

# Conflict Management Workshop

## Participant Manual

### Contents

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| T-Groups  | 2       |
| Beginning thoughts and feelings about conflict                            | 5       |
| Conflict Definitions  | 6       |
| Learning from Experience (EIAG)   | 7 - 10  |
| Feelings  | 11      |
| Feedback  | 12 - 13 |
| Feedback – Negotiation Worksheet  | 14      |
| Communication – Negotiation Worksheet                                     | 15      |
| Within the Conflict   | 16      |
| Conflict Styles   | 17      |
| Mental Models and Becoming a Learning Organization                        | 18 - 19 |
| Levels of Conflict  | 20 - 21 |
| Trust Development & Managing People’s Anxieties                           | 22      |
| Worksheet for Leaders Managing Emotionally Difficult Issues in the Parish | 23      |
| The Drama Triangle  | 24 - 25 |
| Conflict: Separation and Togetherness                                     | 26      |
| Self differentiated Leadership  | 27      |
| Recurring conflict between people or within an organization are used      | 28      |
| Creating Processes and Norms that Allow ... Renegotiate that Relationship | 29      |
| Resistance: Energy and Interests  | 30      |
| Resistance: Degrees of change and levels of resistance                    | 31      |
| Resistance to change five fundamental choices                             | 32      |
| Resistance to Change  | 33 - 35 |
| Improving our ability to listen   | 36      |
| Active Listening Exercise   | 37      |
| Use of Self   | 38      |
| Ladder of Inference   | 39      |
| Lab education norms   | 40      |
| Relationship Cycle  | 41      |

# T-Groups

## History

In 1947, the National Training Laboratories Institute began in Bethel, ME. They pioneered the use of T-groups (Laboratory Training) in which the learners use here and now experience in the group, feedback among participants and theory on human behavior to explore group process and gain insights into themselves and others. The goal is to offer people options for their behavior in groups. The T-group was a great training innovation which provided the base for what we now know about team building. This was a new method that would help leaders and managers create a more humanistic, people serving system and allow leaders and managers to see how their behavior actually affected others. There was a strong value of concern for people and a desire to create systems that took people's needs and feelings seriously.

## Objectives of T-Group Learning

The T-Group is intended to provide you the opportunity to:

- Increase your understanding of group development and dynamics.
- Gaining a better understanding of the underlying social processes at work within a group (looking under the tip of the iceberg)
- Increase your skill in facilitating group effectiveness.
- Increase interpersonal skills
- Experiment with changes in your behavior
- Increase your awareness of your own feelings in the moment; and offer you the opportunity to accept responsibility for your feelings.
- Increase your understanding of the impact of your behavior on others.
- Increase your sensitivity to others' feelings.
- Increase your ability to give and receive feedback.
- Increase your ability to learn from your own and a group's experience.
- Increase your ability to manage and utilize conflict.

Success in these goals depends, to a large extent, on the implied contract that each participant is willing to disclose feelings that she or he may have, in the moment, about others in the group, and to solicit feedback from the others about herself or himself. The focus is upon individual learning; some participants may learn a great deal in most of the above areas, others learn relatively little.

## Method

**One way of describing what may happen for a participant is --**

1. Unfreezing habitual responses to situations -- this is facilitated by the participant's own desire to explore new ways of behaving and the trainer staying non-directive, silent, and providing little structure or task agenda
2. Self generated and chosen change by the participant - Experiment with new behaviors - Practice description not evaluation of
3. Reinforce new behavior by positive feedback, participants own assessment of whether what is happening is closer to what she/he intends, supportive environment, trust development

**Sources of Change in Groups**

- Self-observation - participants give more attention to their own intentions, feelings, etc.
- Feedback - participants receive information on the impact they have on others
- Insight - participants expand self-knowledge
- Self-disclosure - participants exposes more of themselves to others

- Universality - participants experience that others share their difficulties, concerns or hopes
- Group Cohesion - participants experience trust, acceptance & understanding
- Hope - participant see others learn, achieve their goals, improve, and cope more effectively
- Vicarious Learning - participants pick up skills and attitudes from others
- Catharsis - participants experience a sense of release or breakthrough

### **A Description**

The T-group provides participants with an opportunity to learn about themselves, their impact on others and how to function more effectively in group and interpersonal situations. It facilitates this learning by bringing together a small group of people for the express purpose of studying their own behavior when they interact within a small group.

A T-Group is not a group discussion or a problem solving group. The group's work is primarily process rather than content oriented. The focus tends to be on the feelings and the communication of feelings, rather than on the communication of information, opinions, or concepts. This is accomplished by focusing on the 'here and now' behavior in the group. Attention is paid to particular behaviors of participants not on the "whole person", feedback is non-evaluative and reports on the impact of the behavior on others. The participant has the opportunity to become a more authentic self in relation to others through self-disclosure and receiving feedback from others. The Johari Window is a model that looks at that process.

The training is not structured in the manner you might experience in an academic program or a meeting with an agenda or a team with a task to accomplish. The lack of structure and limited involvement of the trainers provides space for the participants to decide what they want to talk about. No one tells them what they ought to talk about. The lack of direction results in certain characteristic responses; participants are silent or aggressive or struggle to start discussions or attempt to structure the group.

In the beginning of a T-Group participants are usually focused on what they experience as a need for structure, individual emotional safety, predictability, and something to do in common. These needs are what amount to the tip of the iceberg in most groups in their back home situation. By not filling the group's time with answers to these needs, the T-Group eventually begins to notice what is under the tip of the iceberg. It is what is always there in any group but often unseen and not responsibly engaged . So, participants experience anxiety about authority and power, being include and accepted in the group, and intimacy.

Depending on forces, such as, the dynamics of the group, the past experience and competence of participants, and the skill of the trainers -- the group, to some extent, usually develops a sense of itself as a group, with feelings of group loyalty. This can cause groups to resist learning opportunities if they are seen as threatening to the group's self-image. It also provides some of the climate of trust, support and permission needed for individuals to try new behavior.

As an individual participant begins to experience some degree of trust (in themselves, the group and the trainers) several things become possible --

- The participant may notice that his/her feelings and judgments about the behavior of others is not always shared by others. That what he/she found supportive or threatening was not experience in that way by others in the group. That how one responded to authority, acceptance and affection issues different from that of others (more related to ones family of origin than to what is happening in the group). Individual differences emerge in how experiences are understood.
- The participant may begin to try on new behavior. For example, someone who has always felt a need to fill silence with noise and activity tries being quieter and still.
- Participants begin to ask for feedback from the group about how their behavior is impacting others.

- Participants may find that they are really rather independent and have a relatively low level of anxiety about what is happening in the group. They will exhibit a broader range of behavior and emotions during the life of the group. In fact their leadership is part of what helps the group develop.

### **The role of the trainers**

- To help the group and individuals analyze and learn from what is happening in the group. The trainer may draw attention to events and behavior in the group and invite the group to look at its experience. At times the trainer may offer tentative interpretations.
- To offer theory, a model or research that seems related to what the group is looking at.
- To encourage the group to follow norms that tend to serve the learning process, e.g., focusing on "here & now" rather than the "then & there".
- To offer training and coaching in skills that tend to help the learning process, e.g., feedback skills, EIAG, etc.
- To not offer structure or an agenda. To remain silent, allowing the group to experience its anxiety about acceptance, influence, etc.
- To be willing to disclose oneself, to be open with the group. On occasion being willing to offer feedback and challenge a participant
- To avoid becoming too directive, clinical, or personally involved.

## **Possible Problems**

- T-Group methods usually encourage self-disclosure and openness, which may be inappropriate or even punished in organizations. This was an early learning. When managers thought they could take the T-group method into the back home organization, they discovered that the methods and the assumptions of a T-group did not fit. T-groups consisted of participants who were strangers. They didn't have a history or a future together and could more easily focus on here and now behavior. Another issue was that in the organization there were objectives, deadlines and schedules related to accomplishing the work of the company or group. Groups with a task to accomplish could not take the same time that would be used in a T-Group. These difficulties helped lead to the development of Organization Development and team building. What had been learned in T-Groups was combined with other knowledge and these new disciplines emerged as ways to address the values raised by the T-Group experience.
- The T-Group experience can open up a web of questioning in a participant. Ways of behaving that the person has used for many years may be called into question by others in the group and oneself. This has in some cases brought the participant to question relationships in the family or at work. While this can be a very constructive process that leads to the renewal of relationships, it has on occasion lead to the breakdown of a relationship. While such a breakdown may have, in time, come to the relationship without participation in a T-Group, it remains a painful and possibly damaging experience.
- Participants being forced or pressured to attend, by an employer or other person with influence, are on the whole less likely to have a positive learning experience. Employers or others who want to require the participation of others may enhance the chance of having a productive outcome if -- they attend a lab themselves before sending others; they speak with the lab coordinator before the event to discuss what might realistically be expected and what the leader could do to assist in the learning process when the participant returns home.
- Very rarely there have been situations in which a participant has a psychiatric problem. One report said "The possibility of negative psychiatric effects of ST, and especially its role in inducing psychiatric symptoms, is yet to be clarified." This reinforces the value of participation based on intrinsic motivation; a norm that discourages people in therapy from attending without the approval of their therapist; and trainers staying focused on the learning areas suited for T-Group experiences.

# My beginning thoughts and feelings about conflict

***Please complete rapidly***

1. Conflict is ...
  
2. For me, the most exhilarating aspect of conflict is ....
  
3. When I see a conflict situation approaching I .....
  
4. In the last important conflict I experienced, I ....
  
5. The best thing you can say about conflict is ...
  
6. From my experience, the best way to resolve conflict is to ...
  
7. The worst thing about conflict is ...
  
8. In this workshop I expect to feel ...
  
9. The best thing about me is ...
  
10. The main thing I hope for out of this workshop is ...
  
11. The trouble with me is ....
  
12. Right now I want ...
  
13. Right now I feel ....

# Conflict Definitions

*Two figures trying to occupy the same space.* - At the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland

*A situation where the forces acting on the person are opposite in direction and about equal in strength.* – Kurt Lewin

## **From Dictionare.com**

1. to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash: *The account of one eyewitness conflicted with that of the other. My class conflicts with my going to the concert.*
2. to fight or contend; do battle.
3. a fight, battle, or struggle, esp. a prolonged struggle; strife.
4. controversy; quarrel: *conflicts between parties.*
5. discord of action, feeling, or effect; antagonism or opposition, as of interests or principles: *a conflict of ideas.*
6. a striking together; collision.
7. incompatibility or interference, as of one idea, desire, event, or activity with another: *a conflict in the schedule.*
8. *Psychiatry.* a mental struggle arising from opposing demands or impulses.

