

# bluearth learning journal contents

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## introduction the bluearth approach and the professional learning program

The Bluearth Approach is the central program of the Bluearth Foundation. The Approach was designed by a team of leading health, movement and physical activity experts in order to address the challenges associated with increasingly sedentary lifestyles. Drawing from a variety of disciplines, the Bluearth Approach seeks to engage, stimulate and challenge while bringing awareness to each individual's experience. **The Professional Learning Program (PLP)** is the methodology whereby teachers (and others) are trained to deliver the Bluearth Approach.

This Learning Journal was created to help you track your experience and understanding of the Bluearth Approach throughout the PLP. It also contains fundamental information on the use of your journal as well as program delivery, and will support your exploration of the unique Bluearth approach to movement and activity.

Your Learning Journal combined with the web based 'Teacher Resource Centre' ([www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org)), your Bluearth Coach, peers and students are the key resources for the PLP. Collectively they form a comprehensive on-going learning pathway that encompasses all aspects of training, delivery and sustainability.

## the learning pathway immersion, delivery, reflection and reporting/ mentoring

Your journey starts from the very first experience of the Bluearth Approach, and recording and reflecting on these experiences is a key element of the PLP. Adding to your journal (see Journal Template) supports your own enquiry and the act of writing helps to clarify thoughts and feelings. Tracking your experiences and responses as they arise will integrate your own lived experiences and be a powerful factor in your enjoyment, development and growth.

## immersion delivery reflection reporting mentoring

Your journal will become invaluable in developing a portfolio which will support you throughout your Bluearth journey and can be used as evidence in the attainment of further qualifications. The mapping and appraisal process, as outlined in this document, encourages you to set goals and track your real-time learning, forming the basis for your ongoing exploration of the Bluearth Approach.

At Bluearth we highly value experience as the teacher and will always be interested in what that experience is for you and others you work with. You will be engaged, supported and stimulated and, at times feel challenged through this journey. We look forward to taking it with you.

**"learning is experience,  
everything else is  
just information."**

Albert Einstein

You are invited to spend time writing in your journal as often as you would like; whether it is the details of a session, what you did and how you did it or something more subtle, it is up to you. It is your journal and should have meaning for you. The ongoing experience of the journal will provide an important foundation to reflect on a session and how it made you feel, enriching your movement awareness and practice. It will provide practical assistance in your development as a leader and a basis for discussion with your Bluearth Coach. Your coach will provide feedback on your progress and guide your development through the PLP.

We also encourage students to keep their own **Physical Activity Diary** (templates for this are available from your Bluearth Coach) and contribute to it immediately after a session. Journaling therefore becomes both an immediate and shared regular experience for you and your class. This shared time in journal writing is an extension of Bluearth sessions.

Your Bluearth Coach will review your Learning Journal with you from time to time and provide feedback and guidance on your progress. At critical stages in the program more detailed discussions will be conducted between you and your coach for appraisal and review purposes. Following are some prompts for your journaling practice;



Mark McGrath, founder/consultant Bluearth Approach

## Kolb's experiential learning cycle and the professional learning program

Kolb (1984) provides one of the most useful models for describing the processes in a learning cycle through which individuals and teams can understand their experiences and subsequently adjust their behaviours appropriately.

The learning cycle is based on the premise that the more frequently you experience a task and then take time to reflect upon it, the greater the opportunity for you to modify and refine your efforts.

Experiential learning mirrors natural learning. Accordingly, we believe that by consistently following the precepts of this learning cycle you will develop a deeper personal and professional learning experience. Kolb's learning cycle contains the following four stages;

**1) Concrete Experience** involves immersing yourself in the doing - the action required by the task. The most important aspect of concrete experience for the coach, teacher, and child is to couple action with intention. The motor system does not differentiate between intention and action, therefore intention becomes the most important ingredient in guiding your action.

*"Intentional binding may underlie the way in which the mind constructs a strong association between intention, action and consequence, as a seamless cloth."*

W. Haynes. Bluearth Consultant.

**2) Reflective Observation** involves stepping back from the task or experience and reviewing what has been done and experienced. The skill of attending to important aspects of a task, noticing differences, and identifying subtle aspects of your movement, will be enhanced by your weekly journal entries. The consistent recording of your experience will deepen perception and open up awareness of your inner resources and creativity.

