



StrengthenND[®]
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RIPPLE EFFECT MAPPING TOOLKIT

**A toolkit for rural communities to
measure the impact of their
projects, programs, and
investments.**

REM TOOLKIT

INSIDE

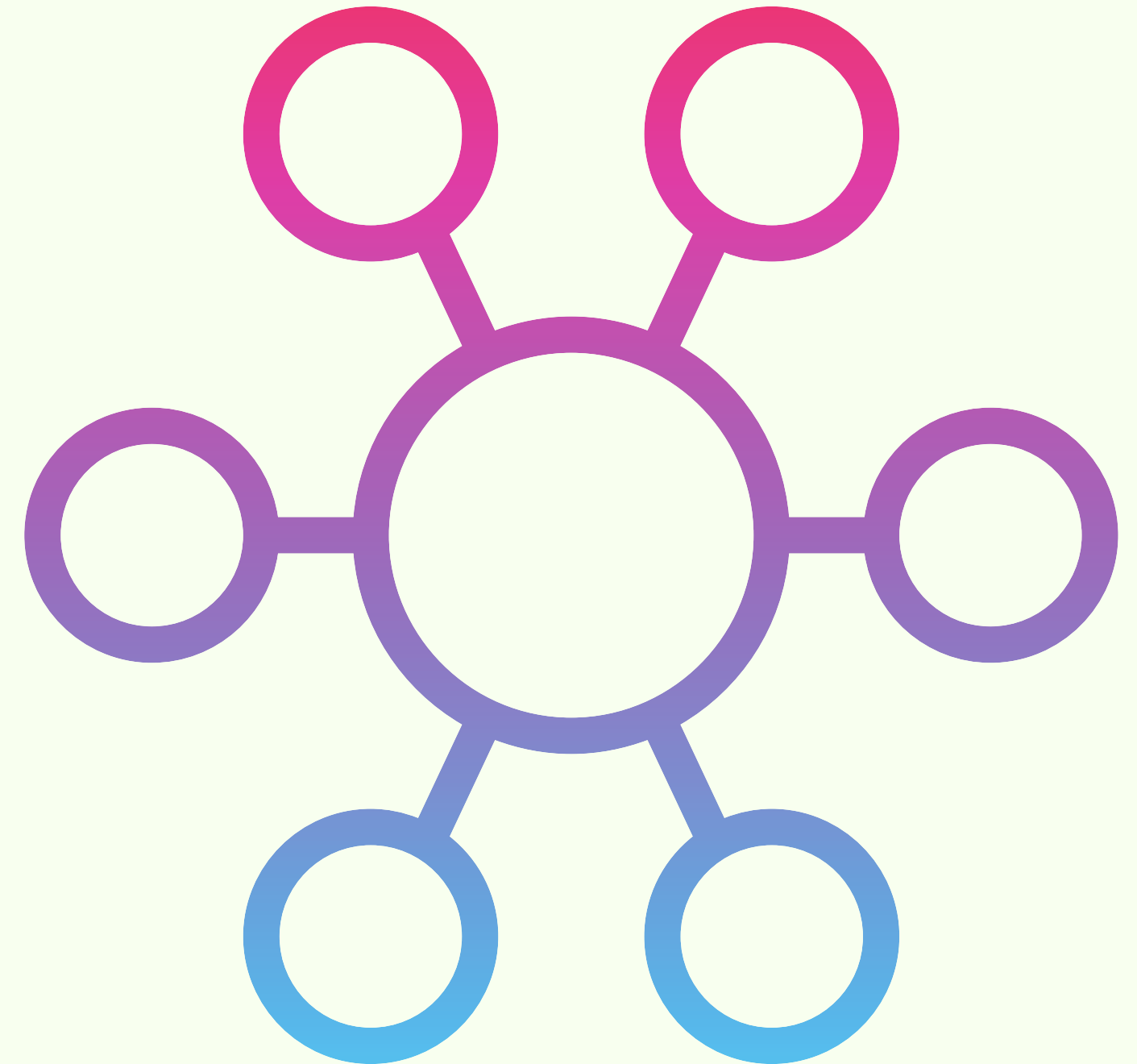
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WHAT IS RIPPLE EFFECT MAPPING?

Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) is an evaluation method developed by the University of Minnesota - Extension, which is utilized to discover the impacts of community projects or programs. REM combines several evaluation techniques to produce "maps" that tell the story of a program, truly depicting the effects of an initiative.

REM can be utilized to understand both the intended AND unintended results of a program on individuals, groups, communities, and regions.

REM BENEFITS

FOR THE EVALUATOR

- Effective way to collect **stories** and **impacts**.
- Captures impacts of **complex** or **evolving** work.
- Useful when the total impact of a program is difficult to **conceptualize** and **measure** with other evaluation methods.
- Opportunity for participant **reflection**.
- Can be completed both **mid-program** (formative) and **post-program** (summative).



REM BENEFITS

FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

- More **positive** and **hopeful** when a group has seen what they have done.
- Provides opportunity for **reflection** and **growth**.
- Displays emerging **patterns** and **trends**.
- Able to see how their activities are connected to a larger purpose.
- Uses a **participatory** and **appreciative** approach that engages stakeholders.
- Fun, engaging, and visual.



HOW DOES REM WORK?

REM blends four components of effective evaluation theory and practice.



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

MIND MAPPING

DATA COLLECTION

CODING & ANALYZING

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is the practice of asking positive questions to individuals or groups.



What has been the most helpful part of the project?



Have you seen unexpected results?



Is there anything resulting from the project that you are proud to share?



What changes are you most proud of?



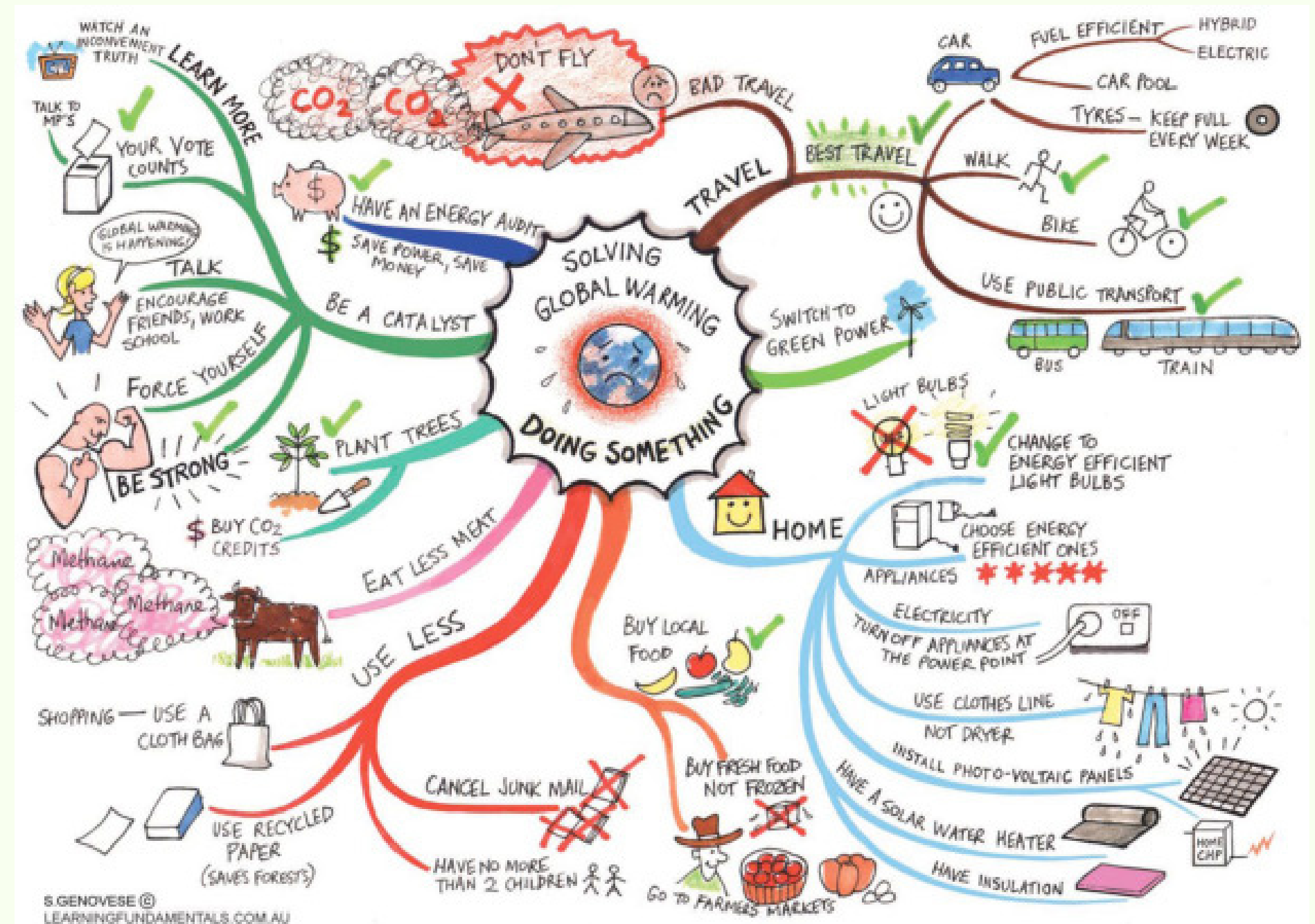
Tell me a story about how you have used the information from the project.



