

Nothing For Us, Without Us

Moving from Action to Impact

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A retrospective on reconciliation by design

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Abstract

It is well-established that Indigenous peoples continue to experience a lower level of health than non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. For many health leaders, finding practical strategies to close the gap in health disparities remains elusive. In this retrospective study, we will illustrate our own experience of transformational change using design and systems thinking tools toward a primary outcome of multi-stakeholder alignment. Using this approach enabled three Indigenous Provincial/Territorial Organizations (IPTOs) representing more than 150 First Nations communities from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario to establish the largest community-led, collaborative approach to health transformation in Canada at the time. These IPTOs have gone on to pursue some of the most ambitious health transformation initiatives in Canada and in September 2018, were granted \$68 million in funding support by the Government of Canada. If health leaders are looking at an alternative approach to closing the gap in Indigenous health, alignment thinking has shown promising results.

There is a world out there we don't see



- skə'tōmə/Scotoma
- a partial loss of vision or a blind spot in an otherwise normal visual field
- can be due to neuromuscular diseases including strokes, neurodegenerative diseases and trauma

There is a world out there we don't see



- skə'tōmə/Scotoma, intellectual
- an inability to perceive distortions in perception that are obvious to others
- in philosophy or politics, a person's thoughts or beliefs might be shaped by an inability to appreciate aspects of social interaction or institutional structure
- when we profile patients/clients, we apply “blindspots”

Unconscious bias

- Even when we are aware, we still apply these perceptions; more likely when stressed, emotional, in burnout
- Unconscious bias helps us make sense of the world; can't be eliminated, can only be managed

Is racism a problem?

- Does racism exist in our healthcare system?
- Is racism a problem?

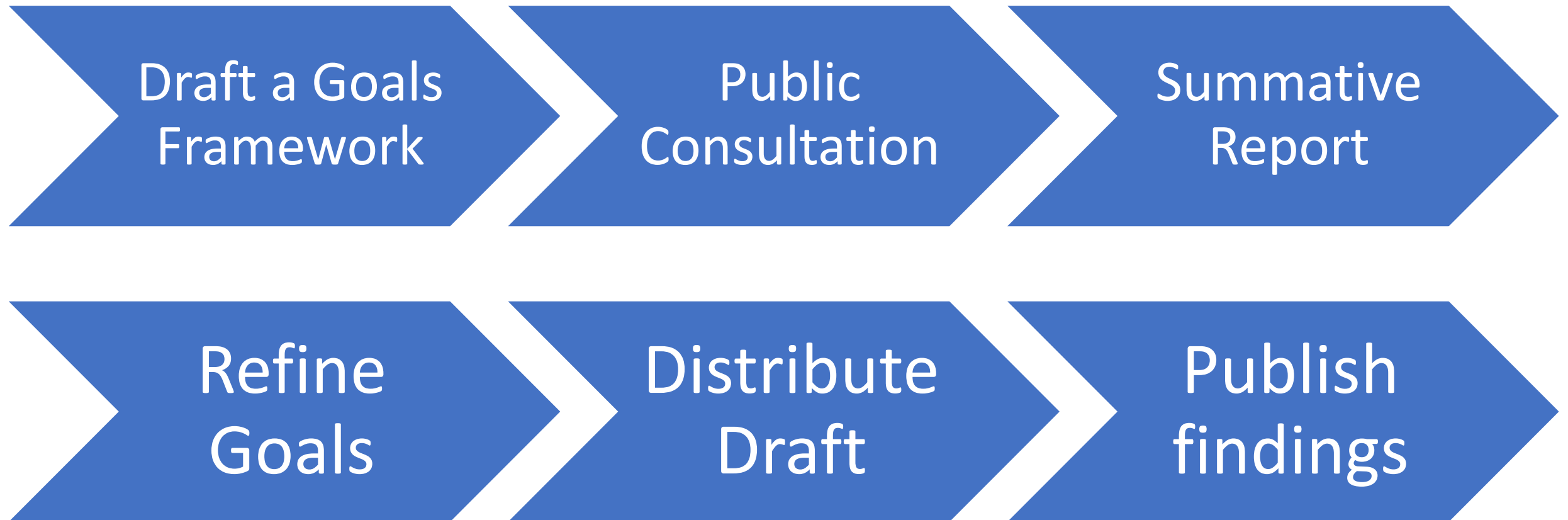
“Our stories are so out of norm and removed from another person's experience that they have a hard time believing that these things can happen.”
- Cree Elder

Do you *believe* these
stories?

