

A Reflective Inquiry

# Agility Unplugged

Uncovering the Living System of  
Relationships, Patterns, and  
Presence Beyond Tools & Labels



BUSINESS  
MEE

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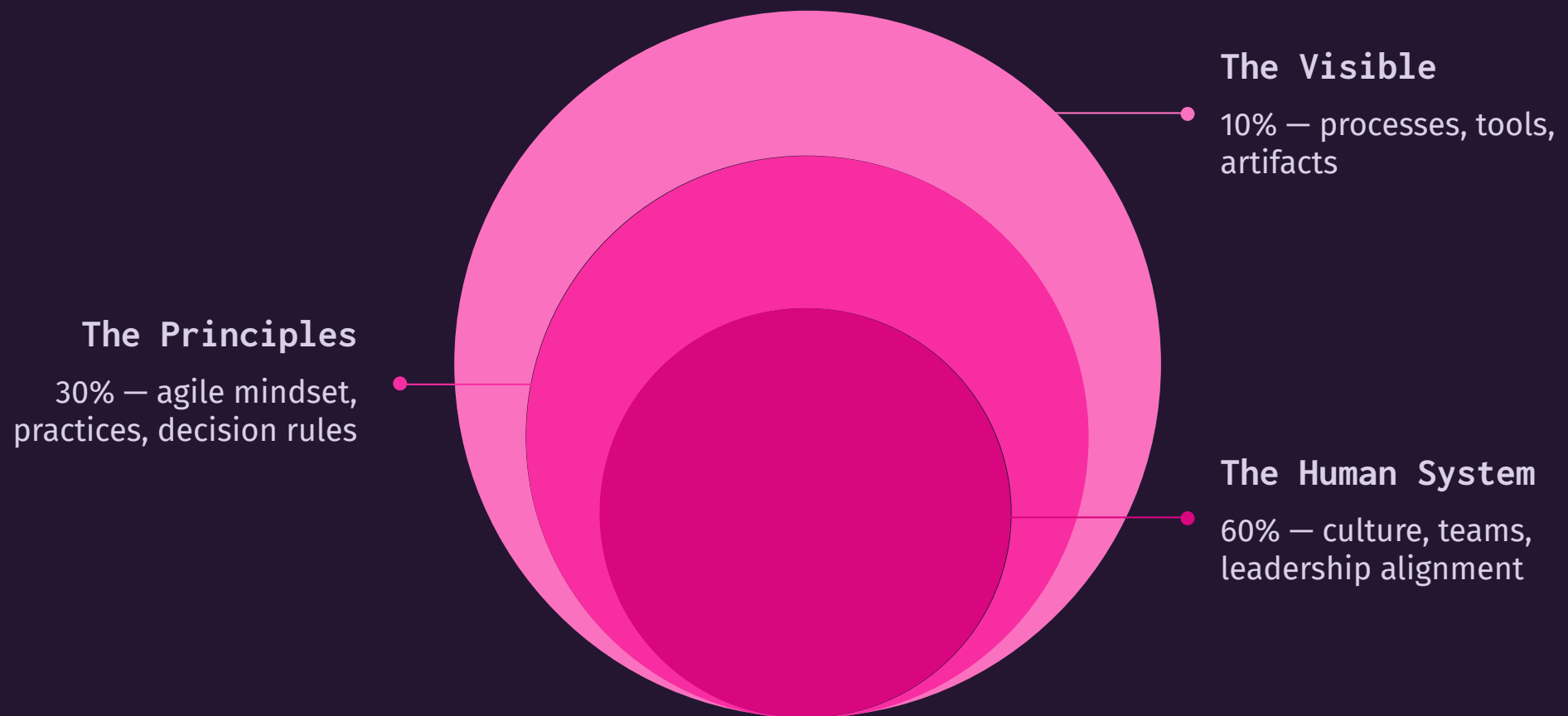


# Why 88% Fail: The Missing Layers

# 88%

of transformations fail to achieve original ambitions (Bain & Company, 2024)

Most organizations skip the middle layers and wonder why frameworks don't work.



