**SSC 2030 exercise: create a simple systems diagram[[1]](#footnote-1)**

As mentioned in class this week, systems consist of ‘components’ that interact with one another in positive or negative ways though ‘flows’ or processes. In his TED talk, Tom Wujec creates a simple systems diagram for making toast. While this is not a ‘systems’ class, and while none of us are going to become skilled systems diagram creators, I want you to spend a few moments thinking about how systems thinking could apply to something you do every day.

For a bit of help or a jump start, have a look at the ‘Systems’ resources on the Module 1 page of my Weebly website for this course, SSC2030:

<https://richmond-hall.weebly.com/1-intro-sustainable-energy.html>

**Assignment:**

1. Think of a phenomenon that affects you every day. Try to find one involves a number of factors that can have both positive and negative effects on the process you are identifying.
2. List the components involved in the phenomenon.
3. List the flows or processes involved….
4. …. And which components are linked by each process.
5. Using boxes to represent components and arrows to represent processes, draw a simple system diagram of the phenomenon.
6. Determine whether the effect of each process is positive or negative. Add positive or negative signs to each process in your system diagram.
7. Evaluate: Does your diagram accurately represent your phenomenon? Why or why not?

We’ll be discussing your work on this assignment during our next class meeting and you’ll have a chance to reconsider your diagram before you submit a final version!

1. Adapted from ‘Q Design Pack: Systems Thinking, Institute of Play  
   <http://educators.brainpop.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/IOP_QDesignPack_SystemsThinking_1.0.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)