Diocesan School
for Parish Development

Anglican Diocese of Ottawa

Year B

Anglican
Diocese of
Ottawa

2019

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INTRODUCTION TO OUR WORK

AIMS, APPROACHES, AND GUIDELINES

The following aims, approaches, and guidelines inform our work in the Diocesan School for Parish Development training program.

Aims

The School's training program for clergy and laity in congregational and organization development has interconnected aims for congregations, leaders, the diocese, and the broader Church. The comprehensive training program is the School's core action toward these aims:

- healthy, faithful, sustainable congregations fulfilling their calling to be the body of Christ in a particular place and time and among a particular people
- congregations grounded in a robust identity rooted in an Anglican ethos and spirituality
- leaders who are both self-defined and connected to their communities of faith
- leaders who are both aware of and responsive to the particular challenges and opportunities before them
- leaders who can help their faith communities engage and respond to challenges and opportunities
- a common language and community of practice around congregational development in the diocese
- stronger connections among congregational leaders for the purposes of learning, community, mutual encouragement, and inspiration
- the creation of useful training programs that can be shared freely and used by others in the broader Church

Approaches

1. The knowledge and skills with which we equip people will be applied on three different levels:
   - the individual
   - the team or group
   - the whole system
2. We will be equipping people to
   a. look at their current reality (Who are we? What are we? Where are we?);
   b. discern their future (What is God calling us to be at this time and in this place?); and
   c. work on strategy, goals, and actions to get to the future (How do we get there?)
3. We will be focusing on training congregational teams (clergy and lay leaders) because teams are more likely to be able to create positive change.
4. Training will include exploring theory; engaging in application exercises and/or experiential learning segments; and planning, doing, and reflecting on back-home projects.
5. We will draw on Anglican Church ethos, culture, and spirituality as well as theology and Scripture in our work.
6. We will draw on the insights and tools of congregational development as well as the insights and tools of the field of organization development.

Guidelines

1. The School assumes an adult learning model—that is, that each participant will be responsible for his or her own learning by doing such things as completing the assigned readings, participating fully in working sessions, coming to all the daily worship and social gatherings, engaging and completing other assignments and projects, and being responsible to other teams within which they are working.
2. Participants are expected to come on time and to stay through all sessions of the School. Any late arrival or early departure must be negotiated with the training staff in advance.
3. From time to time, participants may miss a session for urgent reasons. Those missing any session will need to take responsibility for working with the training staff of the School to make up missed sessions. This may entail additional costs for participants.
4. The format of the School is a mix of reading, discussion, application exercises, project work, worship, and so on. Participants will learn more if they adopt a stance of openness and flexibility as they move from one activity or way of learning to another.
5. In addition to the provided *Diocesan School for Parish Development Manual,* most participants bring paper and pen to take notes as they listen to presentations and engage in exercises. You may also want to bring a journal if you keep one; many participants find journaling helpful as they reflect on what they learn about themselves (or others!) as leaders.
6. The conference center is an informal environment. Feel free to dress in casual and comfortable clothing.
7. Certificates of completion will be given to participants after they have completed the full two-year program. To receive a certificate, you must complete all the sessions, readings, and projects over the two-year format for which you are registered and you must pass the models exam.
8. From time to time, a participant may find that he or she cannot meet the expectations and demands of the work of the School. Should a participant drop out, tuition costs will likely not be refunded, given that many of the School's financial commitments are made months in advance. If a participant drops out and wishes to re-enter the School at a later time, School staff will work with that person to make this possible.

LEARNING AGREEMENT

I understand that the Diocesan School for Parish Development is a two-year commitment for adult learning and work that necessitates from me

- a stance of openness, curiosity, and experimentation as well as taking responsibility for my own learning;
- a willingness to abide by the behavioural norms of the program;
- the completion of readings and projects prior to attending the sessions and/or during the sessions as assigned;
- active participation in all the plenary sessions, group/team sessions, social events, meals, and worship and the required completion of trainer-approved make-up sessions or work if any sessions are missed (for unavoidable reasons);
- the completion of all the readings on the reading list;
- that I work productively with my congregational team (where applicable) during School sessions, in project work, and in the life of my congregational community;
- that I pass the models exam, which will be given to me in advance to use as I study; and
- that I create, execute, reflect on, and write up two projects using the planning process and format provided by the School.

I've read and understand the Learning Agreement, and by participating in the School, I agree to fulfill these expectations.

____

Printed Name

______________________________ ____________________

Signature Date

READING LIST

The following is the Diocesan School for Parish Development reading list to be completed for a certificate of completion.

1. *Introduction to Type: A Guide to Understanding Your Results on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* by Isabel Briggs Meyer (given out in our session)

2. *In the Grip: Understanding Type, Stress, and the Inferior Function* by Naomi L. Quenk (about $18.00)
   -and-
3. *Introduction to Type and Conflict* by Damian Killen and Danica Murphy (about $18.00)
   Psychometrics Canada LTD.
   7125 77 Avenue NW
   Edmonton, AB, Canada
   T6B 0B5
   ph 1.800.661.5158

4. *Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict* by Esther de Waal (about $15.00 at Amazon)

5. One book on facilitation:
   - *Great Meetings! Great Results* by Dee Kelsey and Pam Plumb (about $12.00 Kindle and $29.00 paperback at Amazon)
   - *Facilitating with Ease!* by Ingrid Bens (about $60.00 at Amazon)

6. *The Character of Organizations: Using Personality Type in Organization Development* by William Bridges (about $14.00 Kindle and $30.00 paperback at Amazon)

7. *Organization Development and Change,* 8th or 9th edition, by Cummings and Worley. This is a textbook and can be very expensive. Amazon may have a rental option. If you cannot get the eighth or ninth edition for under $50.00, get an earlier edition from any used bookseller or used textbook seller. Try Abebooks. Read parts of the book that are relevant to the work we are doing together.

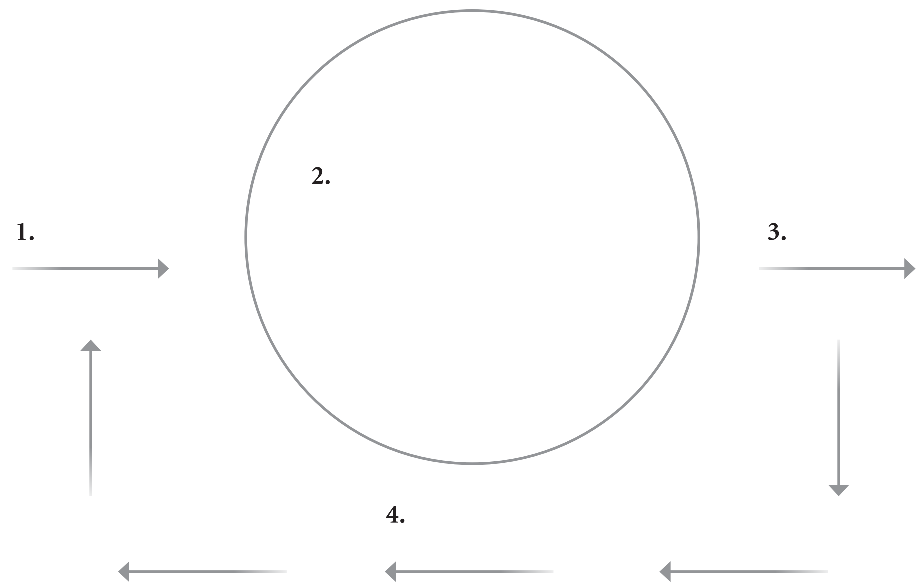
8. One of Peter Steinke's book on congregational systems:
   - *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What* (about $10.00 Kindle or $15.00 paperback at Amazon)
   - *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach* (about $14.00 Kindle or $24.00 paperback at Amazon)
   - *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (about $14.00 Kindle or $22.00 paperback at Amazon)

9. *A People Called Episcopalians: A Brief Introduction to Our Way of Life* by John H. Westerhoff (about $4.00 Kindle or $6.00 paperback at Amazon)

10. *Meet the Family* by Patricia Bays ($4.50, Augsburg Fortress Canada)

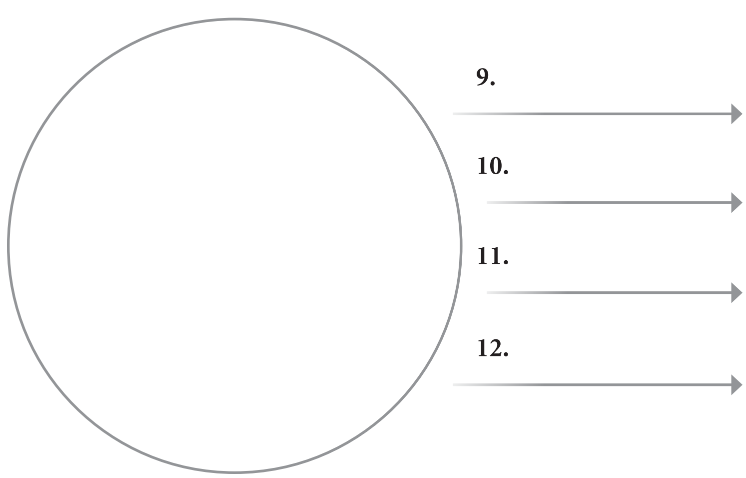
11. *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* 3rd Edition by Sam Kaner (about $35.00 new, $30.00 used, or $15.00 to rent at Amazon)

Model 1: (The name tells you the pieces!)

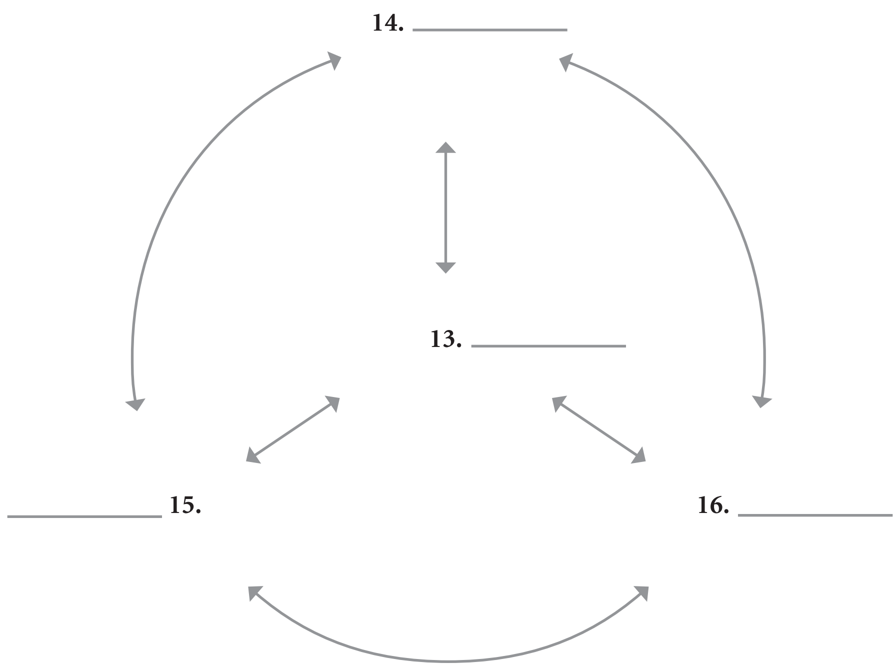


Model 1b (related to #1 above)

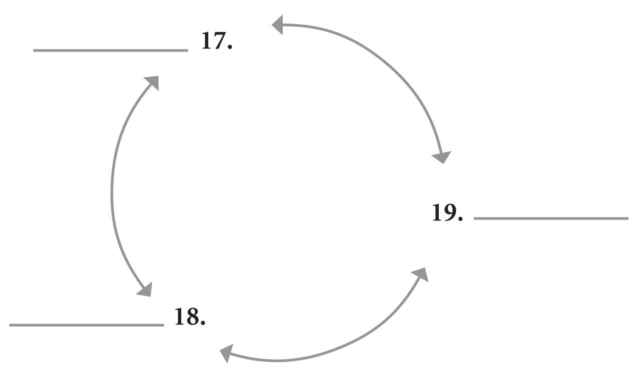
Model 1c (related to #3 above)



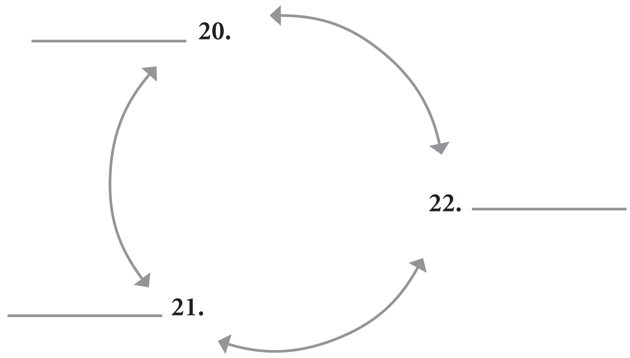
Model 2: Sources of Transformation



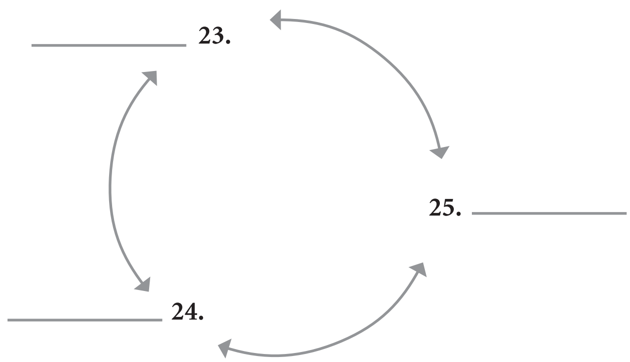
Model 2b (related to #13 above)



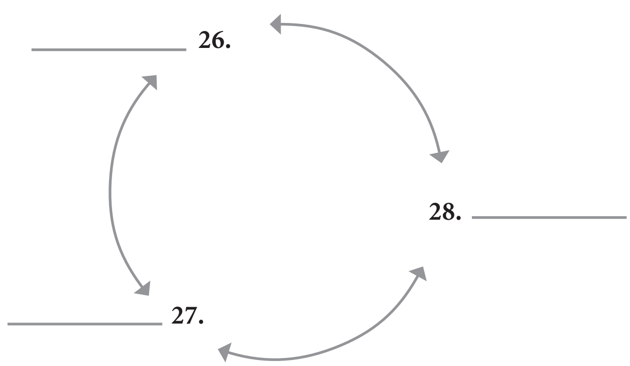
Model 2c (related to #14 on previous page)



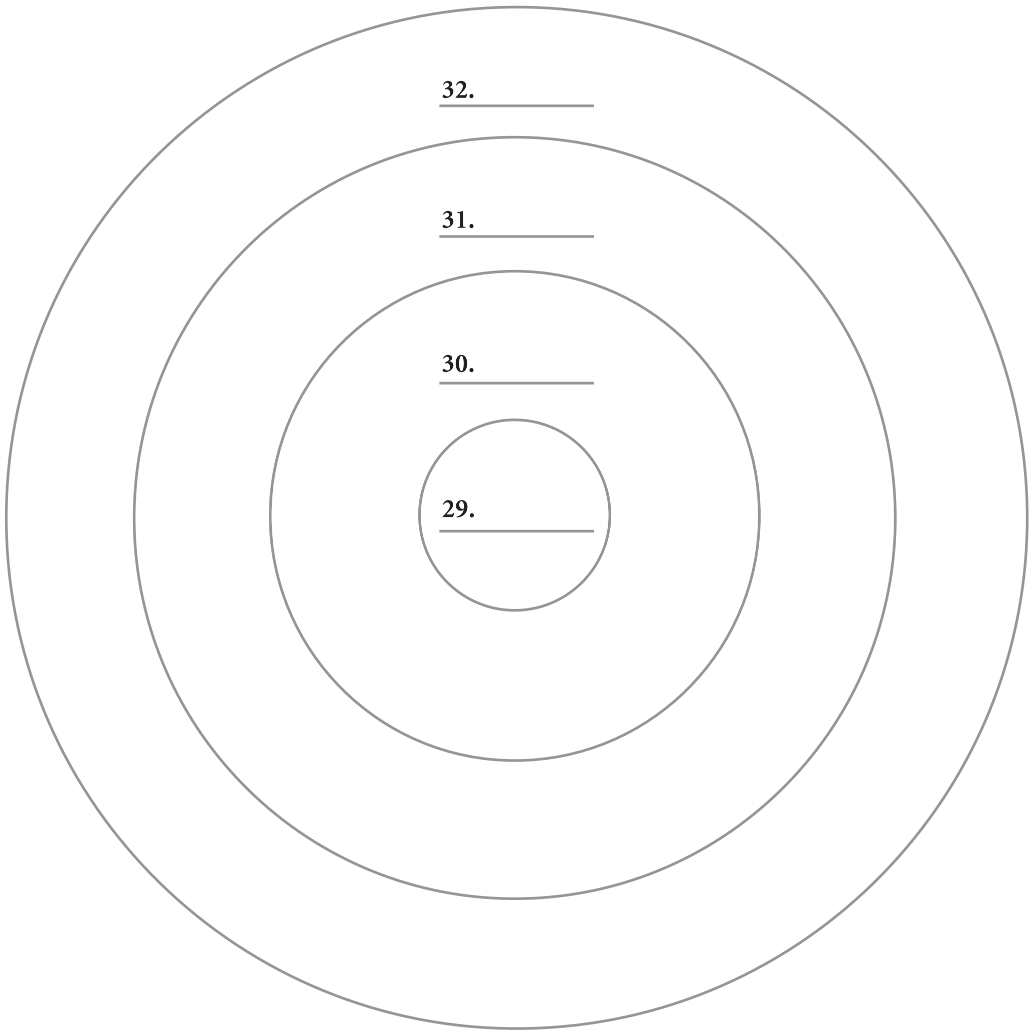
Model 2d (related to #15 on previous page)



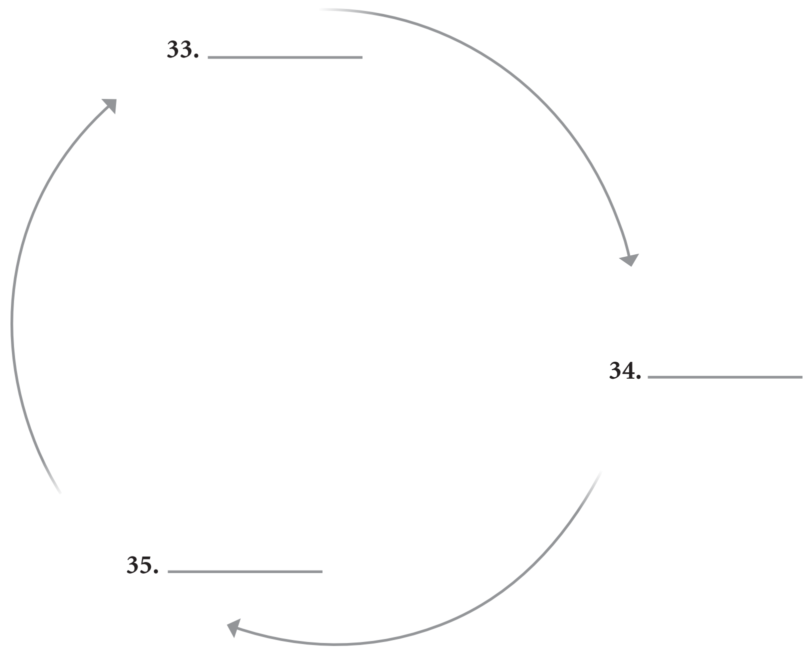
Model 2e (related to #16 on previous page)



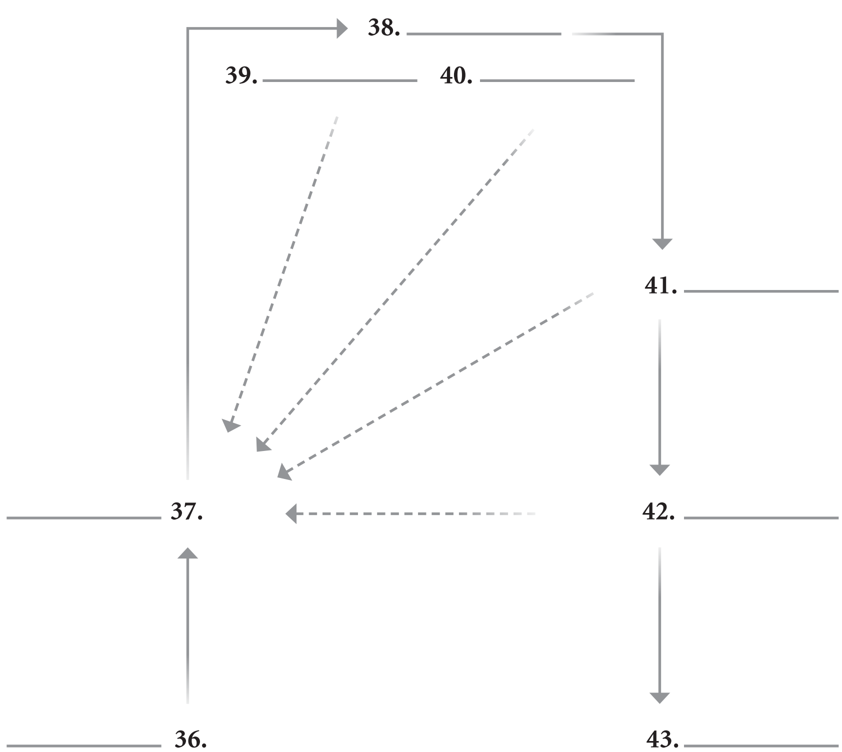
Model 3: Faith Development in Community



Model 4: The Benedictine Life



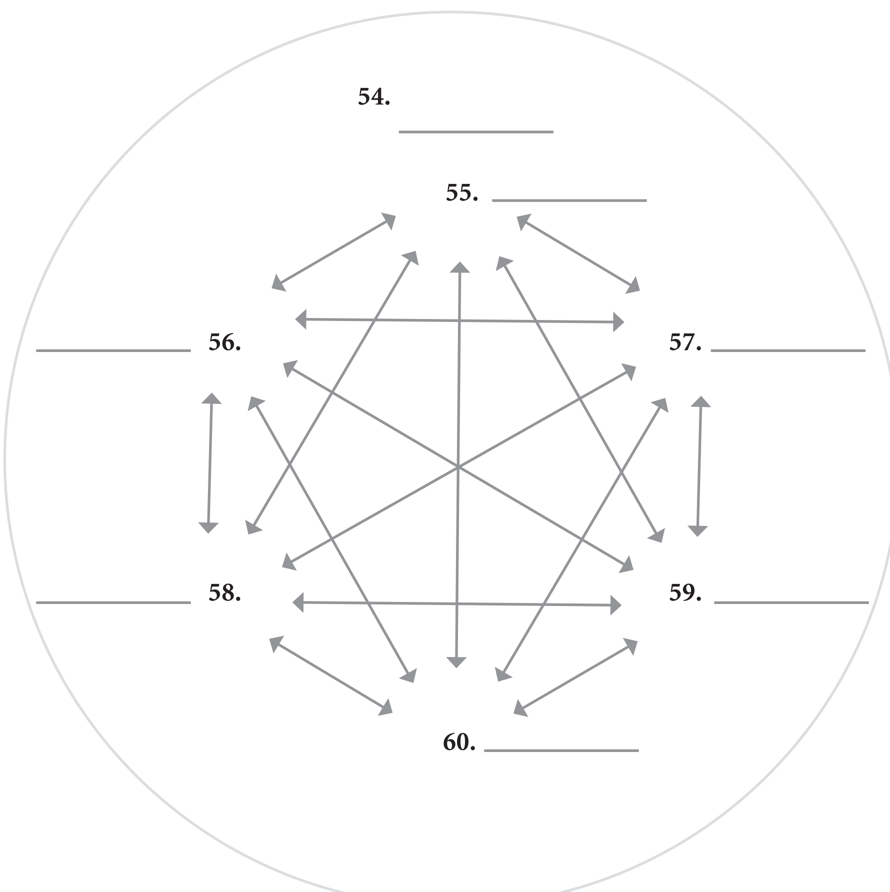
Model 5: Life Cycle of Organizations



Model 6: Congregational Size

	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
ASA range	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.
Key Characteristics	49.	50.	51.	52.	53.

Model 7: Elements of an Organizational System



Kurt Lewin's Change Model

61. → **62.** → **63.** →

Action Research Change Model

64. → **65.** → **66.** → **67.** → **68.** → **69.** →

(Extra Credit) 2 points

Define "congregational development" (as we are using the term in the School):

____

____

____

____

____

____

Score __________ **out of a possible 69 points (55 or more points = pass)**

Name ____

CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT PLANNING AND REPORT FORM

Report on 1st project due ______________________________

Report on 2nd project due ______________________________

Send this project report to your trainer at ______________________________

(Follow this format when you type up your reports.)

