomori often display in online environments compared to real-life social settings.

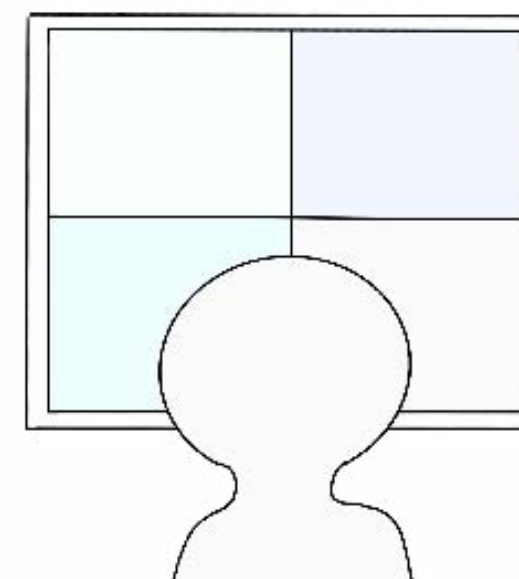


Fig 11 Hikikomori Perspectives

Societal Point of View

On the other side of this social network, hikikomoris are often also perceived with fear, misunderstanding, and stigma. It certainly didn't help when early Japanese media often portrayed hikikomori as lazy, violent or abnormal (Li & Wong, 2015). Reinforcing existing societal prejudices against socially marginalized minorities.

Having a family member who's a hikikomori, comes with a sense of deep *shame*. Making many to either conceal or deny their family conditions rather than seek help. The strain affects not just the individual, but the entire household, leading to widespread mental health deterioration and fractured family bonds (Norris, 2014).

Linguistically, the very term "hikikomori" has acquired a *derogatory connotation*. They are branded as social failures and reinforcing marginalization. This societal *rejection* exhibits its exclusion on *multiple levels*, from key social institutions such as education, employment, to even health services (Kato et al., 2012). Making *stigmatisation* more of a barrier to reintegration.

Hikikomoris are then caught in this feedback loop, where external stigma binds to internal fear. Symbolically, hikikomori's have come to represent the hidden consequences of Japan's rigid post-industrial society and cultural conformist pressures. Highlighting the social structure that struggles to accommodate vulnerability, diversity, and non-linear life paths.

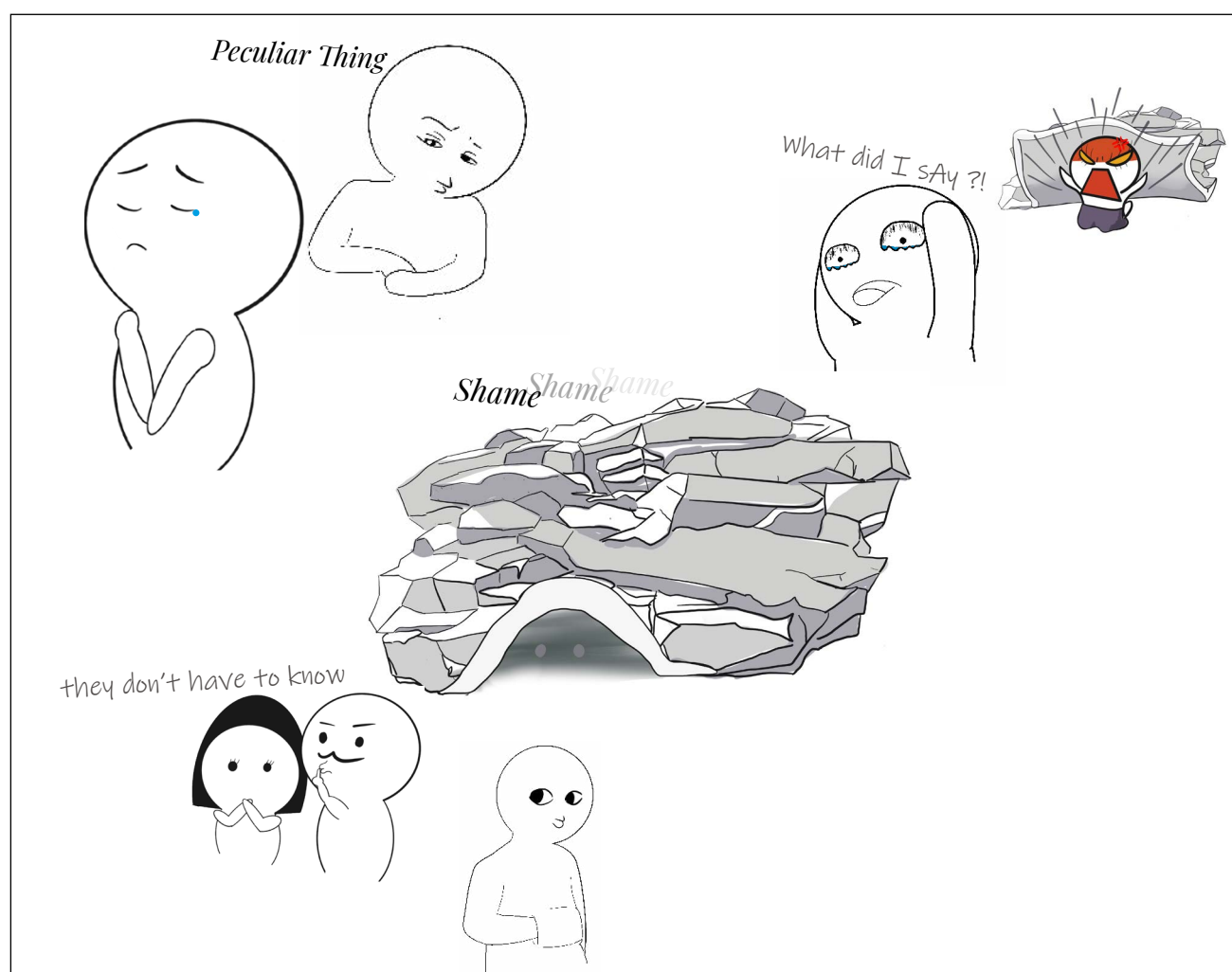


Fig 12 To see them from your point of view (POV)

Critique; Societal Urgencies and Gaps

Despite the growing awareness of the hikikomori phenomenon and its stigmatization, Japan's top-down interventions have remained quite fragmented and often insufficient.

Studies have warned ignoring the hikikomori situation may contribute to worsening social exclusion, rising suicide risk, and an **aging population** burdened with caring for long-term withdrawn individuals (Kato et al., 2012; Norris, 2014; Yong & Nomura, 2019). Yet, there remains a notable lack of policy consensus and diagnostic clarity, which hinders the development of unified strategies (Kato et al., 2012).

Hikikomori is deeply entangled with Japanese labour structure, as many affected individuals fall into the NEET category "Not in Employment, Education, or Training". This highlights both **economic disengagement** and **social detachment** (Li & Wong, 2015). They represent a large sectioned off untapped human capital. What "should have been" workforce that remains inactive (Norris, 2014), an estimate of 1.46 million Hikikomoris in Japan (Yeung, J., & Karasawa, M., April 7, 2023). That's about 2% of Japan's workforce (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2023).

Their prolonged absence from schools and jobs signals not just individual personal cries for help but structural inefficiencies. Neglecting this population will just amplify the already declining of productive demographic and aggravate the socio-economic challenges posed by Japan's rapidly aging population (Yong & Nomura, 2019).

On the treatment side, hikikomoris are often seen and responded with medicalized treatments, focusing on individual psychiatric help on medical symptoms, without addressing broader social structures (Kato et al., 2012; Li & Wong, 2015). On top of that, there's no clear agreement on how to diagnose hikikomori. Only about 30% of Japanese psychiatrists think the usual medical guidelines really fit these cases. Hikikomori can look like depression, autism, or personality disorders, which makes it even more confusing. What's limiting is that outside Japan, there's not much research or data, and mental health models often ignore the cultural and social factors that play a big role (Kato et al., 2012).

All this confusion makes it harder to create good policies, treatments, or support systems. Showing that we need better ways to understand and respond to hikikomori.

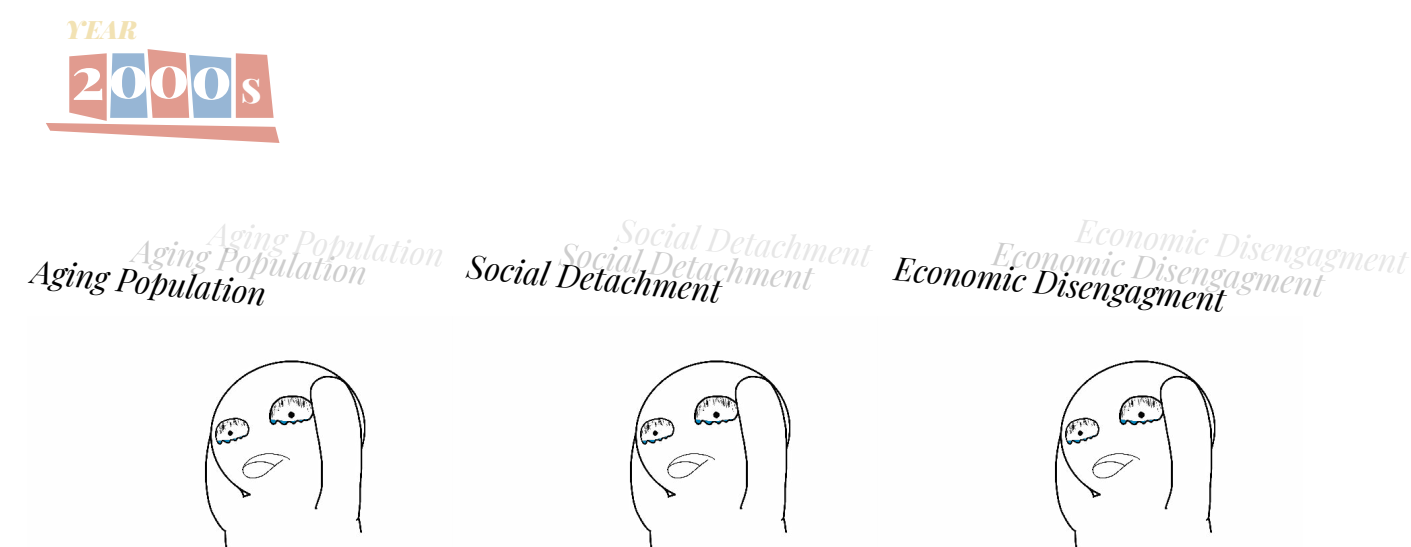


Fig 13 Current Hikikomori phenomenon Impacts

Problem Statement

Japan's developmentalist mindset, rooted in post-war growth and recovery, has prioritized state-led planning and expansion, while turning away from the condition of its social structure. As the country moved into a post-industrial era, national efforts focused on reviving finance and infrastructure, left the social world overlooked and weakened. Systems struggled to absorb those who fall outside its rigid civic paths.

This has led to rising isolation, especially among hikikomori, whose long-term withdrawal reflects not just personal difficulty but a failure of the society to create inclusive and adaptive structures. Existing responses remain fragmented and top-down, addressing surface problems without rebuilding the spaces and relationships people need to reenter public life. The result is a growing population who feel unseen, unsupported, and structurally excluded.

Critique

Japan's continuous tight knit cooperation between government ministries, big corporations, and banks, responded with fiscal and monetary stimuli to economic downfalls. With policies and institutional guidelines, the developmentalist mindset that has persisted all these decades have also affected the social structures, does not provide a holistic approach to revitalisation. (Vibhu Jain & Yuko Okazawa, 2017a, 2017b; Xu, 2019; Zhang, 2017). However, efficiency and productivity driven urban development's also affects cities and their inhabitants (Brenner et al., 2012).

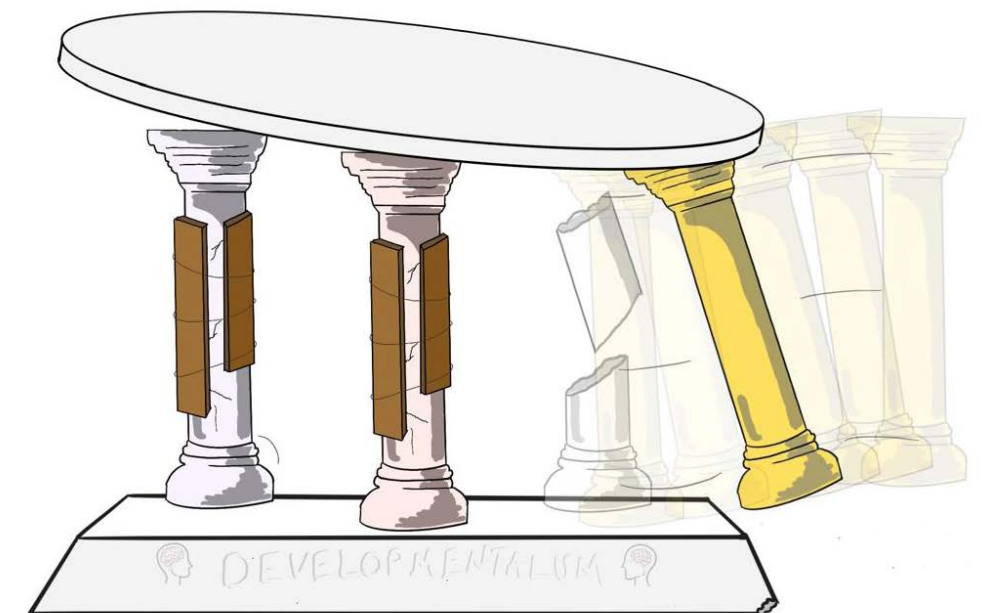


Fig 14 Metaphorical Swapping out for a new Column

Conceptual Framework

(Societal Structure)

Economic Impacts on Society; Personal to Systemic failure

Social structures are often imagined as rational systems, organized, supportive, and designed for collective well-being. But when these systems are shaped by outdated expectations, they begin to misalign with the realities they claim to serve.

In post-industrial Japan, many institutions still follow principles rooted in the mindset that made them champions in the industrial era: uniformity, productivity, and linear progression. These values once offered stability and economic growth, but they now fall short in a world marked by unpredictability, emotional strain, and fragmented life paths. The very structures that once held society together are now, for many, sources of exclusion and quiet collapse. This framework questions not individual dysfunction, but structural misfit: how the structural design of society itself no longer supports the diversity and complexity of life within it.

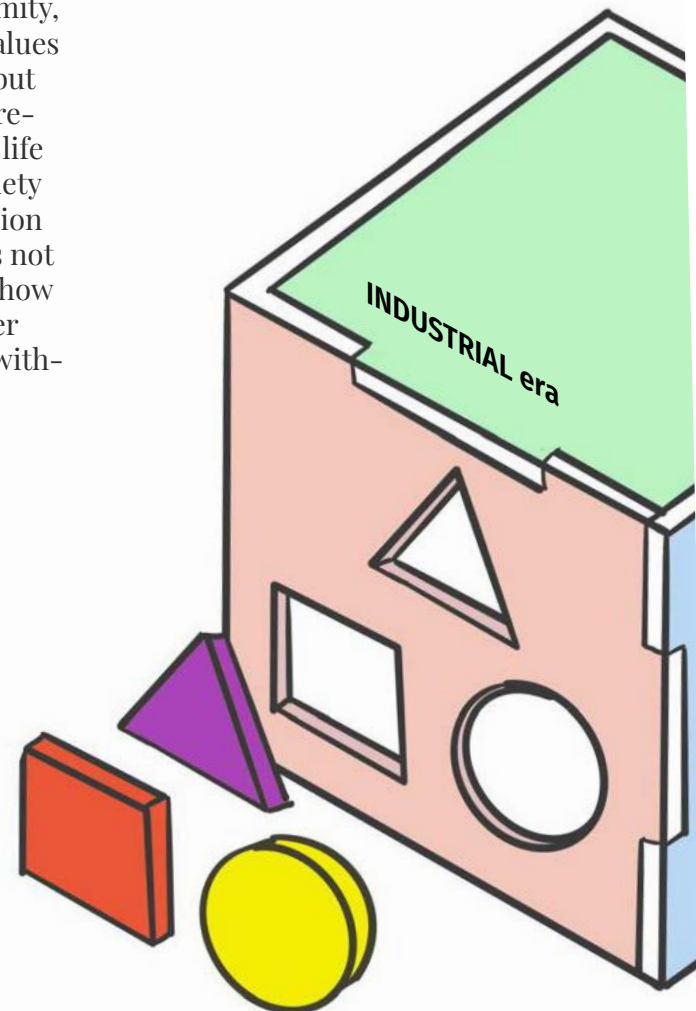


Fig 15 Conceptual Framework (1) : Forms fitting

This tension can be seen through the metaphor of a shape sorter, a children's toy that accepts only specific blocks through specific holes. In this analogy, society is the toy, and its openings represent the narrow definitions of value, productivity, and normalcy that institutions demand. During the industrial era, these openings were well matched to the social forms of the time: stable jobs, linear careers, traditional family roles. The system "worked" because the shape of society matched the form of its expectations. But as the world changed, economically, demographically, and culturally, the mold (*people*) did not. Now, even if people themselves haven't fundamentally changed, the system rotates to a face that no longer fits them. They are not rejected for their failure to adapt, but because the form itself has become misaligned with the social body it claims to support.

The metaphor also reveals how systems resist change. The toy remains rigid, designed to sort, not to question its own openings. In the same way, post-industrial institutions often focus on getting people to fit, through education, correction, or discipline, rather than reassessing whether the structure itself still makes sense. This project suggests that the root of many contemporary crises lies not in the individual's inability to participate in society, but in society's inability to accommodate the forms that people now take.

The question is not how to fix the person, but how to reshape the structure. Before we can rebuild more inclusive futures, we must first recognize that the form itself, the shape of society, is no longer self-evident, and may no longer be fit for the world it's supposed to hold.

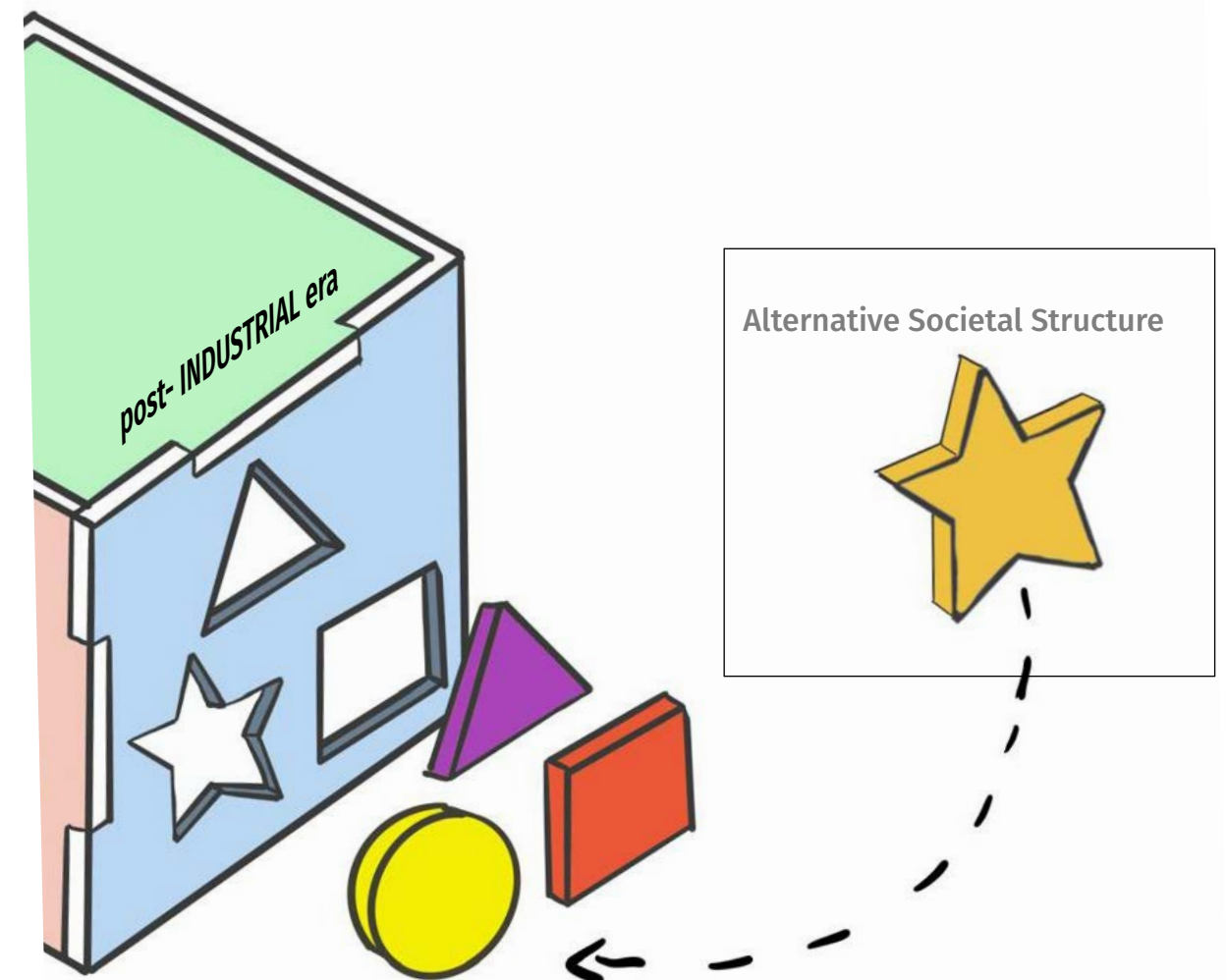


Fig 16 Conceptual Framework (2) : Alternative Societal Structure demanded

Case Study

Bottom-Up Revolution

Societies around the world have long treated conditions to do with mental health such as hikikomori as societal anomalies, an abnormality that requires institutional correction. That said these approaches to “correction” often alienate the very people they intend to help.

However, all the way on the eastern end of the world, there is a little town in *Hokkaido Japan* called *Urakawa*. The town although small of approximately 12,000 people, and decreasing in population, has made quite an impact as one of the leading organizations in the fields of community-based mental health, social welfare, and participatory research (Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025). With a small grassroots community called Bethel House. The town has reached levels of cooperation and social reintegration, not many has seen before.

As Karen Nakamura illustrates in *A Disability of the Soul*, Bethel was formed by individuals living with psychiatric disorders who rejected institutionalization in favour of creating their own supportive, transparent, and participatory space. It has since grown into a social welfare hub where care is relational, peer-led, and visible (Nakamura, 2013).

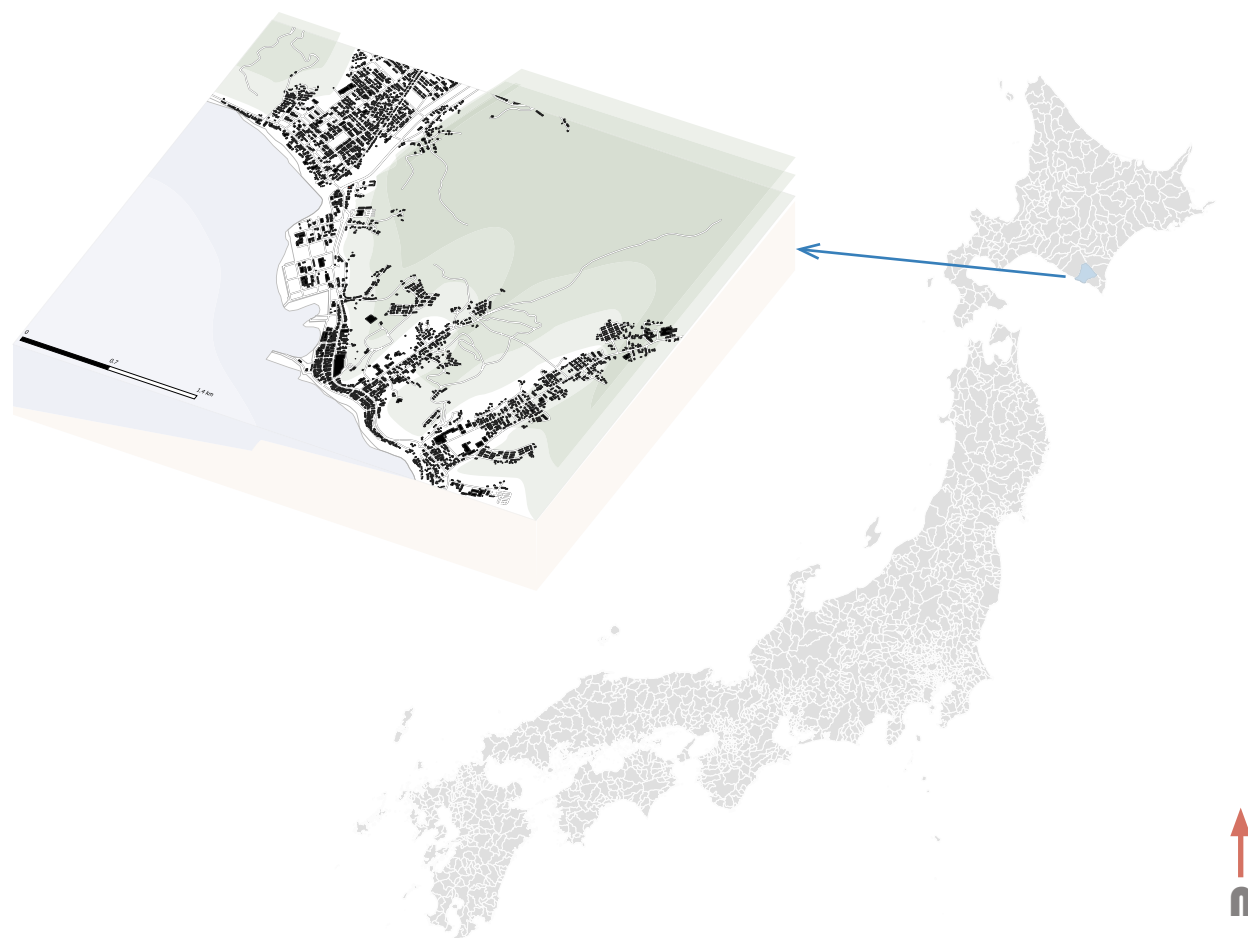


Fig 17 Urakawa in Hokkaido, Japan (Not up to scale)

Bethel House acts as the local activity center for people with mental disorders in Urakawa Town, Hokkaido. It includes several organizations, such as Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, which the project will centre around for its social integration and community networking initiatives. Collectively with all the different organizations the centre is also referred to as “Beteru.” Bethel House is built on the philosophy that people living with mental illness or distress should not be hidden or “cured,” but rather openly included in the life of the community.

Its activities include communal living, self-run support programs, and daily meetings where members share experiences and support one another (Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025).

The organization also engages in economic activities that directly benefit the local community; for instance, it began by selling kombu seaweed, which generated income and allowed members to contribute to the town’s economy (Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025).

The integration of Bethel members into local businesses and disaster preparedness initiatives not only improves their own sense of autonomy, determination and empowerment, but enhances the town’s social and civic resilience (Disabilities Information Resources, 2015). Rather than being a peripheral welfare institution, Bethel House plays a central role in Urakawa’s communal and economic life. Key to bridging the gap between marginalized individuals and the broader public.



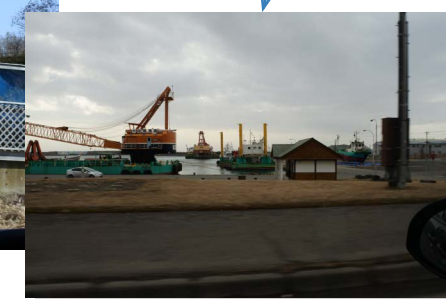
New Bethel Front Facade
(Community Center)



Abandoned Housing



Church Noah



Pier



Abandoned Tracks



Rupines Hills

Fig 18 Landmarks of Urakawa

Case Study

Tōjisha Kenkyū

Ikuyoshi Mukaiyachi * and Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation
Social worker, Bethel House / Professor, Health Sciences University of Hokkaido, Japan
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Central to Bethel’s philosophy is tōjisha kenkyū. Tōjisha kenkyū, **a concept, an approach, a vision and a series of methods and tools**, turns dependencies on psychiatric professionals to participant collaboration. Members would collaboratively investigate their own symptoms and lives and discuss approaches and challenges.

The concept of tōjisha kenkyū, or “**user-led self-research**,” wasn’t a thing when Bethel House started decades back. The term gradually emerged in the early 2000s as members began to give structure to the way they practiced *open dialogues* and interactions. According to Bethel staffs, many of their practices began simply because they felt they were worth doing. It was only when visitors or collaborators pointed out, ‘Hey, you’re doing *social skills training*’ or ‘This resembles *cognitive behavior therapy exercises*’, that they began to name these activities and recognize them collectively as part of tōjisha kenkyū by 2001 (Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025).

Tōjisha kenkyū centers the perspectives of those most directly affected by mental health or social withdrawal. At Bethel, these self-discoveries were shared openly through group meetings, one on one meetings, group dialogues, and newsletters. Visitors have described this environment as one where honesty and emotional visibility replaces social stigma (Nakamura, 2013). Rather than aiming for reintegration into mainstream norms and values, Bethel’s approach seeks to transform spaces itself, making room for people to be seen and heard as they are.

Noboru Tomonari in his publication, *Hikikomori Testimonies: Rise of Tōjisha and the Sharing of Narratives*, explains how such reflective practices allowed hikikomori and others in marginalized groups to shift from being objects of treatment to participants of knowledge production (Tomonari, 2022). Every knowledge is beneficial, especially the “failed experiences” as one of bethel philosophies would put it “We value positive helplessness”

Hikikomori Testimonies:
Such reflective *practices* allowed hikikomori and others in marginalized groups to *shift* from being objects of treatment to *participants* of knowledge production



Fig 19 Daily Meetings (Tōjisha Kenkyū)

Evolution; Exclusion to Community Inclusion

Founded in 1987 by a small group of volunteers and individuals with mental health conditions, it emerged as an alternative to institutional psychiatric care (Nakamura, 2013).

Bethel House in Urakawa, began not as an institution, but as a collective response to exclusion. In 1978, the “Donguri (Acorn) Club” was formed as a self-help group for people living with schizophrenia (Promote growth strategy team, 2025). About a decade later in 1987, a group of volunteers and local residents formally established Bethel House as a space for communal living, based on values of transparency, mutual aid, and public engagement (Nakamura, 2013; Promote growth strategy team, 2025).

The organization’s early activities included shared meals, newsletter production, (kombu) seaweed sales, and open dialogues with residents of Urakawa. This not only started social reintegration for bethel members but also revitalized the town’s local economy and sense of community (Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025).

As Bethel matured, its presence became visible in local infrastructures. Participating in local emergency response planning. Members would help develop evacuation manuals and participated in disaster readiness training during 2006 and 2009, integrating people with psychiatric diagnoses into the civic fabric of the town. It’s not just about knowing who is physically capable and who isn’t, but also about having the confidence to overcome challenges together. (Disabilities Information Resources, 2015). A powerful gesture of trust and inclusion. Through newsletters and public conversations, Bethel began to share its philosophy more widely. A sister program in metropolitan Tokyo was eventually formed, extending Bethel’s practices to a Urban metropolis setting.



Fig 20 Kombu Packaging team Meetings (Tōjisha Kenkyū)

Case Study

Machizukuri

Shigeru Satoh * and Shin Aiba

Professor Emeritus of Waseda University * Professor of Urban Planning, Tokyo Metropolitan University

Book – Japanese Machizukuri and Community Engagement; History, Method and Practice

Social Reintegration Indicator:

The transformation of Urakawa reflects a town-wide model of care and collaboration, embedded not only in community centers but throughout organization and its connection to the broader urban fabric.

The participatory spirit of Bethel that encourages social inclusion aligns closely with the Japanese concept of machizukuri, **a philosophy, a concept, an approach, a vision and a series of methods and tools, of town-building** grounded in local knowledge and co-creation. Unlike Western community development models that rely on top-down planning and development, machizukuri emphasizes horizontal relationships and lengthy iterative collaboration (Aiba, 2020a, 2020b; Satoh, 2020).

The term combines “*machi*” and “*zukuri*”. “**Machi**” meaning town as both place and community, from town structure to intangible objects, from physical environments to social activities that plays upon them. “**Zukuri**”, meaning the act of making or crafting, especially to cultivate with effort and respect. As Satoh explains, machizukuri represents “*a philosophy, a vision, a method and a set of practices*” designed to reflect local values, histories, and social needs.

Bethel House programs embody a vision of integration, empowerment, and collaboration. Multiple employment support centers operate under Bethel House, offering members opportunities to work if they choose to, e.g. members working as drivers for the *Driving Team* of Bethel. These employment paths are shaped through ongoing dialogue; between members and staff, and in cooperation with local government, residents, and institutions.

Noa, facilitates community-based physical labour such as garbage collection, grass cutting, cleaning, moving assistance, and personal support services. Noa members actively assess the physical needs of the town and respond to them, using local newsletters and pamphlets to spread information. Residents can sign up for these services at reasonable rates, creating a locally rooted, mutually beneficial exchange.

Internal teams like Noa collaborate directly with the community, not only addressing household needs but co-producing solutions. These everyday interactions demonstrate that Bethel House is not just situated in Urakawa. Bethel plays an active role in shaping the town’s cleanliness, safety, economy, and culture (Promote growth strategy team, 2025)

Another center, *Betesuda*, complements employment support by providing daily living assistance to members. Like Noa, it identifies work opportunities based on local needs. For decades, Betesuda has been known for its sea kelp packaging work, carried out in close collaboration with the town’s kelp manufacturers, playing a big role in the Urakawa kelp supply chain. Bringing both recognition and **economic benefit** to Urakawa. They also support local farmers with seasonal tasks like removing strawberry stems, offering vital labor during peak times. These partnerships are powerful expressions of trust, inclusion, and the value of community-based support (Promote growth strategy team, 2025)

As a study of community placemaking argues, machizukuri engagements can mitigate *stigmatizations*, empowers residents to express their *needs* and desires, enhancing public spaces and *management*, to reclaim space and *participate* in shaping shared futures (Yu et al., 2023). In contrast to top-down approaches, such as government-led developments and outsourcing management and operations, machizukuri thrives when society, institutions, and local governments work together to identify problems, develop solutions, and implement them through ongoing, collaborative participation. Bethel’s approach, through *tōjisha kenkyū* and embedded social activity, mirrors this participatory energy.

Social Reintegration Indicator

Machizukuri, in this project, is more than a planning tool or concept; it is an **indicator of social reintegration**. Satoh describes machizukuri as a process that reflects the social dynamics of local communities, integrating shared culture, local characteristics and history into planning and development processes (Satoh, 2019, 2020). It is another layer to the fabric of Bethel’s community’s social structure. Through machizukuri activities, Bethel has transformed Urakawa not only in its physical space but also in its social relationships. It has created a welfare model where care is practiced openly and accepted, in collaboration with others, rather than being hidden behind institutional walls.

In this model, it is not just the community centers that express a culture of care and collaboration, but the entire organization and the town itself. This approach reflects the depth of *bottom-up, participatory ecosystems*, where individuals contribute based on their abilities and lived experiences. It shows that welfare can be deeply connected to place, socially meaningful, and emotionally resonant. In this way, Bethel House is more than a model of psychiatric care. It is a living example of coherence, a way of living or organizing that feels whole and integrated, as well as a continuous expression of trust, acceptance, and respect. The value of community-based support grounded in the Japanese tradition of machizukuri.



Fig 21 Driving Team driving bethel members to the super market

Quality (*without a name*)

Christopher Alexander * Christian Norberg-Schulz

was an Emeritus professor at the University of California, Berkeley * Norwegian architect

The Pattern Language & The Timeless Way of Building * Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture

Christopher Alexander insists that good environments possess a certain elusive quality. Something that is difficult to find, catch, understand, or define which he calls the “quality without a name.” This is not a quality of aesthetics or function alone; it is a deep, systemic feeling that an environment is alive, where the atmosphere feels coherent, and the context of it seems morally meaningful. As Christopher Alexander emphasizes disappointedly in his lecture UVC Presents Selections From OOPSLA ’98, many pattern-based design efforts fail because they do not reach this **wholeness**. They replicate form but not spirit. They become *toolkits of “neat format allowing you to write down good ideas, as useful vehicle of communication.”* However, they lack what he calls **coherence** and **continuous moral occupation**. A condition where individuals do not merely inhabit space but care for and shape it continuously (Alexander, 1998).

Similar ideologies that emphasize the importance of a living structure are echoed by Christian Norberg-Schulz in his 1979 book *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. In it, he explores the concept of the “Spirit of the Place” (Latin: *Genius Loci*), arguing that built environments should express and enhance the unique character or “spirit” of a place. The concept suggests that built form should not merely provide physical shelter but should support dwelling.

This means creating environments where people can feel rooted, connected, and able to live meaningfully, in relation to the preexisting natural, historical, and cultural conditions of the place. These entities of memory, context, and identity shape the character of a place and contribute to the sense of *quality* that Christopher Alexander describes.

For the Forget Me Not Project, the “quality” Alexander describes resonates with what Bethel House in Urakawa embodies. In that community, individuals once withdrawn or ostracized from society now live alongside others, contributing economically, socially, and emotionally to town life (Disabilities Information Resources, 2015; Nakamura, 2013; Promote growth strategy team, 2025; Urakawa Bethel House Social Welfare Corporation, 2025). Through *tōjisha kenkyū* members engage in ongoing, reflection, transforming their life challenges into collective understanding (Tomonari, 2022). This dynamic sustains Bethel’s identity and connects it with its environment. It is not just a care model, it is a living system.



Fig 22 Sharing Candy as a form of connection

Spirit of the Place:

Norberg-Schulz in his 1979 book *Genius Loci*

Form should not merely provide physical shelter but should support dwelling.

The Pattern Language

Christopher Alexander

was an Emeritus professor at the University of California, Berkeley

The Pattern Language & The Timeless Way of Building

Pattern language, as defined by Alexander and interpreted by other scholars, is not only a method of analysing space and social structure but also a conceptual tool for recognising the patterns that shape how people interact with their environments. It bridges social sciences and urbanism, drawing from anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology to address socio-spatial questions (Rooij and van Dorst 2020). By identifying *recurring configurations* that support human well-being and social coherence, pattern language operates empirically in both experiential and scientific terms (Dovey 1990). It stresses the importance of spatial coherence and its relationship to psychological stability and collective identity (Salingaros 2000).

In this project, pattern language is approached not as a method for generating design, but as a **structure for analysis**. Rather than applying it to create form, it is used to uncover meaning embedded in existing spatial and social arrangements. This shift allows the method to support a backwards reading of space, starting from observed *behaviours, social rituals, and institutional dynamics*, and tracing them toward larger underlying structures. By examining small-scale patterns such as how people gather, share responsibilities, or occupy transitional spaces, the project looks for relationships that link these patterns together in meaningful ways. These are not isolated observations but part of a larger field of connections that reveal *how space is socially constructed and interpreted*.

Pattern language is especially useful in this context because it gives structure to complex and layered realities. Many of the relationships being studied at Bethel House, such as trust-building, mutual care, or the quiet assertion of personal dignity, are not always visible through conventional planning analysis. The method supports an understanding of these subtleties by focusing on what emerges from practice rather than policy. While spatial conditions are important, they are not the core of this approach. The emphasis lies in the social and systemic relations that space both supports and reflects. This makes pattern language a particularly effective tool for understanding the lived experience of vulnerable groups and how institutions can respond to their needs in grounded, contextual ways.

Project Aim

This research aims to evaluate whether the pattern language model of Bethel House provides a practical and healing model for hikikomori reintegration. It explores how this model contributes to the re-stabilization and resiliency of Japan's developmentalist mindset in the post-industrial era by assessing the existing system and proposing additional patterns that support a more coherent expression of the quality (without a name) if required.

Research Questions

Main Research Question

How does the pattern language of Bethel House demonstrate social reintegration through machizukuri, and can it model a healing structure for Japan's post-industrial society?

Sub Research Questions

1. **W**hat patterns can be observed in the everyday systems and interactions at Bethel House?
2. **W**hat role does *tōjisha kenkyū* play in sustaining and generating these patterns?
3. **H**ow do these patterns support social inclusion and emotional safety for the socially excluded individuals?
4. **H**ow are these patterns linked to the values and practices of machizukuri in Urakawa?
5. **D**o the patterns at Bethel House show signs of coherence and continuous moral occupation (Quality)?
6. **H**ow do these patterns reflect an alternative to Japan's developmentalist social structure?

Hypothesis

Japan's traditional developmentalist model, characterized by top-down coordination between state, industry, and finance, has failed to provide holistic or inclusive solutions to social disintegration and mental health marginalization. In contrast, Bethel House exemplifies a viable, bottom-up alternative where participatory, locally embedded practices like *tōjisha kenkyū* and *machizukuri* generate resilient, emotionally coherent communities.

This model suggests that sustainable revitalization in post-industrial Japan may be more effectively achieved through decentralized, relational, and care-centered social structures that value lived experience over institutional correction.

Theoretical Framework

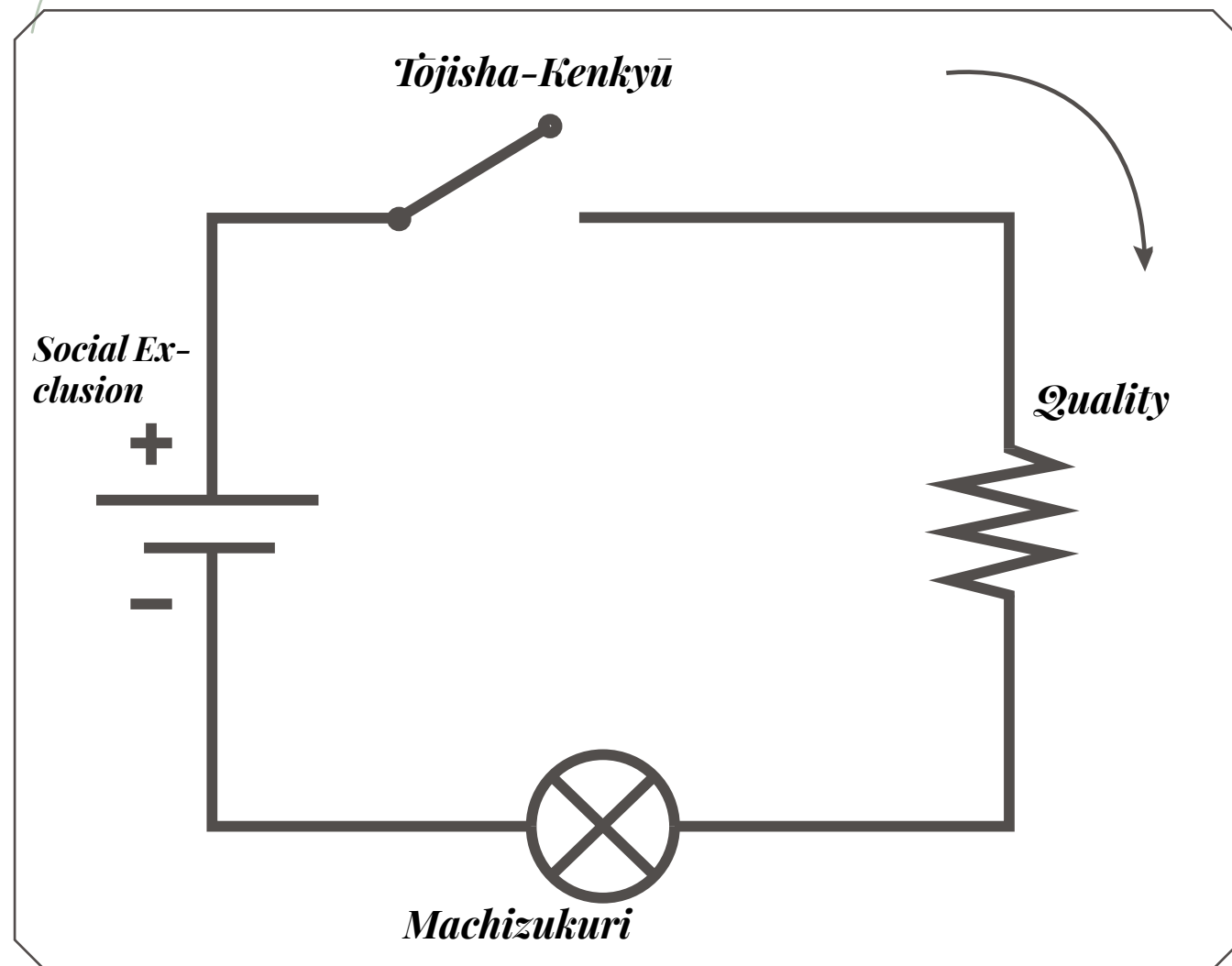
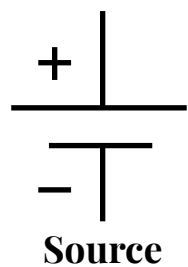


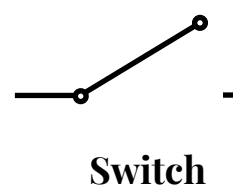
Fig 23 Theoretical Framework : Circuit

Manual



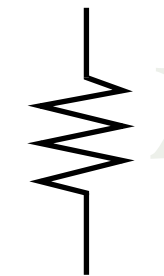
Social Exclusion

The theoretical framework can be read like a circuit: each element acts as a component in a system starting with the entry; the *Hidden Individuals*. When all parts connect, the “lamp” lights up, signaling that machizukuri and social reintegration are active and coherent.



Tōjisha-Kenkyū

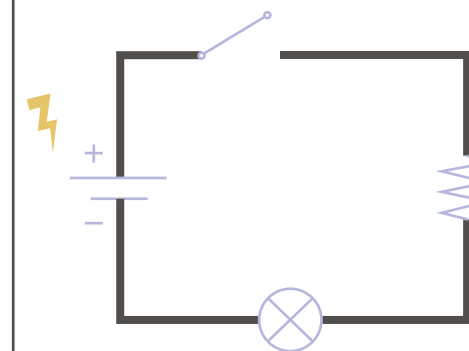
Bethel, grounded in the philosophy of Tōjisha Kenkyū, fosters a community mindset built on mutual reflection, shared experience, and collective growth.



Resistor

Quality (Without A Name)

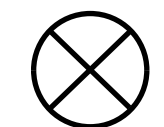
Forget Me Not uses Christopher Alexander's concept of quality as a theoretical lens to investigate what makes Machizukuri (social reintegration) succeed. Not just in terms of social welfare services, but in atmosphere, civic systems, patterns, rhythm, and meaning. In Bethel, social interactions are layered, intentional, and embedded in local life. The community is not built through centralized programs but through repetitions of shared experiences; shared meals, shared dialogues, and open collaborations that foster belonging and acceptance.



Circuit

Pattern Language

Despite the critiques on Pattern Language, Rooij and van Dorst (2020) maintains that the pattern language method offers valuable tools for systematic assessment and comparative learning. It allows this project to analyse sites and locations by identifying the presence or absence of certain patterns. Then organize this complexity into practical design principles.



Lamp

Machizukuri

Machizukuri shares a similar conceptual bloodline with Alexander's framework of Quality. Both emphasizing coherency and continuity for a living structure (Alexander, 1977, 1998). Like Quality, it relies on shared ownership and long-term cohesion.

When the Bethel Community meet with town officials, run civic safety events, or contribute to economic activities, they enact machizukuri. But more than that, they reveal that the presence of the quality (without a name) is what makes machizukuri visible and real. If that quality is present, then machizukuri is working. Not as a policy or model, but as lived reintegration.

Theoretical Framework

Verifying the Quality

Alexander sets out two rules for confirming whether a place or project has the quality without a name Alexander, C. (n.d.):

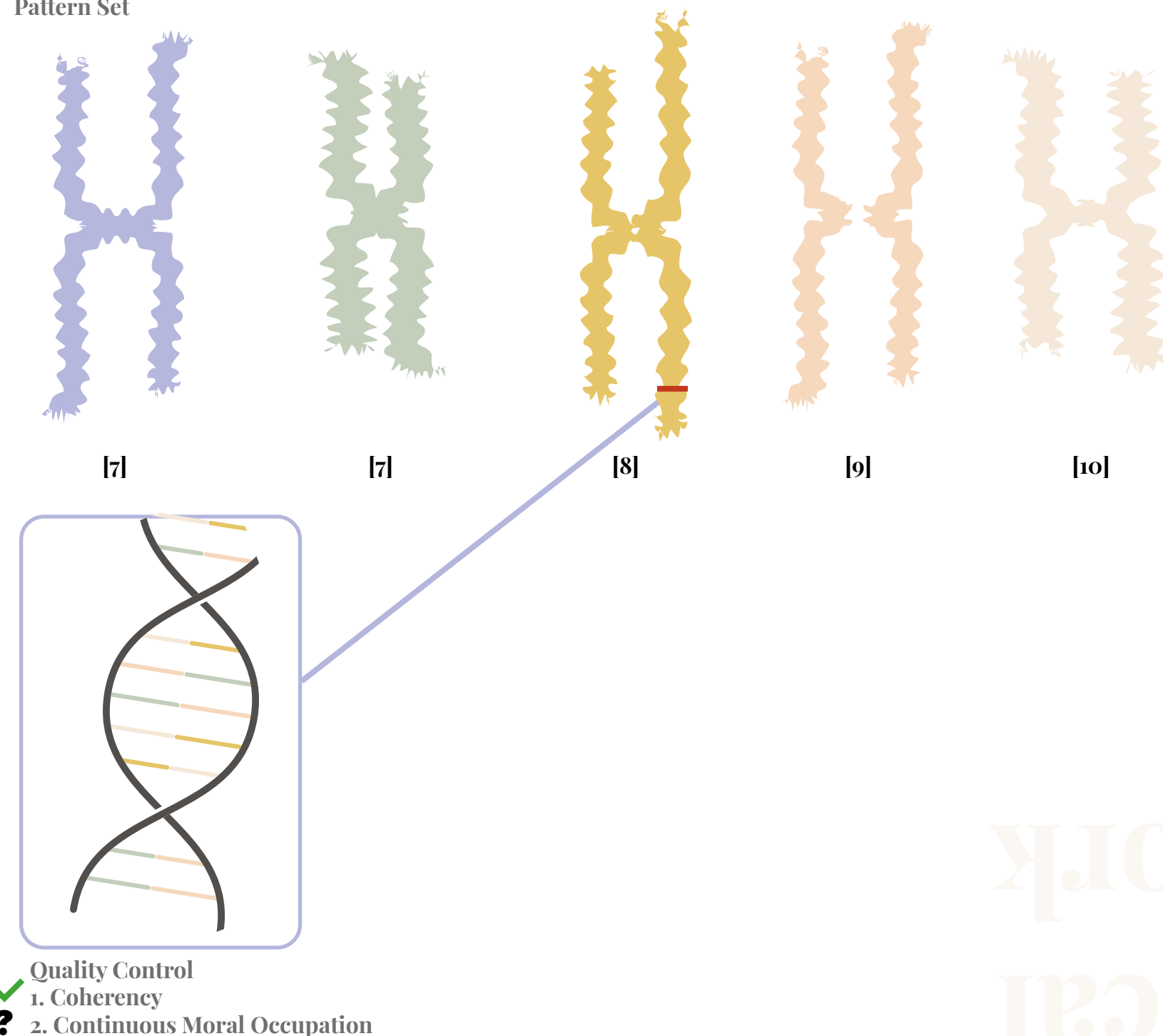
1. Coherence: The way all parts of a system work together as a unified whole. Every entity must collaborate seamlessly, creating unity across roles, structures, and time. This allows the environment to “come to life,” playing a foundational role in shaping the quality of the space.

Quote

“What I see everywhere is people using pattern language as checklists. But the patterns aren’t just pieces – they’re meant to support a structure of feeling, a way of being. – In the things that have life, the parts go together. They’re not arbitrary. They form a whole that cannot be separated without losing its essence.”
(Alexander, 1998)

Quality control on the Genetic Building Blocks to Bethel House , Urakawa

Pattern Set



2. The continuous moral occupation: The ongoing ethical commitment of stakeholders, to inhabit, to care, and to participate, in creation and maintenance. The quality of creation means nothing without people’s continuous acts of intention and care—their fundamental human responsibility to invest, respect, and sustain with intention for the whole.

Quote

“I’m talking about making a world where the soul can thrive. – You have to be in constant touch with the thing. Not just building it and leaving it. But living with it, listening to it, letting it tell you what it needs.”
(Alexander, 1998)

These rules allow us to verify whether if, the patterns identified, are truly healing and inclusive. Bethel House Urakawa, as a site analysed with pattern language, based off tojisha kenkyuu, presents a compelling model where these rules appear fully active. To construct quality that indicates the success of Machizukuri.

Fig 24 Metaphor to Evaluating the Pattern Language

Research Methodology and Approach

Site Definition

Identifying the Social Issue

This research investigates the phenomenon of social reintegration of hikikomori through the lens of pattern language, using Bethel House in Urakawa, Hokkaido as a **case study**. Hikikomori were identified early in the project as key indicators of deeper structural fractures in society. Literature reveals the need for not just individual action, but also societal acceptance and collaboration in reintegration, community engagement.

Criteria for Case Selection

Guided by this framework, various domestic and international case studies were explored, through civic and spatial lens that were institutional-led. The project sought after initiatives that involved both local communities and professional or institutional support for empirical data. While urban organizations such as Alice's Hiroba, a youth-focused NPO in Gunma Japan, provided valuable insight, they were ultimately too specific in scope. The organization focused more on mental health for the developing minds, from children to adolescents. Which positions itself in more of a prevention to treatment category. The research instead required a broader *model of integration* that connected marginalized individuals of *all ages* with the *wider local population*.

Exploring Machizukuri

The concept of machizukuri, emerged as a potential framework to support community engagement through a civic and spatial lens. Offering an alternative to the more commonly discussed psychiatric, policy, or economically driven perspectives on the topic. A visit to Assoc. Professor Kenjiro Matsuura (Chiba University) offered first-hand insights into how *machizukuri* can *operate in urban settings through institutional-led initiatives* such as shared park care or street farming can be so engaging for the citizens on a community level. These examples demonstrated that institutions can still participate in bottom-up projects when working alongside local agendas.

Expert Guidance and Final Selection

Through discussions with Japanese psychiatrist Dr. Yuka Kudo, who specializes in mental health care, a more fitting rural example was identified: **Bethel House in Urakawa**. Its unique model on inclusion, self-discovery, and lived civic practice, offered a rich example of community-based institution-supported social reintegration.

Interview Approach

Methodology

To answer the research questions, the research adopts a methodology that combines intercultural awareness and Homo Ludens (Playing Man) to extract deep systemic insights into pattern language while remaining attentive to where and how these dynamics unfold (Alexander, 1977; Huizinga, 2016; Nunez & Nunez Mahdi, 2021).

Communication Barriers: Intercultural to psychosocial Awareness

The fieldwork occurs within a high-context culture; therefore, the interview process will be rooted in cultural sensitivity. As emphasized in the book *Intercultural Sensitivity: From Denial to Intercultural Competence*. Competence building trust requires awareness of behavioral subtleties and a relational approach to communication.

In Japan's layered communication culture, silence, timing, and gesture often carry more weight than direct expressions. A complete opposite to the Dutch society. To navigate this complexity and enable participants, especially those with psychological vulnerabilities, to express their experiences, opinions and feelings, safely. The research employs a tactic inspired by a master thesis from the Human Centered Design department (Delft University of Technology). A Visual Thinking Tool from Improving Doctor-Patient Communication by Chin-Tang Tsui (Tsui, 2020).



Fig 25 With the help of Intercultural awareness the author was invited to the members personal house for the member's interview session

Research

Interview Approach

Drawing Method: Homo Ludens

The Visual Thinking Tool utilizes a drawing method, which serves as a bridge across cultural and cognitive barriers to address problems with playfulness (Blomdahl et al., 2013; Huizinga, 2016; Tsui, 2020). It externalizes internal states and facilitates non-verbal reflections.

Sketching method as support to interview :

1.

Non-hierarchical communication environment:

Reducing hierarchy and flattening power between interviewer and participant

2.

Memory and metaphor:

Using memory and metaphor helps participants articulate their stories and feel truly heard. Through the selection of suitable visual metaphors, participants gain self-awareness and gradually build a structure around their issues and emotions. Simultaneous drawing and storytelling allows them to express problems in a narrative format. A visual timeline or storybook structure supports them in connecting incidents and making sense of their experiences in a coherent way.

3.

Access to internalized knowledge:

Quick sketches often reveal emotions or thoughts that are difficult to verbalize. This visual expression allows participants to surface non-verbal and internalized knowledge, making it easier for interviewers to understand underlying feelings and perspectives.

Considerations of the Drawing Method

However, co-sketching is time-intensive, unfamiliar to some, and introduces the risk of misinterpretation without guided dialogue. To address this, interviews are expected to last approximately one hour each, covering fewer topics but in greater depth. Inspired by Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture, the creative act of sketching is treated as a form of play (Huizinga, 2016). A way to co-create meaning through imagination.

As the saying goes “Time flies when you are having fun”. This playful process shifts their role from research subjects to co-authors in the storytelling process. Inviting participants to narrate, edit, and visualize their experiences symbolically, transforming their role from subjects to co-authors of the research story.

To level the unspoken hierarchy between interviewee and interviewer. The interviewer will participate in the drawing session. Bringing in the same spirit of sharing and understanding. For this study, the author either sketched the story being told, or played a little game of if the interviewer can draw the same image as the interviewee.



Fig 26 Member Interview (a)



Fig 27 Staff Interview (c)

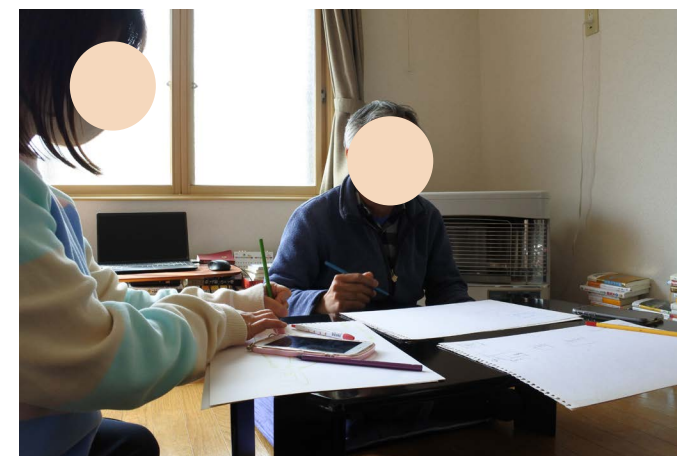


Fig 29 Member Interview (b)



Fig 28 Staff Interview (a)



Fig 30 Staff Interview (b)



Fig 31 Staff Interview (d)

Pattern Language

Patterns

From the interviews, relational diagrams are extracted (*Appendix*). Combined with literature, these are used to identify patterns. Following Alexander (Alexander, 1977, 1998) each pattern connects a recurring problem, the context in which it arises, the actors involved, and the solution applied.

Patterns are constructed through processes of sensemaking, recognizing recurring emotional and behavioral cues, clustering, identifying social systems or rules, and observing structural repetitions. Each pattern can be categorized (*Code*) according to its primary disciplinary focus:

| Code | Disciplinary Category |
|-------|-----------------------|
| Psych | Psychology |
| Socio | Sociology |
| Sp | Spatial |
| Gov | Governance (Policy) |
| Eco | Economy (Finance) |
| His | History |

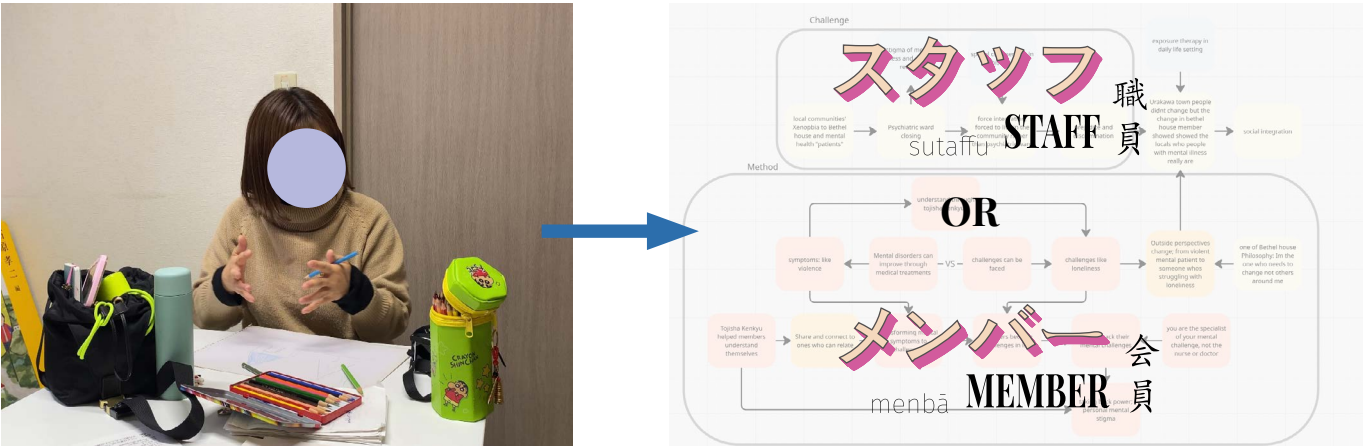


Fig 32 Interview translate to Relational Diagram

In addition to thematic categories, patterns are also classified by two types of scale to better bridge civic dimensions with spatial realities:

- Scales of *Perspective*: these refer to the social or conceptual level from which a pattern operates.
- Scales of *Spatial Context*: these reflect the physical or geographic scope of a pattern, adapted from urban design and planning:

| Scales of Perspective | Scales of Spatial Context |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Personal | Nano |
| Relationships | Micro |
| Community | Meso |
| Town/City | Macro |
| Country | Mega |
| Global | Extra Large |



Fig 33 Pattern Language Scales

These are not isolated features but form a language in which one pattern leads naturally to the next. These principles guide the evaluation of Bethel's systems, which are deeply rooted in to-jisha kenkyuu. This process reveals not only what patterns exist, but also why they work, for whom, and under what conditions.

The patterns are integrated into their respective scales, each represented as a triangle leaning towards a distinct facet of identity associated with Japan's developmentalist mindset. This mindset has shaped policies, institutions, and social structures over generations, influencing systemic frameworks. The patterns align with institutions, such as academic or health institutions, government policies formulated by ministries, and societal structures targeted by this project for conceptual reform. When patterns intersect among these identities, they may blend multiple themes, forming a network within these scales that generates a Bethel House pattern language

From patterns to machizukuri, each identified pattern connects to machizukuri, within the network, not as a top-down policy, but as a lived and evolving practice of community-making. As Satoh emphasizes, machizukuri is not about physical infrastructure but about relational infrastructure. Bethel's practices act as signs of reintegration, expressed through the social and spatial fabric of Urakawa.

According to Proulx et al. (2016), spatial and social cognition are deeply intertwined (Proulx et al., 2016). How people perceive, act within, and move through physical space is closely tied to their self-perception, social identity, and emotional regulation. This cognitive mapping shapes how individuals interpret both physical environments and social relationships. These insights are later used to understand how different sites in Urakawa either support or challenge machizukuri in scenario mapping.



Fig 34 Network Identities and Scales

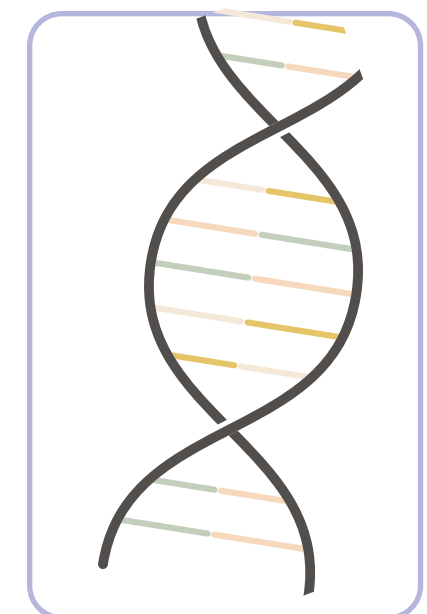
Scenario Mapping

Scenario mapping, developed from pattern language diagrams, helps trace where patterns emerge and how they link across specific locations. These mappings reveal how localized practices form a web of interactions that encourage exposure, collaboration, and mutual acceptance.

Quality Requirements

Patterns are then evaluated against Alexander's two criteria for identifying the "quality without a name":

1. Coherence: how well the parts of a system fit together as a unified whole.
2. Continuous moral occupation: the ongoing, intentional care and engagement of individuals within the system.



- Quality Control
- ✓ 1. Coherency
 - ? 2. Continuous Moral Occupation

Fig 35 Quality Control

Results

Bethel House Patterns

The Bethel Pattern Language is a social design framework that captures the everyday practices and structures of Bethel House, a community in Urakawa, Japan known for its approach to mental health through peer support and civic engagement. It consists of twenty-two interrelated patterns that were developed through participatory observation, interviews, and collaborative reflection with members and staff.

