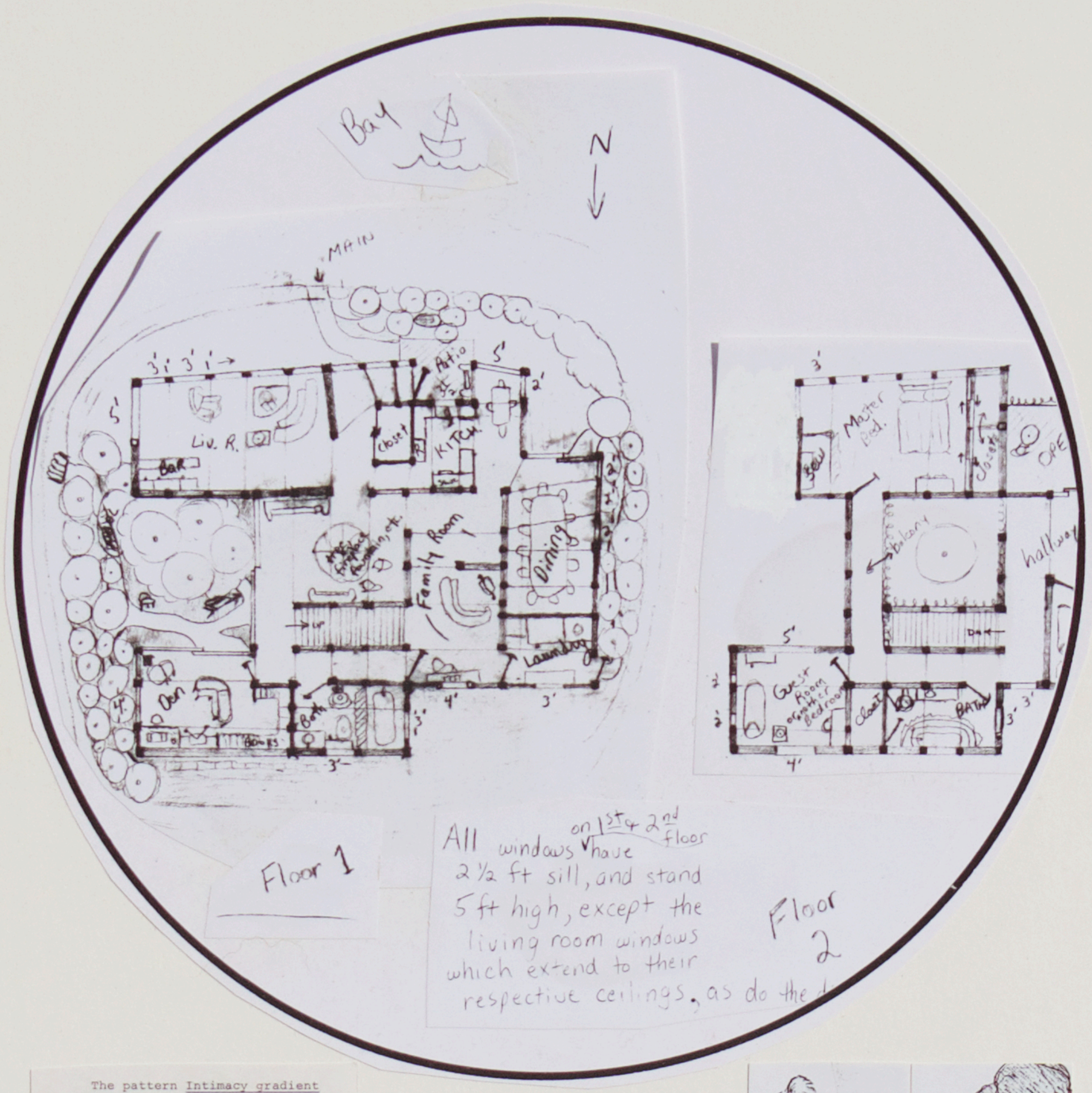
ONE INDIVIDUAL HOUSE

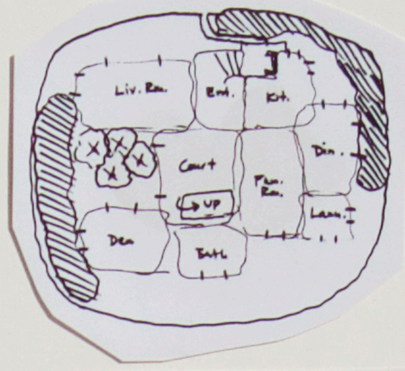
HOW A FAMILY CAN DESIGN THEIR OWN HOUSE WITHIN A CLUSTER OR AN APARTMENT BUILDING. THESE TWO EXAMPLES WERE DESIGNED BY CALIFORNIA LAYMEN.