List an achievement or a success you had based on what you learned.

MIND MAPPING

MIND MAPPING IS A PICTORIAL METHOD OF NOTE TAKING, BRAINSTORMING, ORGANIZING, OR PROBLEM SOLVING.



REM "How-To" Instructions

1 - SCHEDULE A REM EVENT & INVITE PARTICIPANTS

The REM process involves community, foundation, or support organization members who participated in the project, as well as sponsors or partners. A group of 12 to 20 participants is ideal. Other potential participants could include project clientele or elected officials.

2 - CONDUCT INTERVIEWS USING APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

At the start of the REM session, the facilitator will provide a comprehensive but short update regarding the intention of the project elements and what the organization/group has implemented to date. This will support all participants to operate with the same information. Then, the facilitator will pair up participants and ask them to interview each other about ways the community was positively affected by the FSCS project. These interviews serve as an icebreaker to prepare participants for a group mapping session.

In addition to the Appreciative Inquiry same questions listed previously in the toolkit, more Appreciative Inquiry questions could include:

- How has the project impacted clientele positively?
- What community connections have been made that are most helpful?
- How do we know the program is positively impacting our community?

REM "How-To" Instructions

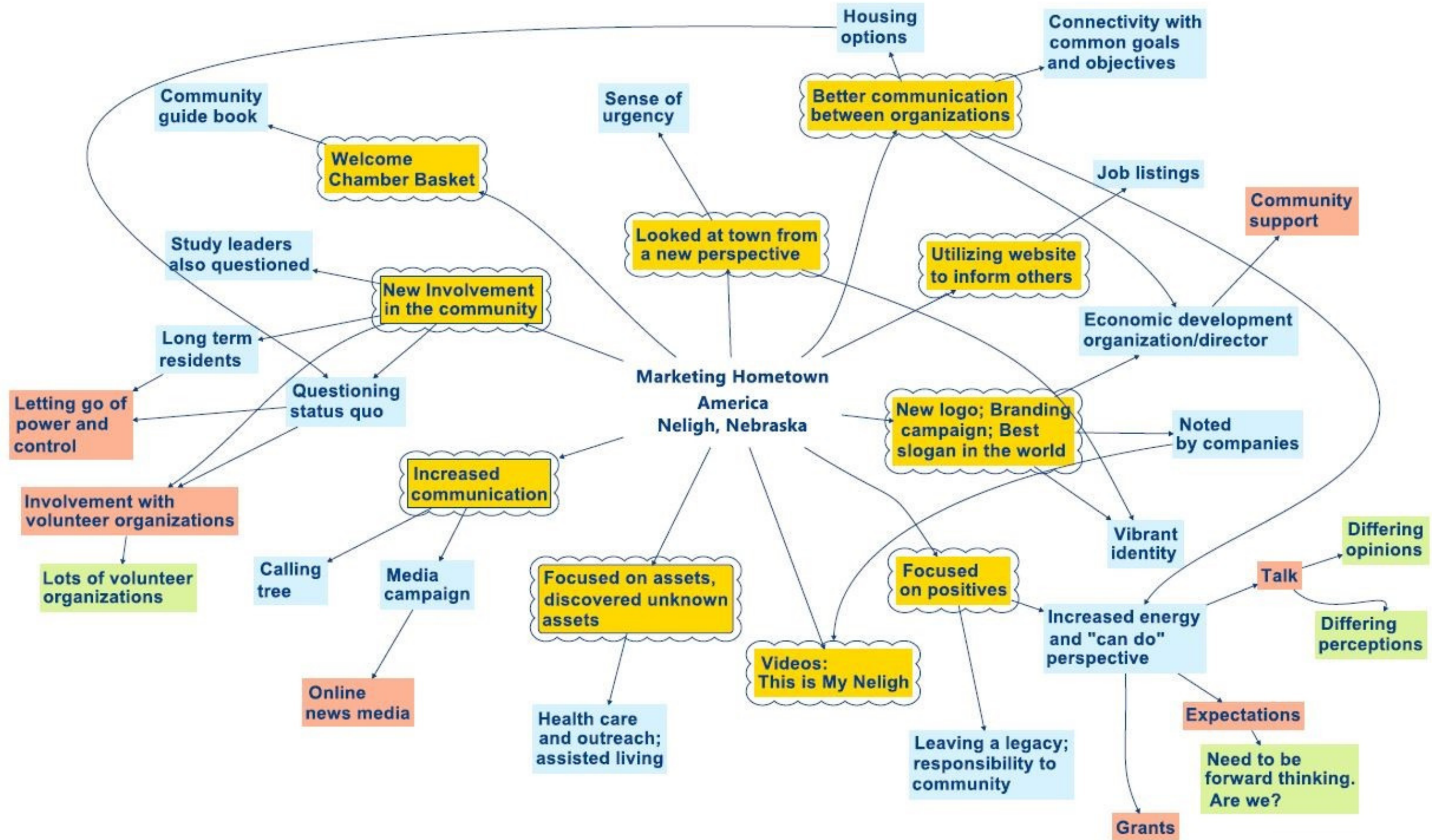
3 - HOLD A GROUP MAPPING SESSION

The core of a REM session involves group mapping - a process of brainstorming and recording the effects (the "ripples") of a project or program. Groups can use either mind mapping software or big sticky notes on a wall. This process engages the entire group and helps participants see connections among the effects they're describing. A facilitator and a mapper co-lead the session, which lasts from one to two hours. The resulting mind map visually depicts the effects of a project.

