

Participatory Narrative Inquiry

An introduction with examples

Cynthia Kurtz
March 2016



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Outline

1. What is PNI?
2. Why stories?
3. How does PNI work?
4. How does PNI connect to other fields?
5. What can you do with PNI?
6. What is the history of PNI?
7. What are the principles of PNI?
8. What are some examples of PNI projects?

What is PNI?

Participatory narrative inquiry is an approach in which groups of people participate in gathering and working with raw stories of personal experience in order to make sense of complex situations for better decision making.

PNI focuses on the profound consideration of values, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives through the recounting and interpretation of lived experience.

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people consider
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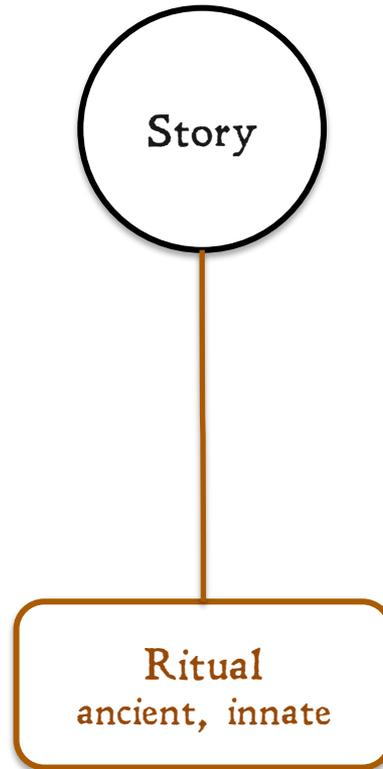
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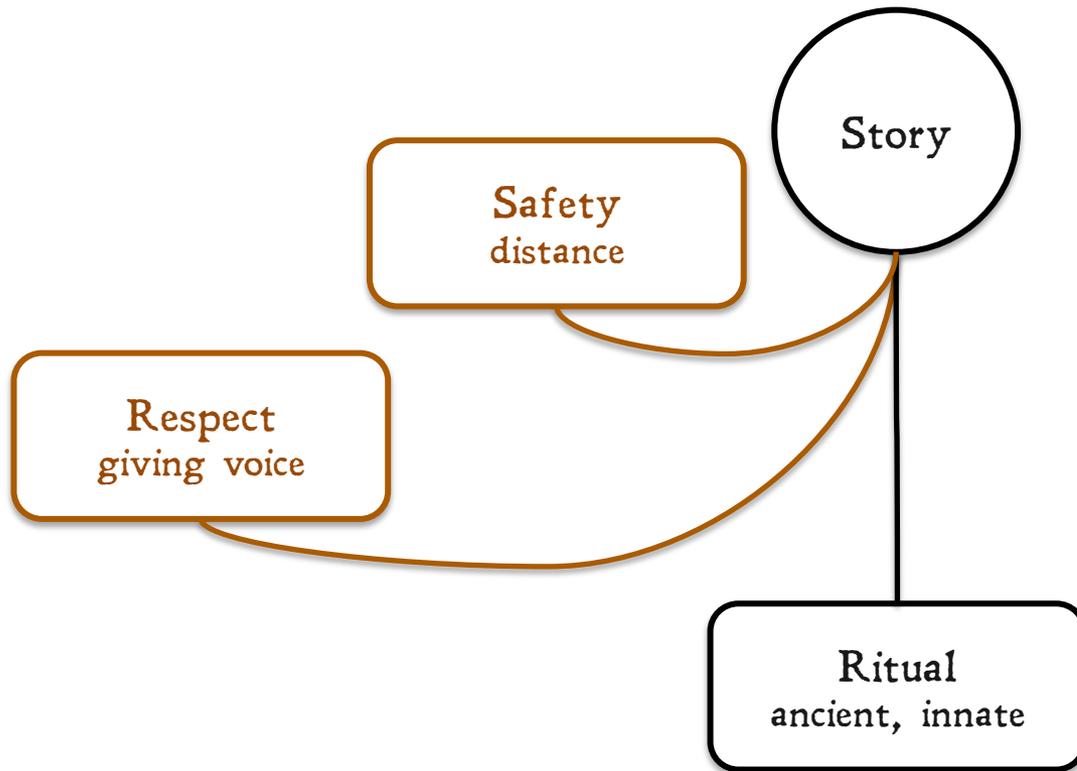
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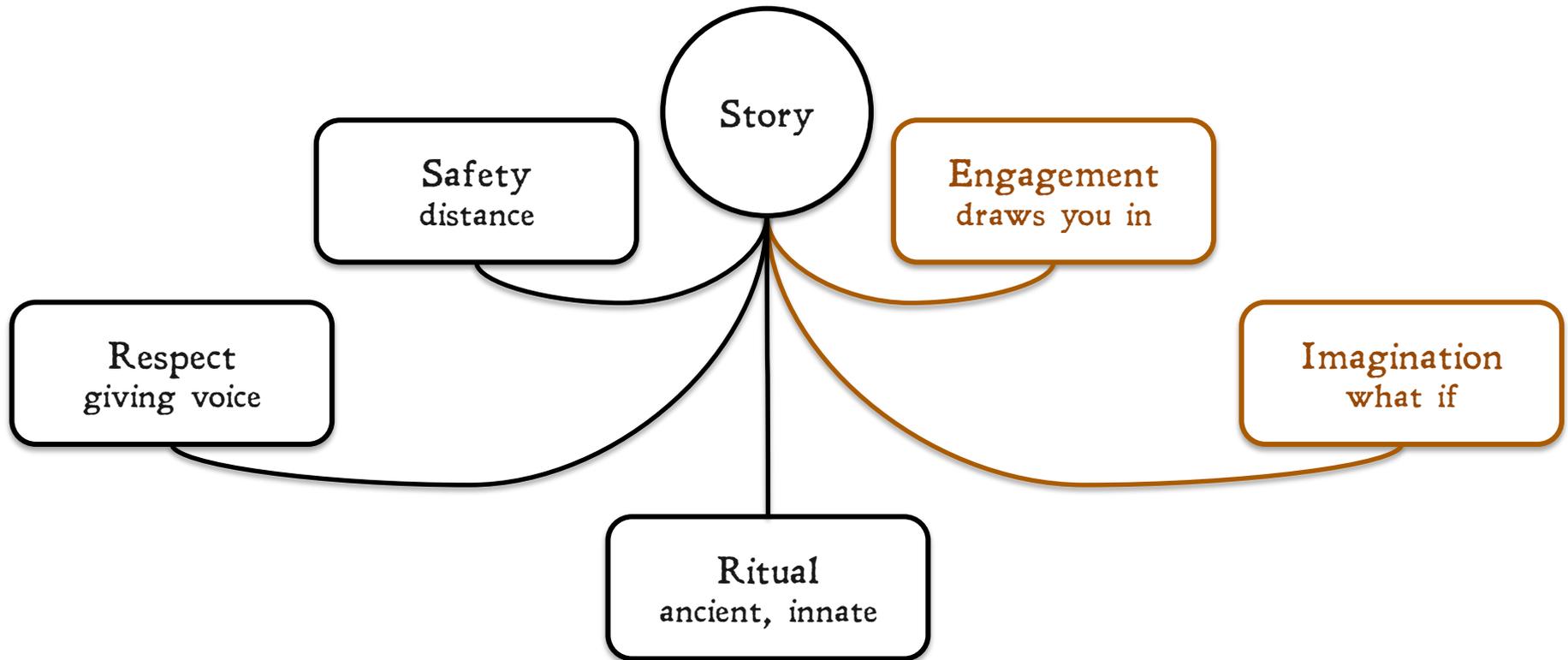
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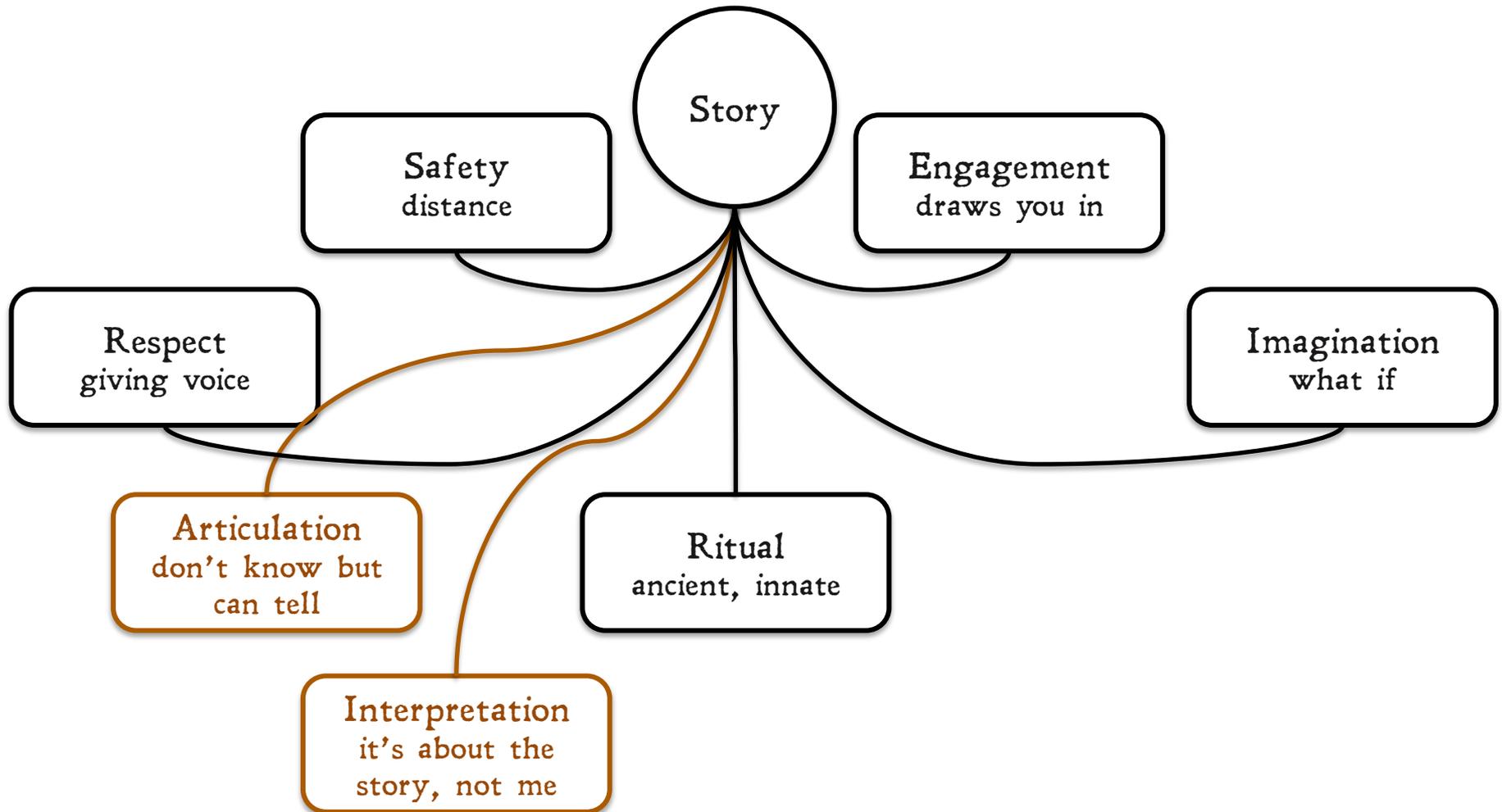
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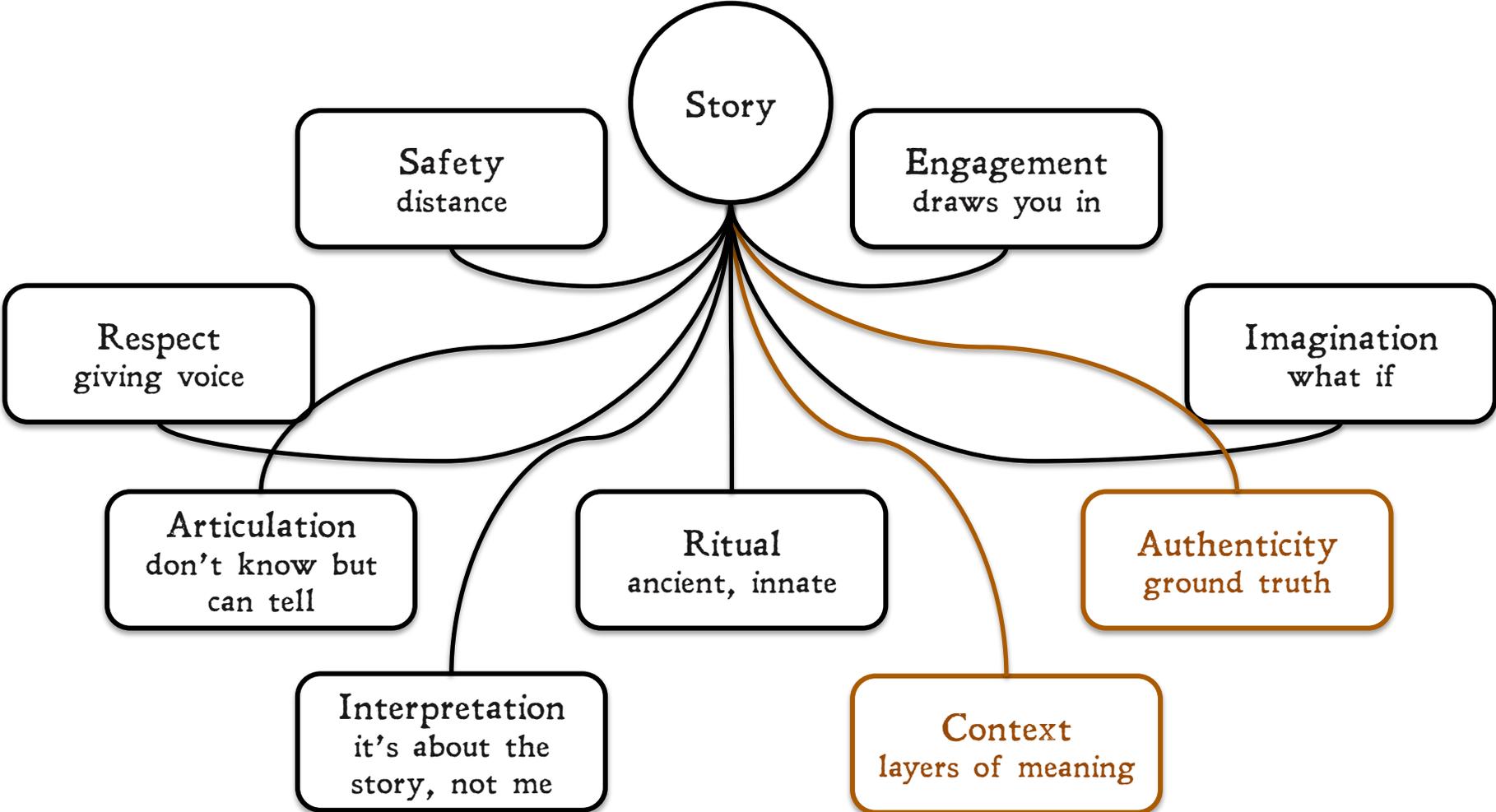
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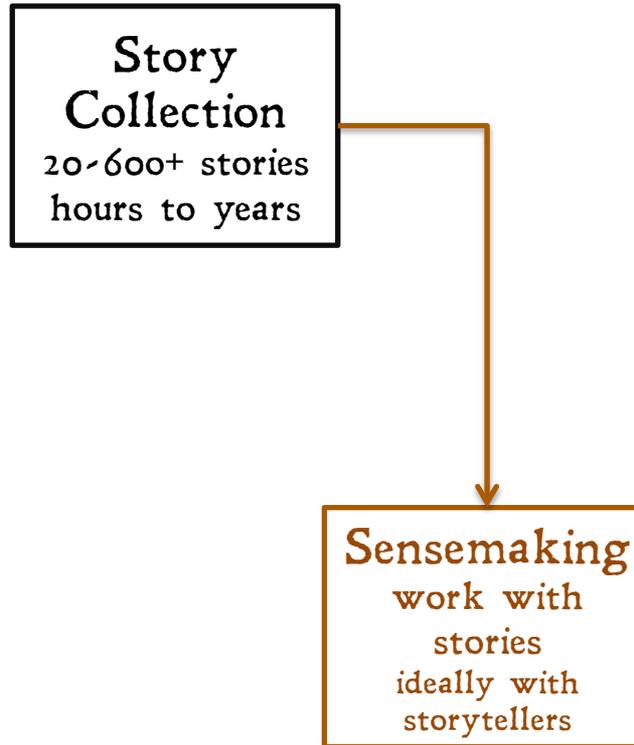
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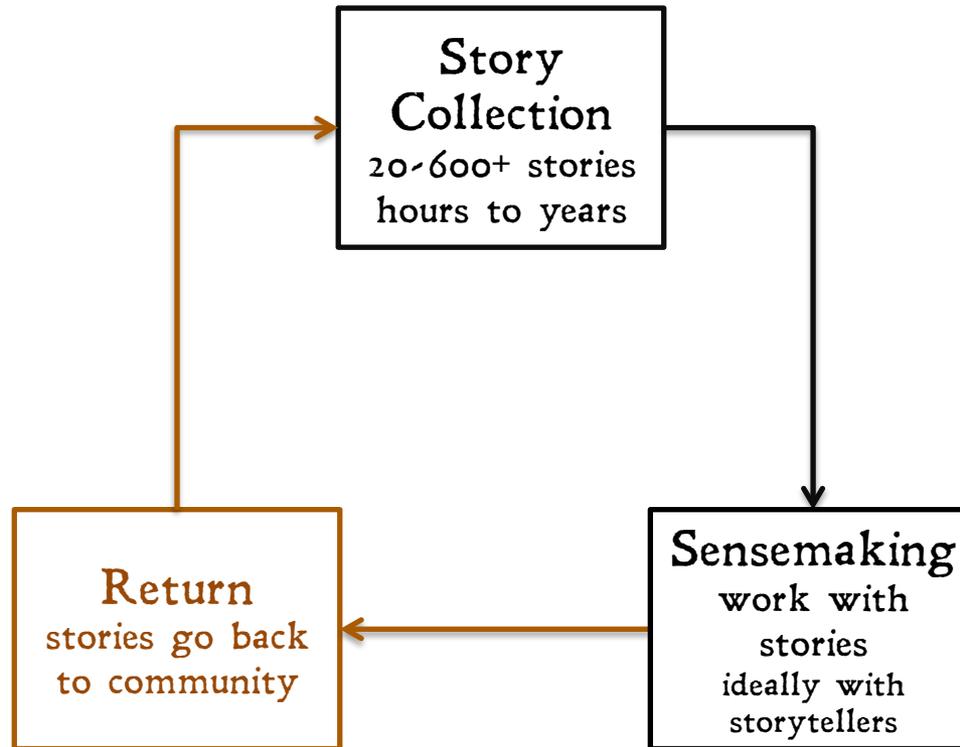
How does PNI work?