[Origin: 1375–1425; late ME (n.) < L *conflictus* a striking together, equiv. to *conflig(ere)* to strike together, contend (*con-* con- + *fligere* to strike) + *-tus* suffix of v. action; (v.) < L *conflictus*, ptp. of *confligere*, or by v. use of the n.]

# Learning from Experience

It is a core assumption of lab training that we do not learn from experience itself; we learn from disciplined reflection on experience. The learning process is really one of learning about our experience from a structured reflection on our experience. The method offered here is called --- E - I - A - G.

E – Experience

I – Identify

A – Analyze

G – Generalize

This has been a core learning method in lab training. With adaptation it has been used in team development and Organization Development efforts.

**Experience** – This is anything that happens in the group. The behavior of the group or people within the group becomes the starting place for learning.

**Identify** – A specific behavior or pattern of behaviors is selected as a starting point. The group needs to identify what happen, when it happen, etc. The objective is for all the group members to adequately recall the experience so they can all contribute to the learning process. The assumption is that everyone may be able to learn from the experience.

**Analyze** – The group explores and examines the experience that has been identified. The group may look at the impact or effect of the behavior(s); sharing how they felt, what they thought, how they acted, etc. Judgments each person made may be shared – was the behavior helpful or hindering to the group’s life and work? Analysis may include relating the experience to some theory, model or research.

**Generalize** – This is an opportunity for group members to state what they have learned; to generalize what has been learned into other situations. Based on the analysis, the members state what they might do in a similar situation, what they might have done differently in this situation, what conclusions they have drawn, etc. Members will not necessarily share the same learnings. In lab training two norms are useful in the “Generalization” discussion. First – Each person has his or her own learning. That learning has its own validity. It doesn’t need to be shared by others to be legitimate. Second – It is acceptable for members to ask each other for information about the basis for stated learnings or generalizations.

# The Reflection Process

## First, be clear about roles

Name those in the group who share, first hand, the experience being explored. These are the people who will need to do most of the work in the process and draw the learnings. Others serve in a support role -- offering suggestions to consider based on similar experiences and the common skills and knowledge they share. In a training group it is usually best for the learning process if the experience being reflected on is shared by all group members.

### **E - Experience**

This is the experience you have already had. It is the base for the process. The disciplined learning process really starts with **I - Identify**

### **I - Identify**

An event in the life of the group that you want to use to learn from.

1. Select an event.
2. Describe the event so everyone understands what is being discussed.
3. Each person that was present during the event share what they saw, heard, felt. What behavior did you observe in yourself and others?

### **A - Analyze**

Think about what happened.

1. Share about the event -- Concerns Likes
2. What helped or hindered the group
  - in terms of its task?
  - in terms of its trust?
  - in terms of \_\_\_?
3. What was the effect on you? What did you say and do? What were your feelings and thoughts?
4. Use appropriate theory, models or research to explore the event.

### **G - Generalize**

State what you have learned

1. What would you do in a similar situation in the future? What would you repeat? What would you do differently?
2. State anything you have learned.

# Learning from Experience:

## An Alternative Use of EIAG

The group goes through these steps in a disciplined process. It may help to have a designated facilitator and to use newsprint to record the group's thinking.

### A. Identify the experience

1. Select an event in the group's experience to reflect upon and learn from.
2. Describe the event (do not try to resolve issues of "true and false", if people have different descriptions, receive them all)
  - a. who was involved?
  - b. what happen, what was the sequence of events, what did we see, hear?
  - c. what did people feel, think?

### B. Analyze the experience

**1. What assessment do people have of what happen?** The concern here is with the results, outcome or consequences of the event and what effected the outcome. You might put the following on newsprint.

#### Outcome/Results of the Experience

|           |   |   |   |   |   |           |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| NOT       |   |   |   |   |   | VERY      |
| SATISFIED | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | SATISFIED |

#### What helped/hindered the group during the event.

#### **2. We are also interested in the consequences of people's behavior during the event.**

Compare the effects, impact, consequences of people's behavior during the event and --

- its relationship to the group's goals, norms, results, etc.

For example -- "I think that my standing up and beginning to record on the newsprint when Harry began to 'tear up', violated our norm of respecting each others feelings and contributions."

- people's intentions; the effect the person hoped the behavior would have

For example -- "By remaining silent I hoped to avoid further upsetting Peter. What happen was that Peter's frustration grew and the group was unable to continue its work."

### C. Generalize

This involves both drawing any conclusions based on the analysis and identifying what the group or individuals might do in a similar situation.

1. Each person share what they might do differently in a similar situation. And/or
2. The group brainstorm a list of what it would "wish" for in a similar situation. Each person then identifies which of the "wishes" they could and are willing to do something about. And/or
3. Each person share "What I have learned ...+about myself" +about how groups function"

# Learning From Experience: Worksheet

Sometimes it is useful to have group members use a worksheet in doing the EIAG.

A. The group -- Identify a significant event that it wants to explore

B. Each person uses this worksheet in an individual exploration

1. During the event what did you

- Observe?
- Feel?
- Think?

2. What did you do during the event; what was your behavior?

3. What did you see as your choices at the time; what choices were you aware of? Was there something you thought of doing and now wish you had?

4. How did you block yourself from acting? What messages did you give yourself that interfered with your ability to act?

5. Is there anything you wish you had done differently?

C. Share what you want to share with the group.

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# Feelings

## Sad

### High

Bleak  
Blue  
Crestfallen  
Depressed  
Devastated  
Disconsolate  
Empty  
Grieving

Grim  
Helpless  
Hopeless  
Melancholy  
Mournful  
Sorrowful  
Woebegone  
Woeful

### Medium

Dejected  
Discouraged  
Dismal  
Dispirited  
Down  
Downcast  
Heavy  
Lonely  
Morose

### Low

Moved  
Shame  
Solemn  
Sullen  
Unhappy

Ashamed  
Bored  
Cheerless  
Disappointed  
Embarrassed  
Hurt  
Pained  
Somber  
Uninterested

## Afraid

### High

Alarmed  
Distressed  
Fearful  
  
Frightened  
Ghastly  
Panic-stricken  
Petrified  
Scared  
Shocked  
Terrified

Agitated  
Anxious  
Apprehensive  
Fainthearted  
Insecure  
Jittery  
Nervous  
Perturbed  
Pessimistic  
Shaky

### Medium

Startled  
Tense  
Troubled  
  
Uptight  
Worried

### Low

Concerned  
Coy  
Diffident  
  
Doubtful  
Dubious  
Edgy  
Fidgety  
Restless

Timid  
Timorous  
Uneasy  
  
Unsettled  
Unsure  
Vulnerable

## Mad

### High

Angry  
Boiling  
Enraged  
Fuming  
Furious  
Hateful  
Hostile  
Infuriated

Aggravated  
Exasperated  
Frustrated  
Incensed  
Indignant  
Inflamed  
Vengeful  
Worked-up

### Medium

Animosity  
Enmity  
Ireful  
Irrked  
Miffed  
Peeved

### Low

Sore  
"Teed off"  
Uneasy  
Unhappy  
Unsettled  
Vexed

## Glad

### High

Alive  
Cheerful  
Delighted  
Ecstatic  
Elated  
Energetic  
Excited  
Exuberant  
Happy  
Jubilant

Comfortable  
Content  
Enchanted  
Exalted  
Exquisite  
Gay  
Gleeful  
Hilarious  
Jolly  
Jovial  
Lighthearted

### Medium

Peaceful  
Pleased  
Rapturous  
Serene  
Spirited  
Vibrant  
Warm  
Zestful

### Low

Blithe  
Blithesome  
Tranquil

# Feedback

By Helene Oswald and Jacqueline Bahn

## Definition and Purpose

In an interpersonal context, feedback is a communication to a person (or to a group) which gives that person (or group) information on how her/his (or its) behavior affects others. The purpose of feedback is to help individuals become more aware of the impact of what they do and say so that they can determine if their behavior is achieving their intent. We do not cause and are not responsible for others' reactions; they choose their responses based upon their perceptions and perhaps even their projections. If interpersonal effectiveness is our aim, we may very well wish to adjust our behavior in light of the feedback received.

## Categories

Feedback may emerge in numerous ways:

**Conscious:** nodding assent

**Unconscious:** nodding asleep

**Spontaneous:** "Thanks a lot. "

**Solicited:** "Yes, it did help."

**Verbal:** "No."

**Non-verbal:** Leaving the room.

**Formal:** evaluation forms

**Informal:** hand-clapping

## Criteria for Constructive Feedback

Descriptive. It is descriptive rather than evaluative. With a precise description of what the other person did and said and how you felt in response, you are simply stating your perception and the other is free to use or not use the feedback.

Avoiding evaluative language reduces the potential for the individual to react defensively. Evaluative statements say something about you and your interpretation, perhaps they are projections. They say nothing about the other's behavior or intent.

- **Specific** - It is specific rather than general, referring to actual words and actions. It gives the person a clear picture of what you saw, heard, felt.
- **Usable** - It is directed toward behavior, something which the receiver can change-
- **Requested** - It is solicited rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver has asked for it or agreed to a process of giving and receiving feedback.
- **Timely** - It is well-timed. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, support from others, etc.).
- **Clear** - It is checked to insure clear communication. One way of doing this is to have the receiver try to rephrase the feedback s/he has received to see if it corresponds to what the giver had in mind.
- **Accurate** - When feedback is given in a training setting, both giver and receiver have the opportunity to check with others in the group the accuracy of the feedback. Is this person's impression shared by others?
- **Appropriate** - Appropriate feedback gives consideration to timeliness and to the individual's capacity to hear it. If a person indicated s/he has heard enough to work on for the moment, offering additional feedback is inappropriate. It is also inappropriate to confront another under the guise of simple feedback.