The Indigenous Health Alliance

- Project that began in 2013 and wrapped in 2017
- Started with 3 First Nations and grew to 150 First Nations represented by SK, MB and ON Indigenous Political Territorial Organizations
- Fall 2018, our push for health transformation funding was approved

The Traditional Approach to System Change



System Change Outcomes

Develop hope
that change is
possible

Create empathy
and inclusion

What value can
stakeholders
provide to our
mission?

Establish value
exchanges
based on shared
priorities

Have
stakeholders
commit

Use resources
and act

Moments vs momentum

- Moments and momentum often get conflated
- Moments; individuals rethink beliefs
- Momentum; scale up and out desired behavior
- Complex, intractable system change requires a change in belief **first**

Moments vs Momentum

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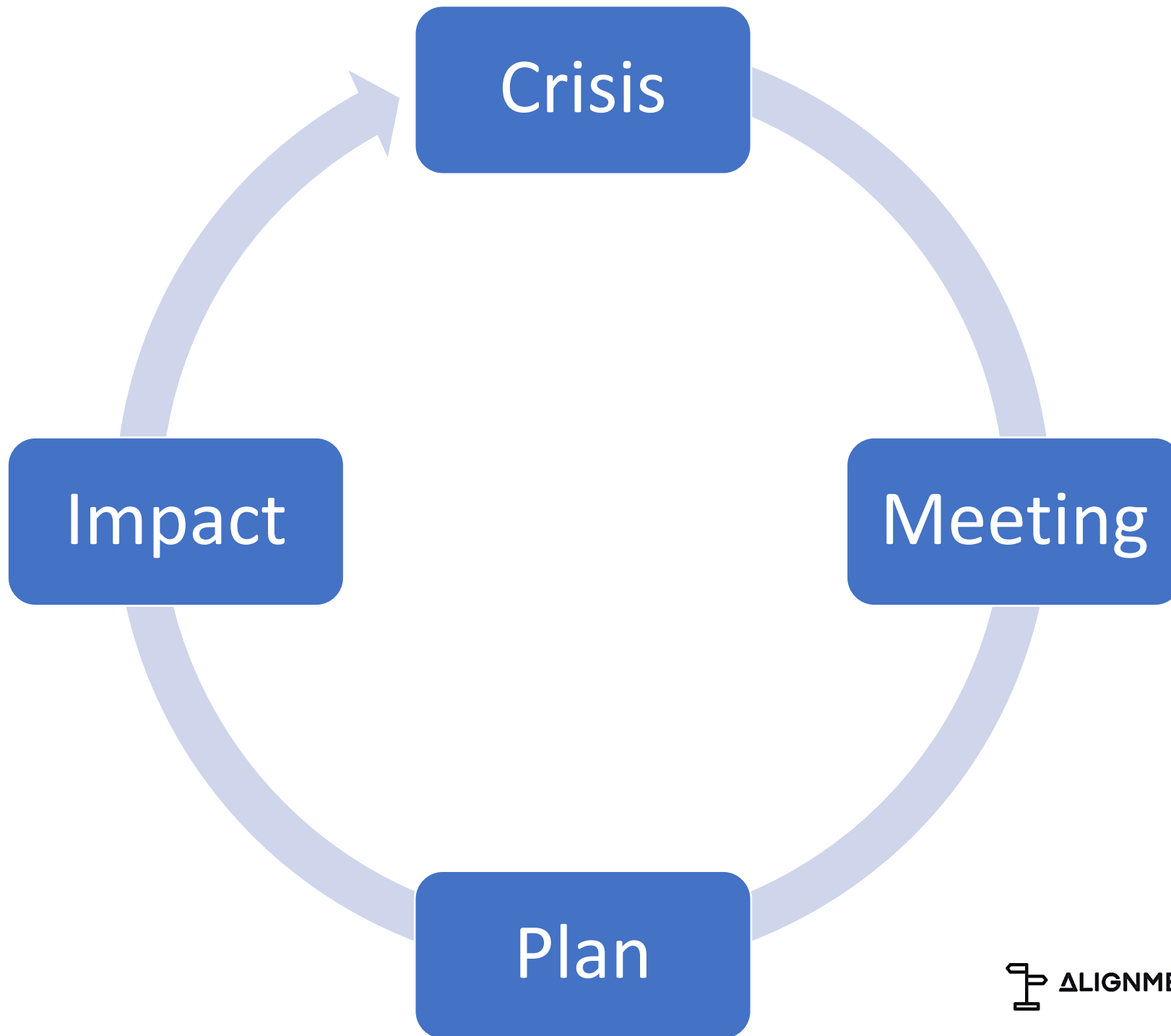
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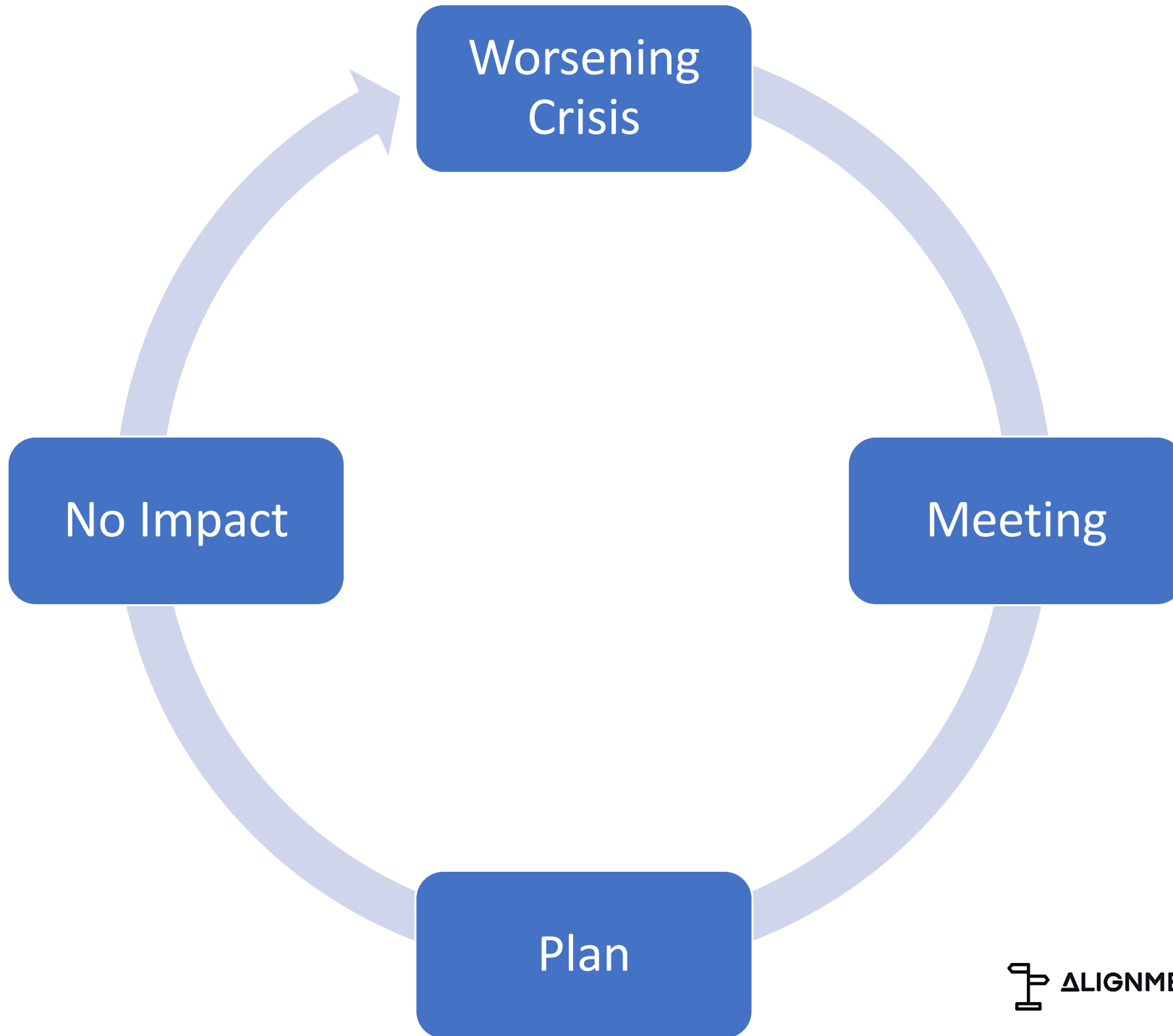
Moments vs momentum