Each pattern responds to a specific emotional or social challenge by offering a situated practice that supports recovery, connection, and participation. These patterns do not stand alone but work together as a network, supporting individuals through rhythms of daily life, collective labor, shared language, and emotional safety. Together, they show how care and reintegration unfold through everyday interactions and community settings.

This language also reflects the principles of machizukuri, a form of place-making grounded in cooperation and local knowledge. The patterns extend from individual routines to shared public roles, revealing how social inclusion and mental well-being are supported through embedded relationships and mutual responsibility. The structure of the network illustrates how each small act contributes to a larger system of care, forming a flexible and grounded approach to social reintegration.

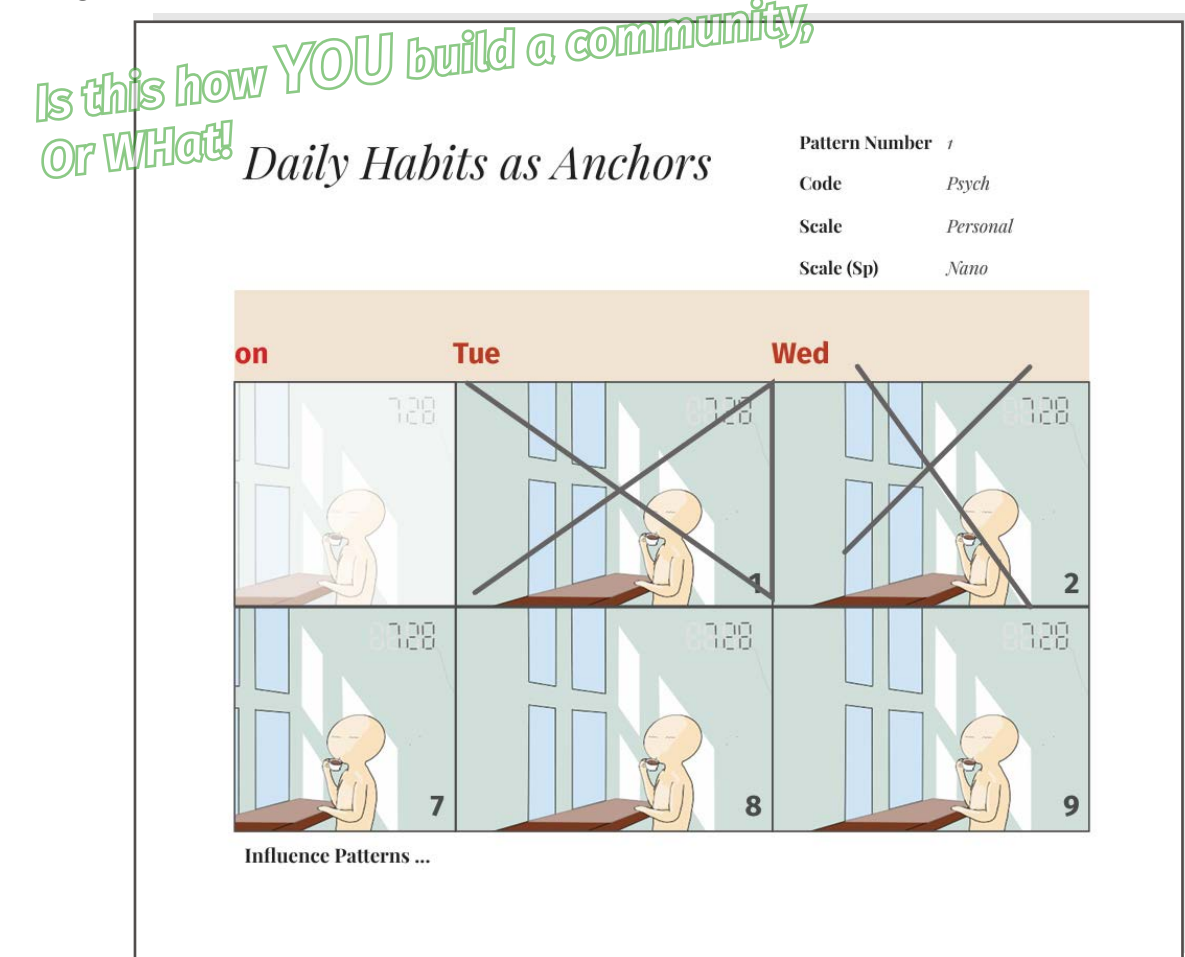
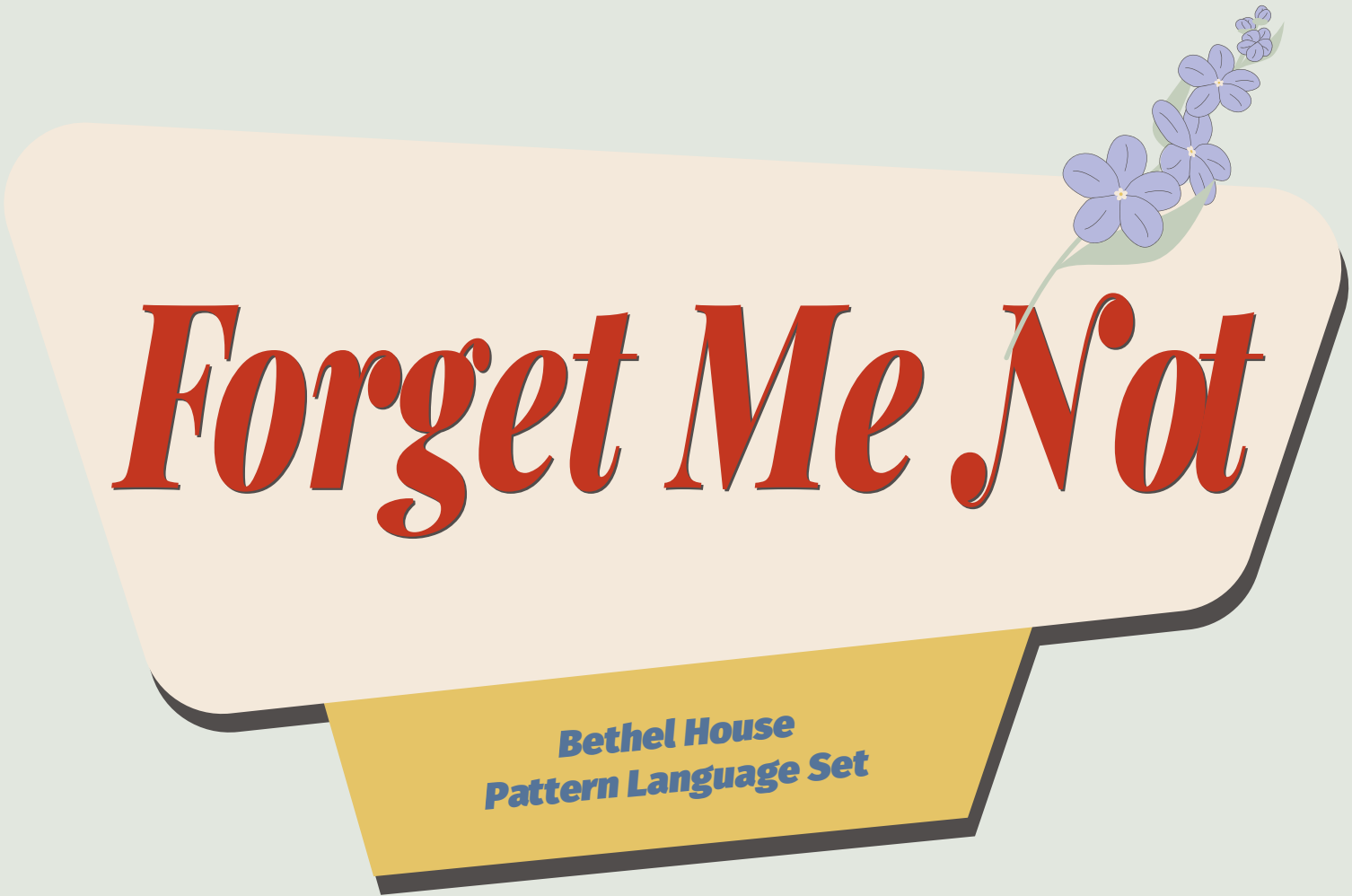


Fig 36 Pattern 1



For the Problem / Main Statement / Hypothesis (Why), Referential Context (Appendix), and Stakeholders of the 22 patterns, please refer to the Appendix Table of Contents.

In the main report, only the first page of each pattern is shown, this includes the *visualization*, the *Pattern Solution (What)*, the *Pattern Description (How)*, and the *connections* within this pack. These elements are essential for understanding the upcoming *network analysis*.

To trace where each pattern originated from, and to see the diagrams they were based on, the appendix provides the full pattern descriptions along with their connections to both packs.

Bethel House pattern language pack cover

Fig 37

Daily Habits as Anchors

Pattern

Pattern Number 1

Code Psych

Scale Personal

Scale (Sp) Nano

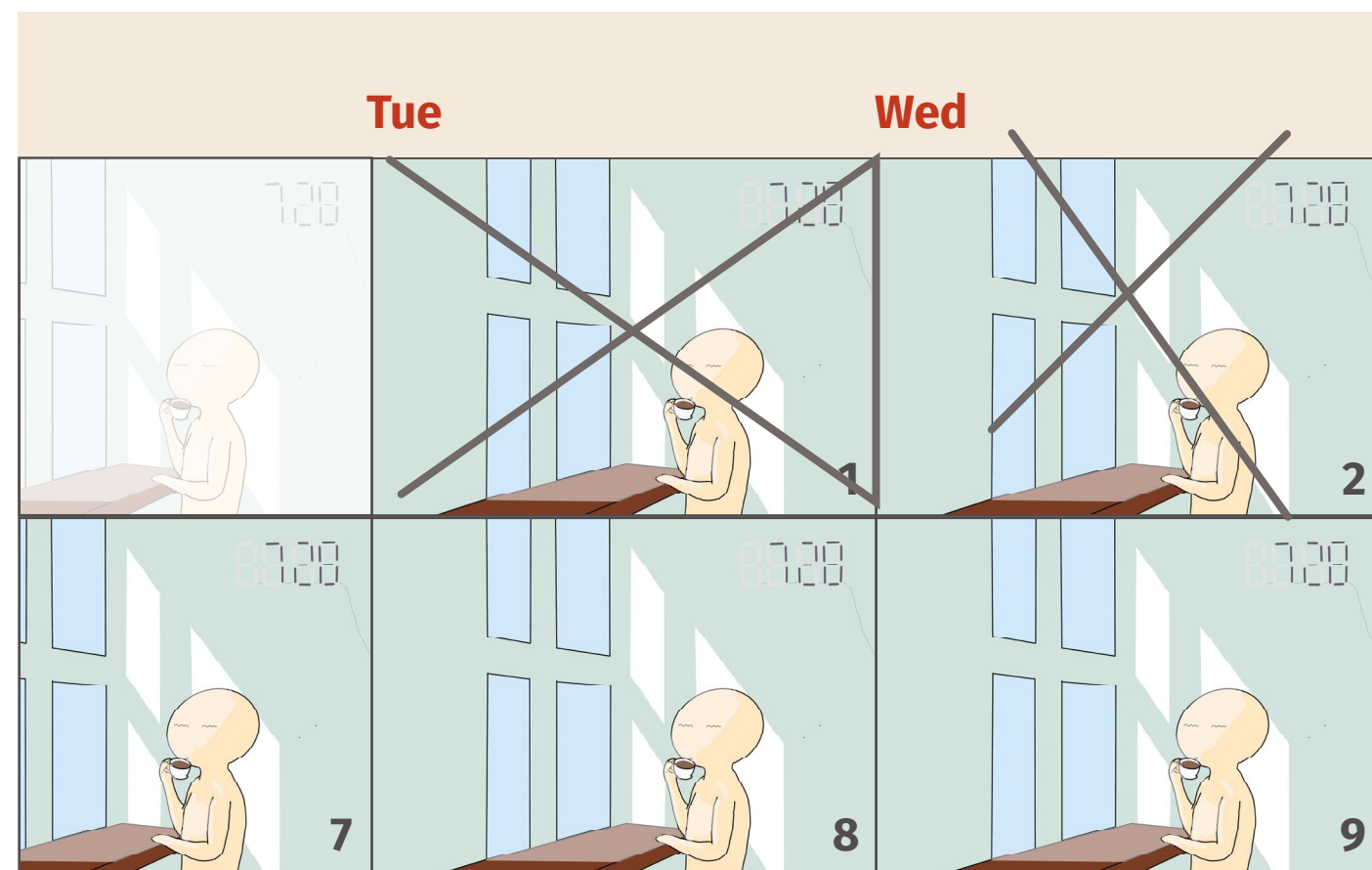


Fig 38 Drinking Coffee by the window everyday

Pattern Solution (What)

Establish predictable daily routines to provide structure, reduce anxiety, and create emotional stability.

Pattern Description (How)

Creating consistent loops in time and space, where tasks, roles, and interactions happen regularly, provides individuals with a steady framework that helps them feel anchored.

These small, repeated patterns offer a sense of safety, control, and predictability, making it easier to navigate both personal and social environments. Simple daily rituals, like returning to familiar routes or routines, build rhythm and emotional grounding, which is especially important for those who are mentally vulnerable.

Over time, this stability supports gradual reengagement, helping individuals regain confidence, rebuild meaningful connections, and gently open up to the unpredictability of daily life.

This Pattern Requires...

2/5

This Pattern influences ...

1/8/9

Daily Meetings

Pattern Number 2

Code Psych

Scale Personal - Community

Scale (Sp) Nano - Meso

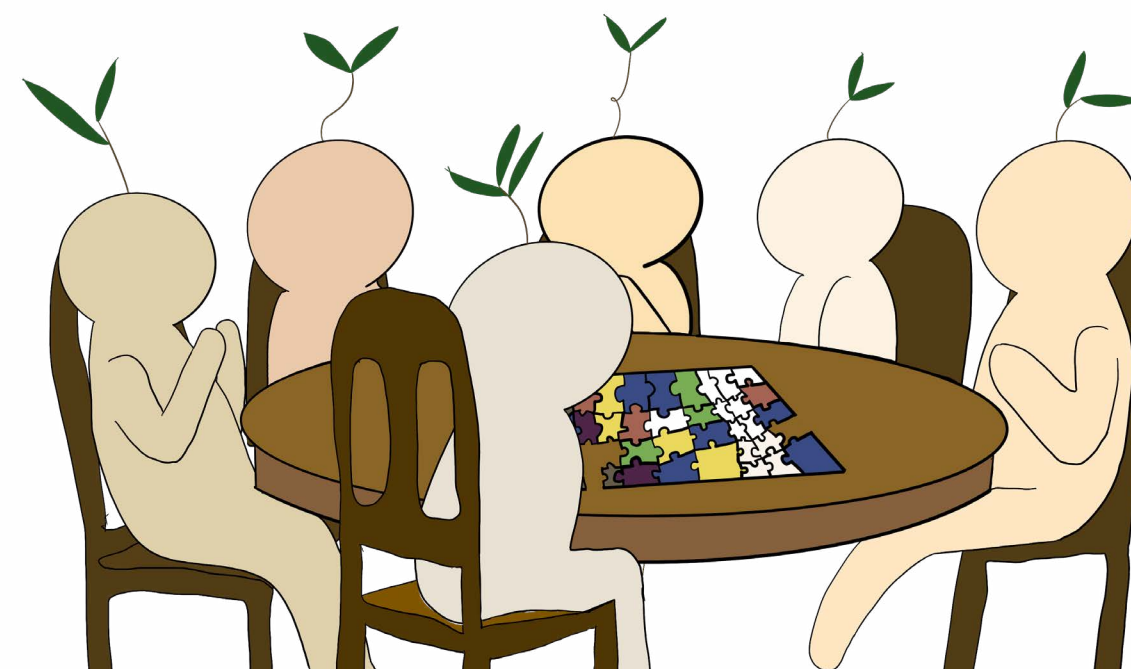


Fig 39 Group Meeting and puzzling (Metaphorically)

Pattern Solution (What)

Daily Meetings provides a collaborative, self-reflective practice where individuals explore their experiences together, turning personal struggles into shared understanding. This approach fosters autonomy, emotional visibility, and mutual support without relying on traditional psychiatric treatments.

Pattern Description (How)

Tojisha Kenkyuu is a collaborative activity in daily meetings where participants engage in self-reflection and share personal experiences within a supportive group. Through open dialogue and feedback, individuals explore their challenges together, turning personal struggles into collective insight.

The activity includes social skills trainings and cognitive behavior therapy methods, helping members develop practical tools to improve social interactions.

Held in safe, non-judgmental spaces, These Tojisha Kenkyuu sessions allow participants to join voluntarily and proceed at their own pace. Embracing the natural complexity and unpredictability of mental health, the activity fosters emotional openness, reduces stigma, and strengthens social connections. By actively participating, members gain confidence and agency, contributing to both their own recovery and the creation of supportive community environments.

This Pattern Requires...

4/6/8/9/11/15

This Pattern influences ...

1/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14

Talk Driven Care

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 3 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

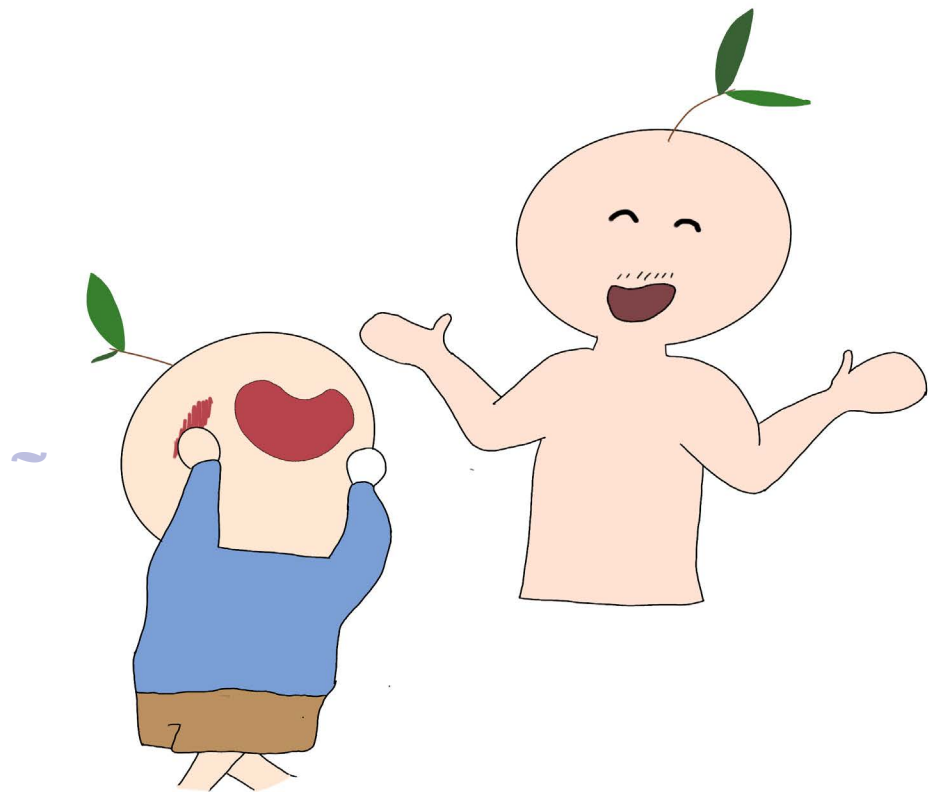


Fig 40 Feeling heard and understood

Pattern Solution (What)

Embed casual, everyday conversations as a core part of care to break down barriers between caregivers and members. These dialogues build trust, reduce stigma, and empower individuals to actively participate in their recovery through continuous, genuine communication.

Pattern Description (How)

This activity revolves around ongoing, stigma-free conversations between staff and members, and among members themselves, creating a supportive space where everyone feels heard without judgment.

It focuses on empowering individuals to express themselves, share challenges, and co-create coping strategies in a relaxed, collaborative environment.

By embracing complexity and emotional honesty, talk-driven care builds trust, supports narrative rebuilding, and encourages early prevention and education. It challenges rigid psychiatric methods by prioritizing genuine, equal communication as a core part of healing and social reintegration.

This Pattern Requires...

2/4/7/8/9/10/11/14/15

This Pattern influences ...

3/4/7/8/10/11/12/14/15/17

Common challenge

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 4 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

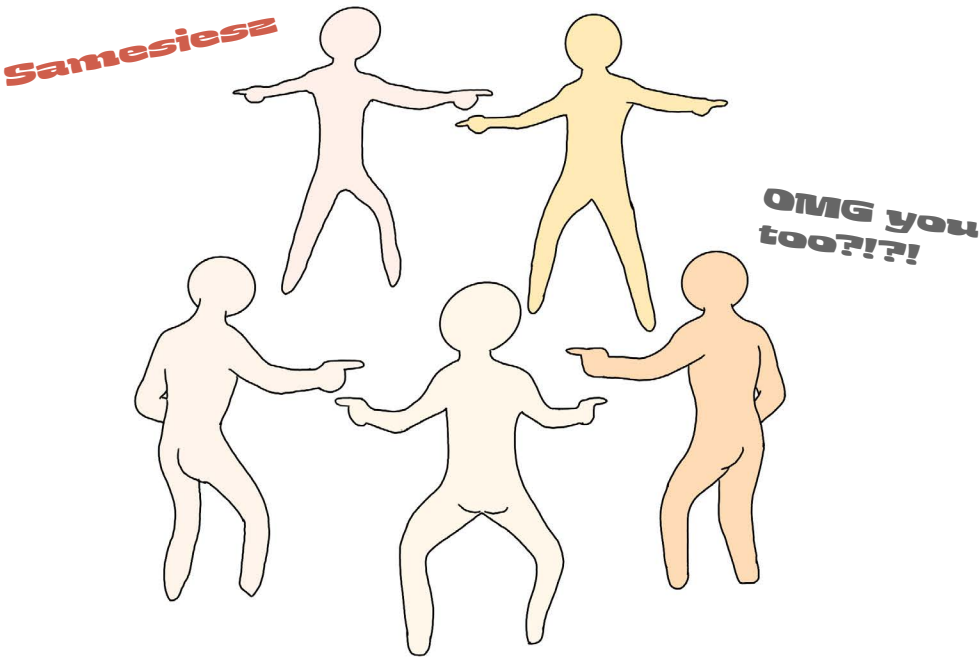


Fig 41 People realizing they have something in common

Pattern Solution (What)

At Bethel House, staff and peers facilitate both chance and guided encounters where individuals with similar experiences can meet and openly share their stories and challenges.

These informal, ongoing conversations help members recognize common struggles, fostering empathy, trust, and meaningful bonds. By transforming personal challenges into shared experiences, members build mutual support and resilience.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern emphasizes shared experiences and mutual understanding as foundations for belonging and safety.

Isolation and frustration are common, but sharing stories in a supportive, low-pressure environment normalizes struggles and reduces loneliness.

Peer dialogue validates experiences, fosters connection, and transforms individual symptoms into collective challenges tackled together. With the help from Staff guidance to create safe spaces encouraging expression, learning, and supportive bonds, highlighting healing as a communal, interactive process.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/14

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/7/10

Holding Space for Chaos

Pattern Number 5
Code Psych – Socio
Scale Personal – Community
Scale (Sp) Nano – Meso

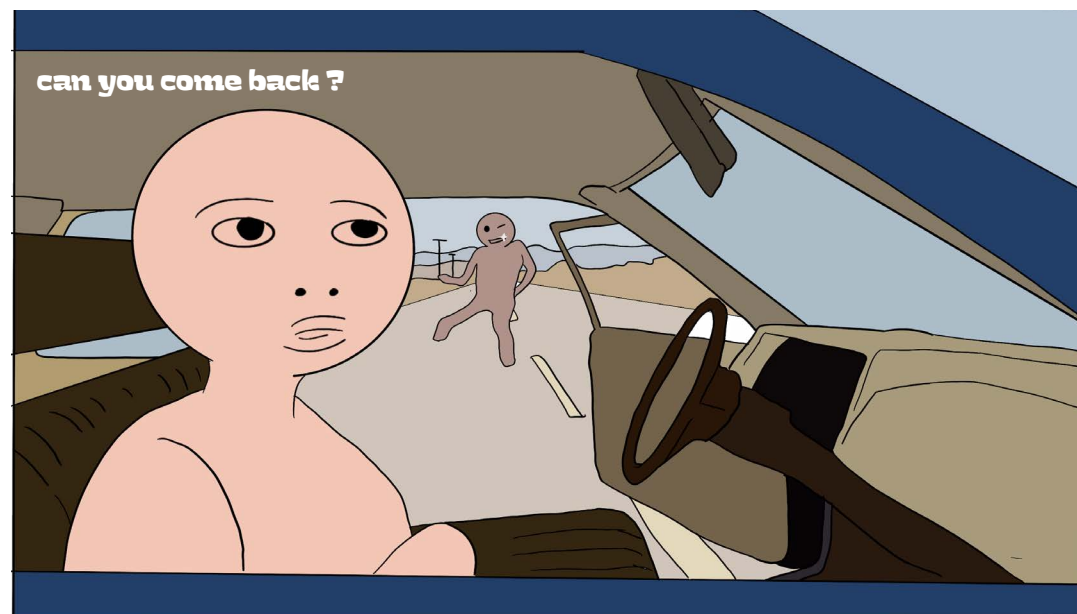


Fig 42 Calm and collected from their friends weird behaviors

Pattern Solution (What)

Normalize emotional unpredictability and public “outbursts” as part of the human experience. Help foster an environment where individuals feel safe to openly express their fears, vulnerabilities, and emotional struggles without judgment.

Develop community awareness and social protocols that support empathy and understanding, reducing stigma and promoting collective care.

Pattern Description (How)

In communities where people with mental challenges live or work closely together, emotional chaos and unpredictability naturally happens. Instead of suppressing or punishing these moments, this pattern encourages embracing them as part of being human.

By creating norms and spaces both physical and social that welcome open emotional expression without judgment, communities build trust and resilience. Individuals learn to support each other through vulnerability which reduces isolation and stigma. This acceptance helps those who struggle with emotional overwhelm or psychological challenges feel safer to engage and belong.

This Pattern Requires...

2/6

This Pattern influences ...

1/8/9/11

Retreat and Return

Pattern Number 6
Code Psych – Socio
Scale Personal – Community
Scale (Sp) Nano – Meso

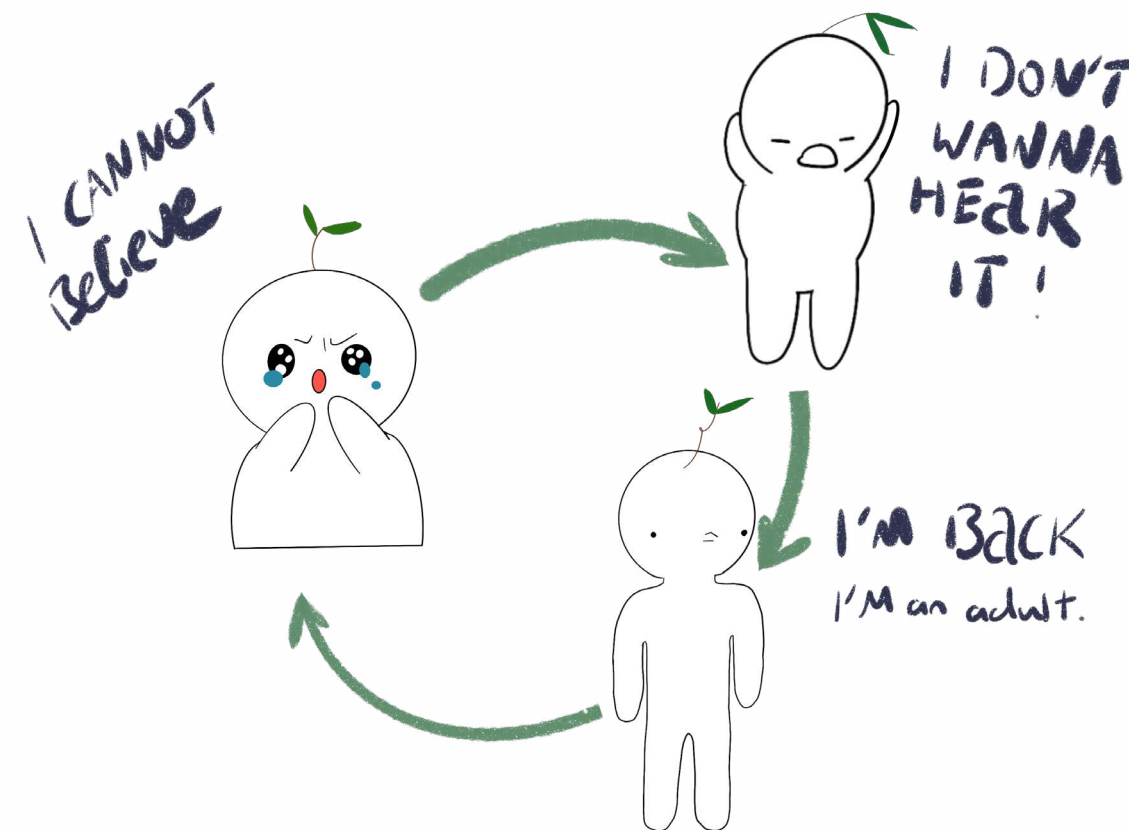


Fig 43 Emotional fluctuations and realizations

Pattern Solution (What)

Normalizing the rhythm of retreat and return within a community. It creates informal social protocols that allow individuals, whether members or staff, to step away when overwhelmed and come back when ready, without guilt or judgment.

By doing this, the pattern reduces the pressure for constant presence, prevents burnout, and supports sustainable, long-term participation.

Pattern Description (How)

This is achieved by fostering a gentle, flexible atmosphere where leaving and returning are seen as natural parts of community life.

The physical layout (like walkable surroundings), cultural attitudes (easygoing, nonjudgmental), and open communication practices all work together to support this rhythm.

People are encouraged to share when they can, but no one is forced to justify their absence.

Instead of punishing withdrawal, the system trusts that individuals will return when they are ready, which strengthens trust, resilience, and ongoing connection.

This Pattern Requires...

2/19

This Pattern influences ...

2/5/8/9/11/12/13

New entries

Pattern Number 7
Code Psych - Socio
Scale Relationships
Scale (Sp) Micro

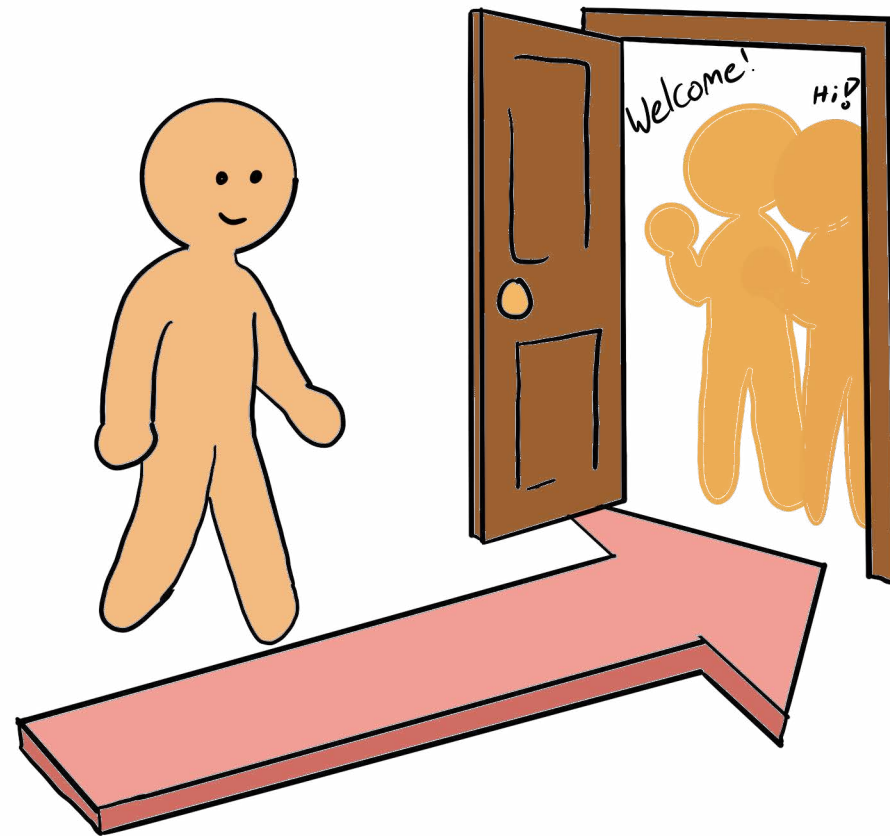


Fig 44 Group Meeting and puzzeling (Metaphorically)

Pattern Solution (What)

The pattern solves the emotional risk of joining by providing an empathetic warm and personalized entry rituals, as well as one-on-one staff guidance.

It reduces newcomer anxiety, helps them gradually build trust, and creates a safe space where they can engage meaningfully over time.

Pattern Description (How)

This is done through a light, casual atmosphere, personal check-ins, and individualized encouragement.

Newcomers are not rushed but are gently eased in through admiration of peers, private conversations, and observing group dynamics.

Staff and members tailor support to each person's background, creating a soft, flexible onboarding process that slowly fosters connection and trust.

This Pattern Requires...

1/2/3/4/7

This Pattern influences ...

3

Shared daily rituals as anchors

Pattern Number 8
Code Psych - Socio
Scale Relationships - Community
Scale (Sp) Micro - Meso

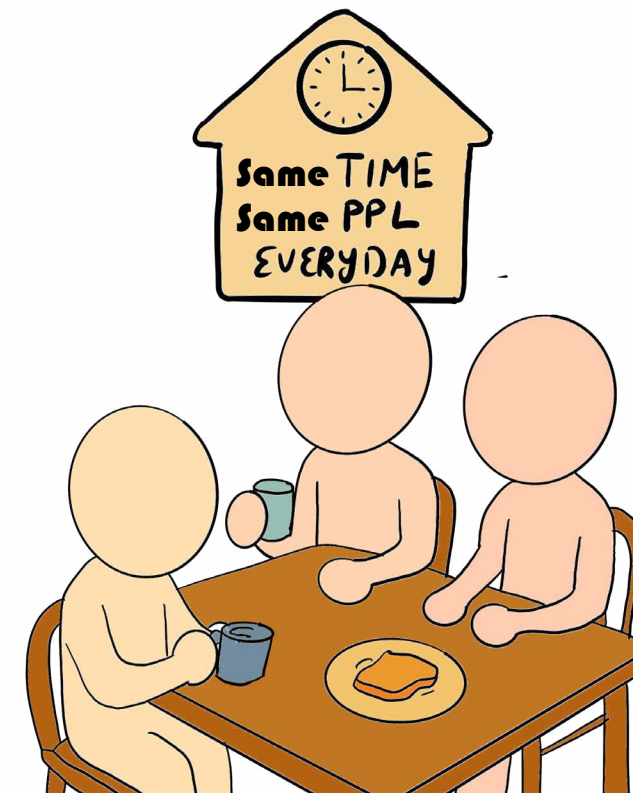


Fig 45 Group Meeting up for tea everyday at 3PM

Pattern Solution (What)

Create predictable, shared daily routines and rituals within the community that provide structure, reduce anxiety, and strengthen informal social bonds.

This includes co-creating simple, recurring activities like tea breaks, group cleaning, or shared walks that bring people together consistently and support their sense of belonging.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern works by embedding simple, repeated daily rituals into the community's routine, creating a stable and familiar rhythm for members.

These shared activities, such as group meals, coordinated work tasks, or regular social gatherings, anchor individuals in a common time and space, helping them reconnect emotionally and socially.

The predictability and repetition of these rituals reduce feelings of anxiety and isolation, foster informal connections, and build a steady foundation of support that encourages sustained participation and belonging.

This Pattern Requires...

1/2/3/5/6/9/10/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/9/11/17

Safe Spaces to Rehearse

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 9 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro-Meso |

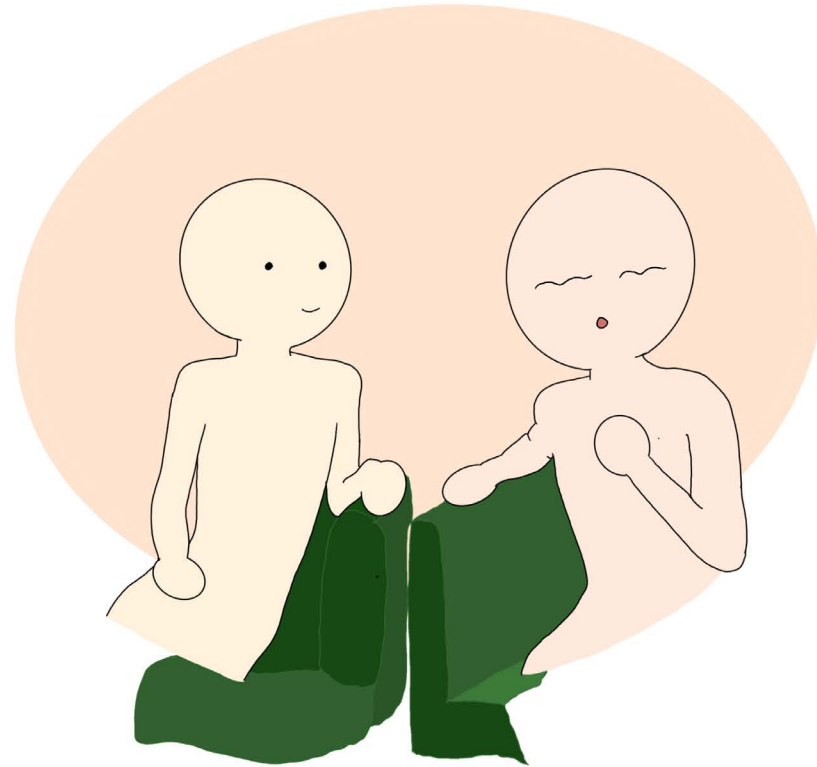


Fig 46 Relieved to finally be able to express oneself

Pattern Solution (What)

Create informal and forgiving low pressure environments where individuals can gradually practice social interaction without fear of failure or rejection.

These safe spaces such as shared homes, cafes, or group activities encourage expression, vulnerability, and mutual support. They allow people to rebuild trust, confidence, and social skills through repeated and nonjudgmental engagements.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern is implemented through casual and familiar environments such as group homes, community cafes, and shared spaces where people regularly gather.

These spaces are designed to be welcoming, informal, and free of judgment, allowing participants to practice social interaction at their own pace. Members engage in shared meals, conversations, and reflective group activities where

emotional expression is accepted and mistakes are treated as part of learning.

Over time, these repeated low-pressure encounters build trust, reinforce a sense of safety, and help individuals develop confidence and resilience in social situations. Both staff and members participate, supporting one another and modeling vulnerability as a strength.

This Pattern Requires...

1/2/5/6/8/11/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/8/11/17

Shared Lingo

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 10 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

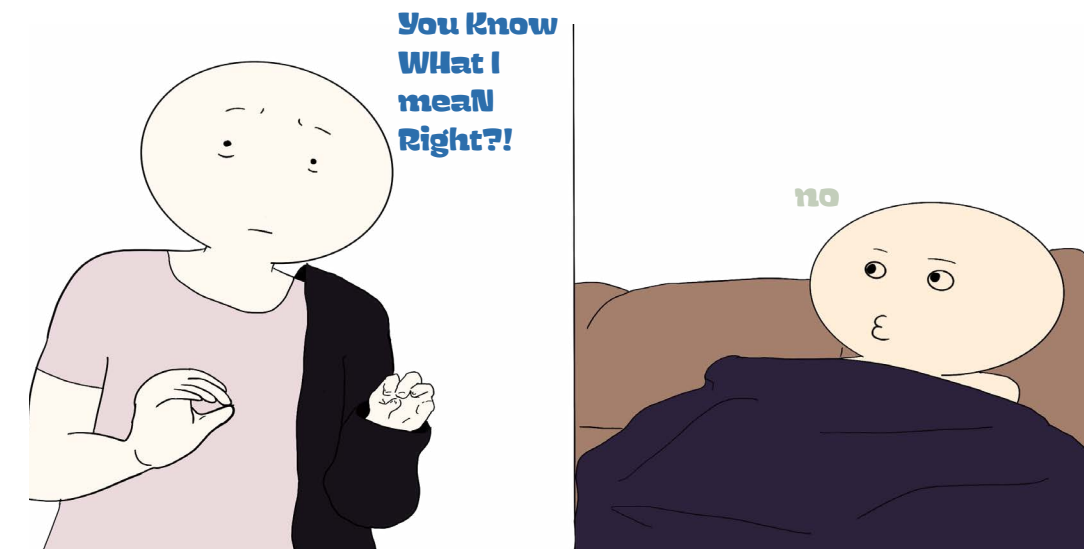


Fig 47 Linguistic barriers

Pattern Solution (What)

Encouraging and developing a unique internal vocabulary within the community, including shared terms, inside jokes, and symbolic phrases, helps members and staff communicate more effectively.

This shared language fosters emotional safety, reduces misunderstandings, lowers stigma, and strengthens the sense of belonging and solidarity among participants.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern is implemented by creating and nurturing a dynamic set of shared terms and expressions that emerge naturally from daily interactions, group activities, and collective experiences.

Members and staff use these unique words and phrases to express complex feelings and situations in a way that feels safe and inclusive.

Through repeated use, this internal language builds trust and connection, making communication smoother and reinforcing the community's emotional bonds.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/4

This Pattern influences ...

3/8/11/15

Shared Labor & Activities; Shared Meaning

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 11 | |
| Pattern Number | 11 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Macro |

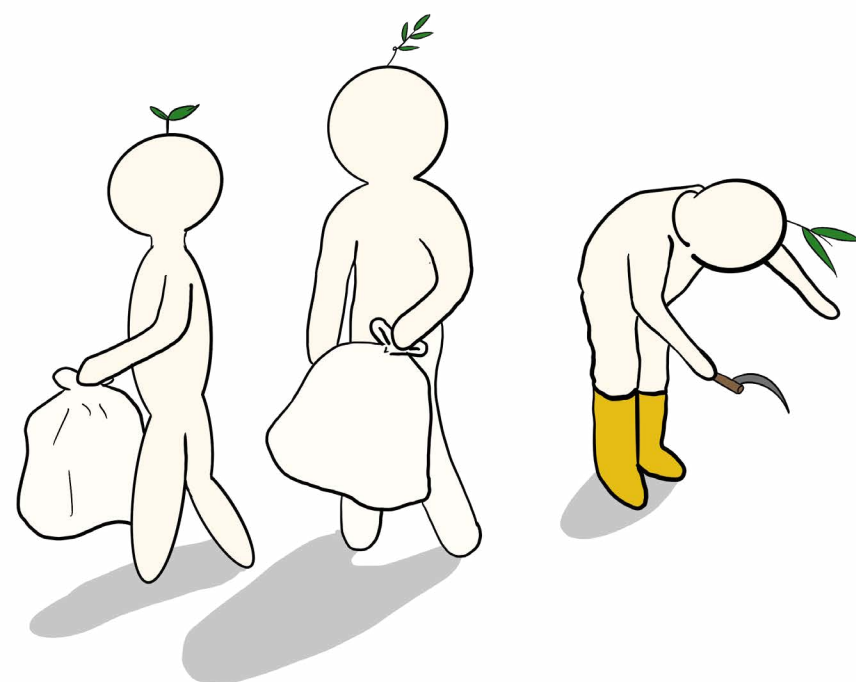


Fig 48 Team Noah working representation

Pattern Solution (What)

Providing accessible and welcoming community-based work opportunities and activities helps individuals rebuild their sense of purpose and self-worth. These roles should recognize each person's contributions and encourage collaboration, allowing members to engage in meaningful activities like civic jobs that are visible and valued by the wider community.

Creating environments where people can share experiences, support each other, and work together helps overcome barriers and fosters motivation and social reintegration.

Pattern Description (How)

The solution is implemented by creating community-embedded work opportunities that have low barriers to entry and encourage collaboration among members. These activities allow individuals to contribute visibly and meaningfully through shared labor, such as participating in civic jobs or group projects.

Open communication and regular discussions help build trust and shared understanding, while recognizing each person's efforts fosters pride and motivation.

The environment supports a mix of different tasks to suit diverse needs and preferences, ensuring everyone can find a role that fits them and encourages positive social connections.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/5/6/8/9/10/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/9/16/21/22

Scaffolded Participation

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 12 | |
| Pattern Number | 12 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Personal - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano - Meso |

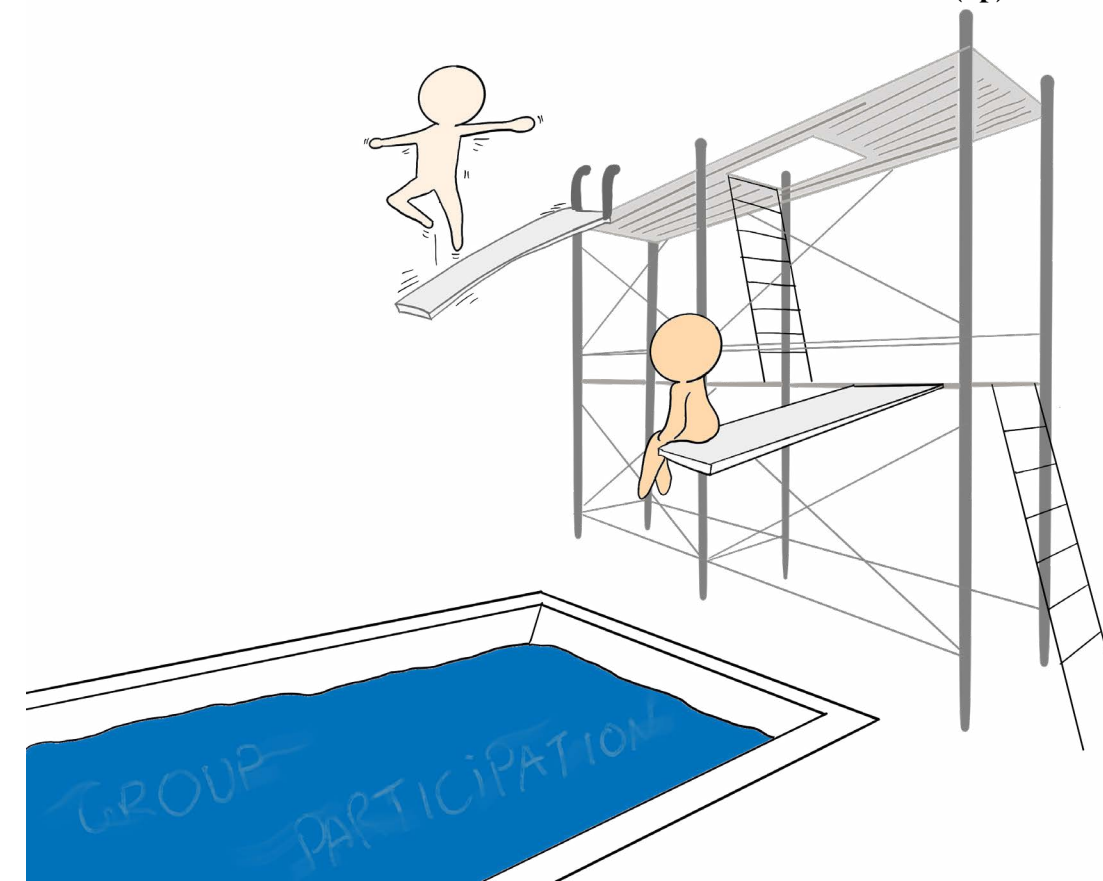


Fig 49 Scaffolded diving board into pool of Participation

Pattern Solution (What)

programs, attitudes, and spaces should be designed with low barrier entry points that allow members to join at their own pace. Participation should be scaffolded through gentle encouragement and ongoing guidance, enabling individuals to gradually build trust and confidence.

This stepwise approach helps people engage comfortably without feeling pressured, allowing them to choose how much and when to participate based on their own readiness and energy levels.

Pattern Description (How)

By creating a step-by-step or fragmented structure where members can engage in activities at their own rhythm.

Programs and spaces are designed to welcome participants gently without overwhelming them, allowing them to gradually increase their involvement over time. Staff and peers provide encouragement and support while respecting individual boundaries and energy levels.

port while respecting individual boundaries and energy levels.

This approach acknowledges that trust and participation develop slowly and need to be personalized, so members can choose when and how much to take part. This flexibility helps members feel safe, reduces pressure, and fosters sustained engagement.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/6/15

This Pattern influences ...

8/9/11/17

Personalized Blurred Lines

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Pattern Number | 13 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Personal |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano |



Fig 50 Personal and Work life blurred

Pattern Solution (What)

Creating a work environment where staff openly share parts of their personal lives and practice tojisha kenkyuu themselves helps break down barriers between staff and members.

This approach fosters genuine connections based on honesty and vulnerability. When staff show their human side and embrace a blurred line between personal and professional, it builds trust and encourages members to open up. Consistent availability and authentic interactions contribute to a stable and supportive community where everyone feels safe to share and care for one another.

Pattern Description (How)

Staff integrate aspects of their personal lives with their work by practicing tojisha kenkyuu, sharing reflections and stories with members in a genuine and honest way.

This creates a community of care where the traditional roles of patient and caretaker blend into mutual support. Boundaries are respected and personalized according to each person's comfort level, allowing staff and members to decide

how much they share and when. Staff demonstrate vulnerability by accepting and expressing their own challenges, which encourages members to do the same. The small, walkable nature of the community supports informal interactions outside of work, making the care continuous and consistent. This approach builds a safe and stable environment where trust grows naturally through ongoing, personal connections.

This Pattern Requires...

2/6/14/19

This Pattern influences ...

15/16

Social Spaces of Acknowledgement

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 14 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano - Meso |

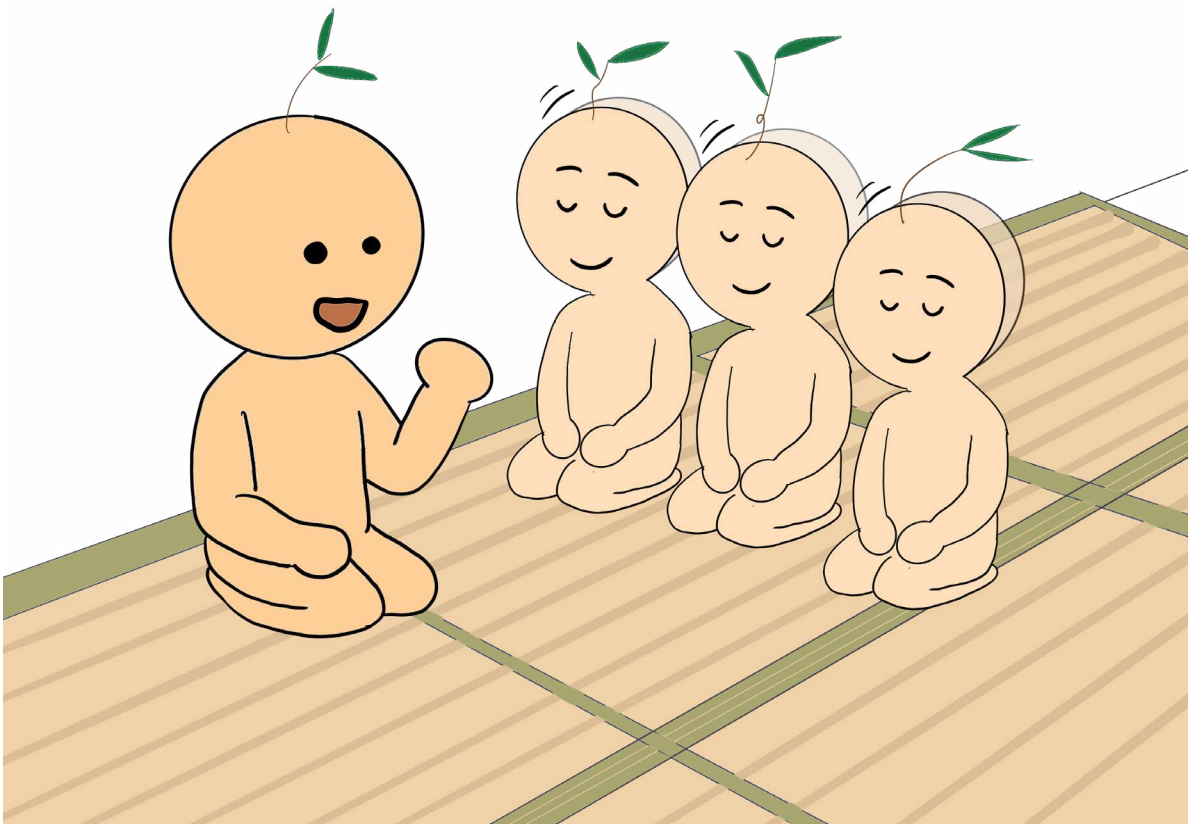


Fig 51 Social cue: Acknowledging the speaker by nodding

Pattern Solution (What)

A habit or cultural tendency to offer clear visual or audio signals of acknowledgement during interactions helps address this problem. Subtle gestures, moments of stillness, and emotional echoes create a space where speakers feel truly heard and validated. These behaviors can be nurtured through social skills training and social awareness classes, fostering a community where vulnerability is met with patience and genuine care.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by embedding a cultural habit of acknowledging others during communication through subtle but clear signals.

These can include visual cues like nodding, attentive body language, or short verbal affirmations that show active listening. It allows moments of stillness or pauses, giving space for emotional reflection and letting the speaker feel supported

without pressure to immediately respond.

Training in social skills and awareness helps participants learn to recognize and practice these behaviors naturally, creating an environment where vulnerability is met with understanding and care.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3

This Pattern influences ...

3/4/8/9/11/13/17

Openly Displayed Care

Pattern Number 15
Code Socio
Scale Community -
 Town/City
Scale (Sp) Meso - Macro

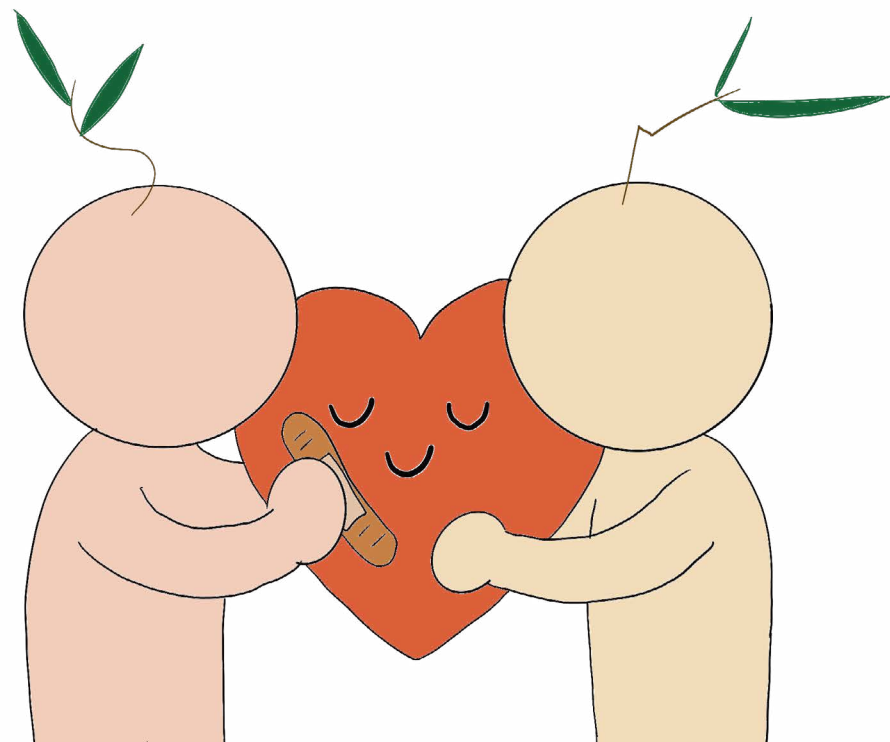


Fig 52 “There, there, it’ll be alright”

Pattern Solution (What)

Foster a culture where care is practiced openly and without hierarchy. Encourage people to show vulnerability and support each other in daily life. Let mutual care be seen, shared, and normalized so that it becomes part of the community’s identity. Create visible routines and interactions that model empathy and build collective trust.

Pattern Description (How)

Care is expressed through small, visible actions that happen regularly and naturally in public life. People offer help without being asked and accept support without shame, creating a shared rhythm of mutual aid.

Staff and members model openness by sharing their own struggles and moments of vulnerability, which invites others to do the same. Through

repeated, everyday interactions like giving rides or listening attentively, care becomes embedded in the environment and spreads throughout the community.

This Pattern Requires...

3/10/13/19

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/7/8/9/11/12/17

As My Witness

Pattern Number 16
Code Socio
Scale Town/City
Scale (Sp) Macro - Mega

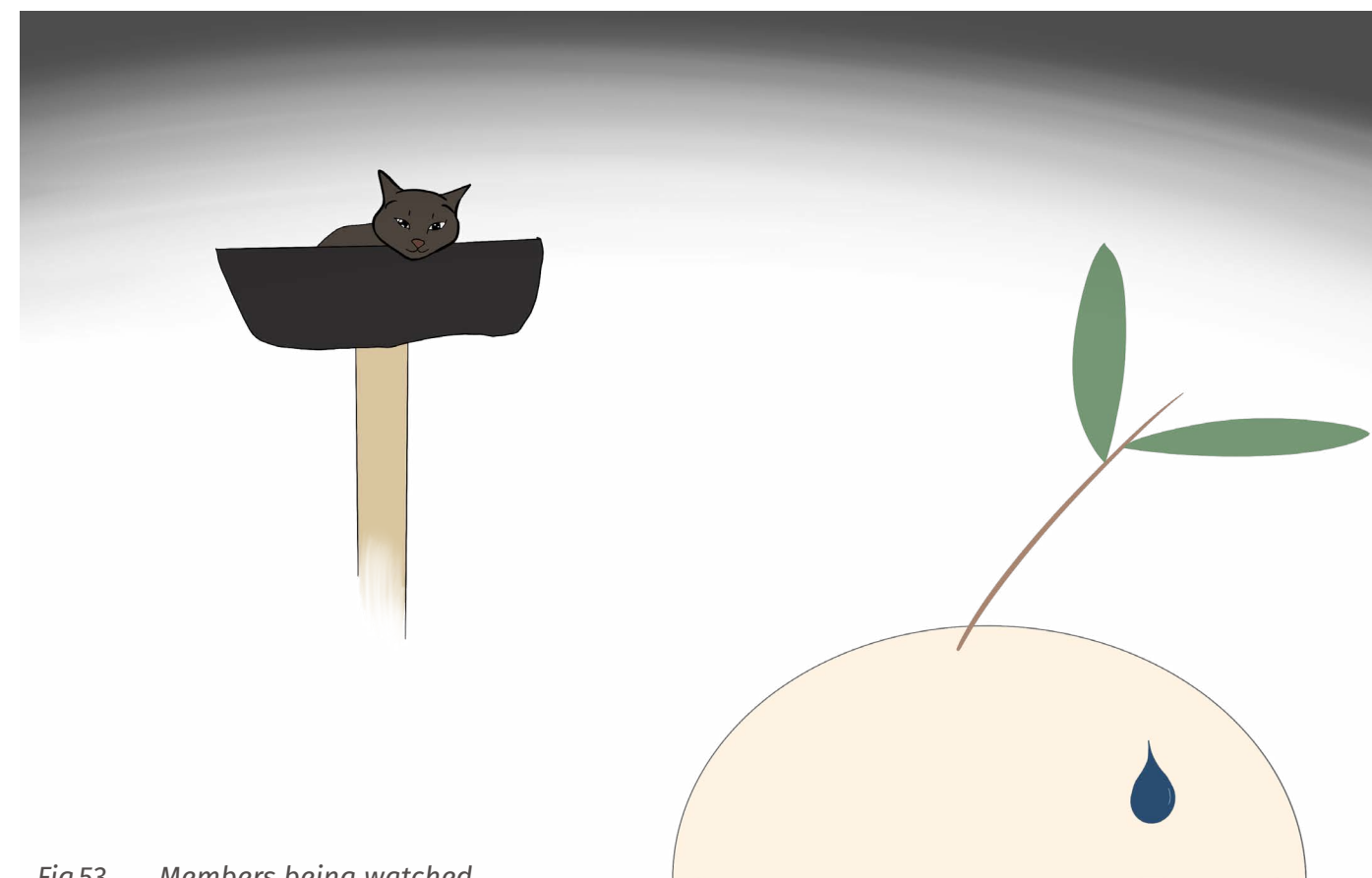


Fig 53 Members being watched

Pattern Solution (What)

The approach focuses on transforming the Bethel House members internally through tojisha kenkyuu, allowing locals to witness real changes in behavior and attitudes. This visible personal growth encourages empathy and shifts local perceptions naturally without confrontation. By openly displaying care and vulnerability, members and staff build trust within the community, gradually reducing fear and stigma. The emphasis is on creating authentic interactions that lead to social reintegration through everyday experiences rather than direct persuasion.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by engaging Bethel House members in shared activities and labor that are visible to the local community.

Through practicing tojisha kenkyuu, members reflect on and manage their own behaviors, which helps shift their self-perception and reduces internal struggles. Staff model acceptance and vulnerability, encouraging mutual trust and care

between members and staff. These interactions and the openness of care create opportunities for locals to witness genuine personal transformation, which gradually changes their perceptions and reduces stigma.

The spread of group homes and community mobility further increases everyday encounters, making the positive changes more apparent and widespread.

This Pattern Requires...

11/13/19/20/21/22

This Pattern influences ...

22

Participation as Currency

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 17 | |
| Pattern Number | 17 |
| Code | Gov |
| Scale | Community -Country |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Mega |

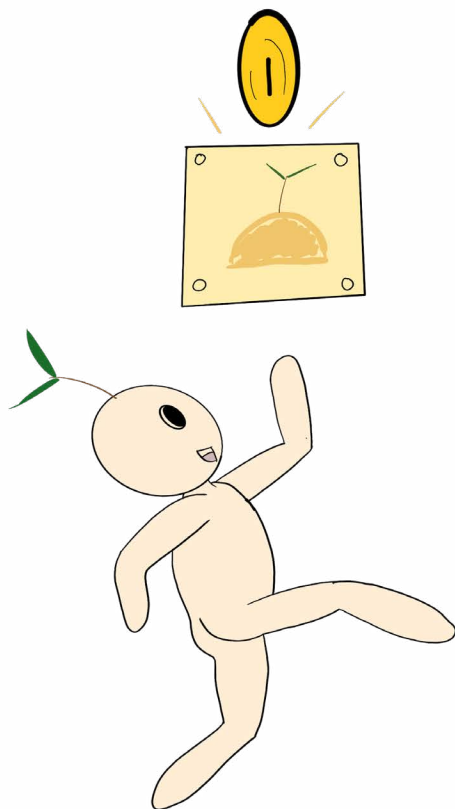


Fig54 Participation leads to subsidies for Bethel House

Pattern Solution (What)

Establish a daily structure of participatory activities that are socially meaningful and financially recognized.

Link member involvement to institutional support through government reimbursement. Value presence and engagement as active contributions to both individual recovery and collective sustainability.

Pattern Description (How)

Participation is encouraged through structured daily programs held between set hours, such as 9 am to 3 pm, creating a consistent rhythm. Attendance in these activities is tracked and tied to government subsidies, allowing institutions like Bethel House to receive financial support based on member involvement.

Members are engaged in tasks such as meetings, driving services, and communal activities, all of which are designed to promote social interaction

This Pattern Requires...

3/8/9/12/14/15/18/19

This Pattern influences ...

18/20

Common Spaces for Activities

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 18 | |
| Pattern Number | 18 |
| Code | Sp |
| Scale | Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso |

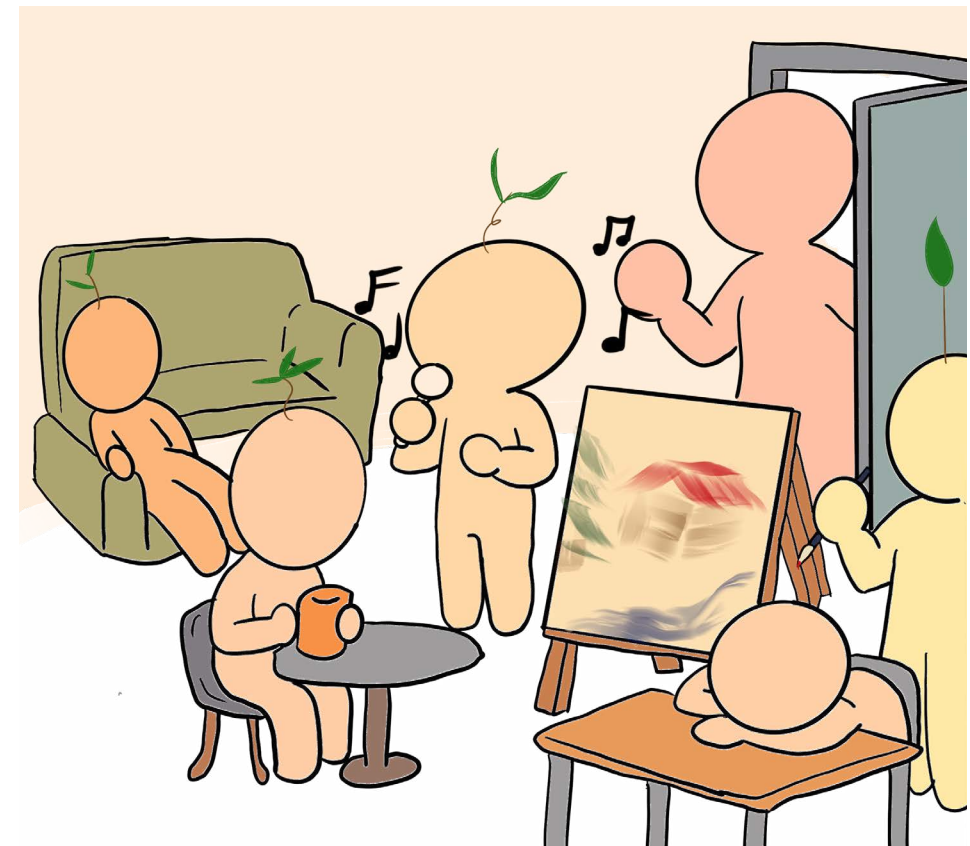


Fig55 Common room, everyone doing something in the shared space

Pattern Solution (What)

Providing low-barrier, community-embedded common spaces where members can gather safely and comfortably enables regular participation in activities and social interaction. These spaces support the practice of tojisha kenkyuu and foster a sense of belonging and recovery. Having multiple accessible locations allows members to choose where to engage, increasing inclusion and sustained involvement.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by establishing accessible and welcoming common spaces embedded within the community that encourage frequent participation and social interaction.