Confrontation may include feedback, but it begins with a declaration of feelings, perception and the problem being experienced by the person confronting.

## Appropriate Responses to Feedback

- Clarify the questions
- Paraphrase the feedback in your own words
- Invite other's perceptions
- Ask for suggestions
- Say "Thank-you"

## Inappropriate Responses to Feedback

- Counter: "Yes, but..."
- Justify: "The reason I .."
- Challenge: "You don't understand that. .."
- Discount: "Well that's because you're a man" or "Oh it was nothing" (to positive feedback)

The T -Group setting provides an excellent opportunity for individuals to practice giving and receiving feedback. In this protected environment one is more inclined to risk asking for feedback. Once one has experienced asking for feedback, has received both positive as well as negative comments, and survived the experience with a newly formed community, the probability of risking doing it in a back home setting is increased significantly. If the experience is unpleasant in the T-Group, the participant can call upon the facilitator and group members to help him/her work through the process and explore ways to go about making it easier next time.

-- From MATC's -- *Human Interaction Experiences: A Resource Book*, 1984

# Feedback – Negotiation Worksheet

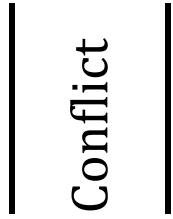
| Formula                 | Intention   | Your Notes in Preparation |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1. "When you ....."     | Note the behavior; describe it as specifically as possible.   |                           |
| 2. "I felt ...."        | Share how the behavior affected you. Just a few words – frustrated, pleased, angry, etc.  |                           |
| 3. Because I ..."       | Share what is going on with you that causes you to be affected that way. Note: this "owns" that the impact on you is not based only in the other person's behavior but also in the filters you bring to the situation |                           |
| 4. "I would like ..."   | What would you like the person or group to consider doing?  |                           |
| 5. "Because ..."        | Why you believe it will help.   |                           |
| 6. "What do you think?" | Invite and listen to the response; explore options; problem solve together.   |                           |

# Communication-Negotiation Skills Worksheet

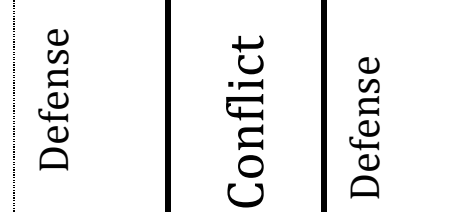
| Skill - with Formula  | Intention   | Preparation Notes |
|---|---|-------------------|
| <p><b>Paraphrase</b></p> <p><i>“What I hear you saying is ...”</i></p>  | <p>Saying back to the speaker what you heard them say. The goal is to accurately grasp the content of their idea. You may either repeat exactly what was said or you may summarize, restate the essence of what the speaker said.</p>   |                   |
| <p><b>Itemized Response</b></p> <p><i>“What I like about it is ....”</i></p> <p><i>“What concerns me is ...”</i></p>      | <p>This involves giving a full response to a person’s idea by telling them what you like/appreciate/can use in their idea <u>and</u> what concerns you about the idea. The assumption here is that it helps the group’s work when we enable participation and seek what may be of value in each idea. Itemized Response helps: keep unformed but possibly useful ideas alive, establish a supportive group climate, and helps us see the fullness of an idea.</p> |                   |
| <p><b>Negotiation</b></p> <p><i>“What I would like is...”</i><br/> <i>or</i><br/> <i>“What I would propose is...”</i></p> | <p>Your goal is to state your own desire. To put forward what you want, hope, expect in this situation. This involved taking active responsibility for the situation rather than passively waiting for others to address the situation.</p>   |                   |

# Within the conflict

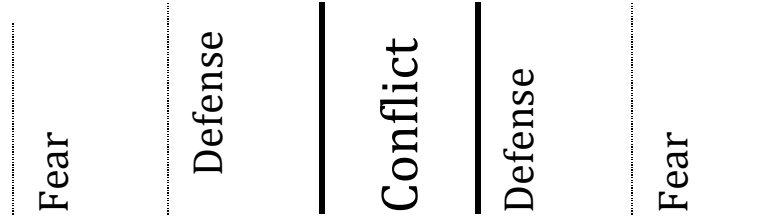
**1. The conflict is underway**



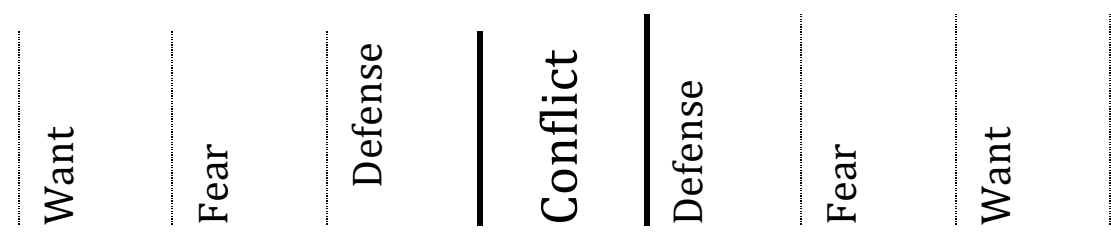
**2. People get defensive**



**3. Behind the defense is a fear**



**4. There is also a want/wish**



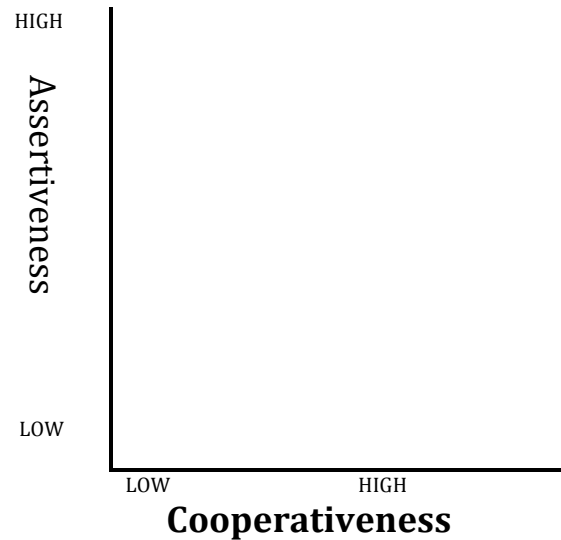
- In some cases –**  
 Disclosing the feelings of
- Defensiveness
  - Fear

**Ask the Question**  
 What is the precious commodity? What is the value that the fight is about?

Can help resolve the conflict  
 Along with a clear statement of what you want.  
 Source unknown. MATC conflict training 1970's

# Conflict Styles:

## Two basic aspects of all conflict handling styles



**Assertiveness** – the degree to which a person attempts to satisfy his/her own concerns

**Cooperativeness** – the degree to which a person attempts to satisfy the concerns of another person

We will look at five different styles or modes people use in managing conflict. Each is a mix of these two basic aspects – assertiveness and cooperativeness

The style we use at any particular time is based on:

- The skills we have
- The situation
- Our ability to assess what is appropriate in that situation
- Our willingness to operate in an effective and appropriate manner

The key to being more effective is in:

- Increased awareness of self, others and the situation
- An expanded range of behavior and skills
- Our commitment to becoming more effective at conflict management

# Mental Models and Becoming a Learning Organization

*Like a pane of glass framing and subtly distorting our vision, mental models determine what we see.*  
- Peter Senge

**Mental model** - a phrase first coined by Scottish psychologist Kenneth Craik in the 1940s refers to the psychological representations of reality. They constitute the images, assumptions, and stories about people, cultures, objects and events.

Mental Models are established by past events, experiences, media and other messages we receive, and serve going forward as filters through which we observe, interpret and respond to the world. They shape what we see and hear, what we feel and what we do. Mental models give birth to stereotypes.

The challenge with mental models is that they limit our ways of thinking and behaving. The good news, however, is that they have the potential to evolve through ongoing learning and interaction with new individuals and environments. Becoming aware of our mental models, which are often invisible, is the first step to effectively evolving them - and therefore, to personal growth. The book *Intercultural Communication* devotes an entire chapter the subject of mental models, highlighting additional examples, exploring the connection between cultural worldviews and mental models, discussing how mental models drive behavior, identifying mental models that may pose challenges in intercultural situations, exploring how to shift mental models and demonstrating how stereotypes drive behavior.

**Examples:** For example on the topic of marriage:

- Men think: ball and chain, wedding, wife, children, shackles, forever, prison, no more dating
- Women think: security, wedding celebration, happiness, baby, husband, tradition

From - <http://about.com> on race relations and mental models

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## From a working paper on “Becoming a Learning Organization”, 2001, University of Maryland Libraries

Peter M. Senge describes a learning organization as an organization "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (Senge 1990). Since 1990 when Senge published *The Fifth Discipline*, many words of wisdom about learning organizations have been published. There is much for library staff to learn from these ideas as we begin to incorporate the disciplines into our organization.

At the core of a learning organization are five disciplines of the learning environment. Senge stresses that disciplines are to be practiced. These disciplines cannot be learned and achieved without practice over time. The five disciplines are interrelated and include:

- **Personal Mastery:** learning to expand our personal capacity to create the results we most desire, and creating an organizational environment which encourages all its members to develop themselves toward the goals they choose.
- **Mental Models:** reflecting upon, continually clarifying, and improving our internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape our actions and decisions. Mental models are the assumptions and stories we carry with us about others and ourselves. Mental models help us function but do not always correlate with reality.
- **Shared Vision:** building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future

we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there. Everyone contributes to the shared vision. Creating a vision is an evolutionary process.

- **Team Learning:** transforming conversational and collective thinking skills, so that groups of people can reliably develop intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents. This is our collective capacity to do something. In team learning there is less authority and more emphasis on collaboration and facilitation. There is a great deal of trust among and between members.
- **Systems Thinking:** a way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding, the forces and interrelationships that shape the behavior of systems. This discipline helps us see how to change systems more effectively, and to act more in tune with the larger processes of the natural and economic world. Systems thinking serves as the cornerstone for the other disciplines (Senge 1994).