Story
Collection
20-600+ stories
hours to years

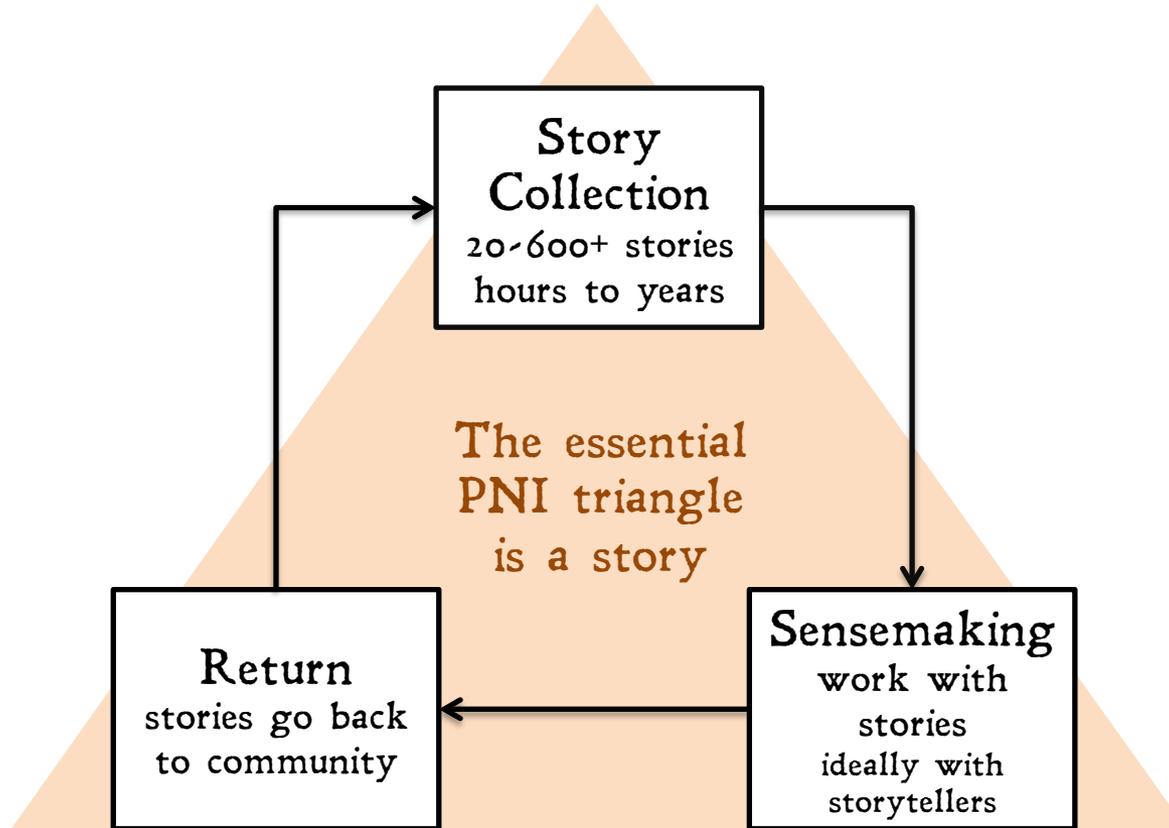
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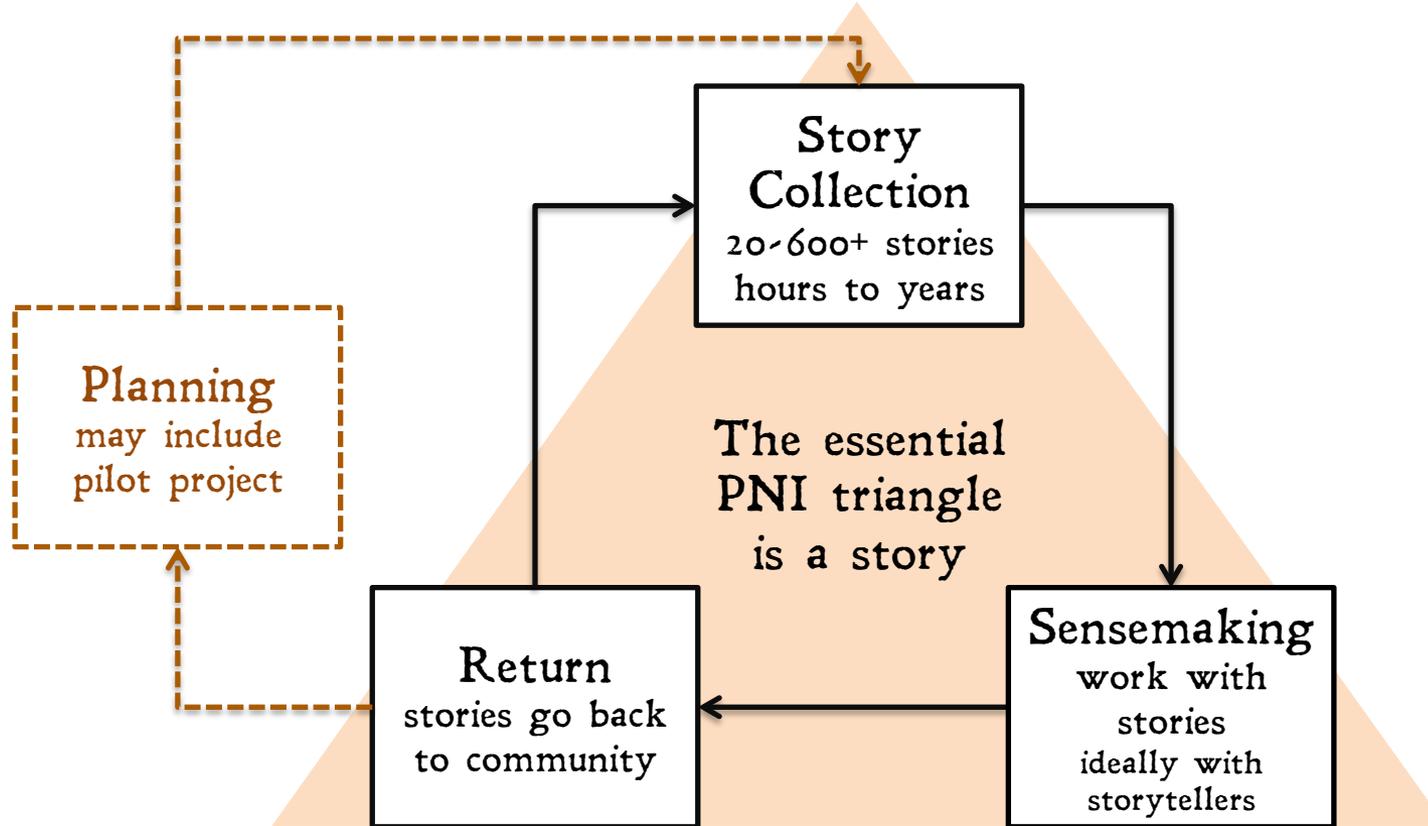
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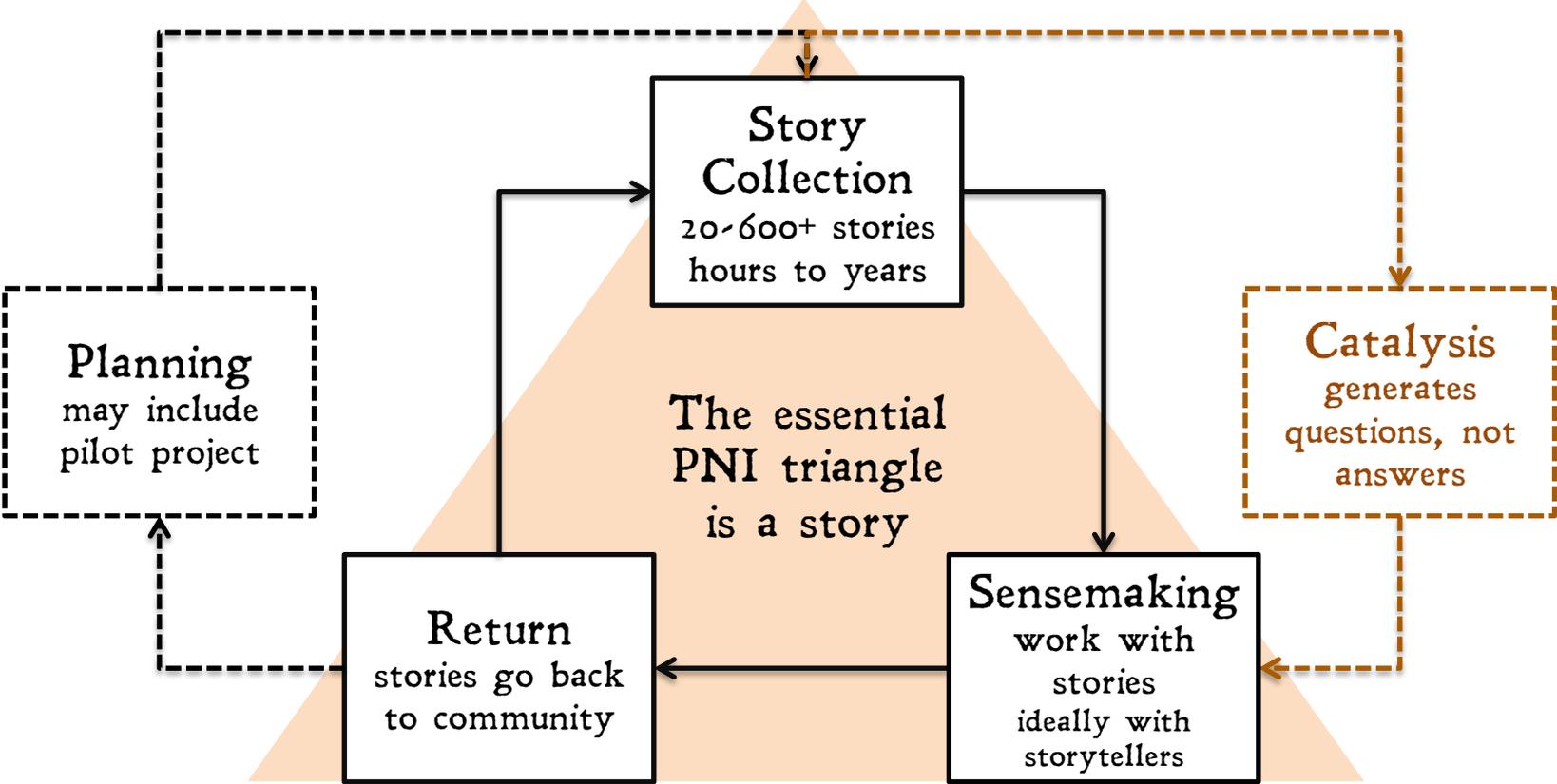
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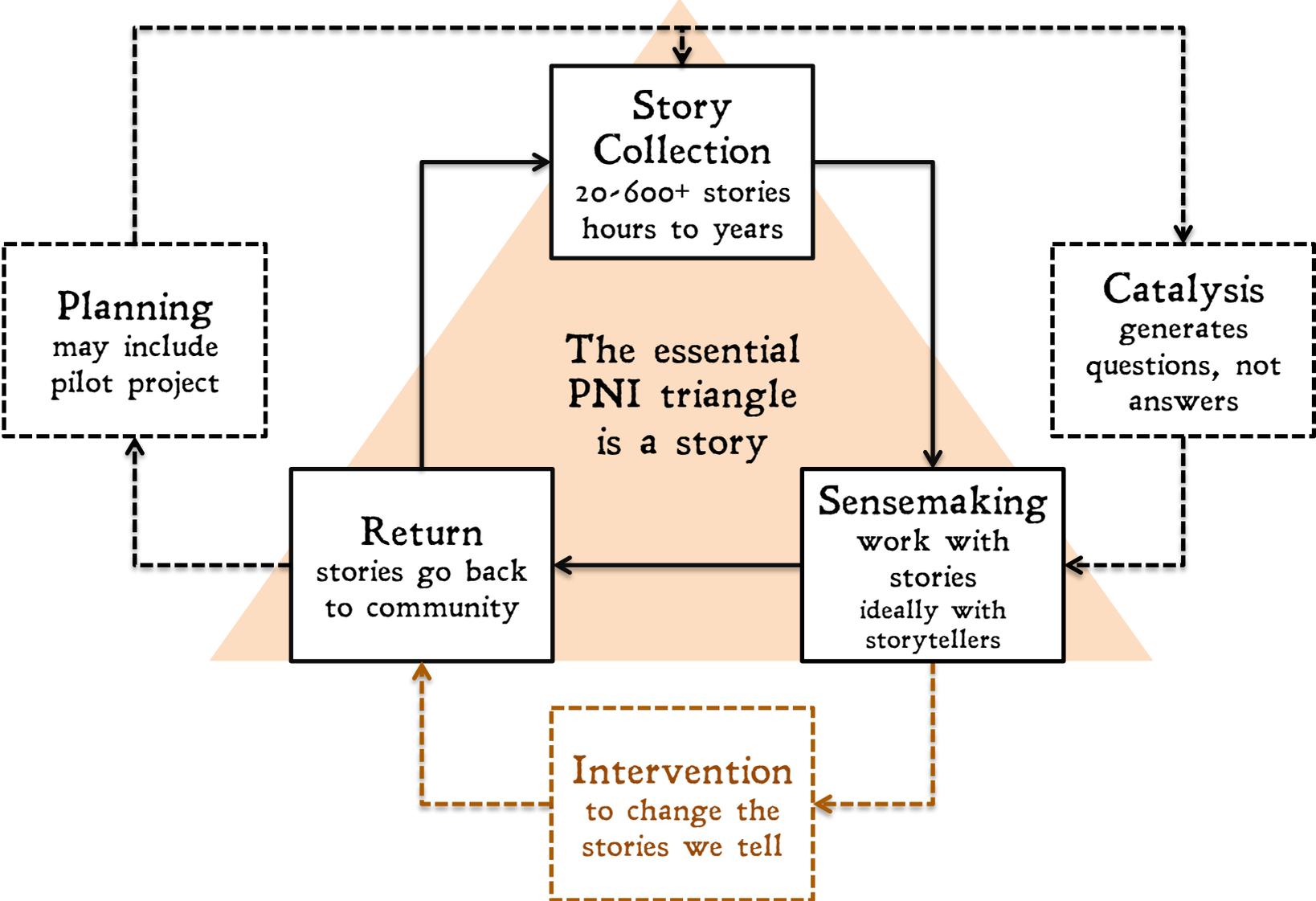
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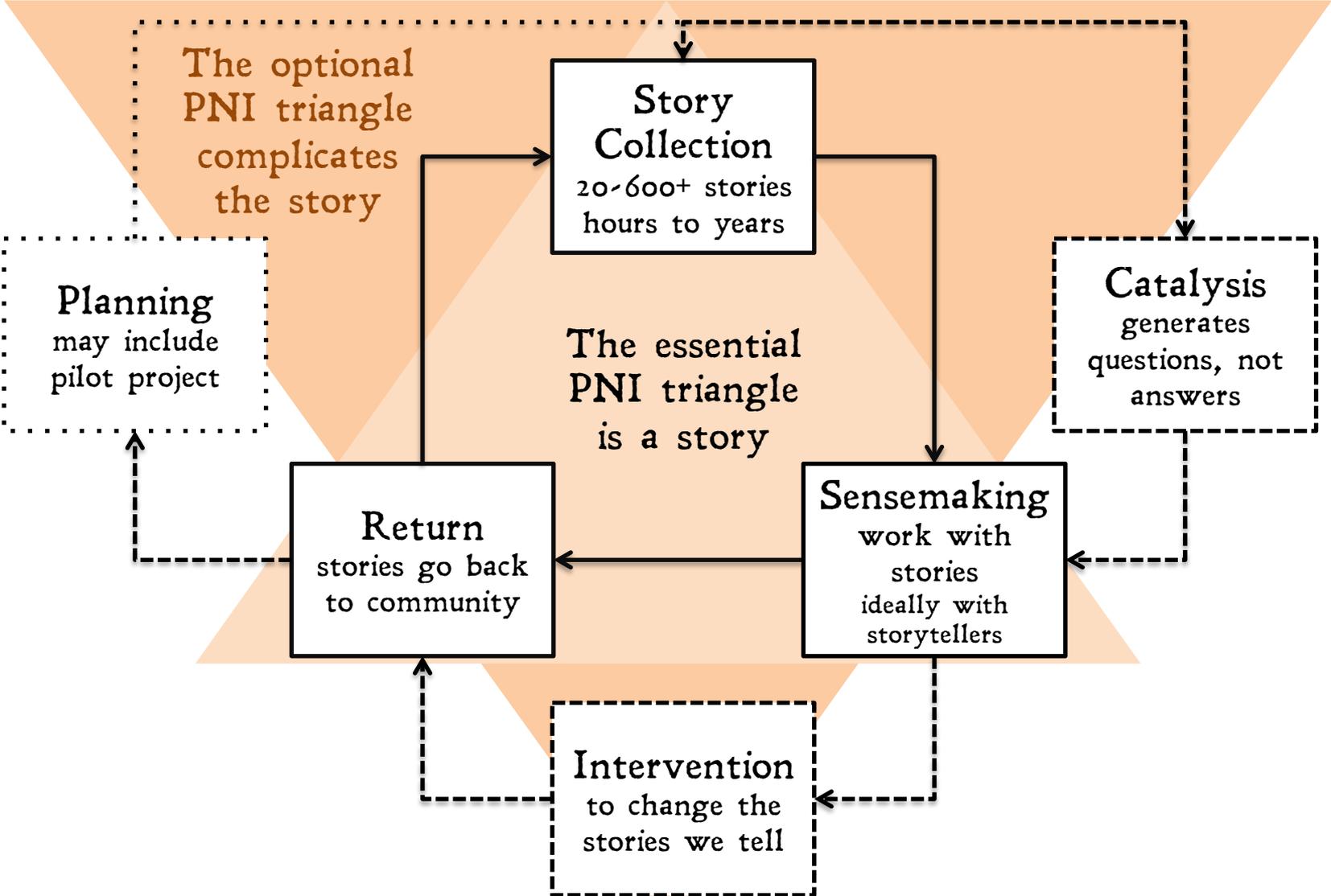
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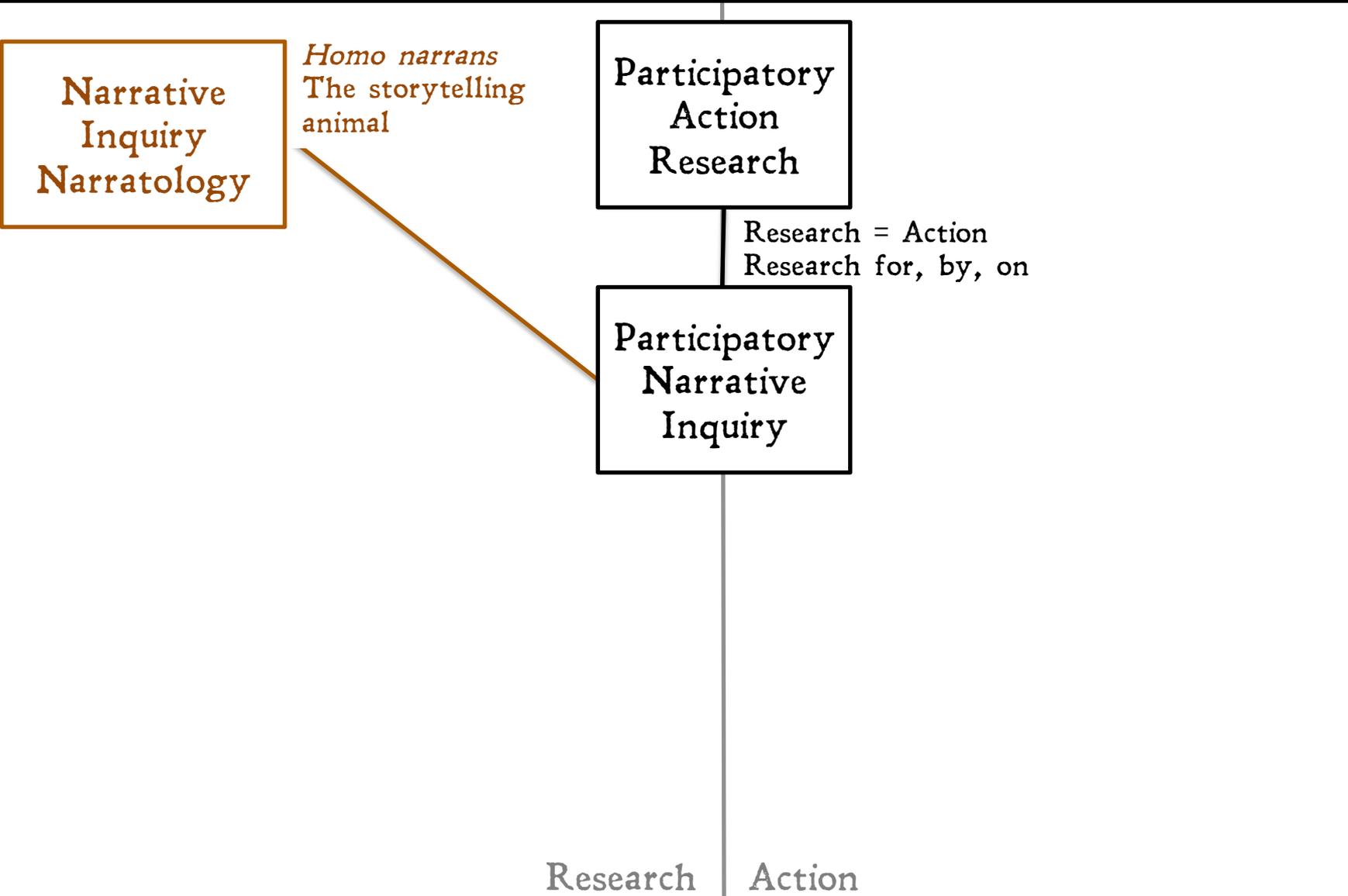
Participatory
Action
Research