Name ______________________________

Congregation ______________________________

Project Planning

1. Describe your overall project.

2. Describe your project objectives.

3. Describe your individual learning goals.

4. Connect your project to the organization development or congregational development definitions (see page 24 in your manual). How is this project OD or CD?

5. Describe the theory base (models, change processes, etc.) you or your team will draw on in your project. Make explicit the connection between your effort and any theory base or models.

6. Outline the specific steps of your project, including activities and dates.

7. Describe what role you will play in the project.

Project Results

1. Describe what you or your team actually did in your project. Did it differ from what you planned to do? If so, how?

2. What results of your project have you observed in your congregation so far?

3. While working through your project, what did *you* as an individual learn? Complete all that apply.

   a. About yourself as leader or change agent:

   b. About working in a team, with groups, or as a facilitator:

   c. About your congregation as a whole:

   d. About anything else (theories, leadership, etc.):

4. Did you achieve your learning goals? (Refer to Project Planning, question 3.) What helped you achieve them or prevented you from achieving them?

Starting with Some Definitions

Part of becoming a congregational development practitioner is more deeply understanding what both organization development and congregational development are. The following definitions—a number of definitions for organization development and a working definition for congregational development—are a good place to start.

What is organization development?

The following quotations demonstrate the many different definitions of OD. Ordered by date, they show the evolution of working definitions over the years.

- Organization development is an effort (1) planned, (2) organization-wide, and (3) managed from the top, to (4) increase organization effectiveness and health through (5) planned interventions in the organization's "processes," using behavioral science knowledge. (Richard Beckhard, 1969)

- Organization development is a process that applies behavioral science knowledge and practices to help organizations build the capacity to change and to achieve greater effectiveness, including increased financial performance and improved quality of work life. Organization development differs from other planned change efforts, such as technological innovation or new product development, because the focus is on building the organization's ability to assess its current functioning and to achieve its goals. Moreover OD is oriented to improving the total system – organization and its parts in the context of the larger environment that affects them. (Cummings and Worley)

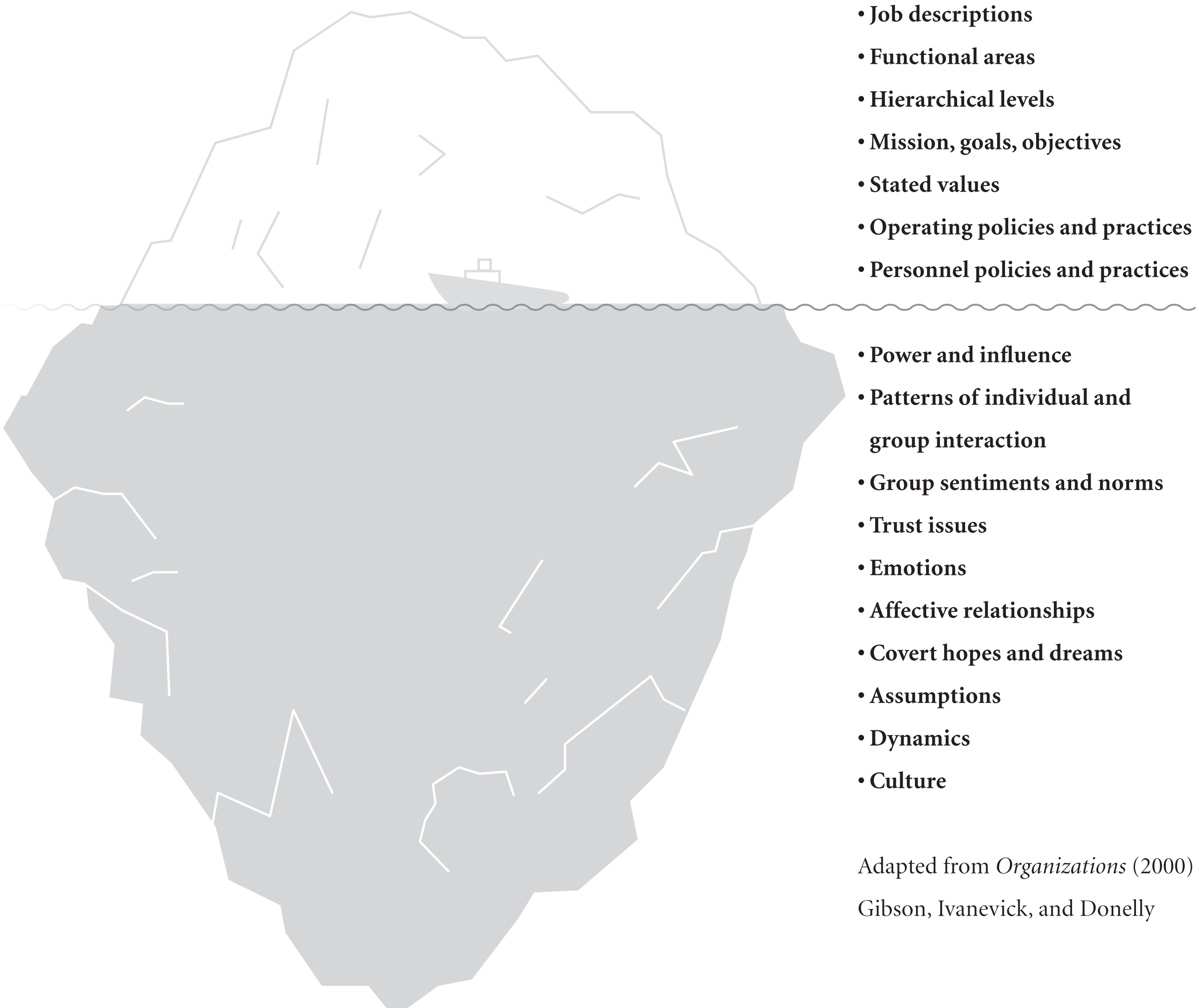
- Organization development is a planned process of change in an organization's culture through the utilization of behavioral science technology, research and theory. (Warner Burke)

- Organization development refers to a long-range effort to improve an organization's problem solving capabilities and its ability to cope with changes in its external environment with the help of external or internal behavioral-scientist consultants, or change agents, as they are sometimes called. (Wendell French)

- Organization development is a system wide process of data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention, and evaluation aimed at (1) enhancing congruence among organizational structure, process, strategy, people, and culture; (2) developing new and creative organizational solutions; and (3) developing the organization's self-renewing capacity. It occurs through the collaboration of organizational members working with a change agent using behavioral science theory, research, and technology. (Michael Beer)

- OD is a field directed at interventions in the processes of human systems (formal and informal groups, organizations, communities and societies) in order to increase their effectiveness and health using a variety of disciplines, principally applied behavioral science. OD requires practitioners to be conscious about the values guiding their practice and focuses on achieving its results through people. (Arnold Minors, Arnold Minors Associates)

Organization development deals with what's under the tip of the iceberg.



- **Job descriptions**
- **Functional areas**
- **Hierarchical levels**
- **Mission, goals, objectives**
- **Stated values**
- **Operating policies and practices**
- **Personnel policies and practices**

- **Power and influence**
- **Patterns of individual and group interaction**
- **Group sentiments and norms**
- **Trust issues**
- **Emotions**
- **Affective relationships**
- **Covert hopes and dreams**
- **Assumptions**
- **Dynamics**
- **Culture**

Adapted from *Organizations* (2000)
Gibson, Ivanevick, and Donelly

FIGURE A-1: ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT ICEBERG

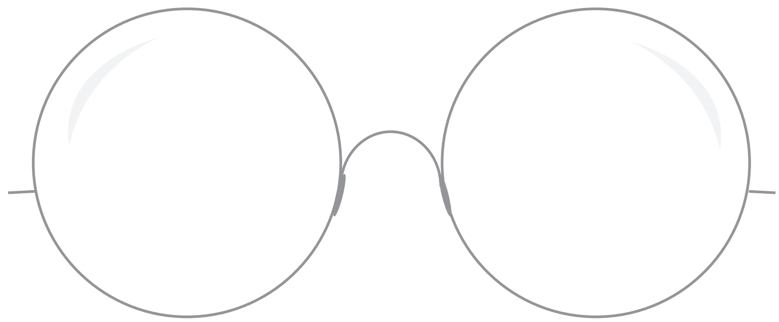
What is congregational development?

Congregational development is the development of congregations of all sizes, locations, and conditions into more faithful, healthy, and effective communities of faith that are

- focused on and faithful to their unique reason for being and primary task as congregations, which are local expressions of the body of Christ;
- connected to and expressive of their unique ecclesial tradition, ethos, and character;
- self-renewing and responsive to the challenges and opportunities before them;
- sustainable, or working toward greater sustainability, in terms of a fit between the elements of their organizational life (e.g., vision for ministry, leadership, culture, size, property, finances, and so on); and
- fostering a culture of transparency, collaboration, courage, flexibility, and forgiveness in which the congregation and its leaders have a greater sense of choice.

Notes, Questions, and Insights about the Working Definition of Congregational Development:

MODELS AND CHANGE PROCESSES



Models are lenses that allow us to look at our congregations and assess them.

Models are a way to frame situations.

Models are not reality.

Models are not useful in all situations.

Models cannot capture all complexity.

FIGURE A-2: MODELS AS LENSES

The Purpose and Work of a Congregation

All organizations have what might be called their primary task, that is, their reason for being: the focused activity that they uniquely exist to do. The primary task of a social service agency is different from that of an educational institution, which in turn is different from that of an auto manufacturer or a Christian congregation. Being aware of and reminding ourselves about our organization's primary task helps us to focus our efforts and define what our organizational faithfulness looks like.

The primary task of a Christian congregation can be described this way: The unique purpose and work of a congregation is to **gather** those called by God into Christ's body, the Church—a community of **transformation** of mind, heart, and action—and to **send** these same people into the world both to be and to act as God's loving and transforming presence.

Another way of saying this is that the purpose of a congregation is to be the body of Christ and, with God's help, to create and renew the Christian folk who in turn create and renew a world that we believe both already is and is in the process of becoming God's own realm—a realm of forgiveness, reconciliation, courage, compassion, justice, peace, and hope.

This is the primary task of every Christian congregation; however, each congregation is doing this task in its own unique **context**. So what this process looks like in practice may differ greatly from congregation to congregation, depending on how each responds to and works within its own context.

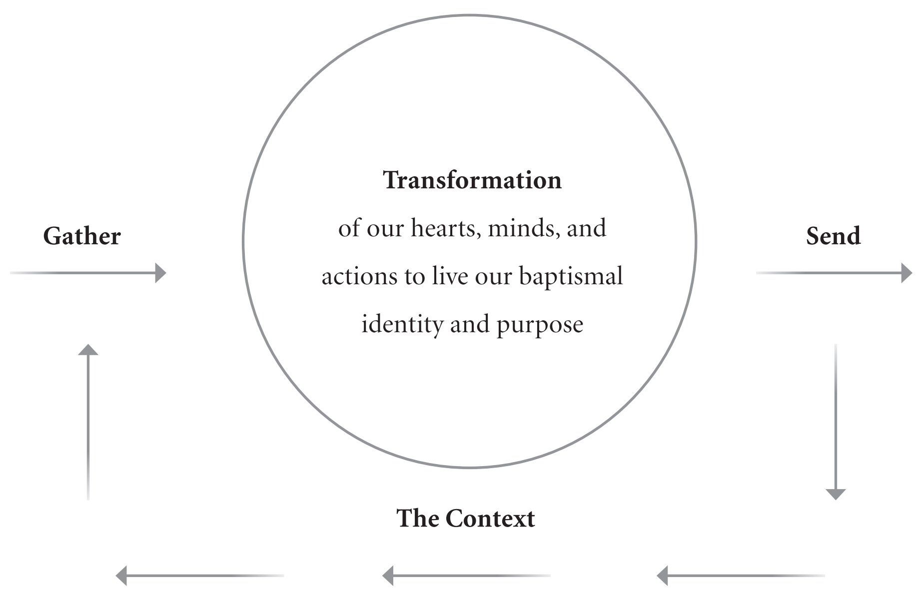


FIGURE A-3: MODEL 1—GATHER-TRANSFORM-SEND

Gather

As this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

—Early Eucharistic prayer found in the *Didache,* ca. AD 100

We believe that God is the source of all invitations to life in the faith communities that are Christ's body, whether these invitations come in the form of gentle nudges, tender entreaties, or rude awakenings. For us in the Church, the questions are: How we can assist God in inviting and receiving people into the life of Christ's body, the Church? How can we continue to invite and receive them over the various stages of their lives and their lives in Christ?

In Alice Mann's book *Incorporation of New Members in the Episcopal Church* (1983), she outlines stages related to the overall incorporation of people into the Episcopal Church. Even now Alice's work provides an excellent description of the primary elements related to gathering.

Invite → **Greet** → **Orient** → **Incorporate** →

FIGURE A-4: MODEL 1—GATHER

Inviting—that is, drawing attention to Christ and the Church, motivating people to explore Christ and the Church further, and inviting people to this particular congregation. Different elements of inviting include (1) physical presence in the neighbourhood, including signage; (2) relationship with the community; (3) invitations made by individual members and word of mouth; (4) electronic outreach, including websites; (5) print brochures, PR, and advertising; (6) invitations in response to enquiries about the sacraments; (7) programs serving those outside the church; (8) special or seasonal liturgies; and (9) re-inviting those who have drifted away.

Greeting—that is, recognizing, welcoming, and extending appropriate and helpful hospitality to those who are our guests. Different elements of greeting include (1) recognizing and acknowledging visitors, (2) an appropriate and interested welcome, (3) clearly stated boundaries and worship norms, and (4) a functional and hospitable coffee hour.

Orienting—that is, helping people participate and understand who we are, where things are, and how we do things in this particular place. Different elements of orienting include (1) follow-up contact and conversations with visitors, (2) newcomers' gatherings and classes, (3) orientation to the building and to the activities of the church, (4) deeper learning about ecclesial and congregational identity, and (5) connection to the clergy and others.

Incorporating—that is, the process of being knit into the congregation and its people as a local expression of the body of Christ. Different elements of incorporation include (1) deeper involvement in a social, formational, and/or activity group; (2) completion of an enquirer's course, a series of foundations courses, and/or a catechumenal process; (3) the invitation (and its acceptance) to be baptized, become confirmed, be received, or transfer membership; and (4) the invitation to make a financial pledge to the congregation.

Transform

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. —Ezekiel 36:26

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
I will, with God's help.
Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
I will, with God's help.
Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
I will, with God's help.
Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?
I will, with God's help.
Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
I will, with God's help.
Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the Earth?
I will, with God's help.

—from the Baptismal Covenant, *The Book of Alternative Services,* p. 159

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds. —Paul, Romans 12:1–2

Congregational life—life lived with others in Christ—is the place where we are baptized, fed, and renewed both to become the people whose presence the world needs and to do the work we are sent into the world to do. This process of transformation goes by many names: continual renewal of baptismal identity and purpose, sanctification, conversion, or formation.

By transformation we mean the gradual process begun in baptism by which the Church experienced in the local congregation comes to shape us more and more into the human beings God calls us to be. This process is an organic one in which our Christian identity and purpose are shaped by the sacraments and other community forms of prayer, learning, and life as well as the practices and actions we ourselves engage in. (These elements are outlined in Model 2—Sources of Transformation on page 34.)

But these elements are not the only sources of transformation. A congregation's culture and climate, informal relationships, decision-making processes, ways of handling conflict and transition, personal presence of leaders, physical property (including the artwork in the worship space), neighbourhood, and attitude toward that neighbourhood—all of these are sources of transformation as well.

Thus, the transformation process in a congregation is never the sum total of programs and liturgies. It is an organic web of actions, dynamics, relationships, and so on that make up the living system—or the living organism—that is a congregation, a specific and local manifestation of the body of Christ.

FIGURE A-5: MODEL 1—TRANSFORM

Send

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

—Dismissal, *The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada,* p. 215

William Temple spoke of the church as the only institution that exists for people who are not its members. God sends us into the world over and over again to be God's own loving presence in a world in need of transformation. The first place that God sends us is into the relationships, communities, roles, and occupations in which we already find ourselves. And so God asks us to learn what it means to live reconciling, peaceful, and justice-loving lives as parents, sons and daughters, spouses and partners, lawyers and factory workers, politicians and health care workers, volunteers and voters.

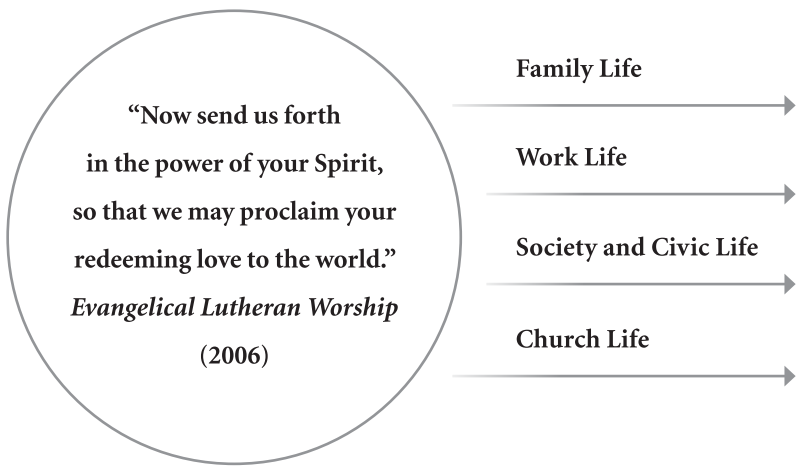


FIGURE A-6: MODEL 1—SEND

Melissa M. Skelton and the Diocese of Olympia, 2007

MODEL 2: SOURCES OF TRANSFORMATION

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. —Acts 2:42–47

While congregational life—the full, specific, and local manifestation of the body of Christ in all its complexity—is the source of our transformation as the Christian folk, the following key means of that transformation are important to explore:

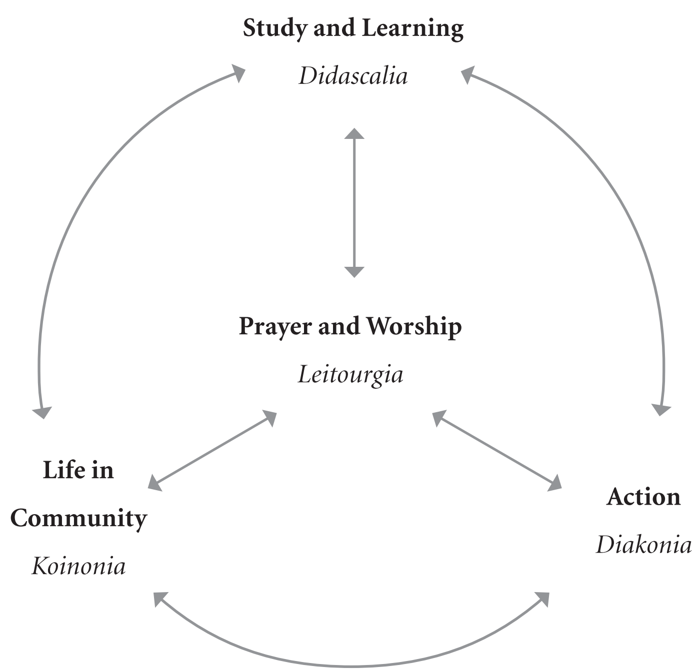


FIGURE A-7: MODEL 2—SOURCES OF TRANSFORMATION

Prayer and Worship: Holy Eucharist, Daily Office, and Personal Prayer

Study and Learning: Mind, Heart, and Practice

Action: Stewardship, Service, and Evangelism

Life in Community: Conversation, Food, and Silence/Listening

Prayer and Worship

Leitourgia

Of all the sources of transformation, worship and prayer are the most important, carrying the most potential for transformation. Through worship and prayer, we encounter God's very self. "Liturgy is the means by which the Church is constantly invested in that gospel, in the reading of scriptures, in proclamation, in praise, in prayer of deep concern, and in those acts which wordlessly incorporate the believer in the word" (*BAS*, p. 10).

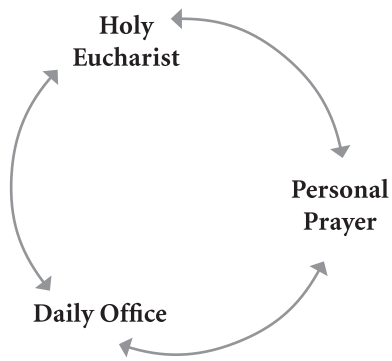


FIGURE A-8: MODEL 2—PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Holy Eucharist: In Holy Eucharist we engage in worship that enacts the Paschal mystery of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ, offered, blessed, broken, received, and taken into the world. Holy Eucharist is at the center of who we are as a people because it enacts who we are as a people in relationship to God and to one another.

Daily Office: In the Daily Office we enter into the rhythm of the daily prayer of the Church to God. As the Rule of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist affirms, "The Daily Office is a sustained act of union with Christ by which we participate in his unceasing offering of love to the Father. In reciting the psalms, singing canticles and hymns, proclaiming the divine word in Scripture, or lifting our voices in prayer, we are to enter more and more into the mind, heart, and will of Christ, and to be borne up by the Spirit in him to the Father. Our praying of the psalter, which is the heart of the Daily Office, takes us ever deeper into the mystery of the incarnation; the psalms give voice to the whole range of human experience which Christ has embraced and redeemed as the Savior of the world."

Personal Prayer: In personal prayer, we pray in ways that are particular to our personality and inclination and suited to the circumstances of our lives. What kinds of prayer are we called and drawn to? Silent prayer? Intercessory prayer? Adoration? Oblation? A form of "breath prayer"? *Lectio divina*? Or perhaps yet another kind of prayer.

Study and Learning

Didascalia

Through study and learning, our minds are enlightened, our hearts are engaged, and our bodies are schooled to live out our baptismal identity with each other and in the world.

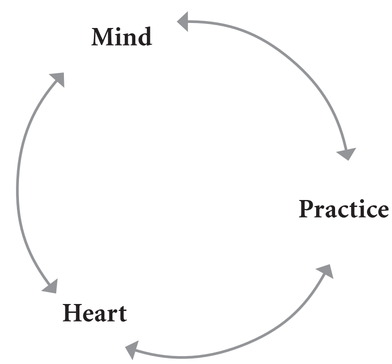


FIGURE A-9: MODEL 2—STUDY AND LEARNING

Mind: Learning to reflect theologically, drawing on Scripture, tradition, and reason to inform our perspectives and our approach to issues related to living as a Christian in today's world.

Heart: Learning through values, emotions, and the wisdom of the body; learning that speaks from and to our experience; learning that takes seriously, and makes an effort to connect to, who we are as embodied, affective beings.

Practice: Learning to practice the faith, including gaining competency in worship and prayer; learning to listen and to have a voice in the life of a faith community; learning to discern the future direction of our lives; and learning practices of stewardship, evangelism, and service both within the congregation and in and for the world.

Action

Diakonia

Doing is always its own formation and transformation as we engage in some of the practices of being the body of Christ in and for the world.

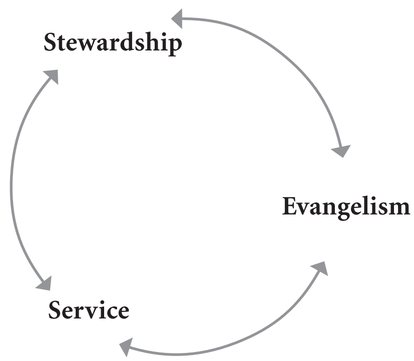


FIGURE A-10: MODEL 2—ACTION

Stewardship: The practice of stewardship forms us as we come to understand that all we are and all we have are gifts from God and as, in response, we adopt a stance of thankfulness and generosity related to all that we have been given from God. Stewardship includes the use of our time, our talent, and our money. It includes our care for the earth.

Service: The practice of service transforms us as we offer our time and energy to benefit others in need or for the purpose of the common good.

Evangelism: The practice of evangelism includes being in touch with the gospel reality of our own lives and organically sharing the good news of God in Christ with others, both within and outside the congregation, in relationship through our presence, our deeds, and our words.

Life in Community

Koinonia

In the togetherness, meals, and conversation of community life, we become more fully who we are and learn what it means to be a people.

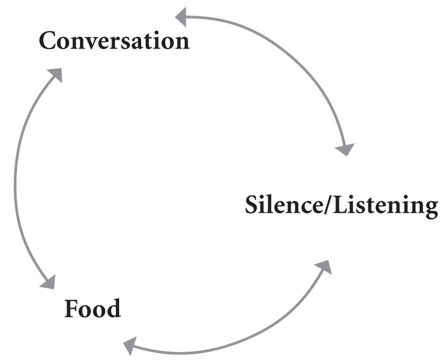


FIGURE A-11: MODEL 2—LIFE IN COMMUNITY

Conversation: Engaging in conversation or dialogue with each other is important on many levels—from more casual conversations as we get to know one another to more structured conversations that aim to give all a voice around a particular issue or opportunity.