# LEVELS OF CONFLICT

Based on Spead Leas, *Moving Your Church Through Conflict*

For it to be a system conflict a significant percentage of people, or people with significant influence, need to be upset with the practices/policies/style/person of the current leadership.

A task of leaders is to develop the organization’s capacity to solve problems and manage the “rubs” that are a normal and useful part of organizational life. This allows the organization to be a more productive and satisfying environment while also heading off serious conflict. As part of its life an organization needs to be engaged in a developmental process of building trust, developing communication and negotiating skills, and establishing processes to manage concerns and new ideas. This gives people the ability to keep conflict at the lower levels. As conflict moves to higher levels people tend to resist skill development, elaborate problem solving methods, the introduction of new ground rules, etc. So, these things are best done when the organization is not in conflict.

| LEVEL                             | SYMPTOMS   | STRATEGY   |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>I<br/>PROBLEM<br/>TO SOLVE</b> | <p><b>Objective of those involved:</b> fix the problem</p> <p><b>Tone/behaviors:</b> optimistic, collaborative, problem not person focus, rational; language is clear, specific, here and now, adult; real differences over goals, values, needs, plans, information; people understand each other and disagree.</p>                               | <p>1. Facilitate decision making by <u>collaborative problem solving</u>, or if not possible, by <u>negotiation</u>, or if not possible, by <u>formal authority action</u> (by voting or leader decision.)</p> <p>2. <u>Methods</u> -- establish meeting norms, use a facilitator and a disciplined process, brainstorm and prioritize, use communication skills, etc.</p>   |
| <b>II<br/>DISAGREEMENT</b>        | <p><b>Objectives:</b> self protection, not getting hurt; solve the problem</p> <p><b>Tone/behaviors:</b> cautious, not hostile; general language to protect people and self, e.g., “there is no trust”, “we need more openness”; hostile humor, distancing comments; withhold information that might serve the other side or damage your side.</p> | <p>1. <u>Reduce tension and facilitate people’s work together</u> --the need here is to keep people close enough to work though their differences and not engage in withdrawal or begin to get aggressive. Encourage people to “hang in”, attend and prepare for meetings; coach people to act, to be assertive, help people fully express their concerns and to listen to the concerns of others; provide ways to build relationships, ways for people to know each other as people, to speak with each other about common interests and needs.</p> <p>2. <u>Methods</u> -- role reversal, expectations clarification, paraphrase and itemized response, brainstorm and prioritize, use facilitator, etc.</p> <p>2. <u>Establish ground rules</u> -- get agreement about how we will work on the issue, e.g., no threats, identify sources of information, direct sharing of differences, no personal attacks, no withdrawing; norms for meetings, etc.</p> <p>3. <u>Make decisions</u> -- collaborative problem solving --- negotiation --- formal authority</p> |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>III<br/>CONTEST</b></p>                 | <p><b>Objective:</b> win, not yet at level of wanting to hurt the opponent.<br/> <b>Tone/behaviors:</b> win/lose dynamics, threatening, difficult, resistance to peace overtures, hanging back waiting for others to show weakness, personal attacks, emotional appeals, limited social contact; language is distorted - overgeneralized (“you always..”, “everyone..”), exaggerated, making a case, expecting magic or rapid change, expecting others to read your mind, extreme, only two sides, lose the shade/gray.</p> | <p>The overall need is to reduce fear and distorted thinking; to provide a sense of order.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All the strategies mentioned for Level II, as possible.</li> <li>2. <u>Structure the process</u> -- work out a clear process; dates of meetings, time lines, etc. Revise it as needed; but work at maintaining a sense of order and direction. There is a high need for a process that is seen as fair, open, and legal.</li> <li>3. <u>Use an external consultant</u></li> <li>4. <u>Contact between parties to the conflict needs to be carefully managed</u> -- opportunities for people to express feelings and clarify their interests need to be provided for each side; this usually needs to first be done apart from the other side; when they are ready to work together, then have a carefully facilitated meeting.</li> <li>5. <u>Decision making</u> -- the same sequence as at other levels; however, the more persuasion, compelling and voting the more likely that people will leave the organization.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>IV<br/>FIGHT/FLIGHT</b></p>             | <p><b>Objectives:</b> hurt/get rid of the others; being “right”<br/> <b>Tone/behaviors:</b> factions inflexible, clear lines, strong leaders emerge; language becomes ideological - about principles, truth, rights; parties detached, causing each to lose sense of the pain they cause; attempt to enlist outsiders in the cause, parties will not speak with each other, self righteous, cold</p>  | <p>More tension will require more structure.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Use an external consultant/mediator</u> -- this can not be someone from the central office.</li> <li>2. <u>Follow the book</u> -- legal issues may be involved, trust is very low; follow the organization’s standards.</li> <li>3. <u>Communicate through third parties</u> -- seek an agreement for third parties to serve as “go-betweens” to carry messages, look for possible areas of agreement, Most likely to be useful when the issue is clear.</li> <li>4. <u>Be tougher about the ground rules</u> -- enforce expectations about personal attacks, loaded language; might have a group that monitors agreements and gives feedback to violators.</li> <li>5. <u>Decision making</u> -- likely to be by formal authority. Some are likely to leave.</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>V<br/>INTRACTABLE<br/>SITUATION</b></p> | <p><b>Objective:</b> destroy the others<br/> <b>Tone/behaviors:</b> attempts to do serious damage to the other’s reputation, position, well being; attempts may continue after the parties have been separated</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The conflict is no longer manageable.</li> <li>- Outside authority will need to make difficult decisions.</li> <li>- The parties need to be separated.</li> <li>- Some people may need to be asked to leave.</li> </ul>  |

# Trust Development and Managing People's Anxieties

This list identifies some of the core skills and methods that can help parish leaders with issues of trust and anxiety.

## Staying Focused on the Primary Task

The primary task of a parish is the formation of its members as baptized people through liturgy, training for prayer and spiritual growth, and learning that equips people for their apostolate in workplace, with family & friends, and in civic life. Leaders need to keep the parish focused on the task.

## Building Trust

Actively working at trust development by attention to acceptance, information flow, adequate ownership of parish direction, etc. Focusing on structure, processes, and climate. Helps to understand the standard Levels of Conflict so leaders can distinguish between low conflict levels and higher levels.

## Bonding: Priest & Congregation

Attention to the relationship between priest and people. Understanding and managing the usual stages of the relationship.

## Developing trust at the center

Team building of vestry, rector, and other leaders. High trust among the leadership tends to help build trust in the parish as a whole.

## Developing critical mass

Having an approach to trust development that concerns itself with creating a critical mass of people with an appropriate trusting relationship with parish leaders. Not feeding parish anxiety by over reacting to the most anxious members but focusing on engaging and nurturing the healthiest members

## Self Differentiated Leadership

Leaders developing skills that allow them to stay connected to others, maintain a needed direction, and not get caught up in trying to satisfy the most anxious members. Learning how to see unproductive emotional triangles and how to detriangulate.

## Negotiating vision

Knowing how to work productively with others in working out parish direction.

## Communication & negotiation skills

Having core communication skills and knowing how to use them in negotiating life with others.

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# Worksheet for Leaders Managing Emotionally Difficult Issues in the Parish

*This worksheet can be used to explore the dynamics and needs of a particular issue. If this is followed by a process in which small groups work on the issue – 1). Remember – only share what you are willing to share; 2). Enter into the conversation with an awareness of how open you are to receiving the help of others, and of offering help to them.*

1. Around this particular issue – how many people in your parish are likely to be emotional upset? Your best guess of the percentage of adults in each category.

| Very Upset | Somewhat Upset | Mildly upset | Very Little; it will pass | Not Upset |
|------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|
|            |                |              |                           |           |

2. How upset are you about the issue?

| Very Upset | Somewhat Upset | Mildly upset | Very Little; it will pass | Not Upset |
|------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|
|            |                |              |                           |           |

3. In terms of those who are most upset -- What is your understanding of, or hunch about, what it is about the situation that they find so upsetting?

4. How are they likely to respond to being upset? – Impact in the parish, on you, etc.

5. How do you see yourself managing this?

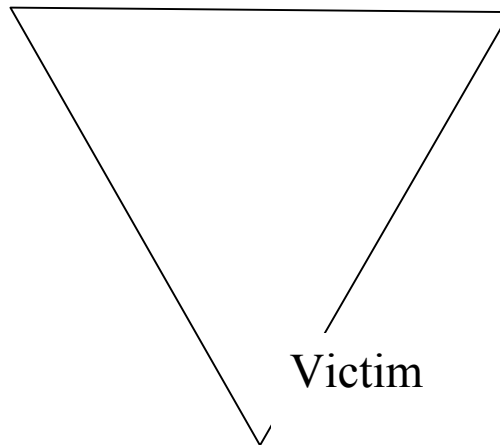
6. If you were going to shoot yourself in the foot in this process – how might you do it?

# The Drama Triangle

Created by Stephen Karpman in 1968 the drama Triangle identifies three roles present in many human exchanges. They are internalized, learned behavior patterns ; habits and ways of exercising control that establish a secure but destructive bond among people in families and other systems, including work organizations.

Persecutor

Rescuer



The two positions at the top are considered the “one-up” positions where the people feel superior while the Victim is at the “one-down” position feeling looked down on and helplessness. The positions often shift as people change emotions to protect the ego which feels threatened. The Victim may become angry at the injustice of being persecuted, thereby shifting into the Persecutor role. The Abuser may become tired with his angry barrage then feel guilty and shift into the rescuing role.

The Drama Triangle positions are largely unconscious in nature and kept in place by denial, arrogance, helplessness and collusion (tacit agreement from all players to keep the status quo.) The Drama Serves as a training ground for powerlessness; it’s impact is to prevent psychological equality in relationships.

If anyone in this triangle changes roles, the other two roles change as well. We enhance the Drama by reversing roles.

