



# The Voice of the System

Stephan van Rooden @ Agile 2019

# How I learned about the voice of the system

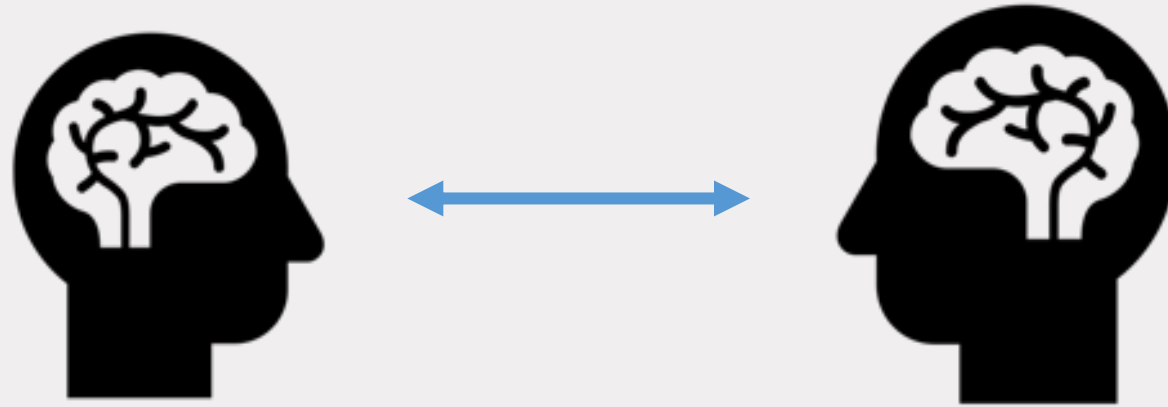
....the hard way.



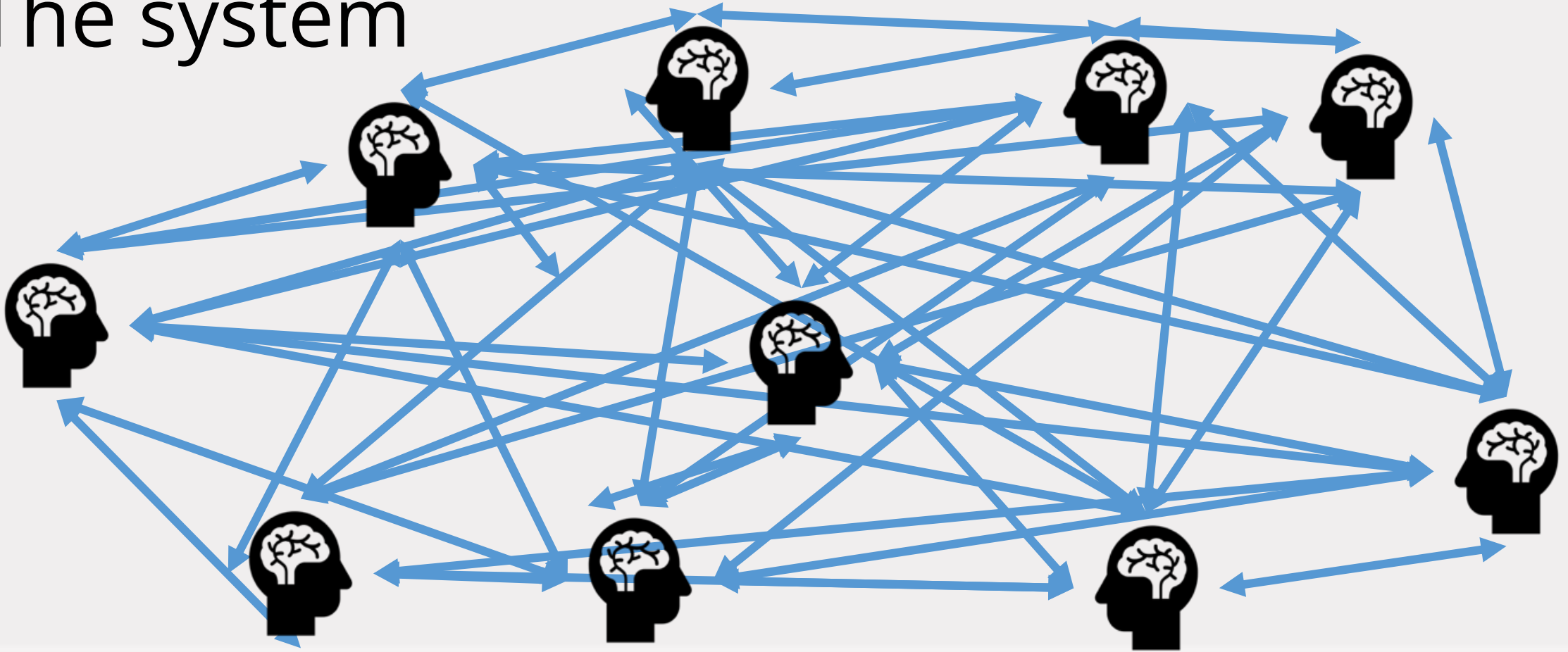
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online\\_shaming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_shaming)