Food: At its most basic level, the sharing of food has the power to create community.

Silence/Listening: We cultivate silence as a way to listen while another is speaking, as a way for us to be connected to ourselves and thereby engage in more meaningful speech, and as a way to listen to God.

Melissa M. Skelton and the Diocese of Olympia, 2007

MODEL 3: FAITH DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITY

We must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. —Ephesians 4:15–16

A congregation is a place that houses and shapes a dynamic movement between different stages of faith development. When healthy, a congregation both accepts people where they are and creates an environment in which people are invited into a more mature practice of their faith, respecting that their faith is legitimate and real.

The role of congregational leaders is (*a*) to assess the current faith development of the individual and the congregational community; (*b*) to decide where to apply their efforts toward faith development, identifying ways to meet people where they are and to invite them to take the next step to go deeper; and (*c*) to nurture those who are mature practitioners, for their own sake and recognizing that they positively influence the whole.

We define the different kinds of faith in a congregation in this way:

Vicariously Connected: Those who do not come to your congregation but who somehow think of it as "theirs."

Occasional Attenders: Those who attend the congregation a few times a year, often Christmas and Easter.

Sunday Sacramentalists: Those who have some pattern of regularity at the Sunday Eucharist. For some this may mean once a month; for others, this may mean every Sunday. This group is mixed in terms of faith development, ranging from people who are tentative in their faith life to those who are actively pursuing going deeper in their spiritual life.

Mature Practitioners: Those who are regular in their participation in the Sunday Eucharist and have developed a pattern of prayer and action that expresses a mature Christian faith.

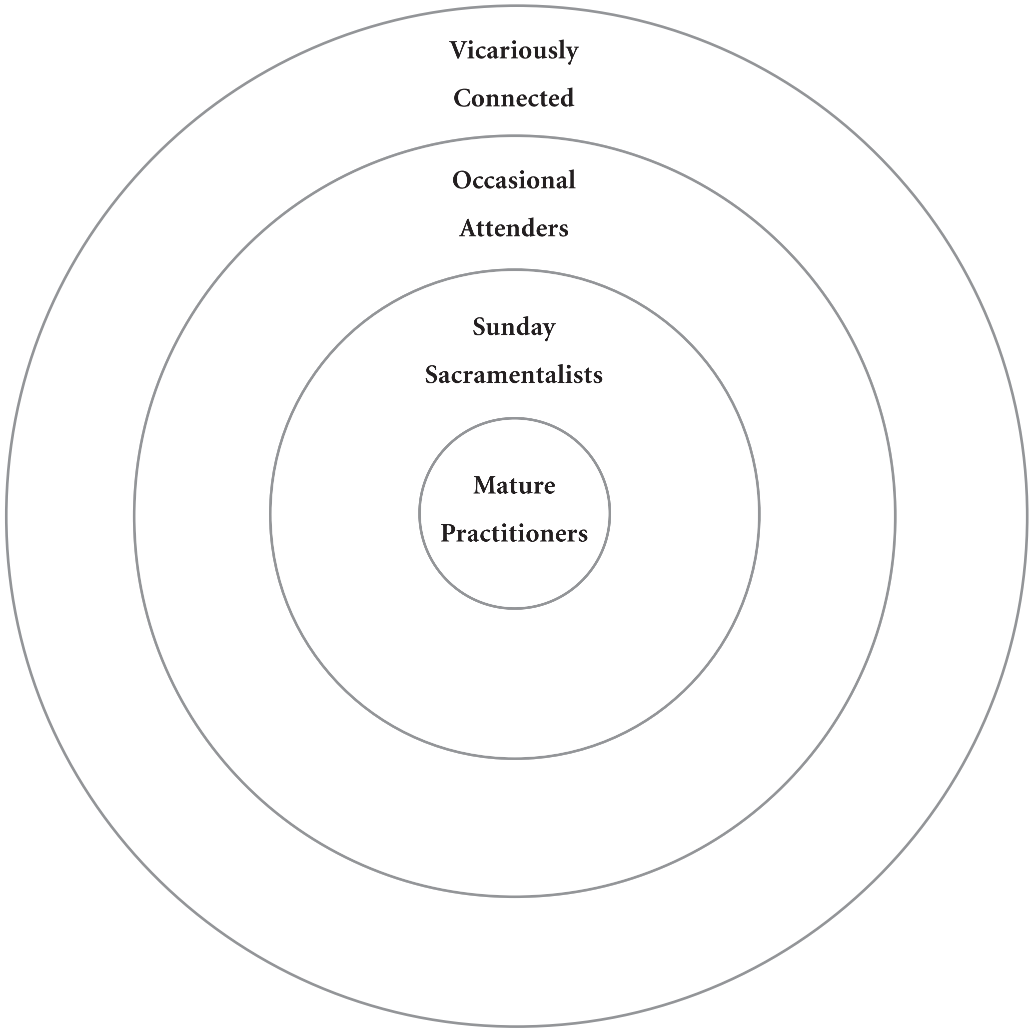


FIGURE A-12: MODEL 3—FAITH DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITY

Adapted from the Church Development Institute, 2007

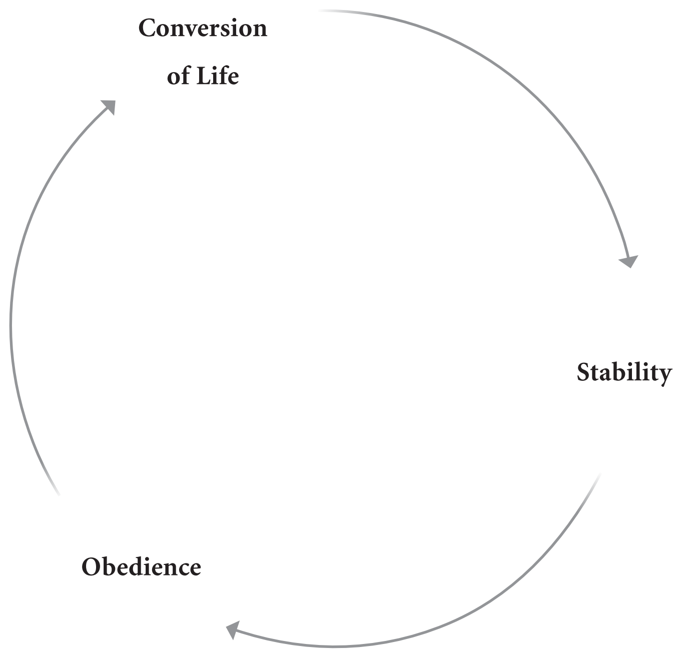


FIGURE A-13: MODEL 4—THE BENEDICTINE LIFE

Stability: "Accepting this particular community, this place and these people…as the way to God"

Obedience: "A lifelong process of learning…listening to the Word of God, to the Rule, to the brethren and to the Abbot" in order to act

Conversion of Life: "A commitment to total inner transformation" as we turn to Christ

—Esther de Waal's *Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict*

The elements described in Benedict's Rule provide a framework for approaching the spiritual life of both individuals and communities. An important aspect of the model is that each of the elements influences the other. And so conversion of life is not possible without the listening stance that obedience brings; stability, finding God in the here and now, is not sustainable without a life that seeks to find the new life in Christ that is always coming into being, and so on.

For Individual Christians

Stability has to do with the ability to find God in our current situations—the people, the places, the time where we really are. It means giving up the idea that God is only in the next location, the next relationship, a better condition, or whatever is right around the corner.

Obedience is about listening with an ear to responding, whether we're listening to God through prayer and silence; through Scripture; through others in community; through our own mind, heart, and body; through friends and family; or through the world around us. Obedience is deep listening to these sources with an openness to taking action.

Conversion of Life is an expectation of, and openness to, the new horizon—the new work God is doing in the midst of our lives that is forever drawing us to Christ.

Rhythm and balance, another important aspect of Benedictine thought, is the practice of living well in the midst of the polarities of life. Through practicing rhythm and balance, we find a way to live the many dimensions of our lives—work, prayer, rest, companionship, study—in a way that will sustain us.

For the Congregation

Stability in a congregational setting is about celebrating and remembering that God is with us here and now, with these people and in this place. Thus, we do not attach God's presence to some future, imagined state of growth, to a better building, to a different neighbourhood, or to a different group of leaders or congregants. Benedictine stability asserts that God is here now in the community of faith as it actually is, in the building and grounds and neighbourhood where the church actually resides, with the people who are actually there.

Obedience in a congregational setting is all about fostering regular opportunities for individuals in the congregation and the congregation as a whole to listen to God. These spaces for listening can include the use of silence in liturgy or in meetings; the regular practice of the Daily Office; the practice of other disciplines such as centering prayer and *lectio divina*; mutual discernment groups; discussions or meetings conducted in a way that people are heard and not interrupted; and town meetings that contain open listening processes in which the collective voice of the community is heard.

Conversion of Life is about cultivating processes by which the new invitation on the horizon to turn to Christ is discerned and by which a path of revitalization is always in place, either for the congregation as a whole or for dimensions of the congregation's life. Often these processes include an annual parish-wide assessment of the congregation's work in its context. They can also take the form of regular assessments and discussions in smaller groups, identifying where things are going well and where certain elements of the congregation's life may need attention or improvement.

Paying attention to **rhythm and balance** in a congregation's life has to do with seeking a balance and rhythm to congregational activity given the congregation's size and style of spirituality. Are we too busy? Are the elements of our life as a congregation in the right balance to support our sense of stability, our obedience to God and to one another, and the continual conversion of our life together?

The Rule in Context

Benedictine principles have guided individuals and communities through the centuries in keeping with their circumstances and callings. We've explored some of the ways Benedictine thought applies to the spiritual life in a congregational setting. The Associates of the Benedictine Order of the Holy Cross articulate the Benedictine life for their context this way:

> Holy Cross Associates intend to love and serve God through a relationship with the Order of the Holy Cross, adapting to their lives the Benedictine principles on which the monks base their common life.
>
> - As the monks are grounded in obedience, so we will listen for the voice of God speaking to us in Sacred Scripture and the traditions of the Church, in our daily circumstances and relationships, in the words of other people and in our own hearts. And hearing, we will try to translate God's word into action.

- As the monks center their lives in stability, so we will be steady and regular in our prayer life and in the obligations of family, work and community.
- As the monks seek conversion of life, so we will reflect on our own lives in regular self-examination, believing that what God wants of us, as of every human being, is growth toward the fullness of the Image in which we are made. We will strive to be open to the changes required by and for that growth.*

For Holy Cross Associates, this one articulation of the Benedictine life plays out in a multitude of expressions as each develops from their common rule an individual rule of life. This is done in consultation with a member of the community or a spiritual director. The Associates explain, "In this way the rule can be tailored very specifically to your life and circumstances. We believe this helps each person to grow in the spirit and in their own gifts. This is very much in keeping with the Order of the Holy Cross and with the very practical wisdom of our Benedictine identity." Likewise, in our own contexts, the elements of Benedict's Rule can inform our spiritual lives, individually and in community.

* Quotations from Holy Cross Monastery, holycrossmonastery.com

MODEL 5: LIFE CYCLE OF ORGANIZATIONS

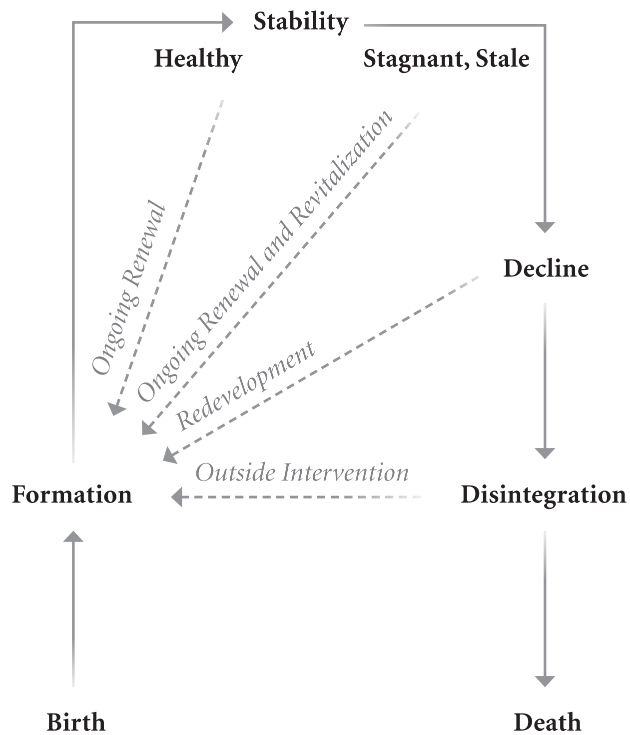


FIGURE A-14: MODEL 5—LIFE CYCLE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Birth: A founder or founders, an idea, a dream

Formation: Identity—who are we (at the faith level)? what are we here for? who is our neighbour, and how are we related to our neighbour?

Stability: Fruitful and sustainable ministry, institutionally and spiritually. A time when the elements of organizational life fit together (money, vision for ministry, property, people). Stability can be a **place of health** or can tip into feeling **stagnant or stale,** with growth stalling and new opportunities being ignored. This tip is sometimes experienced as a membership plateau followed by declining numbers.

Decline: Characterized by a fall-off in numbers; decline in energy; fear, blame, and confusion in the system; a focus on small things rather than central issues

Disintegration: Marked by conflict, hopelessness, feeling stuck, inability of internal leaders to affect change

—Adapted from Alice Mann's *Can Our Church Live? Redeveloping Congregations in Decline*

Congregational Renewal and Redevelopment

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." —John 12:23–24

Healthy Stability and Ongoing Renewal

Healthy, stable congregations stay healthy either through leadership that instinctively raises and acts on formation-related questions in the overall congregation or through processes that continue to renew the entire congregation or important parts of the congregation that need attention. Some leaders organically recognize and act on areas in a congregation that need improvement; some leaders and congregations have in place processes that scan the life of the congregation and listen for and act on areas that need improvement.

Stale, Stagnant Stability and Renewal/Revitalization

When stability becomes stale and stagnant, the necessary work for renewal and revitalization is typically system-wide. A congregation and its leadership will need to look in a more focused way at formation questions of identity, purpose, and context—Who are we? What are we here for? Who is our neighbour? When done skillfully, these interventions also introduce and teach the congregation language and models or frameworks that help to focus the discussion. Sometimes the self-study before the calling of a new vicar/rector can be the context within which at least some of this work is done.

Decline and Redevelopment

The further down the path a congregation goes in declining numbers, finances, energy, and flexibility, the more costly it becomes for a congregation to engage the formation questions that have the potential to activate what it will take to return to healthy stability. Redevelopment is a possibility when serious declines have occurred in a congregation, but significant effort will be needed to increase the likelihood that redevelopment efforts will bear fruit. Often third-party help or a dramatic change in leadership is needed to face the situation, to let go of old patterns and ways of doing things, and to engage the work needed to turn things around.

Disintegration and Outside Intervention

When disintegration begins and things start to fall apart, conflict or paralysis can set in. At this point, a diocese will often intervene, taking charge of the decisions since the congregation has no internal capacity to do what may be needed.

Organizational Types

by Douglas Alan Walrath

One sure way to start an argument among church leaders is to advocate some particular way of categorizing congregations as the best! Each person will usually rise quickly to champion his or her favorite: theological focus, denominational affiliation, type of community, size of congregation—and so the list goes.

I must admit that occasionally I fall into that trap, though most of the time I remember that a better way to clarify the nature and significance of differences among congregations is to employ several frames of reference. Frankly, I don't believe any one way of looking at churches is inherently better than the rest. Usually I employ several when working with a congregation for the same reason a physician uses more than one diagnostic tool. Each frame of reference yields different insights about why a congregation behaves as it does. So I choose the approaches that experience tells me will provide the particular insights I need to have.

I find church size to be one of the most useful frames of reference I can employ when I am seeking to understand the internal dynamics of a congregation—like styles of church organization, leadership, communication, and planning that are functional in that congregation.

For example, just before writing this article, I reviewed the planning task force proposals of a very large, urban congregation with whom I will do some work in a few days. With supporting data the report contains nearly 100 pages. Their plans have already been a year in the making. A dozen obviously talented members of this congregation's planning task force have systematically and thoroughly studied their church and community; the carefully typed minutes they shared with me detail their year-long effort. Looking through their impressive work I am tempted to generalize, "That's the way planning ought to be done!"

Yet, I know otherwise. While attending the annual meeting of another congregation, I witnessed an equally impressive, but very different approach. During consideration of the church's budget, the conversation strayed quite far from the printed agenda to a discussion of the widespread unemployment that afflicts the community served by this church of less than 80 members. It appeared that we were in for a long harangue as people shared their biases about the causes of that unemployment until one man suggested the church "do" something to attack the problem.

"Maybe some of those people who 'won't work' don't know how to work. Maybe they have never had the opportunity to learn. Why don't we employ some of them in our housing ministry this summer?" (This church participates in a ministry of building and improving homes for the poor, handicapped, and other victims of misfortune in its area.) Within a few minutes (!) the congregation had agreed to try this approach, decided how to begin and who would guide the effort. Again I found myself saying, "That's the way planning ought to be done!"

The style of planning that will work best in a congregation is to some degree bound up with how large or small the church is. When we know what size a church is quantitatively speaking, we also know that we can probably draw some qualitative conclusions about the way people will tend to function in that congregation. In the table . . . [Model 6—Congregational Size, on page 46] I have outlined some of those conclusions as I found them to be present in congregations with which I have worked as a pastor, church executive, and consultant. (For a more complete discussion see my book *Planning for Your Church*, Westminster, 1984.) Let me suggest some cautions to keep in mind as you use the table.

The precise number of members I have indicated in connection with each size category can be misleading. Church rolls are notoriously inaccurate—especially in declining churches. The congregation you are seeking to understand may actually belong to a type group larger or smaller than its enrolled membership would place it. So, it may be more helpful to begin by considering one of the functional categories like "key characteristics" or "typical planning style" to place your congregation in the appropriate group. When congregations change in size they tend to hang on to old ways of functioning. Thus a congregation that loses members may hold on to an organizational style that is too complex and large in scale for its current needs; leaders may be unable to function effectively because so much of their energy is used up in maintaining an over-sized organization. By contrast, a congregation that grows in size often attempts to hold on to an informal organizational style that inhibits its ability to develop the number and variety of program offerings its current membership needs. If your congregation has changed in size recently, are the ways you now function still appropriate?

Finally, avoid normative thinking—like "Bigger would be better." With congregations bigger is not necessarily better; neither is smaller. Big and small are simply different. Employing styles of functioning in various aspects of your church's life that are appropriate for a church of your size will enhance the effectiveness of your leaders—and the ministries and mission of your church as well.

Douglas Alan Walrath is Lowry Professor Emeritus of Practical Theology at Bangor Theological Seminary. He is a congregational consultant, an expert on the effect of demographic changes on church development, and a *former Reformed Church in America executive. He is author of* Planning for Your Church *(Westminster, 1984). Reach Doug at Hundred Acre Farm, Box 314, Strong, ME* 04983.

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Adapted by Stephen Shaver from Douglas A. Walrath, "Sizing Up a Congregation," *Action Information* (May–June 1985), 7–9. Used by permission from Alban Institute. All rights reserved.

	Very Small	Small	Middle-Sized	Moderately Large	Very Large
Usual Size (ASA)*	Less than 50	40–100	75–200	150–400	More than 350
Resources/ Staff	Limited resources. No full-time staff. Program limited to essentials; clergy part-time or shared.	Usually no full-time staff. May cooperate with other congregations to provide program.	Economically self-sufficient; full-time pastor.	Varied programs; full-time pastor plus at least part-time additional program staff.	Comprehensive program; specialized professional staff.
Interaction Pattern	A tight-knit group who know and interact with one another regularly. One or two extended families may dominate.	A homogeneous group who all know at least about each other. A majority interact regularly and have current information about one another. A core of leading members/families dominates.	Several sub-groups around a single center. Pastor and a few others have current information about all members. A nucleus (which may be a majority) interact with one another regularly; the rest interact primarily within sub-groups.	Diverse association of individuals and groups. Pastor has current information about almost all members. A nucleus interact with one another regularly; a majority interact primarily within sub-groups.	Complex association of many groups. No one member or pastor has current information about all members. Regular interactions are confined largely to sub-groups, even during large gatherings like worship services.
Organizational Roles	A few persons set tone and direction. Often they hold the same responsibilities for many years. Roles of clergy prescribed by local traditions; typically limited mainly to preacher-pastoral role and minimum governance roles required by denominational polity.	Persons within the nucleus exercise overall control. Even when formal leadership posts rotate, those with real influence remain guiding forces. The same persons often carry the same program responsibilities year after year. Clergy usually viewed primarily in a preacher-pastoral role.	Elected board members determine policy and program, not without the influence of a few respected leaders. Lay persons usually carry major responsibility for maintenance and finance, and share responsibility for program with pastors in other areas. Pastor usually expected to provide direct guidance in all areas.	Elected board members set policy and delegate program responsibility to defined sub-groups. Lay persons share responsibility for program with pastor and other paid staff. Individual responsibilities are clearly defined. Pastor and other employed staff offer suggestions and guidance in their areas of expertise.	Boards set policy and direction. Administrative, maintenance, and program functions are assigned to sub-groups and usually coordinated by staff. Staff play key program roles, sharing responsibility with trained lay members. Pastors and other staff are expected to offer expertise and guidance within areas assigned to them.
Communication System	Informal direct communications among members (word of mouth, phone, online)	Informal, supplemented by some formal means (bulletin, e-newsletter, planned announcements during worship, etc.)	Direct one-to-one or few-to-few communications within core group and sub-groups; formal means to reach the wider whole.	Generally by formal media; direct communications within sub-groups and core group.	Generally by formal means; direct communications within staff and sub-groups.
Planning Style	Spontaneous and informal; carried on within nucleus and based on data available to members' experience.	Usually spontaneous and informal; carried on by nucleus and based mostly on data available to members' experience.	Usually more formal; carried on by board and pastor, sometimes with sub-groups. Based on data available to the group and occasionally on research.	Formal; carried on by board and as assigned by sub-groups. Pastor and other staff participate. Data often gathered by research.	Formal; carried on by sub-groups coordinated by board, occasionally aided by consultants. Data usually gathered through a formal research process.

* ASA = Average Sunday Attendance

FIGURE A-15: MODEL 6—CONGREGATIONAL SIZE

MODEL 7: ELEMENTS OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEM

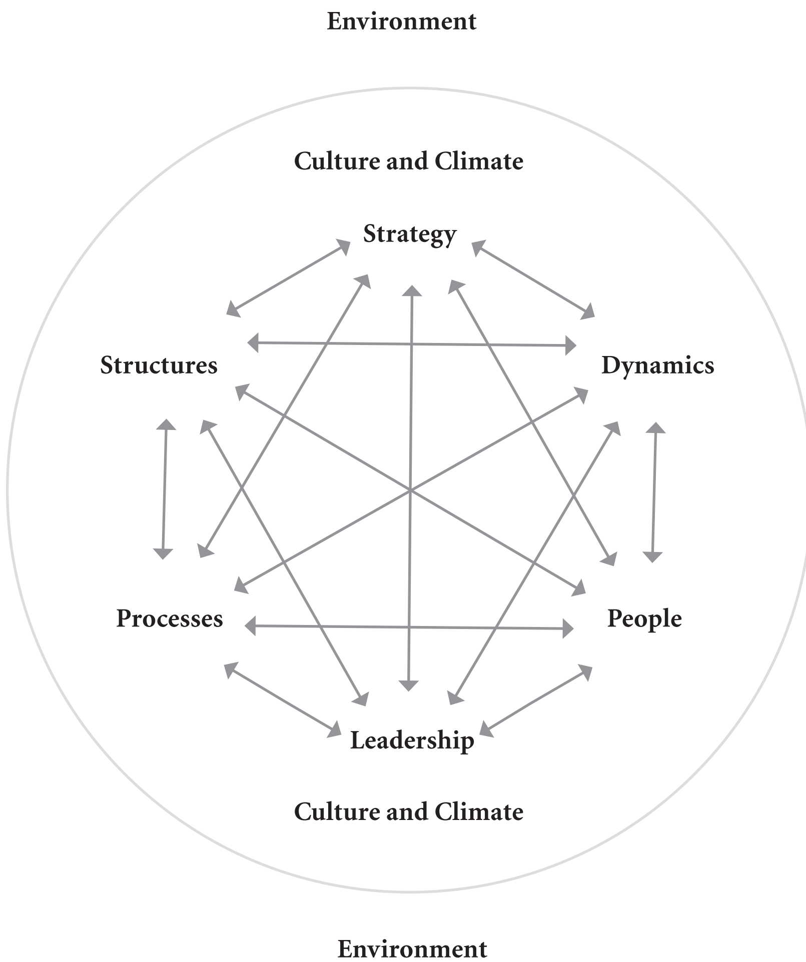

FIGURE A-16: MODEL 7—ELEMENTS OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEM

In [Jesus Christ] the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God. —Ephesians 2:21–22

We must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. —Ephesians 4:15–16

Organizational System: An organization is a living system in which all the elements dynamically interact with and influence each other.