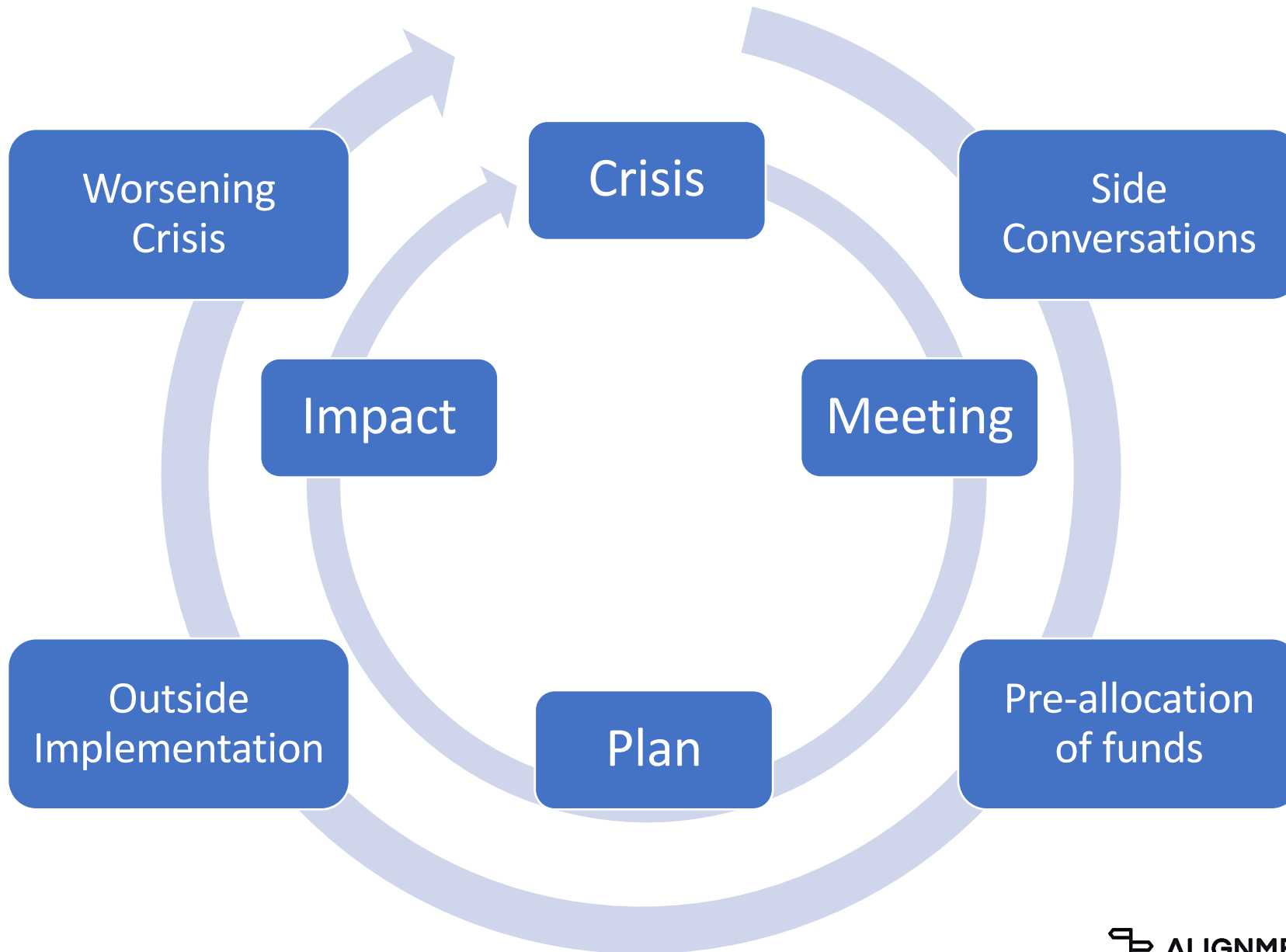
- Moments and momentum often get conflated
- Moments allows individuals to rethink common norms
- Momentum allows organizations to scale up and out desired behavior

Our moment started with a story...

- Did not assign blame
- Did not interrogate truth
- Identified common beliefs through articulating historical responses
- Goal was to create safe spaces for dialogue and being thoughtful







Nothing for us, without us

- Positive statement with negative consequences
- Statement of inclusion, not leadership
- Often misinterpreted as,
 - Nothing for us, unless we ask for it
 - Nothing for us, without our explicit approval
 - Nothing for us, unless we come up w/ idea

To change this story, we have to change our
beliefs

To change our beliefs we have to create
moments of change

To create moments of change, we have to
understand what our beliefs are and what
they need to become

How do I create moments?

- Design thinking
- Questions we focused on,
- How can I support stakeholders so **hope** that things can change can happen?
- How can I create **moments** where stakeholders can feel safe (**not judged or interrogated for their beliefs**)?
- What beliefs do stakeholders hold that are **less effective** and what beliefs could they adopt that could be **more effective**?

How do I create momentum?

- System thinking
- Questions we focused on,
- What value would stakeholder need to contribute to enable change?
- What value would stakeholders commit to contributing?
- How can I ensure stakeholders act; what decision-making mechanisms would they need to adopt?

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