Organizations adopt Layer 1, ignore Layer 2, and expect Layer 3 to magically appear. It doesn't work that way.

# Layer 2: The Missing Link

The principles most organizations skip - yet they're the bridge between frameworks and human systems as decision-making rules that shape culture.



## Individuals & Interactions

Meaning: People solve problems, not spreadsheets

In practice: Face-to-face conversation beats status reports



## Responding to Change

Meaning: Adaptation is the strategy

In practice: Weekly pivots based on learning, not quarterly roadmaps set in stone



## Customer Collaboration

Meaning: Shared discovery, not fixed requirements

In practice: Users in the room during development, not just at the end



## Self-Organizing Teams

Meaning: Those closest to the work make the decisions

In practice: Teams choose their own ways of working, leaders create conditions



## Sustainable Pace

Meaning: Marathon, not sprint

In practice: No hero culture, no burnout as badge of honor

# Layer 3: Where Transformation Lives

When principles become practice, the human system emerges



## Psychological Safety (Edmondson, 1999)

Built through:

- Leaders modeling vulnerability
- Rewarding speaking up
- Treating failures as learning

Impact: Significantly higher learning behavior and team performance



## Collective Flow (Sawyer, 2007)

Built through:

- Shared goals
- Equal participation
- Immediate feedback loops
- Mutual trust

Impact: Peak team performance and heightened creativity



## Adaptive Presence (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018)

Built through:

- Real-time sense-making
- Distributed decision-making
- Continuous reflection

Impact: Enhanced organizational adaptability in complex environments

Layer 3 doesn't appear by magic. It emerges when Layer 2 principles are lived daily.



# How Systems Speak: Reading the Patterns

This slide shows HOW to see and read the living system - practical pattern recognition.

These patterns are empirically validated - not theory, but observable phenomena in high-performing teams.

## **Rhythm & Timing**

Natural cadence versus forced rituals; e.g., team syncs self-adjusting to delivery pace.

## **Energy Flow**

How attention and effort circulate; e.g., bursts of focus around user launches.

## **Trust Signals**

Behaviors that convey reliability; e.g., open updates and dependable follow-through.

## **Emergence**

Unpredicted patterns arising from interaction; e.g., new roles forming during crisis.

# AI & The Living System

How AI amplifies or disrupts the patterns that make teams work

## 1. Rhythm & Timing

- ✓ Amplifies: AI detects optimal sprint lengths, meeting patterns (Larson & DeChurch, 2020)
- ❓ Disrupts: Automated scheduling ignores human energy cycles

## 3. Trust Signals

- ✓ Amplifies: AI analyzes communication patterns to reveal trust dynamics (Zhang et al., 2023)
- ❓ Disrupts: Black-box decisions erode psychological safety
  - "Why did AI decide this?"

## 2. Energy Flow

- ✓ Amplifies: AI surfaces where team attention is stuck, reveals energy drains (Vaccaro et al., 2024)
- ❓ Disrupts: Constant AI notifications fragment focus, deplete cognitive energy

## 4. Emergence

- ✓ Amplifies: AI spots emerging patterns humans miss, enables faster adaptation
- ❓ Disrupts: Over-automation kills self-organization, teams stop thinking

"The question isn't whether to use AI. It's whether AI helps you see the living system more clearly - or obscures it."

Sources:

- Zhang et al. (2023), Trust and acceptance in human-AI teams
- Vaccaro, Almaatouq & Malone (2024), When combinations of humans and AI are useful, Nature Human Behaviour
- Larson & DeChurch (2020), AI as team members





