

Rose, Thorn, Bud

OVERVIEW

This activity can be used as an icebreaker to foster relationships or as an activity debrief to understand what's working, what's not, and areas for improvement. Specifically, this tool can be used by program staff to facilitate reflection on material learned in an event, class, or training through debriefing, processing, and drawing out meaning to apply learning down the road.

How does it work?

There is flexibility with this tool based on what the activity outcome is. Depending on the intended outcomes, the questions can be asked orally to the large group or smaller groups to facilitate discussion, as a pen and paper or sticky note activity, or get creative and integrate stations throughout the program space so that youth can incorporate movement into the activity to maximize engagement. This activity can also be used with program staff after a training as a quick and effective evaluation tool. Sample questions for each element of the activity can be found below.

Rose

- My favourite part of the session/program/training was...
- I'm happy I came to today's gathering because...
- What was the highlight of this session/program/training?
- How have you been successful?
- What are you most proud of?

Thorn

- My least favourite part of the session/conference/program/training was...
- Today's gathering could have been better if...
- What went wrong during the session/conference/program/training?
- What was most stressful?
- Identify causes of difficulty

Bud

- I plan to integrate what I learned into my practice by...
- Future gatherings should...
- What are you looking forward to using from this program at school? Home? Work?



GOOD TO KNOW

- You can adapt the complexity of the instructions based on the age of youth participants in



Learn more:

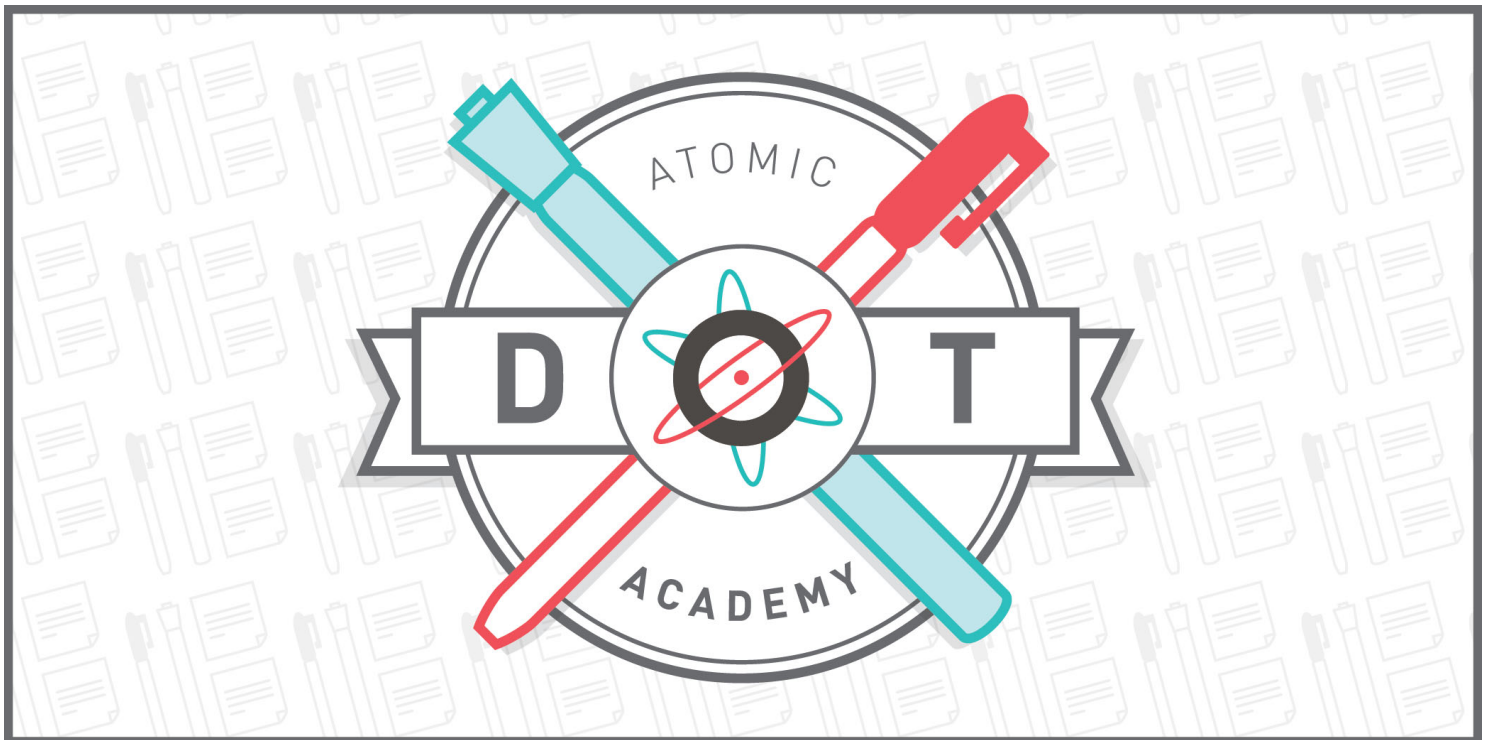
- <https://inspired.fb.com/activities/rose-bud-thorn/>
- <https://spin.atomicobject.com/2018/04/03/design-thinking-rose-bud-thorn/>