## The Persecutor

- Stuck in a false sense of superiority and defense mechanisms keep people in denial.
- Addictive role—feeling the adrenalin rush during anger and rage. Getting high from fighting and witnessing fights.
- Unconsciously uses anger as an energizer to keep depression at bay.
- Needs to be in control and uses verbal or physical force to stay in power.
- Deals with threat, new ideas and conflict with anger to stay safe in the role of being the dominant person.
- Uses blame, criticisms, attacks and then venting to release stress.
- Is highly judgmental of others and angry when others do not do what they say.
- Self-righteous judgments about others weaknesses subtly allows the weakness to continue.
- Strong sense of entitlement—“you owe me” and willing to use verbal or physical force to get it.
- Feelings of frustration trigger the right to get angry rather than deal with our own uncomfortable feelings.
- Unable to feel vulnerable and denies own weaknesses.
- Shame based and uses negative behaviors to cover up/deny own problems.
- Strong need to be right and not have their authority challenged.
- Finds reasons to make others wrong and scapegoats them.
- Believes others deserve the abuse and punishment the Perpetrators dishes out.

## The Victim

- Stuck in a false sense of being unworthy with defenses of feeling sorry for self and passive aggressive behavior.
- Deals with threats by giving in, in order to feel safe and is submissive when others act inappropriately.
- Unable to stand up for self and avoids confrontation.
- Believes his/her needs do not count.
- Can be overly sensitive, wish-washy and unable to make and stick to decisions.
- Doesn't take responsibility for own feelings.
- Feeds off of the beliefs of Perpetrator and rescuer that he/she cannot take care of self.
- Has shame base for being irresponsible and inept.
- Is anxiety driven and makes excuses for staying stuck in Victim-hood.
- Blames Perpetrator for problems in the family.
- Anger, resentment and retaliation through manipulation and refusal to act as a responsible adult.
- Moves between "Poor me" and anger with blaming others "He/she is bad."
- Angry when goes along with what the Perpetrator or Rescuer says to do.
- Feels stuck and unfulfilled in life but does not risk moving forward.
- May have had a lenient or overly-protective parent who set up expectations of helplessness
- May have had a parent who feels anxiety when the child has to suffer natural consequences from mistakes

## The Rescuer

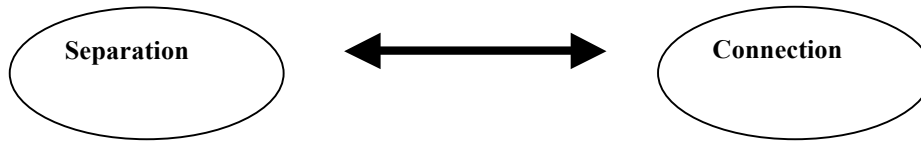
- Stuck in a false superiority with defense of acting unselfishly to help others.
- Addictive role—feeling good at the expense of others rights to take care of themselves.
- Good guy beliefs, such as takes the "high moral ground" of rescuing and enabling others.
- Needs to be in control of others to avoid own feelings and problems.
- Garnering self-esteem by being seen as unselfish for someone else's own good.
- Uses rescuing and enabling to connect or to feel important.
- Highly judgmental of others and angry when others do not do what he/she says.
- Blames Perpetrator for problems in the family while refusing to address one's own problems.
- Is anxiety driven and uses rescuing to reduce feelings of anxiety.
- Guilts self when not involved with other's problems.
- Has shame about loss of self to meet others needs.
- Super caretaker role can create sense of giving own self away and create depression.
- Strong sense of entitlement with the Victim of "You owe me because of all I've done for you."
- Can become a martyr/Victim when he/she feels that he/she has been taken advantage of by others.
- Parents the child though meeting his/her own needs of shame and guilt rather than meeting the needs of the child to be a responsible person who is allowed negative consequences and learns from them.
- May feel guilty and try to make it up to a child because of a divorce or due to choosing a lousy spouse who abuses, scapegoats or neglects the child.
- May feel guilty and try to make it up to a child because of drinking or using drugs when the child was small, neglecting the child or being a single mom.
- May feel guilty and try to make it up to a child because of a handicapping condition or a perceived weakness in the child.

# Conflict: Separation and Togetherness

## Self

Conflict in relationships sometimes is related to how we are experiencing and managing our needs for:

1. Separation from others (from their expectations, needs and presence)
2. Connection with others (with their needs, expectations and presence)



All of us need and want both separation and connection in different degrees and ways. We manage that with behavior patterns in which we also differ from one another. That difference is at times a source of tension and conflict in a system.

## Separation

Some systems are committed to their own passivity and cynicism. People “play the victim.” The end result is that people have a very difficult time creating authentic relationships.

## Connection

Some systems have a “togetherness aggression.” We can feel pushed toward togetherness. If we submit to it we can lose something of ourselves. We are welcome to belong but at the cost of ourselves. Anger, resentment, and in time conflict are likely responses.

## Managing ourselves

Most of us seem to be more comfortable with one or the other. Bring those with different tendencies into the same system and there will be a degree of tension. Some of us have been shaped by experiences, often in our family as we grew up, that make us more driven by a need for separation or connection than others. We may have strong feelings and exhibit reactive behavior when that need seems threatened.

We all are attracted to both separation and connection. We all know the experience of sometimes longing to be alone or to express our true feelings. At times that can bring conflicted feelings and thinking inside ourselves. We may push that conflict out at others if we are unable to understand and cope with those feelings.

## In the church

In many families and in the church there is often an idealization of togetherness. Being “connected” is seen as better than being separated. All the language about community, love and belonging can shape a culture that leaves little room for the self that needs quiet, time alone and opportunities to pursue one’s own way. Part of what it means to be a healthy parish is to be a community in which both needs are accepted and given space.

It can be difficult for a church to address this dynamic. Two barriers are:

1. We see connection and togetherness as being “right.” In some churches the pattern is so strong that people can’t see the problem.
2. We may not see or be able to acknowledge the undercurrent of our own needs to control things in the service of our own needs.

# Self-Differentiated Leadership

Leadership that adequately attends to three tasks:

**1. Staying connected to the system** – staying in touch with the people and culture of the organization; taking in information

As a Participant -- Sharing yourself – feelings and ideas. Use of communication/listening skills (paraphrasing, active listening, referencing another’s ideas, saying what you like about an idea as well as what concerns you), non verbal attention (eye contact, posture, showing active interest, etc.)

As a Team Leader -- Action to invite participation in listening to each other, gathering information about the task or the group, mutual assessment/diagnosis; sensing the climate of the group and enabling the team to do the same, etc.

As an Organizational Leader -- - Establishing structures/process/climate that: a. Enables communication and shared assessments of organizational life including channeling, testing, use of OD consultants, regular management retreats, etc and b. Enables the organization to listen to the trends and forces in its external context

**2. Setting Direction** – taking non-reactive, reflective, data based, well thought out positions about direction

As a Participant -- Own sense of being “grounded”, “centered”; taking clearly defined positions that are not reactive; sharing your own wishes regarding the task and team relationship maintenance in appropriate ways, etc.

As a Team Leader -- Action to help the team define the task, get organized and act on it; responding to the team’s climate, etc

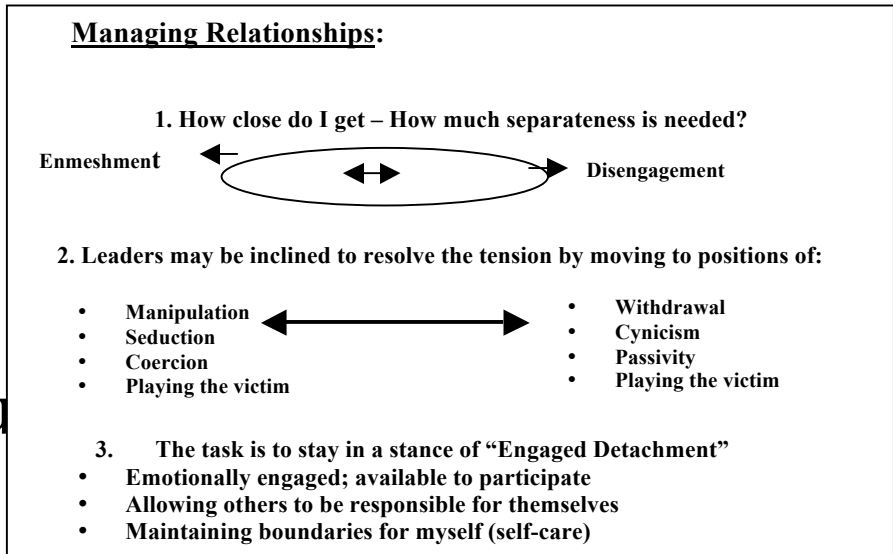
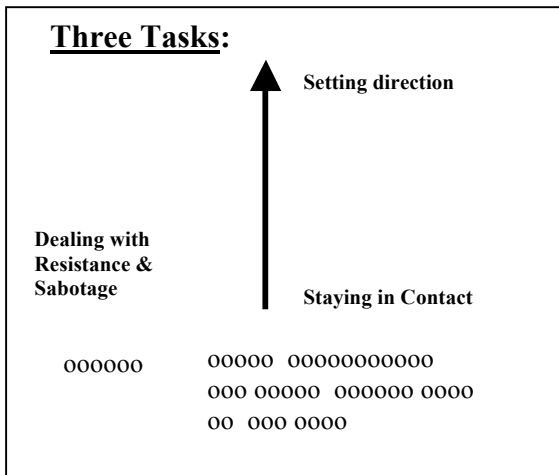
As an Organizational Leader -- Action planning; leader being open about her/his vision regarding direction and organizational culture; moving issues to a decision, alignment of values/intention/action

**3. Dealing with Resistance and Sabotage** – the essential issue is not getting distracted from the direction by the resistance while also not “cutting off” from those resisting

As a Participant -- Managing your own tendency to be a cynic, go “passive”, etc.; managing your own anxiety about pleasing or taking care of others; not colluding with attempts to pull the team away from its task; dealing with your own desire to withdraw, quit, fantasize about “going back to how it use to be”

As a Team Leader -- Acknowledging the other’s position; stating your own position and your desire to move forward, even with your own doubts; invite others to join you in moving ahead; as appropriate “test” options with the team; etc.

As an Organizational Leader -- Establishing norms of “no threats”, dealing directly with concerns, “no surprises”; as appropriate, directly confronting destructive behavior, etc.