These spaces are designed to be flexible and safe, allowing members to engage in activities like tojisha kenkyuu and group work comfortably. By providing multiple locations and varied envi-

ronments, the pattern supports diverse needs and preferences, fostering connection and collaboration among members while promoting a sense of belonging.

This Pattern Requires...

17/19/20

This Pattern influences ...

8/9/11/17/20

Walkability – Connectivity

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Pattern Number | 19 |
| Code | Sp |
| Scale | Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Macro |

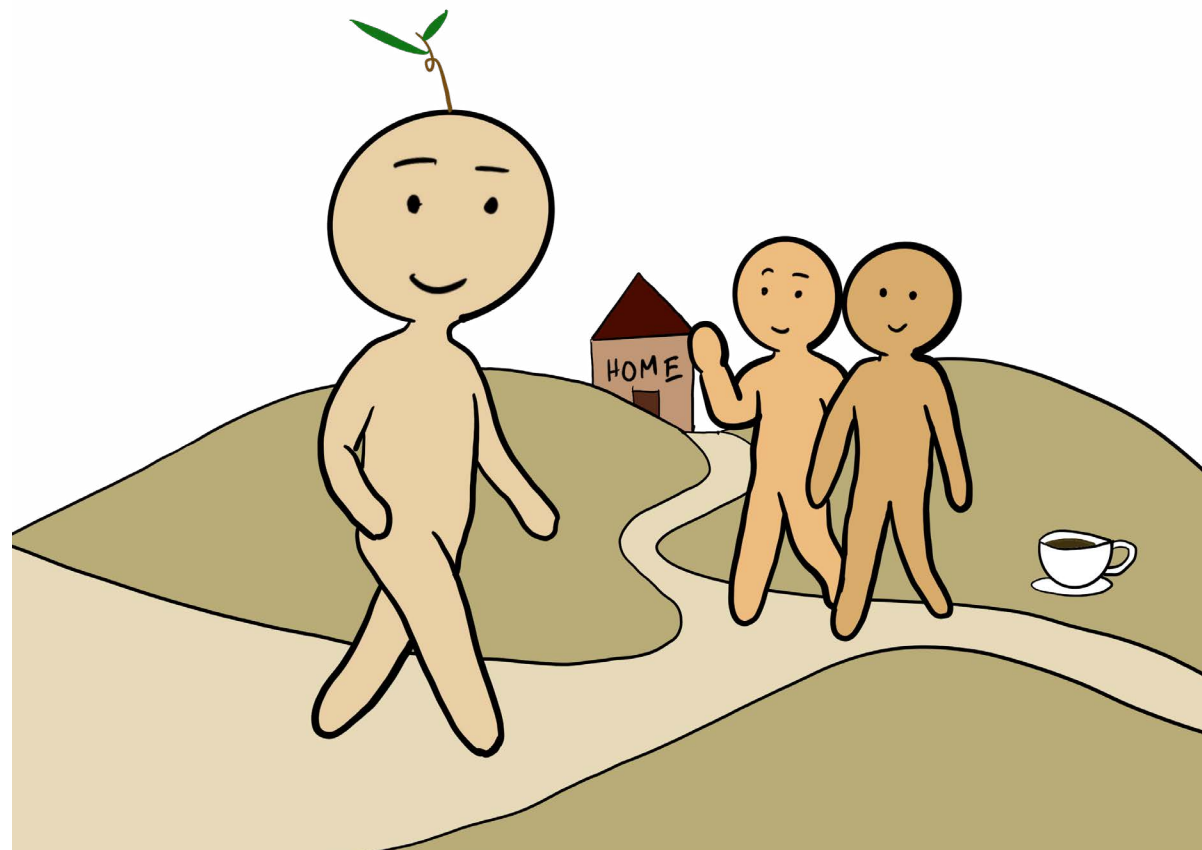


Fig 56 The walkability of the town, everything and everyone is close by

Pattern Solution (What)

Designing or maintaining towns and active areas with accessible and meaningful destinations connected by short and safe walking routes encourages social interaction and easy access. Creating “loops of life” within the town’s rhythm supports daily habits and rituals, making engagement and reintegration into public life more natural and frequent. Transportation options like community driving systems complement walkability during bad weather or special needs, ensuring continuous connectivity.

Pattern Description (How)

Creating a network of short, safe, and accessible walking routes that connect important places throughout the town supports easy movement for members and staff.

Incorporating flexible transportation options like a driving team helps maintain accessibility during bad weather or for those with special needs.

Designing these connections as continuous loops encourages frequent interactions, spontaneous meetings, and seamless participation in daily activities, fostering a supportive and inclusive community environment.

This Pattern Requires...

Influence Patterns ...

This Pattern influences ...

6/13/15/16/17/18/22

Closure Without Collapse

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Pattern Number | 20 |
| Code | His |
| Scale | Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Macro |

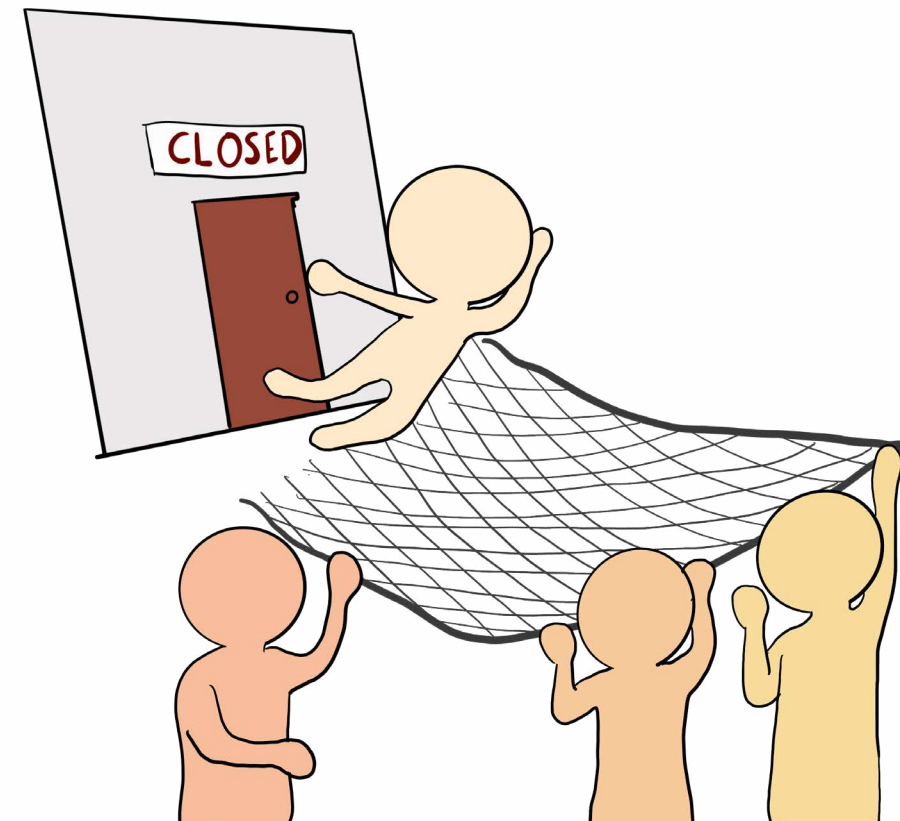


Fig 57 “If you fall we are there to catch you”

Pattern Solution (What)

Replacing centralized psychiatric care with a distributed network of housing, workspaces, and social support embedded in everyday community life helps catch and hold those displaced. This approach provides visible, integrated support that prevents isolation and stigma while fostering social inclusion.

Pattern Description (How)

Intentional systems form through creating multiple housing options, accessible workspaces, and social support networks spread throughout the community.

These elements connect visibly in daily life, allowing displaced individuals to find stable places to live, meaningful activities, and ongoing social interaction. Collaboration between institutions,

staff, members, and locals supports seamless integration and continuous care without relying on a single centralized facility.

This Pattern Requires...

17/18

This Pattern influences ...

16/18

Institutional Collaboration

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Pattern Number | Bethel House Pattern 21 21 |
| Code | Socio-Eco-Gov |
| Scale | Community-Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Macro |

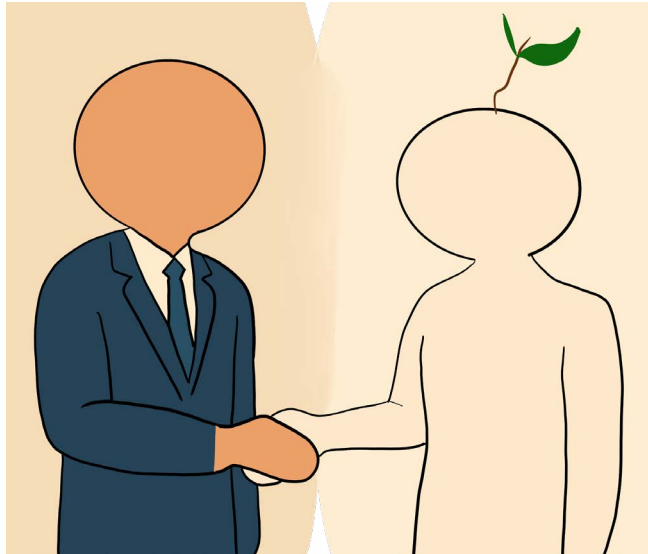


Fig 58 “Yes, yes, Lets make this happen”

Pattern Solution (What)

Bethel members become actively included in a variety of positive local institutions such as government activities, fire departments, and research organizations, fostering collaboration and reducing stigma through shared participation and mutual understanding.

Pattern Description (How)

Building strong connections between Bethel members and multiple local institutions happens through consistent collaboration and participation in community activities.

Staff guide interactions by educating both Bethel members and institutional partners, helping to create mutual respect and understanding. Regular involvement in public events, safety drills,

and meetings integrates members visibly into the town’s social fabric.

This process helps break down stigma, promotes shared responsibility, and strengthens social networks that support inclusion and acceptance.

This Pattern Requires...

11/22

This Pattern influences ...

16/22

Machizukuri

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Pattern Number | Bethel House Pattern 22 22 |
| Code | Socio-Eco-Gov-His |
| Scale | Community - Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Macro |

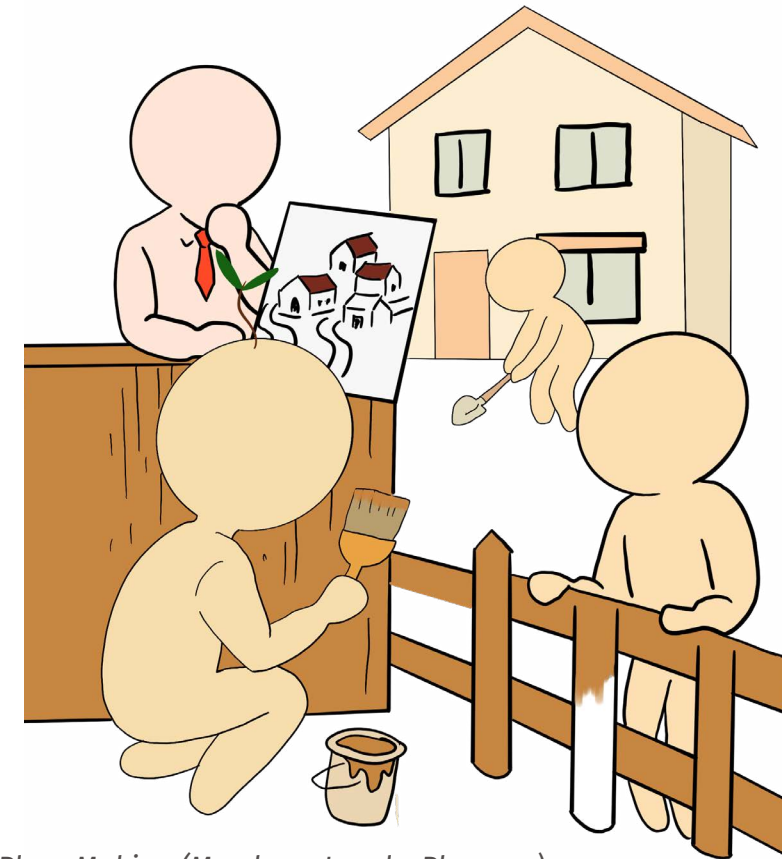


Fig 59 Community Place Making (Members, Locals, Planners)

Pattern Solution (What)

Creating inclusive participatory projects where locals and recovering members contribute equally helps build shared ownership. This approach fosters mutual respect, breaks down social barriers, and encourages ongoing collaboration that integrates all community members visibly and meaningfully.

Pattern Description (How)

Machizukuri works through collaborative town-building rooted in local knowledge and co-creation, emphasizing horizontal relationships and continuous dialogue among residents, bethel members, staff, and institutions.

It cultivates shared ownership by engaging all participants in everyday activities reflecting local values, histories, and social needs.

This approach integrates members visibly into the town’s social and economic life, fostering mutual

respect and long-term cohesion. Practical support systems like Bethel House employment centers connect members with meaningful work that benefits both individuals and the wider community, reinforcing trust and inclusion through ongoing cooperation and iterative collaboration.

The physical and social environments created become spaces where everyone co-produces solutions, embodying the spirit of crafting the town together with effort and respect.

This Pattern Requires...

11/16/19/21

This Pattern influences ...

16/21

Results

Bethel House Patterns

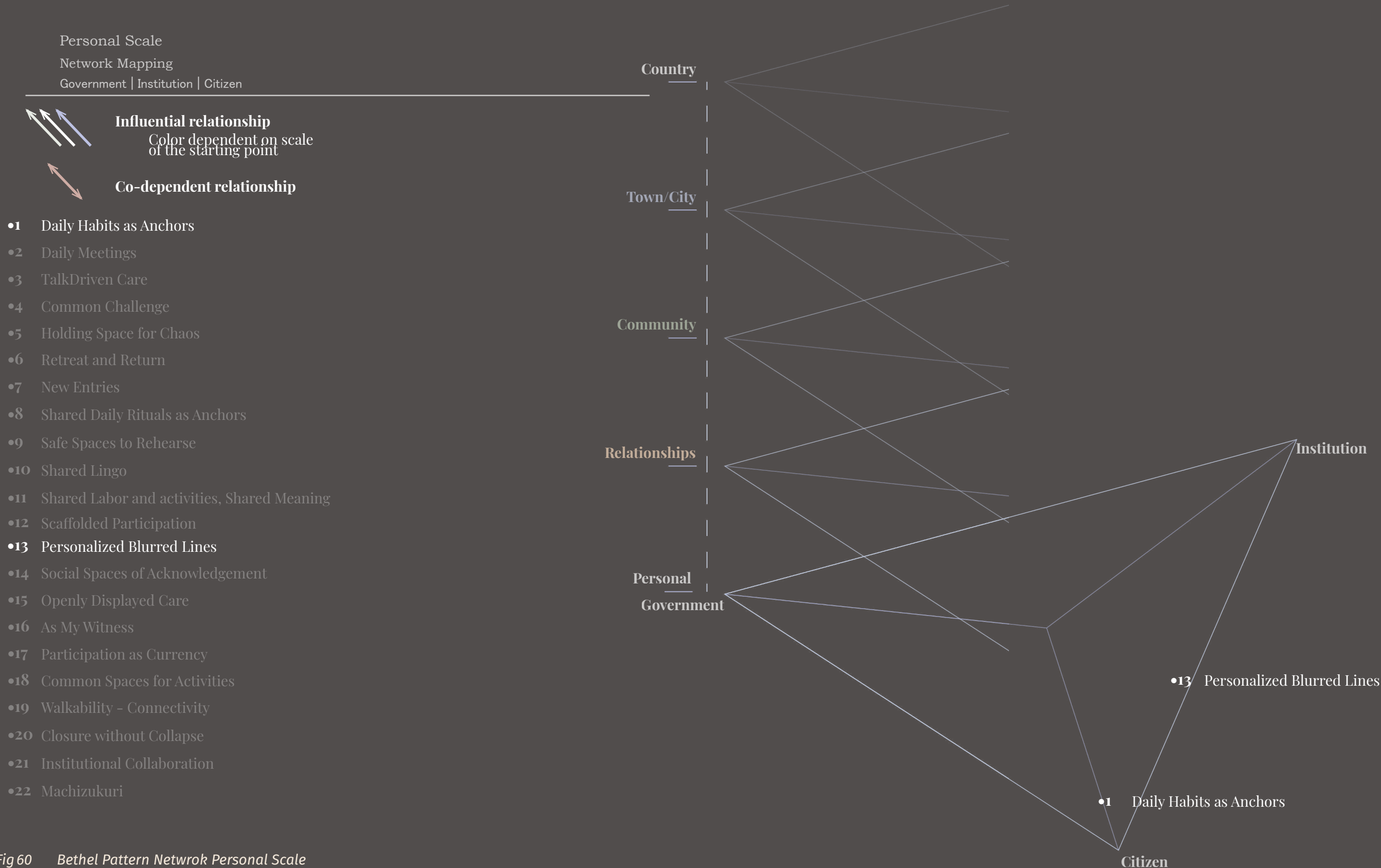


Fig 60 Bethel Pattern Netwrok Personal Scale

Results

Bethel House Patterns

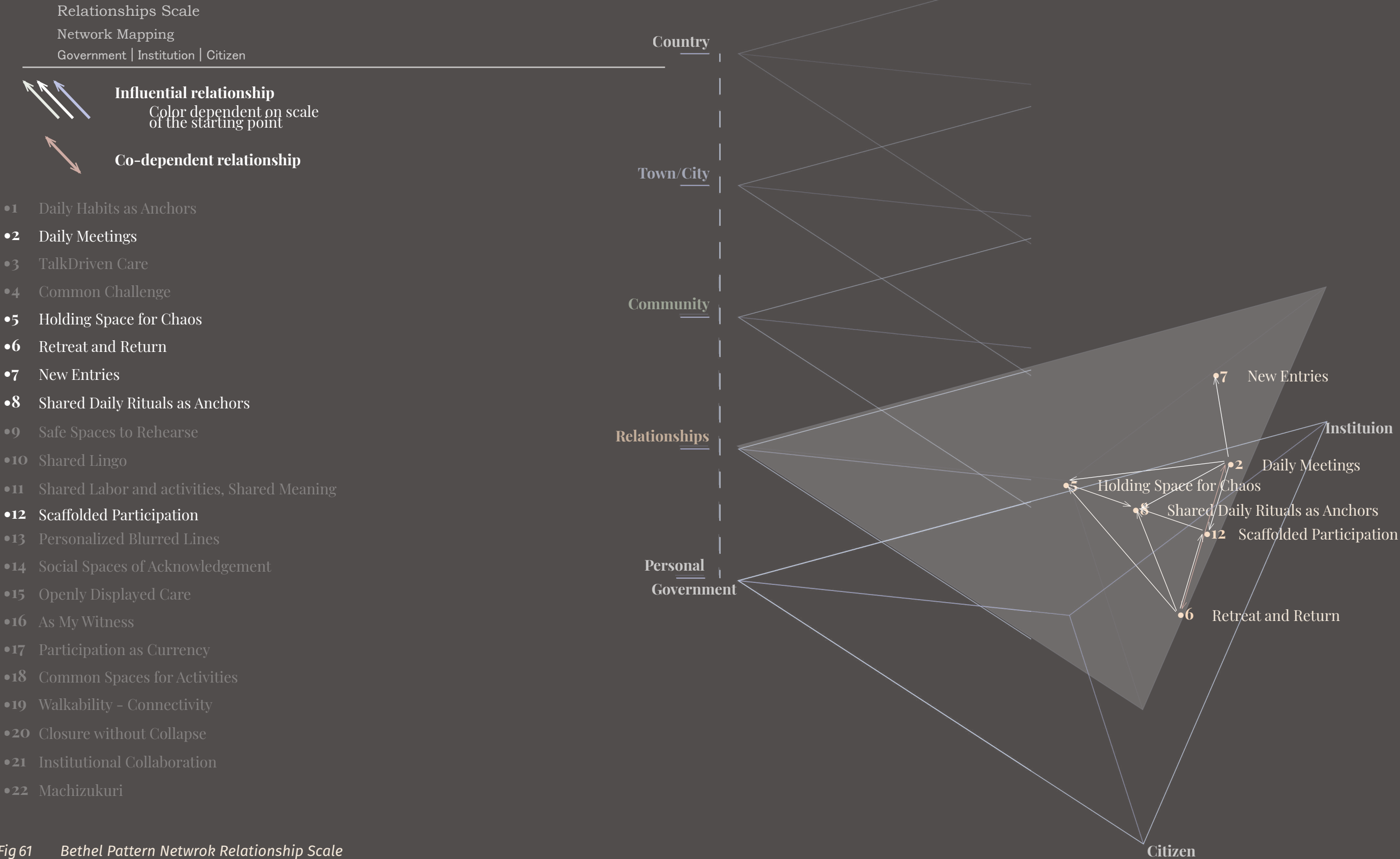


Fig 61 Bethel Pattern Network Relationship Scale

Results

Bethel House Patterns

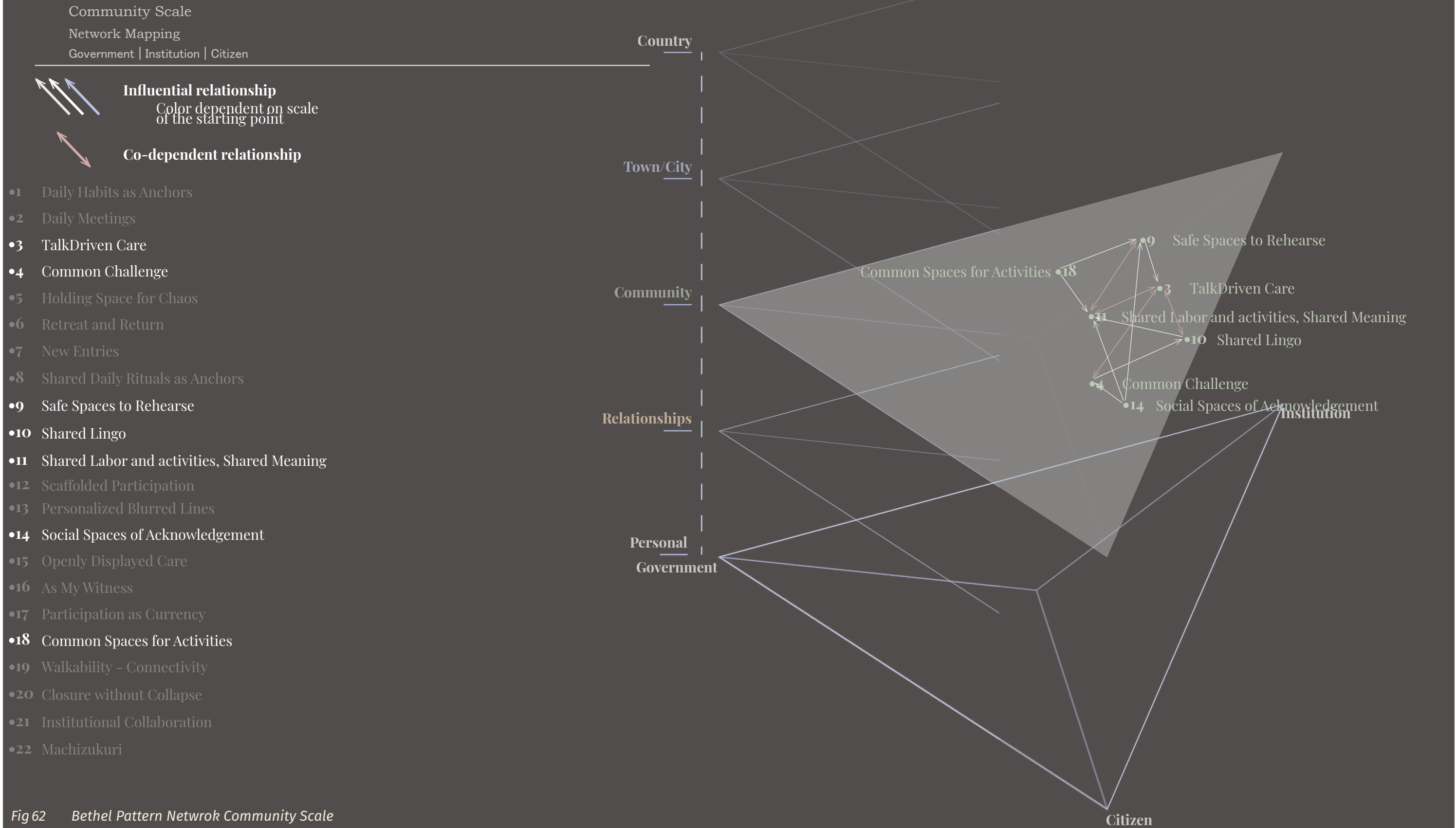
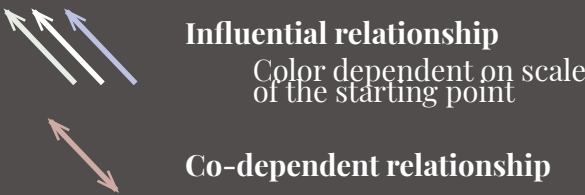


Fig 62 Bethel Pattern Netwrok Community Scale

Results

Bethel House Patterns

Town/ City Scale
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen



- 1 Daily Habits as Anchors
- 2 Daily Meetings
- 3 TalkDriven Care
- 4 Common Challenge
- 5 Holding Space for Chaos
- 6 Retreat and Return
- 7 New Entries
- 8 Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors
- 9 Safe Spaces to Rehearse
- 10 Shared Lingo
- 11 Shared Labor and activities, Shared Meaning
- 12 Scaffolded Participation
- 13 Personalized Blurred Lines
- 14 Social Spaces of Acknowledgement
- 15 Openly Displayed Care
- 16 As My Witness
- 17 Participation as Currency
- 18 Common Spaces for Activities
- 19 Walkability - Connectivity
- 20 Closure without Collapse
- 21 Institutional Collaboration
- 22 Machizukuri

Country

Town/City

Community

Relationships

Personal
Government

Institution

Citizen



Fig 63 Bethel Pattern Netwrok Town/City Scale

Results

Bethel House Patterns

Country Scale

Network Mapping

Government | Institution | Citizen



Influential relationship

Color dependent on scale
of the starting point



Co-dependent relationship

- 1 Daily Habits as Anchors
- 2 Daily Meetings
- 3 TalkDriven Care
- 4 Common Challenge
- 5 Holding Space for Chaos
- 6 Retreat and Return
- 7 New Entries
- 8 Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors
- 9 Safe Spaces to Rehearse
- 10 Shared Lingo
- 11 Shared Labor and activities, Shared Meaning
- 12 Scaffolded Participation
- 13 Personalized Blurred Lines
- 14 Social Spaces of Acknowledgement
- 15 Openly Displayed Care
- 16 As My Witness
- 17 Participation as Currency
- 18 Common Spaces for Activities
- 19 Walkability - Connectivity
- 20 Closure without Collapse
- 21 Institutional Collaboration
- 22 Machizukuri

Country

Town/City

Community

Relationships

Personal

Government

Institution

Government

•17 Participation as Currency

Fig 64 Bethel Pattern Netwrok Country Scale

Results

All Scales
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

Co-dependent relationship

- ## Relationships

Town/City

Community

Personal

Government

Citizen

Fig 65 Bethel House Pattern Language Network; All connections, multi scalar

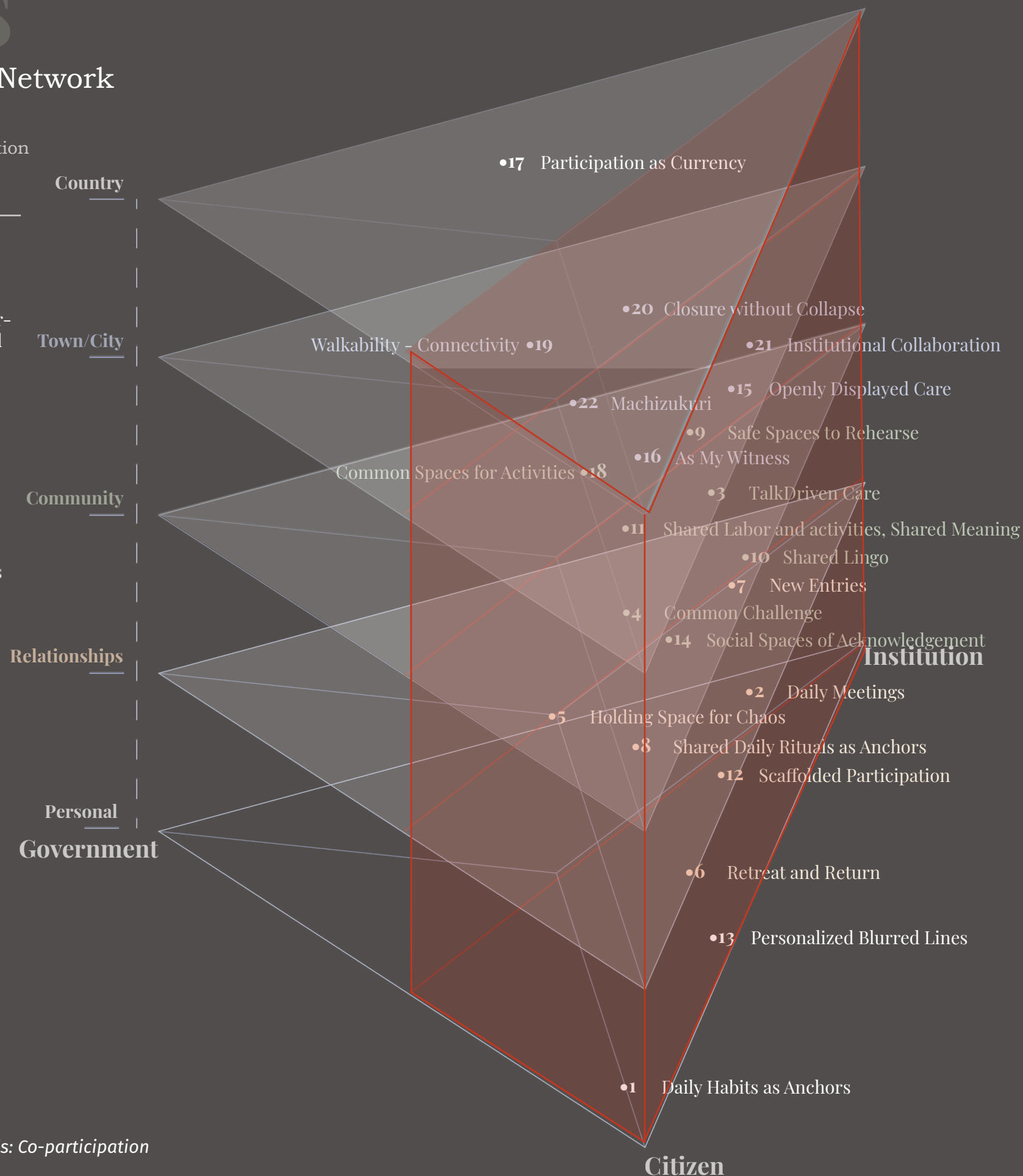
Analysis

Bethel House Pattern Network

Citizen and Institution Co-participation
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

These analyses is based on identifying recurring patterns within Bethel House's practices by comparing interviews, Bethel's own publications, and relevant academic literature. These patterns are then contextualized using theoretical frameworks such as Machizukuri and Tojisha Kenkyuu, to understand how Bethel supports social reintegration and community resilience from the inside out.

The majority of patterns in Bethel House's network lean toward the citizen and institution domains, reflecting a shared responsibility between individuals and Bethel House itself to rework the social structure. The pattern analysis underscores Bethel House's unique position: the institution does not operate as a distant authority, but as a co-participant embedded within the local community. Through this embeddedness, it consistently supports individuals while empowering their readiness and maintaining a structural rhythm that enables people to reengage at their own pace. In Urakawa, social reintegration emerges not from top-down directives, but through sustained collaboration between individual actors and the institutional framework of Bethel House.



Rather than integrating members into pre-existing systems, these patterns reshape the rhythm of care and participation, emphasizing a bottom-up approach to social reintegration. Patterns such as Daily Habits as Anchors (1), Talk-Driven Care (3), and Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors (8) illustrate how Bethel's internal life nurtures everyday practices that build confidence and structure, grounding members before they extend outward into the broader community. Holding Space for Chaos (5) and Retreat and Return (6) offer emotional flexibility, allowing individuals to navigate periods of instability without penalty, while Safe Spaces to Rehearse (9) and Personal Blurred Lines (13) provide gentle exposures to social life.

At the relationship and community scale, Scaffolded Participation (12) and Shared Labor and Activities, Shared Meaning (11) reflect the incremental rebuilding of trust through doing, rather than through abstract planning. These efforts are not hidden, they are made visible through Openly Displayed Care (15), As My Witness (16), all of which signal a readiness to be seen and to be in relation with others. These moments function as subtle signals to external actors, inviting recognition, trust, and engagement.

This analysis speaks most directly to sub-Research Questions 3 and 6. It highlights how the patterns at Bethel House foster emotional safety and social inclusion (sub RQ3) by creating a flexible, participant-centered environment where individuals can move through instability without fear of exclusion. Practices like Holding Space for Chaos and Safe Spaces to Rehearse show how care is structured to support gradual, self-paced reintegration. Additionally, by emphasizing bottom-up, collaborative forms of social participation rather than conforming to rigid institutional or developmentalist norms, the analysis gestures toward how Bethel offers an alternative to Japan's developmentalist social structure (sub RQ6). Bethel's model reframes recovery and inclusion not as endpoints dictated by external systems, but as ongoing, relational processes grounded in shared action and mutual visibility.

Fig 66 Bethel House Pattern Network Analysis: Co-participation

Analysis

Bethel House Pattern Network

Tojisha Kenkyu Patterns
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

At the heart of Bethel House lies tōjisha kenkyū, not as a separate therapeutic tool, but as a way of being. This approach invites individuals to research their own lives through observation, dialogue, and collective reflection. Within Bethel, this concept, ideology, method, value, attitude, is woven deeply into everyday patterns that structure both internal stability and external reintegration.

Several of the 22 documented patterns directly reflect the spirit and methods of tōjisha kenkyū. For instance, Pattern 2: Daily Meetings is a core mechanism through which members report on their emotional state, share problems, and offer mutual support. These gatherings are not about resolution, but about visibility and co-presence. In this space, vulnerability is normalized, and the practice of self-research is cultivated in real time.

Pattern 3: Talk-Driven Care further embodies the tōjisha kenkyū spirit by emphasizing conversation as the primary mode of care. Here, emotional difficulties and mental strain are not medicalized or pathologized, they are made thinkable and discussable, they become challenges in life. As members talk through their struggles, others listen, reflect, and contribute, forming a distributed network of insight that supports individual reflection and growth.

Pattern 4: Common Challenge and Pattern 5: Holding Space for Chaos demonstrate how shared problems become the basis for collective meaning-making. Instead of concealing crisis, Bethel creates structured spaces where confusion, breakdowns, or emotional extremes are welcomed. Tōjisha kenkyū embraces these moments as starting points for understanding, not signs of failure.

- 1

Daily Habits as Anchors
- 2

Daily Meetings
- 3

TalkDriven Care
- 4

Common Challenge
- 5

Holding Space for Chaos
- 6

Retreat and Return
- 7

New Entries
- 8

Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors
- 9

Safe Spaces to Rehearse
- 10

Shared Lingo
- 11

Shared Labor and activities, Shared Meaning
- 12

Scaffolded Participation
- 13

Personalized Blurred Lines
- 14

Social Spaces of Acknowledgement
- 15

Openly Displayed Care
- 16

As My Witness
- 17

Participation as Currency
- 18

Common Spaces for Activities
- 19

Walkability - Connectivity
- 20

Closure without Collapse
- 21

Institutional Collaboration
- 22

Machizukuri

Country

Town/City

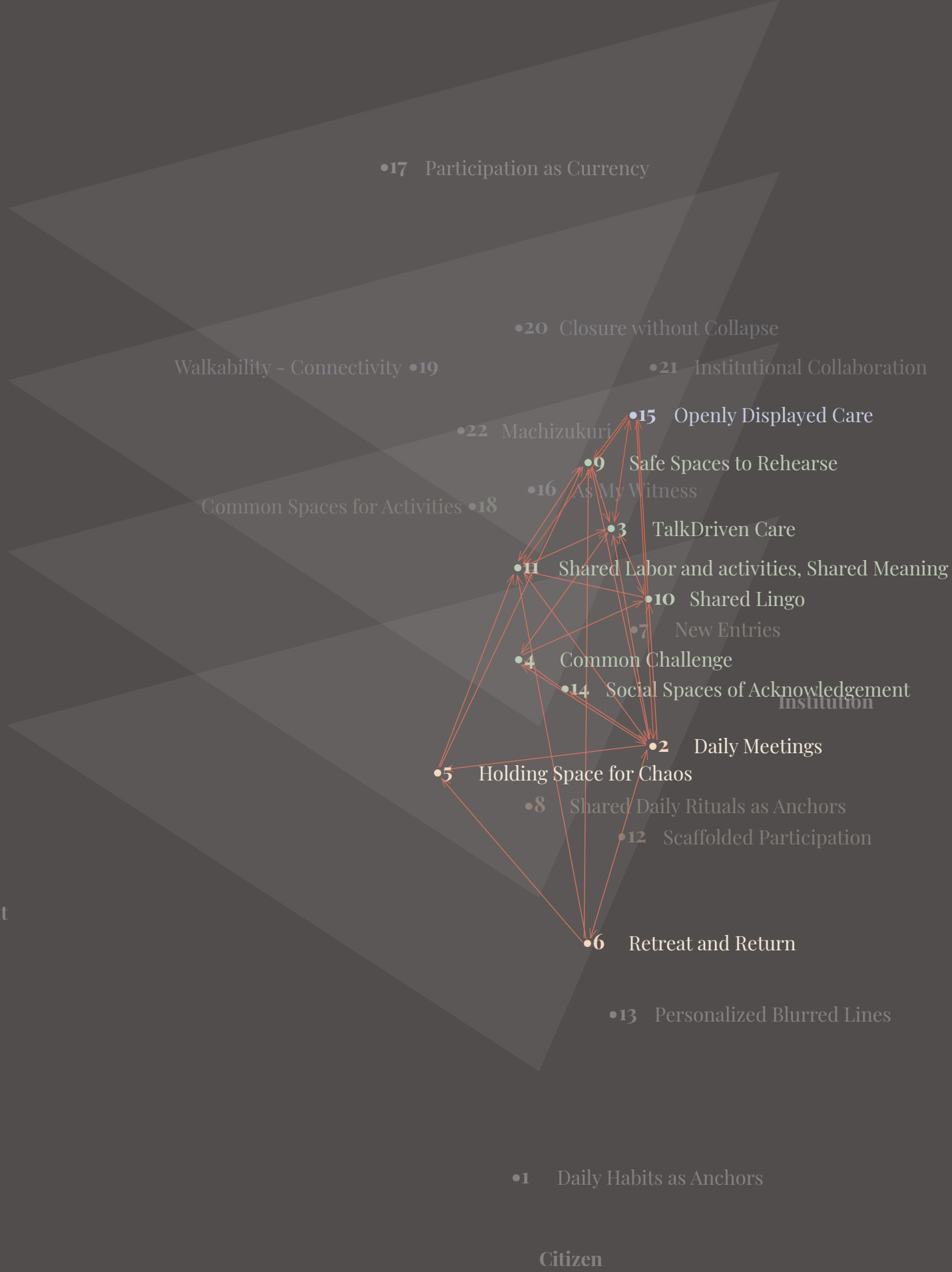
Community

Relationships

Personal

Government

Fig 67 Bethel House Pattern Network Analysis: Tojisha Kenkyu



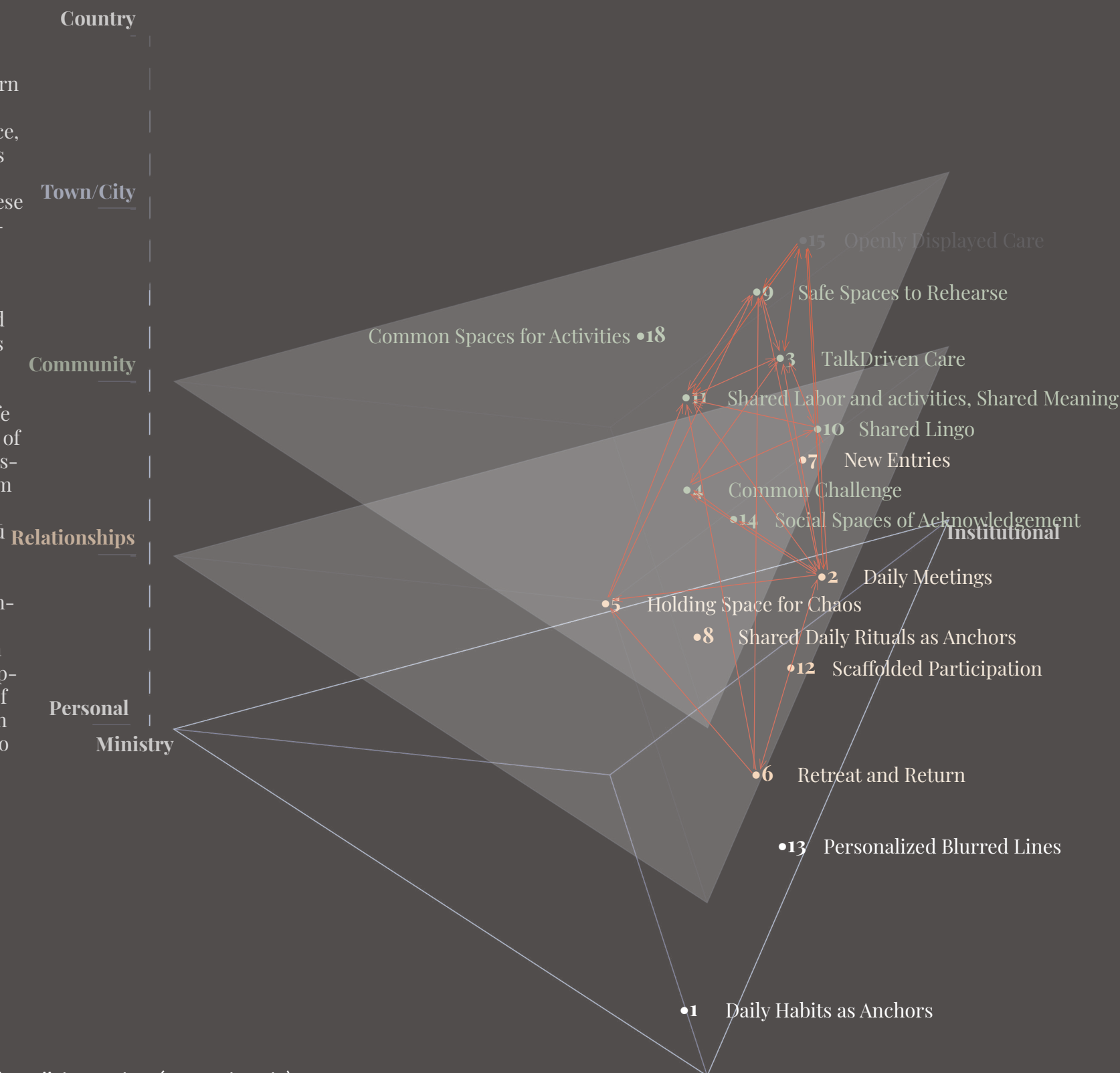
Analysis

The cyclical structure of Pattern 6: Retreat and Return reflects the Bethel logic that stepping back is not regression, but part of a sustainable rhythm. Members are supported in their need to withdraw and are welcomed back without stigma. This aligns closely with the values of self-awareness and boundary-setting central to *tōjisha kenkyū*.

Other patterns highlight the cultural tools that enable this ongoing self-research. Pattern 10: Shared Lingo allows members to speak a common language shaped by lived experience, while Pattern 9: Safe Space to Rehearse gives room for members to try new behaviors or expressions without judgment. Together, these create a scaffold for emotional experimentation and learning.

Tōjisha kenkyū thrives in these relational circuits. Pattern 11: Shared Labor and Shared Meaning turns everyday tasks into platforms for cooperation and reflection, reinforcing the idea that insight doesn't just come from therapy or pills, it emerges through doing life together. Similarly, Pattern 14: Social Spaces of Acknowledgement and Pattern 15: Openly Displayed Care provide the emotional ecosystem in which members feel seen and supported, vital for the deep honesty that *tōjisha kenkyū* demands.

What emerges across these patterns is a communal rhythm that holds, challenges, and rebuilds. There is no pressure to be "well" in the conventional sense. People relapse, disappear, return. They cry, fight, stay silent. All of it is part of a shared ecology of care, in which everyone is engaged in ongoing research into their own humanity.



This culture of iterative self-study not only stabilizes internal life but sets the foundation for broader social reintegration. Bethel doesn't prepare individuals to re-enter society by fixing them to fit in, it supports them in becoming researchers of their own minds and behaviors, capable of choosing their own pace and path. In doing so, the institutional role of Bethel is reimaged, not as a top-down authority, but as a collaborative scaffold that enables individuals to become co-authors of their recovery and re-engagement.

This analysis directly addresses Sub-Research Questions 1 and 2 by illustrating how *tōjisha kenkyū* is not just present but foundational in the everyday systems and interactions at Bethel House. The detailed examination of patterns, such as Daily Meetings, Talk-Driven Care, and Holding Space for Chaos, demonstrates how practices of self-observation and collective reflection are structurally embedded into communal life (sub RQ1). Moreover, the analysis shows how *tōjisha kenkyū* actively sustains and animates these patterns, shaping the rhythms of care, communication, and recovery within Bethel (sub RQ2). These patterns are not isolated behaviors but expressions of a deeply rooted perspective that makes lived experience the primary site of knowledge and healing.

Fig 68 Bethel House Pattern Network Analysis: Tojisha Kenkyu (Internal Scale)

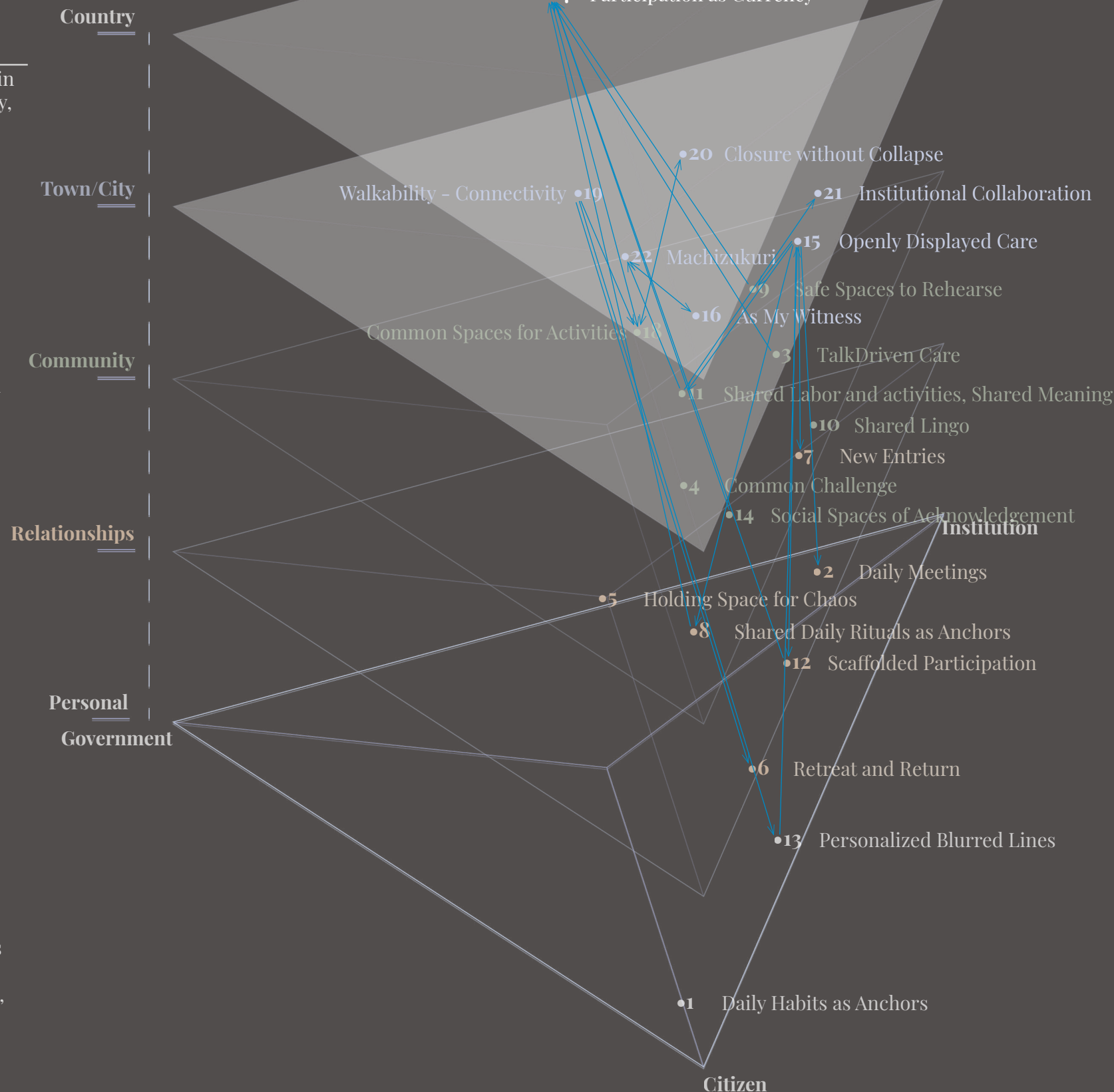
Analysis

Internal and External Dynamics
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

Bethel House's pattern network is rooted in the principle of *tōjisha kenkyū*. Internally, patterns such as Daily Meetings (2), Holding Space for Chaos (5), Retreat and Return (6), Talk-Driven Care (3), and Common Challenge (4) embody this spirit. These patterns form the base structure of the supporting environment between the members and the Bethel House, enabling emotional safety, vulnerability, and community co-regulation. Safe Spaces to Rehearse (9) and Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors (8) further reinforce a stable rhythm that encourages gradual engagement without the fear of failure or social pressure.

These internal practices form the engine of Bethel's care culture. They are supported by Scaffolded Participation (12) and New Entries (7), which help newcomers find accessible points of entry into the community, respecting their pace and readiness. Through Shared Lingo (10) and Shared Labor and Activities, Shared Meaning (11), internal experiences become legible, communicated, and enacted through routine, giving structure to what **otherwise might remain invisible suffering**.

The transition from **internal to external** begins with patterns that are visible and socially legible. Openly Displayed Care (15), As My Witness (16), and Participation as Currency (17) serve as bridges to the external world by making internal support practices observable and respected in public contexts. These allow local residents, shop owners, and institutional partners to witness Bethel's way of being, not as clinical or pathological, but as caring, disciplined, and valuable. Here, **internal trust becomes social trust**.



Spatial patterns like Walkability-Connectivity (19) and Common Spaces for Activities (18) facilitate low-stakes interaction with the town. Bethel's integration into Urakawa's public life is further supported by Institutional Collaboration (21), which formalizes shared goals with external organizations, and Closure Without Collapse (20), which supports transitions out of stigmatized roles while maintaining dignity and social connection.

These external patterns culminate in Machizukuri (22), a form of collaborative town-making that reflects Bethel's reintegration process as mutual shaping. Machizukuri is not the endpoint but a looping structure. Through repeated patterns of relational visibility, positive contribution, and co-presence, internal practices built on *tōjisha kenkyū* patterns gradually reconfigure the wider social fabric. Each small act, whether a kombu delivery, a street-cleaning task, or shared conversation, contributes to reweaving the civic life of Urakawa.

This layered system illustrates how social reintegration is not achieved through a singular intervention, but through recursive movement between inner work and outward engagement. Bethel's internal meetings and rituals sustain emotional safety, which in turn allows participants to show up visibly and meaningfully in society. Over time, this reciprocal patterning builds the relational infrastructure that machizukuri depends on. Internal coherence makes external connection possible, and external acceptance loops back to strengthen internal confidence.

This discussion engages closely with sub-Research Questions 3 and 4 by showing how the patterns at Bethel House support emotional safety and social inclusion (RQ3) and how they link directly to the values and practices of machizukuri in Urakawa (RQ4). The progression from internal emotional structures to externally actions, illustrates how care and visibility are gradually scaled outward. Rather than treating machizukuri as an external policy or initiative, Bethel enacts it through everyday acts of co-presence and contribution, showing how social inclusion grows organically from a base of internal coherence and mutual trust.

Fig 69 Internal and External Dynamics

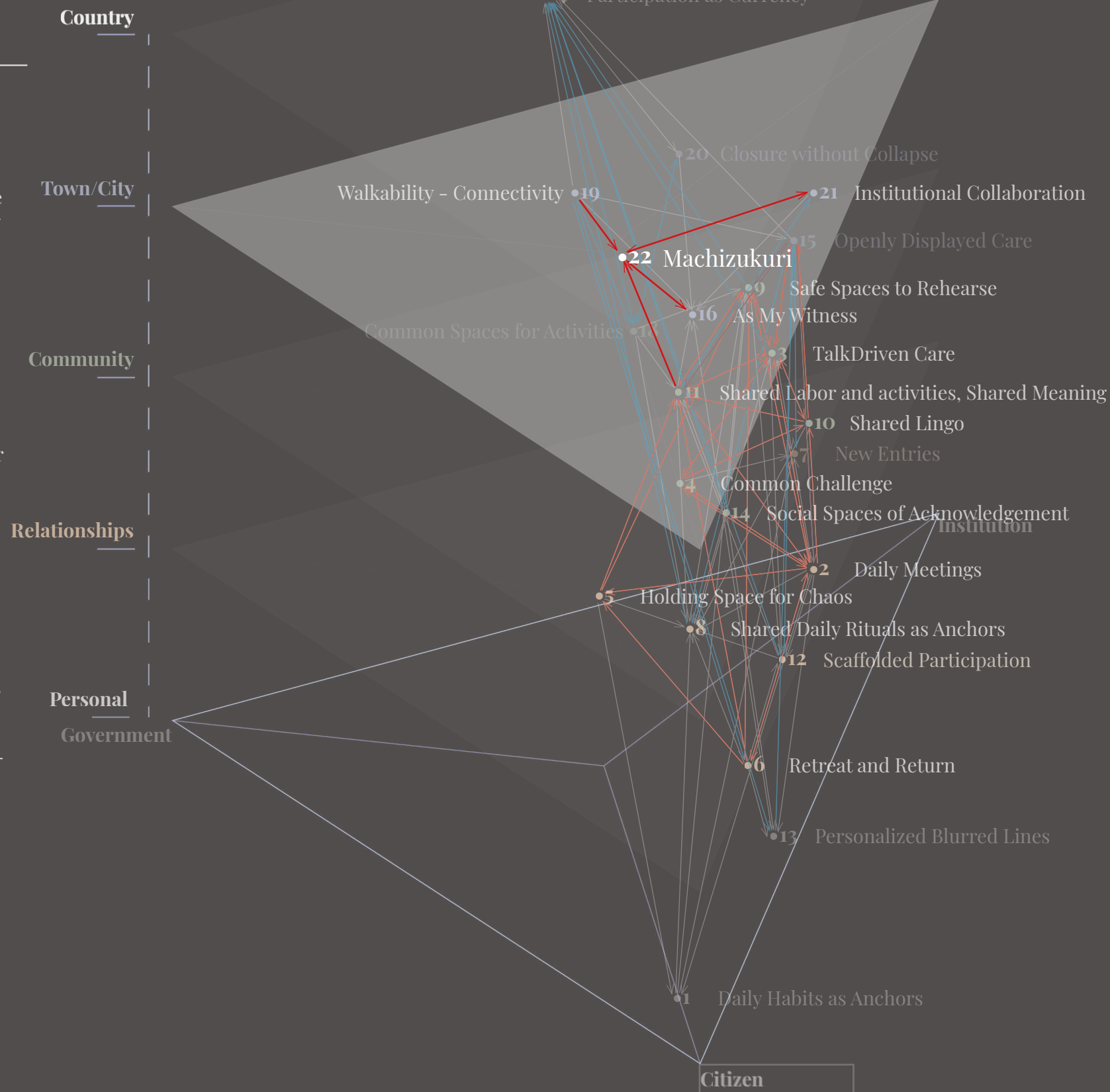
Analysis

Machizukuri Network
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

The path from tōjisha kenkyū to machizukuri follows a layered transition from internal reflection to public participation. In Bethel's internal world, individuals practice tōjisha kenkyū through shared struggles and everyday activities, stabilized by patterns like Shared Labor and Activities, Shared Meaning (11). These internal practices become legible externally through As My Witness (16), where vulnerability is acknowledged publicly, transforming personal suffering into social presence.

The shift continues through Walkability-Connectivity (19), where shared spaces foster spontaneous interactions, easing the boundary between Bethel and the town. Over time, this visibility supports Institutional Collaboration (21), as local structures recognize Bethel as a trusted partner. This network culminates in Machizukuri (22), where the town itself becomes shaped by inclusive, relational design.

As described in the conceptual framework, society's mold no longer fits all lives. Instead of forcing individuals to adapt, Bethel's pattern system allows the structure itself to shift. In the theoretical framework, this circuit of patterns activates when trust, presence, and reflection are aligned, lighting the way toward a community that grows from shared care, not conformity.



This analysis most clearly speaks to sub-Research Questions 4 and 6. It shows how the internal practices rooted in tōjisha kenkyū evolve into broader community engagement through machizukuri, demonstrating a link between Bethel's micro-level care practices and Urakawa's collaborative town-making efforts (sub RQ4). At the same time, it highlights how Bethel's approach challenges Japan's developmentalist social structure by offering an alternative model, one where the social environment hears each other, rather than requiring individuals to conform to rigid societal norms (sub RQ6). Through this layered pattern system, care and inclusion are not imposed from above but emerge organically from lived experience, shared space, and mutual recognition.

Fig 70 Machizukuri Pattern Network

Birds eye-view

Scenario Mapping

This bird's-eye view analysis offers an important spatial dimension to understanding Bethel House's relational ecosystem and speaks directly to Sub-Research Questions 1, 3, and especially 4.

By mapping patterns onto specific location, such as Bethel House, workshops, and residential visits, it becomes clear that everyday practices of care and inclusion are not isolated but distributed across the urban fabric of Urakawa (sub RQ1). This dispersed visibility, made evident through spatial observation, demonstrates how emotional safety and social inclusion are quietly but consistently supported through routine, place-based interactions (sub RQ3).

More critically, this mapping reveals how the values and practices of machizukuri (sub RQ4) are not implemented as top-down urban planning strategies but emerge from the ground up through Bethel's embedded presence in the town. The spatial patterns show that machizukuri is engaged through sustained, small-scale acts of participation, driving routes, casual encounters in common spaces, and collaborative workshops with local institutions. These interactions build a living infrastructure of trust and mutual recognition, subtly reshaping Urakawa's social and spatial environment over time. Rather than transforming the town through large gestures, Bethel contributes to machizukuri by fostering micro-relationships and site-specific practices that enable a more inclusive and adaptive civic life. This demonstrates that machizukuri at Bethel is not a formal program, but a lived process, one that links internal care practices with the physical and relational rewiring of the town itself.



Fig 71 Spatial Analysis: Birds eye view Pattern clusters

Eye-level perspective

Scenario Mapping

The eye-level perspective, drawn from participant sketches and grounded in lived, everyday rhythms, looks to Sub-Research Questions 1, 3, and 4. It reveals how patterns such as walkability, shared labor, openly displayed care, and shared lingo are not abstract principles but embodied practices that unfold across the spaces of daily life in Urakawa (RQ1). These relational actions, often small in scale, like garbage sorting or gardening, are not only stabilizing for individuals but visibly contribute to community care, community place making. As people work side by side, they witness one another and are witnessed by locals, forming mutual recognition loops of respect that foster emotional safety and inclusive presence (RQ3).

The sketches illustrate how *tōjisha kenkyū* and *machizukuri* are not confined to institutional discourse but lived out in public, integrated through routines that bind people to place. These acts reflect the theoretical concept of “quality without a name”, the deep coherence and moral occupation that Christopher Alexander describes, where a place feels alive because its social and spatial structures are in sync.

Thus, *machizukuri* in Bethel is not just civic planning, but a process of slow, visible rewiring of the social fabric through repeated gestures of shared care. Each small encounter, ritual, or task creates civic meaning, demonstrating how relational infrastructures of inclusion are constructed from the ground up (RQ4).



Fig 72 Relational Network of Bethel Pattern Language from eye perspective 1

Analysis

Quality analysis

Christopher Alexander describes two key criteria when evaluating the “quality without a name” in design: continuous moral occupation and coherence. These principles also guide the analysis of Bethel House and its role in hikikomori reintegration.

What does **continuous moral occupation** mean in this context?

It reflects the ongoing, shared responsibility to support one another. At Bethel, this takes the form of consistent care, repeated chances to engage, and a willingness to listen and live alongside each other. It is not a one-time intervention, but a sustained process of mutual presence, reflection, and support. Members and staff alike participate in continuous dialogue and collective effort, making care an everyday practice.

What does **coherence** mean for hikikomori reintegration?

While Bethel offers a strong internal support system and community safety net, there is a notable gap in outreach to individuals who remain isolated.

The system functions well once individuals are already participating, but it does often not extend far beyond its boundaries. There is a lack of outspoken extension to the hidden individuals. This is in part a result of Bethel’s limited capacity and its deep-rooted focus on supporting those who actively seek help. Actively seeking out the ‘Forget Me Not’ individuals, those who remain hidden, is not a central focus of Bethel’s mission, and understandably so, given the organization’s existing commitments and capacity. For the model to be adapted elsewhere, greater attention would be needed on how to reach and connect with hidden hikikomori who have not yet emerged.