Reflective observation is an opportunity to become more conscious of your unconscious tendencies. These tendencies will be evident in your movement, the way you act, when you play a game, in your posture and, importantly, in your class management. Journal writing will allow you to reflect on your performance and track the changes in your perception.

*"The way you do anything is the way you do everything."*

Sarah Powers. International Yoga and Meditation Teacher.

**3) Abstract Conceptualisation** involves observing and interpreting events in order to identify patterns, behaviours and/or relationships within them. It is an opportunity for you to compare and contrast these observations with what you have done, reflected upon, and what you already know (or believe that you do well).

This is the stage of the learning cycle when you can draw upon expert theories, feedback from your Bluearth Coach, or any other source of knowledge for reference. Exploring material in different forms such as audio and video, taking different movement-based classes, and using the web are all excellent ways to compare and contrast your experiences. It is powerful to reflect on this exploration in your journal as it will highlight your learning process.

**4) Active Experimentation** enables you to develop a more subtle understanding of the task and then put this into practice. It is vital to remain conscious of the specific aspect of the task that you are actively changing because of the notorious difficulty of consciously altering a motor pattern or an unconscious behaviour. You must become a "witness" to your own performance. Journal writing will encourage and reinforce this act of witnessing behaviour.

## contextual relevance

To be useful, learning must be placed in a context that is relevant for you. This context should be reflective of the assumptions, beliefs and values that direct your attention and influence who you are.

*"Those who have tried to develop instruments have based them on what people think, do or believe, which is not the proper base for assessment devices. They should be based not on what the person thinks but how s/he thinks, not on what people do or what they believe, but how they do what they do, and how they believe that which they do believe."*

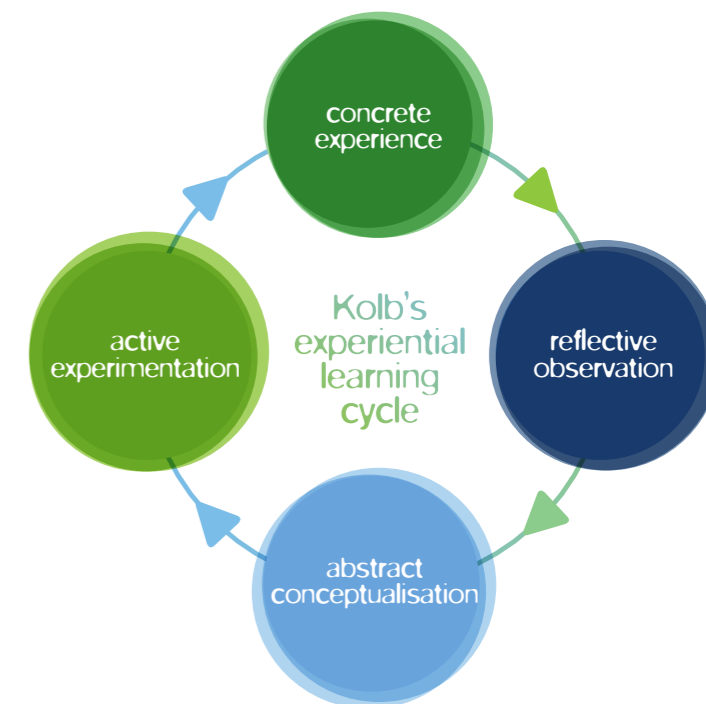
Dr. Clare Graves ([www.clarewgraves.com](http://www.clarewgraves.com)).

## the journal as a learning record

Marrying journal writing with the learning cycle allows incremental improvement to emerge via reflective observation which is captured in writing on a regular basis. It also enables you and your class to learn concurrently from experience and thereby improve performance within Bluearth sessions. The ripple effect will provide a greater awareness of movement and health and wellbeing for your class, in addition to an enhanced awareness of the teaching/learning process and the teacher/student relationship.

Your journal is your primary workbook for the PLP. Optimally you would add your notes and thoughts and other relevant information on a regular basis so that over time it will build into an important portfolio for your reflection and ongoing development. We hope you will come to value Your Journal and that it will remain with you for years to come.