Recurring conflict between people or within an organization are used:

- 1.To create feelings of closeness -- to generate strong feelings, a sense of connection even if negative toward some people.
- 2.To create distance – done when we are feeling too close for it to feel comfortable for us; too much togetherness in some cases, a reactive stance that some have about anything that feels too close.

*Reflection*

1. What are the issues that set of recurring conflict in your life?

a. Personal life

b. Workplace

c. Parish

2. What are the behavior patterns in each?

# Creating Processes and Norms that Allow People in a Relationship to Renegotiate that Relationship

## To renegotiate the relationship when already in conflict

1. Requires the ability to step back from our own emotional reactivity
2. To facilitate listening
3. To facilitate the establishment of norms for “safe conflict”

### Helps

- Communication & negotiation skills
- An image of what it means to “fight fair”
- The ability to identify what it is you feel and want
- The ability to hear and acknowledge the feelings of others
- Willingness to give yourself and others space and time for real forgiveness and reconnection to take place
- Ability to set blaming aside, put it on the shelf
- History of doing it

### Hinders

- Quick to take offense
- “Giving permission” to ones grumbling and resentment
- Accepting a façade of reconciliation – denial of anger, too quick to apologize, quick and easy forgiveness
- Attempts to force reconciliation by blaming, pressure, teaching & preaching
- Lack of history of doing it

# Resistance: Energy and Interests

## Energy

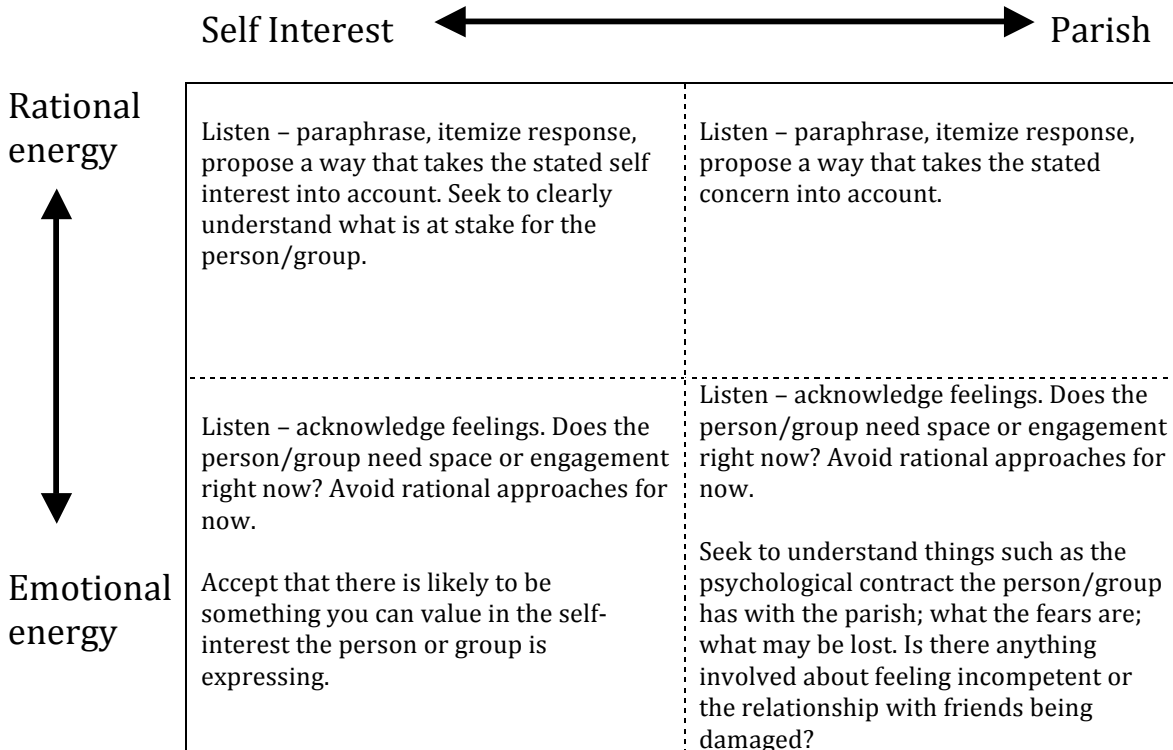
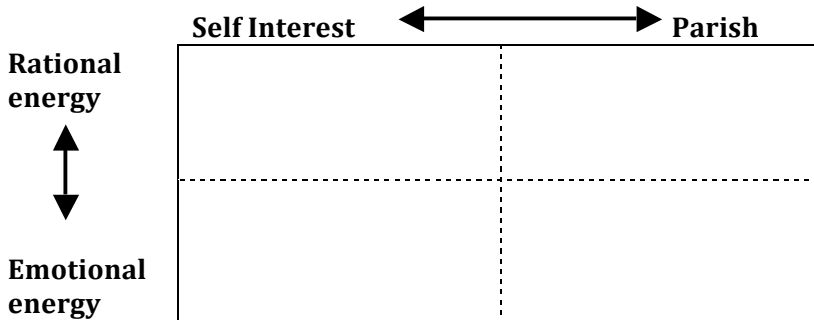
About the energy generated in the resistance – rational or emotional. It drives the resistance. Both are present to some degree.

## Interest

Assessing the extent to which the resistance is a matter of self-interest or about the well being of the parish.

## Task

1. Try to locate the characteristics in the field below.
2. Given what you understand in #1 – look at the second grid with its suggestions about responses. Explore what may fit your situation. Focus on how to address the resistance where it really is. Add your own notes on the grid.

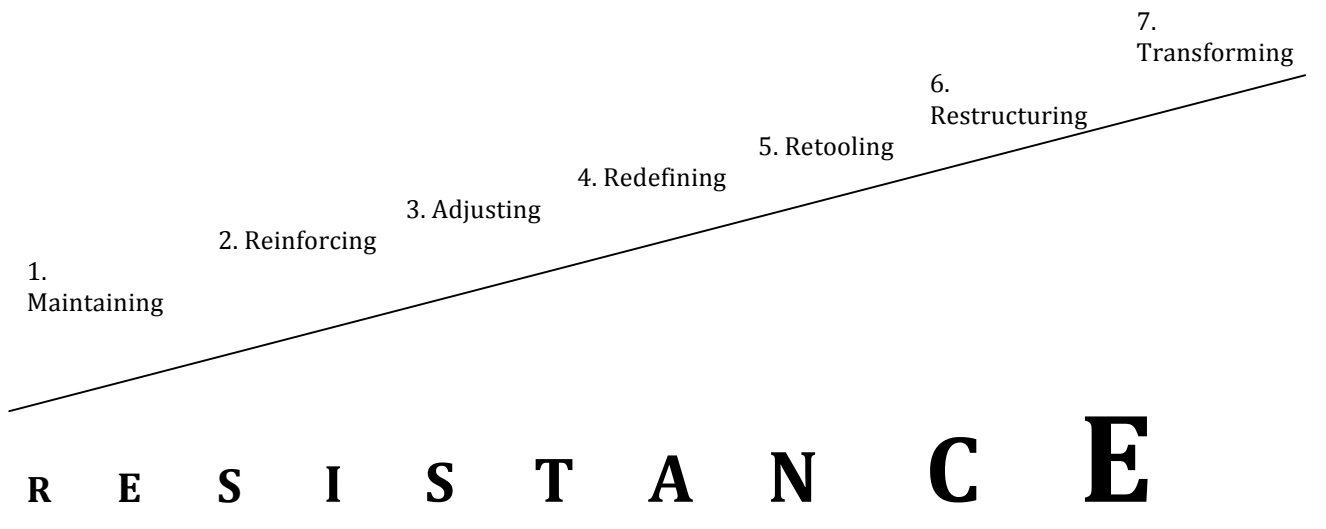


Based on ideas in *Welcoming Resistance*, William Chris Hobgood, Alban, 2001

## Resistance: Degrees of change and levels of resistance

*A leadership initiative (also called an intervention) is any action proposed or taken by congregational leaders that may result in change in the congregation's life.*

**A System** – The parish is a system. Change in one part of its life will bring change in many other parts of its life. So, resistance is not necessarily about the stated change.



In *Welcoming Resistance*, William Chris Hobgood, Alban, 2001

## Resistance to change five fundamental choices

From Edward Hampton on the OD Net E-List

Five fundamental choices a given stakeholder will or can make in terms of how he or she will use his or her power:

- a. Support the Change and by extension support the leader, the person or group pushing the change. This is often called synergism.
- b. Block the change and/or the leader (by extension). In this case, that stakeholder uses his or her power to thwart the change. Usually this comes about because the given stakeholder needs to show the leader that he or she has power - something the leader has "dissed".
- c. Ignore the change and/or the leader. This withholding of power creates opportunity cost for the leader.
- d. Try to change the change and/or the leader. In this case the stakeholder tries to use his her power base to gain an ascendant or controlling position or effect on the leader.
- e. Leave. This is different than ignoring the leader in that ignoring the leader can in fact diminish the leader as people essentially ask "why does so and so NOT support this act". This withholding of support and maintenance of presence creates a standing pressure on the situation. On the other hand, when one leaves - as in resigning, there is a different effect. Simplistically, it is the difference between someone standing in front of you and giving you "the silent treatment" and someone stomping out the room.

I find that the success or failure of organizational change rests hugely or in large part upon gaining change within the organizational culture. Why do I say that? Because - as Ariane eloquently said - culture is what holds organizational behavior in place; sustains or maintains it. It is like gel. And the quintessential anchors of organizational culture are its stakeholders and their behaviors - especially behaviors related to how they express their personal power base, as delineated above.

In large scale change, it is important to note that when it comes to power it is definitely true that "some pigs are more equal than others". That is, some stakeholders linking pins, i.e. there power extends over others. In a stakeholder map, it is useful to try to capture the relative strength of given power bases. Thus, one targets the key stakeholders, the informal leaders, and works to gain leverage from their influence.

# Resistance to Change

About resistance:

## 1. It is always present in some form.

It may only be in the helpful doubts we have about costs or likely outcomes but it is present. If the change is significant it will impact people's work and lives. People may begin to fear losing something, they feel uncertain about the future, social networks are disrupted, influence patterns change, and reward systems are rearranged.