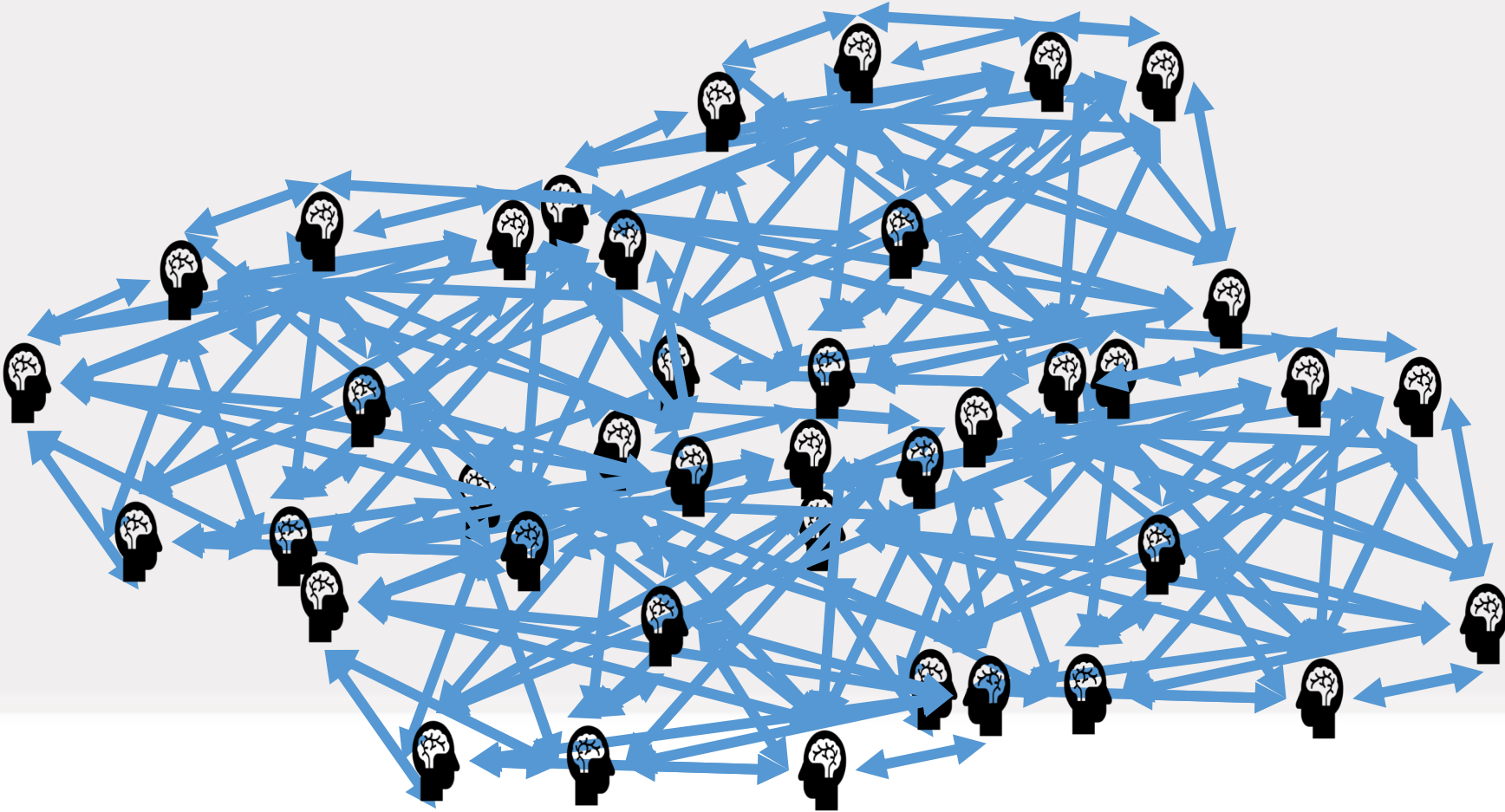
# The system



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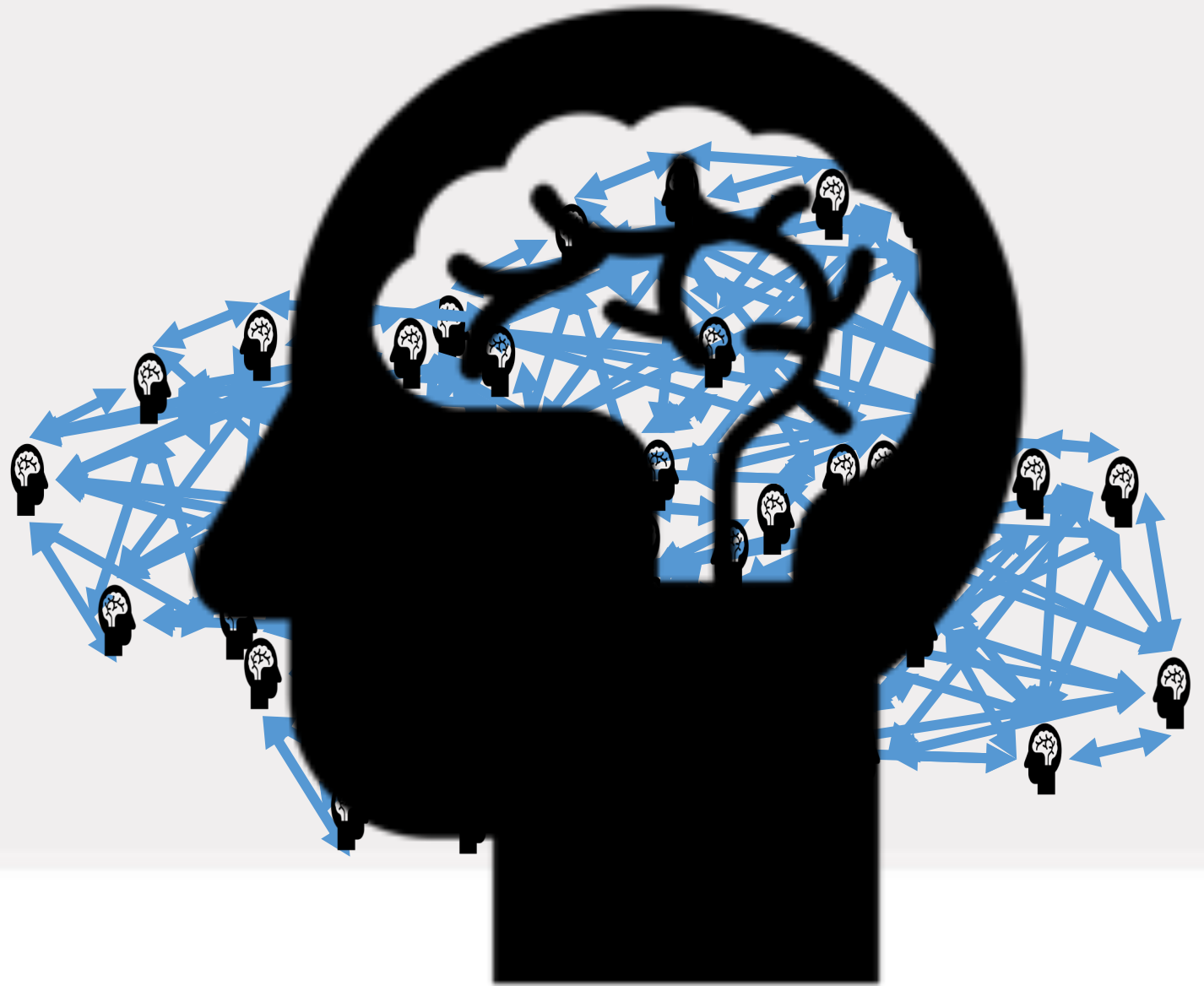
# The system



# The system...

...is a complex entity that contains all the knowledge, emotions, thoughts and memories of the entire group of people. This system has its own purpose, value system.

And it has a voice!



# How the system works...

Let's see if we can identify the voice of the system





# The Voice of the System...

are people who do not only have (and share) their individual opinion or vision. They sense and share what is happening in the system.

They are closely connected to the values of this system and they function as the air valve when there is pressure in the system.

They speak on behalf of the system they are a part of. Another entity for leaders to take into account and to listen to.





# Who is the voice of the system in your team, department or organization?

Take a moment to reflect

# Recognize the Voice of a System

- Speak up
- Loyal to the system's values
- Dedicated to the system
- Sense of state of the system
- Transferable
- Fed by the system (through historical events)

It's never the boss!



Please share your story of the Voice of the System you have identified in your own environment earlier. What made you identify this particular person(s)? What makes them the voice of your system?

Share you story and listen to one or more other stories. What insights and patterns emerge or did you identify?