1. **Leadership:** Those people accountable for oversight, decision making, and movement for the whole system. Leaders' ability to think and manage strategically, their ability to stay in touch with the system, their ability to set direction and move the organization in a direction.

2. **Strategy:** Clarity about and ownership of primary task, mission, vision, goals, and choices made about the allocation of resources to progress the organization toward its vision.
3. **Structures:** The arrangement of the parts of the organization, including roles and positions in the organization, teams, committees, task forces, departments, etc. Also can signify technology, architecture, and space.
4. **Dynamics**: Conflict, trust, the underlying forces related to stability and change, etc.
5. **People:** The people who make up the organization: who they are (personality type and preferred ways of functioning); their motivation, satisfaction, and commitment; their training and competence.
6. **Processes:** The way any organization goes about doing whatever it is doing. Examples of organizational process include decision-making processes, planning processes, performance-appraisal processes, change-management processes, and processes that serve to form linkages between parts of the system.
7. **Culture:** The pattern of values, beliefs, expectations, and assumptions shared by organizational members. Culture represents taken-for-granted and shared assumptions people make about how work is to be done and evaluated, how people relate to each other, and how people within the organization relate to those outside the organization.
8. **Climate:** The current "mood" of the organization. Fearful or trusting? Anxious or excited? Depressed or optimistic? Stressful or calm? Some organizations do regular "climate" surveys that seek to identify and measure those aspects of an organization that have an impact on stress, morale, quality of work-life balance, well-being, employee engagement, absenteeism, turnover, and performance.
9. **Environment**: Forces and trends in the external environment that affect the organization

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Melissa M. Skelton and the Diocese of Olympia, 2007

From *Organization Development and Change* by Thomas G. Cummings and Christopher G. Worley
Used by permission of Cengage Learning

Kurt Lewin's Change Model

FIGURE A-17: KURT LEWIN'S CHANGE MODEL

Action Research Change Model

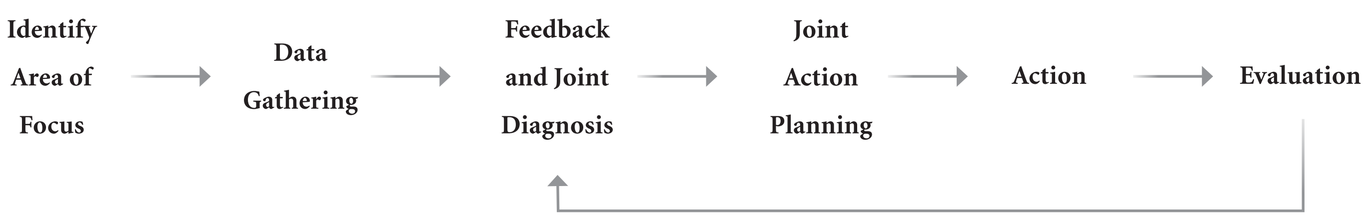

FIGURE A-18: ACTION RESEARCH CHANGE MODEL

Appreciative Inquiry

FIGURE A-19: APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY CHANGE MODEL

William Bridges' Transition Management

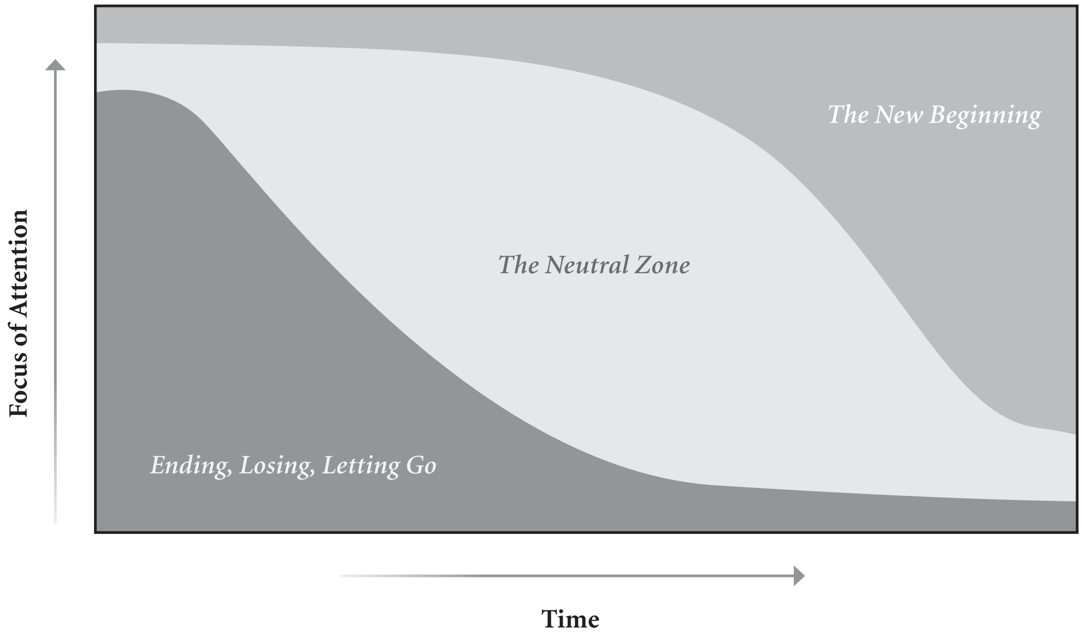

FIGURE A-20: BRIDGES' TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

Gleicher-Dannemiller/Beckhard Change Model

$$C = D \times V \times F > R$$

C	=	*D*	x	*V*	x	*F*	>	*R*
Change		Dissatisfaction with the current state		Vision of the desired state		Tangible first steps toward the vision		The natural human tendency to resist change

If *D*, *V* , or *F* = 0, the theory states that the system will not have enough energy to create the change needed in that *R* will overwhelm or stall the effort.

FIGURE A-21: GLEICHER-DANNEMILLER/BECKHARD CHANGE MODEL

Change Model Based on John Kotter's *Leading Change*

Establish a sense of urgency → **Create a guiding coalition** → **Develop a vision and a strategy** → **Communicate the change vision** → **Empower groups for broad-based action** → **Generate short-term success** → **Consolidate change and produce more change** → **Anchor new approaches in the culture**

FIGURE A-22: KOTTER'S CHANGE MODEL

FACILITATION SKILLS

THE CYCLE OF PLANNING, DOING, AND ASSESSING A MEETING

In our churches we spend a great deal of time in meetings. Effective meeting planning, skilled facilitation, and thoughtful assessment can improve the results of our meetings as well as increase the satisfaction of those participating in meetings.

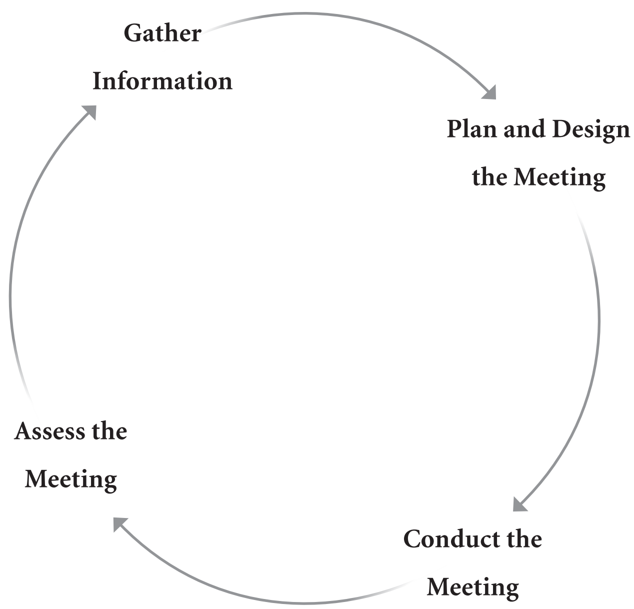

FIGURE A-23: THE CYCLE OF PLANNING, DOING, AND ASSESSING A MEETING

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

What makes a meeting successful? These are just some of the marks of an effective meeting:

- **Purpose**: Has a clear purpose communicated ahead of time and/or articulated at the beginning of the meeting
- **Time and Pace**: Has a clear beginning time, ending time, and location, all communicated ahead of time, and a pace that gets the task done in the time allotted
- **Participants**: Includes the right people as meeting participants, those with the information, expertise, and skills needed to get the task done
- **Design**: Is designed so that the group can achieve its purpose and so that participation is encouraged and supported
- **Facilitation**: Has a facilitator, someone whose task it is to help the meeting participants get the work done
- **Space**: Is held in a space appropriate to the group's task
- **Materials:** Makes appropriate use of materials that allow the group to do its work, see its work, and understand any actions that need to be taken as a result of the work
- **Respect:** Is conducted in such a way that attentive listening is emphasized so that people are heard and their contributions are valued
- **Roles**: Is clear about needed roles—facilitator, timekeeper, recorder—and about any roles related to decision making
- **Accountability:** Has processes in place that support accountability for any next steps coming out of that meeting and has a mechanism for monitoring progress
- **Assessment:** Has a mechanism for assessing itself from time to time so that the group can make any needed improvements in the way it works

WHAT IS A FACILITATOR?

A facilitator is someone who uses the knowledge of group processes to formulate and deliver the needed structure for meeting interactions to be effective. The facilitator focuses on effective processes, or meeting dynamics, allowing the participants to focus on the content or the substance of their work together. Other roles exist for meeting participants besides facilitation. Sometimes facilitators also take on these roles. These include scribing (e.g., writing on a flip chart or newsprint), recording (e.g., taking minutes), timekeeping, and leading discussions.

The facilitator's role is unique (although no more or less important), since his or her primary focus is on the meeting processes. Facilitation can involve many different levels of knowledge and skill, can include work on all kinds of problems and challenges, can assist the group in fulfilling its desire, or can include pushing participants to new levels of understanding. Most important, however, facilitation includes both an ability to recognize when effective meeting processes are needed and an ability to provide those processes.

In its loosest definition, a facilitator is any person who jumps up during a meeting and starts writing key points on a board or an easel pad as they are being discussed, or someone who puts up a hand and suggests that the participants focus on a single problem, or even a participant who suggests that they find out a little about each other or agree on how the group is going to make decisions. These actions that define facilitators are based on an intuitive sense that something in the meeting is amiss. Though this intuition is fundamentally important to good facilitation, it must be emphasized that intuition alone does not replace an understanding of the skills and techniques that are the foundation for the profession.

These are just some of the important things an effective facilitator does well:

- **Task:** Clearly states or gets others to state the group's purpose and task
- **Materials:** Manages materials such as the flipchart, markers, and tape effectively; are the materials visible and the words/images readable?
- **Words:** Records contributions in the speaker's own words
- **Pace and Energy:** Keeps the flow of the meeting moving
- **Time:** Accomplishes the task or follows the process in the time allotted
- **Participation:** Encourages the participation of all by the way the meeting is designed, by how he or she gets others to help, or by his or her personal presence and skills

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

FIGURE A-24: FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

As a facilitator, if you have a chance to prepare before the meeting, take advantage of it! Preparation involves collecting information and then deciding what methods and tools to use and provide.

Gathering Information

The following questions will aid you in making these decisions. If you are an outside, or external, facilitator, you might collect information from both the leader and other group members.

Why: Why is the meeting being held? What tasks are planned? What is the overall goal of the meeting? Is this meeting a part of a larger goal? Has this been written down?

Who: Who is invited? If decisions need to be made, are the right people going to be present? Who is not going to be present? How does attendance affect successful completion of tasks? Who cannot come? Who is not invited? Why?

When: When is the meeting scheduled? How long should it be? Is there enough time to accomplish the meeting's aims? How much time can be allotted for each agenda item? If the meeting is close to a mealtime, should a meal be catered?

Where: Where is the meeting to be held? Do you and the participants need directions? Are adequate resources (flip charts, white boards, etc.) available? How is the room arranged and/or can it be rearranged? Is the room appropriate for the task?

What: Consider possible group dynamics. Do the participants know each other? How well? What is the history of the participants? How long have they been meeting? Have they had specific problems working together in the past? What are potential problems with this meeting? Can particular problems be mitigated or eliminated before the meeting begins?

Planning and Designing the Meeting

Once information is gathered about the meeting, the facilitator can start planning. During the planning stage, the facilitator needs to decide what to include in the meeting, what the sequence of activity is to be, and what tool or technique to use where.

Facilitators have access to a range of formats (e.g., whole group discussion, go-round, fishbowl) and tools (e.g., force-field analysis, SWAT analysis). The information facilitators gather ahead of time helps them make an effective choice for a given meeting. A variety of formats and tools are discussed later in this section.

The following items—charters, meeting agendas, and ground rules—need to be reviewed and developed during planning. As a part of the planning stage, it's useful to circulate the meeting objectives and design to participants for comments.

CHARTERS

For a team or a group with a specific, well-defined scope and purpose, the charter is the document that defines why the team exists and its overall goal(s). However, even if the meeting does not involve a team, the basic elements of a charter are important because they define the purpose of the meeting. A charter is used to ensure that the participants know who is sponsoring the meeting and understand the focus of the time they will spend together. If a charter already exists, the facilitator needs to review it before the meeting. If a charter does not exist (because the meeting does not involve a team), the facilitator should discuss this tool with the leader before the meeting and develop a purpose statement for the meeting. Typical items included in a charter or purpose statement are the participants, the sponsor (if there is one), and a description of the goal.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Charter for (name of team)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sponsor</td><td>Facilitator</td><td>Date</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Situation/Issue Statement</td><td rowspan="3">Behavioural Guidelines</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Scope and Desired Outcome</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Objectives (specific and measurable, if possible)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Important Assumptions</td><td rowspan="2">Members: Leader, Regular Participants, Resource People</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Meeting Frequency and Duration</td></tr>
</table>

FIGURE A-25: CHARTER

A SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

Meeting Purpose: To generate ideas for our upcoming parish fair and decide what we are going to do
Meeting Date, Time, Location, and Duration: Tuesday, January 31, in the parish library from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.
Attendees: Cathy Conflict, Peter Person, Frank Focus, Margaret Meaningful, Robert Relationship, Ellen Expert

Agenda Item	Purpose	Method	Time Frame	Who
1. Welcome and connect	Get participants on board with one another and allow them to enter into the meeting	Participants asked to share one important thing that's happened to them since we last met. Go around the room—each person shares.	15 min.	Facilitator
2. Review purpose, agenda, time frame, and ground rules	Get participants focused on what we are doing	Facilitator walks through purpose, agenda, and time frame, asking the group for agreement	5 min.	Facilitator
3. Background to the parish fair—what worked/did not work last year	Clarify purpose of the fair and what we learned last year	Margaret (last year's leader) to share information with group and answer questions	10 min.	Margaret
4. Generate ideas for this year's fair	To come up good ideas	Brainstorm	20 min.	Facilitator
5. Discuss pluses and minuses	Analyze the ideas	(*a*) Assign the ideas to pairs who will discuss pluses and minuses (*b*) Share results in plenary and whole group adds to their work	20 min.	Peter
6. Prioritize ideas	Choose the best ideas to work on	Participants go to the newsprint list and make a mark by their top three ideas	10 min.	Facilitator
7. Next steps	To outline next steps	Collect next steps from whole group and write on newsprint	10 min.	Facilitator

FIGURE A-26: SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

It's often important to generate and/or lay out guidelines for how the group will operate. These sample ground rules are typical:

GROUND RULES

- Arrive and end on time
- Listen to and show respect for the opinions of others—no interrupting
- Speak for yourself—use "I" statements
- Follow the agenda—stay on track
- It's OK to ask questions!
- Stay with the group discussion—no side conversations
- Cell phones and pagers off

FIGURE A-27: SAMPLE GROUND RULES

FORMATS: DIFFERENT WAYS TO STRUCTURE DISCUSSION IN FACILITATED MEETINGS

Excerpted and adapted from Tree Bressen's "Group Facilitation Primer" at www.treegroup.info

While most meetings default to whole-group, or plenary, discussion, many other formats are available. There are a variety of good reasons for choosing other formats. These are just a few:

- Allowing multiple people to speak at the same time
- Providing safer space for people who are not comfortable speaking in front of the whole group
- Providing an opportunity for people to contribute in diverse ways (e.g., drawing or moving instead of speaking)
- Shifting the energy
- Using time efficiently
- Gathering information
- Exploring an issue in depth

Remember that whatever format you choose, it's important to think through beforehand how each step of the process will work in practice and to have any necessary materials ready. Consider the following sample formats, including their advantages and demands. Which format best supports the meeting's aims, participants, time frame, and so on?

1. Go-Round

A go-round is where every person gets a turn to speak in order, without interruption or direct response ("cross-talk") by others. Before you start, be clear on ground rules: Is everyone expected to speak? Is it OK for anyone to speak a second time once all have spoken a first time? Is the amount of time per person limited? Sometimes the facilitator reserves the right to ask clarifying questions. It's nice if there is time for the group to talk afterward about what came up and/or for the facilitator to offer closing remarks.

When planning a go-round, consider how much time it will realistically take. If a time limit per person is needed, arrange a graceful way to keep to the limit, for example by sending a wristwatch around the circle so that whoever just spoke keeps time for the next speaker, or by having a gentle chime ready for the facilitator to ring as a signal.

Go-rounds are useful when you want to hear from every person present, when some members are reluctant to jump into a fast-paced discussion, or when you feel that a slower, more deliberate method is appropriate to the subject under consideration, perhaps because it is a particularly weighty decision. This format is rarely appropriate in a group of more than fifteen people.

2. Small Groups

Concurrent small groups are an obvious method that should probably be used far more frequently than they are. By simple math, breaking into small groups for part of the time allotted to an agenda item allows a lot more people to have air time. And people who will never speak in front of a large group due to shyness may have wonderful ideas to share.

Breakout groups effectively include two to five people. Beyond that, the benefits of small groups diminish as participants have to wait longer to get a speaking turn. Consider smaller groups (two to three people) for increased safety when the topic has a lot of emotion associated with it. Go with larger groups (four to five) to create more energy when you want people to share opinions or generate ideas.

At the end of the small-group time, bring everyone back together by inviting people to share insights and highlights in the full group. Sharing new learning is more useful than getting full "report-backs," which tend to be boring and decrease the energy. Spending even ten minutes in small groups enables people to express their first responses to an issue very efficiently, thus deepening the level of consideration when the group starts plenary discussion. Small groups that meet for a short time in the midst of a larger plenary session are also known as "zoom groups."

3. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a well-known technique for eliciting as many ideas as possible in the shortest amount of time. It usually consists of having people call out ideas, which are then scribed up front onto a flipchart. If people are really popping, you may even need two separate charts with scribes who alternate.

The basic rule of brainstorming is that no evaluative comments are allowed; that is, no one can say of another idea that it's good or bad. The point is to open up the group to the fullest possible creativity. At least that's the theory.

Brainstorming has been studied extensively by researchers, and the results show that people do in fact tend to feel inhibited about sharing. Saying that ideas will not be judged doesn't in itself keep judgment from happening (even if it's in people's heads rather than out loud), and participants know this. Also not everyone can think creatively in an environment with others shouting out their ideas. So an alternate technique is to have people write ideas down anonymously on half-sheets of paper (or on sticky notes), which are then collected by the facilitator and posted at the front. An added advantage of this approach to brainstorming is that the ideas can then be moved around and grouped into categories.

4. Fishbowl

A fishbowl consists of a subset of the whole group gathering together in one place (usually in the middle of the room) to discuss a topic while the rest of the group witnesses silently from the outer circle. While fishbowls are most often used to bring together representatives of the main divergent points of view on a topic in order to engage in deeper exploration (a heterogeneous fishbowl), they are also sometimes used to explore categorical differences in the group, for example having all the women sitting in the middle talking about what it's like to be a woman followed by all the men sitting in the middle talking about what it's like being a man, in order to improve everyone's education on gender issues (a homogeneous fishbowl).

When facilitating a homogeneous fishbowl, including at least two rounds by each group will help deepen the conversation. For a heterogeneous fishbowl, the key is to get all the important viewpoints represented in the subgroup. As facilitator Laird Schaub explains it, this approach can be usefully employed to sharpen the focus of a conversation when it is clear that a small number of people carry the strongest views or have thought most deeply about a topic—the idea being that any agreement among that subgroup on the topic will likely be amenable to the whole. This prevents diffusion and keeps the conversation very focused.

However, bringing together protagonists on a topic can heighten tensions, and you may need a facilitator who can handle the strong feelings and expressions that may result. You should also keep an eye on the observers to see if they are having trouble (either by losing interest or by getting riled up); occasionally a fishbowl may need to be interrupted to check in with the outer circle.

Another variation on the heterogeneous fishbowl is to include an empty chair in the subgroup that can be temporarily occupied by anyone from the outer circle who wishes to participate. When that person has finished participating, he/she can return to an outer-ring seat, or if a second person from the outer circle wishes to join the discussion, he/she can come stand behind that chair and that's a signal to the first occupant to vacate the spot.

It's important to honor the role of the outer ring in witnessing and holding space for the conversation to happen in the middle. With that in mind, it's appropriate to invite comments by the outer circle at the end of the session, if not before.

5. Kinetic Mapping

Kinetic mapping is a physical expression of where people "stand" on a topic. It is useful in gathering a large survey of information quickly and raising energy by getting people out of their chairs. It is particularly appropriate on issues where opinion naturally falls into a spectrum.

To set up a kinetic map, designate one spot in the room as one end of the opinion spectrum and an opposite spot as the other pole, and ask the group to envision a line running between them. (You might even illustrate this by putting a line of masking tape along the floor.) For example, you might designate one corner as representing, "I think our work guideline should be forty hours per person per month," and the opposite corner as representing, "I think our work guideline should be three hours per person per month or less." Then the intervening space is arranged for five hours, ten hours, twenty hours, and so on.

Next ask people to line up according to their opinions. This provides an immediate visual snapshot of how people feel about the issue. At this point you might have one person from each area of the line talk about how they feel and why. Or, in another creative variation, find the halfway point in the line of people, and fold the line around in two to create a series of pairs, so that the forty-hour person and the three-hour person are paired up, the thirty-eight-hour person is with the four-hour person, and so on, and then give the pairs five to ten minutes to converse, before reporting back to the full group what they learned and what new insights emerged.

6. Council

The term *council* refers here to a special time, one set aside from regular discourse, when the members of a group gather to speak what is in their hearts. You may choose to gather in this way when facing a major decision (such as whether to continue the group or dissolve it), after a tragic event, or when other methods haven't worked.

Making this gathering work requires changing the atmosphere. Think ahead about the group's culture and what it will take to create depth. You could dim the lights and light a candle in the center of the circle and perhaps provide a "talking stick" (a rock or other object) that people hold when they are speaking. Or you might gather outside around a campfire instead of in the regular meeting room.

The council is a ritual, so opening and closing the ritual appropriately is important, to mark it off from other activities. The council is normally held as a stand-alone event, not combined with other meeting agenda. It often starts with a period of silence so that members can meditate on their relationship to the issue at hand.

The council is a time for listening deeply to one person at a time. Typically there is no set limit for how long someone can speak in council (though there is often a request that no one speak a second time until all who want to speak have spoken once); instead the ritual itself creates a container that provides limits. After setting the stage with a formal introduction, usually the facilitator holds silence, giving only ritual comments if any, unless someone participates in a way that injures the mood or safety of the proceedings.

7. Guided Visualization

Guided visualizations rely on intuitive insight to surface new possibilities. For most groups it's not a format to use often, but when you have tried other avenues and need to change your approach, this method can go beyond rationality into the collective unconscious.

First the facilitator asks participants to be seated in a comfortable position, preferably with their eyes closed if they are willing. Next the facilitator leads the group through an initial sequence to help them get present and ready, perhaps a relaxation exercise in which people concentrate on each area of their bodies in order. Then as Laird Schaub describes it, "The facilitator leads the group into mindfulness of the issue to be addressed, and allows everyone to sit with it in a wakeful dream state. . . . After a suitable period of time (5–15 minutes), everyone is brought back to the present and given space to share the images that arose for them during the silence. Once everyone has shared, the group is asked to reflect on what they think the stories mean and how that might offer insight into moving past the stuck place on the issue." The facilitator needs to make sure to use a neutral description when leading people into the issue, one that does not suggest any particular outcome. Schaub notes, "The key is to be authentic and to let go of trying to control what happens." Allowing people to share what came up for them before diving into interpretation and analysis helps create safety and depth.

8. Silence

The Quakers have been holding consensus-based meetings for more than three hundred years. Their practice of the process relies heavily on the use of silence. While most secular organizations are not so inclined, silence is a tool that is available to us at any time. Particularly if the situation is a conflicted one, sitting together in reflection for five to thirty minutes can deepen the conversation.