*Before writing spend a moment to 'check in' with yourself and make sure you are present to the task. Your coach will provide you with guidance in this process of relaxing into awareness.*



## program delivery

The delivery of Bluearth sessions for students is a key component of your Professional Learning Program. It provides you with the concrete experience (see Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle) which is essential to the learning journey.

Under the guidance of your Bluearth Coach, you will experience sessions and be given support with lesson planning and program delivery. The learning process is optimised when Bluearth is scheduled as a weekly (or more often) event for the class; with you and the Bluearth Coach alternating responsibility for the delivery of the sessions. As you proceed, your understanding and skill in delivering program components will increase progressively.

## developmental stages of program delivery

The PLP requires you to become involved in delivery of Bluearth sessions from the start. Your Bluearth Coach will deliver a session and the following week you will simply replicate that session. You will be assisted with lesson planning, journal writing, and use of the web based Teacher Resource Centre to ensure your experience is positive and enjoyable. As familiarity and comfort develop you will begin to design sessions to reflect your own skills and preferences.

Taking responsibility for sessions from the start provides invaluable experience for reflection and discussion. This 'apprenticeship' approach is a proven method of developing competency and truly allowing experience to be the teacher. The ultimate aim of the program is to provide you with the tools, knowledge and motivation to be confident and competent in the delivery of Bluearth sessions.

Working closely with your Bluearth Coach, you will experience diverse practices that are important to engage and motivate students within an enjoyable environment. You will be guided through five developmental stages to allow your involvement in program delivery to evolve from the experiences that you have. How quickly you progress through each stage will be determined by your willingness to actively engage in the program.



### Stage 1) Guided Participation/Delivery

During this stage you will simply observe and participate in Bluearth Coach sessions. You will then be asked to deliver your best approximation of that session to your class in the weeks between coach visits.

### Stage 2) Getting More Comfortable

During this stage you will further develop your understanding of the Bluearth Approach through guided participation and delivery of more complex movement and activity. As your understanding deepens so too will your ability to more fully explore elements of sessions and illicit feedback from participants.

### Stage 3) Gaining Confidence

During this stage you will be simply observe and participate in Bluearth Coach sessions. You will then be asked to deliver your best approximation of that session to your class in the weeks between coach visits.

### Stage 4) Full Delivery

During Full Delivery you will design and deliver complete sessions and be able to follow and build on what you experience in the session. This may lead you away from your lesson plan and requires a high level of empathy, skill and experience to facilitate.

### Stage 5) Accreditation

The Accreditation Stage provides the opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to lead Bluearth sessions confidently and proficiently and so become Accredited to Lead the Bluearth Approach. This requires you to demonstrate to your Bluearth Coach competent planning, preparation and delivery of a Bluearth session.

## bluearth website, workshops and staff PD sessions

The Bluearth Website [www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org) is where you will find comprehensive information on the Bluearth Foundation, our programs, feedback, contacts and history; it is also where you find the Teacher Resource Centre (TRC), an essential resource for teachers in training.



The TRC contains a range of activities grouped into the six elements of the Bluearth Approach; Coordination & Agility, Movement Challenges & Games, Dynamic Movement Control, Core Movement, Skill Activities and Moving in the Environment. Each activity has a printable description, diagrams and photographs and many have video demonstrations to assist you.

The TRC contains a range of activities grouped into the six elements of the Bluearth Approach; it is highly recommended that you utilise the TRC when reviewing and planning sessions and generally for helping to develop your familiarity with Bluearth activities.

The TRC also contains information on workshops, curriculum mapping, further reading as well as additional templates for this journal and lesson plan templates. We suggest you add [www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org) to your Favourites list and visit often.

Bluearth workshops and staff sessions will be conducted to provide a different environment in which to further explore what is possible in the physical activity domain for you and your school. These sessions are designed to be interactive and to encourage participants to acknowledge and share experiences, in a student free environment.

Bluearth workshops are offered in regional settings and are open to those in training, those who have trained in the past and other interested members of school communities. They provide an opportunity to further explore the Bluearth Approach, work with your peers, learn what is happening in other schools, ask questions and participate in Bluearth Coach led activities.

Staff PD Sessions are designed for staff from a single school. They allow staff to gain a deeper understanding of what Bluearth can offer, start the conversation around a whole school approach and interact and share experiences in the physical domain. It is a great forum for the PLP teachers within a school to share their experience which will help motivate all staff to employ the benefits of Bluearth across the whole school, an important step on the journey to sustainability.