April 3, 2018 by: [Kimberly Crawford](#)

Design Thinking Toolkit, Activity 9 – Rose, Bud, Thorn

Welcome to our series on *Design Thinking methods and activities*. You'll find a full list of posts in this series at the end of the page.



Rose, Bud, Thorn may be the most commonly used Design Thinking activity at Atomic due to its versatility and ease of use.

Rose, Bud, Thorn

Primary Goal	To understand what's working, what's not, and areas of opportunity
When To Use	At any point in a project (thus the beauty of this exercise)
Time Required	30 minutes – 1 hour
Number of Participants	1 facilitator and 2-5+ participants
Who Should	The core team or any group of team members engaging in the project (think designers, developers,

Participate?	marketers, business strategists, or preferably a mix of everyone)
Supplies	Large chunk of wall space, pink/blue/green Post-it notes, and Sharpie markers

First let's begin with some definitions:

- a. **Rose** = something that is working well or something positive
- b. **Bud** = an area of opportunity or idea yet to be explored
- c. **Thorn** = something that isn't working or something negative

1. How It Works

There are a couple of ways to use this method. One approach is to use sticky notes as labels to tag categories or single items in a data set. Using pink notes for rose concepts, green notes for buds, and blue notes for thorns works well.

At Atomic, we've used this method when creating an experience diagram to annotate breakpoints, opportunities for improvements, and things we liked that we didn't want to accidentally break during the process of redesigning and improving something else. It's an extremely rich and useful representation of the day-in-a-life type artifact.

Here's an example of how Lyft might use this activity for their app.

Rose, Bud, Thorn for Lyft

Long Distance Trip	Destination Filters	Wrong Directions	Awkward Silence	Clean Cars	Easy to Pay
"Warm" Pin	100 Ride Average	Unfair Ratings	Surge Pricing During Major Events	Purple Dash Light	Ride Saving
Destination on Accept	Automatic Expensing	Cancellation Fees	Long Wait Times	Affordable	Friendly Drivers

Here are a few other ways you can structure this activity:

ROSE

What was the highlight of your day?

How have you been successful?

What did you like?

Describe efforts that blossomed.

What are you most proud of?

THORN

What went wrong during your day?

What was most stressful?

Identify causes of difficulty

What impeded your efforts?

What makes you fearful?

Did you experience pain points in the process?

BUD

What are you looking forward to tomorrow?

Describe opportunities that energize you

What possibilities need growth and nurturing?

2. Reflection

If all goes well, themes will start emerging, and you can start to cluster them by affinity (Affinity Mapping). The team will immediately see which areas are more problematic, promising, and than others. You can synthesize this information in a Google Drawing

document or Mural so that teammates can continue to add thoughts and evolve the activity.

Atomic's Design Thinking Toolkit

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[Your Design Thinking Supply List](#)

[Activity 1 – The Love/Breakup Letter](#)

[Activity 2 – Story Mapping](#)

[Activity 3 – P.O.E.M.S.](#)

[Activity 4 – Start Your Day](#)

[Activity 5 – Remember the Future](#)

[Activity 6 – Card Sorting](#)

[Activity 7 – Competitors/Complementors Map](#)

[Activity 8 – Difficulty & Importance Matrix](#)

[Activity 9 – Rose, Bud, Thorn](#)

[Activity 10 – Affinity Mapping](#)

[Activity 11 – Speedboat](#)

[Activity 12 – Visualize The Vote](#)

[Activity 13 – Hopes & Fears](#)

[Activity 14 – I Like, I Wish, What If](#)

[Activity 15 – How to Make Toast](#)

[Activity 16 – How Might We...?](#)

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Activity 16 - How Might
We...?**

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