Research = Action
Research for, by, on

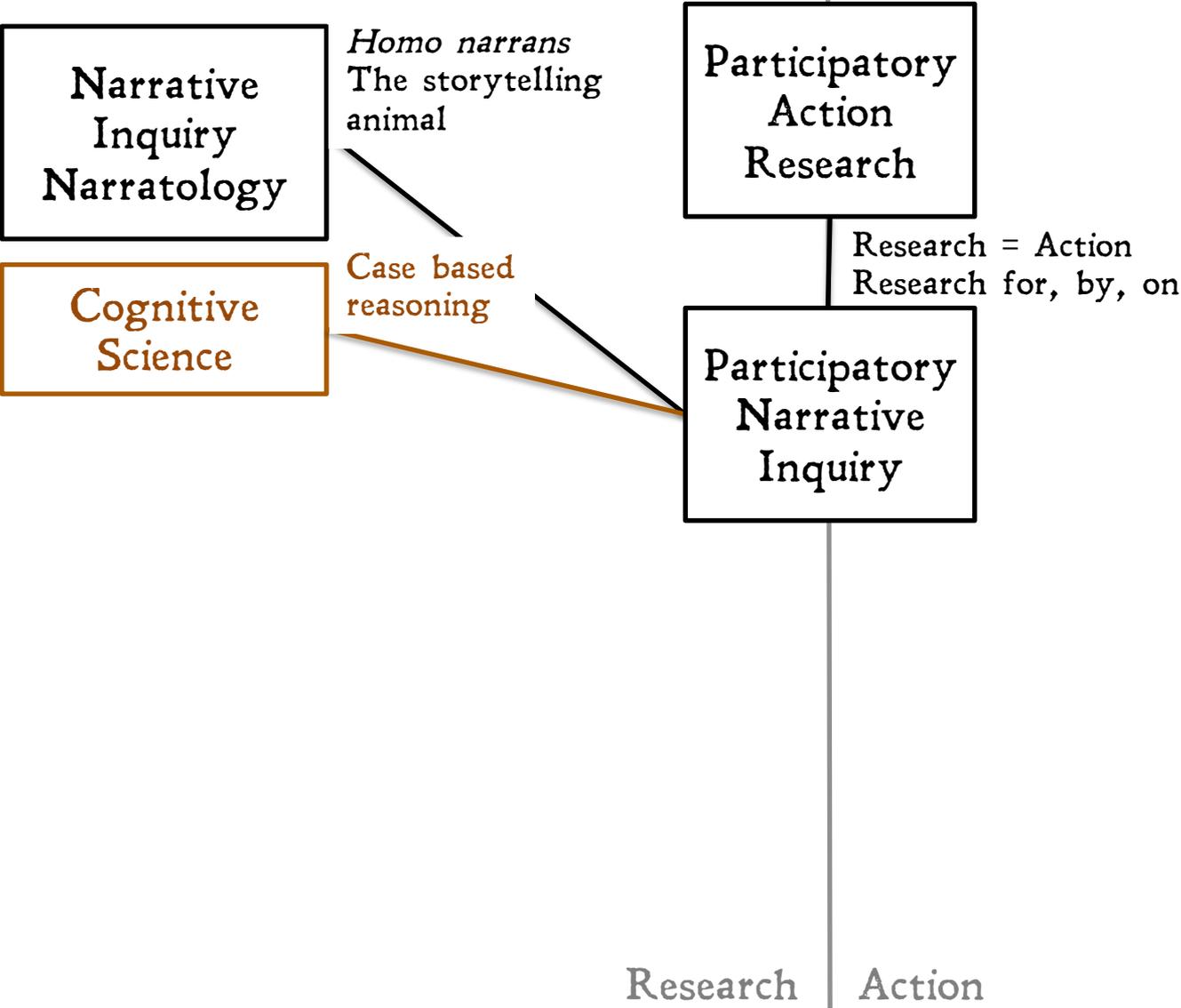
Participatory
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Research | Action