## two year programming

In order to achieve ongoing sustainable delivery of the Bluearth Approach, while recognising the demands of contemporary schools, a two year model is optimal.

The Bluearth Professional Learning Program will deliver high quality physical activity for students and provide best practise professional development for teachers - within the normal school day. There is no need for teacher release or heavy extra demands on staff as the vast majority of the training happens on the job.

The PLP provides the teacher with 36 Bluearth Coach visits on a 2 week rotation over 2 years. This means long term support for the teacher whilst enabling a high degree of teacher input and ownership of their learning journey. Teachers will participate in Bluearth Coach led sessions and be provided with support and guidance so as to enable their delivery of sessions for their class from day one of program implementation.

Additionally Bluearth is happy to support special events at your school such as carnivals, parent days and themed activity days.

## bluearth practices

The following practices guide your participation planning and delivery of Bluearth sessions. We believe that being mindful of these practices will enhance your progress through the PLP.

**Environment** - Create an environment that encourages maximum participation through inclusive practices.

**Experience** - Activate and promote intrinsic motivation through enjoyable and meaningful movement experiences. Work with what is there.

**Engagement** - Engage students in experiences that provide positive and constructive feedback to enhance ability and confidence.

**Stimulation** - Stimulate self reflection, creativity and imagination through individual and group movement experiences.

**Team** - Provide physical experiences that create opportunities for children to interact positively with peers.

**Self Awareness** - Educate students about choice, composure, and responsibility through dynamic interactions.

When planning a session establish an intention with the Bluearth Practices in mind. The intention will be guided by many factors; what you would like to see for the group, where the group is at and how they present, how you feel in terms of your skills and experience, and the environment available for activity.

Initially you will want a full session that reflects the need to explore dynamic, individual, group and subtle aspects of the six key elements;

[Coordination and Agility](#)

[Skill Activities](#)

[Movement Challenges and Games](#)

[Dynamic Movement Control](#)

[Moving in the Environment](#)

[Core Movement](#)

(see [www.bluearth.org](http://www.bluearth.org) / Teacher Resource Centre)

As you progress in your journey you will become more fluid and empathetic in your sessions; planning just a couple of activities and allowing what comes up in that session to inform you of other aspects of movement that you would like to draw attention to. This ease of delivery is found with developing experience and experimentation, with exploring widely within the six elements and then adapting and creating your own movements and activities to fully explore your intention.

The Bluearth Approach does not come with a prescribed set of lesson plans. This is in line with the open nature of the Approach, and is necessary in order to work with the immediacy of what is present. This flexibility to adapt lessons (in real time) allows coaches and teachers to let what is working run, change what is not flowing, and to reflect and find agreement to live the challenge.

This approach means that writing a lesson plan for a Bluearth session is an enjoyable and simple task.

## accreditation to deliver bluearth programs

At the end of your PLP it is anticipated that you will be accredited to lead the delivery of Bluearth sessions in your school. To gain accreditation you will need to demonstrate your ability to lead Bluearth sessions confidently and proficiently which includes planning, preparation and delivery. The PLP is mapped to the nationally accredited Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and has five key elements:

- 1) A thorough understanding of the Bluearth Approach
- 2) A willingness to participate and explore in Bluearth Sessions
- 3) An ability to give and receive instruction and feedback during sessions
- 4) A comfort and ease in delivering Bluearth Sessions
- 5) Maintaining a journal and attending debrief and feedback discussions



**You are on the right path when you demonstrate;**

- a personal interest in every student
- a commitment to building quality relationships between students
- an ability to foster trust, respect and demonstrate positive behavioural management
- respect for the individual identity of each student
- a calm negotiated approach to discipline and behaviour management
- a belief in the holistic development of each student
- a desire to continually develop individual skills and knowledge
- a commitment to the students' and your own active and healthy life

Bluearth believes that the energy and attitude of the teacher is critical to the delivery of the Program and that these attributes are required to achieve accreditation.

## the relationship between the bluearth coach & the teacher

Together, you and the Bluearth Coach have a fundamental role to play in the delivery of Bluearth sessions. Your Bluearth Coach will create and lead a session relative to where the class and your learning is at. In the early days you will simply be asked to repeat that session for your class. It is imperative that you are clear about the session plan and intent to enable your successful delivery.