## 2. The standard issues in resistance are managed primarily by doing good work in introducing change.

Most resistance is managed by involving people in the process of planning and introducing the change. Leaders need to create a critical mass of people who see the need for change, share a vision of what that change would look like, and are clear about the first steps. It's a good rule of thumb not to introduce too many initiatives at the same time. The task is to manage resistance within the process of introducing the change. See other handouts on "The Change Formula" or other ways of looking at the change process.

## 3. Learn from the resistance.

It is important to listen to the resistance. There may be information in the resistance that can improve the change project. People are more likely to feel respected if their feelings and ideas are considered. Use follow-up surveys and outside consultants to help leaders stay in touch with where the change is taking hold and where it is weak. Leaders can take a stance that they want to learn from the resistance. That stance will help leaders be less defensive and anxious. It may also result in improvements to the current change project and better ways of introducing change in the future.

## Having mismanaged the change process – now what?

This handout is mostly about those situations where we have not done the best job in introducing change. Resistance to the change has developed and now has some strength. In a change process it's not always clear as to whether you are still in the initial introduction phase or are well beyond that. It's an obvious problem if there is open and virulent resistance taking place well after the change has been introduced. It's also a problem if the change has been introduced, and some time has elapsed, and people are still complaining or simply not acting in ways that implement the change. How can we understand and influence these forms of resistance?

## Three Things to Notice in Reading the Resistance

A leader's first task is to work at understanding the resistance. Better yet would be to appreciate the resistance. You need to understand how people are experiencing the change you have introduced. You will need to suspend judgment and attempt to see this from the perspective of others. Skills in active listening and data gathering are useful. Consider bringing in an outside consultant to manage the process and coach you.

## Active and passive resistance

What are the expressions of resistance that you are seeing? How intense are those expressions? Is it an underlying simmering of annoyance, a passive unwillingness to put the new way into practice, or is it

open and loud? The more public people have been in resisting the more difficult it will be for them to change their position.

### Active resistance looks like

- Verbal behavior that is critical, grumbling, blaming, ridiculing or mocking
- A pattern of blocking action, undermining efforts to move forward
- Threatening; spreading fear
- Starting or passing-on rumors
- Selective or distorted use of facts

### Passive resistance looks like

- Agreeing to the change when addressed but not following through.
- Putting things off, procrastination
- Claiming to not understand without active work to gain understanding
- Withholding behaviors; not providing needed information or support.

## The Causes of Resistance

Consider what the particular causes of resistance in this case are. Which ones are you dealing with?

- People don't see the need for the change
- People see the potential risks as greater than the potential benefits
- People think that this change will fail.
- People do not trust the leadership
- People think that the change process has been mismanaged.
- People think that the change will have some negative impact on them
- People feel incompetent to make the change. They don't have required the skills and knowledge.
- People see the change as a violation of their values.

## Resistance as conflict

It may be useful to understand resistance as a form of conflict. It may be a very low level conflict or it may be so serious that someone is going to have to leave the organization. Here's a modified use of Speed Leas' "Levels of Conflict" that might be used in understanding resistance.

| <b>Problem to solve</b>  | <b>Disagreement</b>  | <b>Contest</b>  | <b>Fight/Flight</b>  | <b>Intractable</b>  |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| There is some concern about the change. People just want to fix the problem. This will not strike most people as resistance. | People have gotten cautious. They are beginning to feel a need for self protection. The primary interest is still on fixing the problem. | A win/lose dynamic has developed. People make personal attacks, exaggerate, and see only two sides. | The resistance to is inflexible, ideological, and self-righteous. There is a desire to be "right", and to get rid of others or hurt them in some manner. | Attempts to do serious damage to those initiating or supporting the change. An extremely aggressive and hostile form of resistance. Ongoing, not simply an occasional outburst. |

When the change process has been poorly managed; when anxiety has built, people are avoiding one another, and not acknowledging the tensions or concerns; and when there has been either a public eruption, or a series of smaller eruptions, involving large numbers of people or key people – then we have arrived at a high level of resistance and conflict. At these levels it becomes very difficult to manage the resistance.

## Engaging the Resistance

You are late to the game. The change has been introduced in an ineffective manner and resistance has gotten out of hand. But now you have worked at listening and trying to understand the resistance. What can you do?

1. Revise the change in ways that concretely addresses concerns people have. Acknowledge that you are making the revisions based on what people have said.
2. Bring in an outside consultant experienced in process consultation, conflict management, and other aspects of organization development. Have the consultant work with you in the initial listening process and in how you respond to the resistance.
3. Back up in the change process. Do the work that might have been better done when you first introduced the change. Involve people in the process of reintroducing the change. Create a critical mass of people who see the need for change, share a vision of what that change would look like, and be clear about the first steps. To get people to cooperate with this reengagement process you may need to apologize for jumping too far ahead or too fast.
4. Consider backing off. If the data, and your gut, are telling you that the cost of this change will be too high or may not produce what you were seeking – acknowledge that and reverse the decision.
5. If the resistance involves just a few people, and if they are not people with a lot of influence with others, consider having a confrontation in which you invite the person to cooperate with the change or at least to not continue resisting it. Ask the person to consider what you have said and to get back to you in a few days with a response. If the person offers a response that is really a form of continued resistance be clear about the consequences of that behavior.
6. Address the causes of resistance that you have discovered. If they don't see the need for the change involve them in a process to explore the issues and options. Have them look at the information that got you to want the change in the first place.
7. Build trust. Do the basic work in all areas of organizational life to build trust with employees or members. Trust may have been damaged in the process of introducing the change. Show your appreciation for, and understanding, of the culture and the people. Spend some time creating a sense of inclusion. Do some team building work that allows people to acknowledge one another's contribution to the present and future of the organization may help. Make sure that people don't think their jobs are at risk (unless of course they are at risk, in which case you will have to struggle with the trust issue). Do not spend a lot of time talking about changes that you want to make instead of making them in a competent way. Talking about changes can just generate the same anxiety and resistance that the change itself will bring. Have lots of face-to-face time in groups and possibly one-on-one. Make sure that people have an overall sense of where the leadership is trying to take the organization. Checkout what people are hearing and missing. Gather information about organizational issues from employees/members on a routine basis.

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# Improving our ability to listen

As individuals and parish systems we are usually more focused on communicating “out” to others than on listening and taking-in” from others.

Improving listening involves developing several skills:

**Active Listening** - A skill in which the listener uses nonverbal behavior, such as body posture, eye contact and gestures, as well as verbal behavior, including tone of voice, “wonderments”, paraphrasing, and summaries, to show the speaker that he or she is being listened to respectfully and in an engaged manner.

**Look for the underlying meaning** – The skill of understanding the various meanings in what is being said. We can learn to listen for clues to what the person values, wants, and has at stake.

**Listening without judgment** – Setting aside your judgments about the person and message for the moment so you might focus on listening.

**Knowing your own viewpoint** – The skill of knowing how what is being said connects with your values, needs and wants. The ability to “put-it-on-the-shelf” for the time being so you might concentrate on understanding the message from the speaker.

**Sorting out positions vs. interests** – The speaker may be approaching the conversation from a specific point-of-view or have a specific solution in mind that seems to meet his or her interests or needs. It’s likely to be concrete and explicit. The person may be demanding and allow little room for discussion. Sometimes it helps if the listener can look for the underlying interest that is a stake for the speaker. An underlying interest is a deeper, more important value or need.

**Managing the setting** – Having a sense of timing and the needed physical setting that will best allow the conversation.

**Managing emotions** – Self-awareness about our emotions in the conversation allows us to accept responsibility for our emotions and related behavior. This involves emotions that are directly related to the person and/or message and emotions that may have little to do with the immediate situation.

**Paraphrase** - Saying back to the speaker what you heard them say. The goal is to accurately grasp the content of their idea. You may either repeat exactly what was said or you may summarize, restate the essence of what the speaker said.

**Itemized Response** - This involves giving a full response to a person’s idea by telling them what you like/appreciate/can use in their idea and what concerns you about the idea. The assumption here is that it helps the group’s work when we enable participation and seek what may be of value in each idea. Itemized Response helps: keep unformed but possibly useful ideas alive, establish a supportive group climate, and helps us see the fullness of an idea.

**Offering a Proposal** - Your goal is to state your own desire. To put forward what you want/hope/expect in this situation. This involved taking active responsibility for the situation rather than passively waiting for others to address the situation. This may assist others clarify their own interests.

# Active Listening Exercise

This exercise gives participants practice actively listening to others, a skill that incorporates both listening and giving feedback.

***One person is the speaker, and the other person is the listener.***

1. The speaker takes a minute or so to express an idea, opinion, thought, or feeling about something.
2. The listener listens and paraphrases what was expressed.
3. The speaker then gives feedback to the listener regarding the accuracy of the response.
4. The listener then hones the response until the speaker is satisfied with the accuracy of the response.
5. Once the speaker is satisfied, the listener can follow up by asking, "Is there anything else about that?", thus continuing the process.
6. Once this is completed, the roles can be changed and the process repeated.

# Active Listening Exercise - Teams

This exercise gives participants practice actively listening to others, a skill that incorporates both listening and giving feedback.

***One team member is the speaker, and the other members are the listeners.***

1. The speaker takes a minute or so to express an idea, opinion, thought, or feeling about what the team is working on at the time.
2. The speaker then calls on one of the listeners to paraphrase what was expressed.
3. The speaker then gives feedback to the listener regarding the accuracy of the response.
4. The listener must then hone the response until the speaker is satisfied with the accuracy of the response.
5. Once the speaker is satisfied, the listener can follow up by asking, "Is there anything else about that?", thus continuing the process.
6. Once this is completed, the roles can be changed and the process repeated.