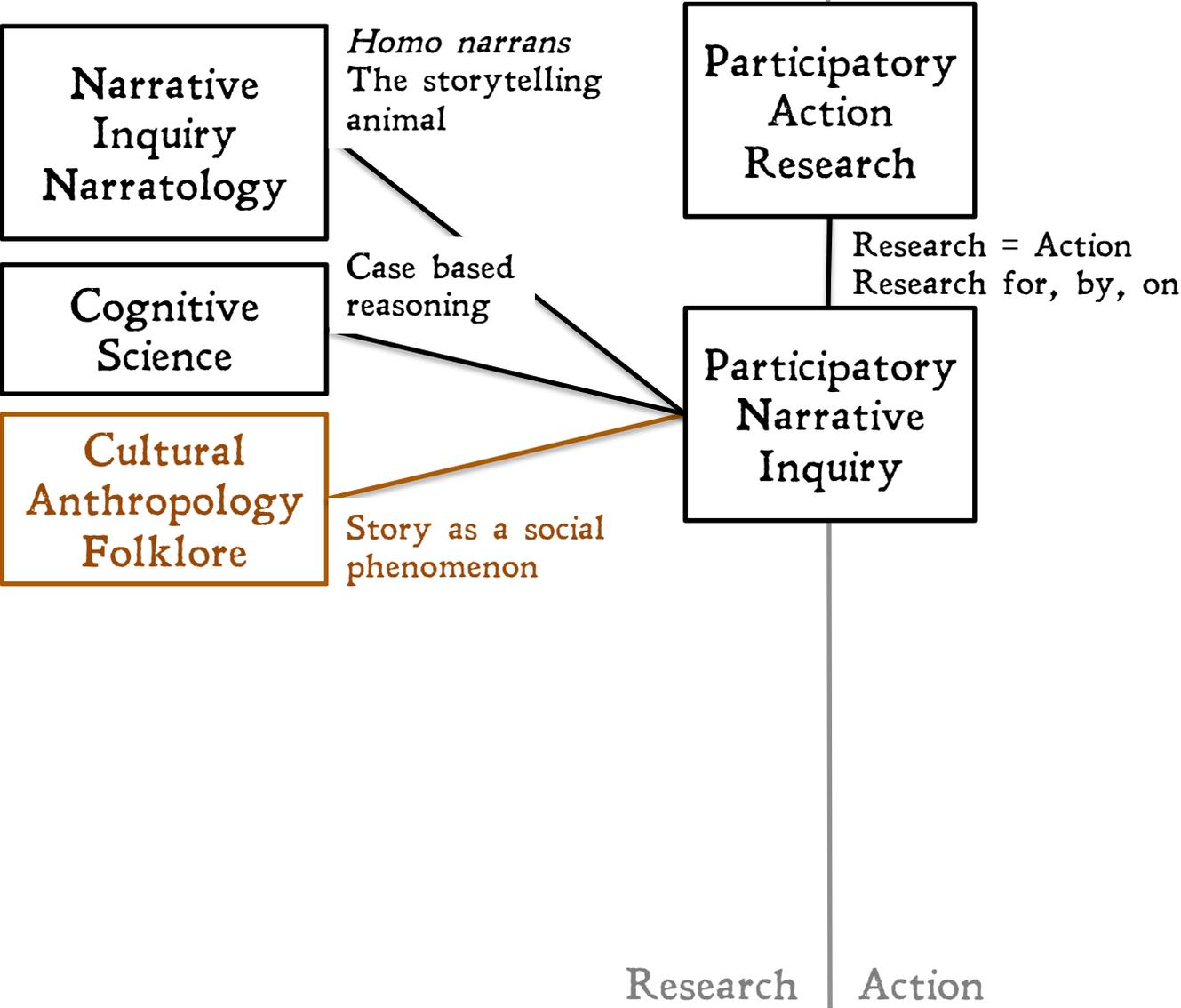
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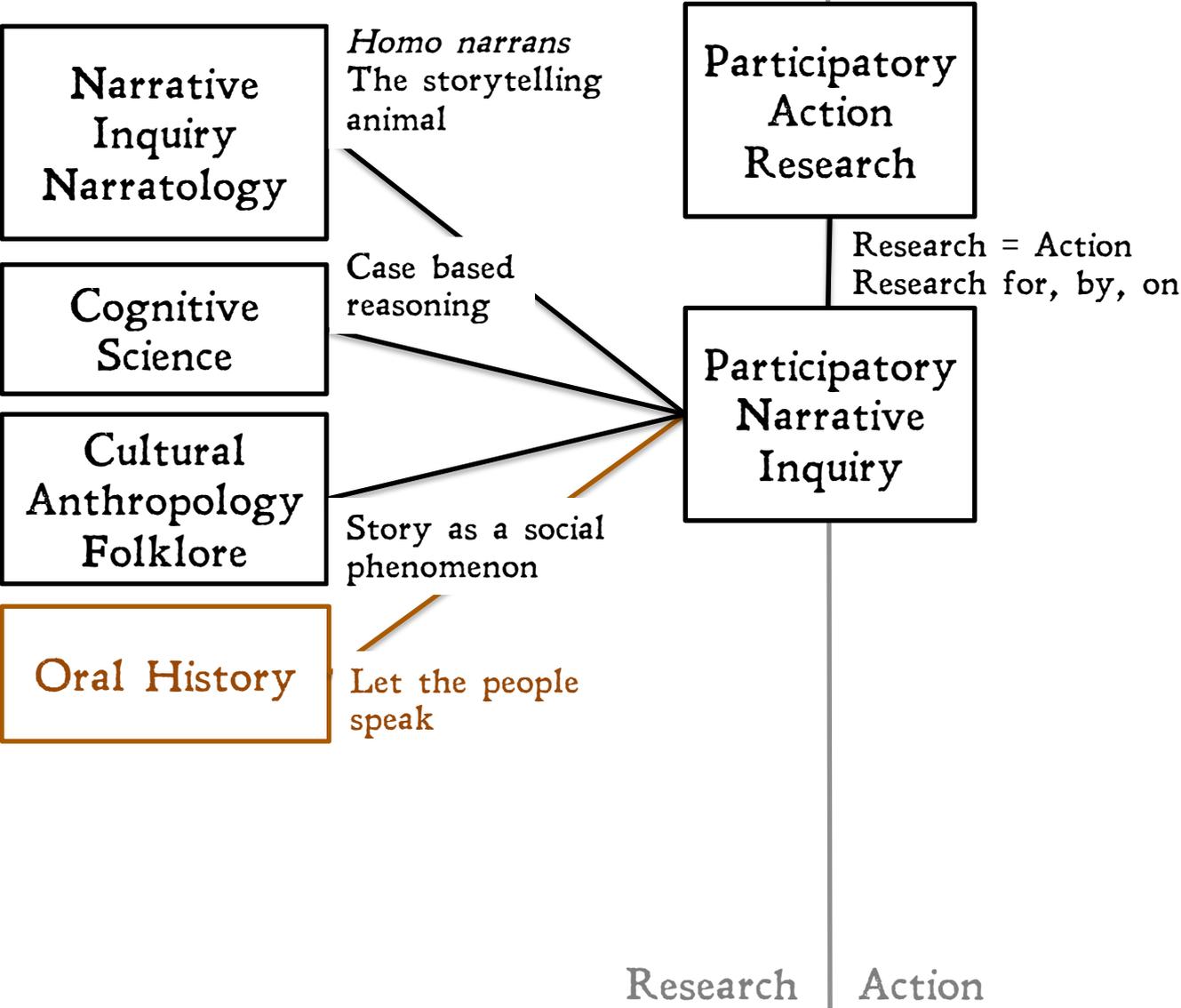
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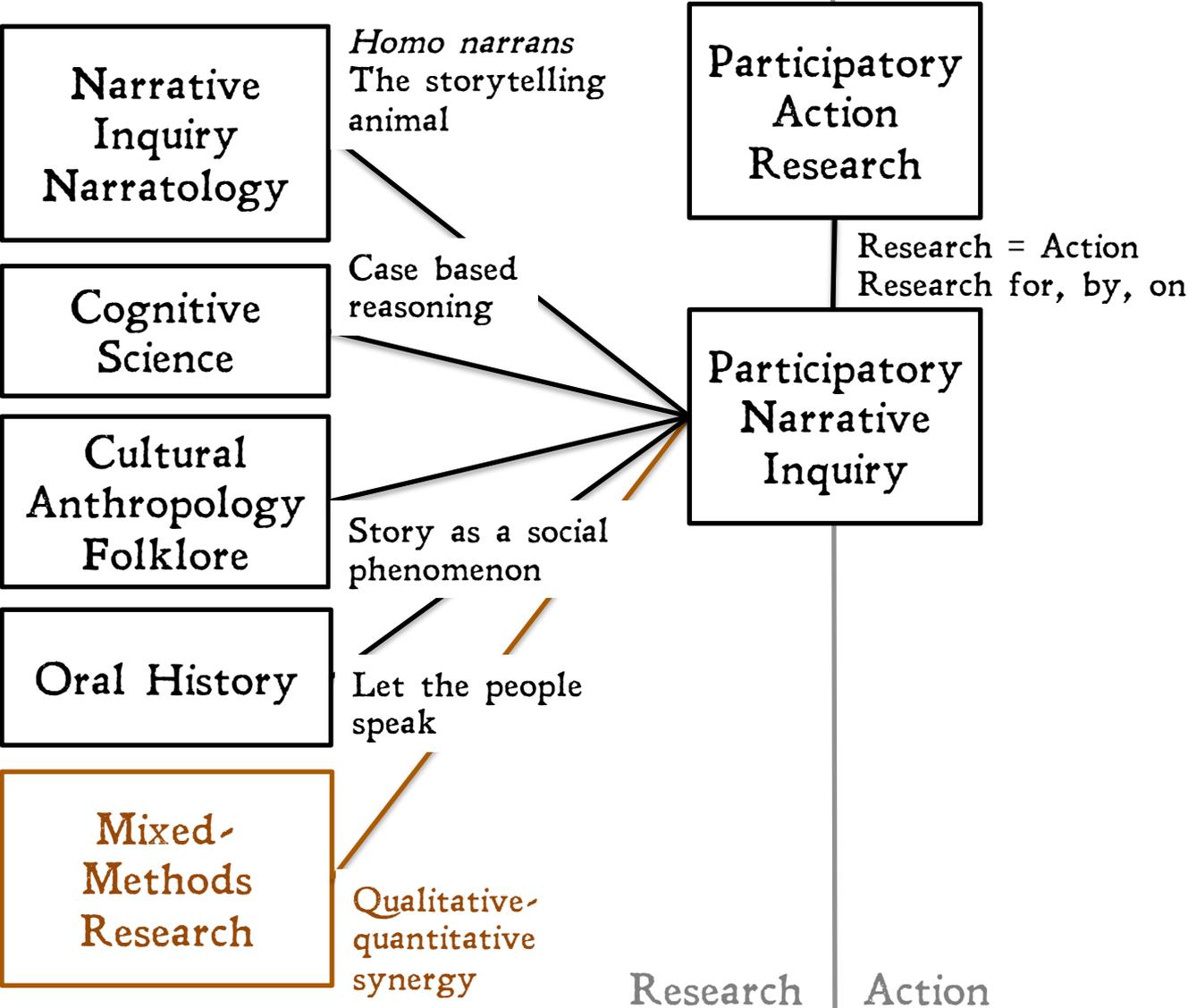
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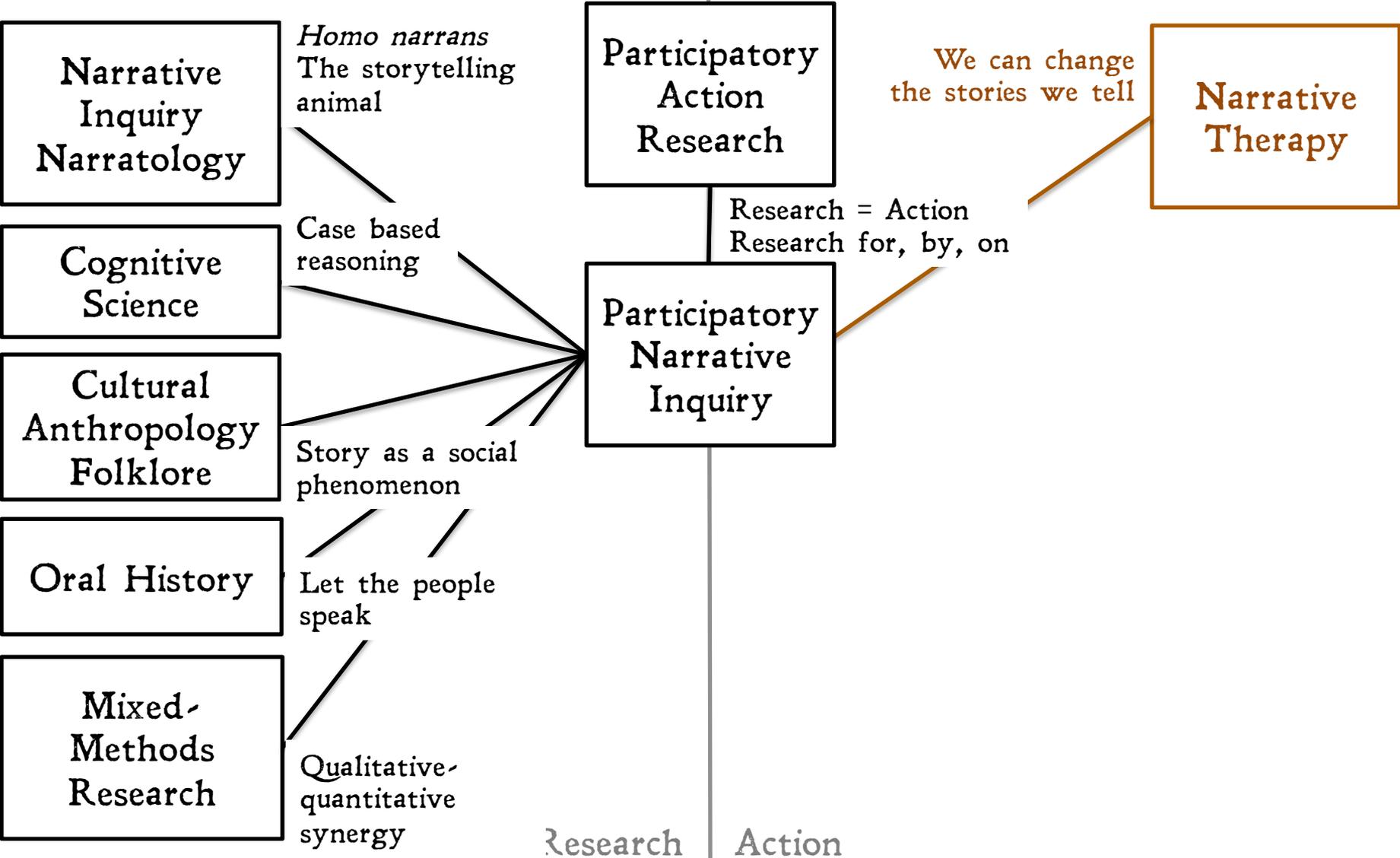
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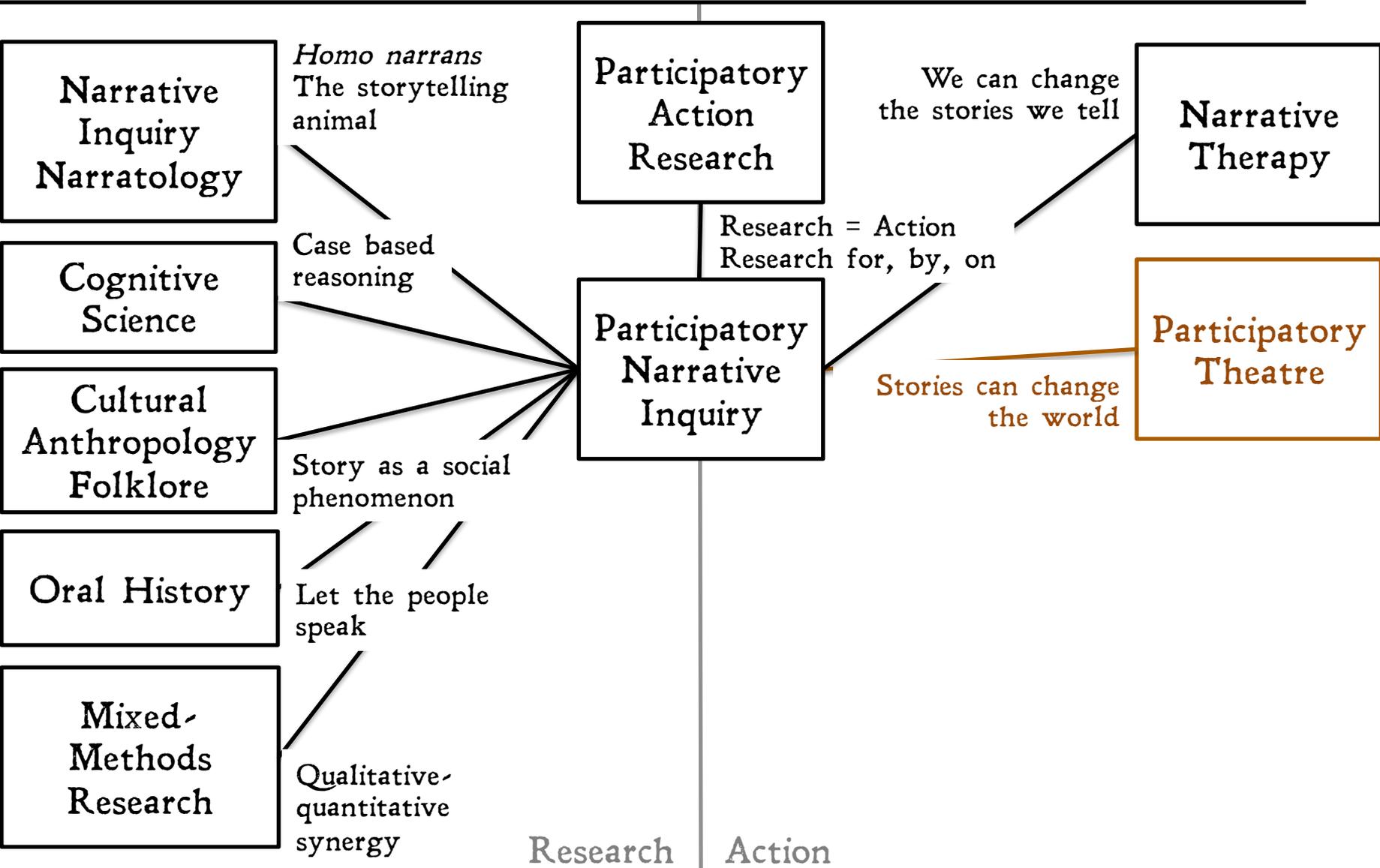