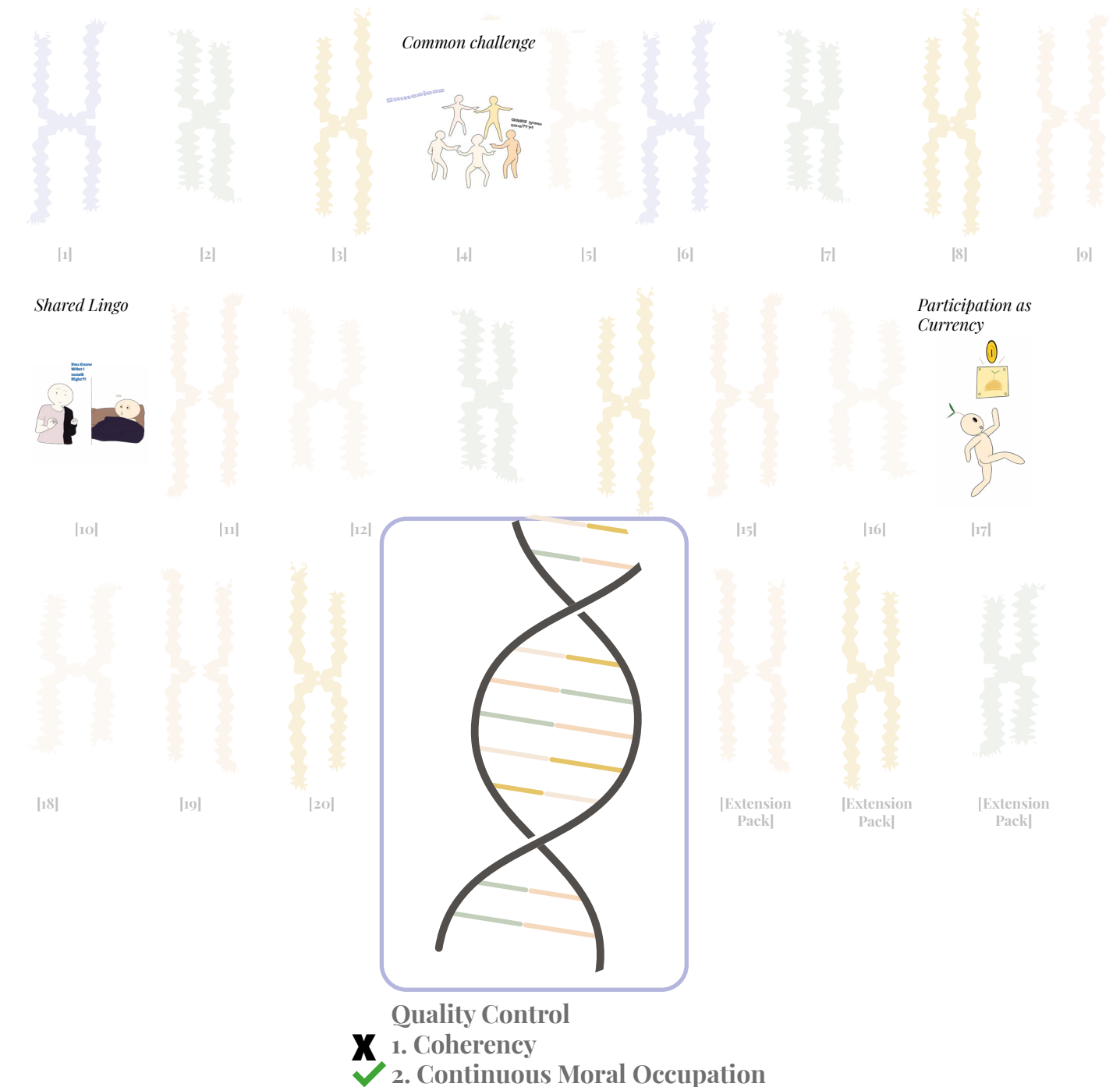


Fig 73 Analysis: Quality Control

Design & strategy

Pattern Design.

The pattern language analysis reveals a rich and deeply relational system of support within Bethel House, built through continuous interaction, shared reflection, and layered care structures. However, one notable gap emerges in the early stages of engagement: *the absence of a clear mechanism for reaching those who remain isolated, the individuals who have yet to enter any support system*. While Bethel excels in fostering reintegration once individuals have stepped into its community, it does not focus on the initial outreach to hidden hikikomori, and understandably so, given its capacity and scope.

This signals a need for an additional pattern set, one that addresses the first point of contact. As current behavioural studies and cognitive theories suggest, the built environment and social setting play a crucial role in shaping how hikikomori perceive safety, connection, and risk. With rising numbers and the influence of digitalization, engagement models must consider how to meet hikikomori in spaces where their anxiety is lowest, and agency can begin to emerge. This may differ from person to person, but a general framework can be established.

Previous methods, such as long-term passive presence outside a hikikomori’s room by volunteers or family members, may have symbolic value but often lead to exhaustion or trauma for everyone involved. Instead, a more sustainable approach should integrate insights from cognitive and spatial psychology, offering low-pressure, personalized, and familiar points of re-entry. Rather than forcing interaction, the design of such a pattern should emphasize attunement to the individual’s pace, digital or physical environment, and emotional readiness, laying the groundwork for more inclusive, ethical, and scalable outreach models.

Pattern group: Initial Outreach for Hikikomori Reintegration

Context

Hikikomori individuals are often trapped in a cycle of withdrawal and isolation, with societal pressure and fear playing a central role in their refusal to engage. For successful reintegration, it is crucial to identify and support hikikomori who are still hidden, and to offer them a safe, non-threatening entry point to social interaction. However, current systems primarily focus on those already within support systems, leaving out those at the start of their journey toward reintegration.

Problem

While Bethel House excels at the reintegration process, it lacks an established outreach mechanism to engage those who remain isolated. Attempts to engage hikikomori often involve direct, confrontational approaches, such as volunteers sitting outside their rooms or pressuring them to interact. These approaches are not only ineffective but can also be traumatic for both the hikikomori and the volunteers involved.

Solution

A tailored, low-stress outreach system should be designed to meet hikikomori individuals in environments where they feel safest and least anxious. Drawing from the culture of Bethel, this approach must honor the principle of creating a **separation with dynamic interaction**.

It is essential to recognize those already participating and those not yet engaged as distinct subgroups with differing needs, rhythms, and thresholds for interaction. While many of the underlying patterns of support may be **similar and interwoven**, the divergence in their physical environments, degrees of social connection, and emotional readiness requires multiple forms and layers within the system.

This distinction is also rooted in Bethel’s early history and spirit, where members and the town of Urakawa co-existed with mutual struggles and resilience. Bethel’s self-sustaining model emerged from recognizing its unique position and choosing to grow within its own constraints while staying in communication with the broader community. In the same way, outreach efforts must acknowledge that while the physical and digital realms may appear separate, they are deeply interconnected. An effective system would not attempt to collapse this separation but instead create soft, *permeable boundaries* through which hikikomori can gradually move, when they are ready, without pressure, shame, or forced reintegration.

Design & Strategy

Context: Key Needs & Sensitivities

Reaching out to hikikomori requires careful attention to the specific psychological, emotional, and social conditions that shape their withdrawal. Drawing from the *positioning* chapter, several key needs and sensitivities emerge that must be addressed for any outreach to be effective.

These form the basis for the extension pack, which acts as a bridging layer between the isolated realm of hikikomori and the supportive Bethel House network. For reintegration to occur, a system must first enter their space on their terms. Only then can the rest of the support structure become accessible and meaningful.

1. Profound Social Fear and Avoidance

Hikikomori perceive even neutral or supportive environments as hostile. They live with chronic hypervigilance, mistrust, and intense fear of humiliation or failure in social interaction.

Outreach must not resemble judgment or surveillance. Pressure triggers further withdrawal.

Sources

Li & Wong, 2015; Yong & Nomura, 2019; Lin et al., 2022

2. Disrupted Sense of Safety and Familiarity

Their internal world has adapted to isolation. Stability and predictable routines provide psychological safety. Sudden or unfamiliar social environments can destabilize them.

Re-engagement must be slow, familiar, and environmentally consistent.

Sources

Kato et al., 2012; Yong & Nomura, 2019

3. Fragmented Relationship with Physical Space

The hikikomori identity is often shaped by the spatial environment. The home becomes both sanctuary and prison. Other physical spaces feel alien or dangerous.

Digital spaces may be the only “safe” spatial environment they can inhabit initially.

Sources

Lin et al., 2022; Proulx et al., 2016

4. Need for Emotional Visibility and Recognition

Social detachment is tied to emotional invisibility. They often feel unheard, unseen, or misunderstood.

Spaces and interactions must provide psychological validation and genuine listening.

Sources

Nakamura, 2013; Yong & Nomura, 2019

5. Stigma and Pathologization of Withdrawal

Traditional approaches label hikikomori as a medicalized problem to fix. This erases their voice and reinforces detachment.

Empower them as co-researchers of their lives. Don’t “fix” them—support them.

Sources

Tomonari, 2022

6. Agency and Autonomy Over Engagement

Many feel stripped of control—by institutions, families, or expectations.

Engagement must be personalized and paced according to their terms. Entry points should never be generic.

Sources

Tomonari, 2022; Yong & Nomura, 2019

7. Trauma from Hierarchical Institutions

Hierarchical systems often replicate dynamics of pressure, exclusion, and shame.

Peer-based, horizontal community models are more effective than clinical or state-run services.

Sources

Bethel House example (*Positioning*) ; Nakamura, 2013

8. Gradual, Non-Linear Recovery Paths

Hikikomori may relapse or oscillate between phases. Pacing must respect this nonlinear progress.

Constant availability matters more than milestones.

Sources

Kato et al., 2012; Yong & Nomura, 2019

FORGET ME. NOT!

Show Christopher, how integrated you are!



My 2nd!

Pattern language Kit

MSc Urbanism Graduation Thesis
Delft University of Technology
Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment
Department of Urbanism

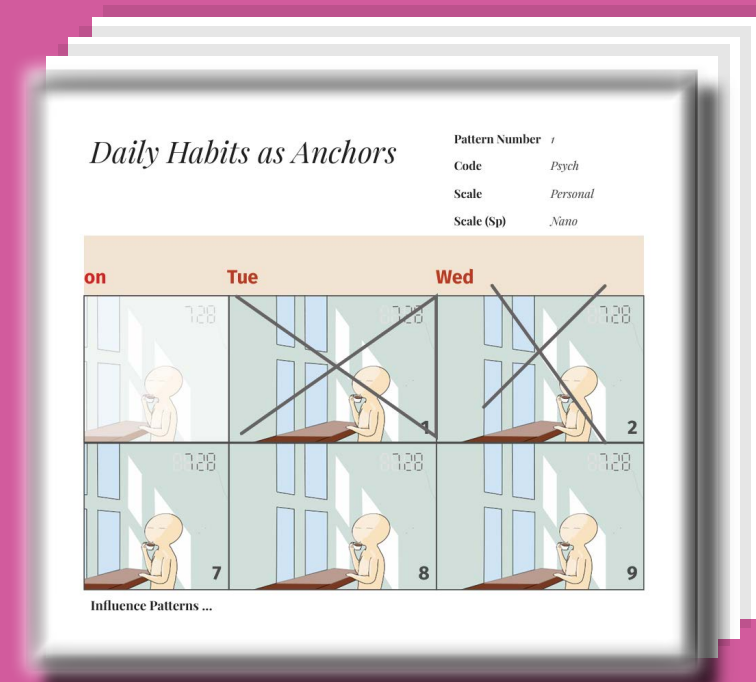
Fig 74 Ad for Extension Pack

Feeling stuck trying to reach someone?

Introducing the **Extension Pack**, a companion set to the original Bethel Pattern Language, specially crafted for the quiet, hard-to-reach corners of care!

YI-AN LU

Connect to the Original Bethel Set!



This five-pattern set (Patterns 23–27) is designed for those working at the threshold, where contact is delicate, presence matters, and *rushing in* never works. Whether you're a peer supporter, a family member, a community worker, or just someone trying to stay close without pushing too hard, this pack was made *with you in mind*.

Perfect for situations where trust *takes time*, the Extension Pack helps you *stay near without overwhelming, invite without insisting, and support without fixing*.

Use with care. No assembly required. Just patience, rhythm, and a little hope.

Available wherever quiet care is needed.



Non-Intrusive, Non-Threatening Contact

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Pattern Number | 23 |
| Code | Code |
| Scale | Relationships |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro |



Fig 75 Reaching out to Hikikomoris hiding under a rock (their blanket)

Pattern Solution (What)

Initiate contact in familiar or private environments through emotionally neutral channels such as digital platforms or trusted intermediaries. Allow the individual full control over when and how they respond. Maintain presence without prompting interaction, creating space for engagement to emerge voluntarily and without pressure.

Pattern Description (How)

Contact begins through low-intensity formats such as anonymous messages, digital platforms, or indirect communication from someone the individual already knows.

Communication avoids personal questions, advice, or emotional urgency. The outreach appears casually and predictably, without follow-up demands.

This Pattern Requires...

3/ 5/ 6/ 7

Messages can be short, open-ended, or even observational, allowing space for the hikikomori to decide if and when to respond.

Repetition and consistency over time help build a quiet sense of presence that does not intrude on their space or emotional boundaries.

This Pattern influences ...

24/27

Problem Context

1. Profound Social Fear and Avoidance
Outreach must not resemble judgment or surveillance. Pressure triggers further withdrawal.
7. Trauma from Hierarchical Institutions
Peer-based, horizontal community models are more effective than clinical or state-run services.
4. Need for Emotional Visibility
Spaces and interactions must provide psychological validation and genuine listening.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

When individuals are approached in ways that respect their emotional boundaries and allow them to remain unseen until they are ready, the act of contact becomes a gesture of recognition rather than intrusion. Meeting someone in their place of withdrawal without pressure affirms their autonomy and humanity. It creates the conditions for trust to grow and for connection to feel possible.

When people are met in their emotional hiding places without pressure, they feel less like a problem and more like a person.

Referential Pattern

3. Talk-Driven Care
Normalizes communication as casual, continuous, and pressure-free. This approach sets the tone for gentle, stigma-free conversations.
7. New Entries
Highlights the emotional risk of entering any community and the need for warm, personalized onboarding.
5. Holding Space for Chaos
Accepts unpredictability in behavior or emotional response. This is essential when initial outreach may be met with silence, anger, or avoidance.
6. Retreat and Return
Embraces stepping back without punishment. A vital structural parallel when initiating contact with hikikomori who fear sustained engagement.

Stakeholders

- Trusted Individual
Familiar figures who can serve as soft entry points without triggering social anxiety.
- Peer Supporters (Community Member)
Individuals with shared experience who understand withdrawal and can model calm presence.
- Family Members (with guidance)
Only when relationships are stable, they can help maintain quiet, non-demanding presence.
- Support Coordinators (Institution Staff/ Care taker)
Oversee outreach strategy, ensuring consistency and emotional neutrality across contact points.

Digital Engagement

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Pattern Number | 24 |
| Code | Code |
| Scale | Relationships |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro |

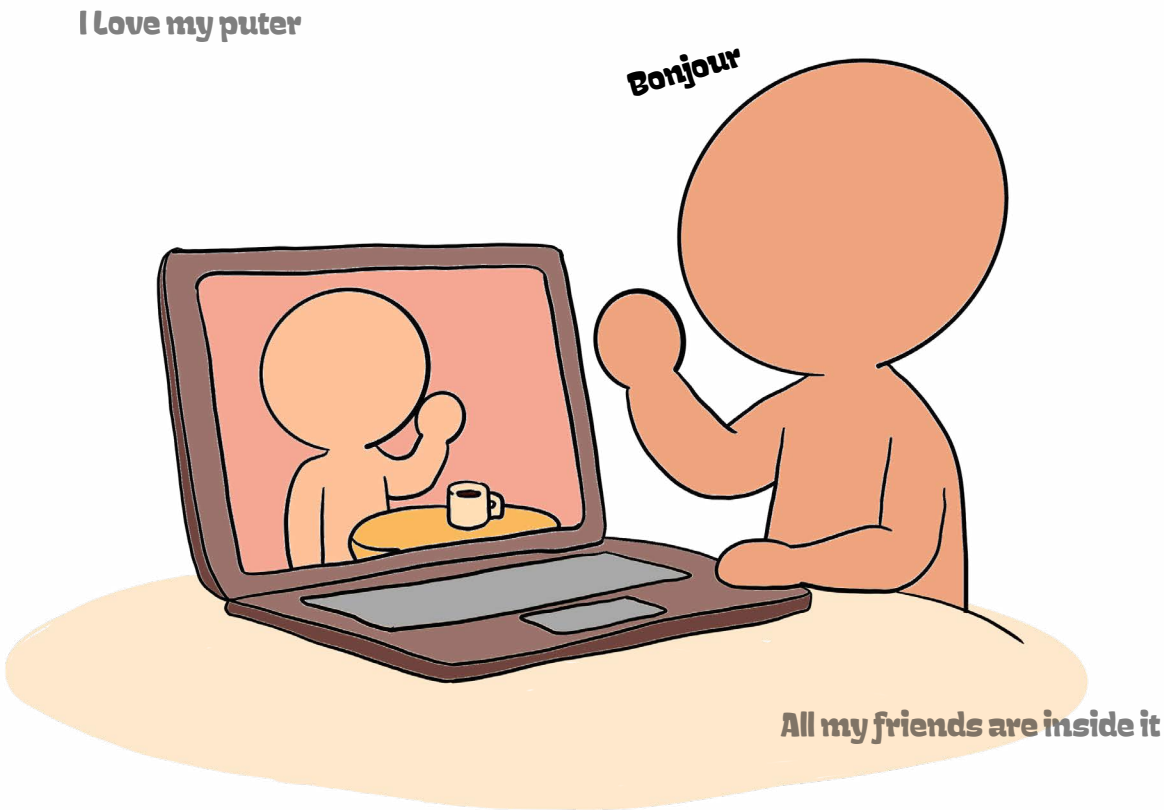


Fig 76 Video Chatting

Pattern Solution (What)

Use virtual environments such as anonymous chatrooms, game platforms, or forums as initial points of contact. These spaces allow hikikomori to observe or participate without visibility or obligation. Interaction remains voluntary, with full control over pace, identity, and timing. Gradual familiarity with shared language, rituals, and digital presence helps create rhythm and belonging without requiring physical exposure.

Pattern Description (How)

Engagement begins in online spaces where anonymity is preserved and interaction is optional. Platforms such as forums, chat applications, or multiplayer games allow hikikomori to enter social environments without physical presence.

These digital spaces act as extensions of the self, offering safety and control over identity. Participation can begin passively, by observing con-

versations or activities, and gradually shift toward interaction as trust builds.

Digital rituals like logging in at familiar times or contributing to shared content help form a sense of belonging and continuity. Over time, these spaces become rehearsal grounds where relational and emotional expressions can be tested without fear.

This Pattern Requires...

1/ 9/ 10/ 15/ 23

This Pattern influences ...

25/ 26

Problem Context

1. Profound Social Fear
Outreach must not resemble judgment or surveillance. Pressure triggers further withdrawal.
3. Fragmented Relationship with Physical Space
Digital spaces may be the only “safe” spatial environment they can inhabit initially.
6. Agency and Autonomy
Engagement must be personalized and paced according to their terms. Entry points should never be generic.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern is important because it recognizes that for individuals experiencing profound social fear and a fragmented connection with physical spaces, virtual environments provide a critical foundation where identity and trust can develop safely and autonomously.

In these anonymous digital spaces, engagement can begin without pressure or exposure, allowing individuals to gradually build familiarity, emotional vocabulary, and social rhythm on their own terms.

By supporting a personalized and voluntary pace of participation, virtual spaces become essential rehearsal zones where identity grows securely before it returns to physical presence, ultimately fostering belonging and agency without triggering withdrawal.

Referential Pattern

1. Daily Habits as Anchors
Translates well into digital rituals—regular times for login, check-ins, or chat sessions that create rhythm in the day.
9. Safe Spaces to Rehearse
Models safe trial-and-error environments, which digital platforms can extend into virtual rehearsal zones for identity and trust.
10. Shared Lingo
Encourages the creation of shared emotional vocabulary, which can also evolve in digital chatrooms or storytelling spaces.
15. Openly Displayed Care
Models how care can be expressed clearly and publicly (even online), building the emotional language of digital empathy.

Stakeholders

Hikikomori individuals
Need safe, non-judgmental spaces to explore identity and build social connection at their own pace.

Mental health professionals
Facilitate outreach and support through accessible, low-pressure virtual environments.

Peer support groups
Provide shared language, emotional support, and connection within digital spaces.

Gradual Physical Re-engagement

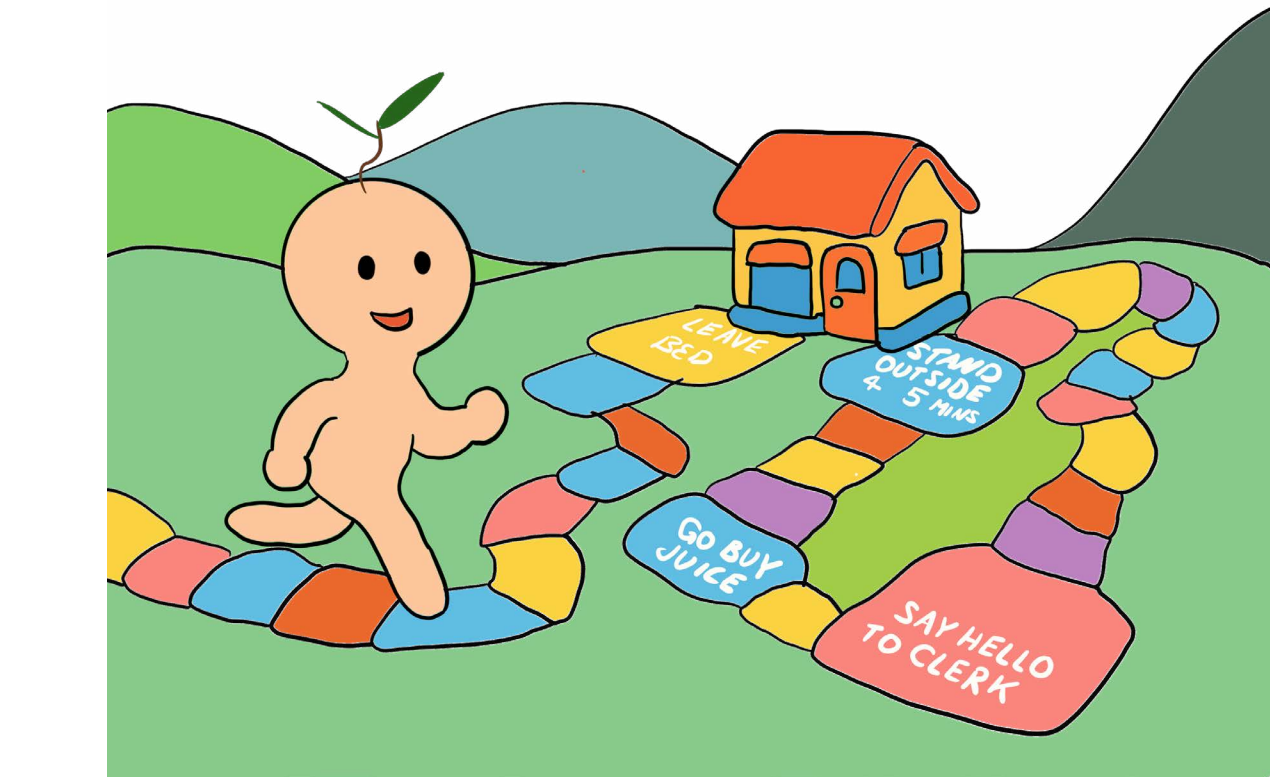


Fig 77 Boardgame with social interaction challenges

Pattern Solution (What)

Support gradual transition from digital to real-world through low-pressure meetups focused on shared activities in neutral spaces.

Use small shared habits and scaffolded participation to ease movement from private to physical environments. Social connection happens naturally through collective tasks, while safe, accessible spaces ensure a familiar and flexible recovery process at the individual’s own pace.

Pattern Description (How)

Many hikikomori experience fragmented spatial cognition and mistrust of physical spaces, feeling most comfortable in digital anonymity.

To support their gradual return, create low-pressure, activity-focused meetups in semi-private or neutral physical spaces that feel safe and familiar.

Use shared rituals and scaffolded participation to gently bridge digital presence with real-world interaction, making social connection secondary

This Pattern Requires...

8/ 11/ 12/ 19/ 24/ 27

to the collective task.

Choose accessible, walkable locations that reinforce safety and consistency.

By focusing on shared interests rather than personal exposure, these environments help translate the sense of control and comfort from digital spaces into trusted physical experiences, allowing individuals to rebuild their relationship with the real world on their own terms.

This Pattern influences ...

8/ 11/ 26

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Pattern Number | 25 |
| Code | Code |
| Scale | Personal |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano |

Problem Context

2. Disrupted Sense of Safety
Re-engagement must be slow, familiar, and environmentally consistent.
3. Fragmented Relationship with Physical Space
Digital spaces may be the only “safe” spatial environment they can inhabit initially.

8. Gradual, Non-Linear Recovery Paths
Constant availability matters more than milestones.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern exists because after identity and trust have developed safely in virtual spaces, a carefully supported transition into real-world environments is crucial for sustained social re-engagement.

Gradual, low-pressure activities in familiar and accessible physical settings allow individuals to rebuild their sense of safety and spatial connection without feeling overwhelmed.

By focusing on shared interests and collective tasks rather than direct social exposure, this approach respects the non-linear nature of recovery and helps transform digital comfort into meaningful real-world presence.

Referential Pattern

8. Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors
Provides the framework for small shared habits that reintroduce social participation without intensity.

19. Walkability – Connectivity
Ensures the physical world being re-entered is safe, connected, and accessible—an urban design condition that can make or break this stage.

11. Shared Labor and Activities; Shared Meaning
Anchors re-engagement in shared, task-based environments (e.g., working with seaweed), making socialization incidental to collective action.

12. Scaffolded Participation
Encourages a step-by-step reintroduction to activity, perfectly aligned with gradual movement from private to shared physical spaces.

Stakeholders

Hikikomori individuals
Need gradual, safe real-world environments to rebuild trust and spatial connection.

Mental health professionals
Support structured, low-pressure social re-engagement and monitor recovery pace.

Peer support groups
Offer shared activities that foster incidental social interaction and belonging.

Personalized Entry Points

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Pattern Number | 26 |
| Code | Code |
| Scale | Personal |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano |

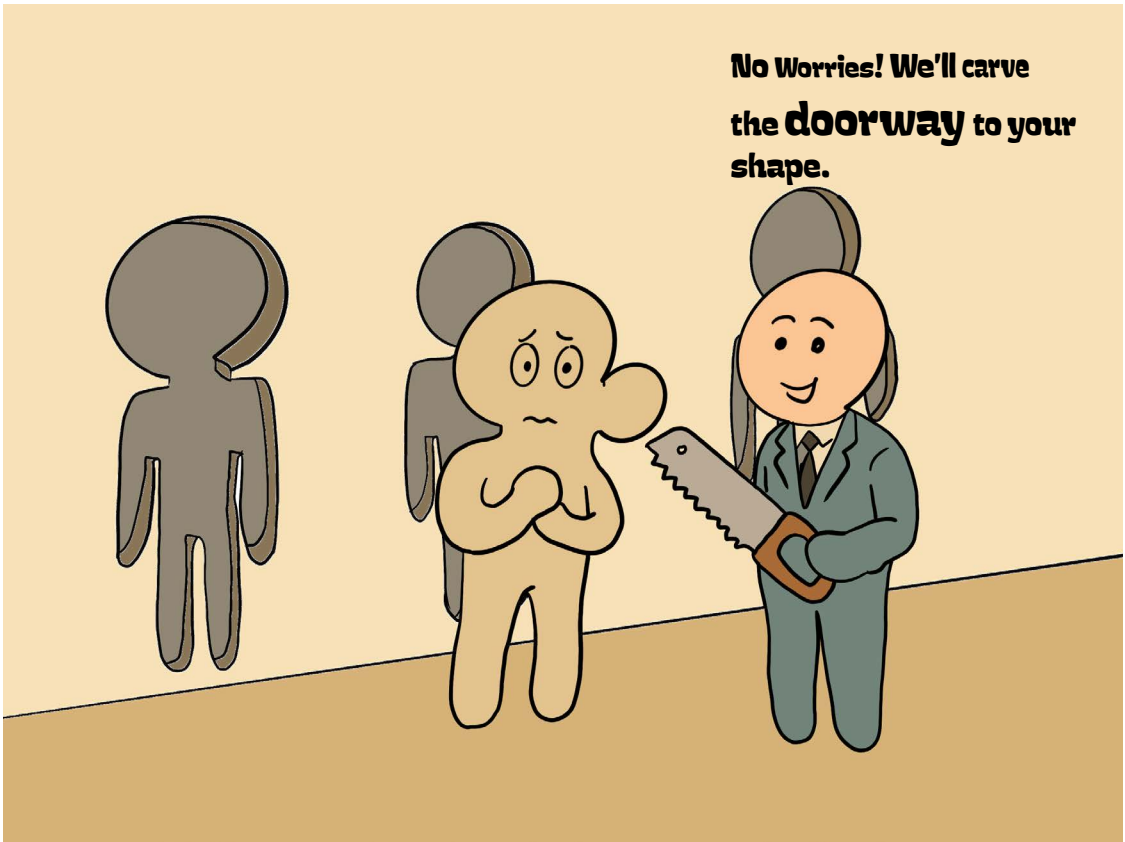


Fig 78 Adaptable entrance

Pattern Solution (What)

Engage individuals through co-created, personalized plans that respect their comfort zones, interests, and triggers. Allow them to lead their own pace of re-engagement with full permission to pause or restart as needed. Foster an environment of genuine listening and emotional validation by reducing hierarchical roles between supporters and participants. Normalize unique experiences as part of a shared social reality, empowering individuals as active collaborators in their own journey rather than subjects to be fixed.

Pattern Description (How)

Many hikikomori need autonomy due to varied trauma histories and often reject uniform treatment because of fear of institutionalization. To support them effectively, co-create engagement plans that respect their unique comfort zones, interests, and triggers. Remove hierarchical dynamics by encouraging equal collaboration between supporters and individuals. Allow flexible

pacing with space for pauses or restarts, acknowledging that recovery is non-linear. By empowering them to shape their own re-engagement path, a sense of dignity is restored and resistance decreases, creating a more meaningful and sustainable connection.

This Pattern Requires...

2/ 4/ 13 / 24/ 25/ 27

This Pattern influences ...

2/ 7/ 12

Problem Context

6. Agency and Autonomy
Engagement must be personalized and paced according to their terms. Entry points should never be generic.

4. Need for Emotional Visibility and Recognition
Spaces and interactions must provide psychological validation and genuine listening.
5. Stigma and Pathologization
Empower them as co-researchers of their lives. Don't "fix" them—support them.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern exists because when individuals are empowered to shape their own path, engagement becomes meaningful and sustainable. Personalized, flexible support that honors their unique needs, comfort zones, and pace restores agency and dignity, making the often difficult journey of re-engagement possible. By removing hierarchy and allowing them to lead, resistance decreases and trust grows, creating space for authentic connection and healing.

Referential Pattern

2. Daily Meetings (Tojisha Kenkyuu)
Emphasizes self-led reflection and voluntary disclosure. Entry points grow from what individuals themselves identify.

4. Common Challenge
Normalizes each person's unique narrative as part of a broader social condition, reducing shame in custom-tailored support.
13. Personalized Blurred Lines
Reduces hierarchy between supporter and supported, allowing the hikikomori to co-shape the structure of engagement.

Stakeholders

- Hikikomori individuals
Need personalized control over their engagement and pace to feel safe and empowered.

Mental health professionals
Facilitate co-creation of plans and provide non-hierarchical support; reduce institutional stigma.

Caregivers and family members
Support individualized approaches and respect personal boundaries.
- Peer
Share experiences and foster mutual understanding without authority.

Ongoing Presence, Not Pressure



Fig 79 Continuous presence, even if I get shouted at.

Pattern Solution (What)

Create an environment of gentle, continuous visibility where support is consistently present but never intrusive, allowing individuals to feel acknowledged without pressure to engage.

Embed this support into daily routines and familiar spaces, making it a steady quality. Encourage intermittent participation without guilt by respecting their need for retreat and return. This ongoing, low-demand presence builds trust slowly, provides emotional validation, and supports non-linear recovery by offering a consistent, reassuring social connection that respects individual pacing.

Pattern Description (How)

Many hikikomori experience non-linear recovery and fear abandonment, making stability and gradual trust essential.

Provide gentle, continuous presence, whether digital or in-person, that never demands interaction but remains reliably available. Embed support within daily routines and familiar shared spaces to create a sense of safety and belonging. Encour-

age passive inclusion where individuals can feel seen and acknowledged without pressure to perform or explain themselves.

This steady quality support allows them to retreat and return freely, building emotional trust over time in a way that single interventions cannot, and reduces shame by allowing re-engagement whenever they are ready.

This Pattern Requires...

1/ 6/ 14/ 18/ 23

This Pattern influences ...

24/ 25/ 26

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Pattern Number | 27 |
| Code | Code |
| Scale | Relationships |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro |

Problem Context

2. Disrupted Sense of Familiarity
Re-engagement must be slow, familiar, and environmentally consistent.
4. Emotional Visibility
Spaces and interactions must provide psychological validation and genuine listening.
8. Gradual, Non-Linear Recovery Paths
Constant availability matters more than milestones.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern exists because connection is sustained when support remains gently present and visible, even during times of withdrawal.

Continuous, non-demanding availability builds deep trust and a sense of safety, allowing individuals to engage and disengage on their own terms without fear of abandonment. This steady presence creates a foundation for gradual re-engagement and emotional healing over time.

Referential Context

1. Daily Habits as Anchors
Predictable routines and recurring availability signal continuity, which builds trust slowly over time.
6. Retreat and Return
Supports intermittent participation without guilt, critical for people prone to burnout or social exhaustion.
14. Social Spaces of Acknowledgement
Fosters spaces where hikikomori feel seen without having to perform or explain themselves. Ongoing presence becomes a form of acknowledgment.
18. Common Spaces for Activities
Embeds presence within accessible and shared spaces, offering soft, ambient inclusion without direct pressure to perform.

Stakeholders

- | | |
|---|--|
| Hikikomori individuals Benefit from steady, pressure-free presence that respects their need for retreat. | Family members Maintain gentle visibility to reassure without overwhelming. |
| Peer Provide continuous, non-intrusive support to build long-term trust. | |
| Mental health professionals Encourage flexible engagement and respect for non-linear recovery paths. | |

Extension Pack Positions

Personal and Relational Scale

Government | Institution | Citizen

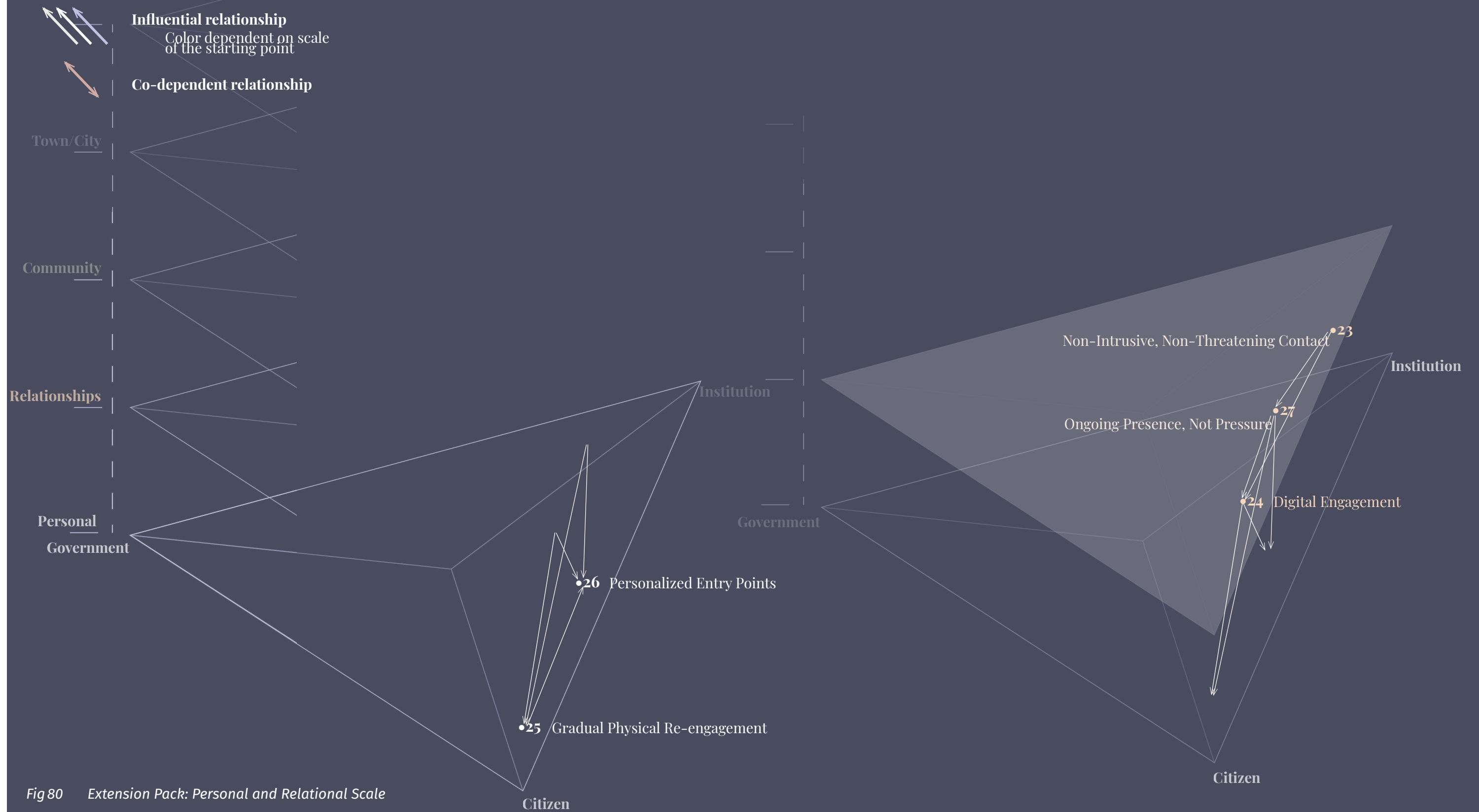


Fig 80 Extension Pack: Personal and Relational Scale

Design &
strategy

Extension Pack

All Extension Patterns

Network Mapping

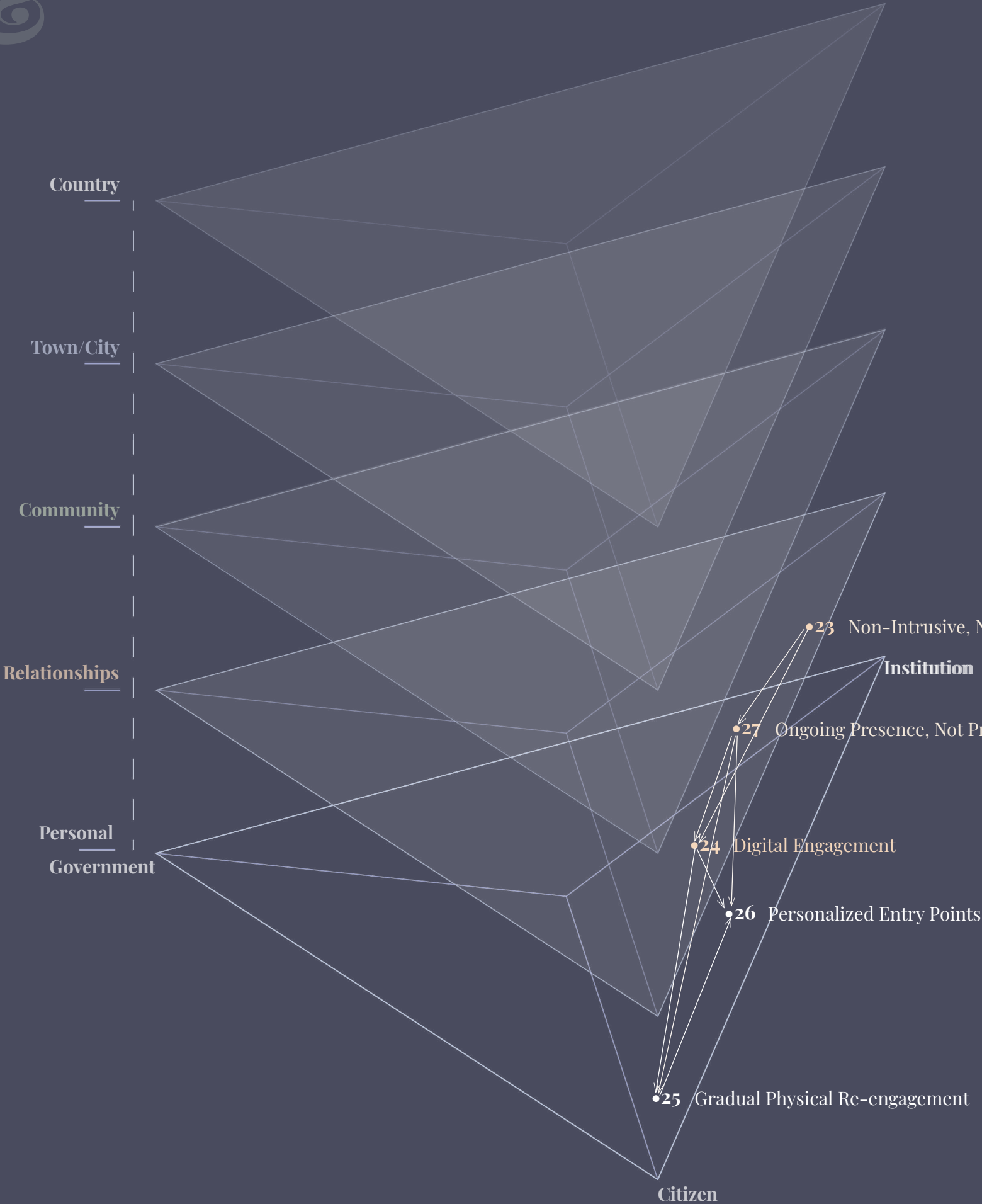
Government | Institution | Citizen

The Extension Pack introduces five new patterns (Patterns 23 to 27) designed to extend the reach of the Bethel system toward individuals who remain in deeper states of isolation.

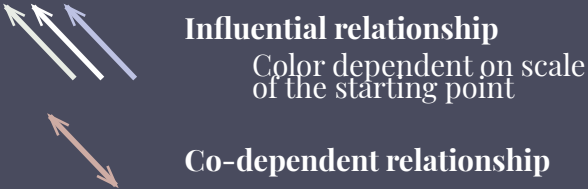
Internally, these patterns operate as a scaffolded pre-entry circuit, progressing through phases that allow for non-linear engagement. Pattern 23, Non-Intrusive, Non-Threatening Contact, serves as the first touchpoint. It is subtle, non-threatening, and designed to lower psychological defenses. Rather than demanding participation, it allows presence without pressure, creating a sense of being seen without being pushed.

Pattern 24, Digital Engagement, provides a mediated environment where individuals can test interaction on their own terms, often through anonymous or low-commitment forms of digital contact. This phase acknowledges the fear and cognitive distortion that often frame public space as unsafe, reflecting the conceptual framework's insights into how spatial anxiety overlaps with social withdrawal.

Pattern 25, Gradual Physical Re-engagement, supports tentative steps into shared space through low-stakes activities, often task-based and brief. This pattern makes relational presence possible without overwhelming social demands. Pattern 26, Personalized Entry Points, customizes the point of transition based on the individual's readiness. It actively connects the preparatory circuit to Pattern 7 of the original Bethel pack, New Entries, by adjusting to what each person is capable of handling emotionally and socially.



Lastly, Pattern 27, Ongoing Presence, Not Pressure, functions like a stabilizing current. It provides continuous, ambient support that accommodates withdrawal and return. This pattern recognizes that the process is not linear and helps normalize cycles of engagement and hesitation, ensuring the pathway remains available over time.



- 23 Non-Intrusive, Non-Threatening Contact
- 24 Digital Engagement
- 25 Gradual Physical Re-engagement
- 26 Personalized Entry Points
- 27 Ongoing Presence, Not Pressure

Fig 81 Extension Pack: Network

Design & Strategy

Connection Between 2 Packs

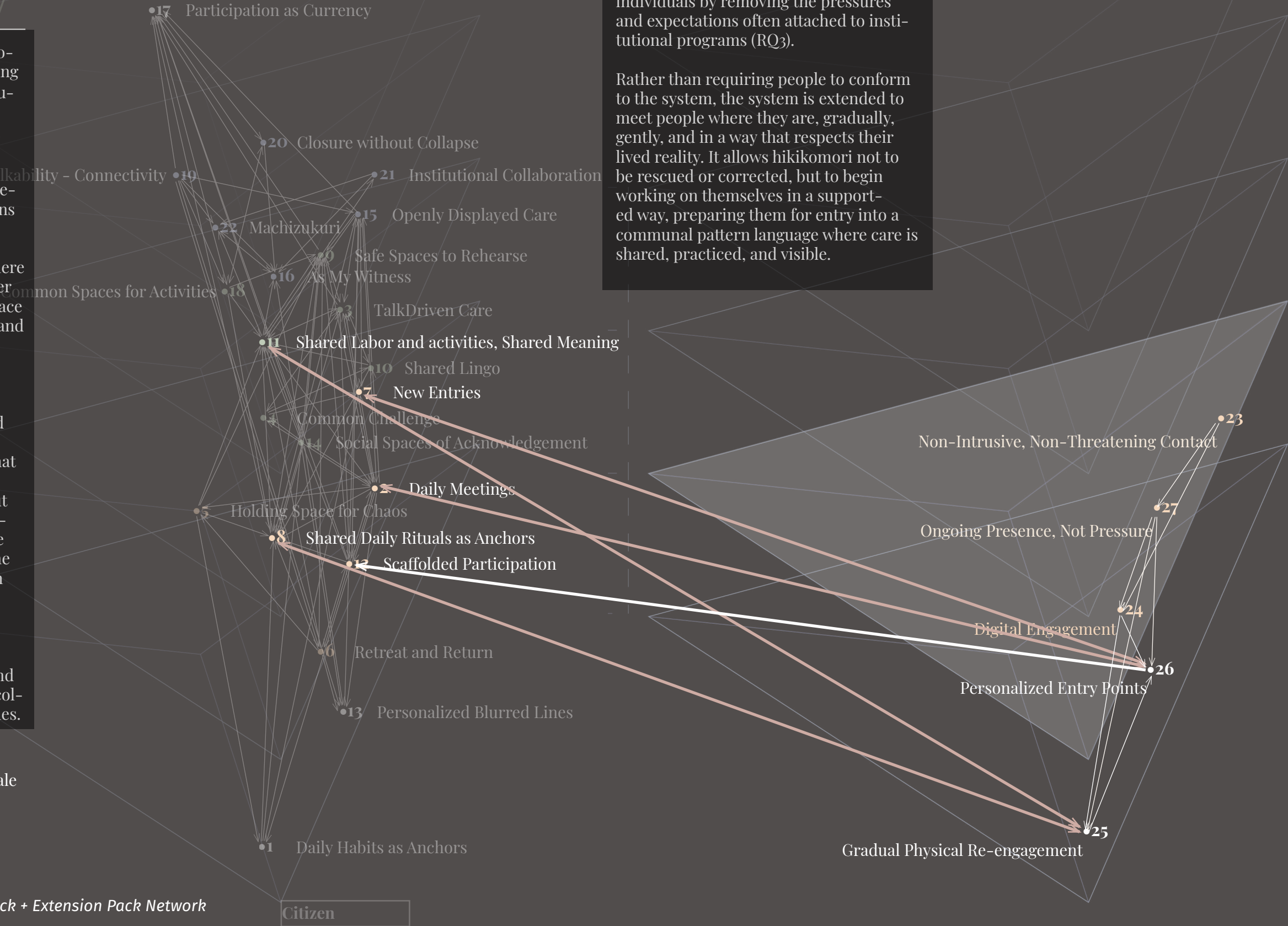
Integration with the Original Bethel Pattern Language
Network Mapping
Government | Institution | Citizen

The Extension Pack does not exist in isolation but feeds directly into the existing 22-pattern system of Bethel House, particularly through its alignment with Pattern 7, New Entries. This connection is facilitated through Pattern 26, which customizes a pathway into Bethel's daily rhythm. Once individuals cross into Pattern 7, they can begin to engage with internal support patterns like Pattern 2, Daily Meetings, where their presence is acknowledged through shared reporting; Pattern 3, Talk-Driven Care, where conversation becomes a form of care rather than confrontation; and Pattern 9, Safe Space to Rehearse, which offers behavioral trial and error without judgment.

The back-and-forth movement between the Extension Pack and the Bethel system mirrors Pattern 6, Retreat and Return, and Pattern 12, Scaffolded Participation. These emphasize the need for a care structure that accommodates fluctuation, one where individuals can step away and return without shame. Importantly, the theoretical framework of this project, especially the critique of Japan's developmentalist structure in the post industrial era, helps explain why such flexibility matters. The dominant system expects conformity and linear progress. The Extension Pack, by contrast, provides an alternative route where individuals can first build the internal capacity for trust and self-recognition before stepping into the collective structure of care that Bethel provides.

Influential relationship
Color dependent on scale of the starting point

Co-dependent relationship



This bridging structure speaks directly to Research Questions 2 and 3. It shows how *tōjisha kenkyū*, can be extended to support the early phases of self-observation and tentative re-engagement (RQ2). At the same time, it supports emotional safety and social inclusion for socially excluded individuals by removing the pressures and expectations often attached to institutional programs (RQ3).

Rather than requiring people to conform to the system, the system is extended to meet people where they are, gradually, gently, and in a way that respects their lived reality. It allows hikikomori not to be rescued or corrected, but to begin working on themselves in a supported way, preparing them for entry into a communal pattern language where care is shared, practiced, and visible.

Fig 82 Bethel House Pattern Language Pack + Extension Pack Network

Conclusion, Discussions & Reflection

Sub Research Questions

1. What patterns can be observed in the everyday systems and interactions at Bethel House?

Bethel House is shaped by recurring patterns that support a flexible and trust-based communal life. These include structured activities like daily meetings and self-help groups, as well as informal moments of shared care, such as reflective check-ins and collaborative work. Key patterns, such as “Holding Space for Chaos,” “Scaffolded Participation,” “Talk-Driven Care,” and “Retreat and Return,” reveal a rhythm of communal life that allows for breakdowns, restarts, and non-linear recovery.

These patterns, analyzed in Patterns 1–22, demonstrate how care is embedded into daily life, not as an add-on, but as a foundational method to collective self-study. Rather than aiming to “fix” individuals, Bethel empowers members to become researchers of their own minds and behaviors, choosing their own pace and path. The institution acts less as an authority and more as a scaffold for co-authored recovery. What emerges is an ecology of care where fluctuation is expected, people may retreat, relapse, or return, but are continually held within a shared commitment to growth and mutual understanding.

2. What role does *tōjisha kenkyū* play in sustaining and generating these patterns?

At the heart of Bethel House lies *tōjisha kenkyū*, not as a separate practice but as a way of being. It is a shared attitude that invites individuals to research their own lives through observation, dialogue, and collective reflection. This culture of self understanding and mutual learning is embedded in the everyday rhythms of the community.

Rather than existing apart from the patterns, *tōjisha kenkyū* emerges through them. Patterns such as Holding Space for Chaos, Talk-Driven Care, and Retreat and Return embody its core principles, creating a communal

rhythm that holds, challenges, and rebuilds. It sustains existing practices by making individual experiences visible, while also generating new ones through continuous reflection and response. In doing so, *tōjisha kenkyū* stabilizes internal life and supports re-engagement with society, not by demanding conformity, but by helping individuals become researchers of their own minds and paths. The institution, in turn, becomes a scaffold for co-authored recovery, grounded in lived experience and collective care.

3. How do these patterns support social inclusion and emotional safety for the socially excluded individuals?

The patterns at Bethel House create a flexible, non-judgmental environment that fosters emotional safety and inclusion. Participation is self-paced and cyclical rather than linear. Members can step back, disappear, or relapse without fear of exclusion, knowing they can return when ready. Patterns like Holding Space for Chaos, Retreat and Return, and Safe Spaces to Rehearse normalize instability and encourage acceptance without pressure.

Emotional safety is supported through consistent acknowledgment, even in silence or absence. Place-based routines, such as walking, gardening, or sorting trash, create moments of visibility and connection. These small-scale actions build mutual recognition, allowing members to feel seen without being scrutinized. Over time, this dispersed visibility supports a gradual, relational form of social reintegration.

Tōjisha kenkyū reinforces this by shifting focus from correcting behavior to understanding experience. In doing so, it enables members to navigate life’s challenges in ways that feel safe, shared, and self-directed, building emotional resilience and making inclusion not just possible, but sustainable.

4. How are these patterns linked to the values and practices of *machizukuri* in Urakawa?

The patterns at Bethel House reflect the principles of *machizukuri* not as formal planning but as lived community-making. Through shared routines, collaborations with local institutions, and participation in town life, Bethel contributes to the social and emotional fabric of Urakawa. This engagement is not separate from care, but an extension of it—civic presence built through everyday actions.

Rather than imposing change, Bethel’s practices shape the town from within. Acts like driving local routes, maintaining shared spaces, and holding public events become slow, relational forms of town-making. These gestures build trust and recognition over time, linking internal stability with external cohabitation.

What emerges is not a top-down process but a ground-up reweaving of community. The values of mutual support, participation, and respect extend beyond Bethel’s walls, making *machizukuri* visible as a process rooted in shared care. Internal patterns grounded in *tōjisha kenkyū* evolve into civic contributions, showing how inclusion is nurtured not through policy, but through presence.

Conclusion,

5. Do the patterns at Bethel House show signs of coherence and continuous moral occupation (Quality)?

Yes. Bethel House demonstrates coherence through the alignment of its values, practices, and spatial rhythms. The internal system supports emotional safety, shared responsibility, and mutual care, reinforcing a consistent moral ecology. Members are not treated as patients or clients, but as contributors to a community where participation is ongoing and reciprocal.

Continuous moral occupation is expressed through daily acts of presence and support. Care is not delivered as a service, but lived relationally: through collective decision-making, emotional check-ins, and shared tasks. This persistence in moral engagement reflects Alexander's principle of quality without a name. The environment is not just physically maintained but emotionally and socially sustained over time.

6. How do these patterns reflect an alternative to Japan's developmentalist social structure?

Bethel House presents a quiet but radical alternative to Japan's developmentalist model, which prioritizes productivity, conformity, and linear recovery. Instead of top-down frameworks driven by state and industry, Bethel operates through bottom-up, relational processes. Its structure is horizontal, with distributed roles and shared authority. Members are not passive recipients of care but active participants who shape their environment and support one another through lived experience.

Patterns 23 to 27 clearly illustrate this shift. At Bethel, healing unfolds through slow rhythms, small repeated actions, and mutual recognition. Rather than correcting deviance, its approach is non-hierarchical and responsive to individual pace and presence. Social recovery is not imposed but emerges from being heard, seen, and included within a shared space.

However, coherence becomes less certain when considering those not yet within the system. Bethel's model functions well for those who have entered, but it does not consistently reach hidden individuals who remain fully withdrawn. While this limitation is understandable, given Bethel's existing commitments, it suggests that for the model to be adapted or scaled, attention must be paid to bridging the gap between those inside and those still on the margins. Coherence, in this sense, is strong internally but limited in external reach.

This reframing challenges dominant narratives around recovery and development. Instead of striving toward fixed outcomes, Bethel emphasizes ongoing, situated processes rooted in coexistence and care. However, the model also exposes a gap: it excels once individuals are inside, but offers limited outreach to those who remain fully isolated. This signals the need for complementary strategies that create gentle and attuned points of first contact, ones that respect emotional readiness and reduce perceived risk. Such adaptations could extend the reach of Bethel's relational model while staying true to its values.

Answering Main Research Question

How does the pattern language of Bethel House demonstrate *social reintegration* through *machizukuri*, and can it *model* a healing structure for Japan's post-industrial society?

The pattern language of Bethel House demonstrates social reintegration as a slow, lived process embedded in everyday life. Rather than relying on correction or reinsertion into normative society, reintegration is nurtured through small, patterned rhythms: daily meetings, shared labor, open dialogue, and acts of visible care. These relational infrastructures are shaped by *tōjisha kenkyū* and *machizukuri*, which prioritize lived experience and collective meaning-making over expert-driven solutions. Together, they create a flexible, responsive ecology of care where difference and withdrawal are not pathologized but accommodated as part of communal life.

This approach fosters coherence and continuous moral occupation, qualities that align with Christopher Alexander's "quality without a name." Emotional safety and mutual accountability are not isolated outcomes but distributed across spaces in Urakawa, forming a pattern-rich social landscape that gradually supports individuals' re-engagement with the world.

However, Bethel's internal coherence begins only after individuals opt into community life. The project addresses this by proposing an Extension Pack: a set of early-stage patterns designed to reach *hikikomori* who remain withdrawn. These include gentle, non-intrusive forms of contact and personalized pathways toward engagement. While these new patterns remain separate from Bethel's core system, they share its values and logic, offering an outward-facing scaffold that makes the structure more adaptable to Japan's post-industrial landscape.

In this way, Bethel's pattern language illustrates how social reintegration can be enacted through relational, spatial, and psychological practices, providing not only a model for healing but a blueprint for participatory recovery that begins from within and scales outward.

Conclusion,

Bethel House offers a compelling vision for post-industrial civic healing, not through state-led interventions but through everyday practices of care, reflection, and shared responsibility. Its deeply embedded pattern language, grounded in Tōjisha Kenkyū and machizukuri, shows how social reintegration can be lived.

Internally, Bethel models coherence and continuous moral occupation. Its rhythms, rituals, and relational structures transform withdrawal into participation and stigma into shared understanding. Yet its reach remains limited to those already engaged, revealing a critical gap: the absence of a system to reach those still in deep isolation.

To respond, the Forget Me Not Project proposes new outreach patterns that offer safe, low-pressure points of contact. These additions form a soft interface between isolation and reintegration. While distinct, they remain aligned with Bethel's values and ways of being.

The pattern method used in this research reveals that reintegration is not a technical solution but a lived process. Through shared routines and co-reflection, individuals gradually return to the social fabric. Patterns here do more than document practices. They act as relational tools that help shape caring ecologies.

Yet not all experiences could be fully captured. Patterns carry traces of situated life, but some emotional and contextual subtleties remain beyond their reach. Even so, this method offers a way to observe and co-create civic structures that respond to fragility with care.

Together, the existing and proposed patterns outline a scalable framework for healing in fragmented societies. They suggest that reintegration begins not with correction but with presence. Bethel is not a universal model, but a prototype for relational infrastructure. A reminder that meaningful change begins with how we meet, listen, and remain with one another.

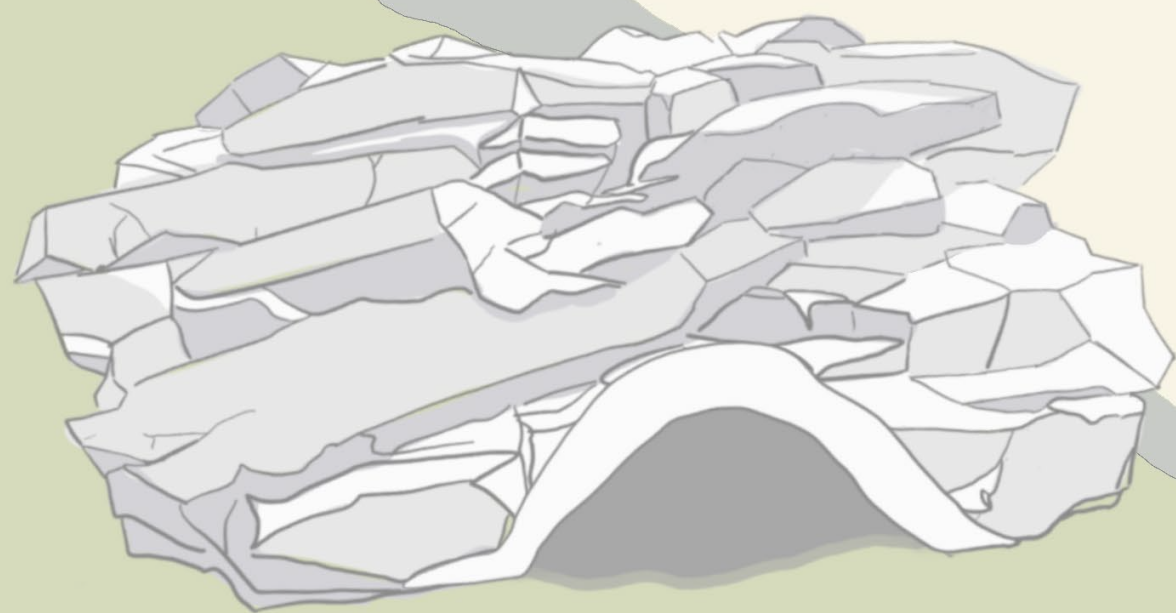
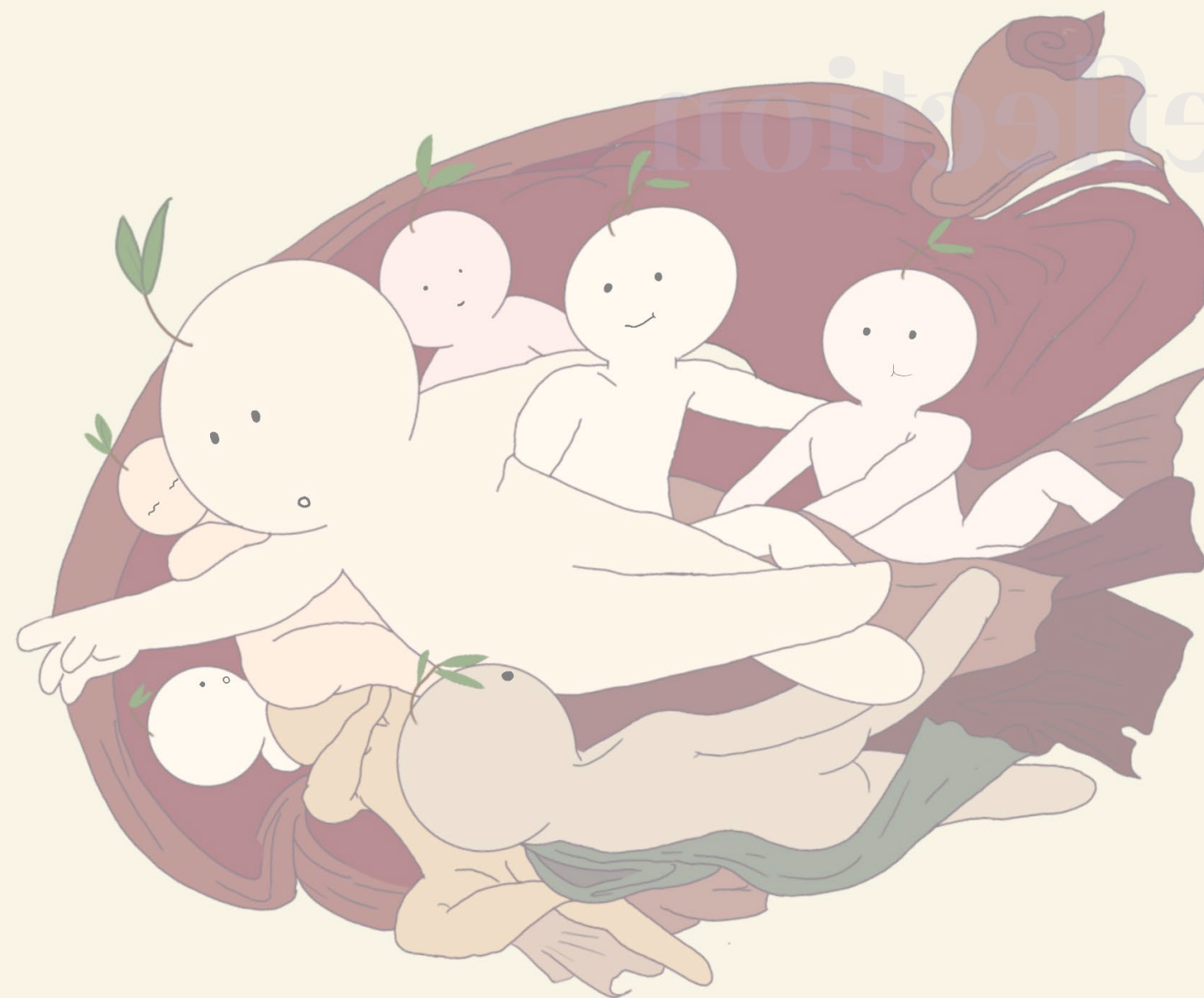


Fig 83 Forget Me Not

Discussion

Project Boundaries and Limitations

This project focused strongly on the visible and lived experiences of Bethel House and its members. While this gave access to the everyday structure and emotional reality of the community, it also meant that certain areas could not be covered in depth. The research concentrated on the physical in-person side of reintegration, which reflects the real-life and societal layers that the Bethel structure impacts. However, the world of hikikomori is not limited to physical space. There is another dimension that was not explored in detail: the digital space, where many hikikomori live. Further research could consider how this different world might influence or reshape the pattern language.

There are also broader policy and planning questions that remain open. This project focused on community-level systems. It did not go into the national or administrative structures that shape housing, funding, and access. Understanding the system from a planning perspective could open up other insights about why withdrawal happens, or how small systems like Bethel can be supported by larger networks.

Transferability and Contextual Considerations

Throughout the research, it became clear that transferability is not simply about whether the structure works. The Forget Me Not Project shows that the challenge to adopting a societal structure that reintegrates socially ostracised individuals is not access. Especially in big cities, accessibility to healthcare and services is already available. The problem lies more in how to communicate context and metaphor. Most people in cities do not know where to start or have time to slow down and reflect on these concepts. If people cannot picture how this community structure works, then you can't expect the pattern language to be effective.

While conducting fieldwork and being immersed in the environment of the town and its organizations, it becomes easy to overlook the fact that this seemingly simple way of living does not come naturally to most people. Machizukuri and Tojisha Kenkyū are concepts that are specific to the Japanese context. The shared understanding in Urakawa between staff, members, and locals is something that took years to build. It is not just the activities that make the model work, but the way people understand and speak about them. Visitors or outsiders may not catch the embedded meanings right away. For example, when someone at Bethel says “there is a visitor,” they are not referring to a person, but an auditory or visual hallucination. These metaphors have become part of their everyday language, and that shared lingo is not easily understood by others.