4 - CODING & ANALYZING

After the session, the project leader reorganizes the mind map and clarifies any additional details by interviewing other participants. Data produced in the mind mapping process can be organized in a spreadsheet and coded to represent the various project or program impacts. For projects, it may be helpful to code "ripples" in alignment with any short-, mid-, or long-term goals the organization or community has; or in alignment with the foundation's grantmaking strategies; How the data is organized and coded is at the discretion of the school as it needs to be in a format that is most helpful to project improvements, future planning, or reporting.

SAMPLE REM MAP



REM SESSION TIPS

TO GET **THE MOST** OUT OF YOUR TIME

FRAME IT AS A CELEBRATION

Highlight the benefits of REM to the participants.

Serve food!

PARTICIPANT OPTIONS

Invite members of the core project team, those peripherally involved, and outsiders (non-project participants) to ensure a diverse perspective.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

REM sessions take - on average - two hours to complete.

PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION & CLOSING

Before ending the session, ask the following questions to inform future work and any needed clarification opportunities:

1. What was the most significant change?
2. Who was missing from the session?
3. What information is missing?

REM SUPPLIES LIST

- Mind Mapping Software (if desired)
- Large Post-It Notes
- Markers
- Scratch Paper & Pens for Participants
- Current Project Brochures or Informational Sheets to Refresh Participant Memories





GOOD LUCK!

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