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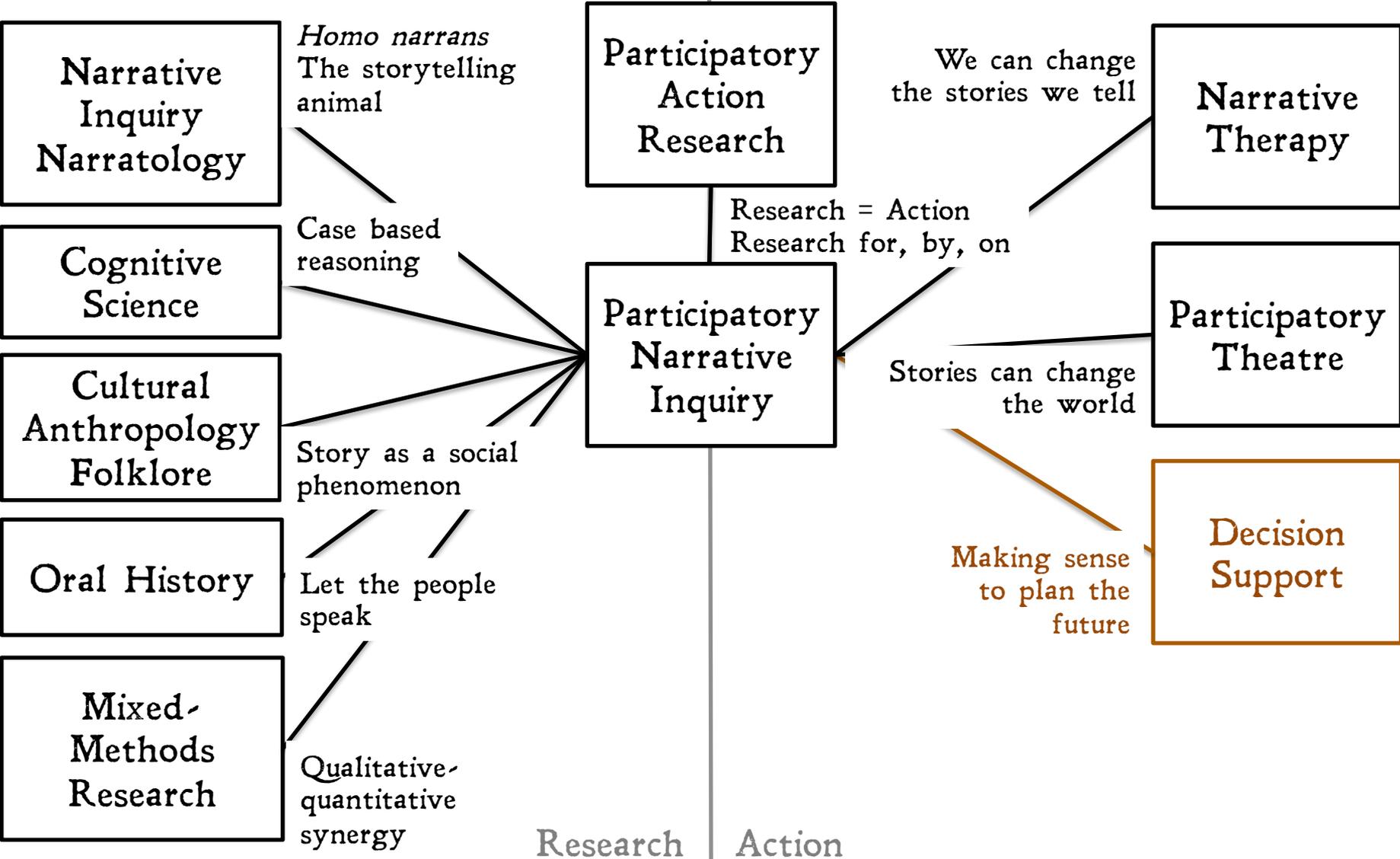
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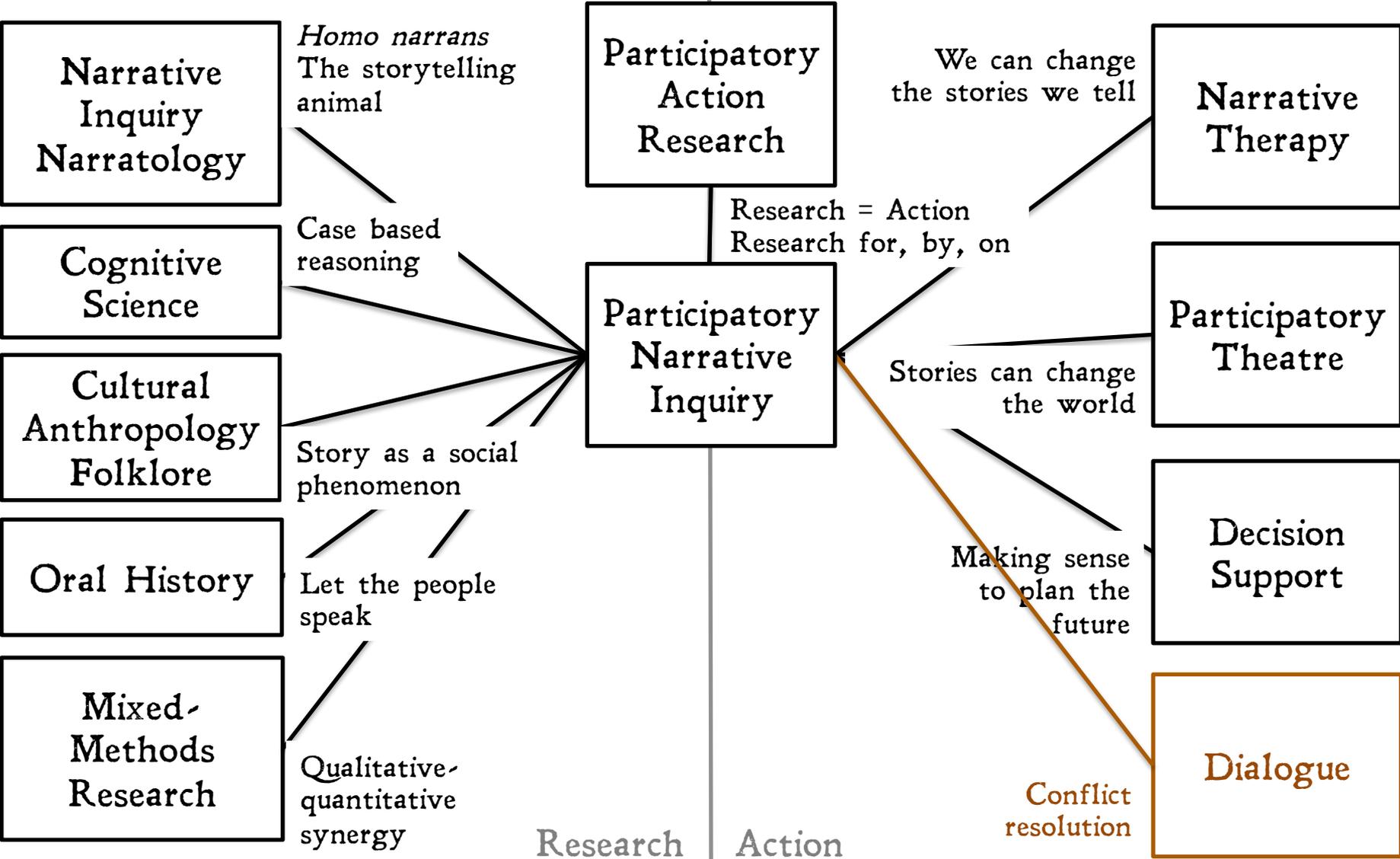
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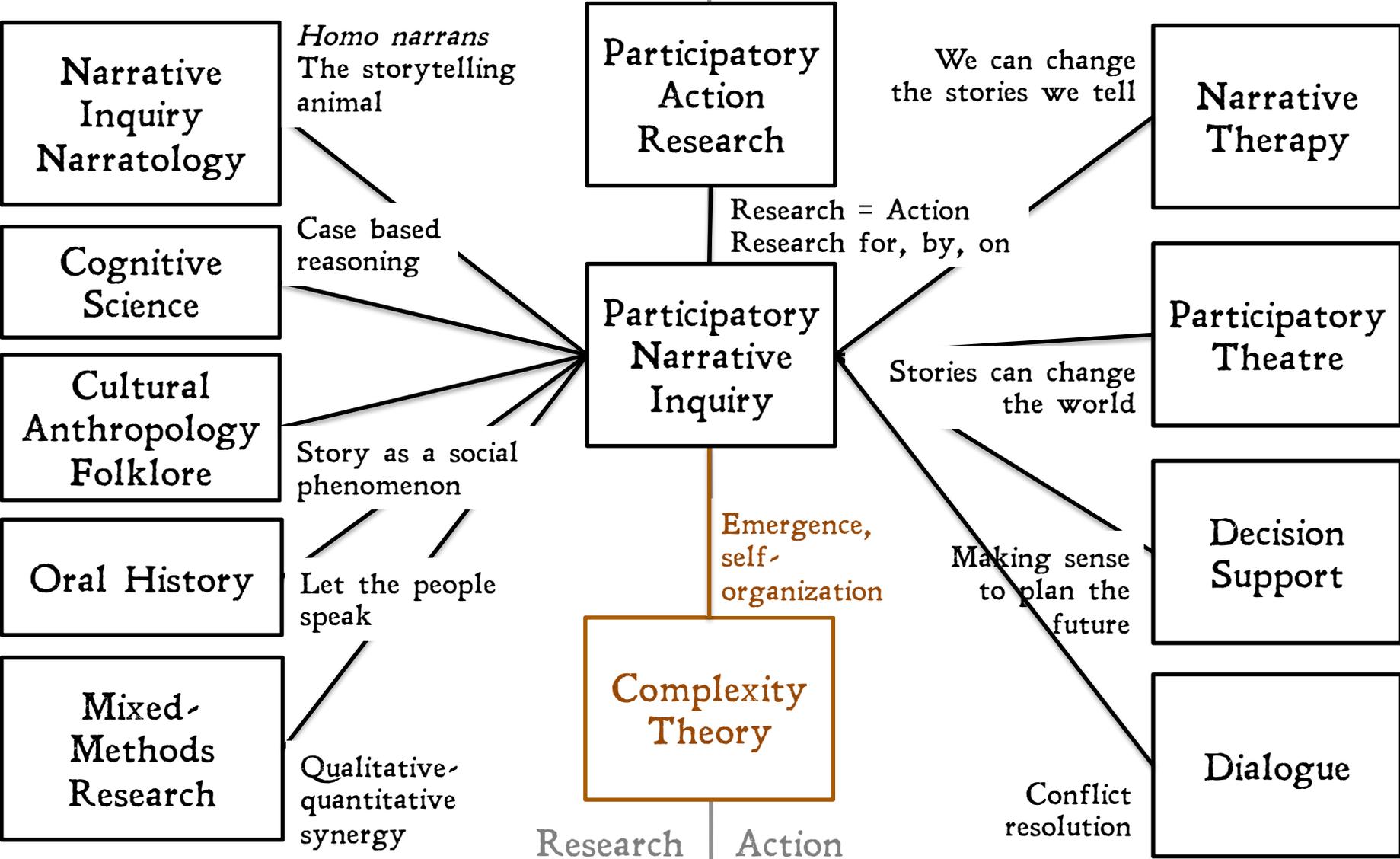
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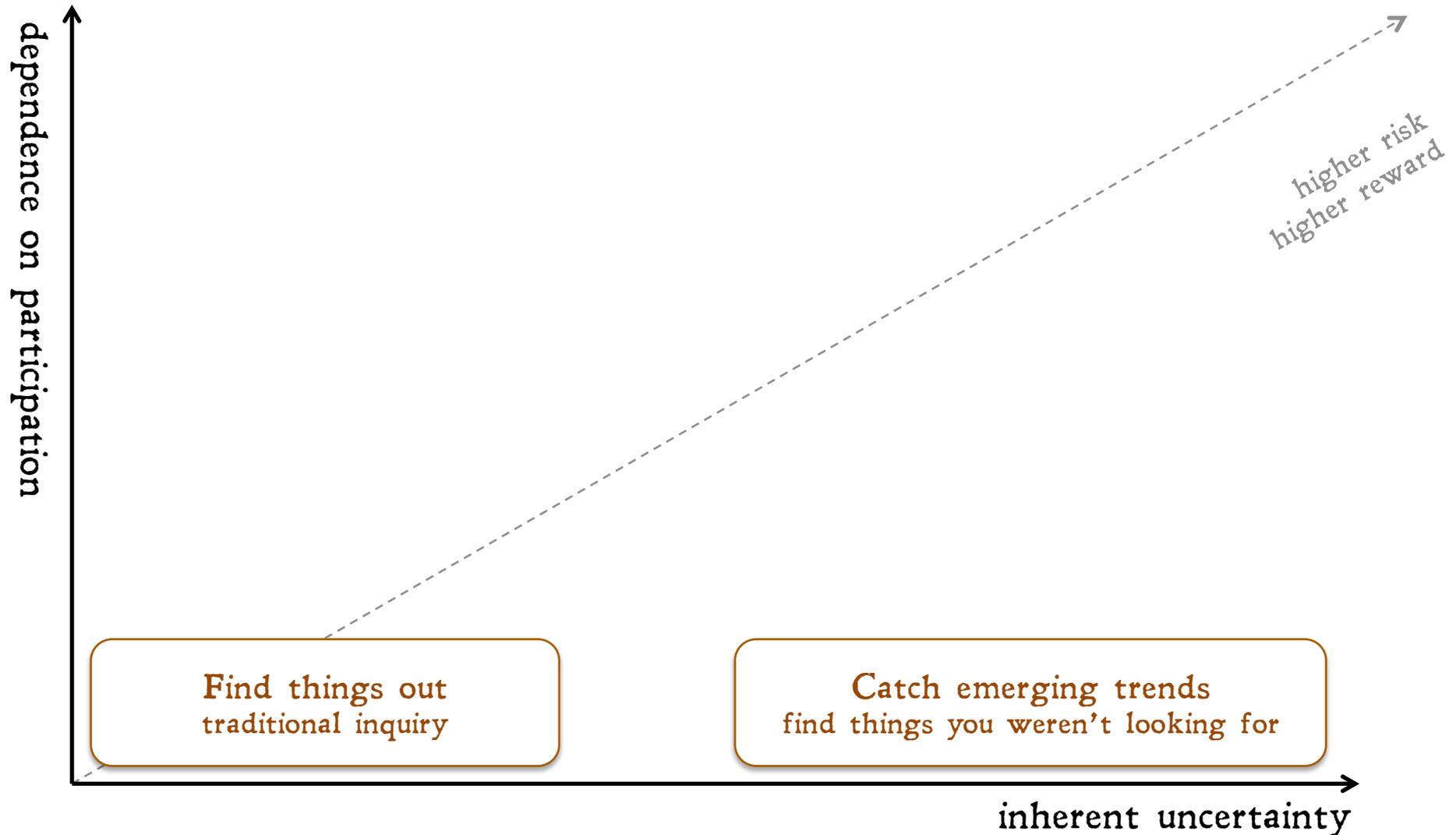