If this model were to be placed in a different city or society, people would have to be willing to listen and take the time to understand how these structures work. This means transferability depends not only on design, but also on education and context-building. It is not just about applying patterns. It is about building a shared language around them.

What Could Be Explored Further

The project raises several areas that could be explored in future research. First, the role of hikikomori as a subculture is a direction worth developing. Much of the focus here was on the reintegration into broader society. But what if the digital or withdrawn life of hikikomori is seen as a form of culture in itself? What kind of design, support, or recognition would that require?

Another possible expansion is to include barriers or forces that limit pattern growth. So far, the pattern language in this project focuses on forces that promote one pattern into another. But there are also obstacles and opposing forces. These could come from social stigma, economic pressure, or even competition. For example, Bethel's collaboration with the kelp industry does promote the spirit of machizukuri. But at the same time, they are also competing with other kelp sellers in the region. Exploring both support and resistance would create a more complete pattern landscape.

Lastly, the pattern language might be made stronger by recognising the role of staff and structure more clearly. In this project, staff roles were often dissolved into general interactions. But the environment at Bethel works in part because of a well-maintained institutional structure. Informal teaching, peer correction, and support are all part of the learning process. These are systems that did not appear as separate patterns, but they shape the space in important ways.

Societal Relevance

This project addresses one of the most overlooked consequences of Japan's post-industrial condition: the growing social exclusion of individuals like hikikomori. These individuals are often framed through medical terms or personal failure, but the findings show that long-term withdrawal reflects deeper systemic problems. It highlights the limits of a society that continues to operate through rigid civic paths, while many young people no longer fit within them. Bethel House offers an alternative that does not treat people as cases to solve, but as individuals to live and build with. Its approach reframes support not as service delivery, but as lived community-making.

The patterns found in Bethel suggest that care can be part of everyday civic life. Through daily rituals, shared work, and open reflection, people are given space to return into social life without judgment. Tōjisha Kenkyū and machizukuri allow individuals to take part in society again through real actions, not forced recovery. This process allows members to become contributors, not just recipients.

These findings offer value beyond the specific context of Japan. Other countries are facing similar challenges: aging populations, insecure labour markets, and disconnected youth. Recognising hikikomori not as a rare issue but as a response to structural pressures allows for broader conversations. Cities and towns facing similar fragmentation could look at how community-based structures might support social reintegration. This positions Bethel House not just as a care centre, but as a civic prototype within a shrinking and shifting society.

Scientific Relevance

The research contributes to an ongoing shift in how hikikomori is understood. Earlier studies often framed the condition within Japanese culture, but recent interdisciplinary research has shown that hikikomori is appearing in multiple countries. This supports the idea that the phenomenon is connected to broader social conditions, not just cultural identity. The Forget Me Not Project adds to this conversation by showing how urbanism, spatial cognition, and lived community design can help explain the condition and support reintegration.

Pattern language in this research offered a bridge between different fields: psychiatry, social work, and urban design. It helped visualise and analyse how complex systems of care operate in real time. It also allowed the project to trace how everyday environments support or challenge reintegration. This method gave structure to soft and often invisible forms of social interaction. When applied carefully, it becomes a tool to observe, compare, and potentially transfer certain aspects of social systems.

The research also connects to studies in spatial cognition, showing how individuals navigate space differently depending on their emotional and mental state. It supports the idea that space is not just physical but experienced through emotion, safety, and memory. These insights are relevant for those working in planning, design, and mental health.

By bringing together multiple disciplines, this project adds a new layer to existing hikikomori research. It shows how space, structure, and participation are all part of what allows individuals to step back into social life.

Reflection

Learning About Culture and Limits

What often shows is how challenging it can be for designers from another world to create solutions for contexts outside their own. During the whole project, I felt insecure by constantly asking if my thinking will truly work in another country. There will almost always be cultural nuances that me as an outsider misses, subtle aspects that can significantly influence how a design is received and functions in practice.

Through academic study, I can gain a conceptual understanding of another culture's ideologies, values, and norms. Through words, videos and pictures. But without having lived that reality, I believe it's inevitable that I missed certain subtleties, the kind that give a design its true depth or quality. Which is a shame that the project is surrounding discovering its true quality. My interpretation is, ultimately, still an outsider's perspective. While I may get glimpses of their culture through media, similarities, or global trends, I'm not embedded in their social fabric enough to fully grasp its intricacies.

Even after spending a year studying the culture, its urban conditions, and social structures, I still feel like I'm only scratching the surface. Within my project, I've done my best to cover the most relevant foundations and to base my decisions on informed research. Yet I remain open to being questioned, especially on aspects I may have overlooked, including culturally or psychologically sensitive dimensions.

This is, in fact, one of the main reasons I chose to focus on a cultural context vastly different from my own. I wanted to see something beyond my own lens. The project started from a financial angle. My aim was to understand spatial disparities through economic impacts. That goal shifted as I found that the root of the issue was not spatial or economic alone. What began as a study of construction booms and policy strategies ended up as a journey into the rhythms and language of community life. It showed me how the failure of economic systems leaves a trace in social relationships, especially in those who become invisible.

I hope that my curiosity, passion, and stress haven't blinded me to cultural assumptions. I've tried to understand the local needs, and I remain committed to learning from the perspectives I may have missed.

On Methods and Site Definition

Site definition was one of the most challenging parts. The method was helpful but expensive and time-consuming. Still, being in Japan allowed me to build the relationships that made this project possible. In this cultural context, real-life meetings are not just preferred, they are often necessary to build trust. It made me think about the balance between academic research and cultural respect. If I had relied only on desk research, the insights would have been more limited.

The use of drawing during interviews also helped bridge differences. It gave participants space to tell their story in their own way. That method helped surface knowledge that is usually hard to access through words alone.

On Positioning and Stakeholder Thinking

In the early stages of my project, I explored different methods such as stakeholder analysis and mapping power dynamics to help define and position the problem. These tools were particularly useful during the formation phase, they helped me narrow down the focus, identify key players, and understand where power and decision-making were concentrated.

However, as the project progressed, I found that these methods had limited value in addressing the deeper cultural and societal dimensions I was interested in. Stakeholder analysis, while helpful for identifying proponents, opponents, and interests, tended to flatten complex social realities into fixed categories. In a context as nuanced as this one, nearly every pattern and connection could generate its own stakeholder diagram, which risked making the project overly technical and detached from lived experiences.

My project proposes an alternative societal structure, offering a different viewpoint on how such systems could function. But traditional stakeholder mapping doesn't fully capture the cultural nuances or social undercurrents embedded in these structures. I found that most of the information surfaced through the analysis, such as who holds power and what their focus is, had already been addressed in existing literature.

I still think stakeholder analysis has value in expanding this work, but only if it includes the more subtle social and cultural factors.

Conclusion,

Looking Ahead

If I were to continue this project, I would focus more on planning and policy. I would look into how to piece together the full system that supports or blocks the transfer of this model. I would also look more closely at the different barriers that exist in other communities, not just what helps patterns grow, but also what holds them back.

This project helped me recognise when to go deeper and when to stop. I learned that research has to set limits, not just in time, but in scope. You cannot know everything, and you should not try to. But you can listen, reflect, and try to understand the systems you are working with. That is what I will take with me going forward.

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Fig 7

Fig 17

Fig 18

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Fig 17

Fig 18

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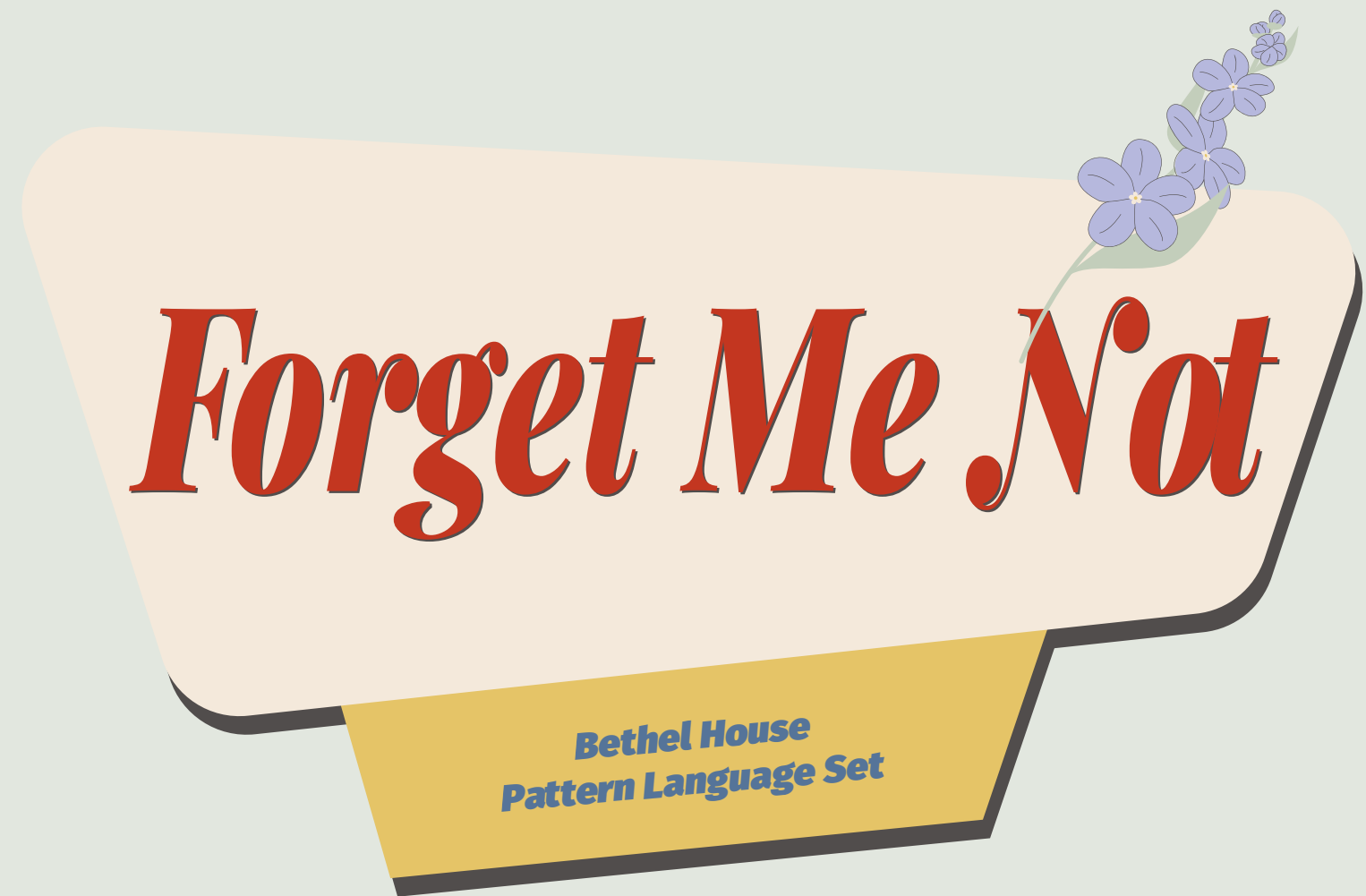


Fig 84 Bethel House pattern language pack cover

Daily Habits as Anchors

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 1 | |
| Pattern Number | 1 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Personal |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano |

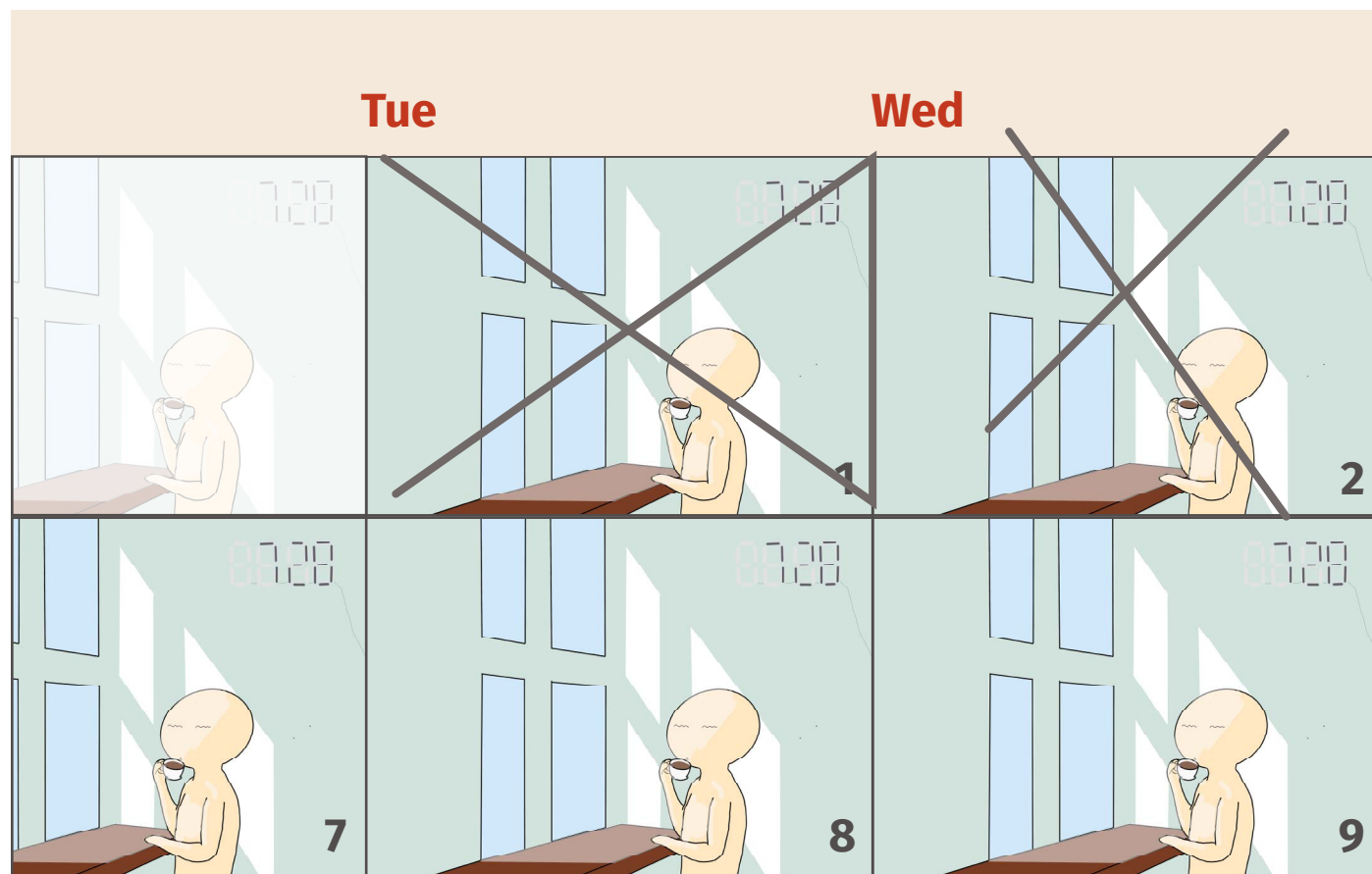


Fig 85 Drinking Coffee by the window everyday

Pattern Solution (What)

Establish predictable daily routines to provide structure, reduce anxiety, and create emotional stability.

Pattern Description (How)

Creating consistent loops in time and space, where tasks, roles, and interactions happen regularly, provides individuals with a steady framework that helps them feel anchored.

These small, repeated patterns offer a sense of safety, control, and predictability, making it easier to navigate both personal and social environments. Simple daily rituals, like returning to familiar routes or routines, build rhythm and emotional grounding, which is especially important for those who are mentally vulnerable.

Over time, this stability supports gradual reengagement, helping individuals regain confidence, rebuild meaningful connections, and gently open up to the unpredictability of daily life.

This Pattern Requires...

2/5

This Pattern influences ...

1/8/9

Problem

For individuals experiencing mental challenges (e.g hikikomori), the outside world feels overwhelming, unpredictable, and often threatening, even in familiar environments like schools or public spaces (Li & Wong, 2015; Yong & Nomura, 2019). This leads to defensive withdrawal, emotional detachment, and a deepening sense of isolation.

Without stable, familiar routines to anchor their daily lives, they struggle to navigate both physical and social environments. Building small, predictable patterns can help create a sense of safety and connection, offering a gentle path back toward engagement.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Simple, repetitive daily habits create a sense of stability and safety for mentally vulnerable individuals. Familiar routines and small loops of predictable activities help anchor them emotionally, offering grounding and gentle support for reengaging with their surroundings.

Referential Context (Appendix)

- Staff 0.1 suggests that chaos happens regularly and is largely accepted as the norm, highlighting the need for patterns such as (5) Holding Space for Chaos.
- Member 1.2 shares that, no matter the environment or situation, music is what grounds him and brings him back to life.
- Member 1.4 talks about the importance of personal “chill time.”
- Member 1.6 describes a daily routine in Urakawa town, starting with breakfast with a view, which then expands into opportunities for socializing, for example, going to the cafeteria or Café Bura Bura to talk or complain. This reflects (8) Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors and (11) Shared Labor and Activities, Shared Meaning.
- Member 2.5 describes having a daily routine, which enables further participation in patterns like (8) Shared Daily Rituals as Anchors and (11) Shared Labor and Activities, Shared Meaning.
- (2) Tojisha Kenkyuu activities make this possible by creating opportunities to socialize and reflect, helping individuals understand what they need in order to reach out, communicate, and engage socially with others.

Stakeholders

- Individual: Learns to identify personal daily needs and builds small routines for emotional grounding.
- Bethel Staff: Support and encourage predictable daily patterns without adding pressure or judgment.
- Peer community Members: To support and share their daily patterns as inspiration.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

24/ 27

Daily Meetings

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 2 | |
| Pattern Number | 2 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Personal - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano - Meso |

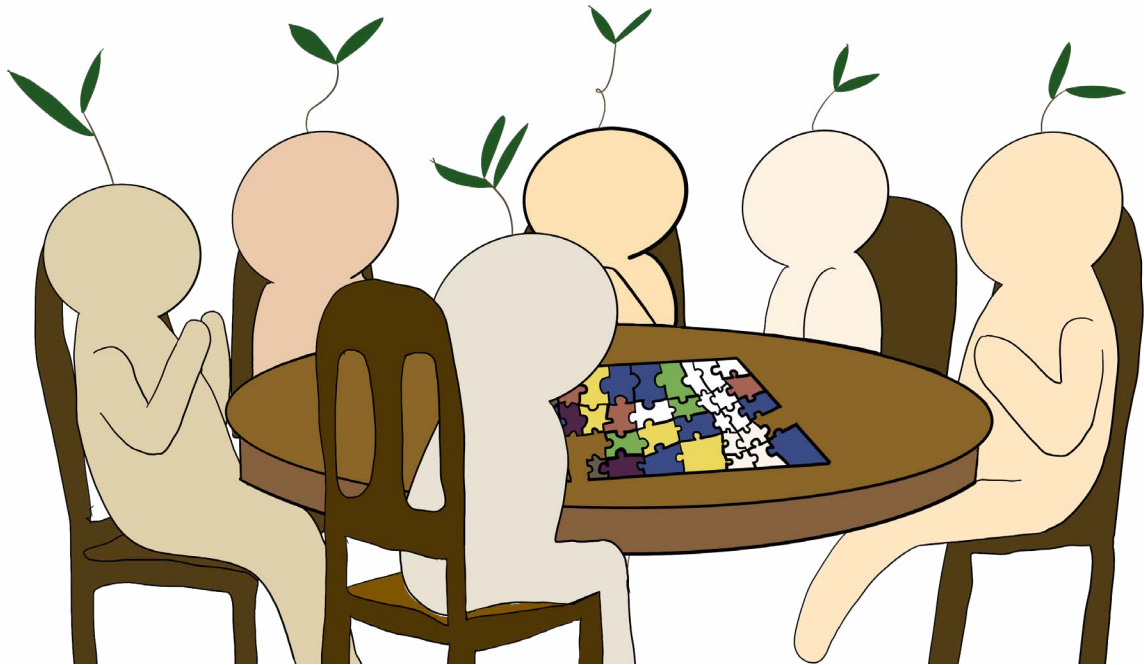


Fig 86 Group Meeting and puzzeling (Metaphorically)

Pattern Solution (What)

Daily Meetings provides a collaborative, self-reflective practice where individuals explore their experiences together, turning personal struggles into shared understanding. This approach fosters autonomy, emotional visibility, and mutual support without relying on traditional psychiatric treatments.

Pattern Description (How)

Tojisha Kenkyuu is a collaborative activity in daily meetings where participants engage in self-reflection and share personal experiences within a supportive group. Through open dialogue and feedback, individuals explore their challenges together, turning personal struggles into collective insight.

The activity includes social skills trainings and cognitive behavior therapy methods, helping members develop practical tools to improve social interactions.

Held in safe, non-judgmental spaces, These Tojisha Kenkyuu sessions allow participants to join voluntarily and proceed at their own pace. Embracing the natural complexity and unpredictability of mental health, the activity fosters emotional openness, reduces stigma, and strengthens social connections. By actively participating, members gain confidence and agency, contributing to both their own recovery and the creation of supportive community environments.

This Pattern Requires...

4/6/8/9/11/15

This Pattern influences ...

1/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14

Problem

Many individuals feel isolated and misunderstood, struggling to express their experiences or manage challenges. They often lack tools and support to make sense of their situation, leading to feelings of powerlessness and social withdrawal.

Traditional mental health approaches may miss the importance of peer support and self-reflection. Without safe spaces for sharing and feedback, these individuals remain disconnected, which deepens isolation and limits their ability to regain control and build meaningful connections.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Tojisha Kenkyuu transforms individual self-exploration into a shared community practice, which fosters emotional openness, reduces stigma, and builds mutual support, empowering individuals to regain agency and improve their social and mental well-being without relying solely on traditional psychiatric treatments.

Referential Context (Appendix)

| | |
|---|---|
| Member 1.1 explains how believing in Tojisha Kenkyuu changes members' experiences and highlights the importance of accepting the chaos in meetings. Members share feedback on mindsets, behaviors, and coping methods from their experiences. | sharing methods and stories. |
| Member 1.6 describes preparing for meetings at the Bethel house, linking it to daily rituals and safe rehearsal spaces. | Member 3.4 feels safe knowing others have similar experiences. |
| Member 2.2 and 2.3 emphasize the importance and presence of feedback loops in Tojisha Kenkyuu. | Staff 1.2 states the practice is voluntary and community-led. |
| Member 3.1 details the exchanges during the activities. | Staff 1.3 explains it helps reclaim narratives and improve mental health without focusing on illness. |
| Member 3.2 says Tojisha Kenkyuu helps organize chaotic inner thoughts. | Staff 1.4 describes the constant, adaptive nature of Tojisha Kenkyuu and its foundational methods. |
| Member 3.3 notes motivation and connection from | |

Stakeholders

- Individual Participants: Individuals who engage in self-reflection and group activities to gain insight and support.
- Staff: People who organize, guide, and support the Tojisha Kenkyuu sessions, ensuring a safe and constructive environment.
- Bethel members: Fellow participants who provide feedback, share experiences, and contribute to the collective understanding and emotional support.
- Mental Health Professionals: While not the primary drivers of this activity, they may support or collaborate with the community
- Bethel House Organizations: Bethel House that provide the physical and social infrastructure the activities.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

26

This Pattern influences ...

26

Talk Driven Care

Bethel House Pattern 3

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Pattern Number | 3 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

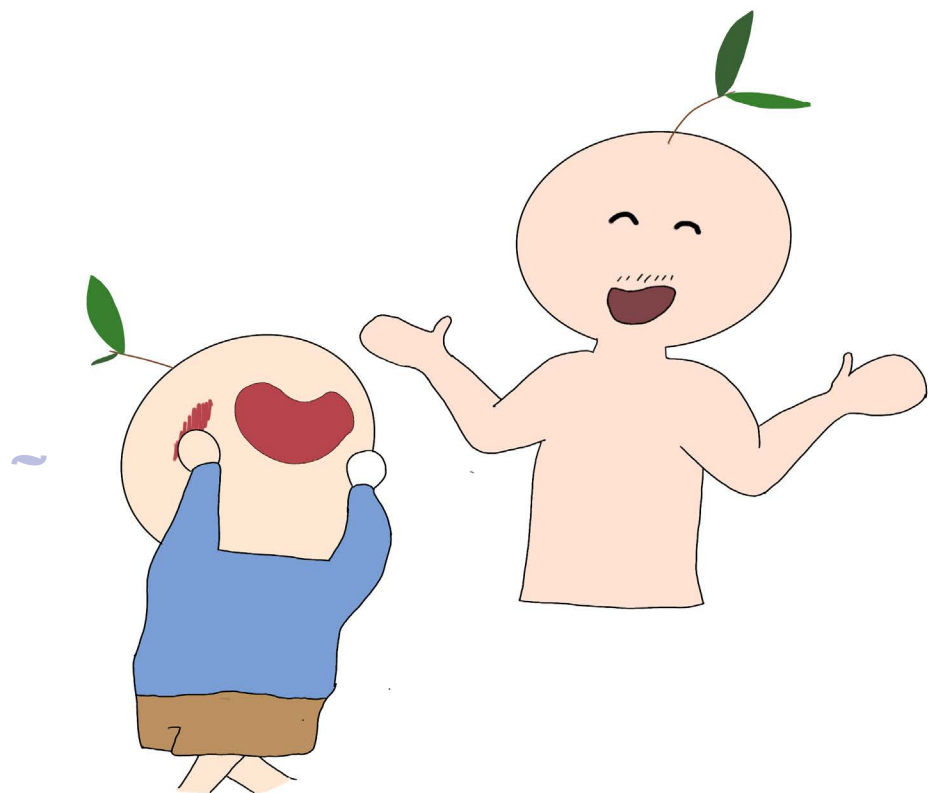


Fig 87 Feeling heard and understood

Pattern Solution (What)

Embed casual, everyday conversations as a core part of care to break down barriers between caregivers and members. These dialogues build trust, reduce stigma, and empower individuals to actively participate in their recovery through continuous, genuine communication.

Pattern Description (How)

This activity revolves around ongoing, stigma-free conversations between staff and members, and among members themselves, creating a supportive space where everyone feels heard without judgment.

It focuses on empowering individuals to express themselves, share challenges, and co-create coping strategies in a relaxed, collaborative environment.

By embracing complexity and emotional honesty, talk-driven care builds trust, supports narrative rebuilding, and encourages early prevention and education. It challenges rigid psychiatric methods by prioritizing genuine, equal communication as a core part of healing and social reintegration.

This Pattern Requires...

2/4/7/8/9/10/11/14/15

This Pattern influences ...

3/4/7/8/10/11/12/14/15/17

Problem

Standard care often reduces individuals to diagnoses, causing stigma, disempowerment, and isolation. Especially for socially withdrawn people like hikikomori.

Without personalized, ongoing dialogue, trust and effective support can't develop, leaving individuals misunderstood and reluctant to engage.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Personalized, continuous dialogue fosters adaptive, respectful, and sustainable care by reducing hierarchy and stigma, enabling equal relationships that deepen understanding of individuals' needs and experiences.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 stresses an accepting, open mindset in conversations, linking to (5) Holding Space for Chaos.
Staff 2.4 highlights collaborative, personalized care through casual talks and gentle guidance aligned with members' desires.
Staff 2.7 credits talk-driven care as foundational to Tojisha Kenkyuu, enabling self-expression and mutual understanding.
Staff 3.1 warns that lack of expression can lead to severe mental illness.
Staff 3.4 insists talk-driven care must be personal, with early prevention and education.
Staff 3.3 notes absence of talk-driven care drives many into harmful societal situations.
Staff 3.6 describes talk-driven care focusing on individual needs and caregiver roles.
Staff 3.8 shares a story showing how lacking talk-driven care causes doubt in psychiatric methods due to communication gaps.
Staff 3.7 emphasizes talk-driven care requires genuine, pressure-free communication.

Member 2.1 shows talk-driven care builds bonds among members.
Member 2.3 recalls pre-formal, stigma-free conversations encouraging self-analysis and support.
Member 3.2 values community encounters offering talk-driven care.
Member 3.5 admits opening up is hard but says talk-driven care encourages connection and friendship.
Member 3.6 explains staff guide members toward work building confidence through talk-driven care.
Member 1.1 notes talk-driven care with staff initiates self-reflection and social reintegration, requiring trust and sometimes retreat.

Stakeholders

Staff: Facilitate ongoing, personalized dialogue and create a safe, non-hierarchical space for care.

Members: Engage actively in conversations to express themselves, share experiences, and support peers.

Bethel House Organisation : Provides the

physical and social environment within the social welfare system where talk-driven care happen.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

23

Common challenge

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 4 | |
| Pattern Number | 4 |
| Code | Psych |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

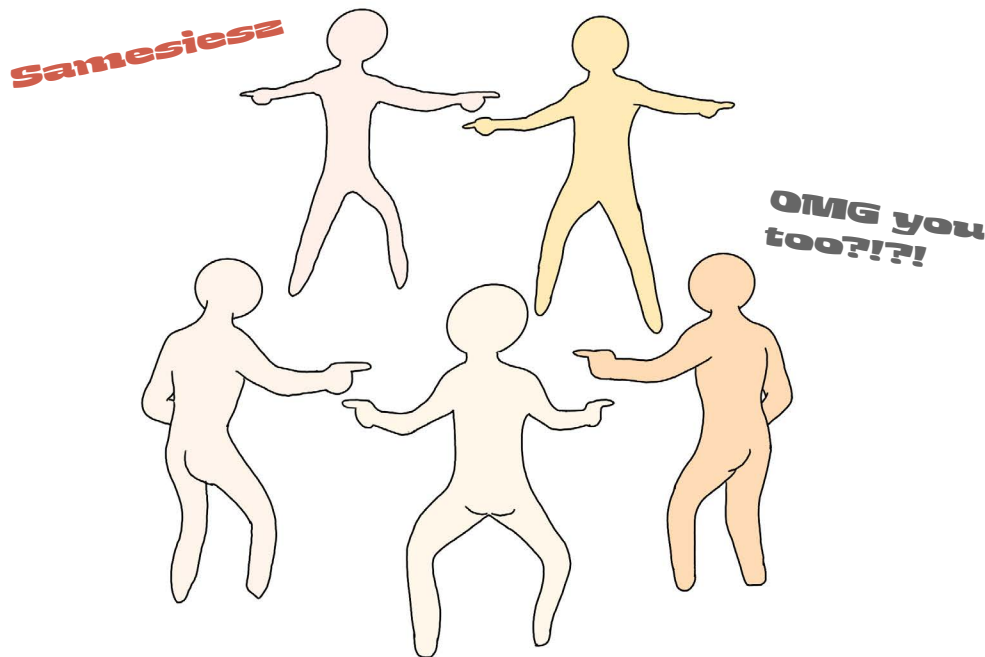


Fig 88 People realizing they have something in common

Pattern Solution (What)

At Bethel House, staff and peers facilitate both chance and guided encounters where individuals with similar experiences can meet and openly share their stories and challenges.

These informal, ongoing conversations help members recognize common struggles, fostering empathy, trust, and meaningful bonds. By transforming personal challenges into shared experiences, members build mutual support and resilience.

Pattern Description (How)

| | |
|--|---|
| This pattern emphasizes shared experiences and mutual understanding as foundations for belonging and safety. | Peer dialogue validates experiences, fosters connection, and transforms individual symptoms into collective challenges tackled together. With the help from Staff guidance to create safe spaces encouraging expression, learning, and supportive bonds, highlighting healing as a communal, interactive process. |
| Isolation and frustration are common, but sharing stories in a supportive, low-pressure environment normalizes struggles and reduces loneliness. | |

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/14

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/7/10

Problem

Standardized care often ignores personal nuances, reducing people to diagnoses, leading to isolation and frustration. Without safe spaces to express themselves or connect with others facing similar struggles, individuals miss out on empowerment and peer support.

Hierarchical care systems can increase stigma and disconnect, blocking real communication and mutual understanding.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Helping others leads to self-healing. Sharing and listening reveal struggles as common, reduces feelings of isolation, creating a supportive space where empathy, encouragement, and resilience grow naturally.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Member 1.1: Feeling isolated fuels frustration; connection through shared experiences is vital.

Staff 1.2: Bethel House practices mutual help through shared challenges, extending support to the Urakawa community.

Member 1.6: Being heard and expressing frustrations at Café Bura Bura helps find common ground beyond formal meetings.

Staff 1.3: Sharing reframes symptoms as life challenges, fostering empowerment.

Member 2.1: Friendships form via Tojisha Kenkyuu through shared stories and challenges.

Member 2.4 & 2.6: Shared challenges are key to recovery and valuable encounters.

Member 3.1: Recognizing common struggles helps individuals accept and live with their issues.

Member 3.3: Sharing builds understanding, connections, and purpose through personal contributions.

Member 3.4: Finding others with similar experiences creates safety and reassurance.

Stakeholders

Staff: Facilitate shared understanding environment and supportive spaces. Members could be directed to each other.

Members: Share experiences and build peer support.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

26

Holding Space for Chaos

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 5 | |
| Pattern Number | 5 |
| Code | Psych – Socio |
| Scale | Personal – Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano – Meso |



Fig 89 Calm and collected from their friends weird behaviors

Pattern Solution (What)

Normalize emotional unpredictability and public “outbursts” as part of the human experience. Help foster an environment where individuals feel safe to openly express their fears, vulnerabilities, and emotional struggles without judgment.

Develop community awareness and social protocols that support empathy and understanding, reducing stigma and promoting collective care.

Pattern Description (How)

In communities where people with mental challenges live or work closely together, emotional chaos and unpredictability naturally happens. Instead of suppressing or punishing these moments, this pattern encourages embracing them as part of being human.

By creating norms and spaces both physical and social that welcome open emotional expression without judgment, communities build trust and resilience. Individuals learn to support each other through vulnerability which reduces isolation and stigma. This acceptance helps those who struggle with emotional overwhelm or psychological challenges feel safer to engage and belong.

This Pattern Requires...
2/6

This Pattern influences ...
1/8/9/11

Problem

Emotional outbursts and unpredictable behaviors are often stigmatized, suppressed, or hidden. This leads to isolation, exclusion, and deepened feelings of alienation for those who struggle. Society’s tendency to label those struggling with emotional instability leading to chaotic outbursts as abnormal, cuts people off from meaningful connection and support.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Accepting and tolerating emotional chaos, vulnerability, and unpredictability without punishment creates a safe environment that fosters healing, trust, and belonging. Normalizing these moments as part of the human experience helps individuals feel accepted and supported in community settings.

Referential Context (Appendix)

- Staff 1.1 emphasizes that chaos is necessary and openly accepted in the Bethel environment.
- Staff 1.5 highlights the importance of accepting chaos and showing one’s own vulnerability rather than maintaining a polished front.
- Staff 2.1 shares that prior experience with psychological challenges helps reduce stigma and fear, allowing openness to chaotic and unpredictable community dynamics.
- Staff 2.2 points out that environmental challenges like harsh weather or earthquakes require stability and calmness during chaotic times, reinforcing emotional resilience.
- Staff 2.7 reflects that accepting chaos and uncertainty became the starting point for their self-directed study (tojisha kenkyuu).

Stakeholders

- Staff: who facilitate and model acceptance of emotional chaos, help reduce stigma, and guide the community in fostering resilience and openness.
- Community members: who benefit from a safe environment where emotional unpredictability is accepted and supported.

Extension Pack — — — — —

This Pattern Requires...
-

This Pattern influences ...
23

Retreat and Return

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 6 | |
| Pattern Number | 6 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Personal - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano - Meso |

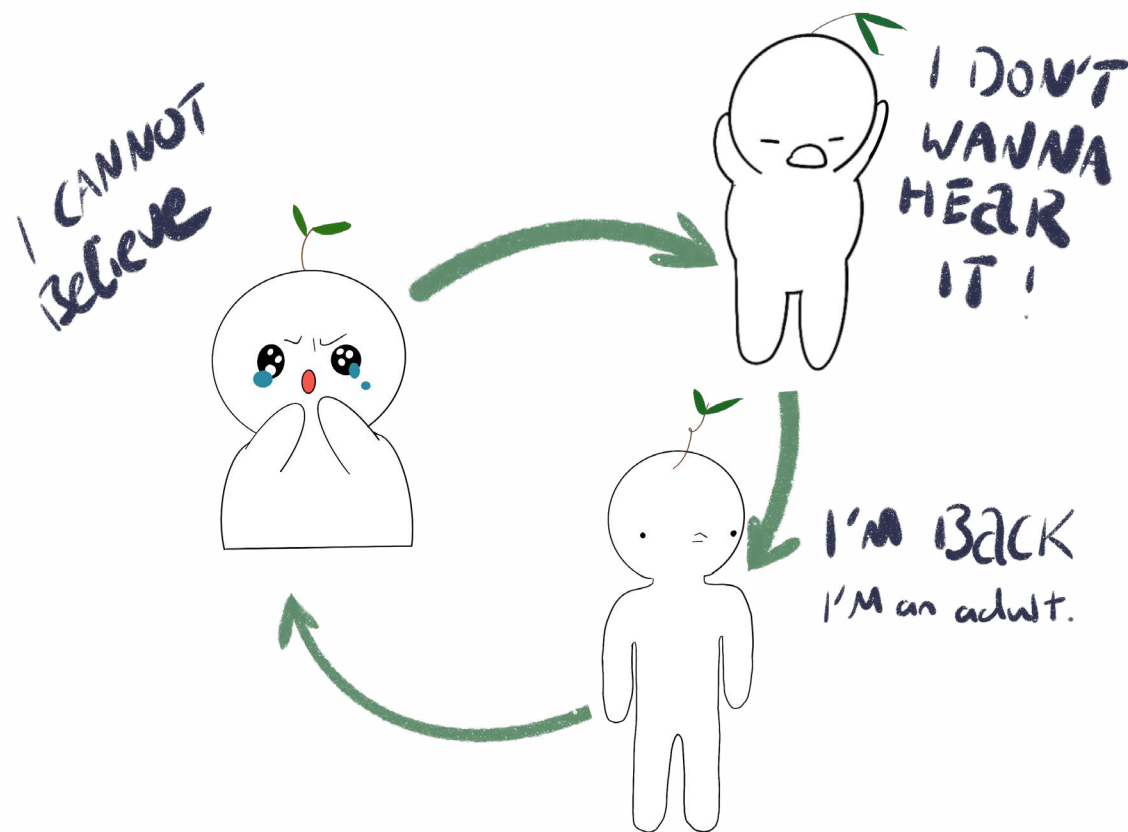


Fig 90 Emotional fluctuations and realizations

Pattern Solution (What)

Normalizing the rhythm of retreat and return within a community. It creates informal social protocols that allow individuals, whether members or staff, to step away when overwhelmed and come back when ready, without guilt or judgment.

By doing this, the pattern reduces the pressure for constant presence, prevents burnout, and supports sustainable, long-term participation.

Pattern Description (How)

| | |
|---|---|
| This is achieved by fostering a gentle, flexible atmosphere where leaving and returning are seen as natural parts of community life. | People are encouraged to share when they can, but no one is forced to justify their absence. |
| The physical layout (like walkable surroundings), cultural attitudes (easygoing, nonjudgmental), and open communication practices all work together to support this rhythm. | Instead of punishing withdrawal, the system trusts that individuals will return when they are ready, which strengthens trust, resilience, and ongoing connection. |

This Pattern Requires...

2/19

This Pattern influences ...

2/5/8/9/11/12/13

Problem

Temporary withdrawal in many social or institutional settings risks misunderstanding, judgment, or exclusion.

People fear being seen as uncommitted, unreliable, or weak if they step away, which pressures them to stay engaged even when exhausted, leading to burnout or eventual disengagement.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Allowing and normalizing temporary withdrawal without social penalty builds a sustainable rhythm of participation.

When people know they can step back without risking exclusion or judgment, they are more likely to stay connected long-term, returning with renewed energy and trust.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Member 1.1: Sometimes had to retreat to work on himself, then return and be included without ostracization.

Bethel Literature 1: Emphasizes the importance of openness; when people explain their stepping away, it invites care from others, but rigid explanations are not forced.

Member 1.5: Even staff sometimes step back into private life and return when available.

Member 4.1: Members can leave and come back to meetings or activities; some prefer this rhythm when things get overwhelming.

Staff 2.3: There's always been an easygoing atmosphere; people can hang out, leave, and return freely, supported by the walkable and accessible town environment.

Staff 3.4: Without space for retreat, people risk stress, burnout, or even hikikomori or depression later in life.

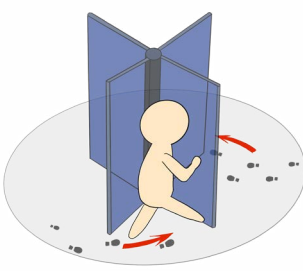


Fig 91 Revolving door

Stakeholders

Members: Step back when needed, return when ready, and share openly if comfortable.

Community as a whole: Cultivate a gentle, nonjudgmental atmosphere where participation can ebb and flow without penalty.

Staff: Maintain flexible norms, support reentry, and model acceptance of retreat and return.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

23/ 27

New entries

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 7 | |
| Pattern Number | 7 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Relationships |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro |

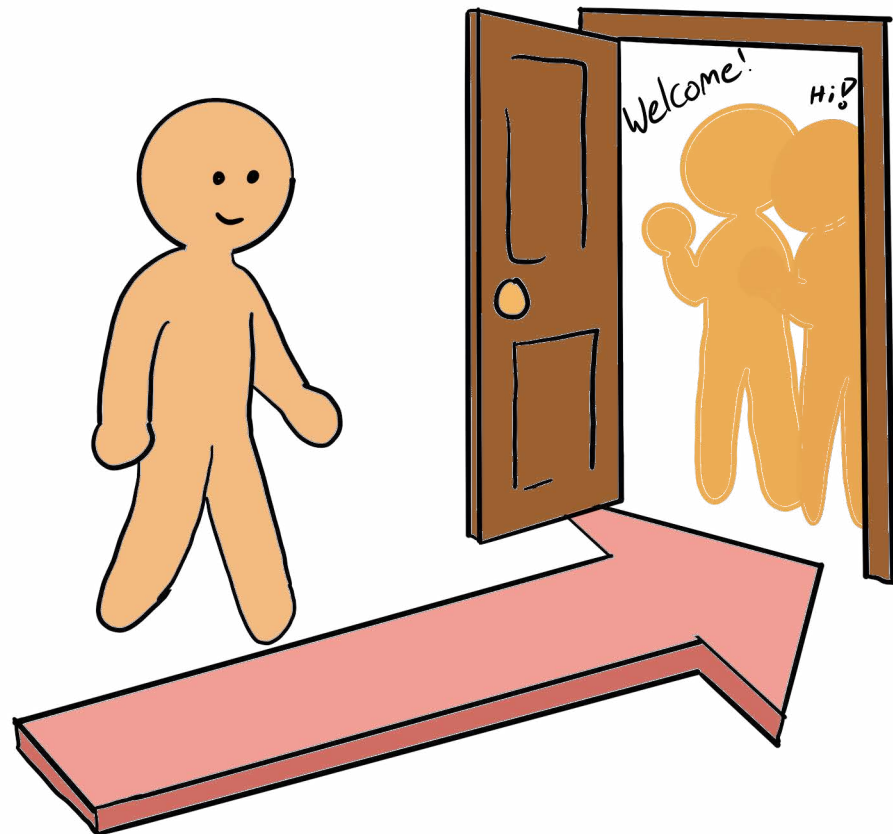


Fig 92 Group Meeting and puzzeling (Metaphorically)

Pattern Solution (What)

The pattern solves the emotional risk of joining by providing an empathetic warm and personalized entry rituals, as well as one-on-one staff guidance.

It reduces newcomer anxiety, helps them gradually build trust, and creates a safe space where they can engage meaningfully over time.

Pattern Description (How)

This is done through a light, casual atmosphere, personal check-ins, and individualized encouragement.

Newcomers are not rushed but are gently eased in through admiration of peers, private conversations, and observing group dynamics.

Staff and members tailor support to each person’s background, creating a soft, flexible onboarding process that slowly fosters connection and trust.

This Pattern Requires...
1/2/3/4/7

This Pattern influences ...
3

Problem

Entry into the community is emotionally risky. New members arrive with varying backgrounds, expectations, and emotional states, often carrying prior institutional baggage, trust issues, or feelings of isolation. Without proper support, they may struggle to connect, trust, or participate meaningfully, risking withdrawal or frustration.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Warm, personalized entry rituals supported by high-contact staff care reduce the emotional risks of joining a peer community, helping newcomers gradually build trust, lower participation anxiety, and foster meaningful engagement.

Referential Context (Appendix)

- Member 1.1: Others may seem casual or inattentive, so personal guidance helps align expectations.
- Staff 2.4: Demotivated or new members receive personal check-ins and one-on-one care to meet their needs.
- Member 1.3: Joined through institutional redirection, landing at Bethel.
- Member 2.1: Admiration for other members forms sturdy, trustworthy friendships.
- Member 2.3: Some had prior experience with self-reflection (tojisha kenkyu) before arriving.
- Member 2.7: Initial unease was overcome through private discussions with Mr. Mukaiyachi.
- Member 3.4: Trust is hard at first but gradually builds when Bethel feels safe.
- Member 3.7: Prior knowledge about Bethel varies, making personalized approaches crucial.

Stakeholders

- New Members: They need emotional support and gradual trust-building.
- Bethel Members: offer informal companionship and model participation.
- Staff: provide one-on-one guidance and personalized emotional care.

Extension Pack — — — — —

This Pattern Requires...
26

This Pattern influences ...
23

Shared daily rituals as anchors

Bethel House Pattern 8
Pattern Number 8
Code Psych - Socio
Scale Relationships -Community
Scale (Sp) Micro - Meso

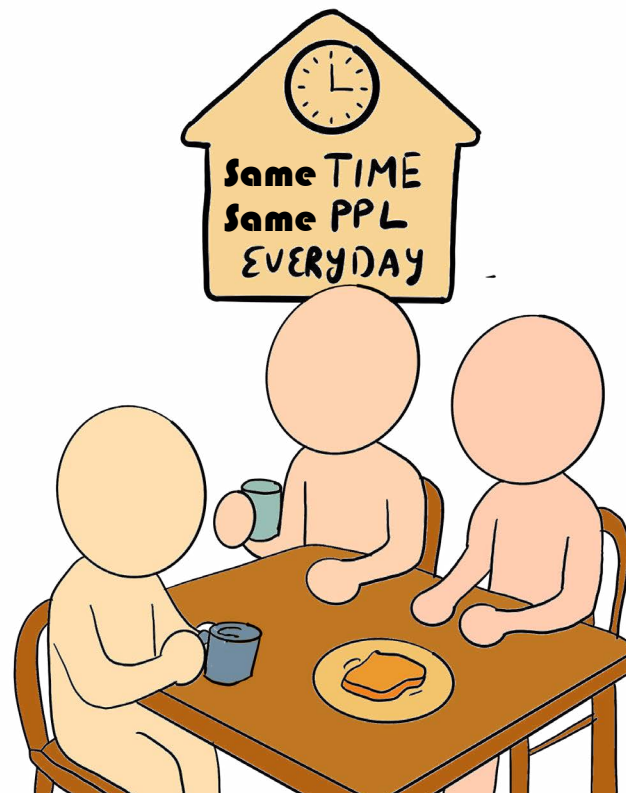


Fig 93 Group Meeting up for tea everyday at 3PM

Pattern Solution (What)

Create predictable, shared daily routines and rituals within the community that provide structure, reduce anxiety, and strengthen informal social bonds.

This includes co-creating simple, recurring activities like tea breaks, group cleaning, or shared walks that bring people together consistently and support their sense of belonging.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern works by embedding simple, repeated daily rituals into the community's routine, creating a stable and familiar rhythm for members.

These shared activities, such as group meals, coordinated work tasks, or regular social gatherings, anchor individuals in a common time and space, helping them reconnect emotionally and socially.

The predictability and repetition of these rituals reduce feelings of anxiety and isolation, foster informal connections, and build a steady foundation of support that encourages sustained participation and belonging.

This Pattern Requires...

1/2/3/5/6/9/10/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/9/11/17

Problem

Individuals attempting to reintegrate into society often feel isolated, emotionally unstable, and disconnected from shared social time and space. This can lead to anxiety, fear, and withdrawal, making it difficult for them to maintain consistent participation or build meaningful social bonds.

The contexts show that without structured, shared daily activities, members might struggle with irregular routines and emotional instability, which hinders their ability to feel included and supported in the community.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Simple, shared daily rituals create a sense of belonging and emotional stability by helping individuals reorient themselves within community time and space.

These repeated, predictable rhythms anchor people, making social integration easier and supporting emotional well-being.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Member 1.1: Others may seem casual or inattentive, so personal guidance helps align expectations.

Staff 2.4: Demotivated or new members receive personal check-ins and one-on-one care to meet their needs.

Member 1.3: Joined through institutional redirection, landing at Bethel.

Member 2.1: Admiration for other members forms sturdy, trustworthy friendships.

Member 2.3: Some had prior experience with self-reflection (tojisha kenkyu) before arriving.

Member 2.7: Initial unease was overcome through private discussions with Mr. Mukaiyachi.

Member 3.4: Trust is hard at first but gradually builds when Bethel feels safe.

Member 3.7: Prior knowledge about Bethel varies, making personalized approaches crucial.

Stakeholders

New Members: They need emotional support and gradual trust-building.

Bethel Members: offer informal companionship and model participation.

Staff: provide one-on-one guidance and personalized emotional care.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

25

This Pattern influences ...

25

Safe Spaces to Rehearse

Bethel House Pattern 9
Pattern Number 9
Code Psych – Socio
Scale Relationships – Community
Scale (Sp) Micro–Meso

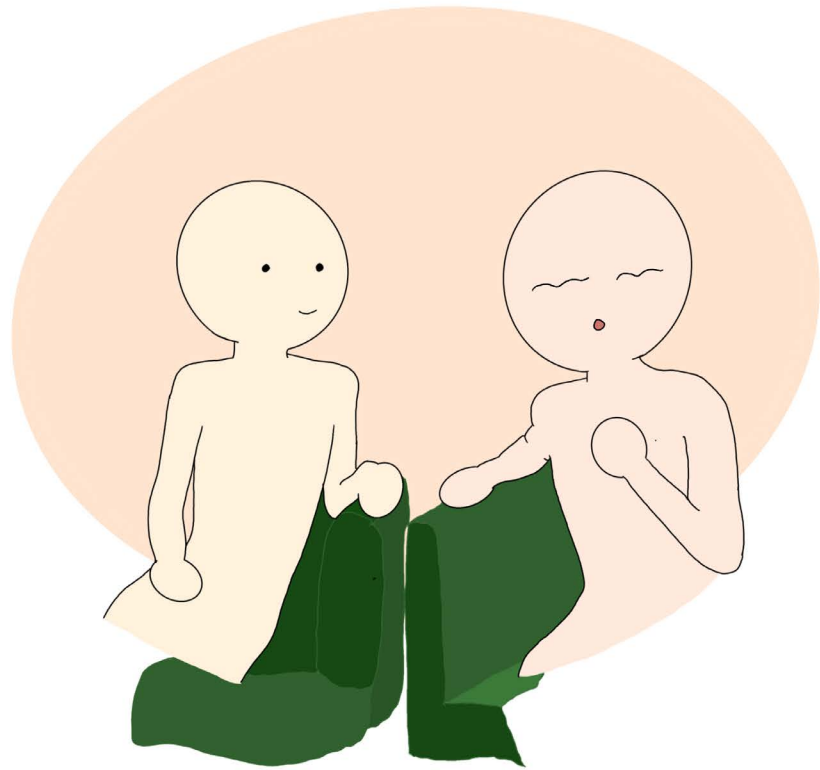


Fig 94 Relieved to finally be able to express oneself

Pattern Solution (What)

Create informal and forgiving low pressure environments where individuals can gradually practice social interaction without fear of failure or rejection.

These safe spaces such as shared homes, cafes, or group activities encourage expression, vulnerability, and mutual support. They allow people to rebuild trust, confidence, and social skills through repeated and nonjudgmental engagements.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern is implemented through casual and familiar environments such as group homes, community cafes, and shared spaces where people regularly gather.

emotional expression is accepted and mistakes are treated as part of learning.

These spaces are designed to be welcoming, informal, and free of judgment, allowing participants to practice social interaction at their own pace. Members engage in shared meals, conversations, and reflective group activities where

Over time, these repeated low-pressure encounters build trust, reinforce a sense of safety, and help individuals develop confidence and resilience in social situations. Both staff and members participate, supporting one another and modeling vulnerability as a strength.

This Pattern Requires...

1/2/5/6/8/11/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/8/11/17

Problem

Many individuals who have experienced social withdrawal or trauma fear judgment, rejection, or failure in social situations.

Without spaces where they feel emotionally safe, supported, and understood, they are discouraged from engaging with others, making it difficult to rebuild confidence and trust in interpersonal relationships.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Social reintegration is possible when individuals have access to safe, low-judgment environments where they can practice interactions and express themselves freely, allowing them to build trust, confidence, and a sense of belonging gradually.

Referential Context (Appendix)

- Member 1.1

Even after emotional outbursts or conflict, acceptance remains; Bethel allows safe trial and error.
- Member 1.6

Café Bura Bura is a regular, open space for expression—judgment-free and inclusive.
- Member 2.3

Tojisha kenkyuu is challenging but supported by a safe and encouraging environment.
- Member 2.5

The Bethel workplace offers space to safely explore creative ideas.
- Member 3.1

Members reassure each other that it's safe to express themselves and participate.
- Member 3.3

Being heard through tojisha kenkyuu requires and reinforces emotional safety.
- Member 3.4

Trust builds slowly through the safety and comfort of shared spaces.
- Member 3.5

Unlike Tokyo, Urakawa encourages vulnerability, which builds real connections.
- Staff 1.5

Staff show vulnerability too—it supports mutual trust and growth.
- Staff 2.4

Staff help members identify their own places of emotional safety.
- Staff 3.7

A playful, light atmosphere makes tojisha kenkyuu feel safe and welcoming.
- Staff 3.8

Strict systems create stress; safety comes from flexibility and openness.

Stakeholders

Members: Use safe spaces to practice social skills and build trust.

Staff: Guides the creation and support these spaces, guiding members and ensuring a welcoming, low-pressure environment.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

24

Shared Lingo

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 10 | |
| Pattern Number | 10 |
| Code | Psych - Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro - Meso |

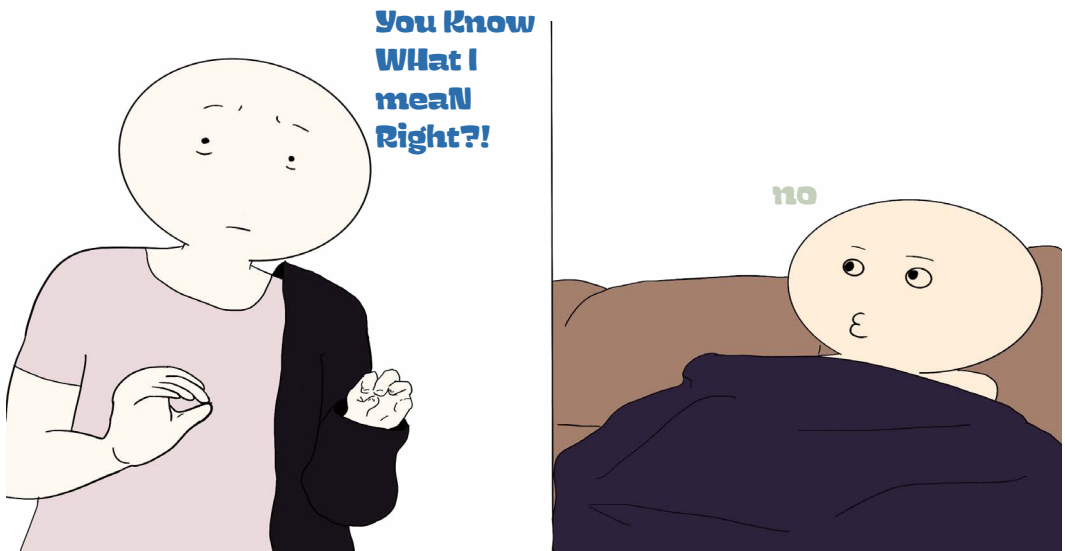


Fig 95 Linguistic barriers

Pattern Solution (What)

Encouraging and developing a unique internal vocabulary within the community, including shared terms, inside jokes, and symbolic phrases, helps members and staff communicate more effectively.

This shared language fosters emotional safety, reduces misunderstandings, lowers stigma, and strengthens the sense of belonging and solidarity among participants.

Pattern Description (How)

This pattern is implemented by creating and nurturing a dynamic set of shared terms and expressions that emerge naturally from daily interactions, group activities, and collective experiences.

Through repeated use, this internal language builds trust and connection, making communication smoother and reinforcing the community’s emotional bonds.

Members and staff use these unique words and phrases to express complex feelings and situations in a way that feels safe and inclusive.

This Pattern Requires...
2/3/4

This Pattern influences ...
3/8/11/15

Problem

Conventional language often fails to capture the complexity of mental and emotional experiences, which can lead to feelings of alienation and stigma among individuals with mental health challenges.

Without a shared internal vocabulary, communication can be misunderstood or isolating within the community.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern exists because developing a unique internal vocabulary helps members feel emotionally safe, understand each other quickly, and strengthens their sense of belonging within the community.

Referential Context (Appendix)

- Staff 1.1 Chaos is okay is a shared phrase understood by staff and many members reflecting acceptance of disorder in daily life
- Staff 1.2 Tojisha kenkyuu is practiced mainly inside Bethel, creating a unique shared language and philosophy among members and staff
- Staff 1.5 The Bethel house language is as important as the practice of tojisha kenkyuu in creating community
- Staff 2.7 Mr Hearing Voices is a shared term to externalize hallucinations reducing stigma and fostering understanding

Stakeholders

Members and staff are part of this pattern because they share and use the unique language to connect, communicate complex experiences, reduce stigma, and build trust within the community.

Extension Pack — — — — —

This Pattern Requires...
-

This Pattern influences ...
24

Shared Labor & Activities; Shared Meaning

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 11 | |
| Pattern Number | 11 |
| Code | Psych – Socio |
| Scale | Relationships – Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Micro – Macro |

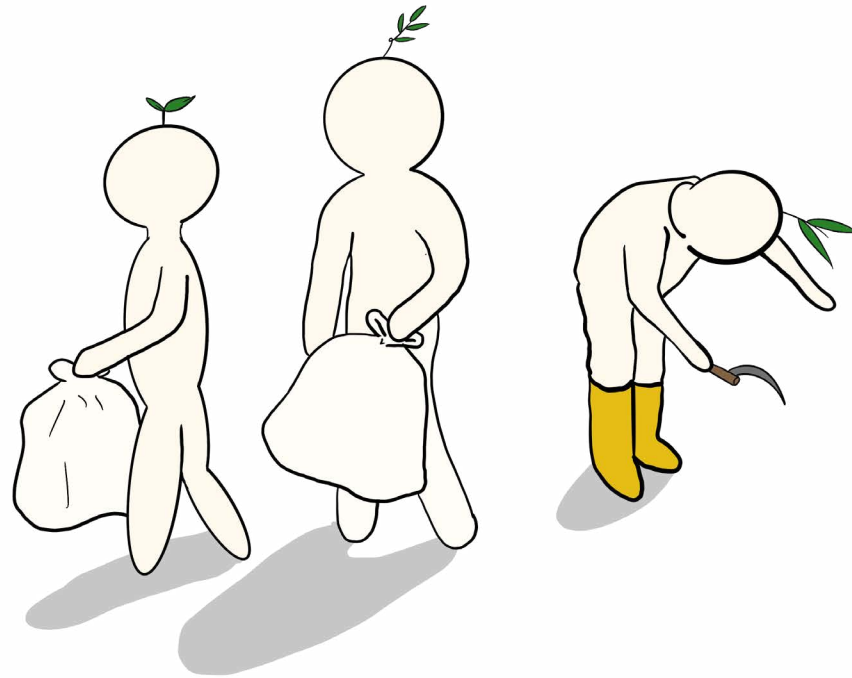


Fig 96 Team Noah working representation

Pattern Solution (What)

Providing accessible and welcoming community-based work opportunities and activities helps individuals rebuild their sense of purpose and self-worth. These roles should recognize each person’s contributions and encourage collaboration, allowing members to engage in meaningful activities like civic jobs that are visible and valued by the wider community.

Creating environments where people can share experiences, support each other, and work together helps overcome barriers and fosters motivation and social reintegration.

Pattern Description (How)

The solution is implemented by creating community-embedded work opportunities that have low barriers to entry and encourage collaboration among members. These activities allow individuals to contribute visibly and meaningfully through shared labor, such as participating in civic jobs or group projects.

Open communication and regular discussions help build trust and shared understanding, while recognizing each person’s efforts fosters pride and motivation.

The environment supports a mix of different tasks to suit diverse needs and preferences, ensuring everyone can find a role that fits them and encourages positive social connections.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/5/6/8/9/10/12/14/15/18

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/9/16/21/22

Problem

Individuals with mental health challenges often face barriers to motivation and reintegration into work and society because community roles are frequently denied to them. This exclusion creates feelings of isolation, reduces self-worth, and lim-

its opportunities for meaningful social connection and contribution. Formal activities sometimes fail to meet members’ needs, making it harder for them to find a place where they feel comfortable, valued, and able to participate fully.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Cooperative work provides individuals who feel isolated with a sense of purpose and peer support while allowing them to contribute economically. This shared labor helps rebuild self-worth and creates meaningful social connections that are essential for personal recovery and community integration. The pattern exists because working together and sharing experiences can transform feelings of loneliness into belonging and empowerment.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Member 1.6 explains how informal social activities like Café Bura Bura offer a space to share and connect when formal meetings feel insufficient

Member 3.3 says Tojisha Kenkyuu helped them gain knowledge and tools for a more positive and fulfilling life

Member 1.6 also describes how Tojisha Kenkyuu meetings help members bond, moving from doubt to passion through sharing methods and experiences

Staff 1.5 stresses the whiteboard’s role in Tojisha Kenkyuu for openness and sharing struggles, which builds connection and shared meaning

Member 2.1 shows how admiring each other’s work and talents builds meaningful friendships and mutual respect

Staff 2.4 notes that activities must fit members’ needs and preferences, requiring trial and reflection to find what works and feels safe

Member 2.2 shares that Tojisha Kenkyuu is a group process where members on their own paths create meaningful conversations and support

Staff 2.6 points out that Bethel House’s meaningful activities spread nationwide, inspiring people like member 3.7 to reach out for help

Member 2.3 feels proud of shared labor, which builds relationships and allows sharing the fruits of their work with friends

Staff 2.7 highlights that shared labor and experiences create shared meaning that helps outsiders understand the community

Member 2.5 talks about working together in the goods team producing handmade products, strengthening bonds through common goals

Staff 3.7 describes Tojisha Kenkyuu as creating a place with a special atmosphere formed by shared experiences and conversations

Stakeholders

Members: Participate in shared activities and labor, build friendships, and regain confidence through collective work.

Staff: Facilitate and support activities, help create safe environments, and guide members in finding meaningful roles.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

25

This Pattern influences ...

25

Scaffolded Participation

Bethel House Pattern 12
Pattern Number 12
Code Psych - Socio
Scale Personal - Community
Scale (Sp) Nano - Meso

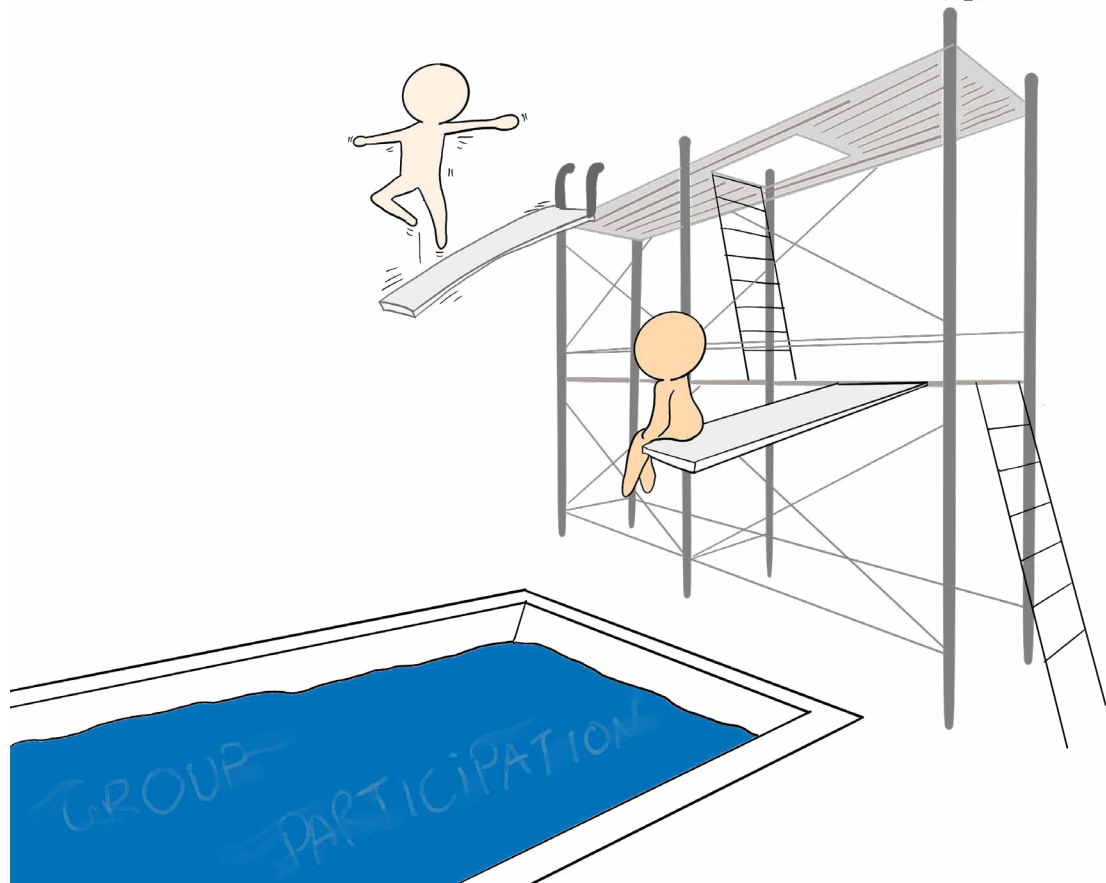


Fig 97 Scaffolded diving board into pool of Participation

Pattern Solution (What)

programs, attitudes, and spaces should be designed with low barrier entry points that allow members to join at their own pace. Participation should be scaffolded through gentle encouragement and ongoing guidance, enabling individuals to gradually build trust and confidence.

