If change is hard... make it continuous

written, illustrated and performed by
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Inertia
ɪˈnərʃə/
noun
A tendency to do nothing or remain unchanged.
synonyms: inactivity, inaction, inactiveness, inertness, passivity, apathy, accidie, malaise, stagnation, dullness, enervation, sluggishness, lethargy, languor, languidness, listlessness, torpor, torpidity, idleness, indolence, laziness, sloth, slothfulness ...
WE DROWN ONE BY ONE
WE ARE LIKE ZOMBIES
MEANWHILE...
“MENACING WAVES ARE MARCHING TOWARDS US”

If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside...
...the end is near.

-- Jack Welch, former CEO at GE
WE LIVE IN TURBULENT TIMES

Credit: NASA Goddard MODIS Rapid Response Team
TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY EVOLVE FASTER THAN MOST ORGANIZATIONS’ ABILITY TO ADAPT

- new knowledge discoveries
- legal or regulatory change
- “exponential” technology developments
- new trends
- global competition
- increased business & consumer sophistication
SO, I WONDER...

How can individuals & organizations move fast, learn faster and thrive in this brave new world?
Improvement without change is impossible.

-- Claudio Perrone
Most of us think about change as big, slow and scary.
BUT WHAT IF WE COULD MAKE IT INFINITELY SMALL...

... AND LEARN TO EVOLVE FAST, ALMOST AS FAST AS A MICROORGANISM?
HERE IS A “MAD” THOUGHT...

“If change is hard, make it continuous.”

— the “virus” principle
TRYING TO REWIRE THE HUMAN BRAIN IS DIFFICULT, HOWEVER.
A better option is to act on the **system** – i.e. the environment in which decisions are made.

...but how?
ENTER POPCORNFLOW
POPcornFlow captures a pragmatic, anti-fragile philosophy...

Inertia is our enemy

As a consequence:

1. If change is hard, make it continuous (Virus Principle).
2. It’s not only what you do but also what you learn by doing it that matters (Ladder Principle).
3. Everybody is entitled to their own opinion, but... A shared opinion is a fact (Freedom Principle).
4. It’s not “fail fast, fail often”...
5. It’s “learn fast, learn often” (Skateboarder Principle).

Small bets, big payoff (Option-Trader Principle).
... AND A 7-STEP DECISION CYCLE

Problems & observations  →  Options  →  Possible experiments  →  Committed

Next  →  Review  →  Ongoing
Problems & observations → Options → Possible experiments → Committed

Next → Review → Ongoing

http://popcornflow.com

... AND A 7-STEP DECISION CYCLE

PopcornFlow

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A "POPCORNFLOW BOARD" BRINGS TO THE SURFACE A LEARNING STREAM
It’s not only what you **do** but also what you **learn** by doing it that matters.

— the “ladder” principle
IT STARTS WITH PROBLEMS & OBSERVATIONS

TIME
Aggressive deadlines
We’re slow to deliver
Quality sucks
could improve
Decisions take forever
Innovate! Ehm... How?
We work in silos
Not much time for reflection
How does the customer think?

Piles of work
Legacy systems
Dependencies
Queues
Risk
Need more people!
We never seek options

Fear to f**k things up
Is failure ever celebrated here?

Are we just producing widgets or solving business problems?

How do people get anything done over here?
Too many competing priorities
Do we have the right mindset?
Are we effective or just efficient?

@agilesensei
I moan but I know I'm wrong

I did everything I could, but my peers/managers are idiots

I moan but I'm unable to make my point with peers/management

I only moan and do nothing about it

https://mysoftwarequality.wordpress.com/2013/10/10/stop-moaning-be-the-change/
I see problems as an easy entry point to hack into the system

**TIME**
- Aggressive deadlines
- We’re slow to deliver
- Quality sucks, could improve
- Decisions take forever
- Innovate! Ehm... How?
- We work in silos
- Not much time for reflection
- How does the customer think?

**Piles of work**
- Legacy systems
- Queues
- Dependencies
- Risk
- Need more people!
- We never seek options

**Fear to f** things up**

**Quality sucks, could improve**

**Too much competing priorities**
- Need more people!

**Innovate! Ehm... How?**
- We are soo bloody reactive

**We work in silos**
- Not much time for reflection
- How does the customer think?

**Is failure ever celebrated here?**

**Are we just producing widgets or solving business problems?**

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How do people get anything done over here?

Do we have the right mindset?

Are we effective or just efficient?

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For example, the quality of our code sucks.
Everybody is entitled to their own opinion, but...

A shared opinion is a fact.

— the “freedom” principle

The quality of our code sucks.
The quality of our code sucks.

... I use shared observations to create/elicit options ("rule of three").
PROMISING OPTIONS LEAD TO A BACKLOG OF POSSIBLE EXPERIMENTS.

**Action:** QA & PO pair to write (manual) BDD scenarios for next 3 features

**Action:** Let's pair program for 3 days

Code review  
BDD  
Pair Programming
Action: Let's pair program
Reason: Code quality sucks
Expectations:
- Perception is that code is better
- We'll like it & want to keep doing it
Duration: 3 days
Review Date: dd/mm/yy
At each retrospective, we ask exactly these questions:

**REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- What experiments did we agree to do?
- Which ones did we actually do?
- What did we expect to happen?
- What actually happened?
- What did we learn?
- Based on what we learned, what are we going to do next?
SOME PEOPLE FEAR “FAILURE”...