**The Bluearth Coach expects that you will:**

- be in attendance for the entire lesson and maintain duty of care
- observe the learning environment created by the Bluearth Approach
- participate actively with students to your best ability
- record sessions and impressions in your Learning Journal for later review
- advise of behavioural challenges and physical and medical limitations of any participants

**Throughout program delivery the Bluearth Coach will work with you to create a dynamic learning environment and together you will:**

- plan and conduct Bluearth sessions
- encourage all students to engage in active participation
- encourage the use of safe practices



## the learning environment

An appropriate learning environment is critical to successful delivery - this includes consideration of potential OH&S issues and policies and procedures. Identifying and addressing OH&S responsibilities is a primary concern and should be considered at the beginning of each session. The characteristics of the learner group must also be considered and may lead to adjustment of session content. The teacher and Bluearth Coach will discuss the following at the pre-program meeting;

### 1) Appropriate Footwear

The program has a number of activities that require appropriate footwear. Also at times, particularly during core movement activities, children may be requested to remove their shoes. The Bluearth Coach should be informed if this practice will conflict with school policy.

### 2) Appropriate Physical Environment

Bluearth requires students to engage in dynamic activities as well as structured quiet activities. Appropriate spaces and surfaces will optimise the outcomes of these activities.

### 3) Sun Smart

Bluearth follows the Sun Smart principles and participants are requested to apply sunscreen and wear approved hats during the delivery of outdoor sessions.

### 4) Drink Breaks

The Bluearth Coach will encourage drink breaks to ensure students remain hydrated at all times. In order to maximise program delivery time, it is requested that all students bring a water bottle to each session with their name clearly marked on it.

### 5) Clothing

All participants should wear suitable and comfortable clothing for all sessions. The wearing of sport or leisure wear is recommended.

### 6) Incident Management

The administration of first aid remains the responsibility of the teacher and school. The Bluearth Coach will document and report all occurrences of significant incidents. It is Bluearth's expectation that the school will maintain all incident and first aid records, in line with system and school policies and procedures.

### 7) Wet Weather / Extreme Hot Weather

The school, following consultation with the Bluearth Coach, should endeavour to provide appropriate facilities for the delivery of sessions during inclement weather.



## mapping

The Mapping component of the PLP is an important step and critical to ensuring that your goals and intentions for joining the Program are identified and clearly understood by you and your coach. The 'map' that you create will guide you through your time in the Bluearth Program.

This would ordinarily take place after some time in immersion and include all teachers in training at your school. These documents are an important part of your development portfolio.

## three steps to the bluearth mapping process

### Step One - Vision and Goals

How does your involvement with Bluearth impact on you, what could be an outcome of this journey? Journal entries will inform the development of your vision and goals - importantly for yourself and also for students and the school as a whole.

### Step Two - Mapping Session

At this session your individual goals will be developed and recorded using the Mapping Template (see Template attached). This process aims to identify:

- your goal/vision
- experiences that will shape this goal/vision
- the team that will support and challenge you
- your purpose or 'strong enough reason' for setting the goal
- your intentions/actions in order to move towards that goal

**The goal you set will be individual to you & may relate to:**

- understanding the Bluearth Approach
- how Bluearth can live in your class and/or the school
- personal physical activity objectives for you
- improved learning outcomes and stronger relationships

### Goal(s)

What is the subject matter or issue on which you would like to work? What form of outcome are you seeking by the end of the Bluearth Professional Learning Program?

### Experience

- The experience needs to be very specific and real
- It must tell a story, which is positive and/or motivating
- What is a powerful experience from your past that has helped shape you?
- Can you capture the specific actions and feelings that were taking place at this time?

### Team

- Your team will support and motivate you
- They will be important people or groups
- You may have personal connections with them and/or be inspired by them
- Who would you want to share your goal with?

### Purpose

- Why do you want to set this goal?
- What value or worth will result in achieving this goal?
- What is your intention to setting this goal?

### Intentions Actions

- Create simple achievable actions to begin your journey to your goal
- You should look forward to completing these actions
- You should set a date when each one will be completed
- Look for new actions to emerge as you complete your list - these are your next steps.