This stepwise approach helps people engage comfortably without feeling pressured, allowing them to choose how much and when to participate based on their own readiness and energy levels.

Pattern Description (How)

By creating a step-by-step or fragmented structure where members can engage in activities at their own rhythm.

Programs and spaces are designed to welcome participants gently without overwhelming them, allowing them to gradually increase their involvement over time. Staff and peers provide encouragement and support

while respecting individual boundaries and energy levels.

This approach acknowledges that trust and participation develop slowly and need to be personalized, so members can choose when and how much to take part. This flexibility helps members feel safe, reduces pressure, and fosters sustained engagement.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3/6/15

This Pattern influences ...

8/9/11/17

Problem

Direct or immediate demands for participation can cause fear, stress, or withdrawal in individuals recovering from social isolation. Because trust and comfort take time to develop, pushing people too quickly into group activities or discussions can

overwhelm them, leading to disengagement rather than connection. The varied energy levels and emotional needs of members require a more flexible and gradual approach to involvement.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Participation in social and group activities can be challenging for individuals recovering from social isolation. Allowing members to engage at their own pace creates a safe and trusting environment where they feel supported rather than pressured.

This gradual and personalized approach helps build confidence and connection over time, making it easier for individuals to reintegrate and sustain involvement within the community. It recognizes and respects the different energy levels and needs of each person during their recovery journey.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 explains how participation in meetings happens through different approaches that require members to sometimes step back, reflect, and return later to fully engage. This reflects the personalized nature of participation.

Staff 2.4 stresses the importance of personalizing participation to fit each member's capacity and preferences. It highlights ongoing discussions among members and staff to tailor activities so they feel safe and comfortable.

Staff 3.7 emphasizes the emotional toll of listening to people's stories and how caring requires energy. This underlines why participation must be paced and scaffolded to avoid burnout.

Member 1.1 shows that participation is multifaceted with members integrating at their own rhythm, retreating when needed, and then coming back to benefit from involvement.

Member 3.4 shares that trust is built gradually through step-by-step engagement in vulnerable activities. This member also notes that full participation in all meetings or teams is not required and one can choose the level of involvement that feels right.

Member 3.6 describes how activities and work are constantly reviewed and adapted through discussion to fit members' personal needs, allowing exploration without pressure.

Member 4.1 provides a relational diagram showing how members may leave and return to participation as needed, reflecting the flexible, non-linear nature of engagement and the energy needed for involvement.

Stakeholders

Staff: They create and facilitate low-barrier activities that allow members to engage at their own pace, providing guidance and encouragement.

Members: They participate according to their own rhythms and energy levels, choosing when and how deeply to engage without pressure.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

26

This Pattern influences ...

25

Personalized Blurred Lines

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 13 | |
| Pattern Number | 13 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Personal |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano |



Fig 98 Personal and Work life blurred

Pattern Solution (What)

Creating a work environment where staff openly share parts of their personal lives and practice tojisha kenkyuu themselves helps break down barriers between staff and members.

This approach fosters genuine connections based on honesty and vulnerability. When staff show their human side and embrace a blurred line between personal and professional, it builds trust and encourages members to open up. Consistent availability and authentic interactions contribute to a stable and supportive community where everyone feels safe to share and care for one another.

Pattern Description (How)

Staff integrate aspects of their personal lives with their work by practicing tojisha kenkyuu, sharing reflections and stories with members in a genuine and honest way. This creates a community of care where the traditional roles of patient and caretaker blend into mutual support. Boundaries are respected and personalized according to each person's comfort level, allowing staff and members to decide how much they share and when. Staff demonstrate vulnerability by accepting and expressing their own challenges, which encourages members to do the same. The small, walkable nature of the community supports informal interactions outside of work, making the care continuous and consistent. This approach builds a safe and stable environment where trust grows naturally through ongoing, personal connections.

This Pattern Requires...

2/6/14/19

This Pattern influences ...

15/16

Problem

The problem occurs when there is a strict separation between personal and professional roles, creating a barrier between staff and members. This separation can cause members to sense a wall or distance, making it difficult for them to

open up vulnerably. The lack of genuine connection limits trust and emotional support, preventing the community from becoming a caring and safe space for everyone involved.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

When staff members blend their personal experiences with their professional roles by practicing tojisha kenkyuu, it fosters a community built on genuine care rather than a strict patient-caregiver relationship.

This approach lowers barriers to trust and vulnerability, creating a more supportive and stable environment where members feel consistently seen and understood. The pattern exists because such personal openness encourages deeper connections and a sense of belonging that is essential for healing and ongoing support.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.4 describes tojisha kenkyuu not only as a method but as an attitude that carries over into both social and personal aspects of life. It teaches social skills and open dialogue, encouraging communication that makes people feel heard and understood. This creates a caring and supportive environment where sharing and vulnerability are personalized according to each person's comfort and boundaries. Both staff and members engage in this reflective process, constantly adapting their level of openness.

Staff 2.1 explains how Bethel House expanded by opening group homes throughout the town, integrating living and working environments such as seaweed packaging. Staff grew up in this environment, which helped reduce stigma because classmates had positive and normal interactions with members. This creates a blurred boundary between what is personal and what is public, and between work and social life. Most staff enjoy this blurred line and the connection it fosters.

Staff 1.5 highlights how important it is for staff to openly accept and show their own vulnerabilities and the chaos in their work or personal lives, but only to the extent that feels comfortable. This honesty builds trust because hiding feelings or having hidden motives can lead members to build emotional walls. By practicing tojisha kenkyuu themselves, staff create a stable, caring atmosphere that motivates members to feel safe and supported.

Staff 2.3 points out that in Urakawa, a small and walkable town, staff often meet members outside work in places like supermarkets and libraries. Many staff live locally, so members become their neighbors and friends. This casual, everyday contact further blurs the lines between personal life and work, supporting stronger relationships.

Stakeholders

Staff: They share personal stories and practice tojisha kenkyuu, helping build trust and genuine connections with members. Their openness encourages a supportive environment.

Members: They experience a community of care where boundaries between personal and professional are flexible, allowing them to feel safe to open up and engage vulnerably.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

26

Social Spaces of Acknowledgement

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 14 | |
| Pattern Number | 14 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Relationships - Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Nano - Meso |

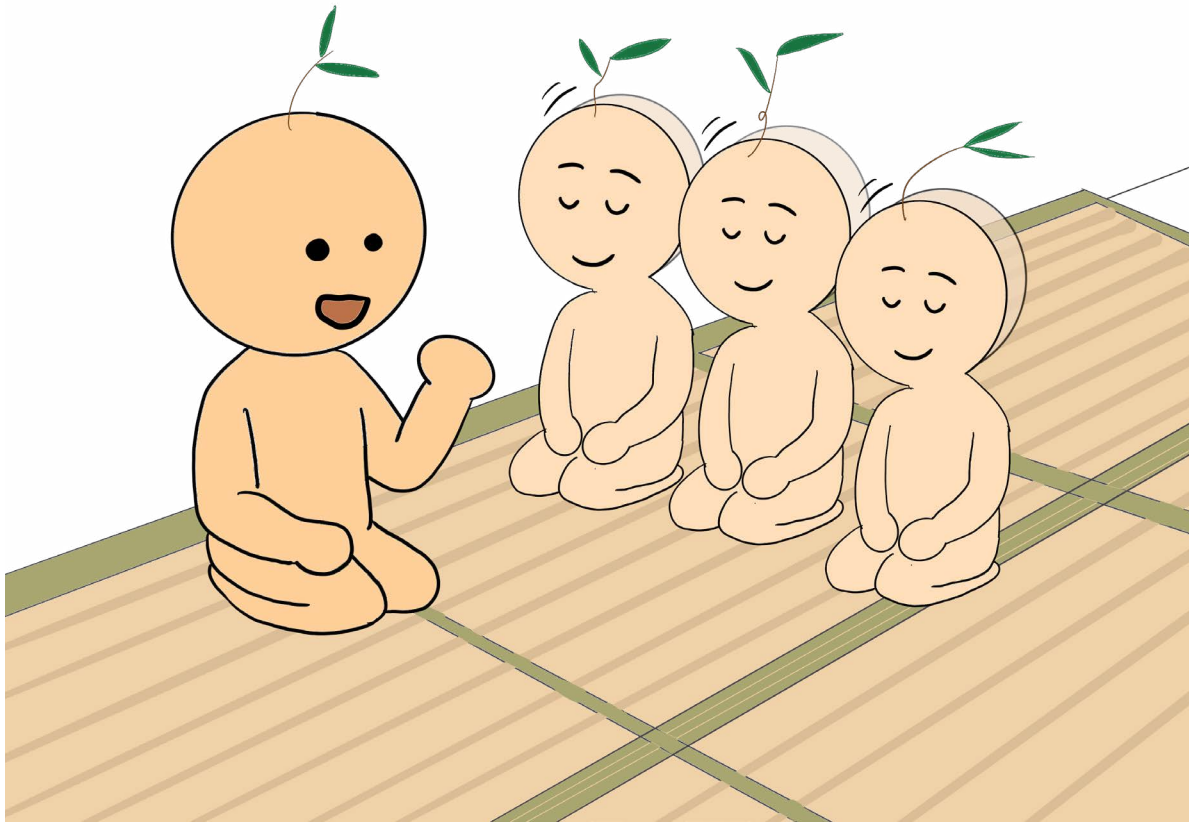


Fig 99 Social cue: Acknowledging the speaker by nodding

Pattern Solution (What)

A habit or cultural tendency to offer clear visual or audio signals of acknowledgement during interactions helps address this problem. Subtle gestures, moments of stillness, and emotional echoes create a space where speakers feel truly heard and validated. These behaviors can be nurtured through social skills training and social awareness classes, fostering a community where vulnerability is met with patience and genuine care.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by embedding a cultural habit of acknowledging others during communication through subtle but clear signals.

These can include visual cues like nodding, attentive body language, or short verbal affirmations that show active listening. It allows moments of stillness or pauses, giving space for emotional reflection and letting the speaker feel supported without pressure to immediately respond.

This Pattern Requires...

2/3

Training in social skills and awareness helps participants learn to recognize and practice these behaviors naturally, creating an environment where vulnerability is met with understanding and care.

This Pattern influences ...

3/4/8/9/11/13/17

Problem

The problem arises when individuals who speak vulnerably feel ignored or unseen, leading to feelings of abandonment or invisibility. Without a supportive space where their stories are acknowledged and emotionally anchored by others, these

expressions can feel isolated or dismissed. This lack of recognition creates emotional distance and undermines trust, making it harder for members to open up and for the community to provide genuine support.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

A space becomes truly supportive when it holds and honors the story of the person speaking, with others actively listening and emotionally present. This creates a foundation of trust and connection where individuals feel seen and validated.

The pattern exists because genuine acknowledgment nurtures emotional safety and encourages openness, making relationships and communities stronger and more caring. Without this, people can feel invisible or abandoned, which undermines their willingness to share and engage authentically.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.3 highlights how Bethel members transform through tojisha kenkyuu ideologies to be more accepted by the Urakawa community. This involves ongoing adaptation where members learn to make themselves understandable so others are willing to listen and share. It addresses rigid social cues and communication behaviors that are worked on through tojisha kenkyuu.

Staff 1.4 explains tojisha kenkyuu as an attitude that applies both socially and personally. Through social skills training and open dialogue, members and staff learn to communicate effectively, feel heard, and create a caring, supportive, and reliable open space together.

Staff 1.5 discusses the importance of staff accepting and showing their own vulnerabilities, whether from work pressures or personal life, to build trust with members. Being genuine and open prevents walls from forming and encourages members to care and engage. Staff practice tojisha

kenkyuu themselves, which helps them maintain this openness.

Staff 2.7 points out how tojisha kenkyuu helps members externalize and visualize their life challenges, making them more visible and understandable to outsiders. This communication helps reduce stigma and fear from locals and encourages acknowledgment of members as vulnerable people who need support.

Member 2.1 describes a friendship between two members who have created a safe space for emotional expression. The older member helped the newer one feel comfortable to open up freely, demonstrating how personal relationships can foster trust and support within the community.

Stakeholders

Staff: They facilitate and model open, vulnerable communication and acknowledgment,

Members: They share their personal stories and challenges, relying on the space and others' acknowledgment to feel seen, understood, and validated.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

27

Openly Displayed Care

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 15 | |
| Pattern Number | 15 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Community - Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Macro |

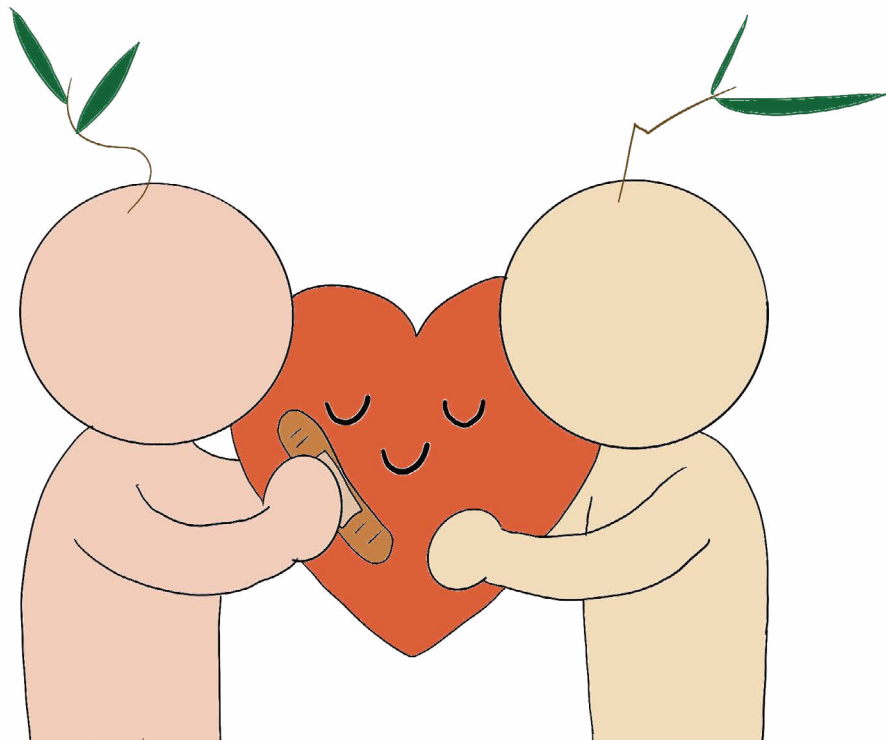


Fig 100 “There, there, it’ll be alright”

Pattern Solution (What)

Foster a culture where care is practiced openly and without hierarchy. Encourage people to show vulnerability and support each other in daily life. Let mutual care be seen, shared, and normalized so that it becomes part of the community’s identity. Create visible routines and interactions that model empathy and build collective trust.

Pattern Description (How)

Care is expressed through small, visible actions that happen regularly and naturally in public life. People offer help without being asked and accept support without shame, creating a shared rhythm of mutual aid.

repeated, everyday interactions like giving rides or listening attentively, care becomes embedded in the environment and spreads throughout the community.

Staff and members model openness by sharing their own struggles and moments of vulnerability, which invites others to do the same. Through

This Pattern Requires...

3/10/13/19

This Pattern influences ...

2/3/7/8/9/11/12/17

Problem

Emotional support is often hidden, stigmatized, or seen as the responsibility of professionals only. This creates shame in receiving help, discourages mutual care, and isolates people who need support. Without visible models of care, communities lack the trust and openness needed for collective well-being.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

When care is expressed openly and received without shame, it builds trust, reduces stigma, and encourages others to participate in mutual support. This visible exchange of care strengthens community bonds and creates a safe environment where vulnerability is not hidden but embraced. As people see care modeled around them, they are more likely to mirror it, allowing support to multiply naturally and inclusively.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.2
Bethel has long practiced open care, visible to the whole town. Its presence is normalized in Urakawa, seen as part of everyday life. Their system supports both members and the town without being intrusive. This public visibility helps dissolve stigma.

shaped acceptance.

Staff 2.2
A driving system helps members move around, visible to locals. People often see members helping each other into cars. This shows adaptation to member needs. Care is woven into daily town life.

Staff 1.4
Tojisha Kenkyuu is an attitude of openness, used socially and personally. It teaches people to listen, reflect, and support each other. Care becomes mutual and visible, creating a safe, shared space. Others witness this and follow.

Staff 2.6
Naming Tojisha Kenkyuu helps communicate Bethel’s care methods to outsiders. It gives structure and clarity to their practices. This opens the way for others to understand and adopt similar models. Care becomes legible and shareable.

Staff 1.5
Staff share personal struggles to show vulnerability. This honesty builds trust and encourages members to open up. Care becomes reciprocal, not top-down. Being seen while helping or receiving help builds confidence.

Member 2.1
Two members care for each other in a way everyone sees. Their relationship is mutual and known across the community. This visibility normalizes emotional support. It shows care is shared, not hidden.

Staff 2.1
Bethel expanded into group homes across town, making care more visible. As kids, locals often visited Bethel, creating early positive exposure. This reduced stigma among that generation. Visibility

Member 3.5
In Urakawa, it’s easy to check in on friends and share openly. There’s no need for hospitalization to connect or be cared for. Vulnerabilities are shared in daily life. This openness fosters natural, visible care.

Stakeholders

Staff members: model vulnerability and openly share care, setting the tone for the community

Community members who witness and engage in openly displayed care, helping reduce stigma. As well as practice social skills and open dialogue that foster mutual care

Bethel House organization: Create and spreads the visible care system throughout the town

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

24

As My Witness

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 16 | |
| Pattern Number | 16 |
| Code | Socio |
| Scale | Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Macro - Mega |

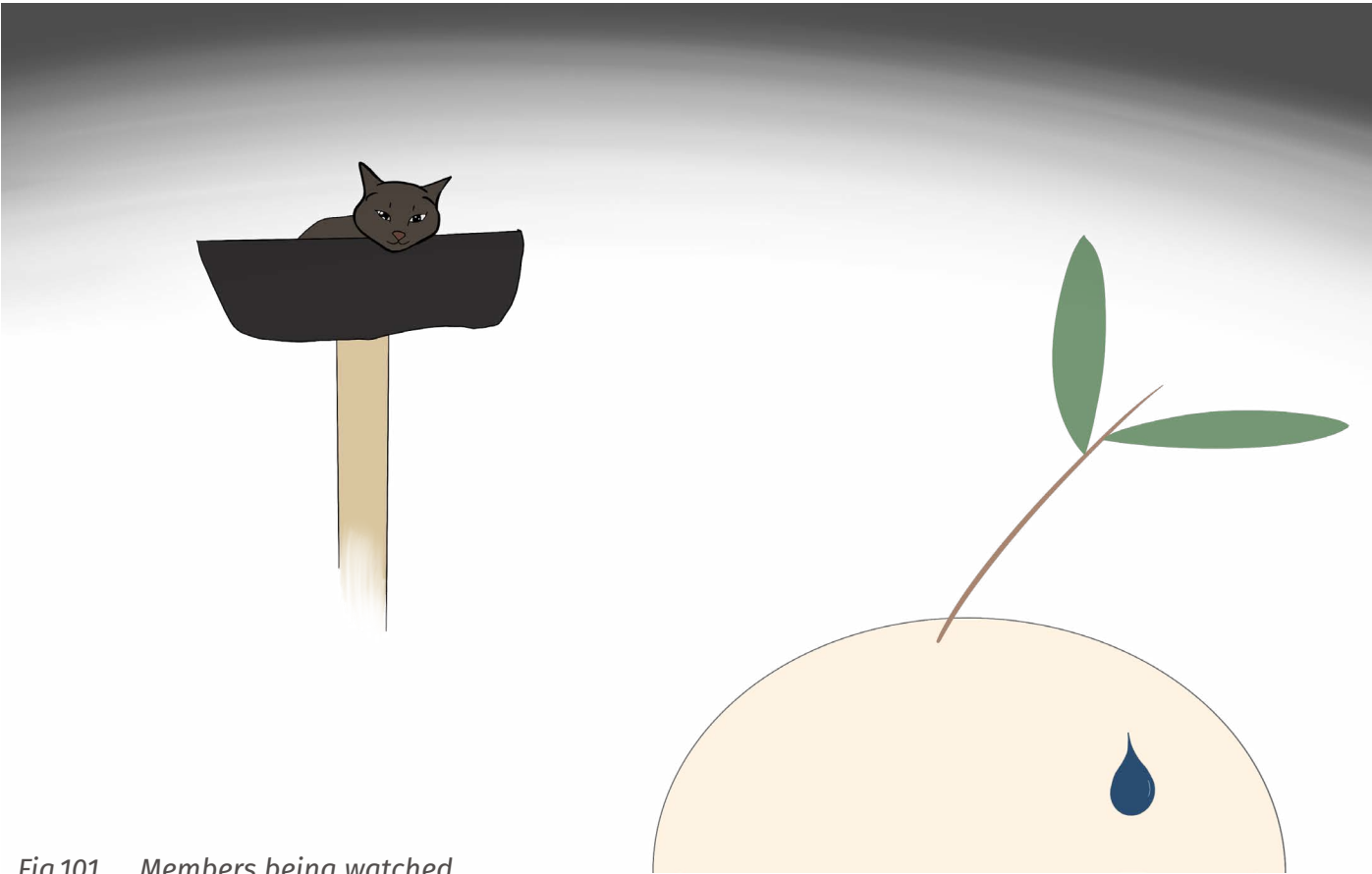


Fig 101 Members being watched

Pattern Solution (What)

The approach focuses on transforming the Bethel House members internally through tojisha kenkyuu, allowing locals to witness real changes in behavior and attitudes. This visible personal growth encourages empathy and shifts local perceptions naturally without confrontation. By openly displaying care and vulnerability, members and staff build trust within the community, gradually reducing fear and stigma. The emphasis is on creating authentic interactions that lead to social reintegration through everyday experiences rather than direct persuasion.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by engaging Bethel House members in shared activities and labor that are visible to the local community.

Through practicing tojisha kenkyuu, members reflect on and manage their own behaviors, which helps shift their self-perception and reduces internal struggles. Staff model acceptance and vulnerability, encouraging mutual trust and care

between members and staff. These interactions and the openness of care create opportunities for locals to witness genuine personal transformation, which gradually changes their perceptions and reduces stigma.

The spread of group homes and community mobility further increases everyday encounters, making the positive changes more apparent and widespread.

This Pattern Requires...

11/13/19/20/21/22

This Pattern influences ...

22

Problem

The core problem is that local residents hold deep-seated fears and stigmas toward former psychiatric patients and outsiders. This creates social exclusion and misunderstanding in the small town, making it difficult for members

of Bethel House to be accepted and reintegrated. Despite the members' efforts, the rigid social roles and lack of direct engagement from the community sustain these biases and prevent meaningful change in local attitudes.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

When community members actively participate in shared work and openly engage in self-reflection through tojisha kenkyuu, it leads to positive personal transformations. These changes are witnessed by local residents, which helps break down fears and stigmas associated with mental illness.

By allowing members to visibly manage their challenges and fostering mutual vulnerability between staff and members, the community's perceptions shift naturally. This process creates a foundation for social reintegration and greater acceptance without direct confrontation, making the pattern essential for improving relationships between marginalized individuals and their communities.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 emphasizes accepting chaos as normal, which is essential for Bethel House staff and members to provide care and model future practices. Staff 1.3 shows that the town did not change, but Bethel members transformed through Tojisha Kenkyuu, reducing stigma as locals saw their true personalities beyond mental illness. Staff 1.4 highlights that Tojisha Kenkyuu gained national attention by openly showing care and vulnerability, letting people witness positive changes without active persuasion. Staff 1.5 stresses staff vulnerability as a way to build trust and encourage mutual care with members. Staff 2.1 describes how Bethel House expanded into group homes across Urakawa, making care visible and lowering stigma especially among younger generations. Staff 2.2 explains a driving team helps members travel, which locals see as a sign of community support.

Staff 2.3 mentions members visiting friends in public places, normalizing their presence in town. Staff 2.6 points out that naming Tojisha Kenkyuu helps explain Bethel's methods to outsiders and supports wider recognition. Staff 2.7 shows members visualize their struggles to help others understand them better. Staff 3.7 notes Tojisha Kenkyuu creates a playful atmosphere visible in members' daily interactions, improving acceptance. Staff 3.8 recalls past institutionalization caused fear and stigma, making integration difficult.

Member 3.6 describes open communication between staff and members about work abilities inside and outside Bethel House, aiding community participation. Member 3.7 expresses hope that Urakawa Bethel House's spirit and Tojisha Kenkyuu teachings will spread nationally and globally, lasting beyond the physical house.

Stakeholders

Community members: participate in shared labor and tojisha kenkyuu

Bethel house staff: support members

Local residents of the town: their witnessing of members' changes influences their attitudes, re-

ducing stigma and fear.

Bethel house organization: provides the structure, group homes, and mobility support that enable visible care and interaction in the community.

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

Influence Patterns ...

Participation as Currency

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 17 | |
| Pattern Number | 17 |
| Code | Gov |
| Scale | Community -Country |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Mega |

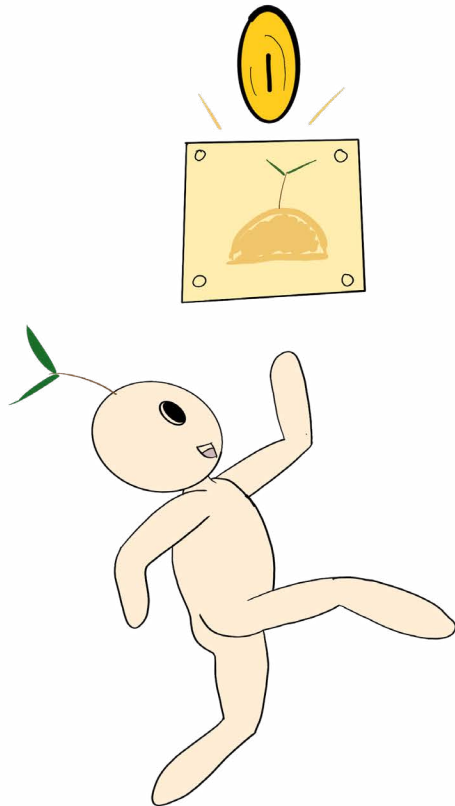


Fig 102 Participation leads to subsidies for Bethel House

Pattern Solution (What)

Establish a daily structure of participatory activities that are socially meaningful and financially recognized.

Link member involvement to institutional support through government reimbursement. Value presence and engagement as active contributions to both individual recovery and collective sustainability.

Pattern Description (How)

Participation is encouraged through structured daily programs held between set hours, such as 9 am to 3 pm, creating a consistent rhythm. Attendance in these activities is tracked and tied to government subsidies, allowing institutions like Bethel House to receive financial support based on member involvement.

Members are engaged in tasks such as meetings, driving services, and communal activities, all of which are designed to promote social interaction

This Pattern Requires...

3/8/9/12/14/15/18/19

This Pattern influences ...

18/20

Problem

The time, effort, and presence of marginalized individuals are often undervalued in traditional care systems. Institutions carry the full responsibility for engagement without recognizing the everyday contributions of members. This creates a gap between support and participation, making recovery feel one-sided and economically unsustainable.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Recognizing participation as a form of currency redefines care by valuing the time and presence of marginalized individuals. This approach creates mutual benefit where institutions gain financial support and members gain structure, self-worth, and social integration. It shifts the perception of care from passive reception to active contribution within the community.

Referential Context (Appendix)

| | |
|---|---|
| Staff 1.1 Shared spaces in Bethel allow for disorder and flexibility. This depends on staff and members building safety and mutual trust to sustain these environments. | Staff 2.4 Daily participation from 9 to 3 brings local government funding to Bethel. Keeping members engaged and active is essential for both care and organizational sustainability. |
| Staff 1.2 Bethel began from a community need in Urakawa where money and support were scarce. Participation gradually became a visible form of contribution and helped bring in government backing. | Member 1.1 Tojisha Kenkyuu meetings help members reflect and talk openly. Being seen and heard through shared dialogue strengthens self-connection and communication. Participation brings emotional value. |
| Staff 2.1 Members used to pack seaweed in group homes to support the community. Labor and presence were essential for survival and mutual care. | Member 1.6 Routines like breakfast at Rupiness Hill and meetups create structure. Simple shared movements build consistency and participation. |
| Staff 2.2 When walking is not possible, members use a shared driving system run by both staff and members. It is a work opportunity that brings financial and emotional support while keeping the town connected. | Member 2.3 Working at Bethel gives rhythm and purpose. Participation shapes recovery and social engagement. |
| | Member 2.7 Encounters only happen through shared spaces and activities. Participation builds emotional value and deepens social ties. |

Stakeholders

| | |
|--|--|
| Members: They participate in daily activities which generates both personal value and institutional funding. | Local Government: Provides financial reimbursement tied to members' daily presence, incentivizing inclusion. |
| Bethel Staff: They design and manage systems of engagement and support members' participation. | Locals of Urakawa: Benefits from the social integration and visible contributions of marginalized individuals. |

Common Spaces for Activities

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 18 | |
| Pattern Number | 18 |
| Code | Sp |
| Scale | Community |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso |

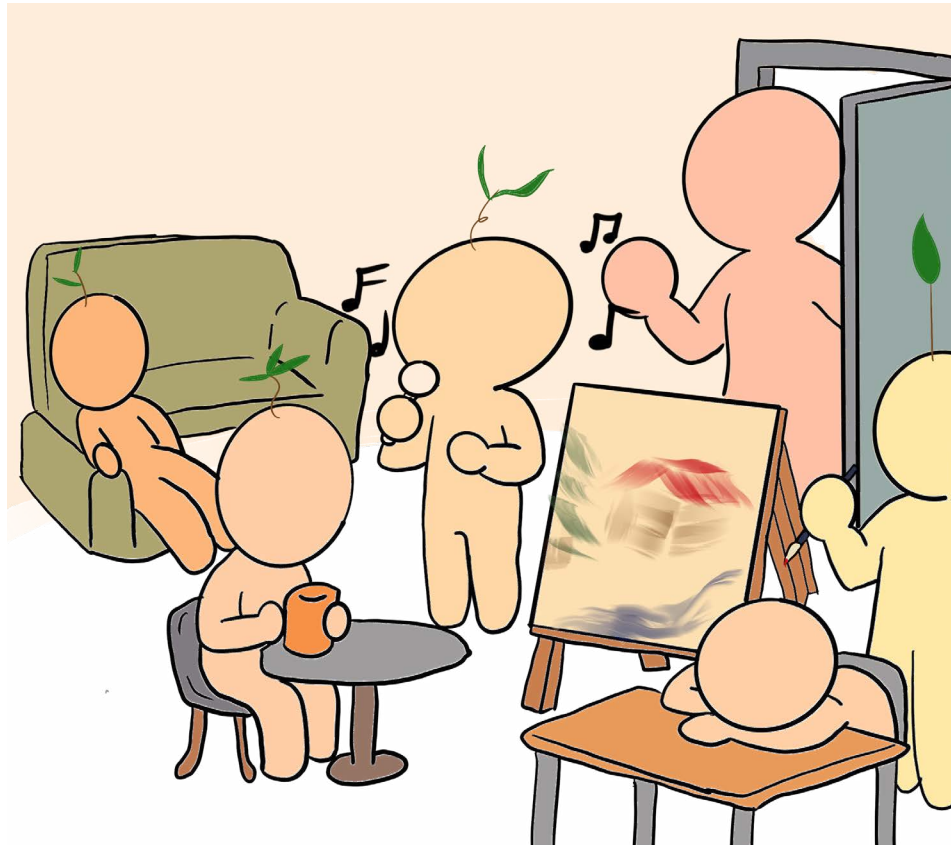


Fig 103 Common room, everyone doing something in the shared space

Pattern Solution (What)

Providing low-barrier, community-embedded common spaces where members can gather safely and comfortably enables regular participation in activities and social interaction. These spaces support the practice of tojisha kenkyuu and foster a sense of belonging and recovery. Having multiple accessible locations allows members to choose where to engage, increasing inclusion and sustained involvement.

Pattern Description (How)

The pattern works by establishing accessible and welcoming common spaces embedded within the community that encourage frequent participation and social interaction.

These spaces are designed to be flexible and safe, allowing members to engage in activities like tojisha kenkyuu and group work comfortably. By providing multiple locations and varied envi-

ronments, the pattern supports diverse needs and preferences, fostering connection and collaboration among members while promoting a sense of belonging.

This Pattern Requires...

17/19/20

This Pattern influences ...

8/9/11/17/20

Problem

The problem is that marginalized individuals lack accessible, safe, and supportive spaces where they can regularly gather, participate in activities, and build social connections. Without these common spaces, opportunities for meaningful encounters

and community engagement are limited, which hinders recovery and social inclusion. Additionally, without dedicated places embedded in the community, sustaining participation and the associated social and emotional benefits becomes difficult.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

This pattern exists because having accessible and inclusive common spaces is essential for fostering social connection and recovery among marginalized individuals. Such spaces create opportunities for meaningful encounters and collaboration, which are vital for personal growth and community support. The presence of these shared environments helps build trust, encourages participation, and sustains the activities that promote well-being and collective empowerment.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.2 shares how Bethel House began from the community's need for a safe place where people could gather, express themselves, and collaborate. This early story highlights the importance of space for connection and mutual support.

Staff 1.5 explains that while the physical location is flexible for tojisha kenkyuu activities, the atmosphere created by the group is what truly matters. Tools like whiteboards help with reflection and engagement during meetings.

Staff 2.1 reflects on a past time when members worked together packing seaweed in an old church, showing how hands-on participation in shared spaces was vital for the community's survival.

Staff 2.4 describes the daily activities and meetings held from morning to afternoon in Bethel House facilities. These activities are key to maintaining government subsidies and keeping members motivated to participate and socialize.

Member 1.1 talks about personal growth experienced through tojisha kenkyuu meetings at New

Bethel, emphasizing how these spaces foster communication and feeling heard by others.

Member 2.2 notes that members have several facilities to choose from, each with its own group of members and staff, giving people options for where to participate.

Member 2.3 describes meeting people and sharing small achievements through work and meetings in Bethel, which strengthens friendships and social bonds.

Member 2.5 explains the daily routine of traveling between different Bethel locations for multiple activities, illustrating how common spaces are part of a structured day.

Member 2.6 describes Bethel in Urakawa as a welcoming place where many people come to meet and connect, reinforcing its role as a social hub.

Member 2.7 highlights that encounters with others are key to recovery and that such encounters depend on having accessible places to gather and face shared challenges together.

Stakeholders

Bethel staff ensure safe, welcoming spaces and organize activities

Members use common spaces for socializing, work, and recovery

Local government supports funding and subsidies for these facilities

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

27

Walkability – Connectivity

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 19 | |
| Pattern Number | 19 |
| Code | Sp |
| Scale | Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Macro |

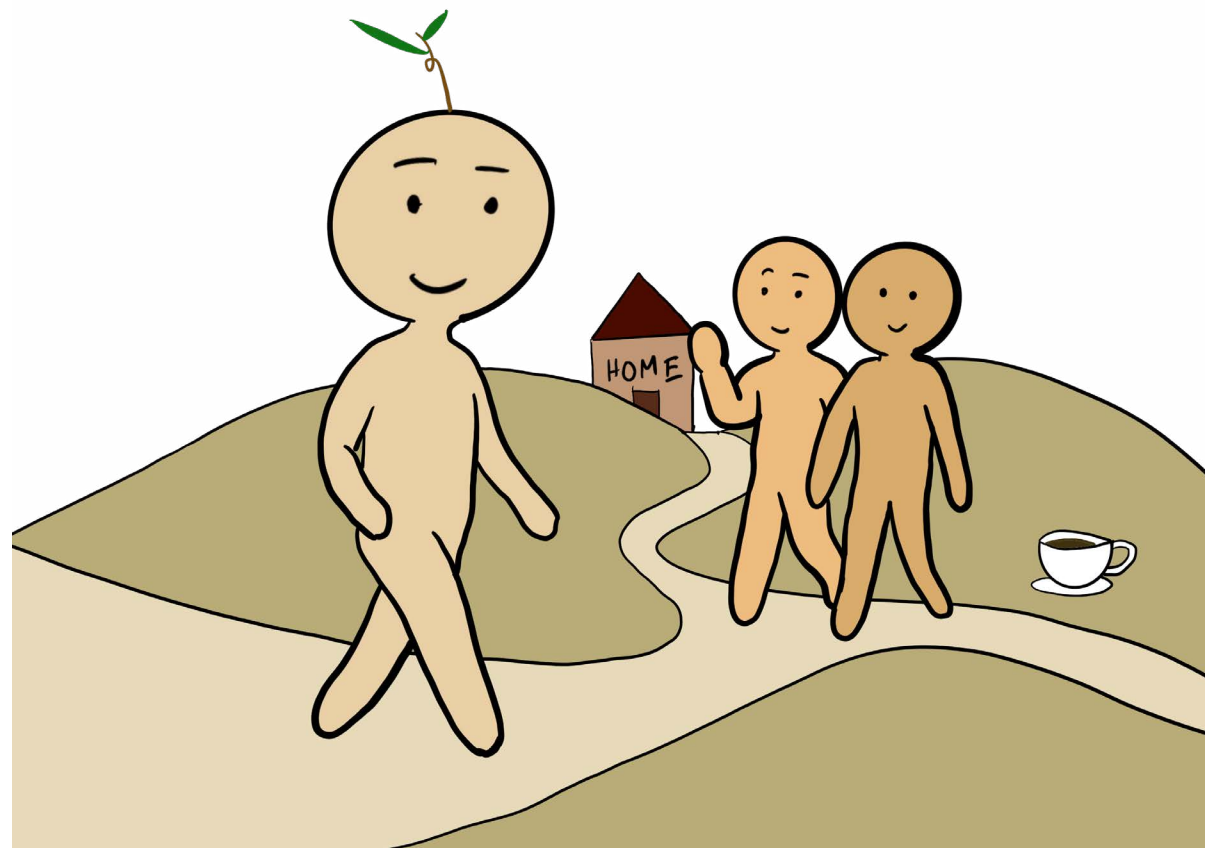


Fig 104 The walkability of the town, everything and everyone is close by

Pattern Solution (What)

Designing or maintaining towns and active areas with accessible and meaningful destinations connected by short and safe walking routes encourages social interaction and easy access. Creating “loops of life” within the town’s rhythm supports daily habits and rituals, making engagement and reintegration into public life more natural and frequent. Transportation options like community driving systems complement walkability during bad weather or special needs, ensuring continuous connectivity.

Pattern Description (How)

Creating a network of short, safe, and accessible walking routes that connect important places throughout the town supports easy movement for members and staff.

Incorporating flexible transportation options like a driving team helps maintain accessibility during bad weather or for those with special needs.

Designing these connections as continuous loops encourages frequent interactions, spontaneous meetings, and seamless participation in daily activities, fostering a supportive and inclusive community environment.

This Pattern Requires...

Influence Patterns ...

This Pattern influences ...

6/13/15/16/17/18/22

Problem

Members face isolation when public spaces are dominated by cars or when key destinations are spread too far apart, making social interaction and access to support difficult. Limited walkability reduces spontaneous encounters and the ability

to easily engage in daily activities, which hinders community connection and reintegration.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

A walkable and well-connected town allows members and staff to engage easily in social and daily activities while having the option to retreat to private spaces whenever needed.

This accessibility fosters spontaneous interactions and visible care within the community, supporting mental health and social reintegration.

The pattern exists to ensure that the spread of facilities across town remains approachable, creating a supportive environment where movement is effortless and connections are maintained.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 2.1 recalls when members packed seaweed in group homes located in an old church. As Bethel grew, the number of group homes and facilities expanded across town, creating a need for a well-connected and accessible network for members and staff.

Staff 2.2 describes Urakawa’s walkability and explains the driving system that supports members in bad weather or upon request. The driving team, composed of staff and driving-capable members, ensures the town remains accessible through buses and a driving network.

Staff 2.3 emphasizes how walkability allows members to visit friends and easily access support networks, helping them stay connected and engaged within the community.

Member 1.6 shares the ritual of going to Rupiness Hill for breakfast and attending meet-ups at different locations, showing how the walkable town supports these activities.

Member 2.5 describes a daily routine involving frequent traveling between places, illustrating how accessible transport and walkability sustain daily activities.

Member 3.1 reflects on Urakawa as a small and walkable town where sharing information and staying in touch is simple, contrasting this with the challenges of larger urban areas.

Stakeholders

Staff ensure transportation and support for mobility within the community

layout and transportation infrastructure

Members rely on accessible routes to participate in activities and maintain social connections

Driving team members provide essential mobility services, especially in bad weather

Local government or planners influence town

Local Community help maintain and promote walkable, connected spaces (Machizukuri)

Extension Pack

This Pattern Requires...

-

This Pattern influences ...

25

Closure Without Collapse

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Bethel House Pattern 20 | |
| Pattern Number | 20 |
| Code | His |
| Scale | Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Macro |

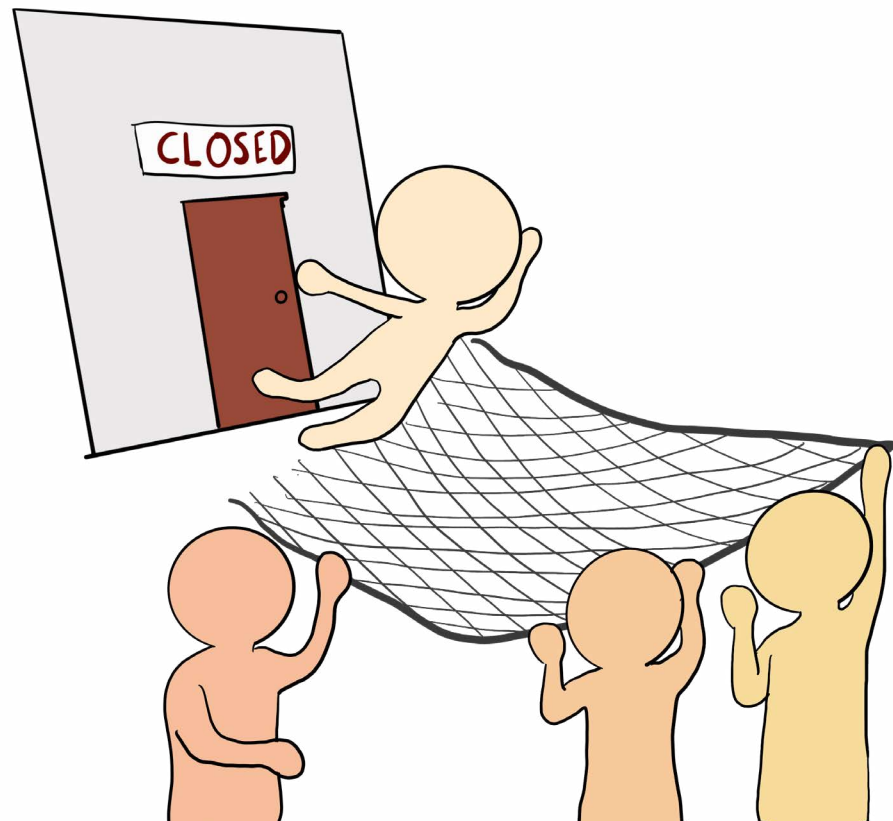


Fig 105 “If you fall we are there to catch you”

Pattern Solution (What)

Replacing centralized psychiatric care with a distributed network of housing, workspaces, and social support embedded in everyday community life helps catch and hold those displaced. This approach provides visible, integrated support that prevents isolation and stigma while fostering social inclusion.

Pattern Description (How)

Intentional systems form through creating multiple housing options, accessible workspaces, and social support networks spread throughout the community.

These elements connect visibly in daily life, allowing displaced individuals to find stable places to live, meaningful activities, and ongoing social interaction. Collaboration between institutions,

staff, members, and locals supports seamless integration and continuous care without relying on a single centralized facility.

This Pattern Requires...

17/18

This Pattern influences ...

16/18

Problem

The closure of psychiatric wards creates a gap in care that risks leaving vulnerable individuals without support.

Without intentional systems and locations to catch those displaced, stigma and suffering increase, leading to social isolation and abandonment.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Closing psychiatric wards leaves vulnerable people without support which risks increased suffering and stigma.

Creating intentional community-based systems helps catch those displaced and provides continuous care. This approach is essential to prevent isolation and exclusion while promoting social integration and well-being.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 describes the early days when chaos was accepted as the psychiatric ward gradually closed. This acceptance was key to building a system to support displaced individuals.

Staff 1.2 talks about Bethel House starting from the town's need during the ward closure. It provided a safe space to gather, express, and build support networks.

Staff 1.3 explains how the closure caused stigma and discrimination. Bethel worked internally and with the local community to change perceptions and create social integration, establishing a protective safety net.

Literature provided by Bethel also discusses this closure lead to the start of Bethel House.

Stakeholders

Former psychiatric patients need ongoing support and inclusion
Institutions transition care from centralized wards to community systems

Bethel staff provide care, coordination, and community building

Local government offers funding and policy support

Institutional Collaboration

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 21 | |
| Pattern Number | 21 |
| Code | Socio-Eco-Gov |
| Scale | Community-Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Macro |

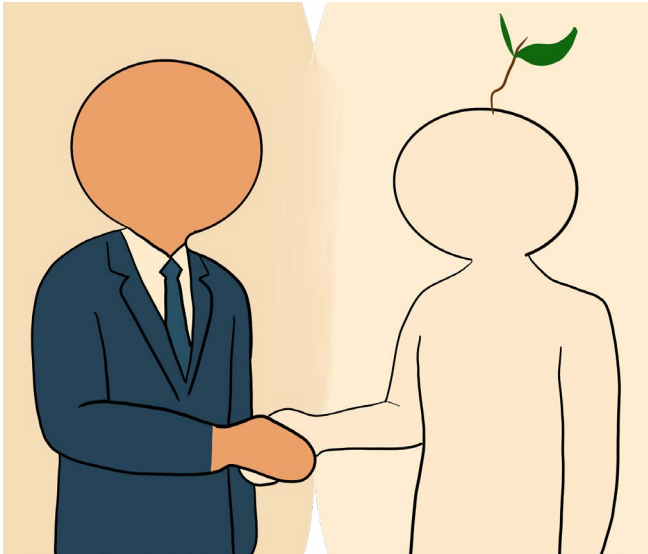


Fig 106 “Yes, yes, Lets make this happen”

Pattern Solution (What)

Bethel members become actively included in a variety of positive local institutions such as government activities, fire departments, and research organizations, fostering collaboration and reducing stigma through shared participation and mutual understanding.

Pattern Description (How)

Building strong connections between Bethel members and multiple local institutions happens through consistent collaboration and participation in community activities.

Staff guide interactions by educating both Bethel members and institutional partners, helping to create mutual respect and understanding. Regular involvement in public events, safety drills,

and meetings integrates members visibly into the town’s social fabric.

This process helps break down stigma, promotes shared responsibility, and strengthens social networks that support inclusion and acceptance.

This Pattern Requires...

11/22

This Pattern influences ...

16/22

Problem

The problem is that Bethel members face exclusion from public planning and institutional activities, which limits their full civic inclusion and reinforces stigma, preventing them from being recognized as whole persons within the community.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

When people who have experienced exclusion become active participants in local institutions, the positive association helps reduce stigma. Collaboration between Bethel House and other local organizations builds trust and positive relationships, making social integration possible and strengthening the community as a whole. This pattern exists to ensure that civic inclusion during times of change supports dignity and belonging for everyone involved.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 emphasize modeling acceptance of chaos, guiding collaboration with institutions like fire departments who are not experts in mental health, supporting Bethel members through these interactions

Staff 1.2 Early days of Bethel arose from community need during psychiatric ward closure, with support and leadership from Mr. Ikuyoshi Mukaiyachi helping build a network of safe gathering spaces and support

Staff 1.3 Bethel worked internally to change stigma brought by the psychiatric ward’s closure by building social integration with locals through machizukuri, creating safety nets without alienation

Staff 1.4 Tojisha kenkyu, the practice of peer-led research and care, is gaining recognition especially in cities, drawing attention from governmental and NGO institutions wanting to learn from Bethel’s social care model

Staff 2.4 Bethel members’ participation in daily activities is supported and subsidized by the local government, helping maintain engagement and social connection

Staff 2.5 Admission procedures involve collaboration between Bethel branches in Tokyo, Urakawa, and the Hidaka government, ensuring coordinated support

Staff 2.6 Visits from academic, governmental, and international experts help spread tojisha kenkyu knowledge and promote mutual learning

Stakeholders

Bethel members: Engage actively

Bethel staff: Facilitate collaboration and guide interactions with other institutions

Local government: Support and include Bethel members in community activities

Other institutions (fire department, research institutes): Partner with Bethel for inclusive community efforts

Experts and visitors: Share knowledge and support social care development

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bethel House Pattern 22 | |
| Pattern Number | 22 |
| Code | Socio-Eco-Gov-His |
| Scale | Community - Town/City |
| Scale (Sp) | Meso - Macro |

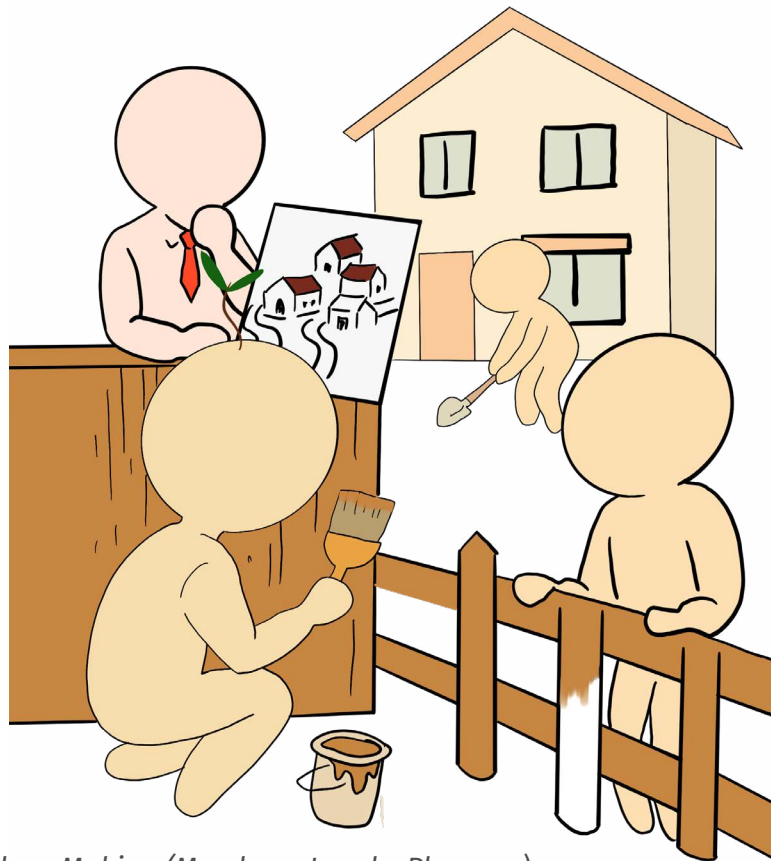


Fig 107 Community Place Making (Members, Locals, Planners)

Pattern Solution (What)

Creating inclusive participatory projects where locals and recovering members contribute equally helps build shared ownership. This approach fosters mutual respect, breaks down social barriers, and encourages ongoing collaboration that integrates all community members visibly and meaningfully.

Pattern Description (How)

Machizukuri works through collaborative town-building rooted in local knowledge and co-creation, emphasizing horizontal relationships and continuous dialogue among residents, bethel members, staff, and institutions.

It cultivates shared ownership by engaging all participants in everyday activities reflecting local values, histories, and social needs.

This approach integrates members visibly into the town's social and economic life, fostering mutual

respect and long-term cohesion. Practical support systems like Bethel House employment centers connect members with meaningful work that benefits both individuals and the wider community, reinforcing trust and inclusion through ongoing cooperation and iterative collaboration.

The physical and social environments created become spaces where everyone co-produces solutions, embodying the spirit of crafting the town together with effort and respect.

This Pattern Requires...

11/16/19/21

This Pattern influences ...

16/21

Problem

The problem is that segregation between local residents and recovering members reinforces stigma and social division, preventing true integration.

Without shared roles and visible collaboration, misunderstandings and discrimination persist, isolating members and weakening community cohesion.

Main Statement/ Hypothesis (Why)

Machizukuri exists because collaborative placemaking between residents and bethel members fosters mutual respect, shared ownership, and lasting urban integration. This approach counters social stigma and segregation by creating a living community where everyone actively participates in shaping their environment. It builds a foundation for empowerment and social acceptance through continuous dialogue and co-creation, ensuring that local values and needs guide development. The pattern is important as it transforms mental health recovery from isolation to inclusion within the broader town, strengthening social bonds and resilience.

Referential Context (Appendix)

Staff 1.1 model acceptance of chaos within Bethel, guiding interactions with institutions like the fire department who lack expertise with mental disabilities, embodying integration, empowerment, and collaboration through horizontal relationships and ongoing dialogue

Staff 1.2 Bethel House began from local needs after the closure of the psychiatric ward, providing a safe gathering space for expression and support under the guidance of Mr. Ikuyoshi Mukaiyachi reflecting local history and social needs

Staff 1.3 Psychiatric ward closure caused stigma and discrimination but Bethel internally worked to shift perceptions and built a safety net linking members and institutions, preventing alienation and supporting social integration through machizukuri

Staff 1.4 Tojisha kenkyu is gaining recognition nationwide especially in urban areas as a respectful practice cultivating mental health awareness rooted in local values and social needs

Staff 1.5 The physical place for tojisha kenkyu activities is flexible but the community atmosphere is key, with spaces and social activities designed to

foster respect and collaborative reflection
Staff 2.2 Urakawa's walkability is supported by a driving network operated by staff and members responding to mobility needs, showing multi-party cooperation including car rentals and scheduling
Staff 2.4 Members participate in daily Bethel activities subsidized by the local government, which supports socialization and engagement from 9 am to 3 pm including a lunch break

Staff 2.7 Resource shortages to help patients led to collaboration between staff and Mr. Mukaiyachi, helping members externalize challenges through tojisha kenkyu and fostering social acceptance
Staff 3.8 Contrasts machizukuri with top-down institutional power over patients, emphasizing the importance of horizontal collaboration and empowerment

Members 2.2 can choose among multiple facilities, each with their own staff and groups, working together to support the organization and individuals
Members 3.6 Member employment inside or outside Bethel is discussed collaboratively with staff to evaluate and plan work opportunities

Stakeholders

Residents of Urakawa: Participate in placemaking and build social acceptance

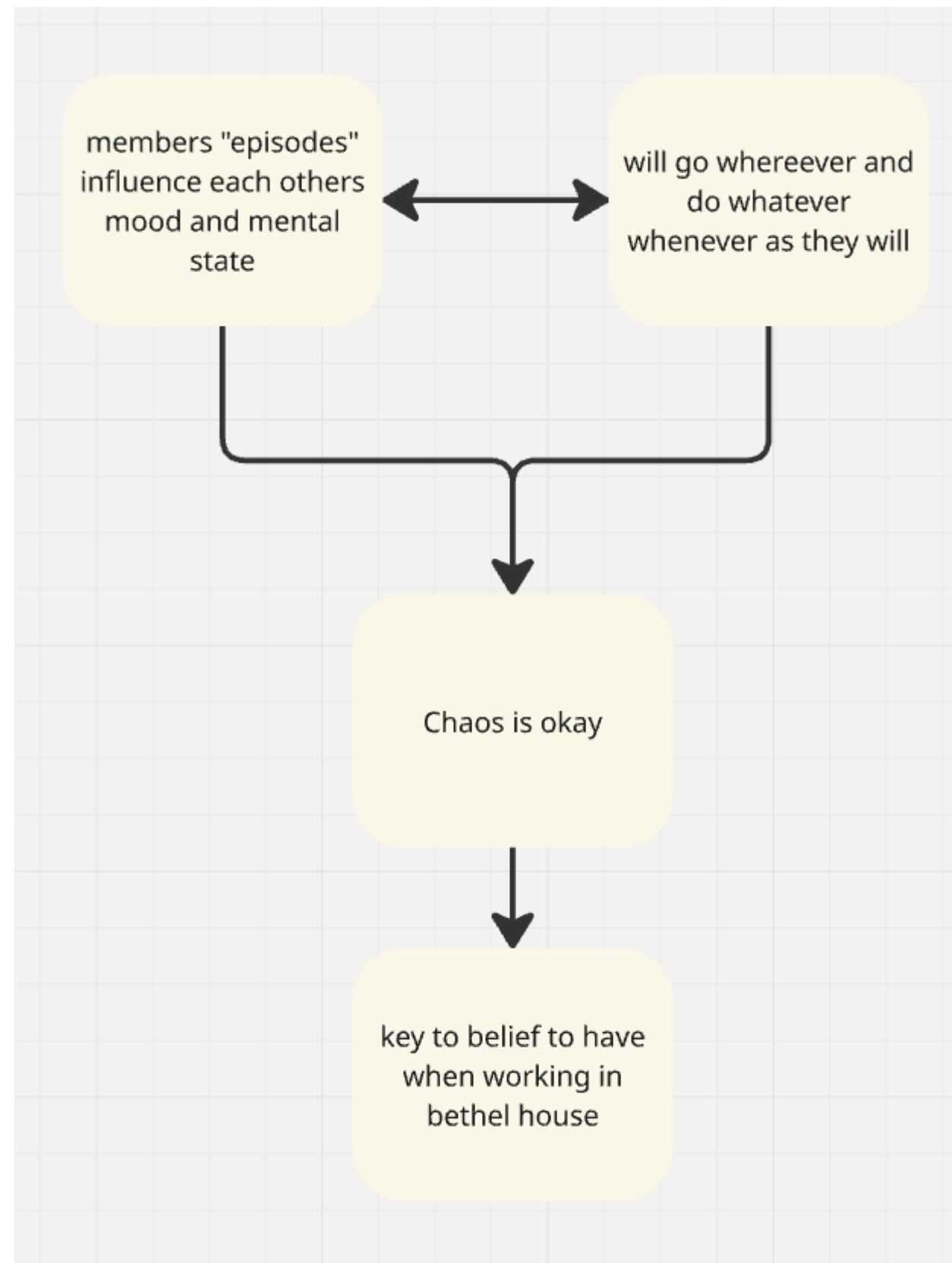
Bethel House Members: Engage in community activities

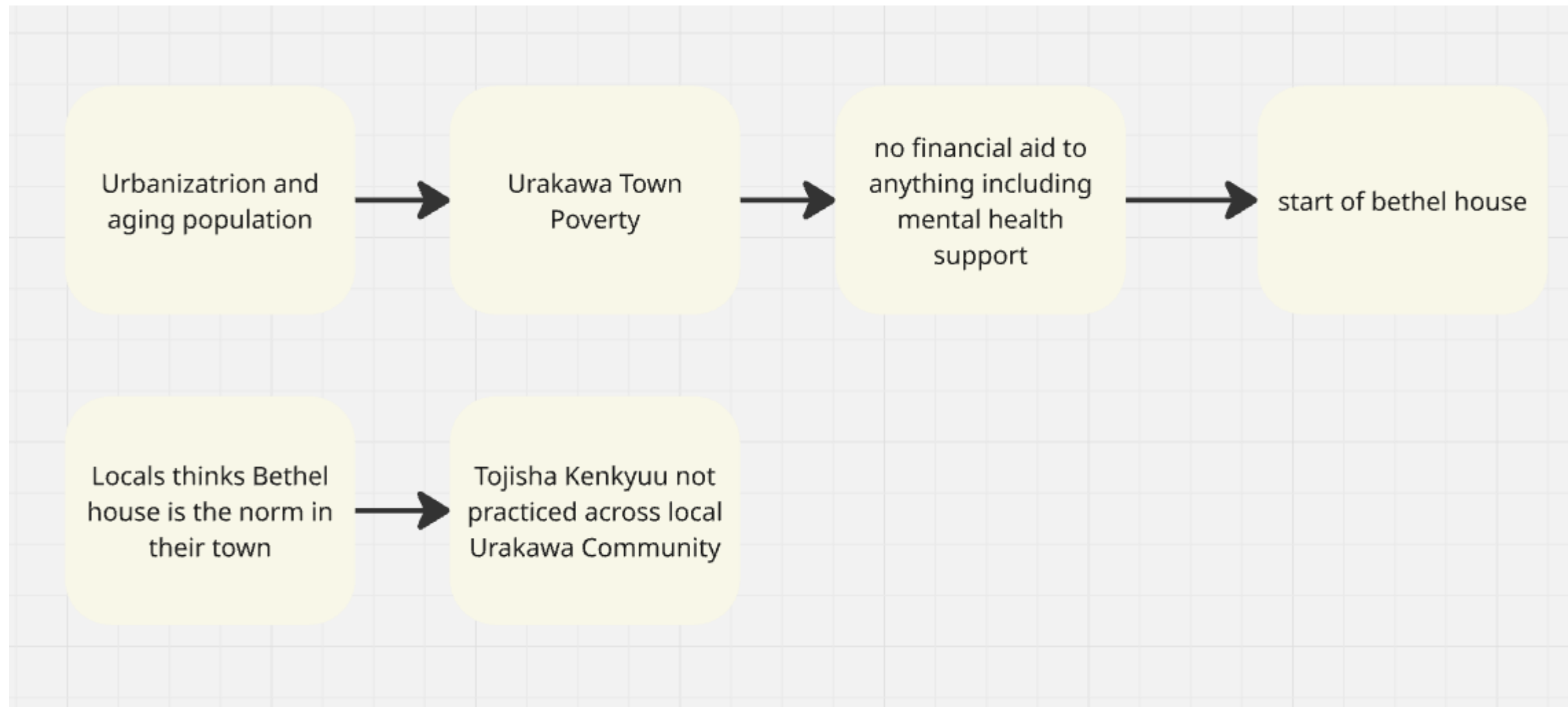
Bethel Staff: Facilitate collaboration and support member participation