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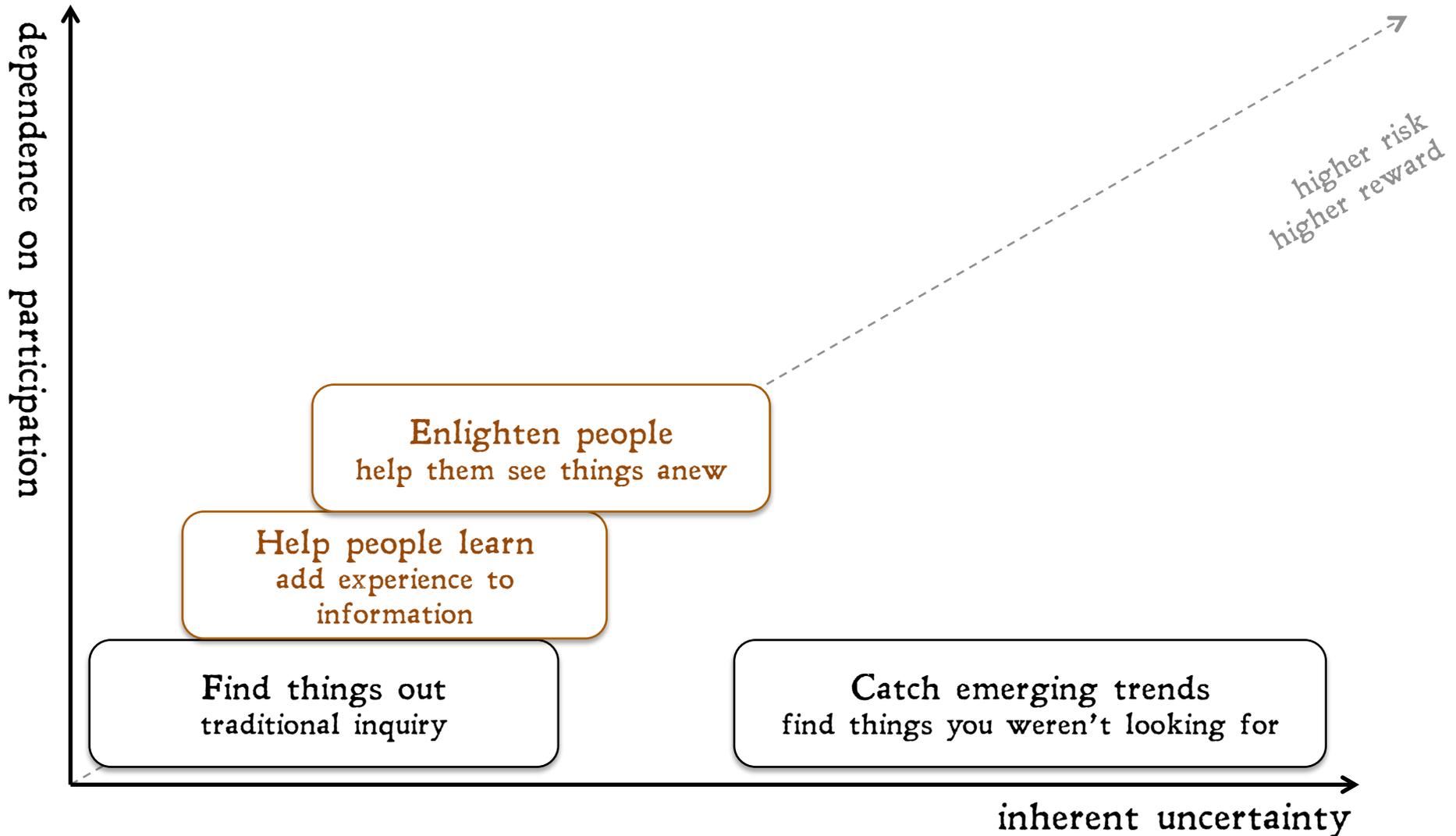
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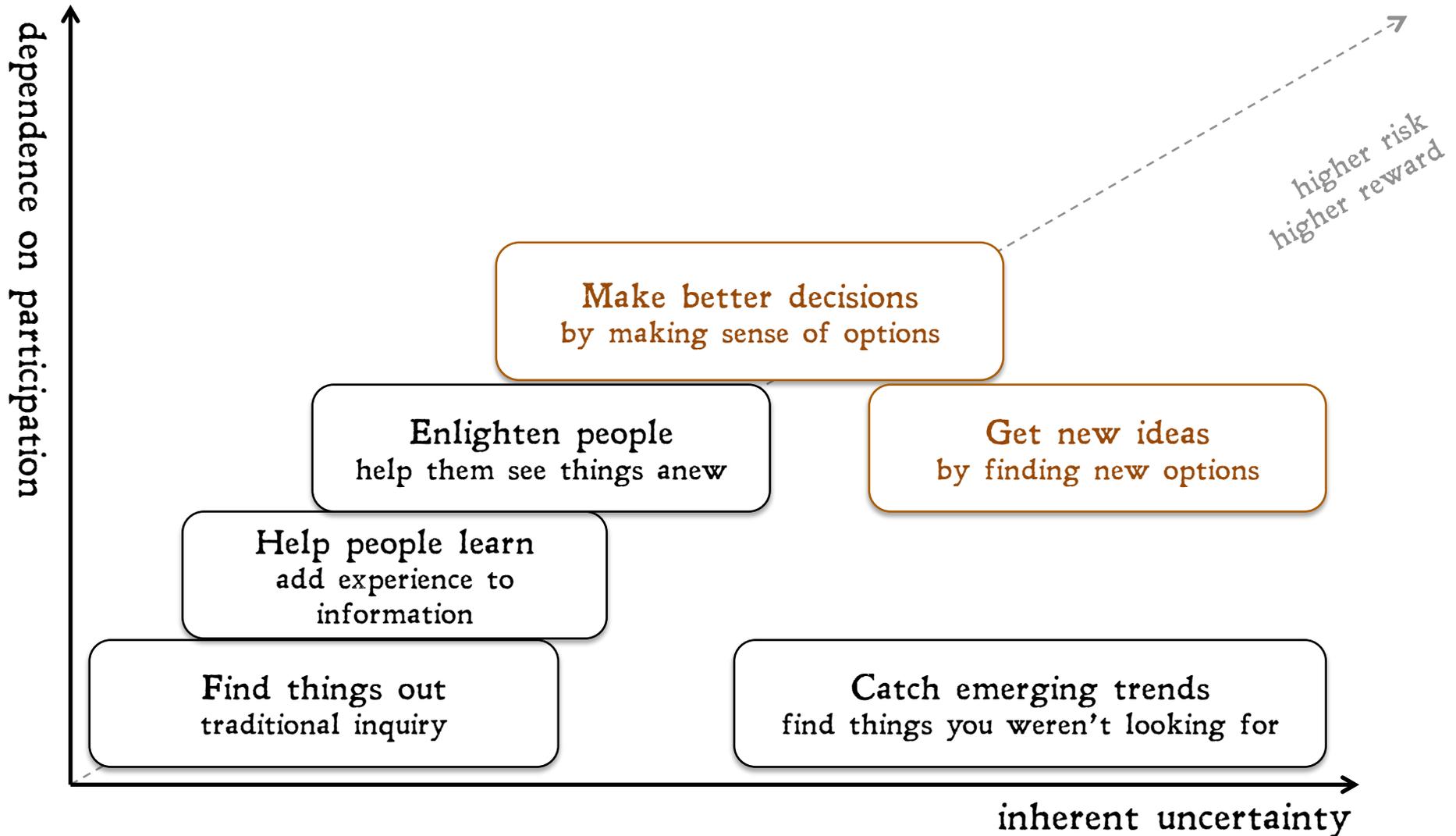
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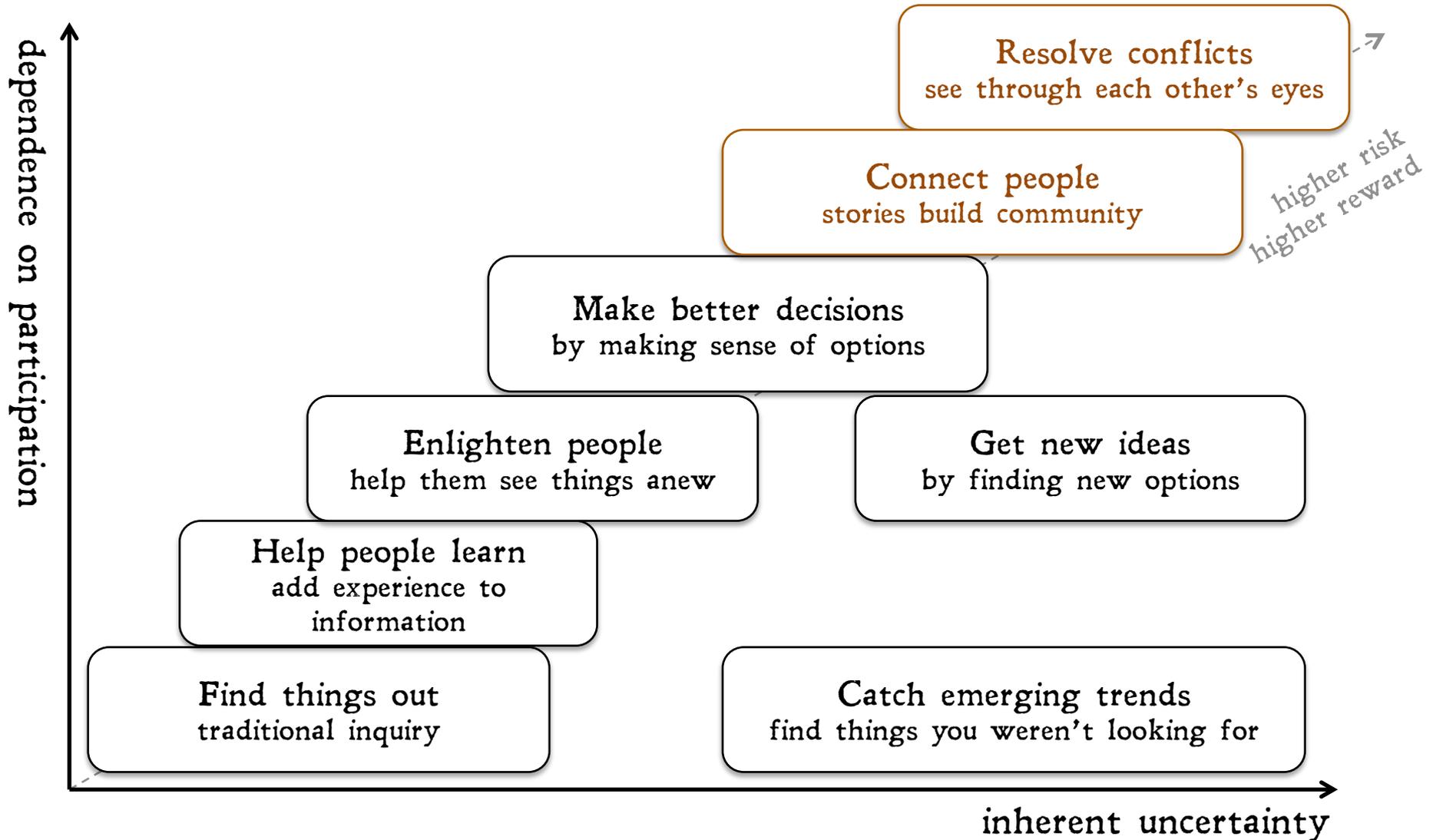
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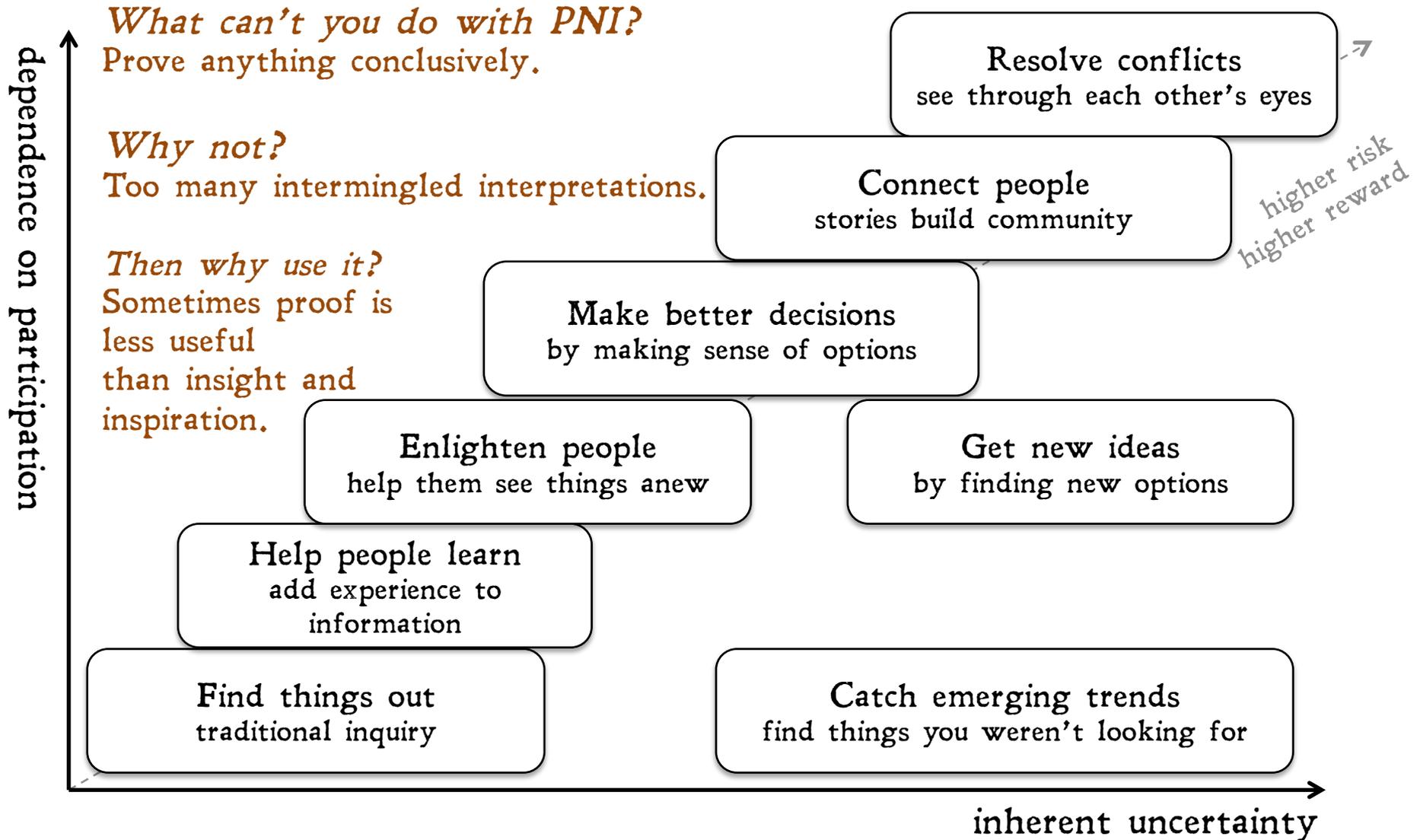
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What is the history of PNI?