# The Next Leap: From Doing Agile to Being Agile

The evolution from frameworks to living systems

1	<p><b>Agile as Method (2001-2010)</b></p> <p>Focus: Frameworks, ceremonies, roles</p> <p>Mindset: "We do Scrum"</p> <p>Result: Mechanical compliance</p>
2	<p><b>Agile as Principles (2010-2020)</b></p> <p>Focus: Values, mindset, culture</p> <p>Mindset: "We live the manifesto"</p> <p>Result: Deeper understanding, but still prescriptive</p>
3	<p><b>Agile as Living System (2020-Present)</b></p> <p>Focus: Patterns, emergence, sense-making</p> <p>Mindset: "We read and respond to our system"</p> <p>Result: Adaptive, context-aware teams</p>
4	<p><b>The Next Leap (Emerging)</b></p> <p>Focus: Collective intelligence + AI augmentation</p> <p>Mindset: "We co-evolve with technology and each other"</p> <p>Key shifts happening now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From trains to networks: Collaboration across ARTs and partners, not single teams</li><li>• Dynamic structures: Teams reconfigure around value flows, not frozen org charts</li><li>• AI-native organizations: Work self-organizes around opportunities; AI coordinates, humans judge</li><li>• Strategy as conversation: Continuous alignment across portfolios, not yearly alignments</li><li>• Leaders as stewards: Helping people see the real system and stay on strategy while moving</li></ul>

The future of agility lies in teams that can sense, learn, and evolve faster than their environment changes: **teams as learning organisms that reconfigure in real-time.**



# Working with the Living System

Three practices that activate Layers 2 & 3



## Activate Layer 2: Make Principles Explicit

**Practice:** Ask "Which agile principle guides this?" in every decision.

**Connects to:** Individuals over processes, Responding to change, Self-organization.

*Example: Team debates tool choice → Ask "Does this enable individuals & interactions?"*



## Cultivate Layer 3: Build Psychological Safety

**Practice:** Leader shares one mistake/learning at every retrospective.

**Connects to:** Trust Signals pattern, Psychological Safety.

*Example: "I pushed for that feature without asking users - we wasted 2 weeks."*



## Read the Patterns: Weekly Sense-Making

**Practice:** 15-min weekly team reflection: "What patterns did we notice?"

**Connects to:** All 4 patterns (Rhythm, Energy, Trust, Emergence).

*Example: "We noticed energy drops every Thursday afternoon, let's experiment."*

These practices represent how you work WITH the living system, not against it.



# My Invitation



## Start Small: One Pattern This Week

Pick ONE pattern to observe this week: Rhythm, Energy, Trust, or Emergence.

**Question:** Which one is calling for attention in your team?

**Action:** Friday 4pm: 5-minute reflection - what did you notice?



## Create One Safe Moment

Share one mistake or uncertainty in your next team meeting.

**Question:** What vulnerability can you model?

**Action:** Next retro opener: "Here's what I got wrong this week..."



## Ask One Better Question

Stop asking: "Are we doing agile right?"

Start asking: "What is our system telling us?"

**Question:** What question would shift your team's seeing?

**Action:** Write it on a sticky note. Put it where you'll see it daily.

# You don't need permission to start

Frameworks come and go. The human system remains. See it. Name it. Work with it. Start Monday.



# Who I Am



## My Focus

Making health systems more effective through prevention and early intervention, where human benefit and economic sense align.



## My Approach

Transformation as leadership and accountability, less about advisory. Building trust-based relationships that create lasting change.



## My Throughline

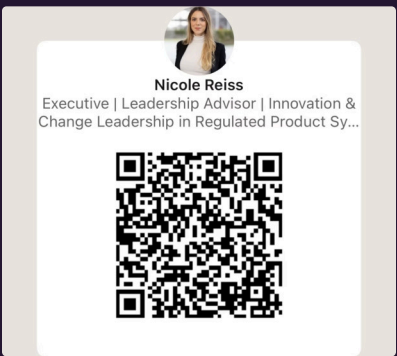
Prevention and mental health since 2017. Partnering with organizations that carry change themselves with clarity and courage.

# Let's Connect

I'm here for conversations that matter:

- Transforming health systems with prevention at the core
- Building living systems in Digital Health and MedTech
- Leading change that reshapes, not just manages
- Navigating the intersection of AI, agility, and human systems

If you're ready to see your system differently and work with it - not against it - let's talk.



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