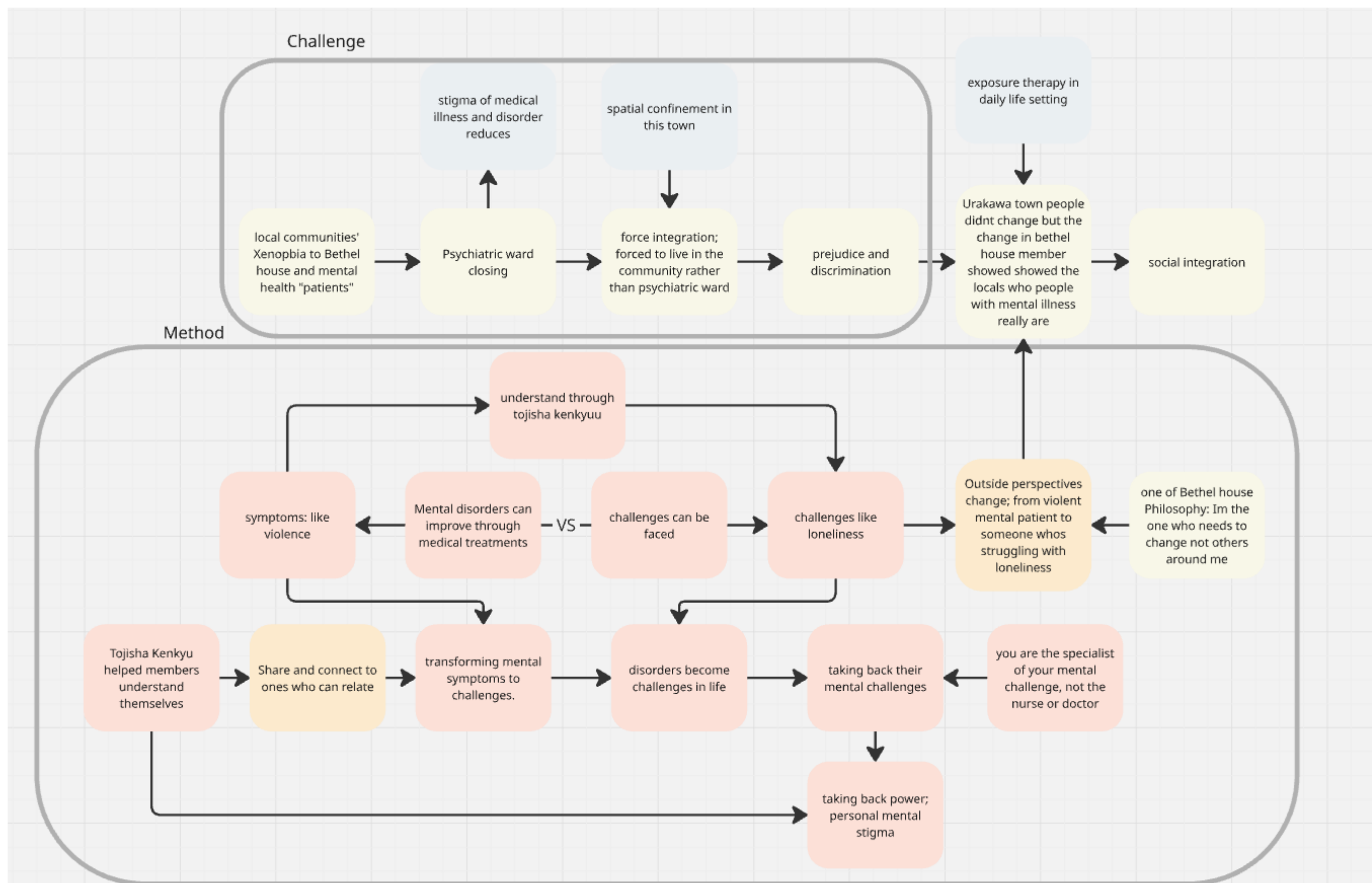
Local Government: Provides subsidies and sup-

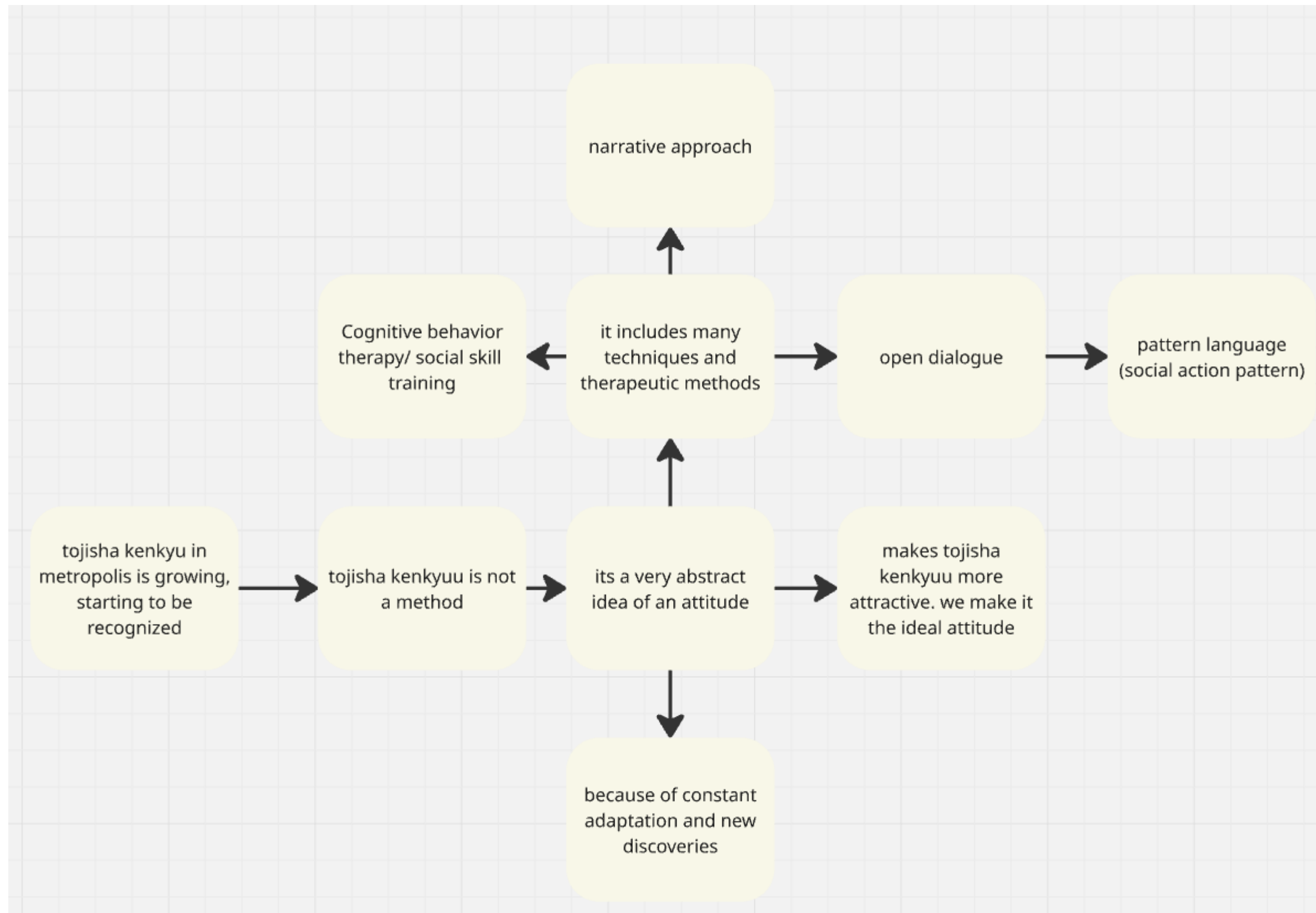
ports organization and town growth programs
Local Institutions (e.g., Fire Department): Collaborate with Bethel

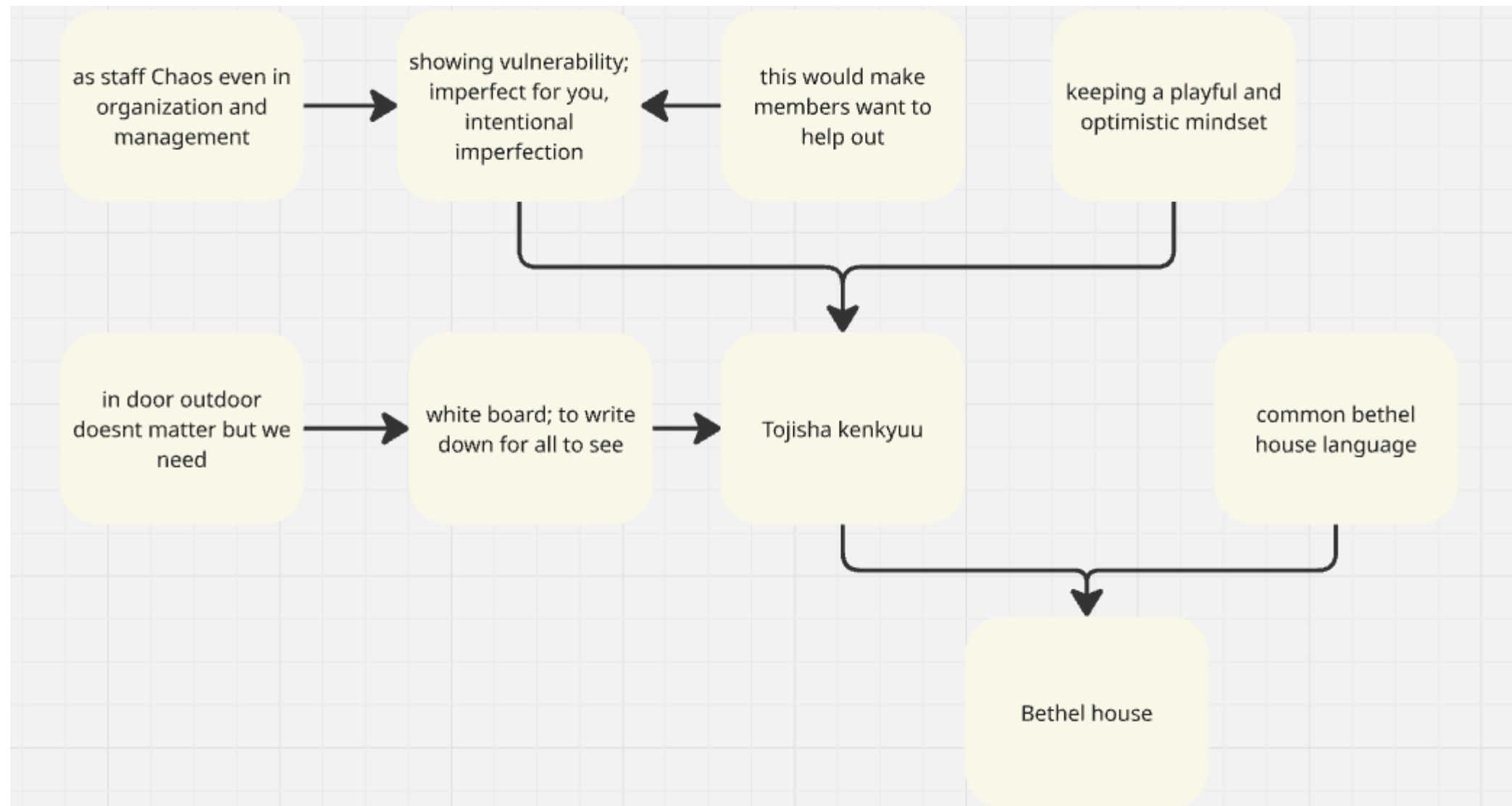
Local Businesses and Farmers: Partner with Bethel for mutual economic and social benefits