99

IBM Global Business Services

Dave Snowden

Sharon Darwent

- Anecdote circles
- Archetypes

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Neal Keller

- Story circles
- Questions about stories

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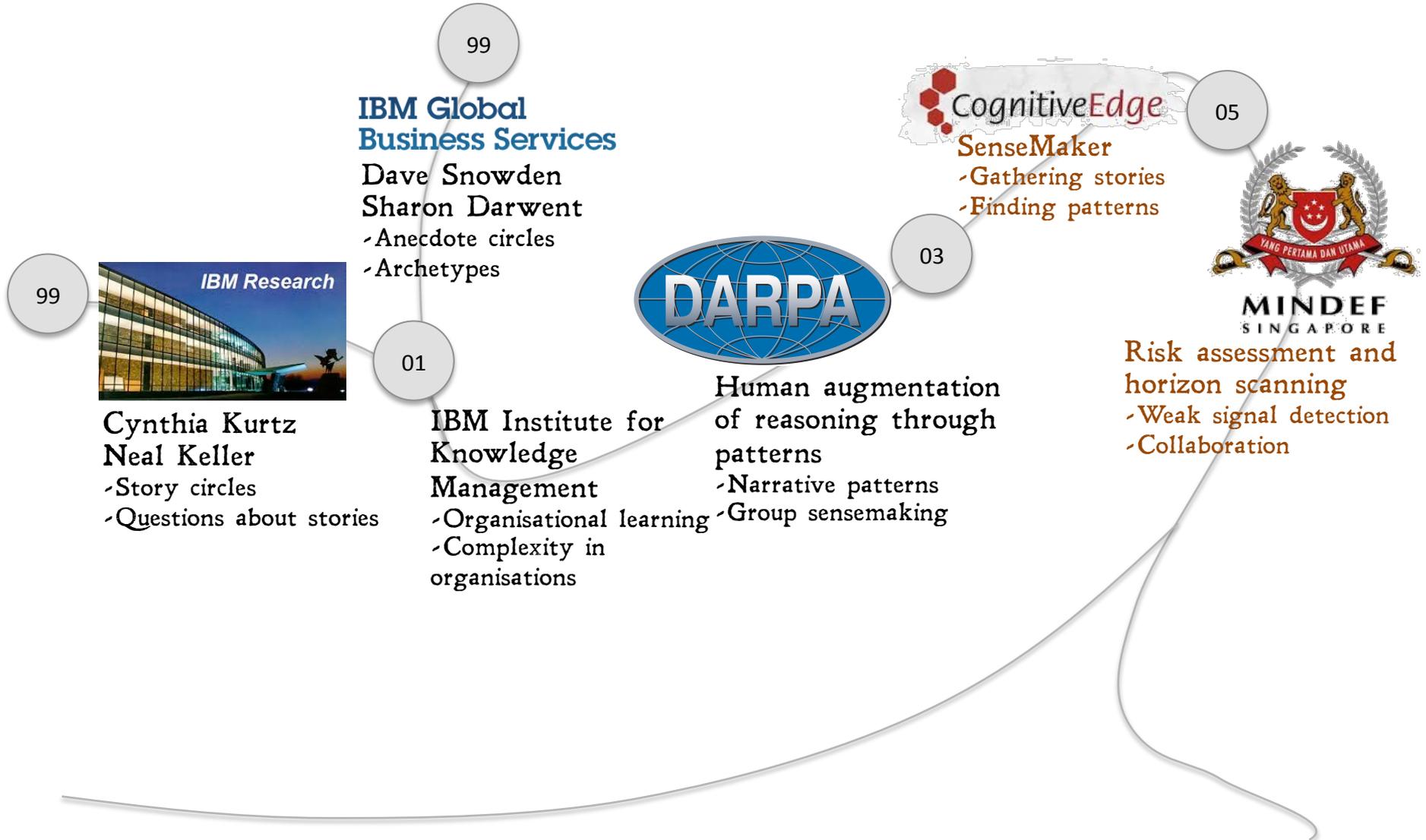
01