Quakers also create a "frame of silence" around each speaker, waiting a few minutes after one person speaks before the next person talks. Even a pause of ten to sixty seconds makes more space for the less assertive members to contribute. This helps equalize power in the group and can create a more deliberative process.

There are many design tools that a facilitator can use throughout a meeting to help with energy, productivity, and successful meeting outcomes. What follows are just a few.

Brainstorming and Prioritization

Brainstorming is a process for generating a list of ideas about a topic. The approach described here is sometimes called "popcorn" brainstorming because in the first part of the process anyone can speak up until all the ideas are out.

When It's Useful

Brainstorming is useful anytime a group needs to come up with a list of ideas for any purpose—problem solving, creative exploration, etc.

How to Use It

1. Post pieces of easel paper—have enough that you won't have to stop to find more.
2. Review the rules of brainstorming and/or post rules on paper where everyone can see them.
3. Begin!

Rules for Brainstorming

- Express whatever comes to mind—don't monitor, censor, or hold back. The more ideas the better.
- Don't evaluate your ideas or another's ideas. Don't make positive statements either. Just let the ideas flow.
- Don't discuss the ideas as they come up.
- Repetition of ideas is OK.
- Piggy-backing on others' ideas is fine!
- Silence is normal at certain points.

How to Prioritize

After the group has generated all its ideas, it may want to decide which ideas are most important or have the most potential.

Each team member is given one vote for every three or four ideas on the newsprint. Everyone comes up to the newsprint to indicate his or her "vote" by placing a check mark near the number assigned to the idea. There's no need to group ideas or narrow down the list before doing this.

A Twist

In the prioritizing process, you may want to introduce additional choice criteria, such as stipulating that the group will run with, or invest its energy in, ideas getting the most "votes" ALONG WITH ideas given priority by the leader.

Force-Field Analysis

Force-field analysis is a process by which a group can assess the forces at work either for or against a particular change and can strategize about what actions to take to strengthen or weaken those forces in support of the change.

When It's Useful

Use this tool to identify and analyze the factors that drive or restrain a particular change and to figure out in a more specific way what needs to be done to help a change happen.

How to Use It

1. Prepare to make a force-field analysis chart like this one:

We want to increase the number of people who say some form of the Daily Office on a regular basis.

Driving Forces	Restraining Forces
Morning Prayer is in congregation already	No understanding of the roots of the Office
Congregational readiness for learning about the practice of prayer	Everyone is sooooo busy!
Sarah has just come back from a profound Benedictine experience	Perception that the Office isn't very sexy
	Some perception that the Office is too complicated
	Rector pressed for time

FIGURE A-28: FORCE-FIELD ANALYSIS CHART

2. At the top of your chart write a clear statement of the specific change you want to see happen or the specific action you want to take. Phrase it as positively as you can.
3. Brainstorm the specific factors or forces (that are already there) that could help you move toward the desired outcome (driving forces). Brainstorm the specific factors or forces (that are already there) that could work against reaching the desired outcome (restraining forces).
4. Circle two or three driving forces whose strength you can increase, then two or three restraining forces whose impact you may be able to minimize.
5. List the specific steps you can take to increase the strength or decrease the impact of each driving or restraining force you've circled. In some cases you may also add a new driving force.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a tool for analyzing the current situation both internally and externally. It provides helpful baseline information for a group that wants to vision the future or analyze a problem.

When It's Useful

Use this tool as a part of a planning process to help a group determine where it stands and what it might need to work on in order to get where it wants to go.

How to Use It

1. Post four pieces of newsprint and label them like this:

FIGURE A-29: SWOT ANALYSIS

2. To identify strengths, ask the group what activities the organization does very well. Record these ideas on the newsprint.
3. To identify weaknesses, ask the group what the organization does not do very well. What "outages" or "blind sides" undermine the way the organization functions? Again, record the ideas on the newsprint.
4. To identify opportunities, ask the group to consider the external factors that benefit or could benefit the organization. Put these factors on the newsprint.
5. To identify threats, ask the group to consider the external factors that could trip up the group or undermine the ability of the organization to function.
6. Once the group has generated all four SWOT components (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), use some form of prioritization to sort out which is most important and might form the basis of a strategy.

Mutual Expectations Exercise

This exercise structures a conversation between two parties for the purpose of surfacing their expectations of each other and helping them identify where mutual expectations are aligned and where they are not and need further work.

When It's Useful

Use this mutual expectations exercise when two individuals, two groups, or an individual and a group are initiating a working relationship or when it's important to get expectations on the table.

How to Use It

1. Each party prepares two pieces of newsprint with these headings:

FIGURE A-30: MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS EXERCISE

2. Both parties go to separate spaces and use a brainstorming process to create a list of expectations each party has of the other and a list of what each party believes the other party wants or needs from him/her/them.
3. The two parties come back together and post their newsprint sheets side by side, matching up the expectations and imagined expectations of each.
4. Both parties review the lists together, identifying where expectations are in agreement and where they are not, negotiating any differences.
5. Both parties identify any next steps related to the conversation.

Broad-Based Assessment Tool

This tool helps members identify their likes, concerns, and wishes, providing a group process for assessment, listening, and planning.

When It's Useful

This tool is good for getting a group's input on just about anything, from a written document to an ongoing event you want to improve. It can also be used to check in more generally with a group or a broader system to assess how things are going. It can be used to take the temperature of a group or system at any time.

How to Use It

1. Write the following headlines at the top of three sheets of newsprint:

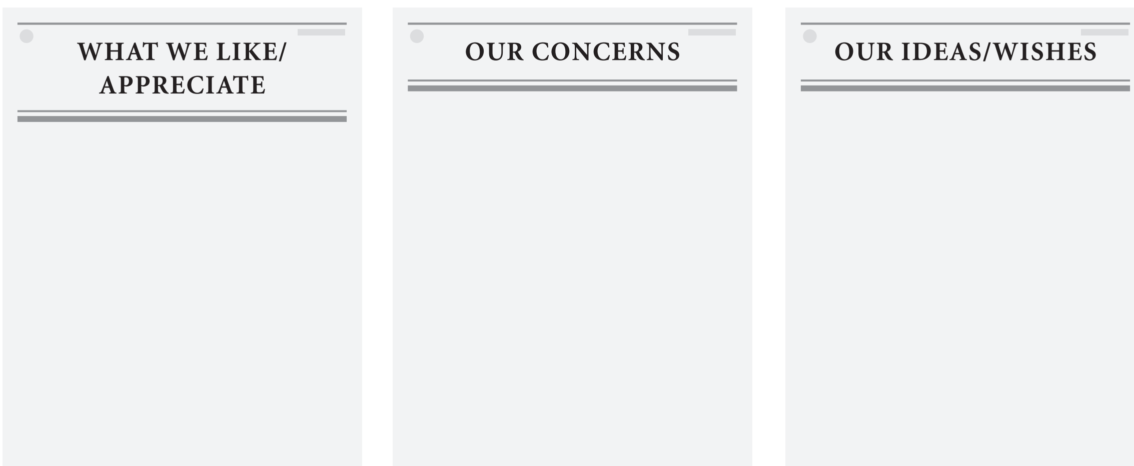

FIGURE A-31: LIKES, CONCERNS, WISHES

2. Using a facilitator, have the group brainstorm its responses to the three areas, or simply invite participants to get up and write their responses to the three questions on the newsprint itself. For example, the facilitator might frame the task like this: "As you think about the way we greet people on Sunday morning, what do you like/appreciate about the way we do it? What concerns do you have? What wishes do you have?" This assessment process might follow a teaching about best practices on greeting, in which case the questions are posed in light of both the teaching and the current experience of the congregation.
3. After ideas are generated under each category, the facilitator might invite the group to assign priority to the items under each category by allowing each participant to "vote" for a specific number and seeing which ideas have more votes.
4. The process ends by identifying any next steps. These could be specific action steps related to the items generated or an action step explaining where the work will go for action.

When a group is made up of people from different cultural backgrounds, or of people who come from drastically different places in terms of power and privilege, these dynamics will present both challenges and opportunities for a skilled facilitator. Here are a few things to consider in multicultural facilitation, or facilitations where participants benefit differently in terms of cultural, institutional, or systemic power and privilege:

- In almost any facilitation, issues of power, privilege, and cultural difference will be part of the dynamic, whether spoken or unspoken. When designing a meeting or facilitation, consider these dynamics and how the facilitation addresses them. For example, a go-round format structures who speaks and when in a different way than a brainstorming format.
- In Canadian dominant culture, the most powerful or privileged may also be those who are most comfortable contributing to a meeting or discussion verbally. In many cultures, speaking without an invitation is considered rude. Alternatively, those who do not perceive themselves as culturally powerful may not feel comfortable speaking without direct invitation. Even then, some may not wish to speak in front of the entire group. As a facilitator, consider methods of contribution that do not require speaking in front of everyone, such as small groups.
- Canadian dominant culture tends to value individual accomplishment over relationship with community. This can show up in meetings or group discussions in norms that require starting and ending at a particular time, or that place value on getting through a particular agenda over connecting with the group and listening to each other. When working with groups that are culturally diverse, these norms may not be universal, or the most important to enforce.

One More Format: Mutual Invitation*

Mutual invitation is a process of sharing and discussion in which one person speaks to the topic or issue at hand and then invites another person to have her turn. When that person is done, she invites another person to speak. Each speaker chooses the next speaker. If someone passes on the invitation to speak, he is still responsible for inviting whoever comes after him. It is the role of the facilitator to frame the issue or question at hand, newsprint appropriately as people speak, and remind participants to invite others when they are finished sharing.

This format is intended to address perceptions of personal power by individuals in the group. It can feel awkward the first time or two it is used. The hope is that mutual invitation will raise awareness on the part of participants around their own expectations for speaking and increase intentionality within the group around who is invited to share.

Resources are widely available for further research into how to facilitate meetings and group discussions in ways that value and enhance diversity of culture, power, and privilege among group members. This format is just one way!

* This format, mutual invitation, originates with Eric H. F. Law in *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community.*

MANAGING MATERIALS

A flip chart and markers can look innocent enough, but it takes some time to get comfortable using them. Flip charts and markers are still the best tech available for interactive, participatory meetings. They are easy to use, inexpensive for organizations that don't have funds for advanced technology, and can be co-created in the room as needed. They also travel well—and the batteries never run out!

- Do keep the flip chart visible and hang up pieces of newsprint on the walls where people can see them.
- Do use dark colors (blue or black) and write fairly large so people can see what has been recorded. Do try to write legibly, and by the way, spelling does *not* count! Do title and number your pages.
- Do write down exactly what participants say. You may have to edit or shorten. If you do this, ask for permission or check it out. When all else fails, ask the contributor, "What should I write down?"
- Do make phrases fairly complete so that folks can understand what was meant when they look back at it. "Outreach team" doesn't mean as much as "Outreach team to meet and consider feeding proposal by end of month."
- Do write and talk at the same time—this will keep the pace going. This may take practice to learn!
- Do move around a bit to keep things lively. It's OK to move toward a speaker to show interest!
- Do allow and encourage others to come up and write things—to make a point, work out or illustrate something, or facilitate part of the discussion.

From time to time (or every time) it's helpful for participants to have a way to assess their meetings. The process can be simple or more extensive depending on the need. Assessment information is fed back to the whole group at the meeting or, if more formal and extensive, gathered, collated, and fed back to group members at another meeting. In both cases, the point is to prompt the group to work on specific things in order to improve meetings.

Simple Ways to Conduct Meeting Assessments

1. Draw a scale of 1–5 on a piece of posted newsprint (1 being low and 5 being high), and ask each group member to walk up and make a mark on the scale indicating how satisfied he or she was with the meeting. Go around and talk about why people put their marks where they put them. At the end of the discussion, record any changes the group wants to make to their meetings going forward.

2. Go around the group and ask group members to give an image for how the meeting went (a car, a flavor of ice cream, an animal, etc.) and to tell why they chose that image. After everyone shares an image, explore them: "Are our images telling us anything about how we might want to improve our meeting for next time?"

3. Give out a written meeting assessment—for example, one page with questions about task (did we accomplish it?), relationships (did people feel included and listened to?), the use of materials, time, etc. Have people complete the assessment; then go through each question together, hearing where group members are. At the end, explore any changes the group may want to make for the next meeting.

4. Go around the group and have people share (*a*) the best thing about our meeting today was . . . and (*b*) the one thing that needs to be improved about our meeting is . . . . Or have people first talk about those questions in pairs and then share their conversation with the whole group.

From time to time a group may want to do a more extensive assessment of their life together. The following pages show an example of a more thorough questionnaire.

Melissa M. Skelton and the Diocese of Olympia, 2008

MEETING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the number that comes closest to your level of agreement/disagreement with each statement.

	Disagree					Agree
1. **Overall:** I have a high level of satisfaction with our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. **Purpose:** Our meetings have a clear purpose that is circulated ahead of time or stated at the beginning of the meeting.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. **Preparation:** Everyone comes to the meeting prepared to participate and make decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. **Setting:** Our meetings take place in a setting that supports our work and in which we have the materials to do our work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. **Start and End Times:** Our meetings begin and end on time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. **Role Clarity:** People function within their roles, and important group roles such as timekeeper, scribe, and facilitator are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. **Action Items:** Action items from previous meetings are brought forward, and next steps with responsibilities are clearly laid out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. **Process:** We have a clear process by which we will handle items on our agenda.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. **Prioritization:** We prioritize important discussion items and give them the right amount of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. **Participation:** We are fully engaged in our meetings and take responsibility for follow up.	1	2	3	4	5	6

FIGURE A-32: MEETING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

(page 1 of 2)

	Disagree					Agree
11. **Listening:** We actively listen to what others are saying in our meetings. We do not interrupt each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. **Differences and Conflict:** We air our differences and use conflict productively in our work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. **Decision Making:** We generally make high-quality decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. **Pace:** The pace of our meetings is just about right.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. **Staying on Track**. Our meetings stay on track in following the agenda.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. **Record Keeping:** We keep records of important discussions, decisions, and next steps.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. **Personal Contribution:** I feel free to make contributions to the work, and I feel valued in my contributions.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. **Interruptions:** Interruptions (people coming and going) are kept at a minimum in our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6

1. Do you have any comments about your ratings on the assessment questions?

2. What do you most appreciate about your meetings?

3. What most concerns you about your meetings?

4. What wishes/ideas do you have to improve your meetings?

(page 2 of 2)

YEAR B UNIT 1

THE GROUP NEEDS MODEL

Adapted from "The Group Needs Model: A Tool for Creating Extraordinary Groups"
by Geoffrey M. Bellman and Kathleen D. Ryan, *OD Practitioner* 41, no. 4 (2009)

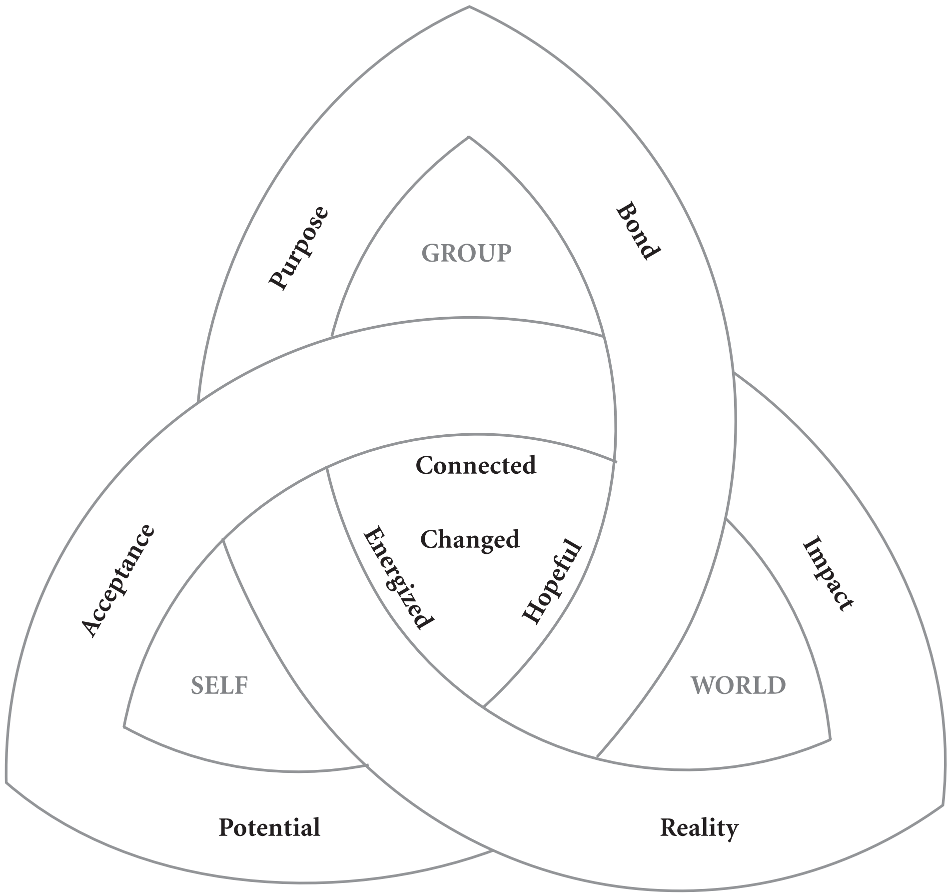

FIGURE 1-1: GROUP NEEDS MODEL

After much experience in groups and after interviewing people from sixty extraordinary small groups of two to twenty members, Geoffrey Bellman and Kathleen Ryan identified six underlying human needs that they believe each of us brings to any group and that, if fulfilled, will enable "transformational group output."

We each come to groups with a set of mostly unarticulated ancient and instinctive needs that we long to meet through a group experience—whether we know it or not. Groups are central to who we are as human beings; we define ourselves and meet our needs within them. The Group Needs Model presents six needs in three pairs:

- **Self:** *Acceptance* of self while developing one's *potential*
- **Group:** A *bond* with others that grows while pursuing a common *purpose*
- **World:** Understanding the *reality* of the world while making an *impact*

The Self Needs

The two sides of the Self loop express our need to accept ourselves and our need to reach toward who we could become. Here's a definition of each need.

- **Acceptance:** Knowing and accepting ourselves for who we are.
- **Potential:** Sensing and growing into our fuller and better selves.

As we accept ourselves, we become more confident in whatever surroundings we find ourselves. The sense that we can be who we really are reduces inner anxiety and allows us to operate from a more centered stance. At the same time, we know we could be more. We lean toward our potential selves; we see that growth as our opportunity. Our interviews were full of examples of the interplay of Acceptance and Potential.

The paired needs of Acceptance and Potential are part of our individual makeup, but we meet those needs through the groups to which we belong. We use others to gauge who we are and who we are becoming; we match their reactions to us with how we see ourselves. Though we experience the needs within ourselves, those needs play out in each group to which we belong. Joining a new group, we bring our current levels of self Acceptance and Potential with us, and that affects how we interact. In the group, we bring our individual needs to others and find two more needs that inevitably come up in a group setting.

The Group Needs

Groups give considerable attention to meeting individual and collective needs for a Bond and a Purpose. Within the Group loop of our model, Purpose and Bond are the primary forces shaping the interaction within the group. Those needs are defined here:

- **Bond:** The connections among us that create a shared sense of identity and belonging.
- **Purpose:** The reason why we come together.

Members show up hoping for a group to meet their needs to connect with others in a meaningful way. The group offers the possibility of a home—a safe place to be known, accepted, respected, and valued by others: a place to contribute and discover. This intangible sense of "being on the same team"—of belonging—is what Bond is about. As bonded members join to pursue a common Purpose, they commit to something larger than themselves and their connection with one another. Through Purpose, they focus their attention, energy, skills, and communication—all within the context of a common compelling and unifying cause.

The World Needs

The World loop refers to the larger world that is most relevant to a group, which can vary greatly in size, for example a corporation, a neighborhood committee, a cross-functional team, or an extended family. Whatever it is, a group needs to understand its world context to survive in and affect it.

Two primary needs relate:

- **Reality:** Understanding and accepting the world as it is and how it affects us.
- **Impact:** Our intention to make a difference and our readiness to act.

Understanding our surrounding Reality is essential to our survival. Accepting our world means acknowledging it, working with it—even when we want to change it. We ignore the Reality of our world at our peril. Impact is about changing the world; it's about a group joining to move its world a notch toward what members think it should be. Understanding and accepting the world informs a group's strategies and broadens the possibilities for impact.

Now we overlap all the loops and needs in the Group Needs Model because each of these six needs can interact with the other five. And, the more they interact, the more likely it is that an extraordinary group will be created.

Another point: As powerful as tangible results might be out there in the world, the larger power of extraordinary groups is their transformative effect on individuals. People interviewed regularly stated that their group experience changed who they were and how they saw the world. This shift in perception may or may not be visible, but to the individuals affected it is huge. And when this shift happens, people are more receptive to changing their behaviour; they feel more alive in their group work; they feel more committed to the organizations or structures that support their group experiences; and they are motivated to bring their best to the work at hand. Thus the personal impacts benefit the organization greatly.

THE GROUP NEEDS CHECKLIST

Group Need and Definition	Where have you experienced or observed this need at work in the group?
Self	
The Need for Acceptance Examples of your own experience of self-acceptance or behaviours that made you (or another member) feel accepted for who you were and what you bring to the group	
The Need to Stretch toward Potential Examples of you (or other group members) stretching toward your potential, or behaviours that encouraged you or others to stretch toward new potentials	
Group	
The Need to Bond with Others Behaviours that bonded group members to each other	
The Need for a Purpose Behaviours that expressed the group's desire to focus on its shared purpose	
World	
The Need to Deal with Reality Behaviours that expressed the group's attempts to be in touch with the givens of the larger organization or world outside itself	
The Need to Have an Impact Behaviours that expressed the group's desire to have an impact on the larger organization or world outside itself	

Other Observations: What, if any, needs seemed to dominate the group? What needs did not come up much in the group? What needs were frustrated, and what needs were met? How directly or not were needs expressed?

FIGURE 1-2: GROUP NEEDS CHECKLIST

GROUP EXERCISE:
FAITH DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITY

Purpose: To practice using Model 3: Faith Development in Community as a tool to deepen leaders' understanding of their congregation and develop strategy for congregational development work.

Time: 60 minutes

Task: To assist the members of one congregation represented on your team with doing analysis on their place using Model 3: Faith Development in Community.

1. Choose a congregation represented within your group to focus on. This will be the "client" congregation, and members of your team from this congregation will provide the information for this exercise. The information should be from the real life of the congregation!

2. Choose a facilitator, *not from the client congregation*. The facilitator will manage the newsprint and markers and facilitate discussion.

3. The rest of the group will assist the facilitator in drawing out data from the client congregation. To be effective assistants, activate your curiosity about this place and the information being presented through the model.

4. Once you have chosen a client congregation and facilitator, draw the model and explore each of its categories. Discuss and newsprint the following topics and questions. (Choose how to spend your time!)

Building the Model

Mature Practitioners: Estimate how many Mature Practitioners you have in the congregation (a guess). Write this number on the model in the Mature Practitioners circle.

Sunday Sacramentalists: Subtract the Mature Practitioners number from the average Sunday attendance (ASA). Write the difference on the model in the Sunday Sacramentalists ring.

Occasional Attenders: Subtract the ASA from your attendance on Christmas or Easter. Write the difference in the Occasional Attenders ring.

Vicariously Connected: List groups of people related to the congregation this way (e.g., neighbors, people who come to the food bank, people who show up for the annual Christmas bazaar but never for mass) and estimates for the numerical size of each group. Add these numbers, and put the sum in the Vicariously Connected ring.

Exploring the Model

Ask and assist the client congregation with some of these questions:

- Is any area of the model sparsely populated or unpopulated? Is any area especially populated? What do you make of this?

- Thinking about what the congregation does to nurture faith development (e.g., worship, formation, stewardship),
  - » how is the congregation nurturing Mature Practitioners?
  - » what is encouraging movement between areas—support for those Vicariously Connected to become Occasional Attenders, for example, or for tentative Sunday Sacramentalists to become more intentional Sunday Sacramentalists, or for Sunday Sacramentalists to move into becoming Mature Practitioners?

- Do you see any areas that might benefit from leader focus/energy? How might the congregation more intentionally nurture Mature Practitioners? In what ways might the congregation encourage movement between the rings?