### Step Three - Ongoing Review

Throughout the program you will be encouraged to continually review and reflect on your involvement and delivery. Your Journal provides you with the ideal tool by which you may record your experiences, perceptions and feelings. In addition, you are encouraged to continually review the Map you create and reflect on its relevance to where you are now and to how your intentions have evolved.

### References

Mark McGrath - [www.markmcgrath.com.au](http://www.markmcgrath.com.au)

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Dr. Clare Graves - [www.clarewgraves.com](http://www.clarewgraves.com)







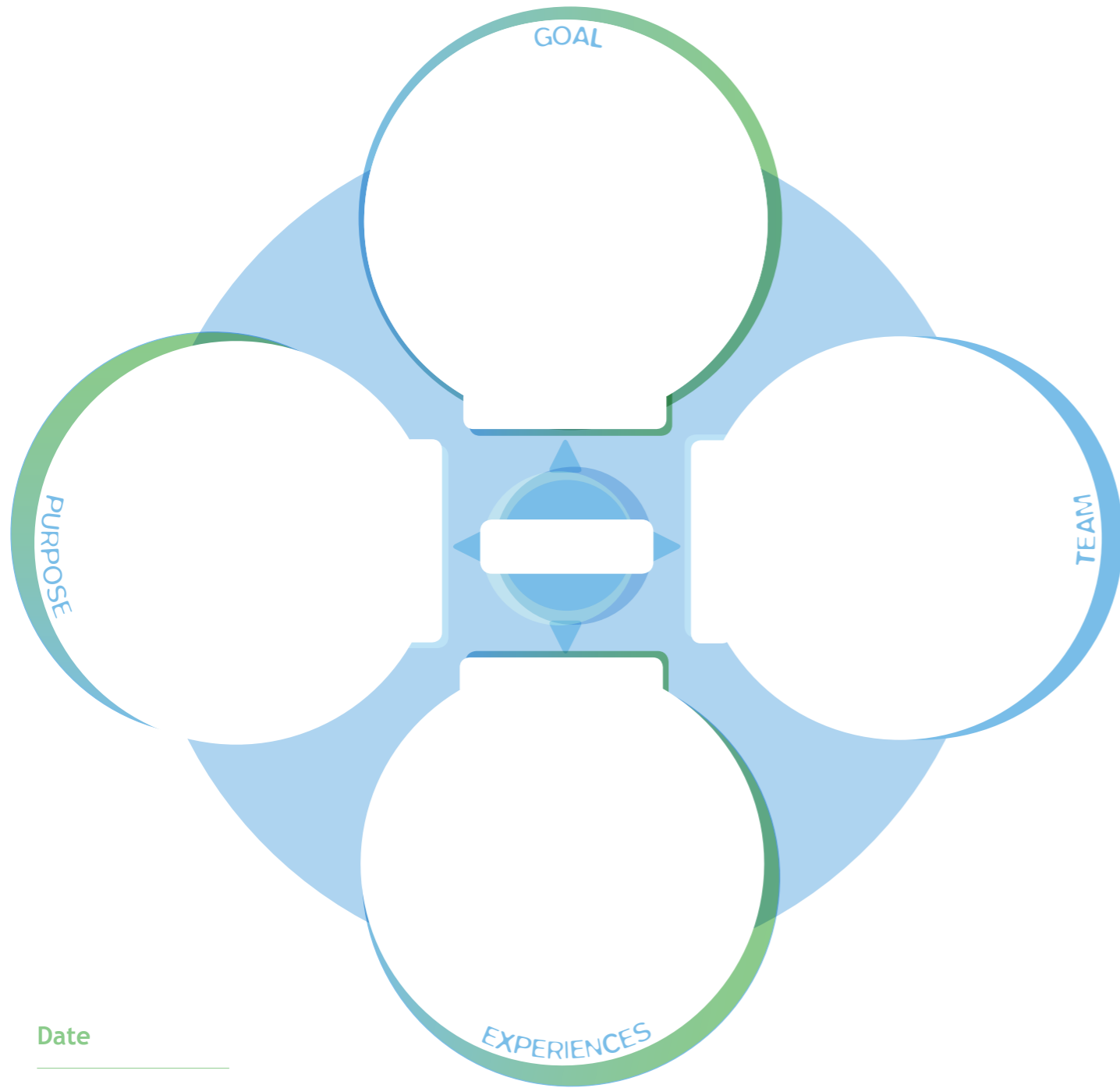












Date \_\_\_\_\_

intention/action

perception/reflection

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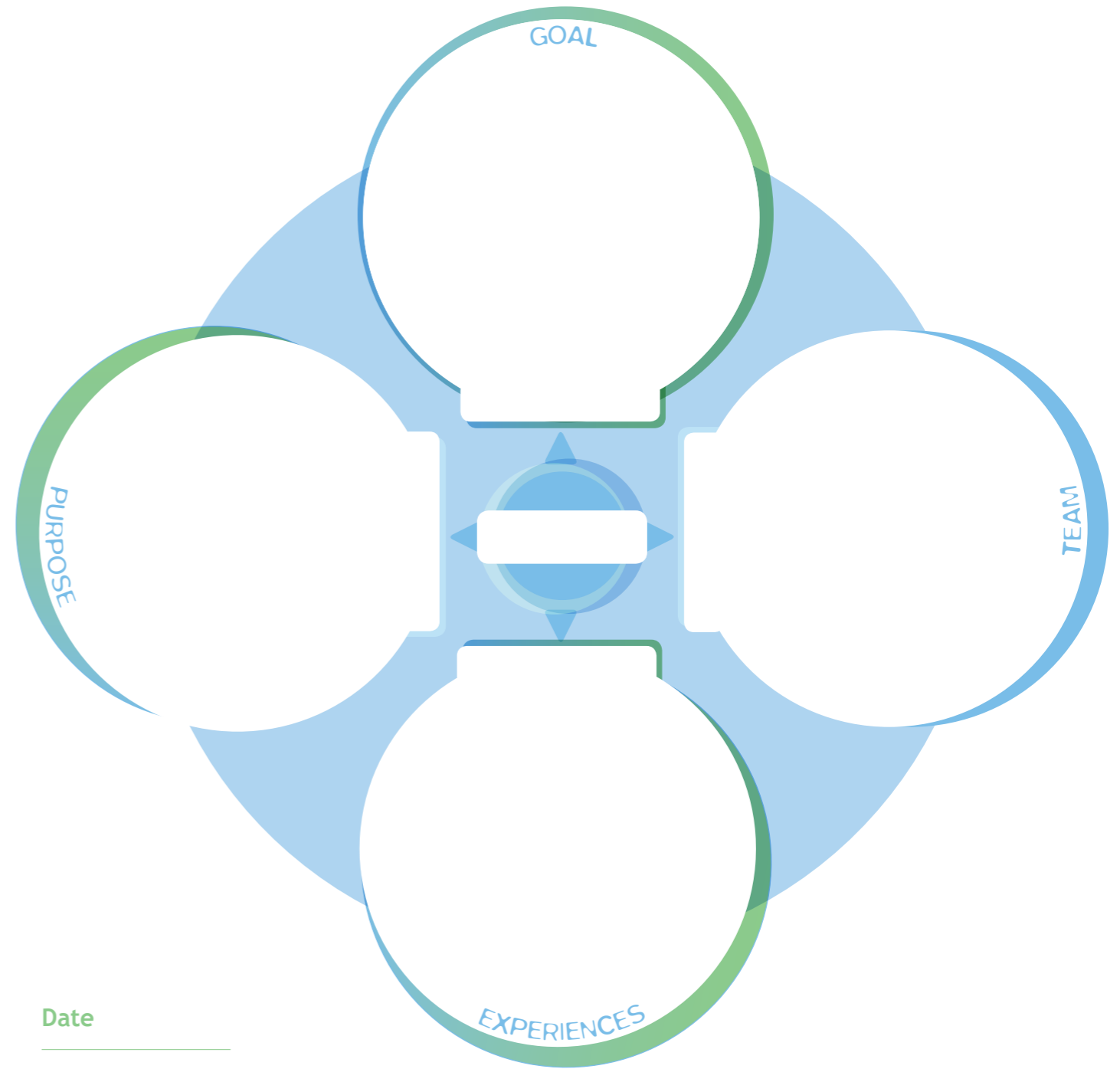
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