IBM Institute for Knowledge Management
- Organisational learning
- Complexity in organisations

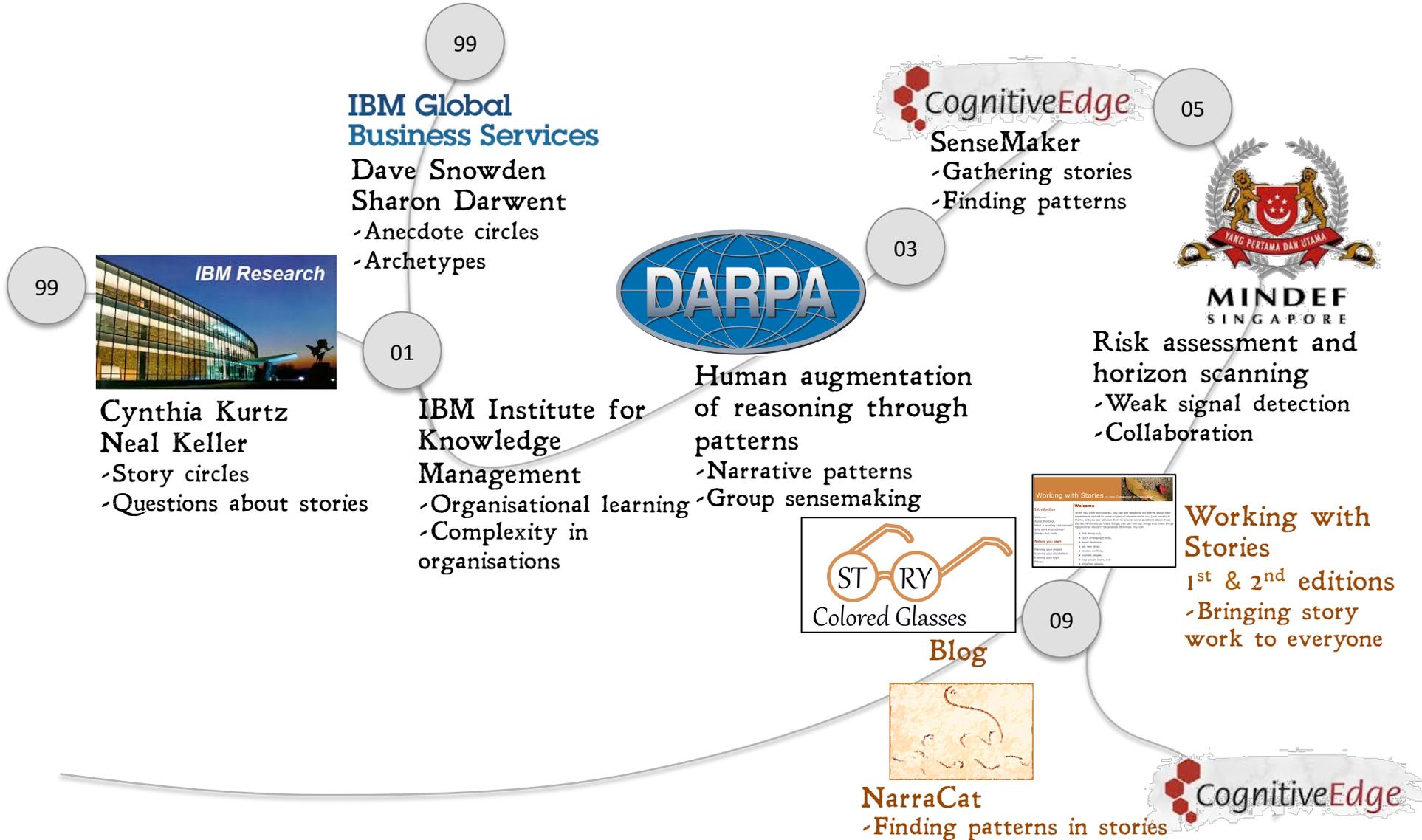


Human augmentation of reasoning through patterns
- Narrative patterns
- Group sensemaking

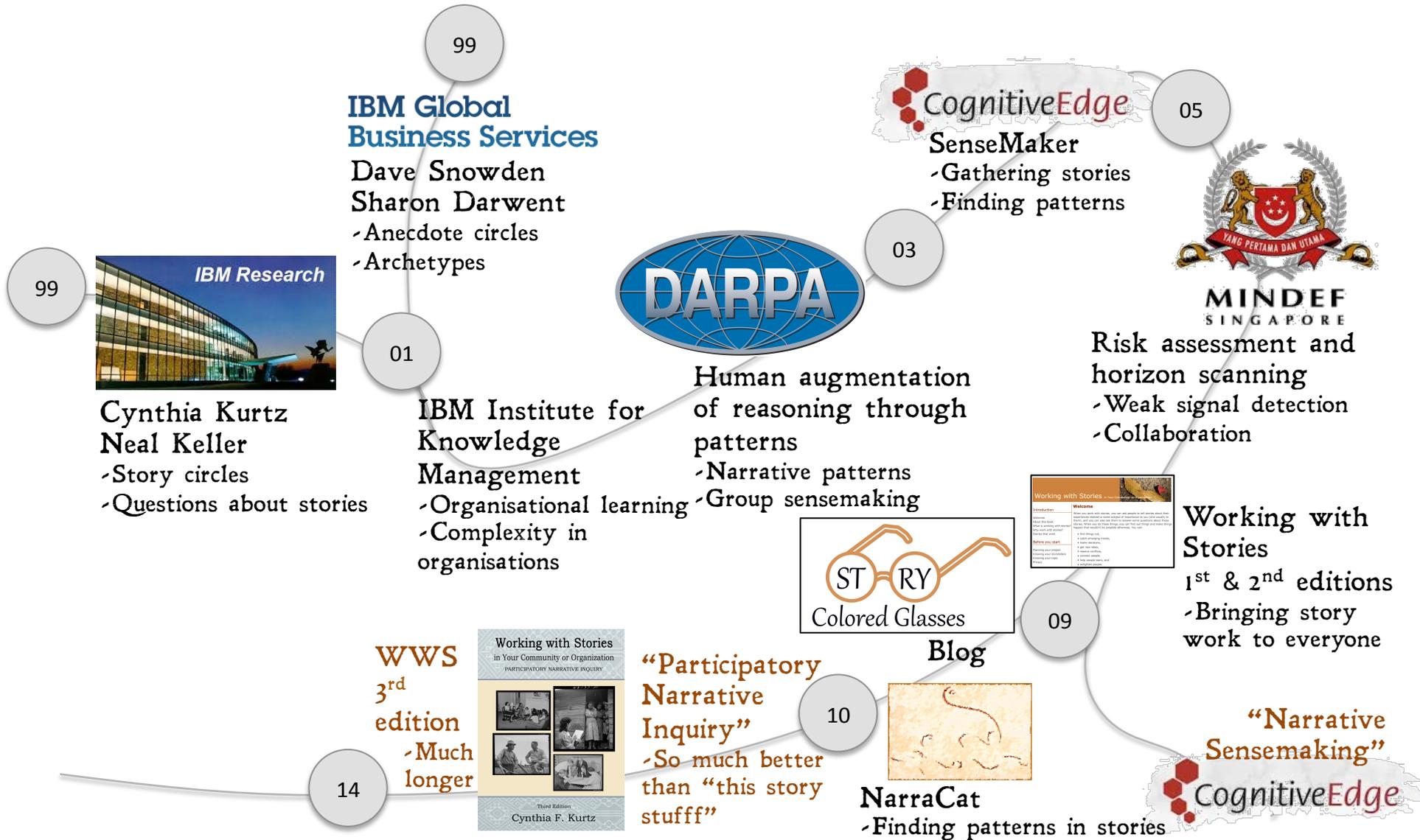
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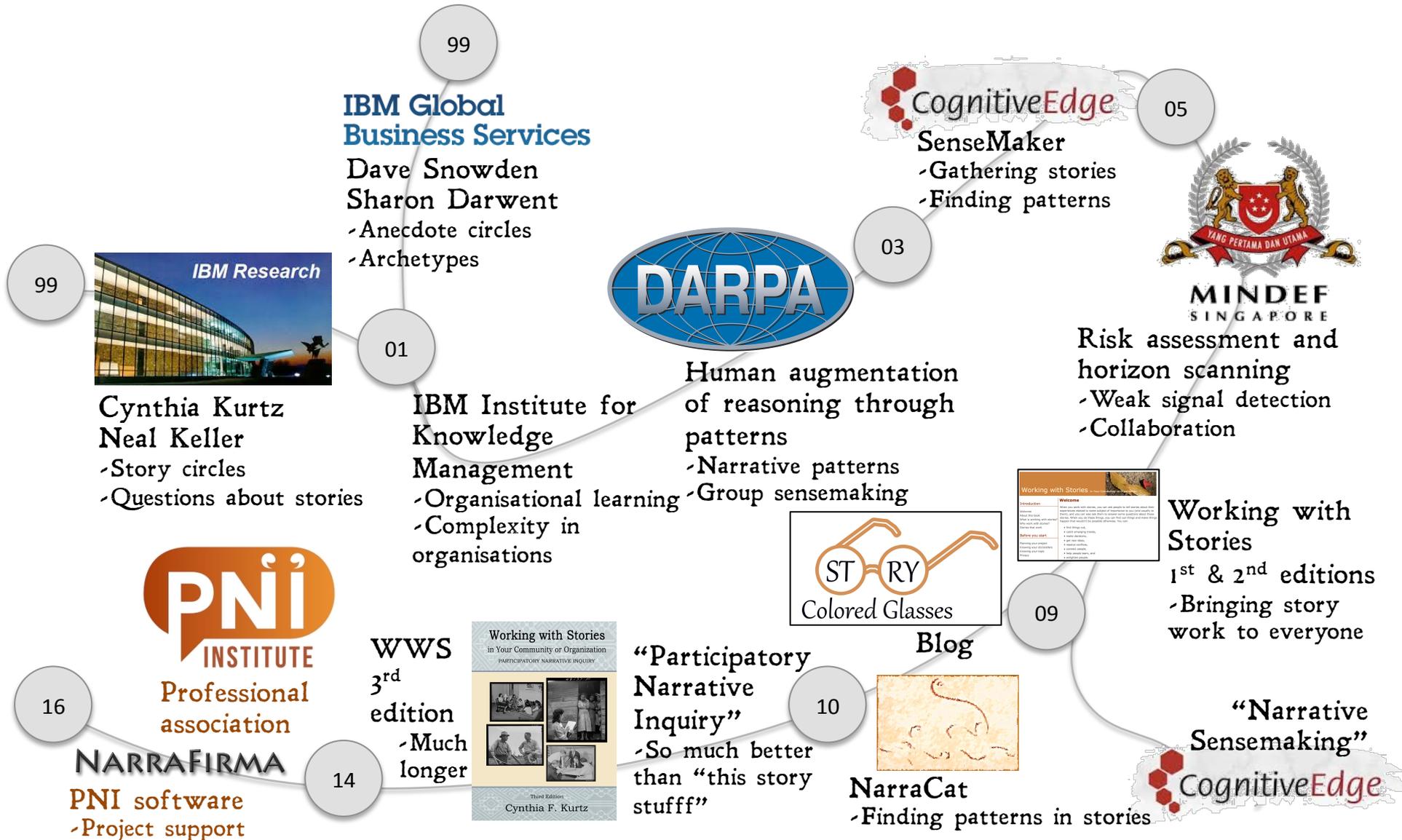
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Stories explore conflict and contrast at many scales. So does PNI. It's about mutual awareness, not consensus.

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If you do not make PNI your own, you are not doing PNI.

PNI is not a dogma. It's alive, and it needs you.

What are some examples of real PNI projects by industry?

Health care

- **Doctor-patient relationships**
How do doctors and patients share control, communicate, and make decisions?
- **Hospital management**
How can we best balance patient safety, compassionate care, quality, and efficiency?
- **Physician motivations** Why do doctors do what they do? How can we help them do it?

Manufacturing and Utility

- **Customer satisfaction** Why do only some of our customers trust us?
- **Innovation** How can we design products for a variety of medical conditions? What unique conditions do we need to address?
- **Merger and acquisition** How can we help two very different cultures learn to work productively together?

Education

- **Beliefs about learning** What do students, parents, and teachers think makes a good student? Do they agree?
- **School benchmarking**
Which schools need our help, and how?
- **Leadership** What makes a good leader? How can we help people learn to lead?

Emergency preparedness

- **Weak signal detection** How can we help policy analysts make sense of complex situations?
- **Inter-agency collaboration**
How can we work together to avert disasters?
- **Voice of the citizen** What is the public's view of large infrastructure projects? What are their beliefs and concerns?

What are some examples of real PNI projects by function?

Research and planning

- **Future planning**
What drives our volunteers? How can we better support them? What do they need from us?
- **Problem solving**
Where, when, how, and why is theft taking place in our city? What can we do to reduce crime?
- **Evaluation** What do our college students need to succeed? Who needs our help most?

Human resources

- **Work-life balance** Why are people in this particular division so overworked? What is going on there?
- **Leadership development**
How can we help our top executives evaluate their performance and learn from others without losing face?
- **Retention** How can we challenge our employees in ways that inspire them instead of draining them?

Knowledge management

- **Knowledge transfer** How can we help our retiring employees pass on what they know in a respectful yet useful manner?
- **Training** How can we help our employees understand a complex process that few fully understand?
- **Communication between silos**
How can we help policy makers and scientists communicate more effectively?

Customer relations

- **Perceptions** How do our patients see us? How do our patients think we help them, and how do they think we hinder them?
- **Satisfaction** How do our members see our professional organization? Are we meeting their needs?
- **Misunderstanding**
How can we counter a dangerous misbelief about our product? How can we protect our customers when they won't listen to us?

Questions?

Find out more at:

- ✓ workingwithstories.org – textbook
- ✓ pni2.org – PNI Institute
- ✓ storycoloredglasses.com – blog
- ✓ cfkurtz.com – web site