# Use of Self

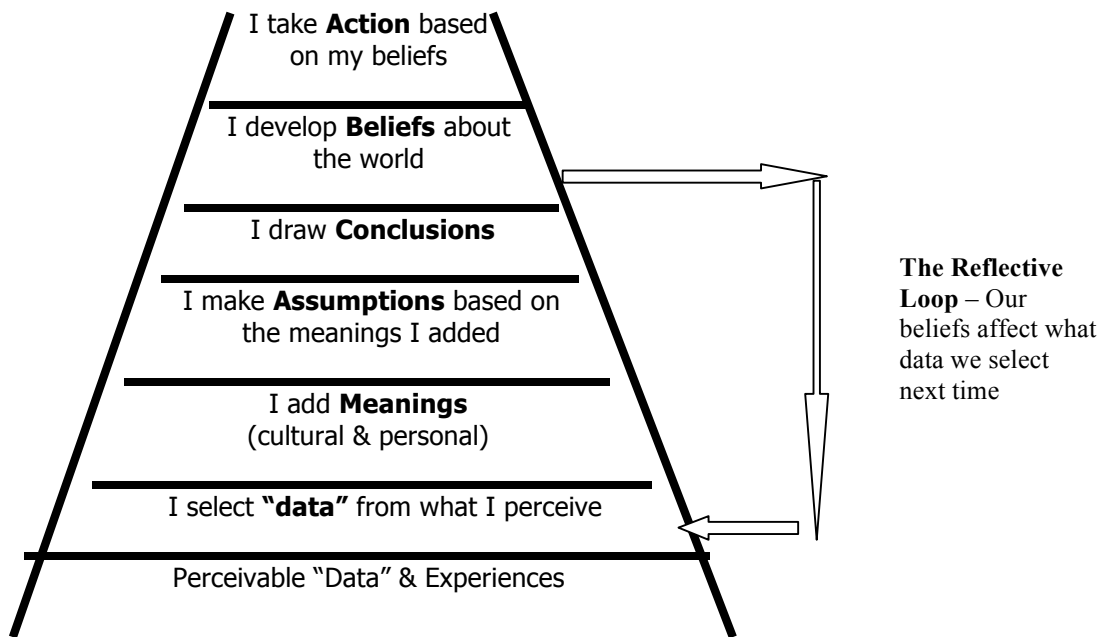
## Skill area

| Don't even understand what it means   | Weak ability | Working on it | Some improvement | Significant improvement |
|---|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Awareness of &amp; Management of filters</b> (e.g., increased awareness of the web of feelings and thought patterns that you bring into a situation; its impact on decision making; etc.)  |              |               |                  |                         |
| <b>Adaptability</b> (e.g., Flexibility in handling change; able to see several ways of understanding a situation; seeing options for intervention; etc.)  |              |               |                  |                         |
| <b>Political awareness &amp; skills</b> (e.g., Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships. Effective use of influence; Wielding effective tactics for persuasion; presentations to appeal to the listener; etc.)  |              |               |                  |                         |
| <b>Communication</b> (e.g., Effective in give-and-take, registering emotional cues in attuning your message; Listen well, seek mutual understanding, and welcome sharing of information fully; Foster open communication and stay receptive to bad news as well as good; using core communication skills, etc.) |              |               |                  |                         |
| <b>Collaboration and cooperation</b> (e.g., Working with others toward shared goals; Balance a focus on task with attention to relationships; Promote a cooperative climate; etc.)  |              |               |                  |                         |

## Notes

# Ladder of Inference

Adapted from The Fifth Discipline Handbook



## The "Myopic" Ladder of Inference

From The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook, Peter Senge, 1994... Modified by Michael Keller, 1999

Often, without recognizing it, we struggle with our own stereotypes and misperceptions about other people – our "lens" or the filters present in our thinking. The "Ladder of Inference" helps us to understand the origin of our ideas and the ways in which we "filter" data, often in very narrow, or limited ("myopic") ways which go unquestioned. The steps on the "myopic" ladder are:

- ◆ Observable data (an act, behavior, event) and experiences
- ◆ I add meanings (cultural and personal) to gain understanding
- ◆ I make assumptions based on the meanings I added (privately)
- ◆ I draw conclusions (privately, usually without consulting "the source")
- ◆ I adopt belief about the world (usually as if it were true for everyone at all times)
- ◆ I take actions based on my belief(s) (as if they were the "only" or best choice)

This process of sorting information is normal and is the way that we make sense from our experiences. The "tricky" part is in reminding ourselves that "events" are inherently NEUTRAL and that our meanings, assumptions, conclusions, and beliefs are formulated first (and only) in the "privacy" of our own thinking process – we make them up as if they were real/true. We "interpret" and "ascribe" meaning and relevancy to all events. In short, we create our "experience" in the world. The important thing to remember is TO QUESTION your "interpretation" – to challenge your "lens" when it comes up...in yourself AND in other's thinking too.

# Lab education norms

## What helps maximize the learning experience?

These norms are not judgments about “right” or “wrong” behavior. They represent the gathered wisdom of what seems to be most useful if you want to learn in this situation.

1. Accepting responsibility for your own learning. Actively making use of the resources and methods available in lab type workshop. Putting on the shelf your impulses toward passivity and cynicism.
2. Self-disclosure, asking for feedback, working at self-observation and insight,
3. Helping to build a learning community – being on time, focusing on your own learning and being willing to assist in the learning of others by offering feedback and observations.
4. Avoiding distractions – being at all sessions and not allowing other things to interfere; taking care about drinking alcoholic beverages before a session, not getting involved in an intense relationship with another participant or trainer.
5. Staying in the “here & now” vs. the “then & there” – we learn by reflecting on the behaviors in the group. We learn from disciplined reflection on experience that we have in common.
6. Keep it in the group – Keep the reflection – learning process in the group not in outside conversations. And, don’t tell others not in the workshop about what other participants say and do.
7. In this form of learning there are several things you can do that are likely to result in learning: 1) Ask for feedback on your behavior, 2) disclose what you are feeling, 3) request an EIAG process.

## Standards

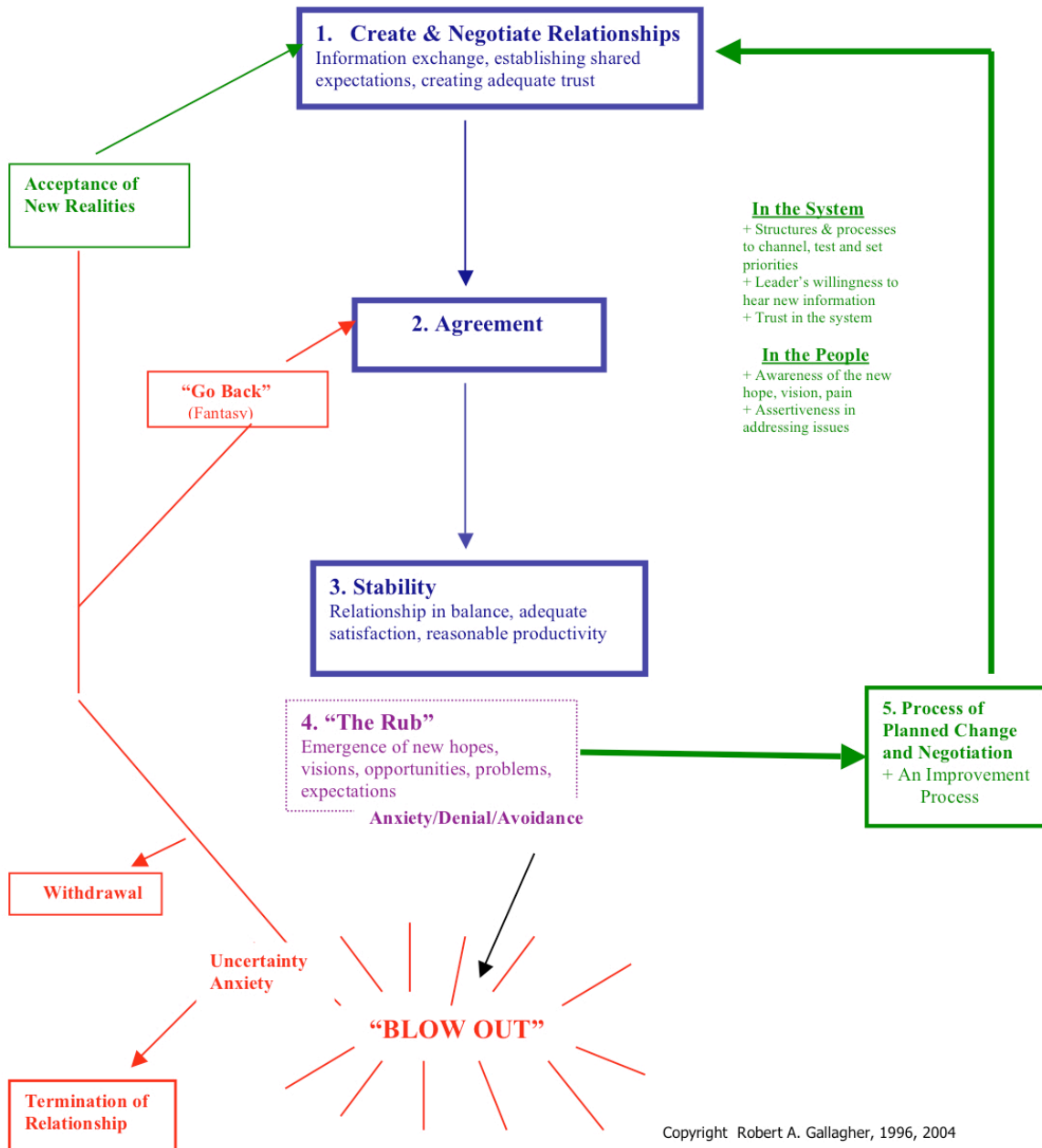
You will need to leave the workshop if –

1. You are very late for a session or leave early
2. You walk out of a session (for whatever reason – upset, angry, etc.)
3. You are, in the opinion of the trainers, significantly interfering with the ability of others to learn. For example, being drunk, being threatening in some manner.

## Role of Trainers – (more in the participant manual)

- To help the group and individuals analyze and learn from what is happening in the group.
- To offer theory, a model or research
- To encourage the group to follow norms that tend to serve the learning process
- To offer training and coaching in skills that tend to help the learning process
- To not offer structure or an agenda. To remain silent, allowing the group to experience its anxiety about acceptance, influence, etc.
- To be willing to disclose oneself, to be open with the group. On occasion being willing to offer feedback and challenge a participant
- To avoid becoming too directive, clinical, or personally involved.

# RELATIONSHIP CYCLE IN ORGANIZATIONS



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