Gap = Frustration

Expectation

Reality
... but we only really “fail” when we limit our opportunities to learn.

Gap = Frustration

Anticipation

Expectation

Reality

Learning
Besides, can you really learn if you are not prepared to fail?
It’s not “fail fast, fail often”... It’s “learn fast, learn often”.

— the “skateboarder” principle
RATHER THAN JUST **SURVIVE UNCERTAINTY**...

... **WE WANT TO EXPLOIT IT!**
Some things gain from disorder.

Asymmetry test:
Anything that has more upside than downside from random events (or certain shocks) is **anti-fragile**. The reverse is fragile.
AND SO...

“Small bets, big payoff.

— the “option trader” principle
YOUR PARTICIPATION TO THIS CONFERENCE IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU CAN USE VARIABILITY, OPTION ASYMMETRY AND TIME TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.
Right from the beginning, I knew that PopcornFlow was different.
... BECAUSE I SAW ONCE-TRoubLED TEAMS BEING ABLE TO HANDLE 5-10 CHANGE EXPERIMENTS EACH WEEK...
... QUICKLY NEGOTIATE CHANGE AND CONVERGE TO SUCCESS
Experiment: "Fix as you go": If found small bugs (less than 20 mins), just branch and fix them. Do a pull request and mark the id on the card. 
Reason: too much bureaucracy for small bugs.
Expectation:
- developer happy to fix things as needed without lengthy triages.

Experiment: Pair on JIT analysis
Reason: We are moving towards JIT analysis to reduce sprint planning and moving to continuous flow.
Expectation:
- DoD created
- Team agrees that analysis goes smoothly
- No significant bottlenecks created

Experiment: Do an Analytics meet-up to show how analytics work in <new kanban tool>
Reason: <product owner> needs some form of predictability.
Expectation:
- Po/Team are aware of what’s possible now with the current level of analytics
- We have better understanding of if, how, when we can improve forecasting with minimum amount of estimation.
POPCORNFLOW IS LIKE AN “ALIEN” TECHNOLOGY...
VIRUS-LIKE PATTERNS ARE EMERGING TO DISRUPT THE STATUS QUO...
... AND “TERRAFORM” ORGANIZATIONS
Imagine a continuous flow of experiments to accelerate the rate of change in every corner of your organization... How far would you go?
Last year, our company revenue grew by 10x.
and the coaching that Claudio provided was the bedrock for our success.

— Rory O’ Connor, CEO at Scurri
TODAY, POPCORNFLOW IS ENTERING MORE ORGANIZATIONS
ITS FAST AND LIGHTWEIGHT DECISION CYCLE THAT CAN BE HIRED TO GET MANY ‘JOBS’ DONE
POPCORNFLOW IS TOUCHING LIVES EVEN OUTSIDE THE BUSINESS WORLD...
A while ago, Matteo had a problem.

Problems & Observations

I want to sell snails. Mummy says that nobody would buy them. But she doesn't know that.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I could ask kids I know if they want to buy it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could make a video about everything that I'm going to do with the snails that I'm selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could put a sign on the door saying &quot;snails for sale&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a weekend sale on Saturday with everything half price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make &amp; sell a snail-sized bike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a snail workshop where I say everything I know and then I can sell the workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could give up. I'll never give up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can make a snail spooky ride and sell it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe on some days I may sell them for free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can make a snail workshop where I say everything I know and then I can sell the workshop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SO, HE CREATED 16 OPTIONS... IN LESS THAN 1 HOUR!
His first experiment didn’t bring the results that he had hoped for.
His sign was promising too, but didn’t work out either.
NO MATTER WHO AND HOW HE ASKED...

... NOBODY WANTED TO BUY HIS SNAILS
I could give up. I’ll never give up.

-- Matteo Perrone
Matteo decided to explore a new option

I will make a comic book with a story about snails with Daddy. (I don't want daddy to miss out on the fun). I'll sell it for €4.99... is is a good price?

24th Jun 2016
HE WORKED FURIOUSLY ON AN EPIC ADVENTURE

BOOM!

It was a sunny day in Snail City...

Hi, how are you doing?

You have lettuce stuck in your teeth.

Oh, do I?
Wed, June 15 2016
HIS 4-PAGE MVP EARNED HIM HIS FIRST €20...

... IN HIS SLEEP!

http://popcornflow.com/snails
48 HOURS LATER...

€91.02
For a long time, he begged people to visit his landing page http://popcornflow.com/snails

@agilesensei
1 OUT OF 6 PEOPLE WHO VIEWED THAT PAGE END UP SUPPORTING THIS CHEEKY MONKEY

http://popcornflow.com/snails
Continuous evolution is a way of life
Every single week, I’m 5 experiments older. When you’ll die, how old would you rather be? Two experiments old... Or twenty thousands?

-- Claudio Perrone
AND THEN, WHAT IF...
... POPCORNFLOW COULD ENABLE FRIENDLY STRANGERS TO AFFECT GLOBAL CHANGE?
FINAL THOUGHTS
In times of change, learners inherit the earth...

... while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.

-- Eric Hoffer
WE LIVE IN TURBULENT TIMES INDEED...
... AND IT’S AWESOME!
Wanna dig deeper?
Option 1: Join my workshop tomorrow.
Option 2: Bug me in the corridors.
Option 3: Bring me to your place.

Please, remember to rate this session. Thank you!

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