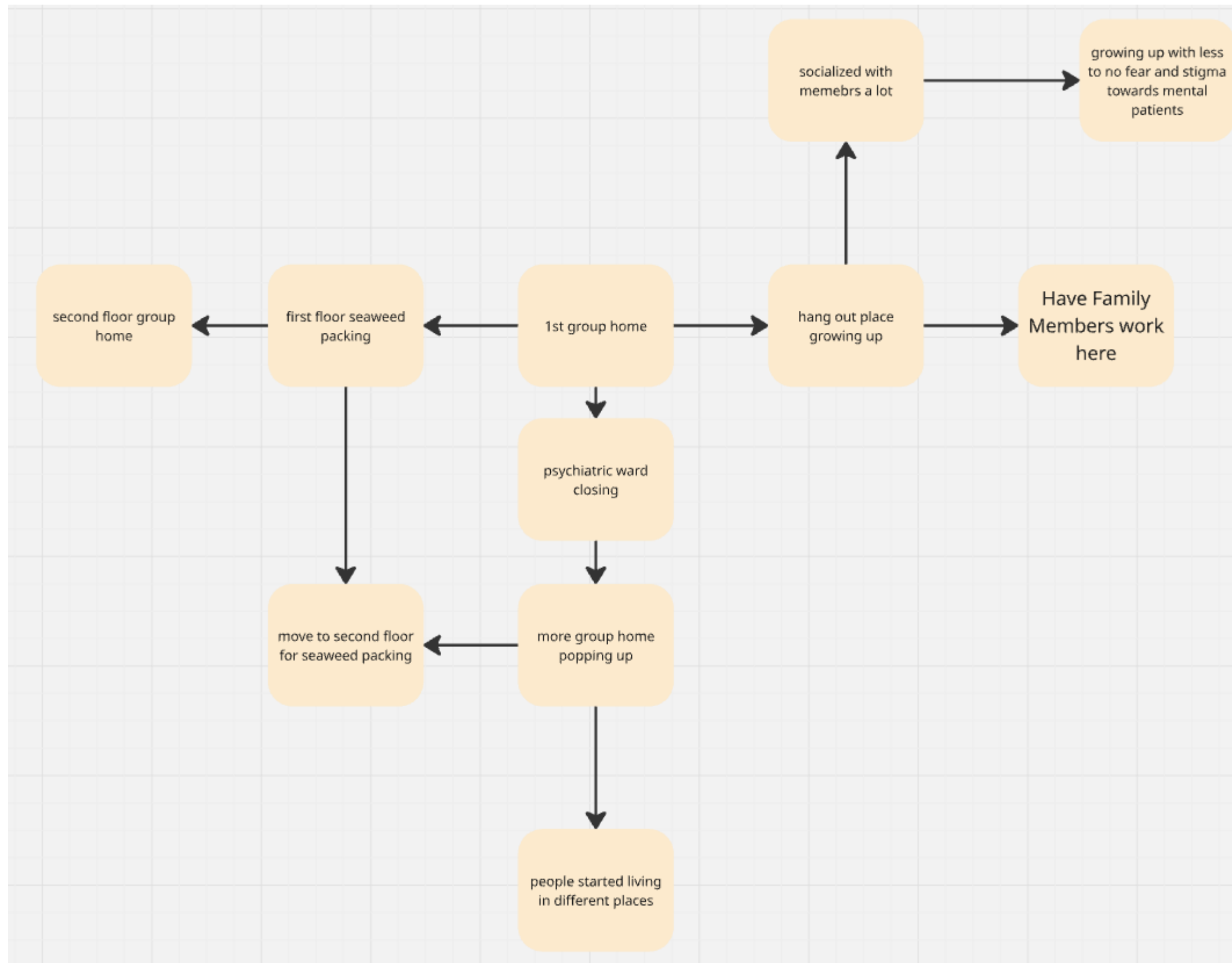


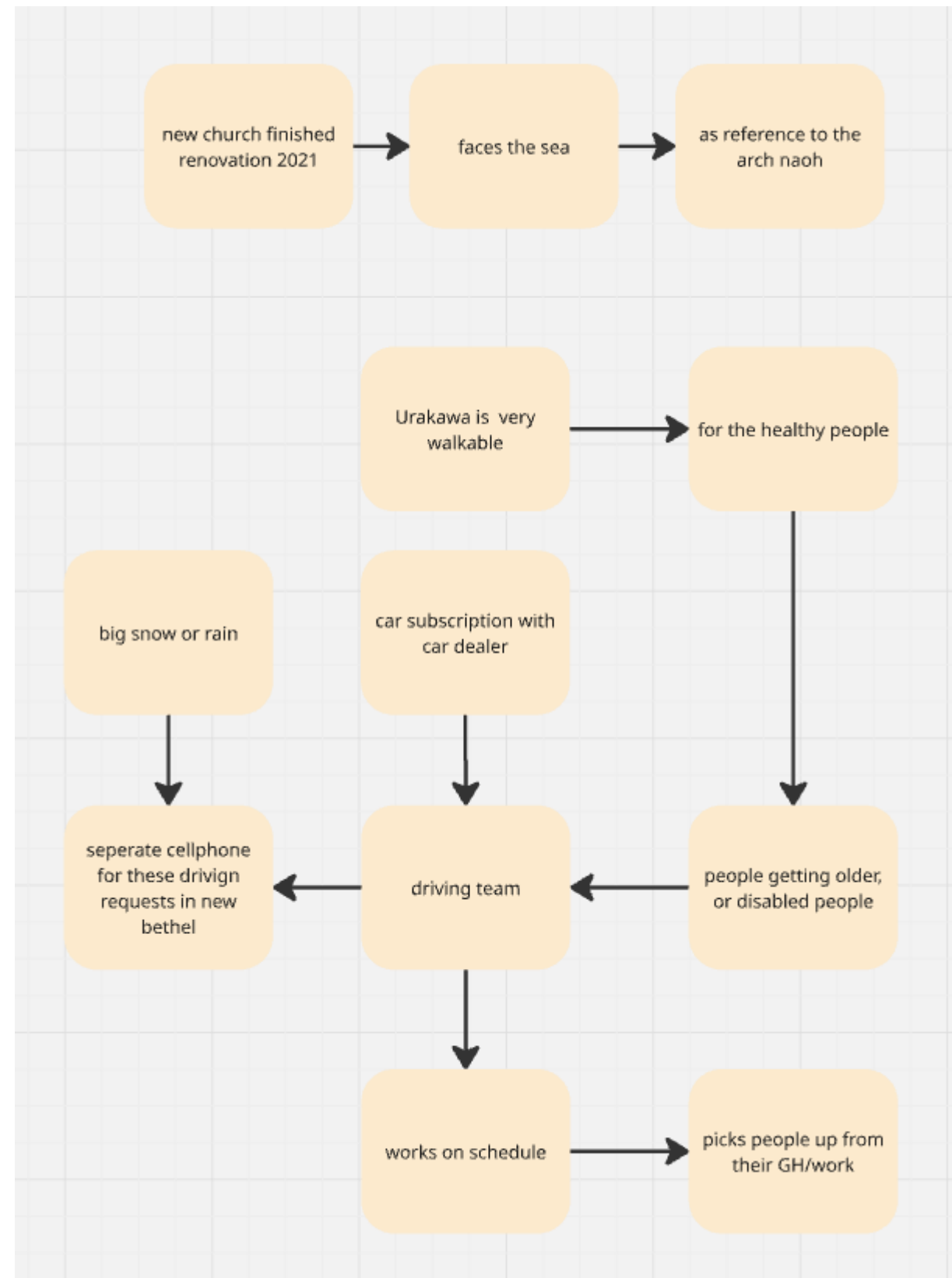


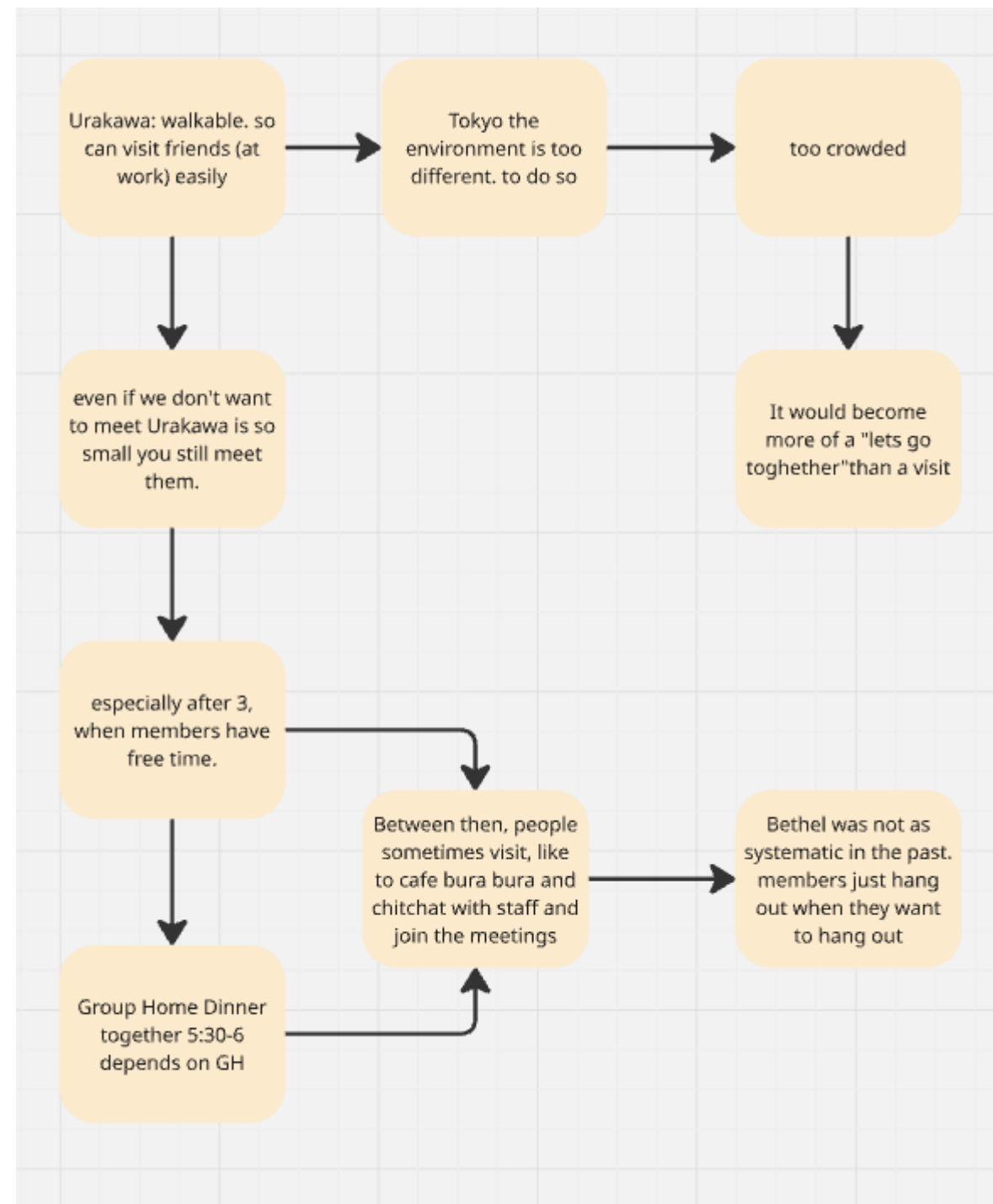


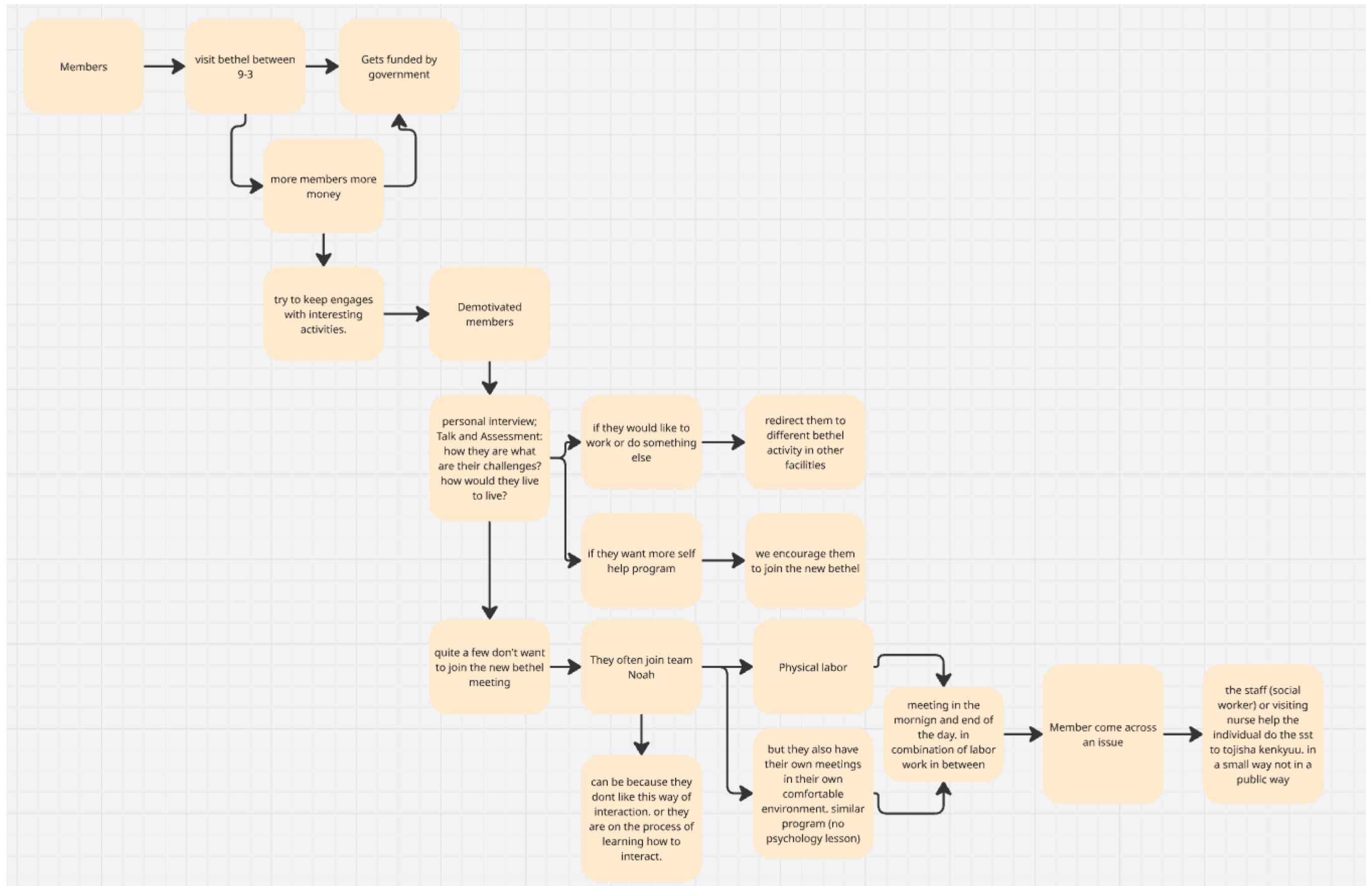


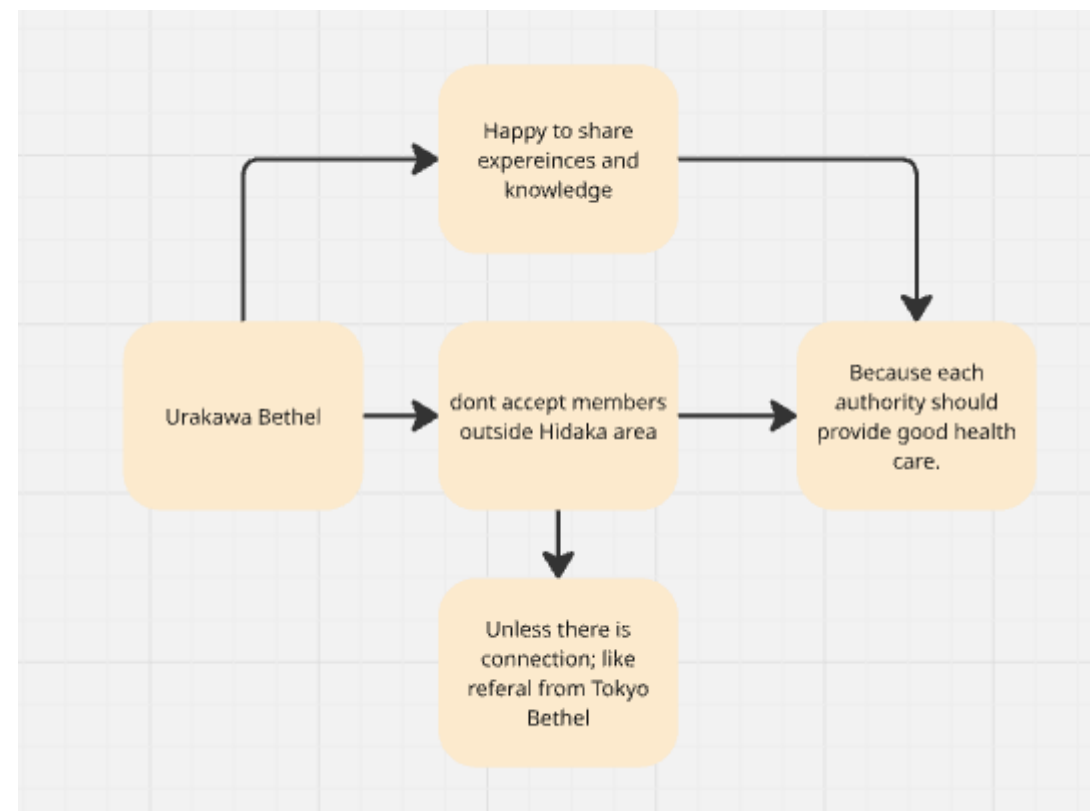


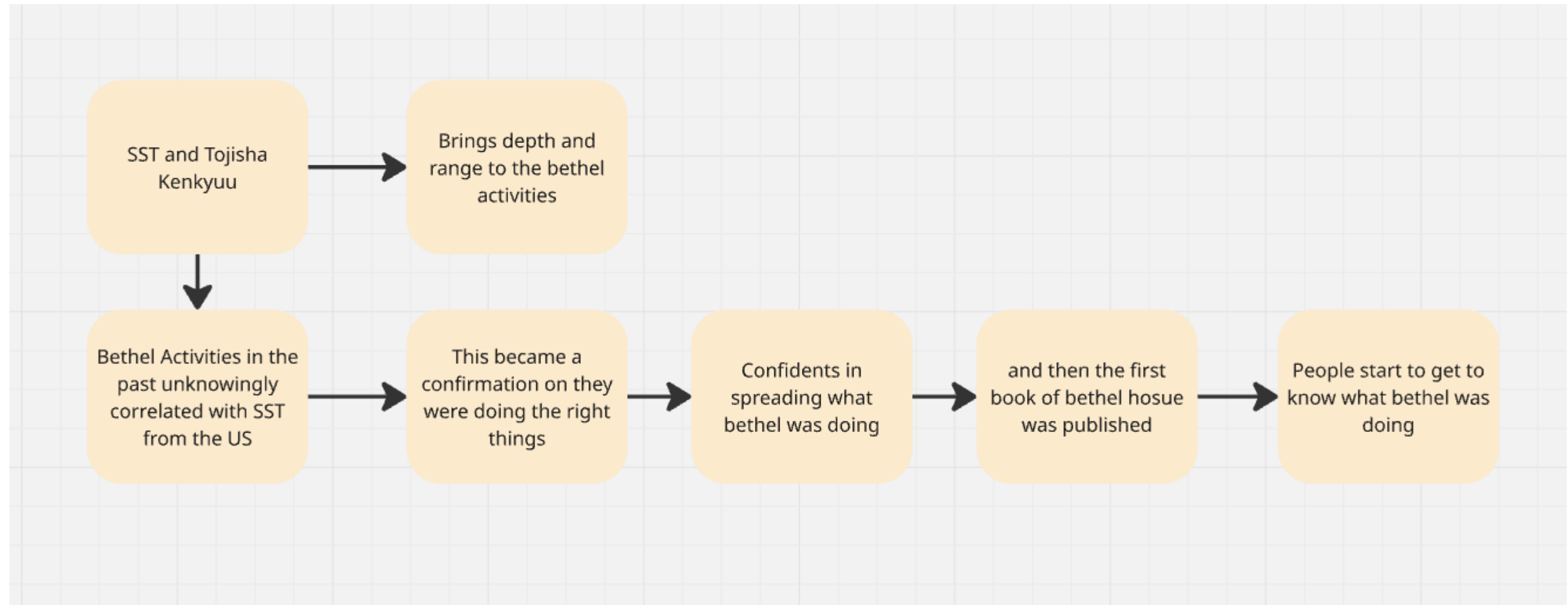


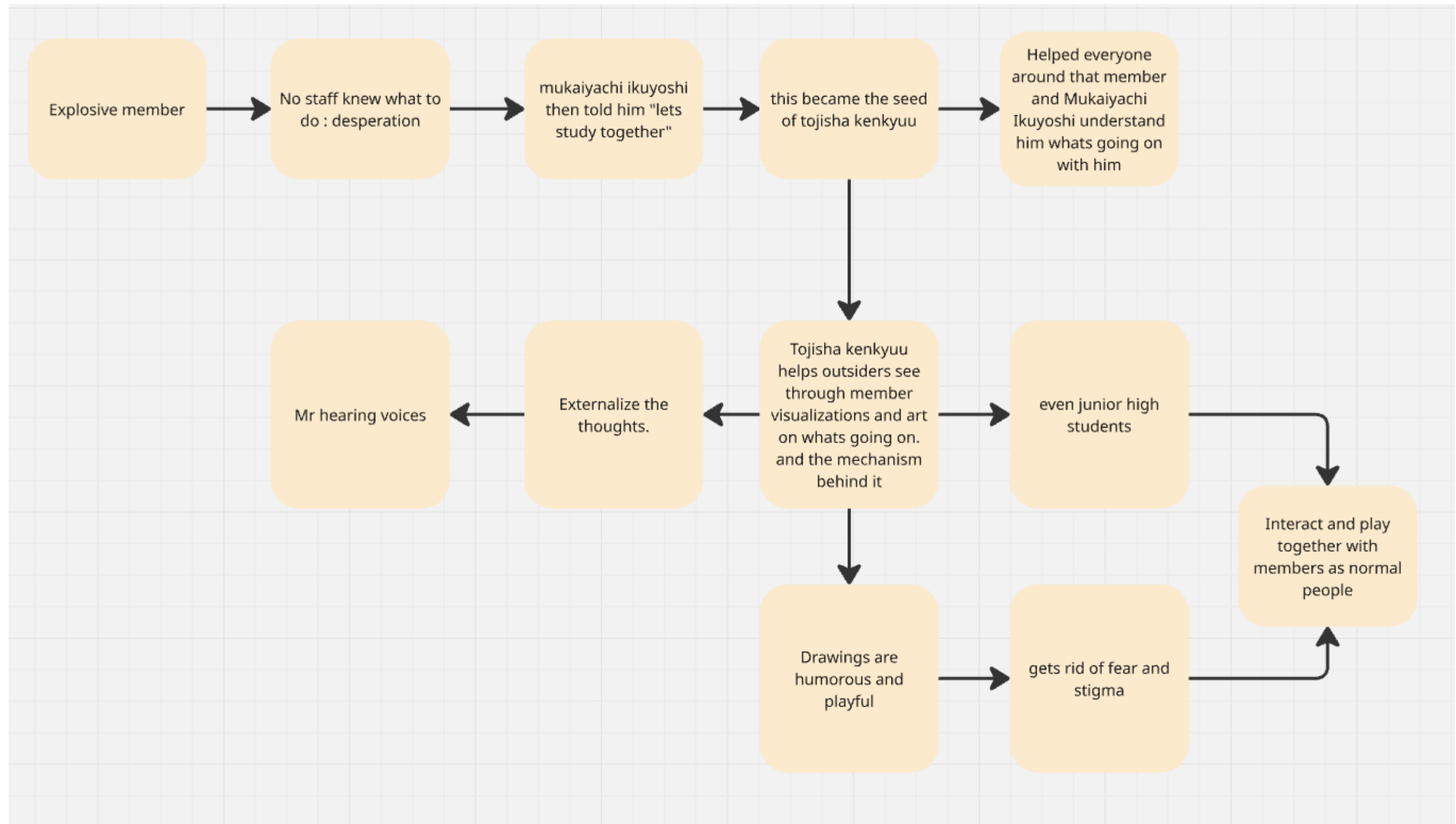


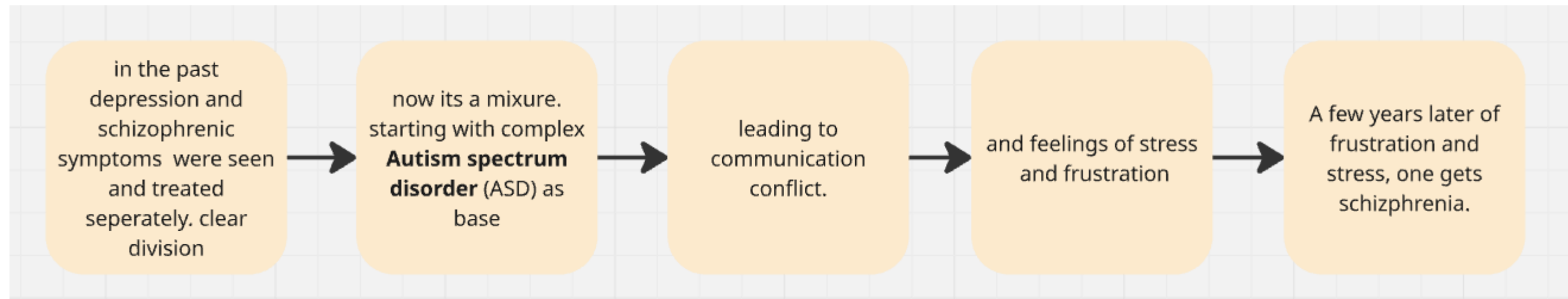


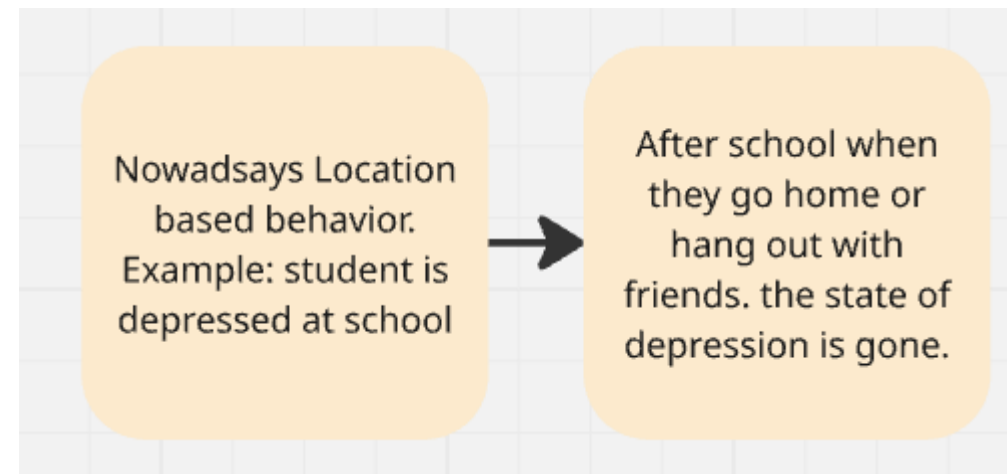


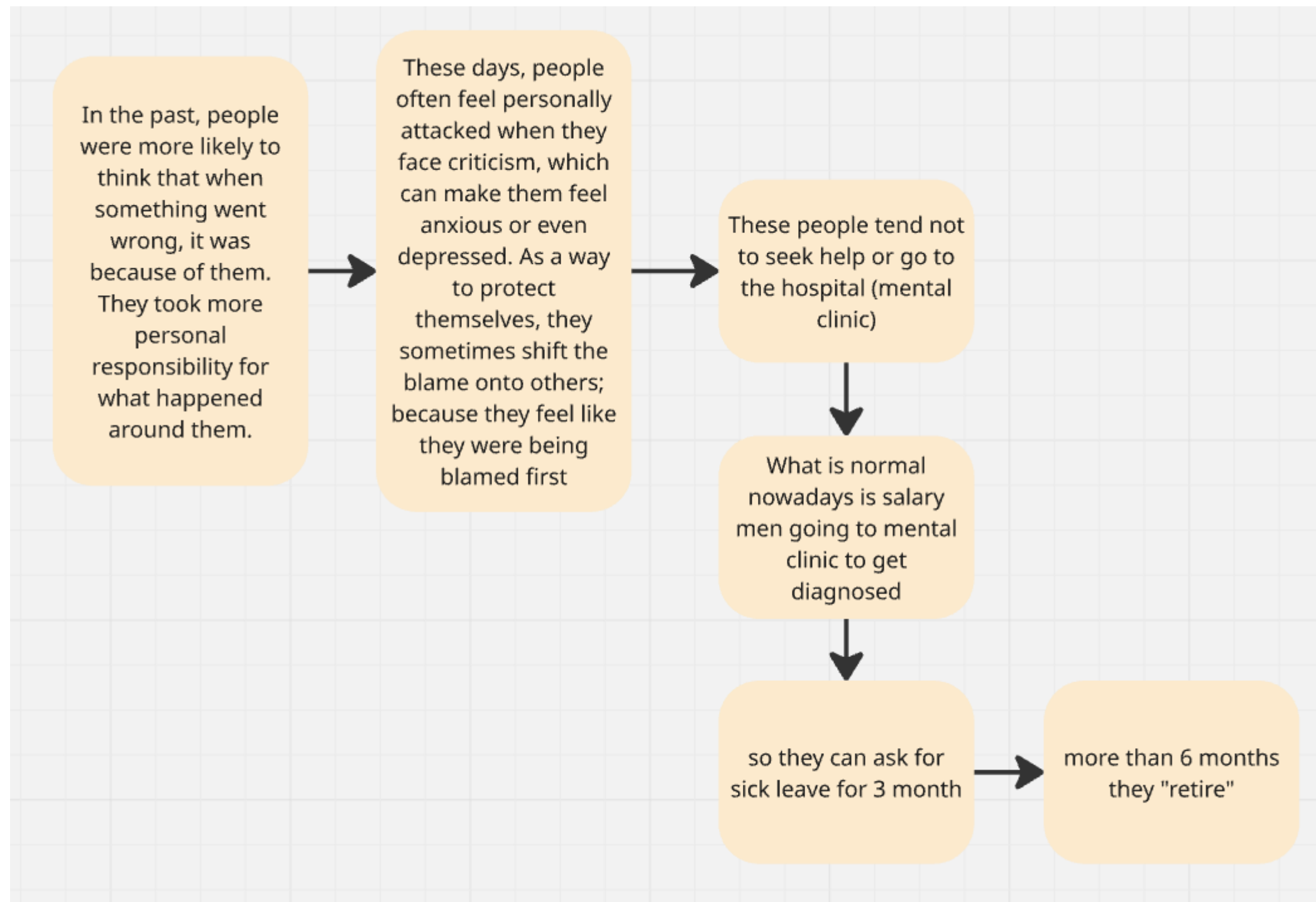


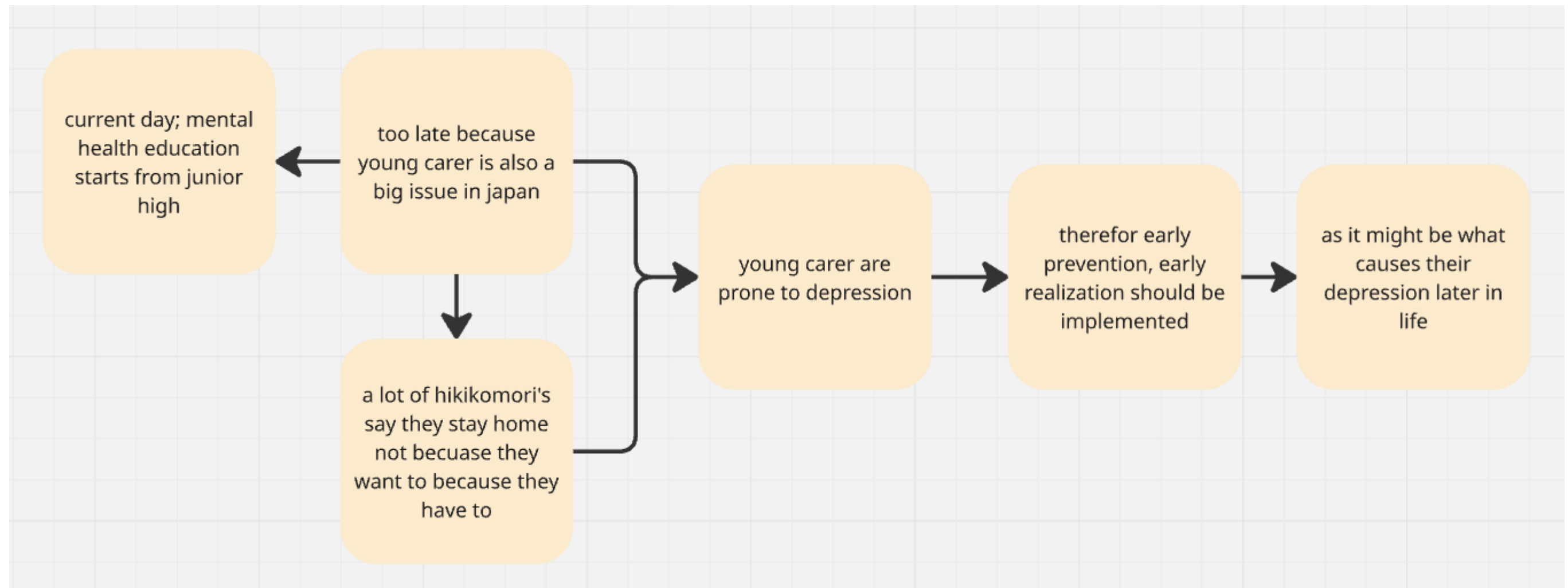


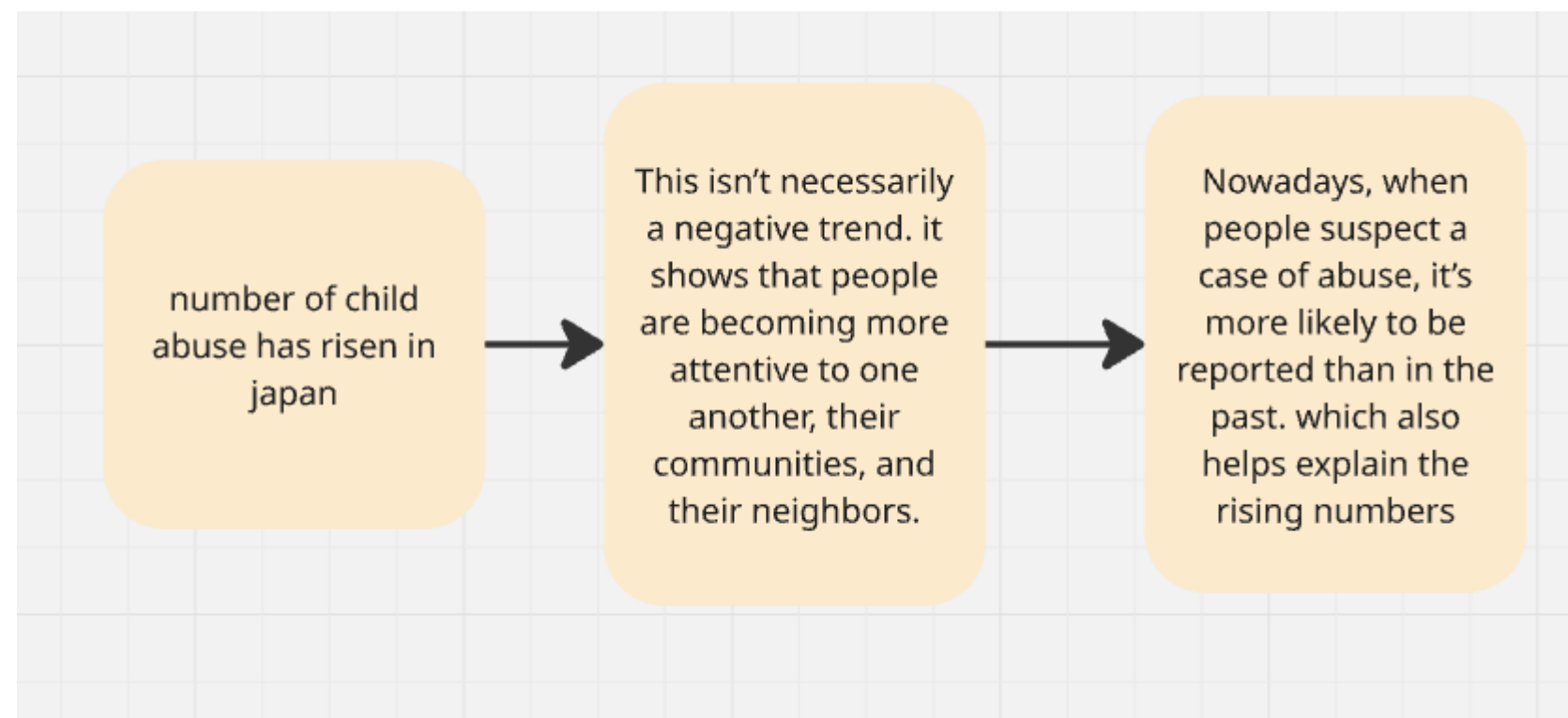


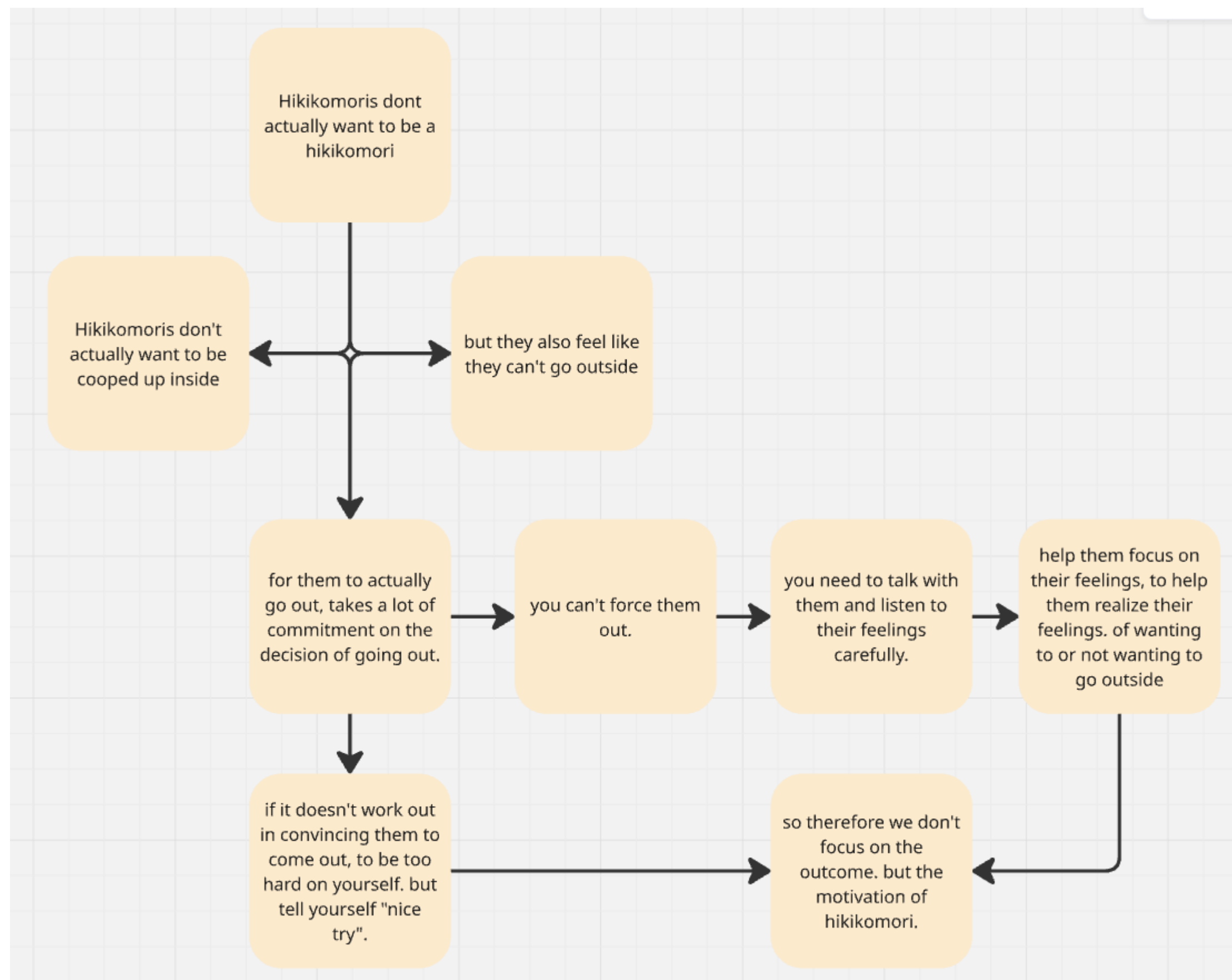


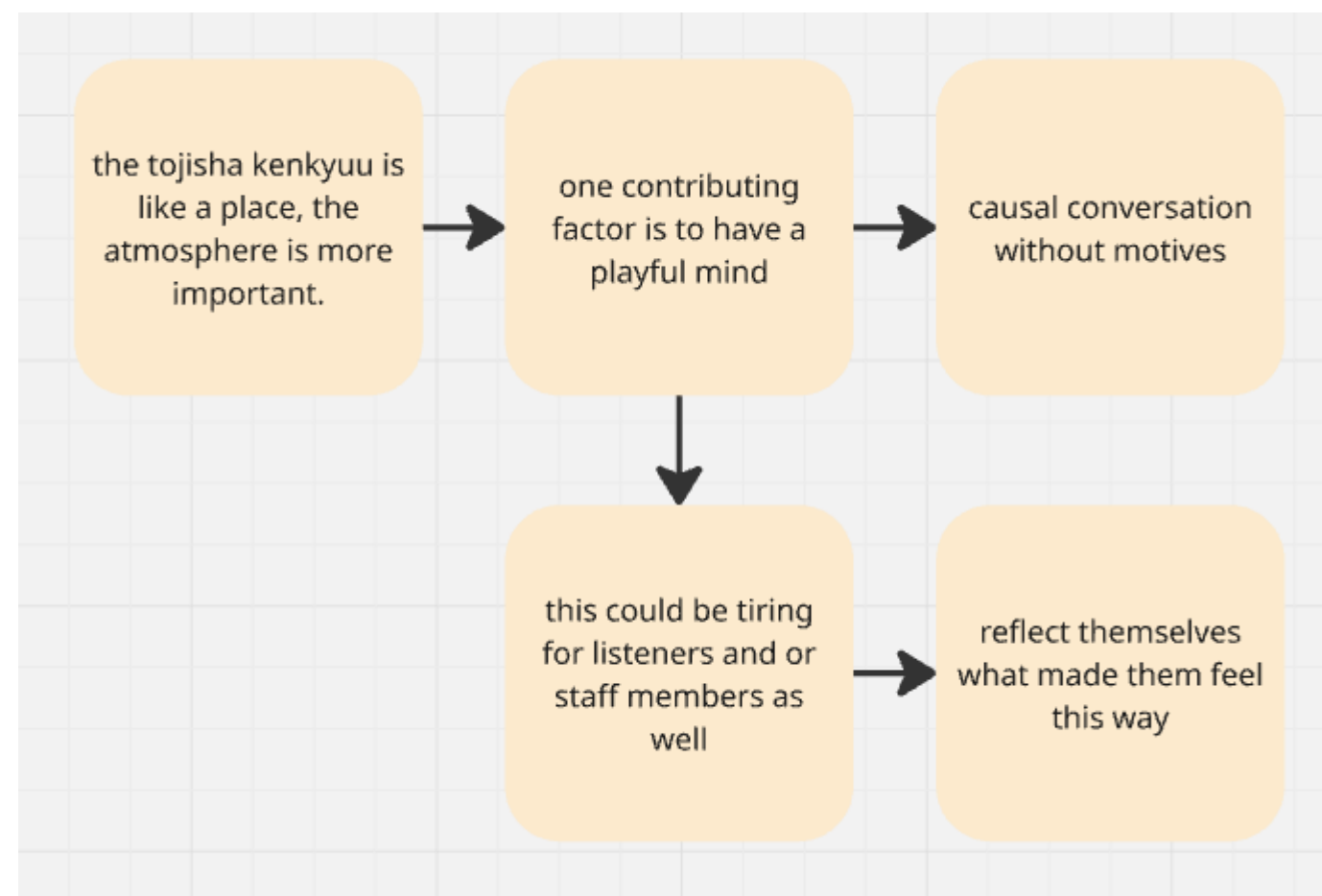


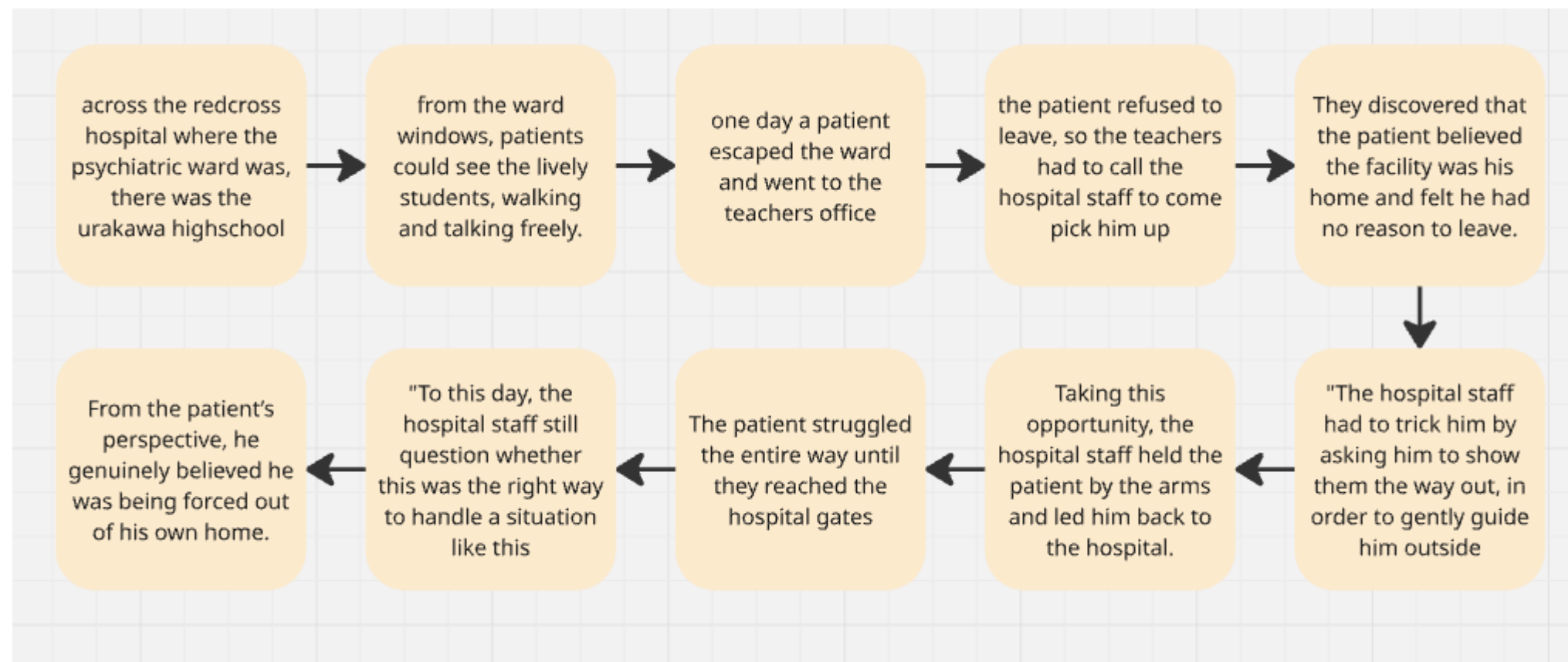


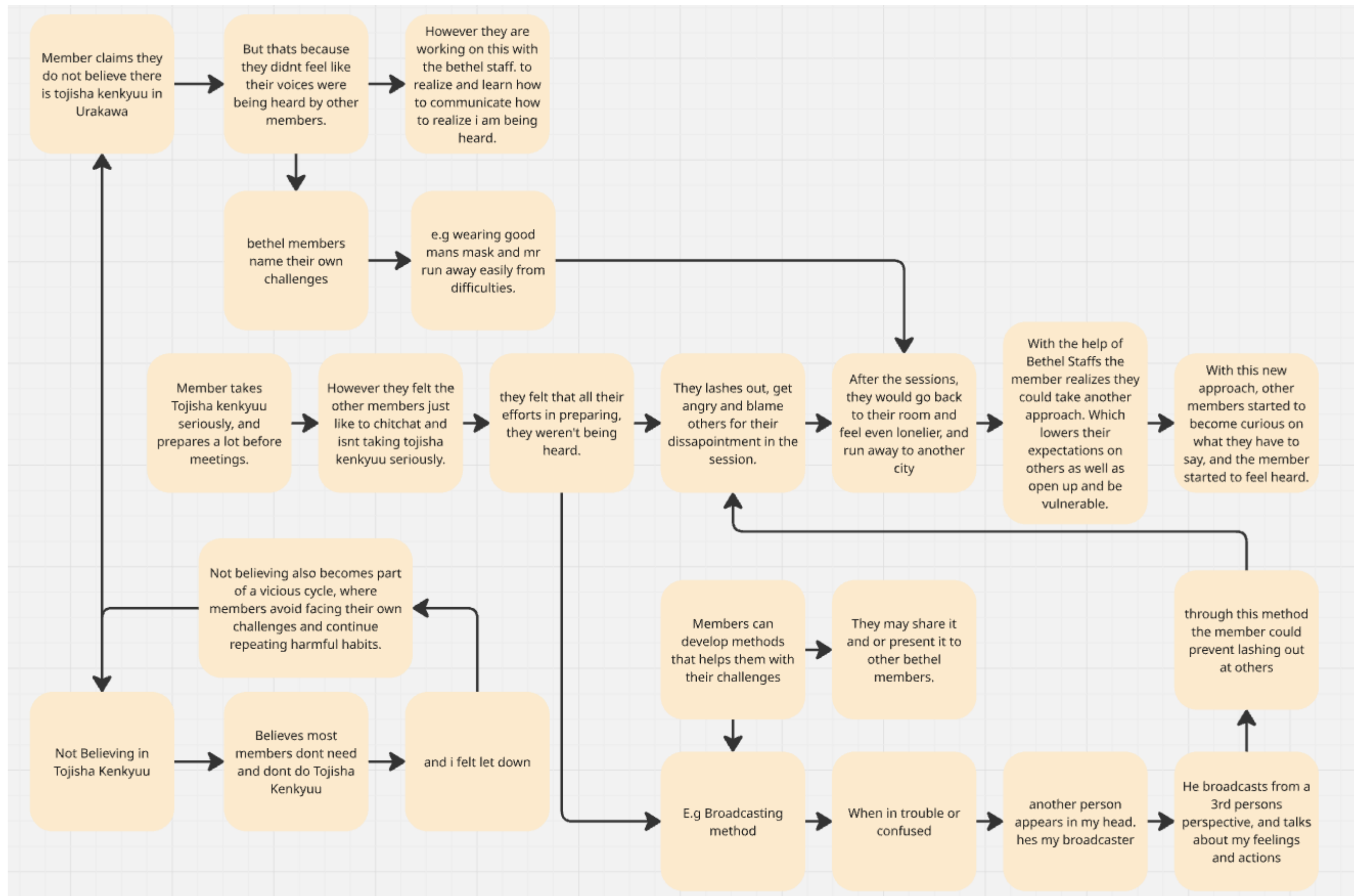


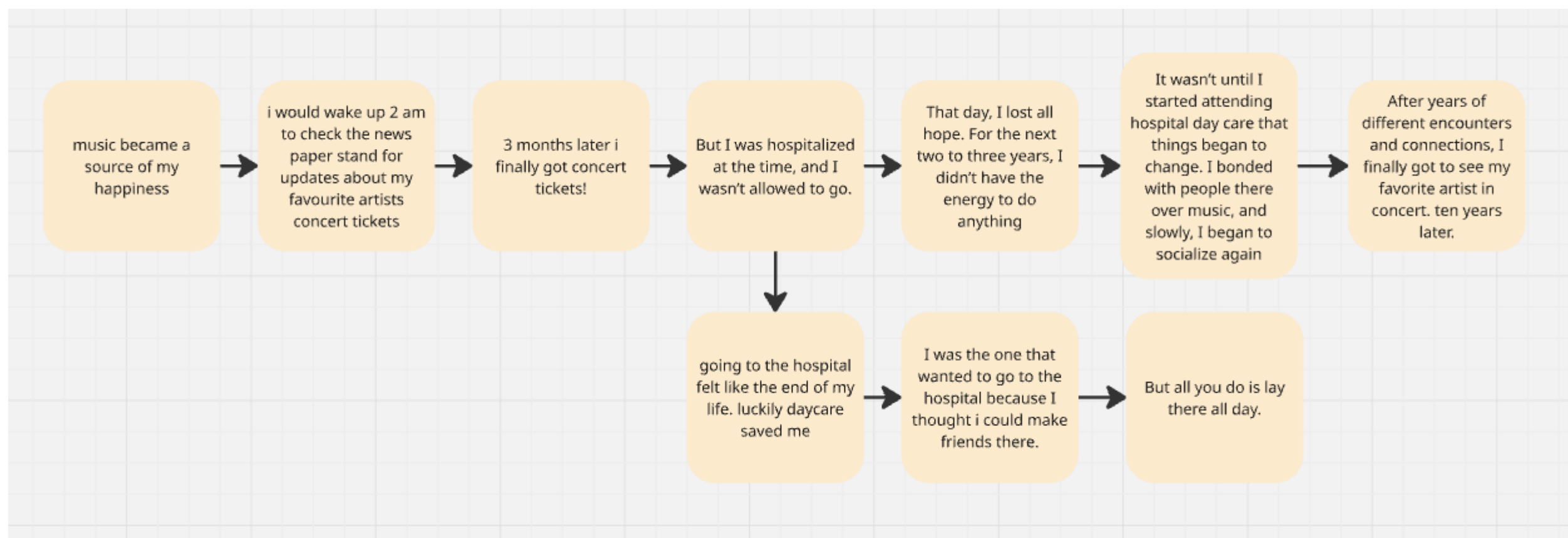


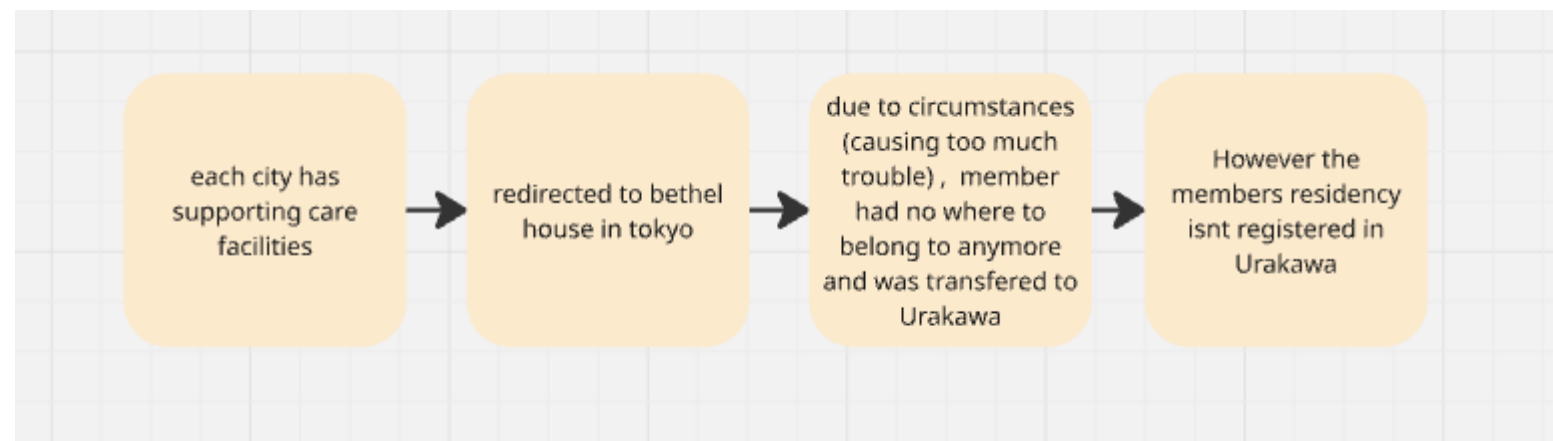


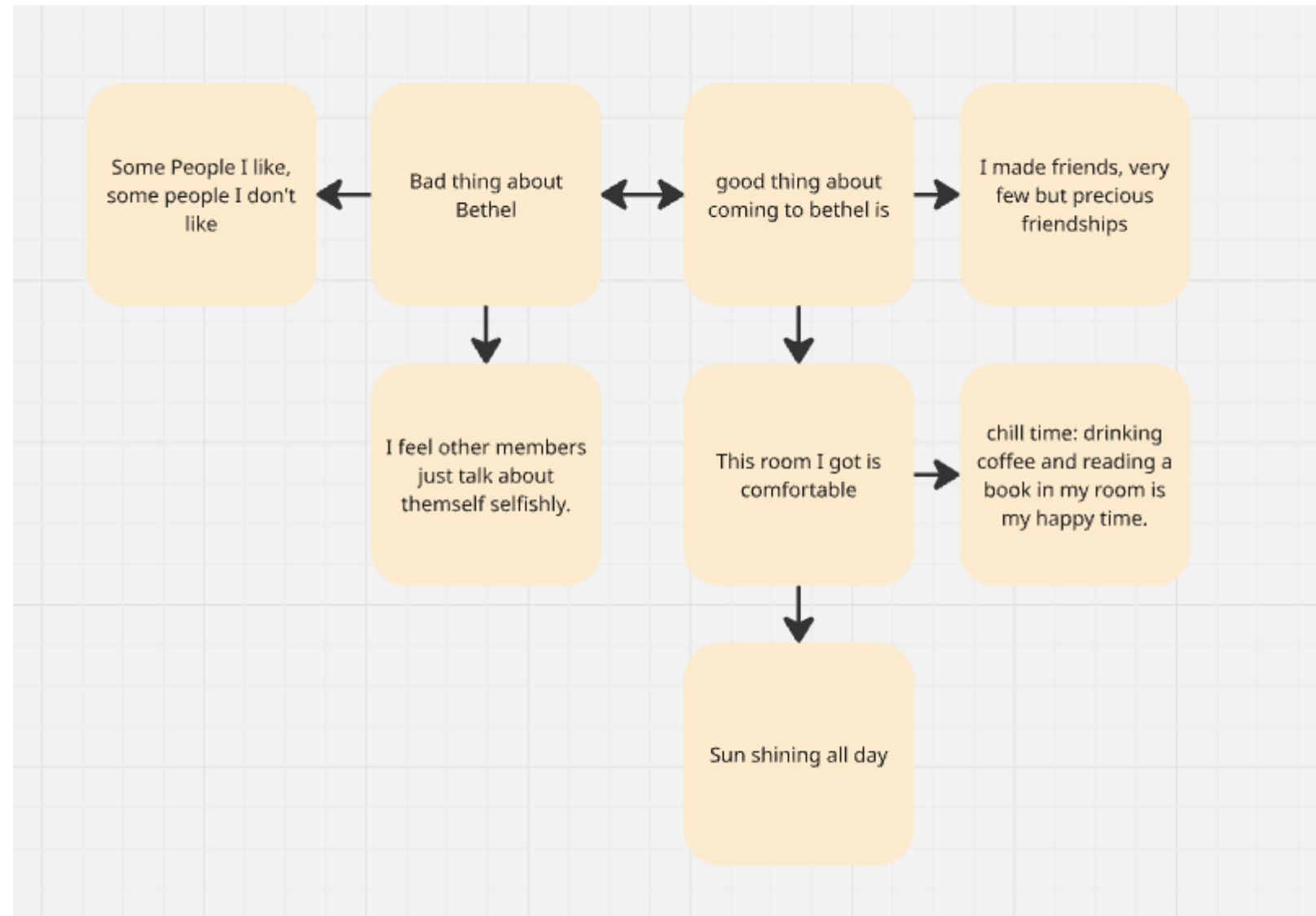


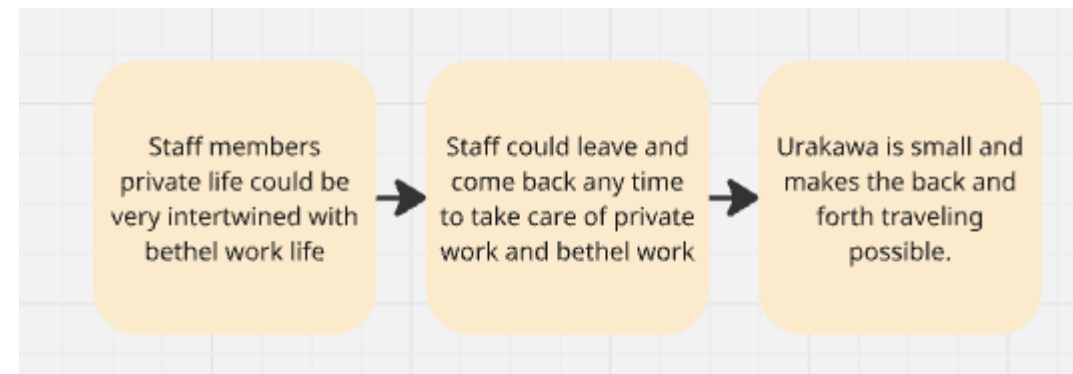


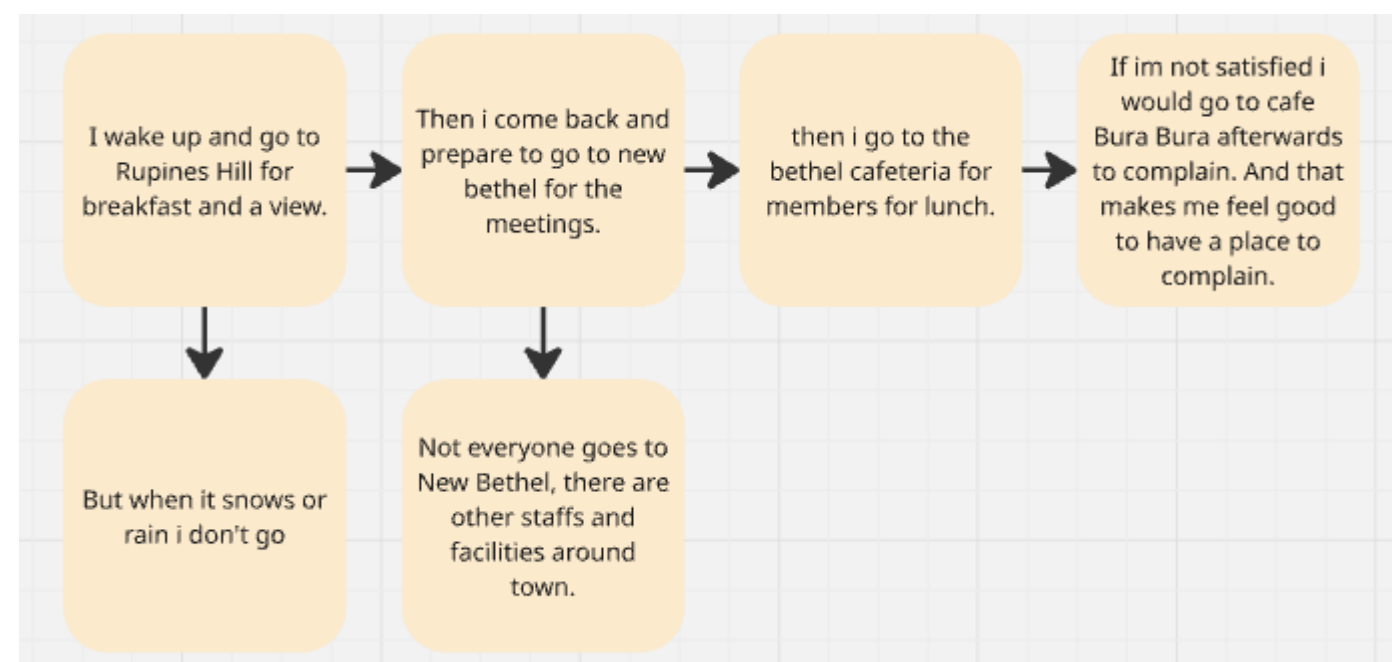


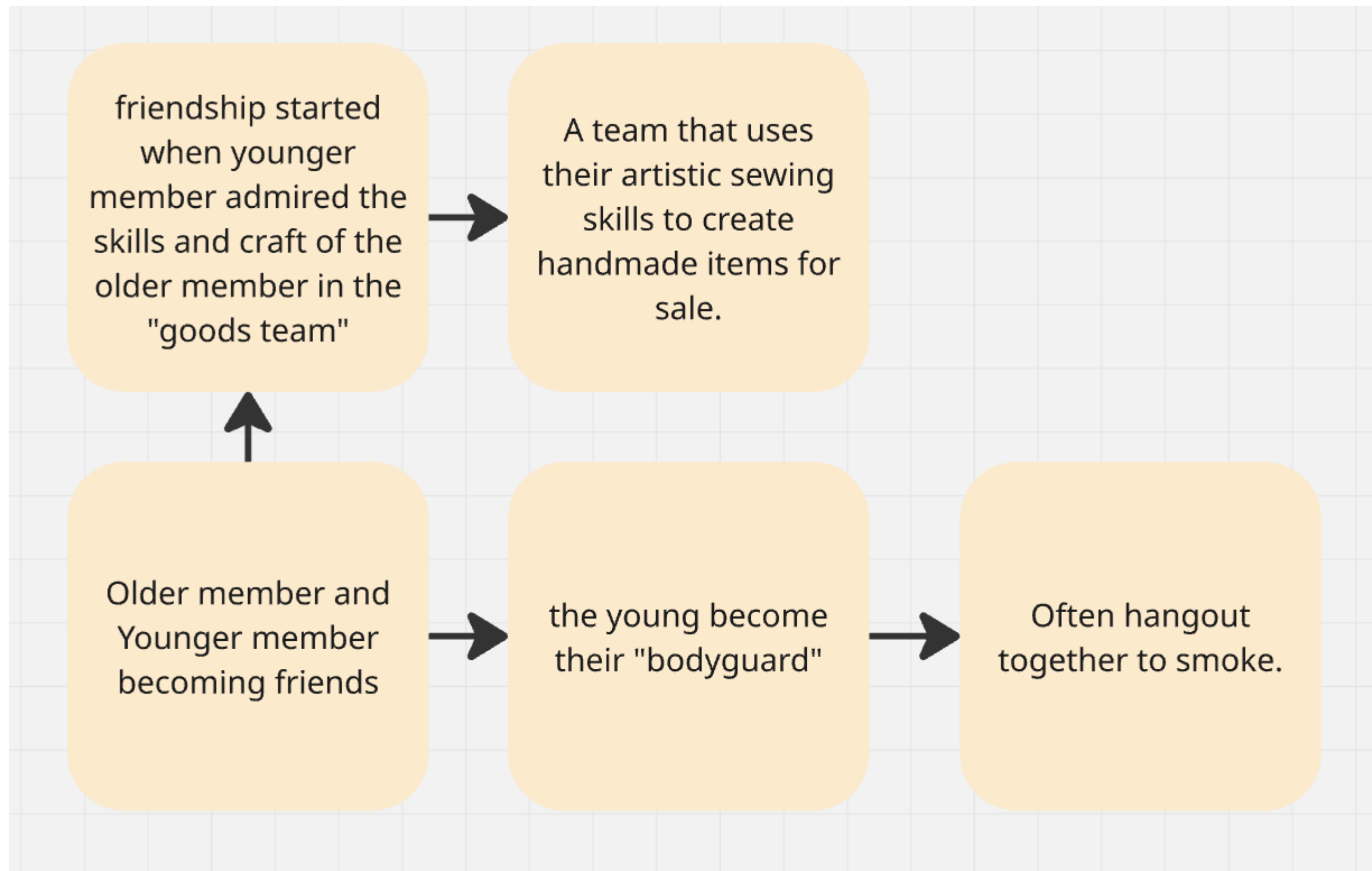


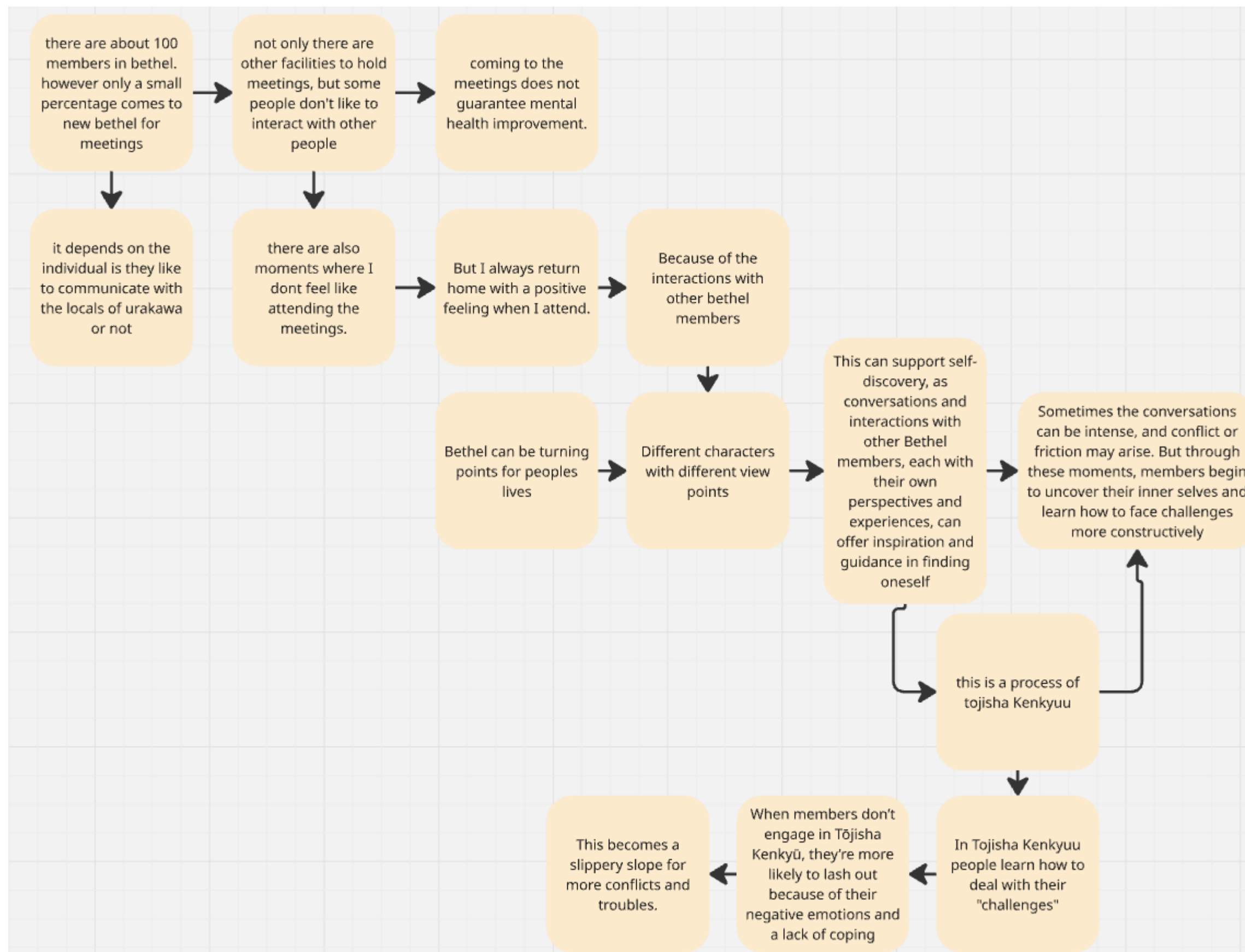


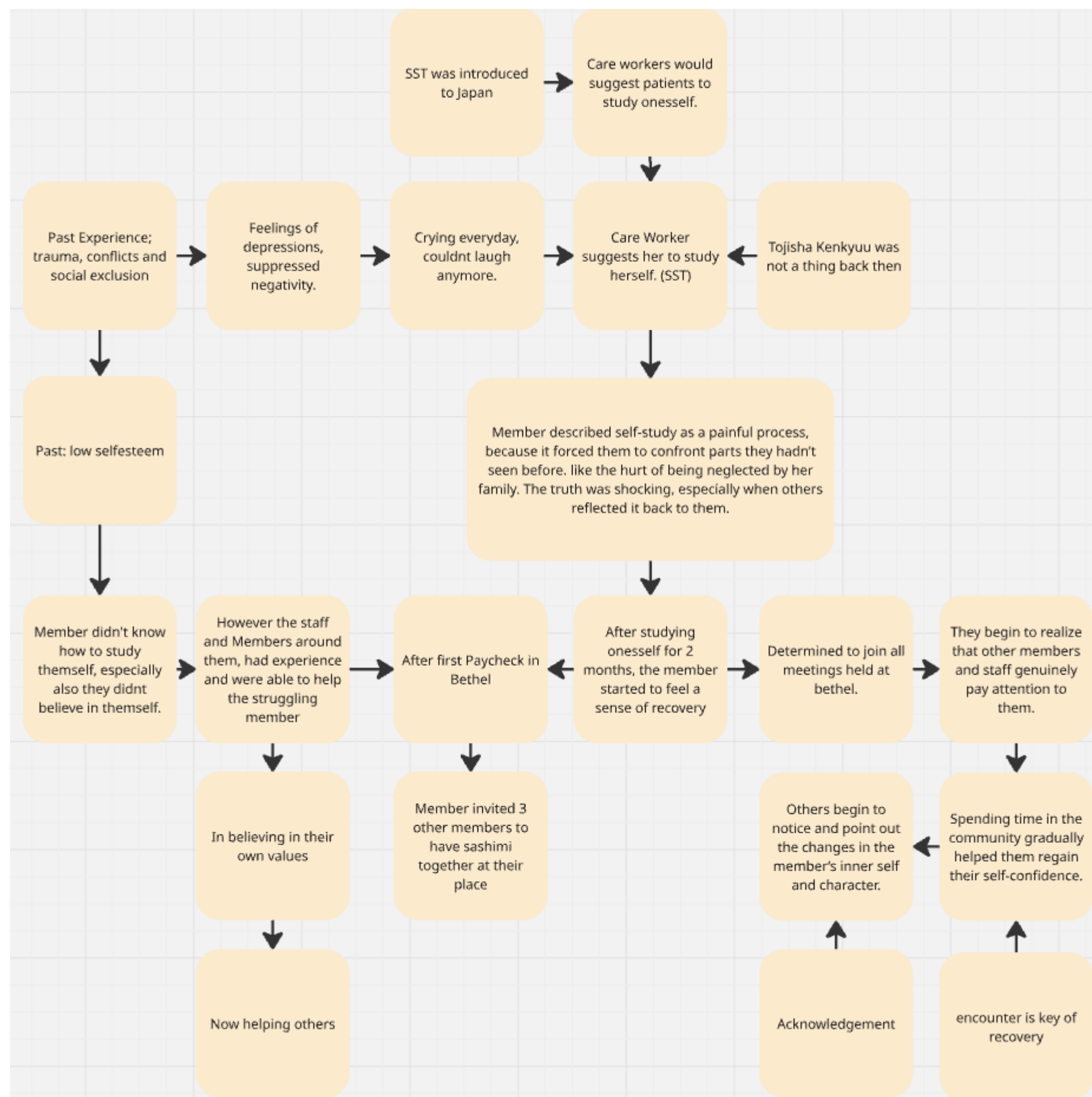


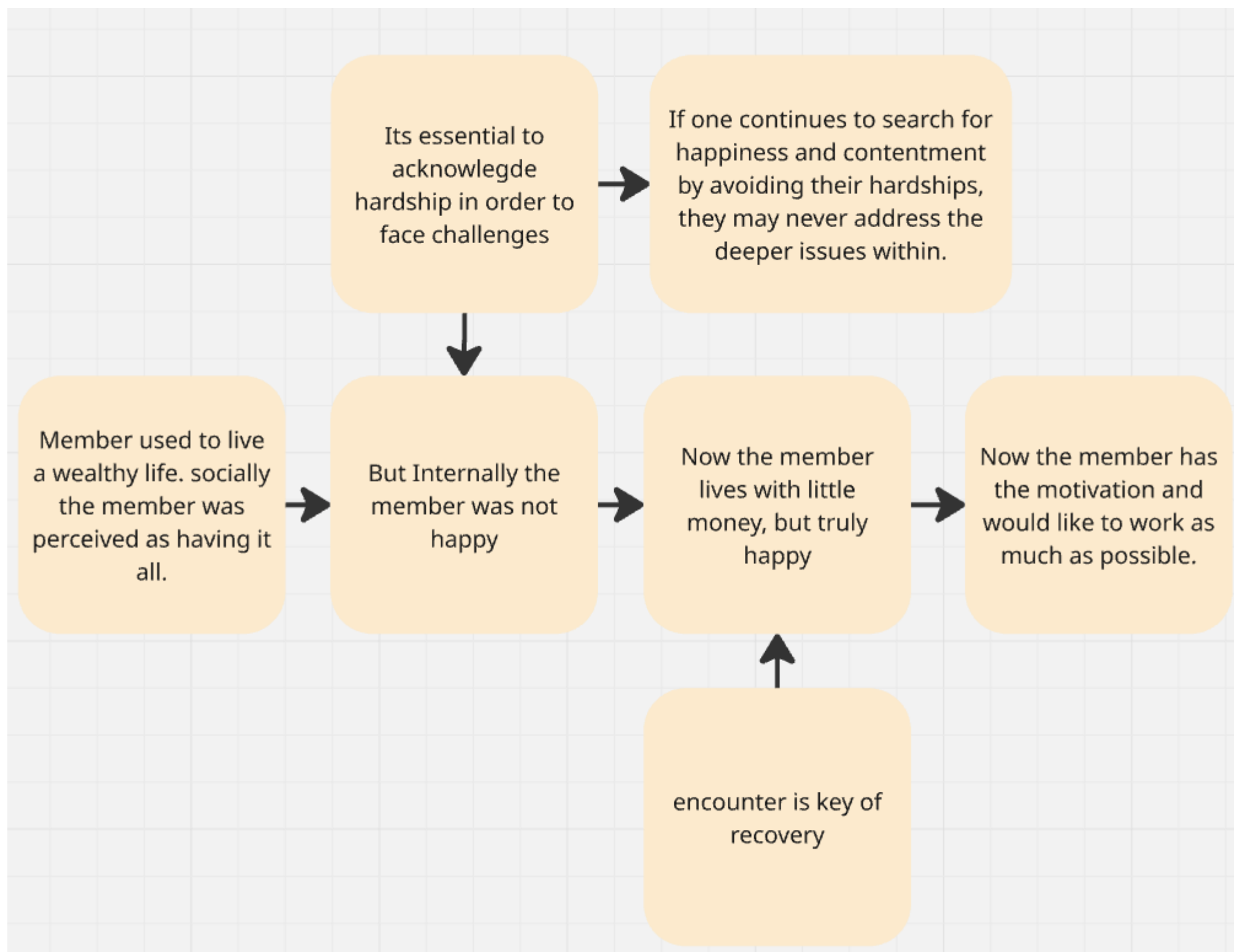


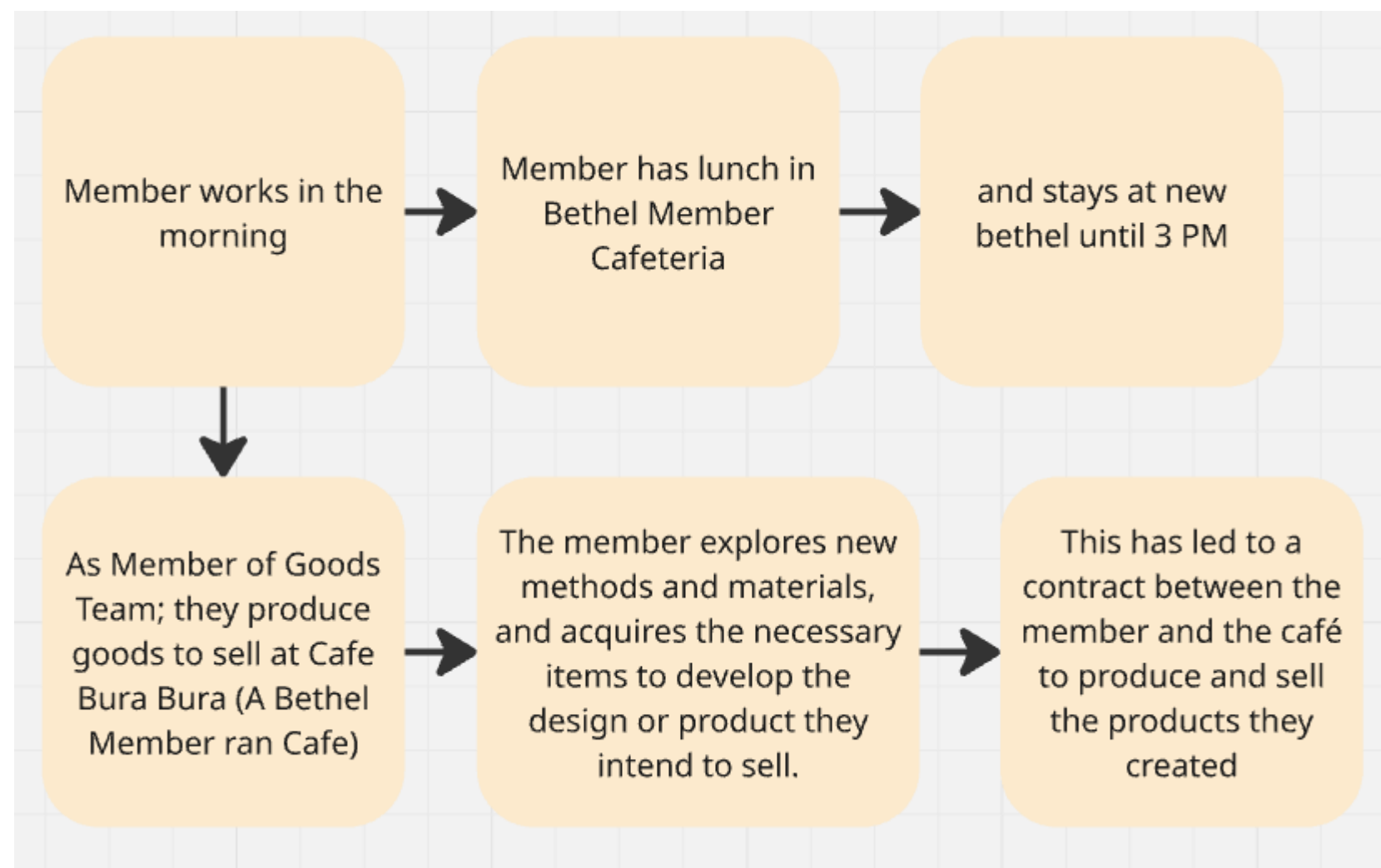


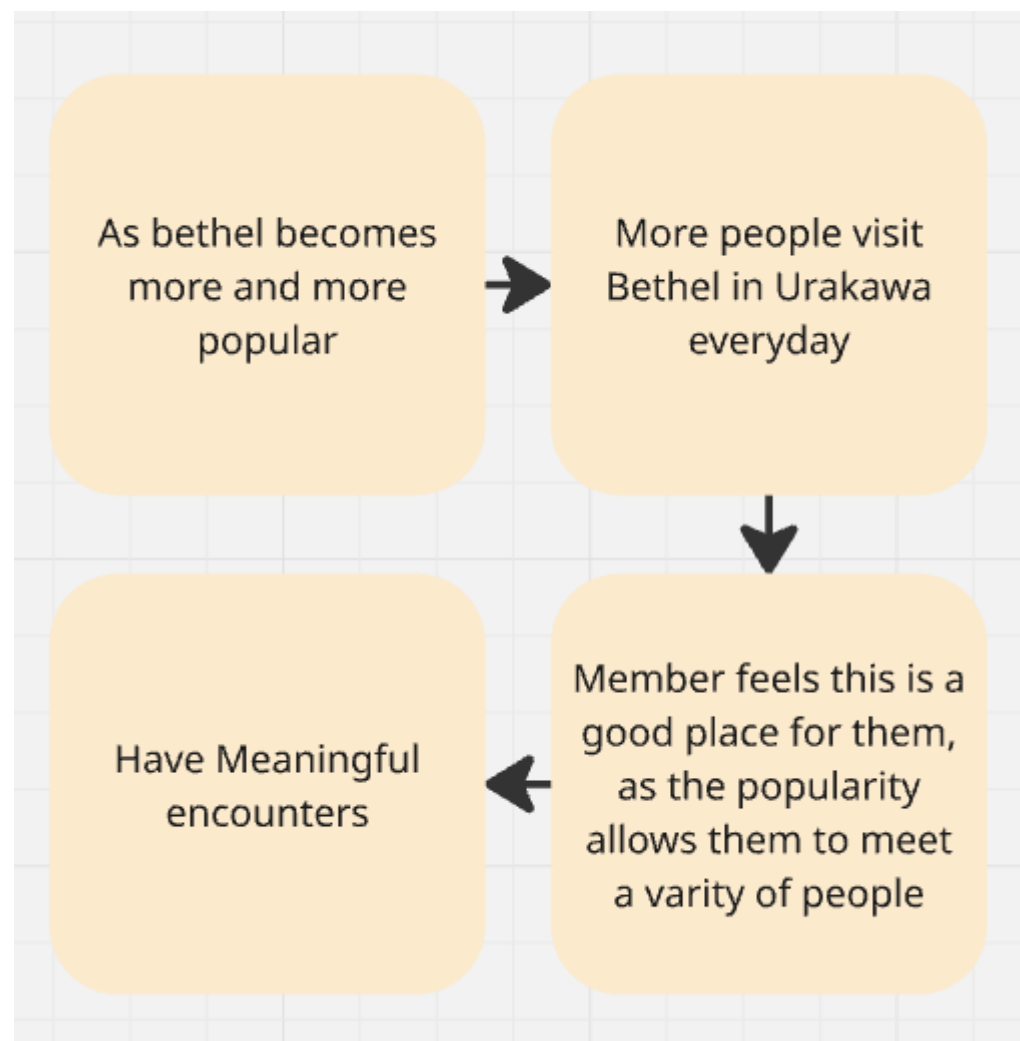


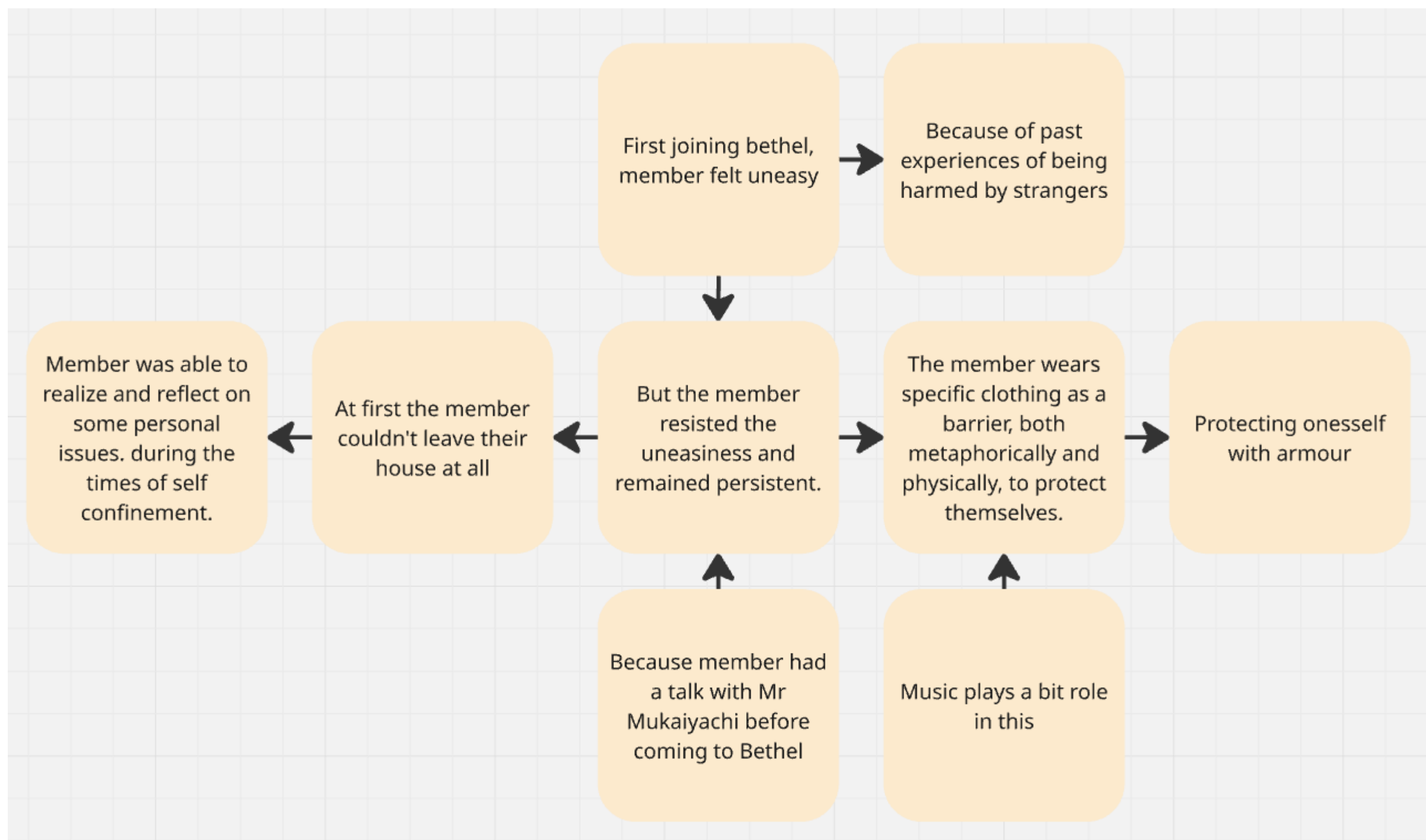


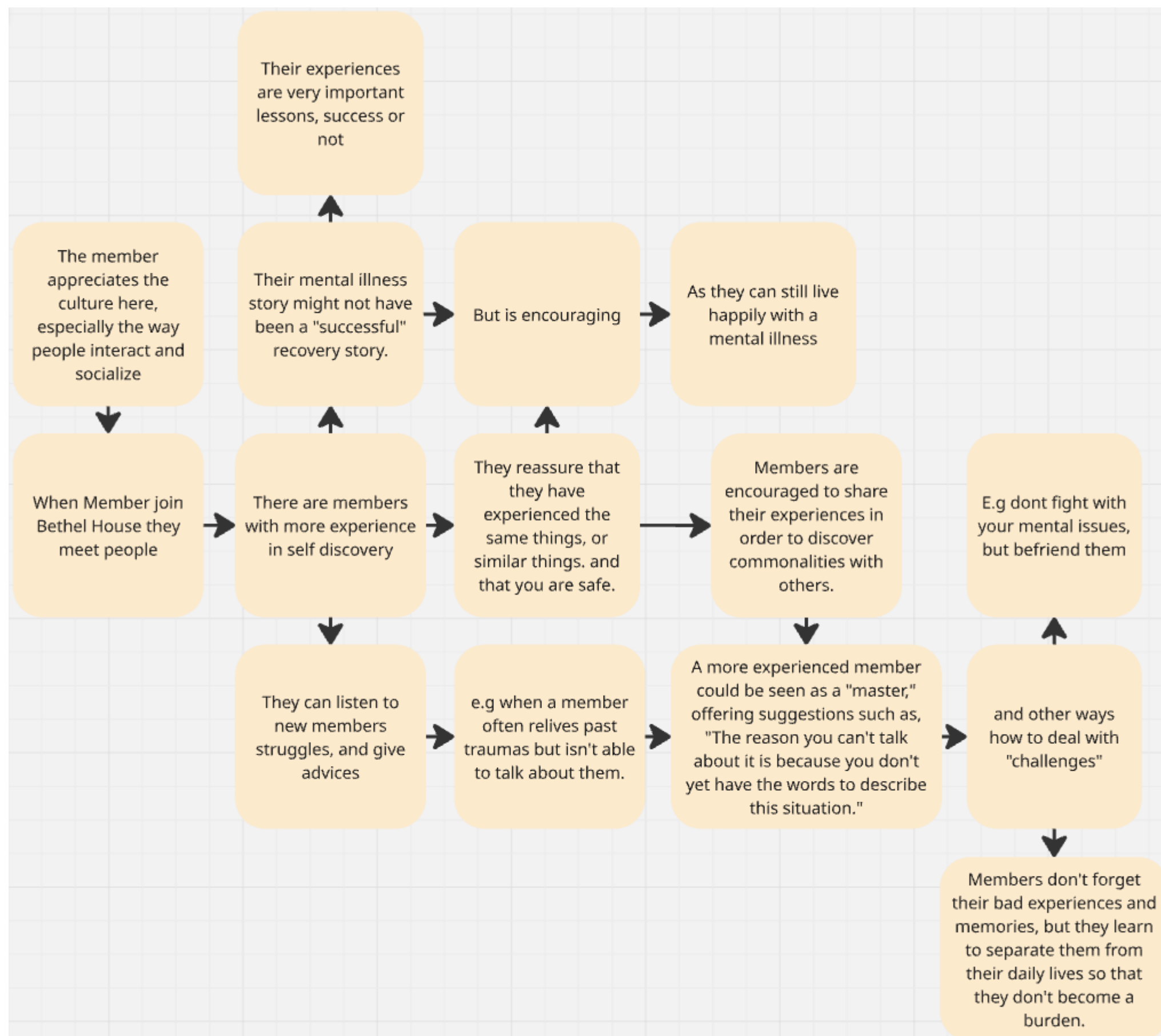


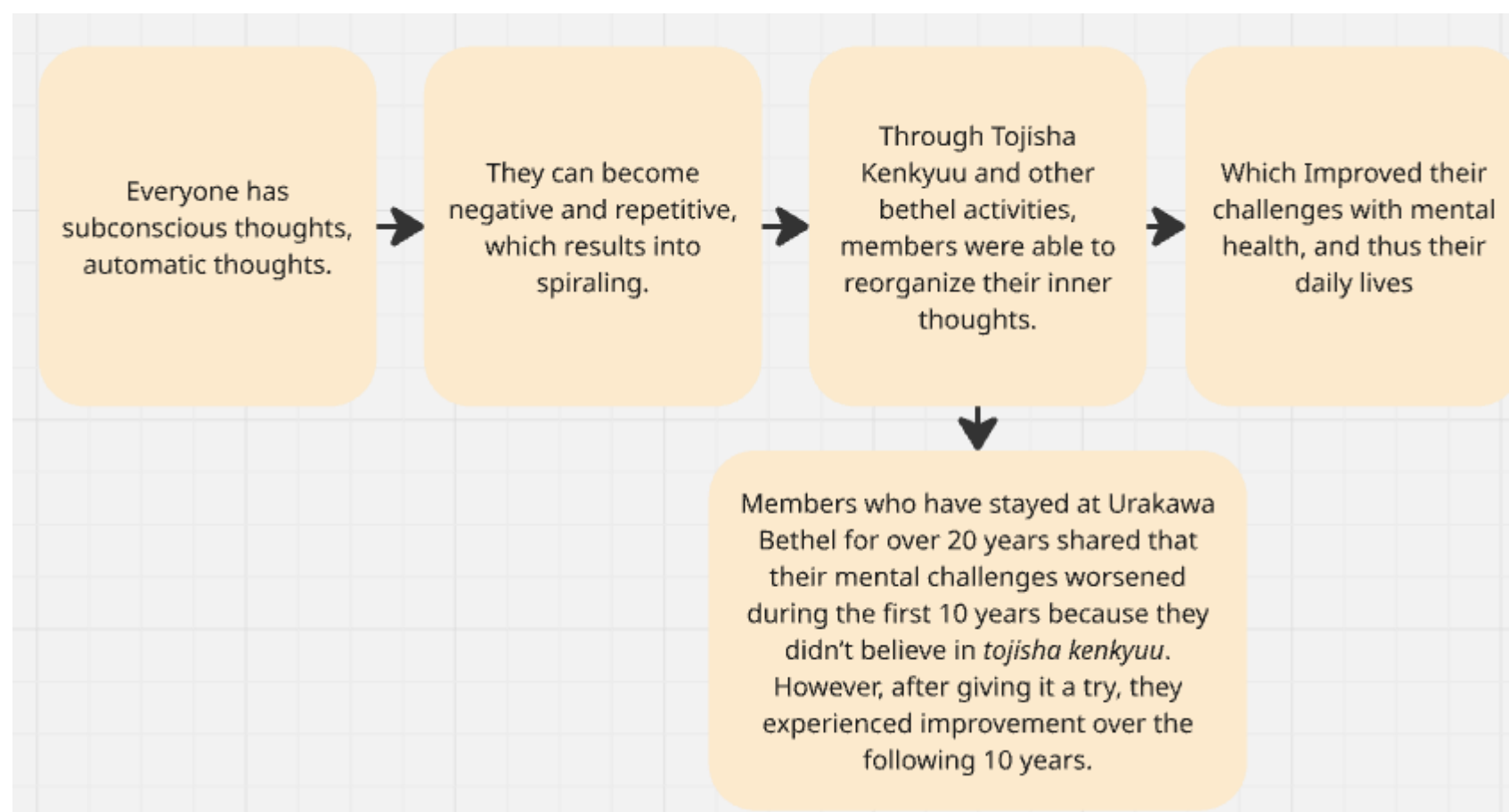


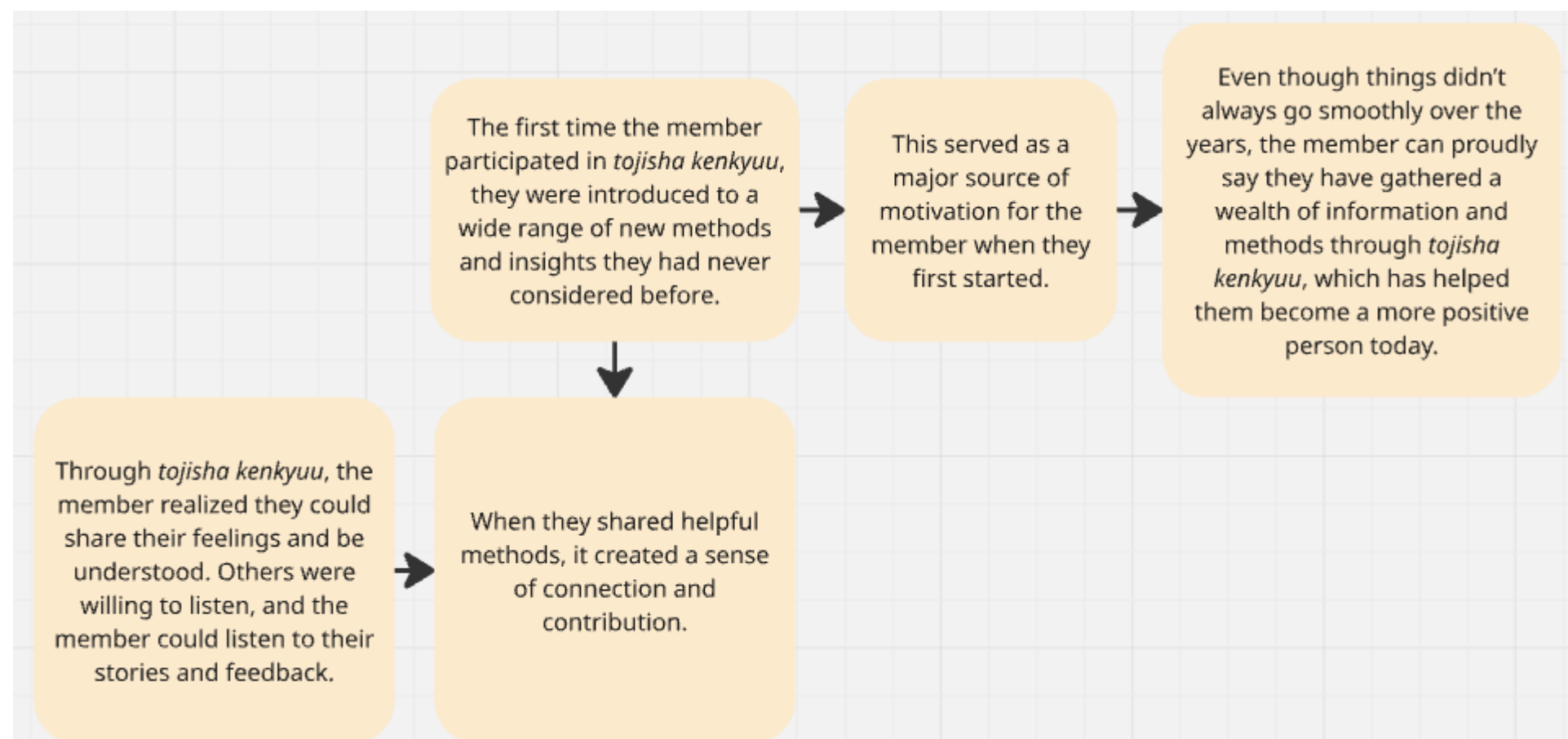


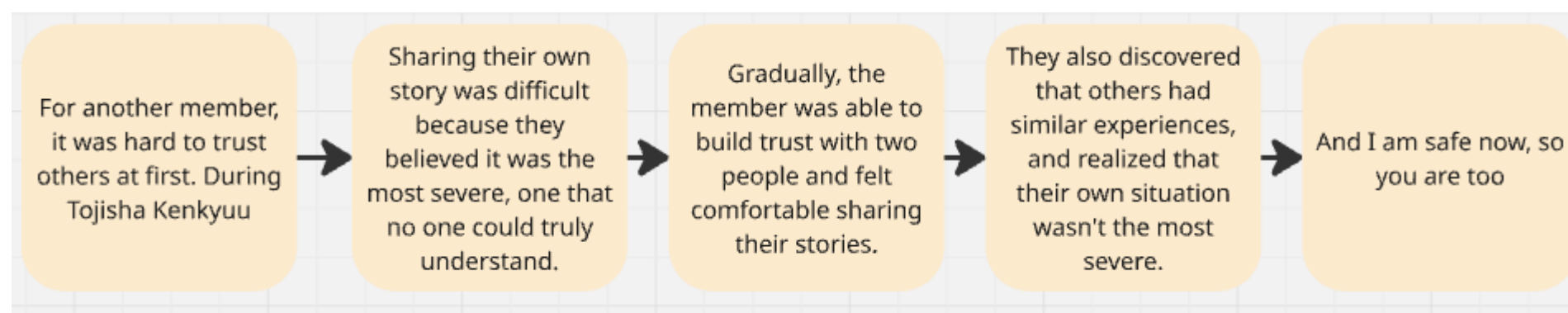


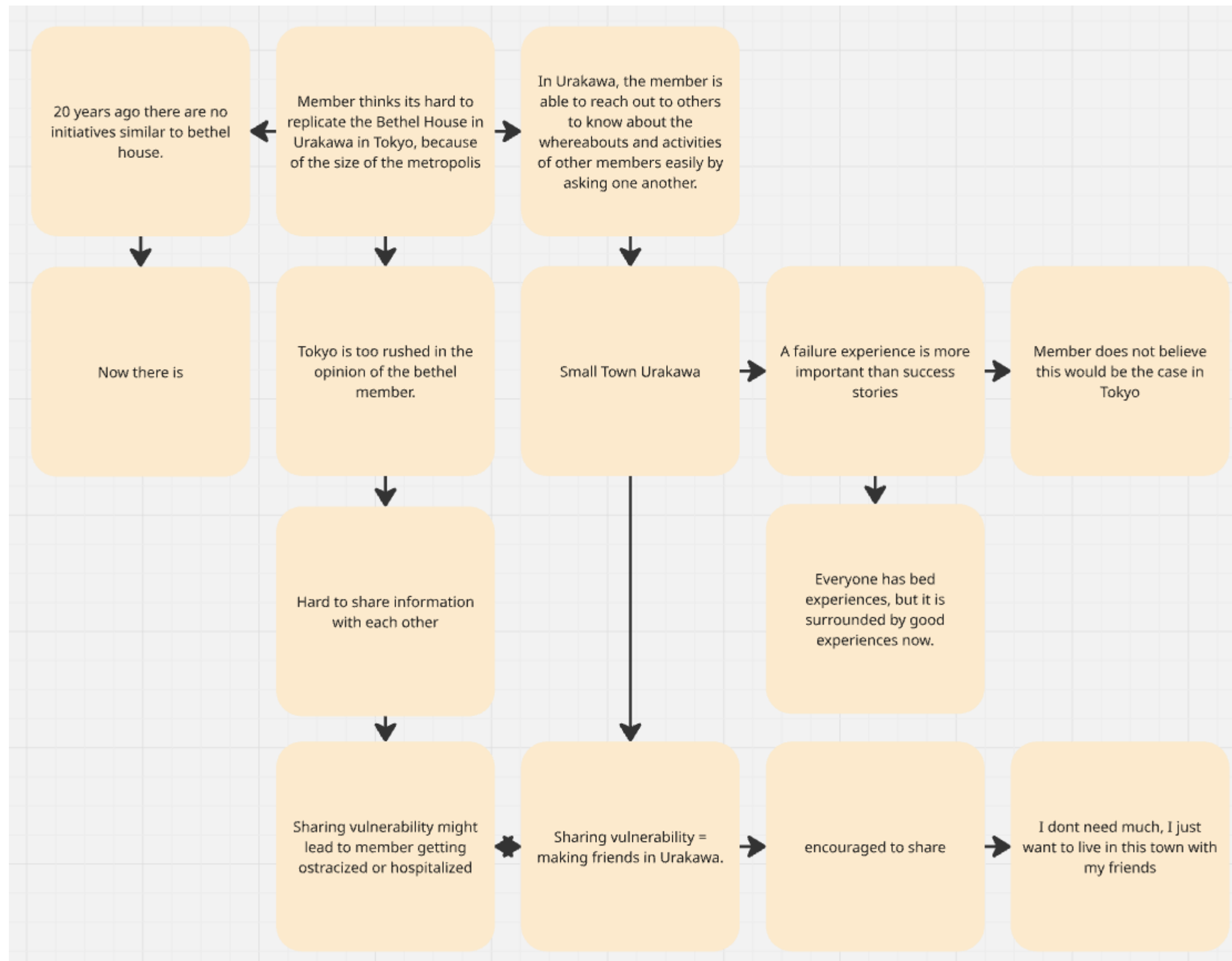


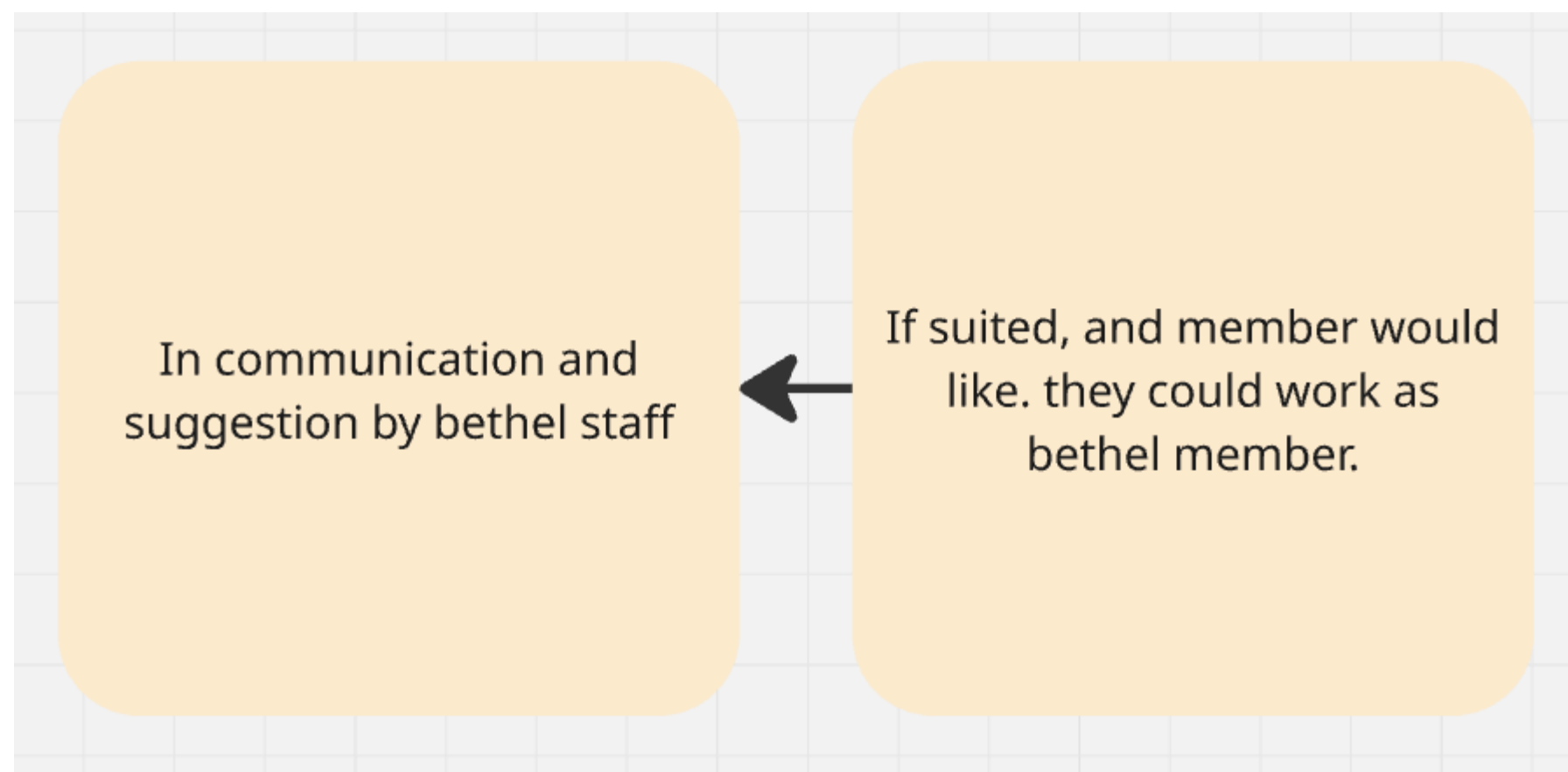


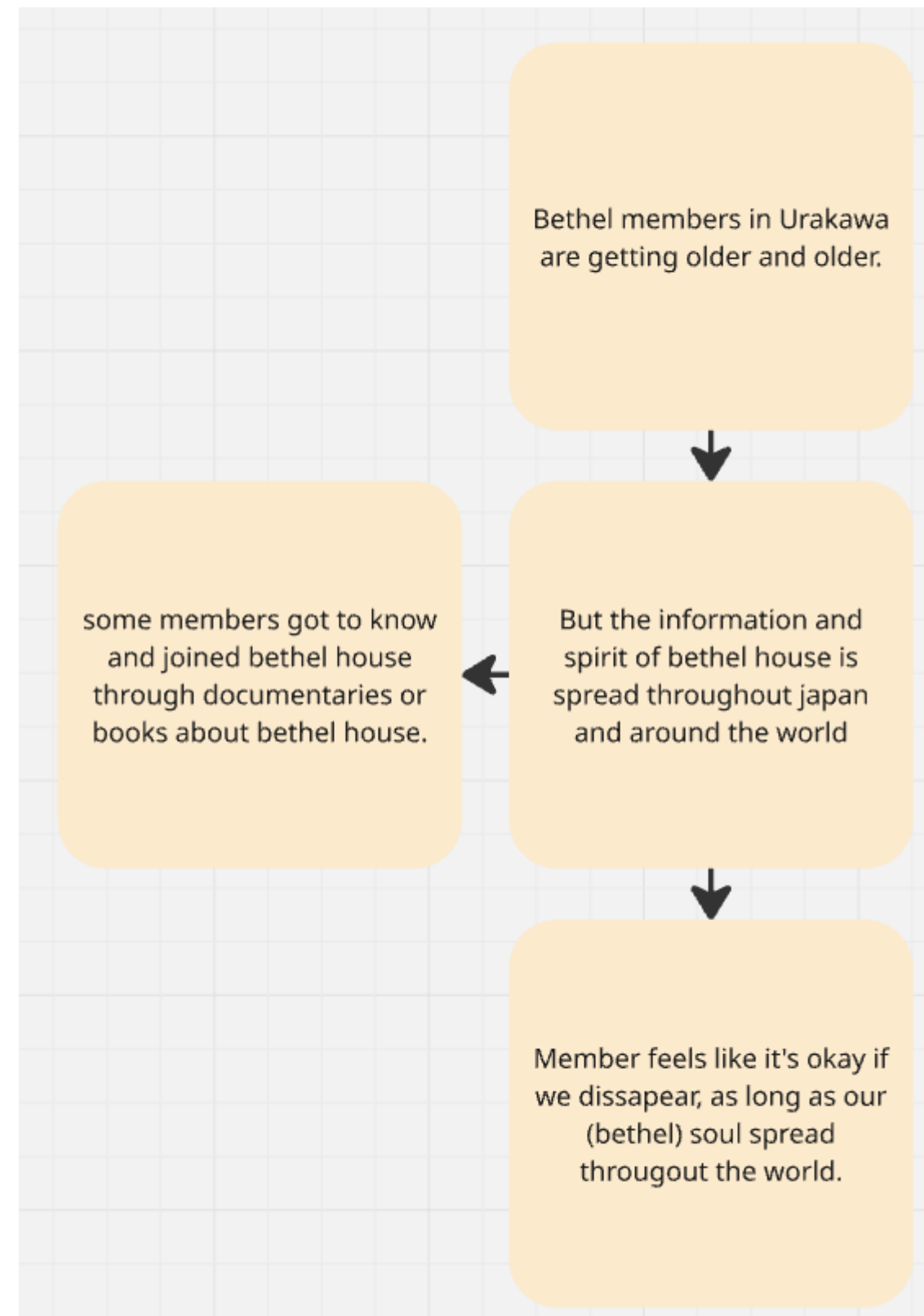












Bethel Literature 1

Summarized Bethel House provided information

Since the information from the Behtel House Social Welfare Cooperation was shared through printouts, pamphlets, and live presentations, I’m not able to upload or directly share them here. But I’ve made a short summary based on what was provided so I can still refer to the main points.

About Bethel House

- Located in Urakawa, a small depopulated town (pop. ~11,000).
- Originated in 1983 when people with mental health challenges asked: “What can we do for our community?”
- Their answer: run businesses, share personal experiences, and build mutual support systems.

Key Historical Milestones

- 1978–1983: Origins include sea kelp work at the old Urakawa church.
- 1988: Began direct manufacturing/sales of kelp.
- 1993–2002: Expanded into welfare shops and formal group homes.
- 2008: Employment Continuation Support Type B projects start.
- 2014: Psychiatric hospitalizations in Urakawa dropped to zero.
- 2023: Café Bura reopens; “Nishikiya (Talent)” employment base is launched.

Bethel is unapologetically bold and honest:

- “Bethel is full of problems.”
- “Your mental illness will come out by coming to Bethel House.”
- “We sell sea kelp — and also our diseases.”
- “Prejudice and discrimination are always welcome.”
- “Weakness as connection.” (弱さを絆に)

These phrases reflect a radically transparent, strength-through-vulnerability ethos.

FOUNDATIONS OF BETHEL HOUSE

“Let it be as it is”
“Weakness as connection”

Bethel’s Core Philosophies

1. Disclose vulnerability:
“病気も売ります (We sell our diseases too)”
→ Radical transparency is a strength.
2. Welcoming discrimination & chaos:
Not in a literal sense — but to acknowledge and disarm stigma.
3. Mutual care:
“Helping others helps me.”
“Turn my hardships into everyone’s hardships.”
4. Nonprofit-first:
Value what isn’t profitable. “それで順調 (That’s why it works).”
5. Mental illness emerges in the open:
“Your mental illness will come out at Bethel.”
→ Not pathology — reality that can be met communally.
6. 3 Meals and Meetings:
A daily rhythm that keeps life socially and emotionally anchored.

Programs & Infrastructure

- Employment Continuation Support (Type B)
- Packing sea kelp
 - Shipping team (famous for personalized touches & quality control)
 - Strawberry de-stemming (agriculture x welfare project)
 - Café Bura: lunch and drinks, philosophy-centered products
 - Noah: garbage collection, moving, snow shoveling
 - Nishikiya (Talent): work floors + rest floors + meeting areas

Group Homes

12 homes in Urakawa, housing ~60 people. Supported by the Bethel Life Support Center.

Life Care and Peer Support

- Peer support meetings.
- Visiting nursing, home-care support.
- Mina: daily physical/emotional wellness programs (karaoke, drives, fieldwork, etc.)

Self-Help, Dialogue & Research

- Tojisha Kenkyu: self-research into one’s own condition.
- Activities include SST (social skills), Open Dialogue, Money MT, Diet MT, etc.
- 3S Team (Started 2024): Health-first initiative built on positivity, shared weakness, and body-based reflection.

Products and Social Enterprise

- Sea kelp is sold nationwide.
- Shipping team includes hand-written letters, reusable packaging, and personalized touches.
- Strawberry jam and milk sold at Café Bura.
- Lunch menu items include “Mr. & Mrs. Hearing Voices Sunday.”

Community and Advocacy Messages

- “Name your own disease.”
- “Turn your hardships into everyone’s hardships.”
- “Help others to help yourself.”
- Members report improved anger, self-esteem, and joy from simply being in a supportive work environment.

PRACTICE AND PROGRAMS

All rooted in Tojisha Kenkyu: self-inquiry + peer-led research.

Work Integration (Type B Employment Support)

- Sea kelp team: sticker labeling, inspection, bagging.
- Shipping team: adds custom notes, personalizes packages, reflects on failures.
- Café Bura: food, retail, emotional expression.
- Noah: garbage collection, snow removal, strawberry field work.
- Nishikiya (Talent): multi-floor facility – work, meet, rest.
- Strawberry stem removal: seasonal agricultural labor.
- Work is scaffolded, self-paced, and emotionally responsive.

Emotional Safety + Dialogue-Based Activities

- Peer Support Groups.
- Tojisha Kenkyu (Self-Research) meetings.
- Open Dialogue, “Money MT”, “Support MT”, “SST”, “Karaoke”.
- 3S Team (started in 2024) promotes

health reflection through body not just mind.

Living Structures

- 12 group homes hosting ~60 people.
- Integrated care: meal-sharing, fieldwork, gym, karaoke, and board games.
- Mina House: aged 50–90s, highly social with personal development goals.

Quotes from Members

- “There are 1,200 hallucinations inside me — a passerby, an alien, and a demanding one.”
- “Being with others helps me not be angry anymore.”
- “I talk to my hallucinations more kindly now.”
- “I want to brighten up people around me.”

Self-Help as Everyday Life

- Naming your own illness.
- Acknowledging when you’re tired. (“I may have trouble counting today due to bad sleep.”)
- Leaving visible signatures at every stage of work for accountability and pride.

Work + Identity Blend

“昆布も売ります。病気も売ります。”
“We sell kelp. And we sell our illness.”

Work isn’t separated from the self — it is used to rebuild self-worth, reduce isolation, and contribute visibly to society.

Big Takeaway:

Bethel House isn’t a place of “treatment” — it’s a village of shared life experiments. It uses commerce, care, chaos, and collaboration as social technology for re-humanizing individuals formerly excluded.