Families in Marsta Sigtuna will be able to design their own houses just as Japanese families have been doing for centuries - the whole family participates as a unit and each member of the family has a chance to contribute his good ideas to the design.

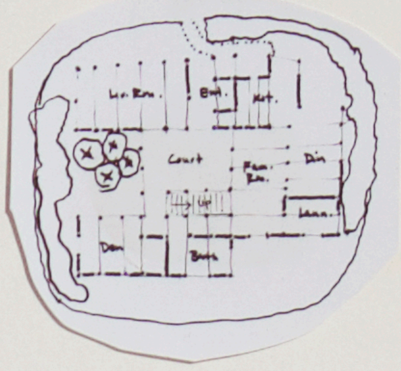
The example we use, to explain the process, is a house designed by a California layman in two days.

The family will begin by studying the patterns together. Then they go to the site itself to make their design on the land. Each pattern is taken in the order given by the Pattern Language. They walk around the site, considering how to implement each pattern in turn. As major elements are located, they are marked on the site with wooden stakes, then later sketched out on paper.





Towards the end of the house design process, the family will put the construction into their previous design decisions. One example of a structural pattern has to do with the placement of wooden columns in post-and-beam construction used in California. Columns at the corners explains how one begins to give structure to the design by placing columns at the corners of all social spaces, then continuing to add other columns along their sides to form structurally sound bays.

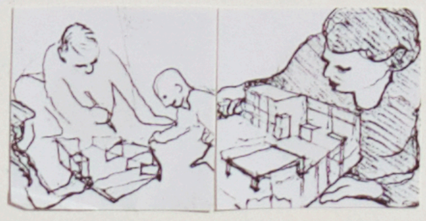


The family would now give this sketch to a builder directly. This builder understands the structural system used by the family in the preparation of the sketch. He can work directly from their drawing, by using his own detailed structural patterns.

Convex outdoor space was one of the first important patterns in our California example. It explains the need to consider outdoor spaces as important as indoor ones, and to realize that for an outdoor area to be experienced as a "space" it must be partly enclosed, almost like a room. Our Californian used the mass of the building to enclose his outdoor garden area.

The pattern Intimacy gradient has been very influential in his next sketch. This pattern presents the idea that the act of entering and moving through a house should be a gradual progression from the most public and formal areas to the most private and intimate ones. The normal sequence would be Entry-Receiving Room-Kitchen-Family Room-Bedrooms. In this scheme, he has used two floors to emphasize the privacy of the bedroom areas.

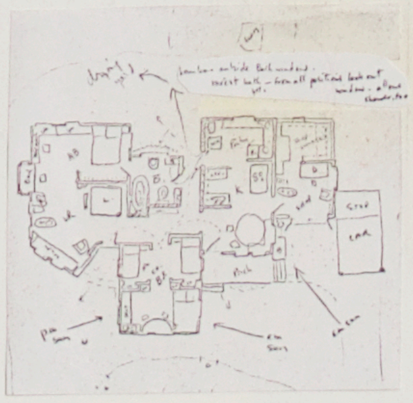
The pattern Wings of light attempts to correct those situations where rooms cannot receive adequate light due to their position in the building. It specifies that a small building should, from the very start be quite narrow - either one room wide, or, if the wing is short enough to have all its rooms at the exposed end, two rooms wide. This was achieved in this example by all the rooms of the house gathered around an open skylit courtyard.



Up to this stage, the entire family would work as a unit. But now the individual members of the family can take special areas of responsibility. The mother might do the further design of the kitchen, the father take charge of the development of the den, and the children might help to design their bedrooms and outdoor play areas.

At this stage the family would be implementing such detailed patterns as Pair of windows. This pattern says that every room should have windows on at least two sides to reduce glare and give the room a spacious, airy feeling. Notice how in this example the interior court and his previous use of Wings of light allows every room to be lit from two sides.

Our Californian's final drawing is shown in the circle. His house is rather large, around 145 m^2. Below we show another house designed by a less wealthy family. It has only 65 m^2, yet provides enough room for 2 adults and 3 children.



SINCE THE STRUCTURAL PATTERNS IN THE LANGUAGE GUARANTEE THAT THE DESIGNS CREATED BY THIS PROCESS ARE BUILDABLE, THE CLIENT'S DRAWING NOW GOES DIRECTLY TO THE BUILDER.