# Listening to the voice

Now that you have identified the voice of the system....

- Create safety for the voice to speak up
- Incorporate this voice into your decision making
- Connect voice of the system and those with entrepreneurial abilities to fix what is wrong in the system

This will deflate the pressure in the system.



# Ignoring the voice

Signs the voice of the system is not being heard...

The person being the voice of the system will eventually leave but the voice will not!

- (Sarcastic) Jokes
- Excuses
- Gossip
- Poor communication/breakdown
- Disruption
- Go slow
- Strike
- War/Withdrawal



# Wrapping up

- The Voice of the System is an entity you, especially as a leader, should be aware of it being an essential source of information on the state of your team/department or organization.
- It is the Voice of the system and not the personal opinion of the person being the voice. They feel very connected to the norms and values of the system but do not personify the system! They are the air valves!
- You can try to ignore the voice but it will never go away!





# Entrepreneurability

[ahn-truh-pruh-nur-uh-bil-i-tee]

/,ɒntɹəprə'nə:ə'bɪlɪti/

*noun*

1. To enable entrepreneurial abilities (taking initiative, making strategic and business decisions, innovate and bear the risk)
2. To bring to life ideas, talents and skills in an economy driven by purpose.





stephan@entrepreneurability.nl



susanne@entrepreneurability.nl