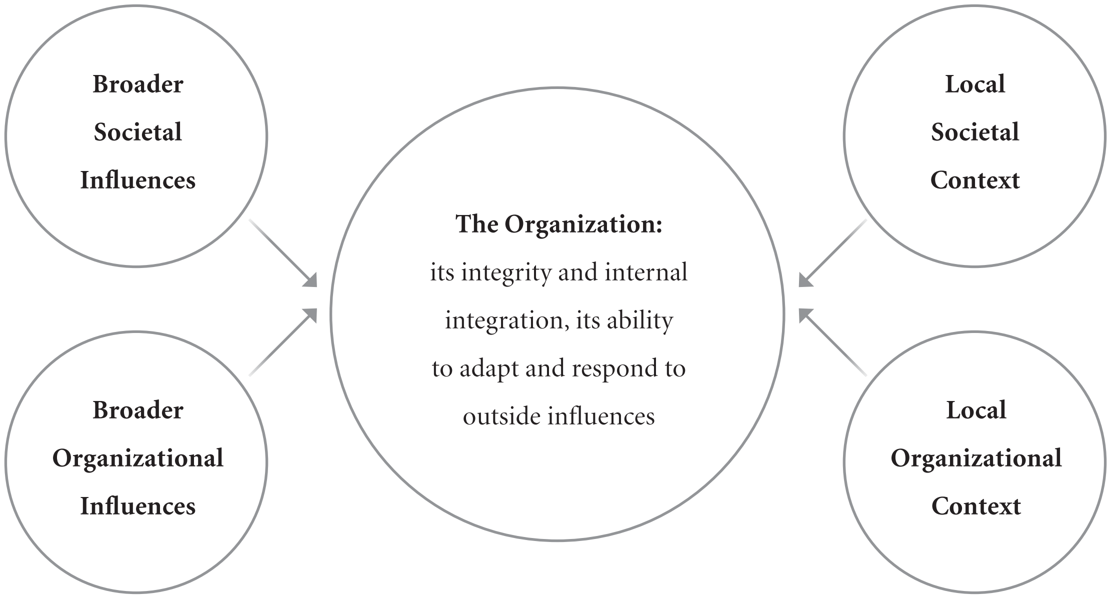

FIGURE 1-3: ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations are influenced by dimensions outside themselves that are part of the context within which the organization functions. These outside influences may be of a societal nature or an organizational nature and can operate on either a wider or more local scale.

1. **Broader Societal Influences**
    - Political and economic trends and events
    - Generational experiences and groups
    - National identity, culture, and values
2. **Local Societal Context**
    - Regional and local trends and/or regional and local manifestations of broader societal trends
    - Regional focus and values
    - Regional openness to the work of the organization and what it offers
3. **Broader Organizational Influences**
    - Any influence on the organization that comes of it being connected to or affiliated with a larger network, company, group, or organization—the values, practices, and culture of that larger entity
    - The policies, available resources, and connections of the broader organization
4. **Local Organizational Context**
    - Any influence related to the more local, regional manifestation of the broader organizational affiliation
    - The policies, available resources, and values of the regional, more local group or entity

Each of these four factors is part of the organizational environment in which the organization lives. Together they influence the organization as it attempts to both maintain its focus on mission, vision, values, identity, and integration and adapt appropriately to its environment system.

All the elements of the organization's system are influenced in some way by what happens in the environment, whether strategy, people, leadership, structures, processes, dynamics, or culture and climate. (See Model 7: Elements of an Organizational System.)

The Environment and the Organization

1. Societal influences deeply affect an organization's life. Organizations often aren't able to control or greatly influence these forces from *social context,* a reality that can go unacknowledged and be blamed on an organization's leader. Organizations can often, if they choose, have an effect on the broader or more local *organizational context.*
2. Most healthy organizations focus on their own unique identity and mission as well as find appropriate ways to adapt and respond to outside societal and organizational influences. The question is what to pay attention to when.
3. Organizations need to develop a regular and intentional way of (*a*) scanning for environmental factors (both societal and organizational), (*b*) identifying which factors are the most important to adapt or respond to, and (*c*) planning together about how to implement this adaptation or response.

SOCIETAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCES WORKSHEET

List the influences on your congregation in each category,
and circle those that are most important for adaptation and/or response.

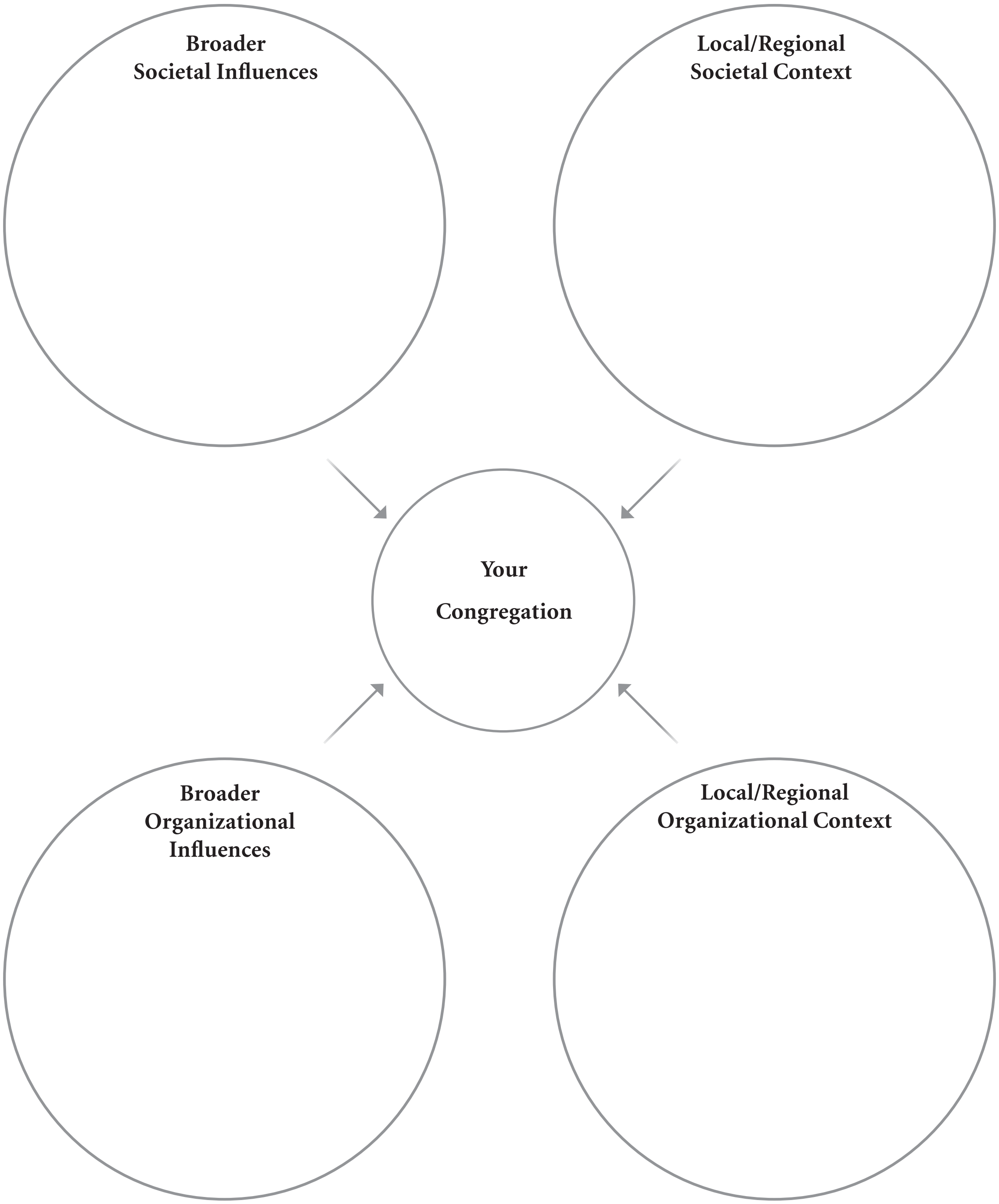

FIGURE 1-4: SOCIETAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCES WORKSHEET

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF ANGLICANISM

Once rooted in English culture, Anglicanism has since adapted itself to a variety of countries, cultures, and time periods. Anglicanism has its own personality, culture, and ethos. The following description is a shortened version of John Westerhoff's articulation of Anglican spirituality and temperament in A People Called Episcopalians. *As congregational development practitioners, we continue to ask (1) to what degree and with what transparency the local congregation reflects this broader organizational culture and (2) how the local congregation adapts or responds to society (whether broader or more local) as it functions.* *(See figure 1-3, Environmental Influences on Organizations, on page 85.)*

Anglican Spirituality

Liturgical/Biblical: Anglican spirituality is rooted in communal daily prayer (Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayers, Evening Prayer, Compline) as laid out in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Thus, our way of praying tends to have more formality and structure and is shaped by the Scriptures—the divine reading of Scripture and the prayerful meditation on the psalms.

Communal: For Anglicans, communal prayer comes before and shapes personal prayer. Prayer is seen as an activity that connects us to God and to each other and includes the living and the dead. Communal prayer is a part of daily, weekly, and yearly rhythms and both surrounds and informs community gatherings and meetings in which decisions are made.

Pastoral: Anglicans tend to see their relationship to God as lived out and "measured" by their relationships to their true selves, other people, and the natural world.

Sacramental: Anglicans see the world itself as sacramental, that is, capable of mediating the grace of God. Anglicans also emphasize the two primary sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist as well as offer the other sacramental rites of confirmation, holy matrimony, reconciliation, unction, and ordination.

Incarnational: Anglicans emphasize the incarnation, God's entry into human life and history. Accordingly, Anglicans have an earthy spirituality that affirms the goodness of life and the created world and believes that the extraordinary is to be found in the ordinary.

Mystical: Anglicans experience union with God as happening over time, bit by bit through a journey aided by spiritual discipline and prayer. Such a belief is consistent with the description of spiritual progress found in the mystics.

Anglican Temperament

Comprehensive: Anglicans believe the truth is to be found in the tension between counter-opposites. We affirm both sacred and secular, both the material and the non-material, both the mind and the heart, both the transcendence and the intimate closeness of God.

Ambiguous: Anglicans are not "black-and-white" thinkers, but instead affirm the ambiguity of experience and the value of learning to tolerate and embrace complexity and ambiguity in many aspects of human life and in the spiritual journey.

Open-minded: Anglicans are people of a questioning faith. We search for wisdom in many places and encourage people to listen to each other and to bring their honest questions to their spiritual life.

Intuitive: Anglicans are at home in the world of image, symbol, myth, ritual, and the arts. Very few Anglicans write systematic theologies. Instead we are writers, poets, pastors, and musicians.

Aesthetic: Anglicans believe that beauty is the doorway to truth and goodness, and that beauty is a doorway to God.

Moderate: Anglicans avoid extremes, believing that a godly life is one that is disciplined, balanced, and temperate.

Naturalistic: Anglicans have a reverence for nature and its rhythms. Anglicans believe in working to protect the natural world and its creatures.

Historical: Anglicans value their historical roots and learn from a careful reflection on the past.

Political: Anglicans believe that Christian life has political implications and that civic life is both a legitimate and important place for a Christian's apostolate to be expressed.

The material throughout "Culture and Cultural Assessment" is adapted from the work of Ed Schein in *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide* and "Culture Assessment as OD Intervention" in *The NTL Handbook of Organization Development and Change: Principles, Practices and Perspectives.*

Schein states that all groups must deal with two problems:

1. **Adaptation:** Surviving and growing in the environment, or context
2. **Internal Integration:** Developing a "way we do things" that allows us to function and to adapt

What is culture, and how does it work?

- Culture is the property of a group—whenever a group has enough common experience, a culture begins to form.
- Culture is the result of the accumulated learning of a group—the ways of thinking, feeling, and perceiving the world that have made the group successful.
- Culture is the learned, tacit assumptions on which people base their daily behaviour, resulting in what is popularly thought of as "the way we do things."
- Important parts of culture are invisible—the shared mental models that the members of an organization hold and take for granted.
- Cultural assumptions can be fully understood only by members of the culture. Therefore, creating a vehicle for their understanding is important.
- People cannot readily tell you what their culture is any more than a fish can tell you (if it could) what water is!
- Cultures are not right or wrong, no better or worse, except in relation to what the organization is trying to do and what the environment in which it operates "allows."
- Culture is deep, broad, and stable.

Schein's Levels of Culture

Artifacts

Visible organizational structures and processes

(hard to decipher)

↓ ↑

Espoused Values

Strategies, goals, and philosophies

(espoused justification)

↓ ↑

Underlying Assumptions

Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings

(ultimate source of values and actions)

FIGURE 1-5: SCHEIN'S LEVELS OF CULTURE

Cultural Assessment Process

Remember: Focus on the "business problem" not the culture. Focus on a new "way of working" desired in the organization.

Remember: You're not just about culture change; you're about identifying what aspect of the current culture you can use to make a positive change.

Some organizations assume that a general cultural assessment would be of value to them. However, unless the cultural assessment is tied to a change initiative, it's fairly useless to do an assessment because of the vastness of culture in an organization.

Most culture-related interventions in a system do not involve culture change. Instead they are interventions into some aspect of how the organization works that can actually be changed *using* the culture rather than changing it.

Organizations can undertake the following cultural assessment process (typically with outside help) to assess their own culture after they have identified what "business problem" they want to work on:

1. **Obtain leadership commitment** (confirming the specific area in which you want to work).
2. **Select groups for interviews** (those involved in the problem on which you are working—can be small or big groups).
3. **Select an appropriate setting** for the group interviews (large, comfortable, flexible space).
4. **Explain the purpose of the meeting** (explained by someone in leadership—consultant is a "process consultant" only).
5. **Explain the culture model** (see figure 1-5, Schein's Levels of Culture, on page 90).
6. **Elicit description of artifacts.** (Describe the culture through its artifacts. It is often helpful to ask someone who has joined the organization more recently what they noticed and what it felt like. Gather other information from others about artifacts; the question here is "*What* are you doing?")
7. **Identify espoused values.** (The question to elicit this is "*Why* are you doing what you are doing?")
8. **Identify shared tacit assumptions.** (Do this by checking whether the espoused values explain all the artifacts.)
9. **Identify cultural aids and hindrances.** (Often working in small groups, look at the assumptions and see which assumptions aid and which hinder the solution of the problem being addressed.)
10. **Do joint analysis and next steps.** (Come up with the change that needs addressing, and using change models, work on planning the change.)

How Leaders Embed and Transmit Culture

The following is a summary of Schein's description of how leaders embed and transmit culture in a group or organization. Schein describes the most powerful culture-embedding mechanisms, the ones he calls "primary," as well as those that are "secondary," the ones that initially serve to reinforce the primary mechanisms and later become the way the culture is transmitted.

Primary Embedding Mechanisms	Secondary Articulation and Reinforcement Mechanisms
What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis	Organization design and structure
How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises	Organizational systems and procedures
Observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources	Organizational rites and rituals
Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching	Design of physical space, facades, and buildings
Observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status	Stories, legends, and myths about people and events
Observed criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire, and excommunicate organizational members	Formal statements of organizational philosophy, values, and creed

FIGURE 1-6: HOW LEADERS EMBED AND TRANSMIT CULTURE

Primary Embedding Mechanisms

1. **What Leaders Pay Attention to, Measure, and Control**
    - What leaders systematically pay attention to communicates major beliefs: what is noticed, comments made, casual questions and remarks.
    - This mechanism becomes powerful if a leader is aware and consistent.
    - If a leader is unaware and inconsistent, confusion can ensue; consistency is more important than the intensity of attention.
    - Attention is focused in part by the kinds of questions leaders ask and how leaders set the agendas for meetings.
    - Emotional reactions communicate a message.
    - What leaders do *not* react to also sends a message.

2. **Leaders' Reactions to Critical Incidents and Organizational Crises**
    - In a crisis, how do leaders behave?
    - How leaders deal with a crisis creates new norms, values, and working procedures. Their behaviour reveals important underlying assumptions.
    - Crises are especially important in culture creation.
    - Crisis heightens anxiety, which motivates new learning.
    - A crisis is what is perceived to be a crisis, and what is defined as a crisis by a leader.
    - Crisis about a leader—for example, insubordination—tests the leader.

3. **Observed Criteria for Resource Allocation**
    - How budgets are created reveals a leader's assumptions.
    - What is or is not an acceptable financial risk?
    - How much of what is decided is all inclusive? bottom up? top down?

4. **Deliberate Role Modeling, Teaching, and Coaching**
    - A leader's own visible behaviour has great value for communicating assumptions and values to others.
    - Informal, nonverbal messages are very powerful.

5. **Observed Criteria for Allocation of Rewards and Status**
    - Members learn from their own experience with promotions, performance appraisals, and discussions with the boss.
    - What is rewarded or punished is a message.
    - What counts is actual practice—what happens as opposed to what is written or said.

6. **Observed Criteria for Recruitment, Selection, Promotion, Retirement, and "Excommunication"**
    - When adding new organizational members, who they are and why they might have been chosen is very telling because much of this process operates on an unconscious level and is therefore telling about what is really going on.
    - The reverse—who doesn't get promoted and who gets fired—says important things as well.

Secondary Articulation and Reinforcement Mechanisms

In young organizations, organizational design, structure, architecture, rituals, stories, and formal statements are cultural reinforcers, not culture creators. Once an organization stabilizes, these can become primary and can constrain future leaders. These are cultural artifacts that are highly visible but hard to interpret. When an organization is in a developmental stage, the leader is often the driving force. After a while, the following reinforcers will become the driving forces for the next generation. These secondary mechanisms will often become primary in midlife or mature organizations.

1. **Organization Design and Structure**
    - Typically, founders have strong ideas about how to organize. They often build a tight, highly centralized hierarchy, which can shift to decentralization over time as others are perceived to be strong.

- How stable the structure should be is variable, with some organizations sticking to their original setup and some constantly reworking things.
- Structure and design can be used to reinforce leaders' assumptions.

2. **Organizational Systems and Procedures**
   - Routines—daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually—are the most visible parts of life in an organization.
   - Groups and members seek this kind of order, and through these they formalize the process of "paying attention."
   - Systems and procedures give consistency; inconsistency allows for subcultures.

3. **Rites and Rituals of the Organization**
   - Rites and rituals can be powerful reinforcers.
   - They may be central in deciphering as well as communicating cultural assumptions.

4. **Design of Physical Space, Facades, and Buildings**
   - Visible features and their symbolic purposes may convey an organization's philosophy.

5. **Stories about Important Events and People**
   - As history develops, stories evolve and are used to reinforce assumptions.
   - Leaders can't control stories about themselves.
   - Using stories alone to decipher an organization is too limited and can be misleading.

6. **Formal Statements of Organizational Philosophy, Values, and Creed**
   - Formal statements highlight only a small portion of an organization's cultural assumptions.
   - They reflect only what is available for public consumption.
   - They cannot be viewed as definitions of the organization.

Summary and Conclusion

- Embedding mechanisms are about how leaders embed cultural assumptions and create culture and how they get others to share those assumptions.
- Primary mechanisms are used to embed assumptions in an ongoing manner.
- Secondary mechanisms are more subtle, more ambiguous, and more difficult to control, yet can be powerful reinforcements of primary mechanisms.
- All mechanisms convey the content of culture to newcomers.
- **Over time secondary mechanisms can become primary, which often means that as organizations mature or decline, new leaders will need to become cultural change agents.**

Some in organization development believe that Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is the most exciting development in thinking about change in recent years. AI is both a model and a process to guide change. AI can be regarded as a different than—but complementary to—the traditional action research model.

What AI Is

In *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change,* David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney explain:

> Appreciative Inquiry is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives "life" to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms.
>
> AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the "unconditional positive question" often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people. In AI the arduous task of intervention gives way to the speed of imagination and innovation; instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis, there is discovery, dream, and design.
>
> AI seeks, fundamentally, to build a constructive union between a whole people and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insights into the deeper corporate spirit or soul—and visions of valued and possible futures. Taking all of these together as a gestalt, AI deliberately, in everything it does, seeks to work from accounts of this "positive change core"—and it assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive. Link the energy of this core directly to any change agenda and changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized.*

Key Assumptions in Appreciative Inquiry

In "What Is Appreciative Inquiry?" Joe Hall and Sue Hammond articulate the key assumptions of AI this way:

1. In every organization or group, something works.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality: our conversation creates our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
4. The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way.

* David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney, *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change* (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2005).

5. People have more confidence or comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry forward parts of the past, it should be what is best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality.

Key Principles of Appreciative Inquiry (A way to describe the basic process)

1. Choose the positive as the focus of inquiry.
2. Inquire into stories of life-giving forces.
3. Locate themes that appear in the stories and select topics for further inquiry.
4. Create shared images for a preferred future.
5. Find innovative ways to create that future.

Questions Used in Appreciative Inquiry

As the name implies, AI involves inquiry into the best aspects of an organization, using narratives of the past and present as the foundation for imagining and then creating the future. AI questions are intended (*a*) to elicit stories that reveal the sources of vitality in an organization and (*b*) to create an environment where the interview participant can creatively imagine a future that is built from the foundation of vitality. Appreciative Inquiry questions are explicitly designed *not* to elicit problems to be solved, or things to be improved.

Four core AI question/statement areas are generally used for AI interviews:

- Peak experience or "high point"
- Things valued most about… (you fill in the blank with self, work, organization, community, family, etc.)
- Core factors that "give life" to organizations
- Three wishes to heighten vitality and health

AI Sample Questions

Peak experience: Think back through your years in this congregation. Locate a moment that was a high point when you felt most spiritually aware and nourished. Describe how you felt and what made the situation possible.

Things valued: Without being humble, describe what you value most about your congregation and your role in it.

Core factors: Describe how you stay affirmed, renewed, energized, enthusiastic, and inspired as a member (or leader) of this congregation.

Three wishes: Describe your three concrete wishes for the future of this congregation.

A resource for further exploration of AI questions: Diana Whitney, David L. Cooperrider, Amanda Trosten-Bloom, and Brian S. Kaplin, *Encyclopedia of Positive Questions: Using Appreciative Inquiry to Bring Out the Best in Your Organization* (Bedford, OH: Lakeshore Communication, 2002).

A resource for conducting an Appreciative Inquiry process in a congregational setting: Mark Lau Branson, *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2004).

An Appreciative Mindset

Even in congregational situations where you are not going to conduct a full Appreciative Inquiry process, AI offers an effective way to lead in congregational settings. Leaders who adopt an "appreciative mindset" enter every group or situation assuming that there is something positive happening, which if explicitly recognized and valued will open up possibility for healthy growth and change.

An appreciative mindset assumes that there is always the possibility of moving from strength to strength.

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. *Selah*
Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.
O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*
Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed.
For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness.
For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.
O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you. —Psalm 84

An appreciative mindset acknowledges the potential of the mustard seed.

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." —Mark 4:30–32

An appreciative mindset seeks common purpose and accord.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. —Philippians 2:1–2

An appreciative mindset focuses energy on what is true, just, pure, and honorable in the belief that this will lead to the joy of excellence.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. —Philippians 4:8

CONGREGATIONAL VISITS

1. **The purpose of the congregational visits**: In this assignment you and others will act as cultural anthropologists in a congregation other than your own. You will observe and ask questions of leaders in a congregation so that you can come up with your own working hypotheses/guesses about the congregation's culture. You will use Ed Schein's Levels of Culture, the "gathering" portion of Model 1: Gather-Transform-Send, some of the basics of appreciative inquiry, and background on change.

   The purpose of this exercise is *not* for you to assess someone else's culture (remember Schein says only those in the culture can assess their culture). Rather, this assignment is ultimately **about raising your own awareness of your own congregation and learning a bit about how you (and others) might go about assessing, appreciating, and considering steps to strengthen your own congregation's culture.**
2. **Choosing a congregation to visit**: Choose a congregation near you or near where you might be on a Sunday if possible. If you cannot manage to visit a congregation on a Sunday morning, choose another day when the congregation is offering a Eucharist.
3. **Scheduling your visit**: Contact the rector/vicar and tell him/her when you and others will be visiting and ask if you can meet with him/her and other leaders right after the visit. The meeting with them will take about two hours. Tell them that you are doing this as an assignment for the College and that you and the others on your team would like to ask them some questions about the congregation as a part of your visit.
4. **Preparing for your visit**: Don't over prepare for your visit. Just look over the basic areas you want to observe and ask about, and figure out who will be taking the lead at what time in the questioning. Prepare by reading through what gathering is all about. Consider what you're trying to get at through appreciative inquiry and how you might articulate some generic questions about change and how it's been managed (or not) in the congregation.
5. **The visit itself—attending worship and meeting with leaders**: Unobtrusively make notes about what you notice on the observation sheet—overall impressions and specifics related to "gathering." When you meet with leaders, be sure *not* to use the jargon of the College (for instance *gathering*). Use the language of the people being interviewed when inquiring into the areas you want to learn about. Do use some of the language related to appreciative inquiry—this is the kind of language those interviewed should be able to respond to easily. You'll also be inquiring about how the congregation has dealt with change—because you always want to understand this! If someone from the congregation mentions a change, you can follow up with questions. Or you can ask about change outright: What are some recent changes in the congregation? Tell us about making the change—what happened? How did it go (how hard, how easy)? What did you learn about the congregation in making the change?
6. **Debriefing your visit**: Take some time to debrief your visit as a team. (We will also debrief your visits in the next session of the College.) How did it feel to be there? What did you pick up/what are your working hypotheses about the culture in the congregation around its ability to gather? What did you hear were the core positive parts of the congregation's identity and story? What did you hear about how the congregation has made changes? What's your guess about the culture of change in the congregation?

CULTURAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET FOR CONGREGATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Elements of Gathering	Artifacts: What Shows Up (ways of doing things and stories about visible things)	Stated Values	Shared Assumptions (hunches, guesses, or things you wonder about)
Invite			
Greet			
Orient			
Incorporate			

FIGURE 1-7: CULTURAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET FOR CONGREGATIONAL INTERVIEWS

(page 1 of 2)

Other Observations

1. Overall observations or first impressions:

2. Observations about what the congregation and its people most appreciate about who they are and what they do—high points in their life together:

3. Observations about the congregation's experience with change:

(page 2 of 2)

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

YEAR B UNIT 2

DEBRIEFING CONGREGATIONAL VISITS

Aims: The aim of the discussion is to expand team members' learning about the "gathering" portion of Model 1: Gather-Transform-Send as well as deepen knowledge and skills related to cultural assessment (Schein's Levels of Culture) self-awareness, question framing, observation, hypothesis formation, etc.).

Time for the Task: 60 minutes, with an additional 5 minutes for debriefing the facilitator at the end of the discussion

The Task: Engage in a facilitated debrief and discussion of the congregational visits

Areas to Discuss and Explore (60 minutes)

- How was it for you to visit a congregation—to observe and ask questions of leaders? What did you feel as you did this? Any learning about yourself as an observer/framer of questions?
- What were some of the artifacts related to "gathering" (the "business problem" as Schein calls it) that you noticed in the congregation you visited? The shared values you heard articulated around this?
- What did you come away wondering about the congregation's gathering process? About other facets of the congregation's life?
- What did you most appreciate about the congregation you visited?
- What did you learn about the idea of culture in a congregation?

Debrief the Facilitator (5 minutes)

Trainer debriefs facilitator with the group, using the facilitator assessment sheet (found in Facilitation Skills and at the end of each unit).

DISCUSSION ON "GATHERING" IN CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS

1. What are our congregation's strengths in "gathering"?

2. What are the areas within "gathering" we might need to strengthen?

3. What do our strengths and areas that need strengthening suggest about our congregation's culture?

4. What are one or two concrete ideas for improving "gathering" in our congregation?

To understand marketing in a congregational setting, we suggest adopting the stance of Frederick Buechner's words on vocation: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."*

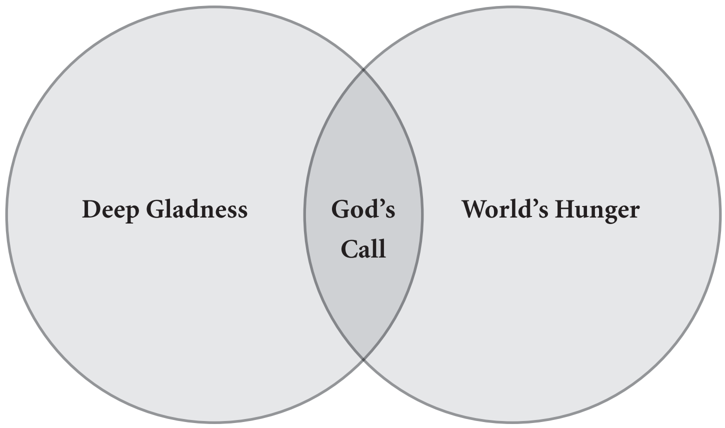

FIGURE 2-1: THE PLACE OF GOD'S CALL

Using this approach, "marketing" a congregation is about identifying and deepening the way that a congregation lives out and expresses its "deep gladness" and connects this gladness to hungers for God within and outside the congregation.

Marketing Defined (an appreciative understanding)

Marketing Is…

- The creation, building, and maintaining of satisfying, growth-encouraging relationships between a congregation and its people—insiders and members of the outside community alike
- The capacity in the congregation to notice, to listen to, to learn about, and to respond to those whom the parish is currently attracting and serving and would like to attract and serve
- Communications and actions shaping how the congregation is perceived by insiders and outsiders alike, all of which are based in reality, appreciatively understood
- Communications and actions influencing insiders and outsiders as they make choices about participation in aspects of the congregation's life (e.g., the decision to visit the congregation's website, the decision to visit the congregation or invite someone to visit the congregation, the decision to come to a newcomers' gathering, the decision to make a financial gift, the decision to participate in a centering prayer group, the decision to teach Godly Play, the decision to participate in the monthly community meal)
- "Everything everyone does every day"

Marketing Is Not…

- Education or communication alone (though education and communication will typically be a part of what you do)
- Selling (though there will be times when you are influencing or asking people to make a decision about whether to do something or not)
- Misleading people (though you will be making choices about what you communicate about the congregation and what you do not communicate)
- Just doing programs and liturgies and hoping others will see the benefit and will come (though the quality of programs and liturgy are very important)

Our Deep Gladness: Stories of Who We Are

Pairing this comprehensive understanding of marketing with Buechner's description of vocation, parishes can explore their "deep gladness" through exploring their identity. This identity is embedded in story:

The congregation's "given" stories: What stories from a congregation's origins, it name, its history (ups *and* downs), and its location are most distinctive, important, and "useable"?

The stories of people in the congregation: What stories of people's spiritual growth as fostered in the congregation are most engaging and moving?

The story of the parish's ecclesial tradition: What stories about the life of the congregation and its people best express the congregation's ecclesial identity?

The parish's missional story: What stories related to the parish connecting to God's mission in and for the world are the most motivating? What stories related to the parish serving those in its context are most powerful?

The stories of God moving in and through the parish: What Biblical stories or stories from the Church's tradition best express where the congregation is on its journey? What images for God best express the God encountered in the life of the congregation?

Noticing What People Do Instead of Coming to Your Church

In marketing efforts, any activity that people engage in rather than coming to and/or being connected to our parishes may be a source of important information. Knowing what these activities are may give us ideas about how to creatively join with where people are actually spending their time and energy.

Additionally, it can be helpful to be aware of which parishes our parish "trades" with (that is, which parish or other churches we lose people to or which parish or other churches people leave to come to us). Knowing this may teach us something about who we are and how we might speak of ourselves as distinctive from alternatives to our parish.

It's also a useful exercise to visit the websites of all the parishes in our geographical area and to notice whether our website does a good job of distinguishing us from other churches in the area (while, of course, telling the truth in an appreciative way about who we are). With all this said, remember that our focus is our own parish and its relationships:

- How will we create and maintain a parish that has a vibrant, healthy center?
- How will we build relationships with those we want to reach and engage?
- How will we communicate our parish in an attractive way?

In other words, start from and build your own center; invest your resources there rather than spending a lot of energy being concerned about what others are doing! One exception: do engage in intentional learning from another parish that is doing something well so that you can apply what you learn to your congregation in order to strengthen what you do.

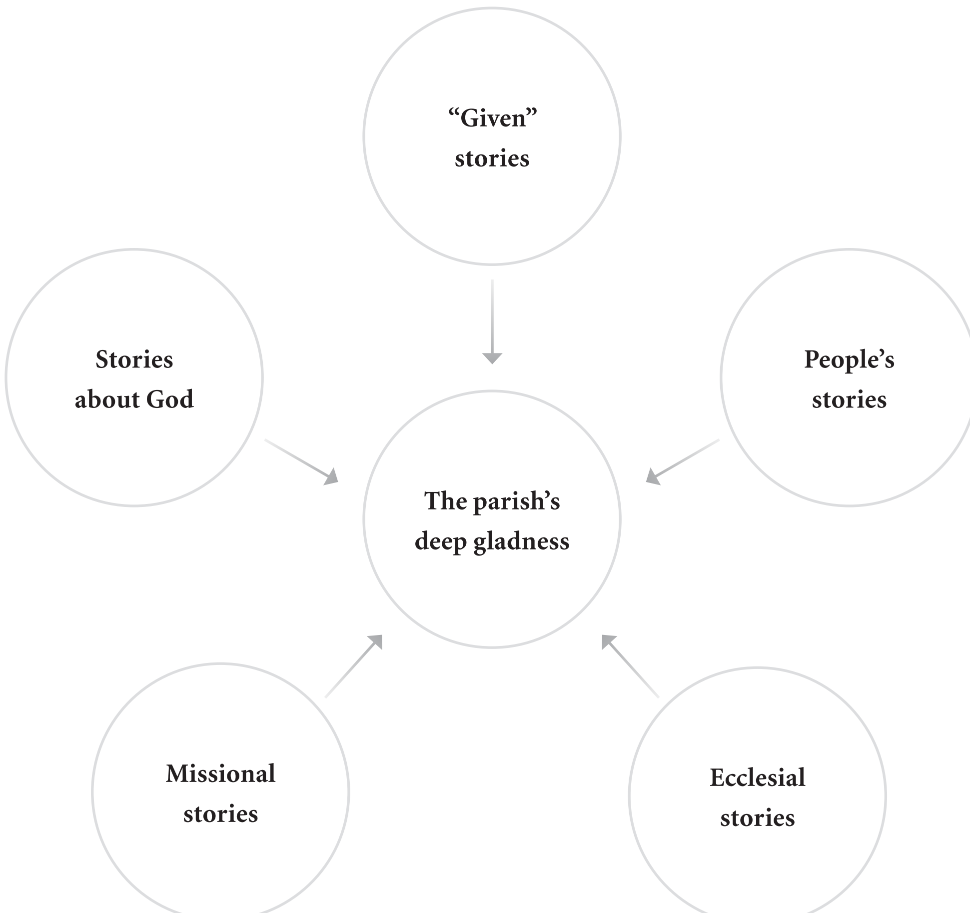

FIGURE 2-2: WORKING ON DESCRIBING OUR OWN DEEP GLADNESS: STORIES OF WHO WE ARE

* Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC* rev. ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

TEAM EXERCISE: THE CORE IDENTITY OF A CONGREGATION

Purpose: To increase participants' capacity to listen and learn about their congregations. To explore dimensions of congregational identity and the implications of that identity for what congregations offer (programs and other efforts) to those they desire to attract and serve.

Time: 60 minutes for the team and 10 minutes to debrief the facilitator or debrief the process. This is **not a process that makes use of newsprint**. Rather, group members are to make their own personal notes and refer to them.

Task

1. **Trainer will serve as facilitator**.

2. **Identify one parish team or individual to be the focus congregation.** The role of the rest of the team will be to encourage and assist the focus congregation by asking questions.

3. **Focus congregation chooses 2–3 storytelling areas** from figure 2-2, Working on Describing Our Own Deep Gladness: Stories of Who We Are, on page 109 as the areas they want to explore.

4. **Facilitator assists the focus congregation in telling stories** in each area. The rest of the group asks questions, as appropriate, and takes personal notes on what they hear from the focus congregation. The facilitator's role is to move the conversation along while at the same time allowing for the telling of the stories.

5. After finishing the storytelling, **the facilitator poses these questions to the focus congregation**:

   - "What do any of your stories suggest to you about what is **core to your congregation's identity**?
   - What does this identity suggest about **what your parish might offer** (e.g., programs or other initiatives) to those inside or outside your parish?"

6. After the focus congregation responds to these questions, the **focus congregation is silent** and is encouraged to make notes for themselves while the **facilitator turns to the rest of the group and asks:**

   - What did you hear (in the focus congregation's stories) that ***you*** **believe is core to the identity of their congregation**?
   - What are ***you*** **most excited by in that core identity or in the focus congregation's ideas for action**? Why?

7. **With the other group members silent, the focus congregation now shares** what he/she/they heard from the other group members that they found valuable.

8. End the time with the **facilitator inviting all in a go-round fashion** (take turns, no interruptions, anyone can pass!) to answer this question: what did you learn from this exercise about self or about the process or about your congregation's identity)?

Reaching, Attracting, and Retaining Specific Groups of People

Become an expert on your community and the area you believe you can and will draw from to reach new people. You can do this by working in the following areas to understand your community and to define the group(s) you want to reach.

1. **Geographics:** Identify where the people you want to reach live. Start with getting a sense of how many people live within a five-mile radius of your congregation. (You can begin by getting the information for a three-mile radius from Mission Insite.) This will give you a sense of your prospects for numerical growth. Also analyze where your current membership lives—how far they come to get to you and why. This will help you understand how far to extend your geographical map in terms of potential participants/supporters/members.

2. **Demographics:** While you should not overdo demographic research, it's important to have a feel for who's actually in your area. What ages are represented in your immediate area, and how many people are in each age group? How many people are single, and how many partnered or married? What is the ethnicity or culture of those in your area? What is the median income and average household income? What is the educational level? What occupations dominate?

3. **Culture:** Understanding the culture of your community is even more important than demographics. What is the mind-set of those in your community, the "air they breathe," the "shared assumptions" that the "artifacts" in the community and the espoused values point to? Businesses call this the "psychographics" of a group of people. What are the hopes, the fears, the ways of living (lifestyles), the values, the hurts, the needs of groups of people (to include important subcultures) in your area? The best way to uncover the answers to these questions is to talk to people!

4. **Spiritual Life:** What is the spiritual climate of the people in your area? What are their assumptions and beliefs about God and where God can be found? What are their assumptions and beliefs about church or "organized religion"? What is the church background, if any, of those you might attract? Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail? Former Roman Catholics? Practicing Buddhists? Being aware of the religious/spiritual frame of reference of those we seek to attract can help us in building a bridge from their experience to our congregation.

"Creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed . . .
in hope that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay."

Friends,

On Sunday, April 4th, Rayne Pierce Barakh and Isaiah Selah Seraphim will be baptized during St. Clara's Easter Vigil service, beginning at 5 a.m. (211 Pine Street, Mayfield). Your participation in their lives has been part of God's wild and relentless pursuit of their young hearts . . . and our own. As such, we would be grateful to have you as witnesses to this Sacrament—the sign of their adoption as children of God—as Pierce and Selah are forever marked as kings in Jesus Christ's Kingdom (a bit of imagery they've enjoyed) and forever washed in His death, burial, and resurrection.

In addition, you are invited to a Beach Feast & Fire on Alki at 6 p.m. (a more reasonable hour for some) 'til the sun sets. Hot dogs, chips, and smores will be provided. In case of heavy rain, the feast will move to our residence: 1164 Morning Glory Circle.

We realize 5 a.m. is early, 6 p.m. may be late, and Sunday is Easter and your families may be celebrating. However, if you decide to come to the Vigil and/or the Beach, feel free to come as you are . . . pjs, smells, and disheveled hair are welcome.

Thank you for blessing our family as you have . . . and continue to do. We are grateful beyond words.

Christ is Risen!

+ the Smiths +

FIGURE 2-3: SMITH BAPTISMAL INVITATION

WEBSITE EXPLORATION

Your trainer will provide you with three different church websites to visit and explore with others in your group. Use these questions to reflect on that exploration.

1. What is/are the most memorable visual(s) on the homepage?
   Site 1:

   Site 2:

   Site 3:

2. What content on the site is the most engaging/interesting?
   Site 1:

   Site 2:

   Site 3:

3. How easy or hard is it to find important information on the site?
   Site 1:

   Site 2:

   Site 3:

4. Whom do you believe the congregation is seeking to appeal to? How effective is the website in doing this?
   Site 1:

   Site 2:

   Site 3:

5. Based on your experience of the websites, which congregation would you visit? Why?

SELF-DIFFERENTIATED LEADERSHIP: A WORKSHEET

Assess yourself using a 1–5 scale on the following dimensions of self-differentiated leadership. (1 = low and 5 = high)

1. Maintaining a non-anxious presence

A. I know where I end and others begin. I do not take on others' anxieties.

1	2	3	4	5

B. I take responsibility for my life and life course and don't typically blame any person, event, or thing outside myself as the cause for what I feel, do, or say, whether that's in the past, the present, or the future.

1	2	3	4	5

C. I'm able to maintain a non-reactive stance when people react to me (e.g., when someone attacks me verbally in person or in e-mails, avoids my presence, or minimizes my perspectives).

1	2	3	4	5

D. I'm able to let go of the urge to make decisions or take actions that are aimed at trying to get people to like me or admire me.

1	2	3	4	5

2. Staying connected

A. I regularly talk to people to find out where they are and what is going on with them.

1	2	3	4	5

B. I have specific methods that allow me to stay connected to the collective voice of the congregation, the parish council, and other groups (e.g., town meetings, use of newsprint and assessment processes, café conversation/cottage groups).

1	2	3	4	5

FIGURE 2-4: SELF-DIFFERENTIATED LEADERSHIP WORKSHEET **(page 1 of 3)**

C. I'm able to listen to those who disagree with me, even and especially in tense situations. I do not cut off or withdraw from difficult people.

1	2	3	4	5

3. Setting direction

A. I can and do make declarative statements: "I want," "I agree/disagree," "I think," "I feel," "I am going to do this/not do this."

1	2	3	4	5

B. I focus energy on pursuing the congregation's vision or goals. I communicate "this is where we are going and how we are going to get there."

1	2	3	4	5

C. I know the difference between the vision and goals of the congregation and my personal agenda, and I choose the former more often than the latter.

1	2	3	4	5

D. I'm able to take a stand in the face of disapproval.

1	2	3	4	5

E. I'm able to "stay the course" on something important when staying the course becomes difficult.

1	2	3	4	5

4. Managing resistance and/or sabotage

A. I resist the urge to cut myself off from people I believe oppose me. I stay in emotional contact with the loyal opposition with as much emotional neutrality as possible without losing my goal-directed orientation.

1	2	3	4	5

(page 2 of 3)

B. I'm not knocked off course by sabotage and don't become emotionally reactive to it, retaining my goal-directed orientation.

1	2	3	4	5

C. I've learned to value those who resist where we are going. I try to learn from them so that I can improve and advance the vision and goals of the organization.

1	2	3	4	5

Considering my assessment of myself, what are my areas of strength?

What areas need improvement and attention?

(page 3 of 3)

Definition of Self-Differentiated Leader

". . . someone who is less likely to become lost in the anxious emotional processes swirling about . . . who can separate while still remaining connected, and, therefore, can remain a modifying, non-anxious, and sometimes challenging presence . . . who can manage his or her own reactivity of others, and, therefore, be able to take stands at the risk of displeasing. It is not as though some leaders can do this and some cannot. No one does this easily, and most leaders, I have learned, can improve their capacity."

—Edwin Friedman in *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*

What is "systems thinking"?

"Systems thinking" is an approach to organizational life (and all of life) that sees everything as interrelated, in relationship to and with other elements in "the system," that is, the totality of elements and relationships inside and outside an organization or a situation. This way of thinking is often contrasted with a way of thinking that emphasizes the separate parts of an organization or a problem being analyzed. In contrast to "separate parts thinking," systems thinking focuses on how the element of a system being studied interacts with the other constituents or elements of the system of which it is a part. This means that instead of isolating smaller and smaller parts of the system being studied, systems thinking works by expanding its view to take into account larger and larger numbers of interactions.

Peter Steinke in his book *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach* contrasts these two approaches in this way:

Separate Parts Thinking	**Systems Thinking**
Atomistic	Holistic
Problems belong to the individual	Problems belong to the system
Problems are intra (within a part)	Problems are inter (between parts)
Whole can be understood by reduction into parts	Whole can be understood by interaction of the parts
Parts explain the whole	Whole explains the parts
Understanding comes from breaking whole down into smaller and smaller pieces	Understanding comes from looking up (larger and larger wholes)
Parts can be understood in themselves	Parts mutually influence one another
Think in lines	Think in loops
Cause and effect thinking	Co-causal

FIGURE 2-5: SEPARATE PARTS VS. SYSTEMS THINKING

Family Systems and Congregational Leadership

Dr. Murray Bowen, a psychiatrist, originated family systems theory and identified interlocking concepts that were important in the family systems he worked with and observed. This was a different paradigm of human dynamics, contrasting with "personality theory," which tended to focus on individuals as those who had certain fixed traits and tendencies.

Rabbi Edwin Friedman and others then built on some of these theories and applied them to religious and organizational systems. Lutheran pastor Peter Steinke popularized these theories in a series of books on congregations as systems and the role of leadership within congregations in creating and maintaining congregational health.

These thinkers developed and/or described several important background concepts and assumptions relevant to our study of congregational systems:

Emotional fields and the important position of leaders: A field is a region of influence, an environment created when one thing affects another thing, "an invisible force of influence." A field comes into being when one piece of matter draws near another. In human interactions, when people come together, they begin to function as they do because they are in the presence of one another. Within the concept of emotional fields, *the position* someone occupies in the field comes to be very important. Because of a leader's position, he or she affects the emotional field and, therefore, the whole system more than anyone else. This means that the leader has tremendous potential to evoke a healthy response in a system when it is in distress. For instance, as Steinke writes in *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach*,

- When the system is in crisis, the leader can bring calm
- When the system is bewildered, the leader can bring focus
- When the system is stagnant, the leader can bring challenge
- When new situations arise that need new responses, the leader can bring change

Chronic anxiety: According to Bowen and others, all emotional systems contain free-floating anxiety. "While specific events or issues are often the principal generators of acute anxiety, the principal generators of chronic anxiety are people's reactions to a disturbance in the balance of a relationship system" (Kerr & Bowen). Anxiety is an organism's response to a real or imagined threat. Bowen presumed that all living things experience anxiety in some form. He used the term interchangeably with emotional reactivity. Both terms indicate an increase in physical manifestations, such as heart rate and blood pressure changes, gaze aversion, fight or flight responses, and heightened alertness or fear sensations.

Basic life forces—closeness and distancing: The theory postulates "two opposing basic life forces. One is a built-in life growth force toward individuality and the differentiation of a separate self, and the other an equally intense emotional closeness." (Bowen) Bowen defined two life forces at work in human relationship systems, togetherness and individuality. The togetherness force entails the pressure and desire to be like others, to agree on beliefs, principles, values, and feelings. The individuality force, also termed the differentiating force, involves the impetus to define a separate self from others. Bowen viewed the differentiating force as responsible for self without making demands on others or blaming others. A person who is self-defined takes action based on well-thought-out principles when working with an emotional system.

According to Bowen, "the togetherness force assumes responsibility for the happiness, comfort, and well-being of others" while a person differentiating a self "assumes responsibility for one's own happiness and comfort and well-being."

Triangles: Triangles are the basic molecule of human relationship systems. A two-person dyad becomes unstable once anxiety increases. Then, one or both members of the dyad usually pull in a third person to relieve some of the pressure. In a three-person system, anxiety has more places to go, and the relationship where the anxiety originated experiences some relief. When the three-person system can no longer contain the anxiety, it involves more people and forms a series of interlocking triangles. Bowen researchers consider triangles a natural function of living systems. Triangles can have either negative or positive outcomes depending on how their members manage anxiety and reactivity. Bowen postulated that if one member of the triangle remains calm and in emotional contact with the other two, the system automatically calms down. On the other hand, with enough stress and reactivity, members lock into a triangular position, which negatively affects all three parties, particularly the one who for the moment is "triangled out."

Differentiation of self: According to Bowen, families and other social groups deeply affect how people think, feel, and act, but individuals vary in their susceptibility to "group think" and groups vary in the amount of pressure they exert for conformity. These differences between individuals and between groups reflect differences in people's levels of differentiation of self. The less developed a person's "self," the more impact others have on his or her functioning and the more he or she tries to control, actively or passively, the functioning of others. The basic building blocks of a "self" are inborn, but an individual's family relationships during childhood and adolescence primarily determine how much "self" he or she develops. Bowen believed that once established, the level of "self" rarely changes unless a person makes a structured and long-term effort to change it.

People with a poorly differentiated "self" depend so heavily on the acceptance and approval of others that either they quickly adjust what they think, say, and do to please others or they dogmatically proclaim what others should be like and pressure them to conform. Bullies depend on approval and acceptance as much as chameleons, but bullies push others to agree with them rather than their agreeing with others. Disagreement threatens a bully as much as it threatens a chameleon. An extreme rebel is a poorly differentiated person too, but he or she pretends to be a "self" by routinely opposing the positions of others.

People with a well-differentiated "self" recognize their realistic dependence on others, but they can stay calm and clear headed enough in the face of conflict, criticism, and rejection to distinguish thinking rooted in a careful assessment of the facts from thinking clouded by emotional reactivity. Thoughtfully acquired principles help guide decision making about important family and social issues, making them less at the mercy of the feelings of the moment. What they decide and what they say matches what they do. They can act selflessly, but their acting in the best interests of the group is a thoughtful choice, not a response to relationship pressures. Confident in their thinking, they can either support another's view without being a disciple or reject another view without polarizing the differences. They define themselves without being pushy and deal with pressure to yield without being wishy-washy.

Self-Differentiated Leadership

The idea of self-differentiated leadership draws on many of the pieces of Bowen's theories. Accordingly, self-differentiation as a leader does not mean being autonomous, cut off, separate, or independent of others in the system in which one is a leader. Rather, the leader needs to be himself or herself *and* remain part of and connected to the system. This is not necessarily easy. The task is to be connected to and with people in the system but not condition one's emotions on them. Another way of saying this is that cutting oneself off from others doesn't show a lack of emotion but instead both too much emotion and an inability to cope with that intensity of emotion.

One of the most important facets of congregational leadership, then, is the ability *not* to become emotionally entangled in a congregation's anxious responses. This means that leaders must understand the dramatic effect of emotions and anxiety in organizational systems. This also requires that leaders be able to overcome their own anxious reactivity through self-regulation and "stay the course" even in the most highly anxious situations.

Thus, self-differentiated leadership involves cultivating **a self-regulated**, **non-reactive, non-anxious presence** that

- **stays connected to others,** that is, is able to resist the impulse to cut oneself off physically and emotionally, and is able to be present to and listen to people and the system as a whole;
- **sets direction**, that is, is able to take clearly conceived and defined positions that create, where appropriate, movement of the system to greater health, faithfulness, and effectiveness; is able to be a "self" or an "I" in the face of pressure by others or by the system to be part of, or blend into, the "we"; is able to know one's opinion, stand, or stance without imposing expectations or demands on others; is able to state clearly and calmly one's position without suggesting (with "must," "should," or "ought" language) that others need to have the same position; and
- **manages resistance and sabotage**, that is, without retribution, rigidity, dogmatism, cut-off, or withdrawal, is able to stay the course in the face of the natural human tendency to resist change and the inevitable emergence of sabotage in a changing system.

Understanding What Triggers Anxiety in a Congregation

Peter Steinke's list of what triggers anxiety in congregations (from Steinke's *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What*) is a helpful reference for congregational leaders as they try to make sense of what is going on in their congregations at a given time:

- Money—raising it, spending it, and managing it when there isn't enough
- Sex and sexuality—sexual identity and expression issues, differences around this issue
- Pastor's leadership style—just "not liking" the pastor or a mismatch between the pastor's style and the leadership needed at a given time
- Lay leadership style—from overly passive to overly controlling
- Growth and survival—slow or rapid growth, survival issues
- Boundaries—people overstepping their authority, misuse of funds
- Trauma and/or transition—a key damaging event or significant transition
- Staff conflict and resignation
- Harm done to a child or the death of a child
- Old and new—a change like a new hymnal or a new worship time
- Contemporary and traditional worship—when style of worship elicits strong emotional response
- Gap between ideal and real—when lofty ideals are betrayed by reality
- Building construction, space, and territory—anything connected to space!

Dealing with Triangles

Congregational leaders often (some might say daily) have to work out how to deal with the many interlocking triangles that emerge in congregational life. Here are some basic triangles that are present in congregations and take active management. You can supply many more!

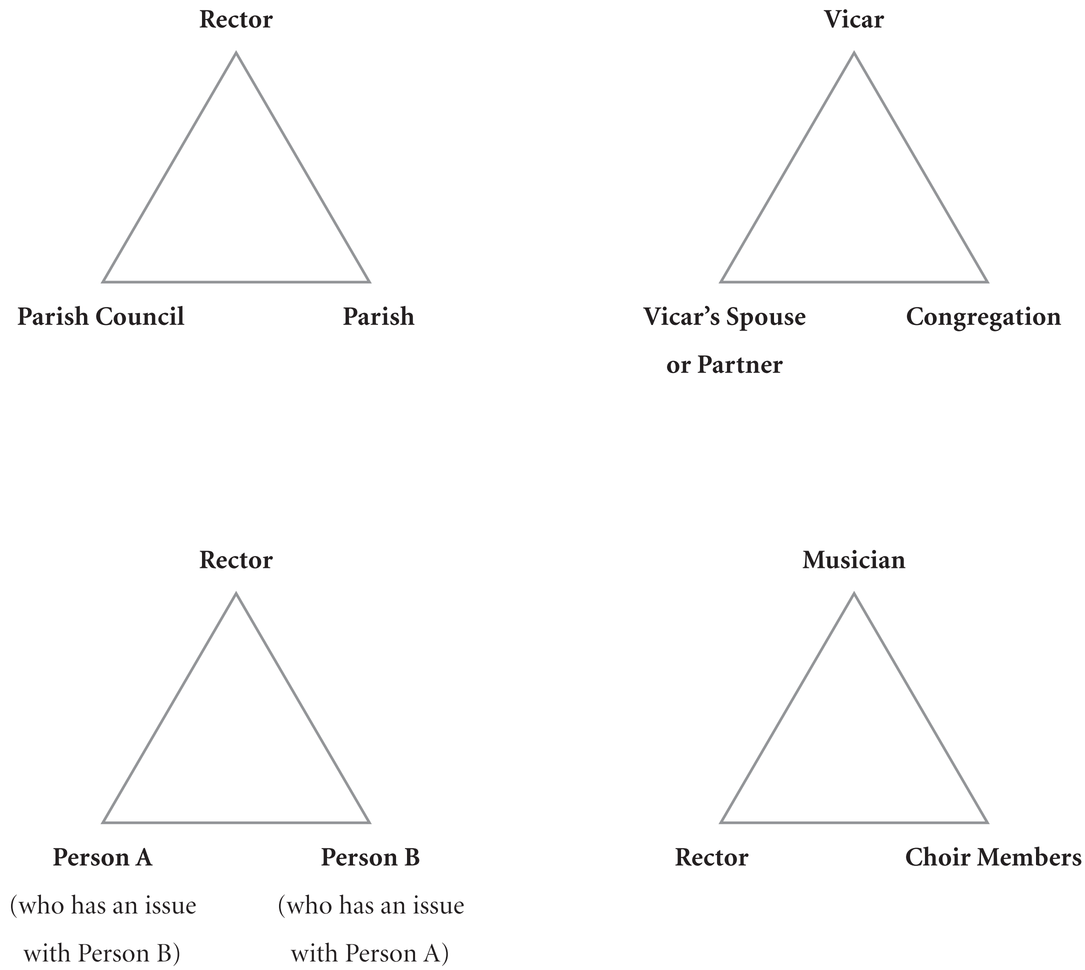

FIGURE 2-6: EXAMPLES OF TRIANGLES

As you deal with triangles, consider these tips:

- *Remember triangles are normal*—they are often a function of general anxiety in a system as well as the universal struggle people have with managing their closeness and separateness with one another (including you) and the anxiety that emerges as they try to navigate this. There will always be triangles!
- *Learn to recognize triangles* and try, where possible, to understand the emotional issues that are driving them.
- *Notice your own impulse to triangulate*, that is, not deal directly with someone with whom you have an issue. If you notice yourself chronically doing this, reflect on (or seek help about) these questions: What are the issues I have in relationship to this person or these people? How can I figure out a way to communicate more directly here?

- Where appropriate, *consider "repositioning" yourself in a triangle*—Person A comes to you about an issue with Person B. You let Person A know that you believe it's best for Person A to work this out on his/her own with Person B. You take on a role of helping Person A to learn more about himself/herself in this and coach Person A about how he/she might approach Person B.
- Where appropriate, *consider "collapsing" the triangle*—you hear from someone that Person A has an issue with you and you go to Person A and say, "I've heard you're troubled about ______________. Can you tell me more about this?" Or you hear from Person A about his/her issue with Person B (and likewise) and you offer to sponsor a conversation between the two (this can be tricky).
- *Work on yourself* in terms of your ability to set a tone and an environment in which people feel safe to come to you about issues they may have with you.
- *Set norms in the whole system* about direct communication with the person or group someone has an issue with (or praise for).
- *Set into motion processes that allow the collective voice to speak and be listened to* so that people have a constructive means to gain clarity about where the bulk of the congregation and the leadership are on an issue or where things stand in the midst of a process. This can relieve tensions and anxiety and lessen the need to triangulate around an issue.

Out of a stance of self-regulated, non-reactive, non-anxious presence, a leader focuses on:

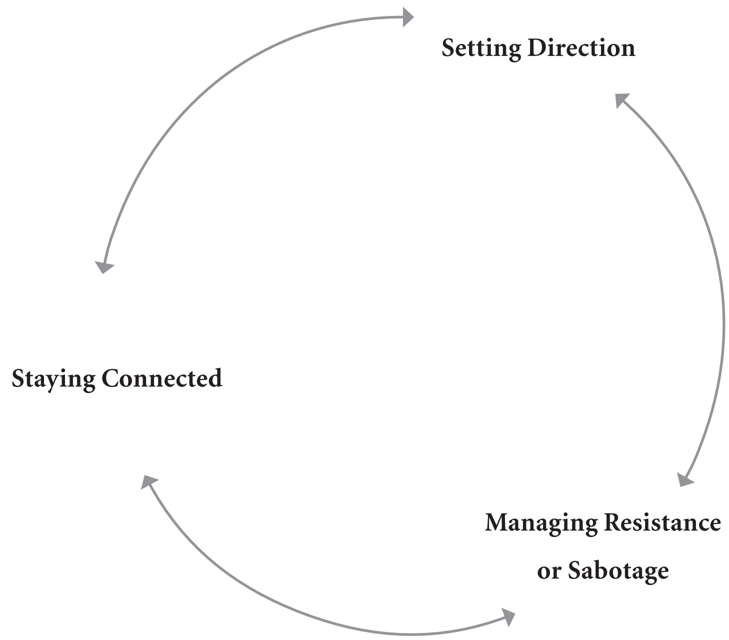

FIGURE 2-7: SELF-DIFFERENTIATED LEADERSHIP MODEL

Self-differentiated leadership involves cultivating a **self-regulated, non-reactive, non-anxious presence** that

- **stays connected to others,** that is, is able to resist the impulse to cut oneself off physically and emotionally, and is able to be present to and listen to people and the system as a whole;
- **sets direction**, that is, is able to take clearly conceived and defined positions that create, where appropriate, movement of the system to greater health, faithfulness, and effectiveness; is able to be a "self" or an "I" in the face of pressure by others or by the system to be part of, or blend into, the "we"; is able to know one's opinion, stand, or stance without imposing expectations or demands on others; is able to state clearly and calmly one's position without suggesting (with "must," "should," or "ought" language) that others need to have the same position; and
- **manages resistance and sabotage**, that is, without retribution, rigidity, dogmatism, cut-off, or withdrawal, is able to stay the course in the face of the natural human tendency to resist change and the inevitable emergence of sabotage in a changing system.

20 OBSERVATIONS ABOUT TROUBLED CONGREGATIONS

From the *Alban Weekly* – Week of 12/4/2006

By Peter L. Steinke

I have worked with troubled churches for 20 years. I never cease to learn from these experiences. The list below includes some of what I have learned about congregations in times of conflict.

1. Most people are interested in relieving their own anxiety rather than managing the crisis or planning for a clear direction. Their primary goal is anxiety reduction, not congregational renewal.
2. Under certain conditions, anxiety is neutral. As much as possible, effective leaders normalize anxiety. Considering what is happening, anxiety's presence is what we would expect. By normalizing, people will not automatically think anxiety exists because the community is flawed.
3. If anxiety is high, people lose their capacity to be self-reflective. They look outward, not at themselves. Self-awareness is dim, and the ability to identify with the life processes of others is impaired.
4. Peace is often preferred over justice. Congregational members can resist or be hesitant about taking stands, making decisions, or charting a course of action that would offend or upset the community. By placing a premium on togetherness, they play into the hands of the most dependent people who can threaten to incite disharmony as a way to receive what they want. When such superficial harmony—so-called "peace"—must prevail, then the pursuit of justice often is sacrificed and others who are involved become excused from responsibility.
5. If an individual becomes the lightning rod for people's anxiety and cannot extricate him- or herself from that position through self-differentiation (or the environment is so perverse that no one can escape from that position), trying to maintain his or her position or presence in the emotional system is unproductive as well as painful.
6. All disease processes are enabled. Viruses need host cells. Not all people designated by anxious systems as the patient are sick. The illness is in the interactive system, to which the following observations attest:
   "All neuroses have accomplices" (Carl Jung).
   Anxiety not resolved in one relationship will be acted out in another relationship.
   "Unless the leader has a degree of self-knowledge and self-understanding, there is the risk that he or she may use the organization to address his or her own neuroses" (Peter Senge et al.).
7. The way we use information is an emotional phenomenon; what we hear and don't hear, what we remember, how we gather and exclude data are all connected to emotional processes. We gravitate toward information that coincides with our viewpoints and that promises to contribute to our survival.
8. The healing process for midrange to severely anxious congregations takes two to five years.
9. Losses (membership, offerings, attendance) will result no matter what choices are made. Most congregations regain their losses within two years.
10. Secrets—that is, hidden agendas and invisible loyalties—in most cases need to be brought to light. What about sin and evil? Expect it; expose it. To expose the demonic, name it (recall the story of Jesus and the demoniac in Mark 5).
11. Reactivity can issue from people who are leaders, erudite, talented, wealthy, well-educated, pious, charming, or normally calm folks. None of the above characteristics indicate that these individuals are mature emotionally.

12. Issues must be clearly identified and individuals must be challenged to act. No anxious congregation can handle more than three to five issues at a time. The issues must be condensed.
13. The sabotage of a process to deal with conflict should be expected. The usual saboteurs will be those who are losing control or not getting what they want from the process.
14. Murray Bowen claimed that all dyads are unstable. Therefore the basic molecule of all relationship systems is a triangle (the use of a third party to reduce tension between a twosome). A Swahili proverb reads: "When the elephants fight, it's the grass that gets crushed." Triangle formation is natural. Triangulation is another matter. It happens when the third party allows the original dyad to escape responsibility for its actions by assuming their anxiety and taking responsibility for them. Whenever a congregation brings in a third party, such as an intervention team, there is a triangle. Triangulation would occur if the team became anxious and felt responsible for the conflict's outcome.
15. Five styles of managing conflict have become commonplace: accommodating, problem solving, compromising, avoiding, and fighting. They are useful for recognizing general patterns of behaviour under pressure. But they are not helpful when used as predictors—"Oh, Susan never takes a stand. She'll compromise on anything." People like Susan do not function in the same way in every context. At home Susan may compromise but at work she's quite a problem solver. Even in the same conflict, people may shift from one style to another. One may begin as a fighter, only with time to become an accommodator. Further, not all avoiders or problem solvers are equal. There's a range to their functioning. People's functioning is not determined by a style but by the context.
16. Recent research challenges the prevailing assumptions about conflict behaviour being mutually exclusive. For example, direct fighting and problem solving are more effective in combination than they are in isolation. The continuous repetition of fighting, then problem solving, and then fighting is effective.
17. How the conflict is framed affects the behaviour of those involved. When the conflict is conceptualized as cost or benefit, the participants' behaviour changes. People become more involved if they anticipate losses as a result of the conflict than if they anticipate gains. Losses arouse greater emotional force. Researchers found that a prospect of loss led to less yielding behaviour. Even when the opponent is about to suffer a loss, there is more cooperation from the other side than if the opponent enjoyed a profit.
18. No emotional system will change unless the members of the system change how they interact with one another. Patterns of behaviour tend toward rigidity. Conflict may be necessary to jolt and jar the shape of things in order to reshape the pattern. But the degree to which that change is positive or negative depends on the leadership present to respond to it.
19. The parties involved in a rift are in a poor position to settle the dispute if anxiety is high and rampant. Being too closely and emotionally involved in a circumstance, they will find it difficult to provide a fair overview.
20. Final or perfect solutions are not available. Conflict leaves things messy. The best solutions to insolvable problems are the approximate solutions—ones that prepare a system for a new learning and a new beginning.

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Source: *Alban Weekly* © 2006 The Alban Institute, Inc.
From the *Alban Weekly* - Week of 12/04/2006

CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY CASE

The Church of the Epiphany was founded in 1960 as a mission from another nearby congregation. The congregation, located in a suburb of a medium-sized city, is in an area that was projected to have great growth potential. However, this growth has never really taken off, with the congregation just barely having the budget to have a full-time priest. Average Sunday attendance at its highest was 75.

The current priest, John Murphy, has been in place for five years. John was placed in the position (with a brief interviewing process by the congregation) after a previous vicar resigned on account of his wife's illness and death. John came with what he believed was a clear mandate from the diocese with which the congregation concurred: to grow numbers and finances. John is extroverted, with a somewhat charismatic orientation, is charming, and has a "big" personality. He is married with two children under the age of eight.

Initially things went well for John and for the congregation. Young families new to the Anglican Church began visiting and staying, and John was successful at creating programs for them, all with parish council support. "Old-timers," many of whom were well-educated early retirees over 55, were thrilled at the progress and increased their own levels of giving to support the new energy, recognizing that many of the younger families could not afford to contribute much money to the congregation.

However, over time, a group of the "old-timers" (roughly 15–20 people) began to notice some things that disturbed them. John did not seem to have time for them and did not seem as interested in them as he had been when he first arrived. He also seemed to be moving some of them out of the positions they formerly occupied with the rationale that the new, younger people who had joined the church needed to begin playing more of a leadership role. Along with this, some began to think that John's sermons had become a tad too simplistic and "Jesus-y."

A few of the couples within this group had become interested in the Gnostic Gospels, and after discovering a tape series on the subject that featured a renowned scholar, they put together a discussion group using the tapes to be held on a Sunday morning after church. The event was well-publicized and drew a surprisingly large number of people. A younger, more recently elected member of the parish council, who was very connected to the other young couples, attended the event and then went to John with this complaint: "The tapes sound like they are by people who don't believe in Jesus! I don't think we should be showing these here in a church that should be all about Christ!" John's heart raced when he heard this. "God," he thought. "I had hoped to avoid this!"

Within an hour, John sent an e-mail to the couples who had organized the tape series discussion, telling them that while they were free to go on meeting, they could no longer hold the discussion group on a Sunday morning because the series was upsetting and confusing to some of the younger new couples. The couples who had planned the event were steamed and immediately fired back an e-mail asking to meet with John to talk about his decision. He wrote back immediately, reminding them of the Canons that gave him the right to determine how the building was used and referred them to the newly formed adult formation committee, chaired by the person on the parish council who had complained to John about the series.

CONGREGATIONAL ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Choose a facilitator and **do an analysis of Church of the Epiphany using elements of systems theory, especially drawing on the elements of self-differentiated leadership.** Be prepared to share in plenary **one area of analysis** and **one thing** you believe could move the congregation toward a healthier, more productive life. (Your trainer will tell you whether you will be sharing your results in plenary.)

Area	How High? 1–10 (1 = Low, 10 = High)	Examples
Anxiety in the system		
Sense of direction in the system		
Ability of the system to stay in touch with itself		
Ability of the system to deal with resistance and sabotage		

What important triangles are present in the system? Draw and label them.

What are one or two things you believe would move the congregational system toward a healthier, more productive life?

FIGURE 2-8: CONGREGATIONAL ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

SELF-DIFFERENTIATED LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK WORKSHEET

1. Review the self-differentiated leadership worksheet (see figure 2-4 on page 114) on which you assessed yourself in regard to non-anxious presence, staying connected, setting direction, and managing sabotage. Reflect again on your personal areas of strength and weakness. What do you do (behaviourally) that lets you know this area is a strength for you? What about your weak area? Write a bit about this here.

2. Write down an area or behaviour related to an aspect of the Self-Differentiated Leadership Model about which you would like to receive feedback from your group.

3. Give and receive feedback in your group. Take notes here on the feedback you receive.

4. Given your reflections and the feedback you've received, identify a new behaviour you are going to try back home. This behaviour may further develop an area of strength or improve an area of weakness.

FIGURE 2-9: SELF-DIFFERENTIATED LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK WORKSHEET

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback is communication to a person that gives that person information about how he or she affects others and the performance of the group or organization. Feedback can also be given to a group.

1. **Feedback is descriptive rather than evaluative** and is based on observed behaviour. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for the individual to respond defensively. Describing behaviour minimizes inferences or assumptions made by the giver.

2. **Feedback is specific rather than general.** To be told that one is "dominating" will probably not be as useful as to be told, "When I offered a suggestion, you did not acknowledge it and just went on with your description of what you wanted to do." Give examples.

3. **Feedback takes into account the needs of both the giver and receiver** of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only our own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person on the receiving end.

4. **Feedback is put into context.** Is this a big issue or a minor issue? If we give feedback without saying how important it is, the other person's attention is directed toward figuring out the severity of the discussion rather than listening to you.

5. **Feedback is well timed.** In general feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after a particular behaviour (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, support available from others, etc.).

6. **Feedback is checked to ensure clear communication**. It's helpful to have the receiver paraphrase the feedback to see if the message was received.

7. **Feedback describes impact and desired outcome.** Describing the impact on the sender, the group lets the receiver know why this is an important issue. Describing the desired outcome lets the receiver know what could be different in the future.

8. **Feedback is owned by the giver** by using personal pronouns like *I* or *my*. Such messages enable the speaker to take responsibility for his or her thoughts, feelings, reactions. In other words, speak for yourself.

9. **Feedback includes speaking from the heart,** from the emotions.

Adapted from materials from National Training Labs, 2007

FOUR-PART FEEDBACK MODEL

Plan and prepare to give feedback.

Consider why you want to give the feedback.

Determine the best time and place.

Ask permission to give the person feedback.

Be conscious of the person's capacity to take it in.

The four-part model includes these statements:

When you ______________________________

(Behaviour)

I felt ______________________________

(Emotion)

The impact on me is ______________________________

(Consequence)

I prefer/want ______________________________

(Request)

FIGURE 2-10: FOUR-PART FEEDBACK MODEL

Adapted from materials from National Training Labs, 2007

A (NOT EXHAUSTIVE!) LIST OF FEELING WORDS

Mad	Sad	Glad	Afraid	Multiple Categories (in one, two, or three of Mad, Sad, Afraid)
angry	hurt	happy	apprehensive	abandoned
furious	blue	content	scared	rejected
enraged	gloomy	calm	terrified	embarrassed
disappointed	discouraged	easy	freaked	lost
peeved	upset	delighted	uneasy	isolated
disgusted	hopeless	assured	nervous	alone
bugged	despairing	warm	anxious	forgotten
annoyed	sorrowful	loving	jealous	left out
frustrated	empty	affectionate	shy	remorseful
resentful	blah	chipper	unsure	humiliated
uptight	numb	joyful	timid	disgraced
irritated	bored	amused	worried	mortified
hateful	grieved	excited	inadequate	goofy
self-pitying	pessimistic	eager	threatened	ashamed
combative	unhappy	cheerful	insecure	punchy
powerless	dejected	excited	petrified	patronized
irked	miserable	tranquil	panicky	
	distraught	serene		
	down	peaceful		
	useless	eager		
		jazzed		
		tickled		

FIGURE 2-11: FEELING WORDS

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

YEAR B UNIT 3

BECKHARD CHANGE MODEL EXERCISE

Learning Goals: For all team members to become more familiar with the Beckhard change model and for one congregational team to think through and learn about applying a change model to a specific change effort or project in their congregation

Time: 60 minutes for team exercise and 10 minutes to debrief facilitator

The Task: Choose a facilitator and one individual or team representing a congregation that will be the focus congregation for this exercise. The focus congregation identifies one broad change it believes might be helpful to implement in the congregation. For example, the change might be "to go from a less welcoming congregation to a more welcoming congregation on Sunday morning" or "to go from a congregation that is not welcoming to children to one that welcomes and forms young children." Use the format "To go from ______________ to ______________."

Using the Beckhard change model C = D x V x F > R (Change = Dissatisfaction x Vision x First Steps > Resistance) and the change the focus congregation has identified, the facilitator and the rest of the group help the focus congregation think (and feel) its way through the elements of the change model. The idea is to encourage the congregational team to explore and describe in as much detail as possible each of the dimensions of the change model and, by doing this, discover something about what they might need to do if they want to successfully shepherd this change.

After doing the work above, end the work with the focus congregation by exploring and answering these questions:

- Using the model, which dimension of your change is in the "best shape"? Which dimension of your change needs the most work?
- What is one thing that the leadership of the congregation can do to best support your particular change?

"If I told you you were a very political person you would take it either as an insult or at best as a mixed blessing."
—Peter Block in *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work*

Some Beginning Definitions

Power: In the context of organizational life, power has been variously defined as the capacity to make something happen; the ability to influence and, in some cases, control people, resources, and outcomes; and the ability to influence the behaviour of other people and, through this influence, affect the organization as a whole. Power need not correspond with a person's organizational position. Authority, on the other hand, is power that is sanctioned or legitimated by the organization and is often itself a "source" of power.

Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal, in the book *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership,* outline these different kinds of power or sources of power:

- Position power
- Control of rewards
- Coercive power
- Information and expertise
- Reputation
- Personal power
- Alliances and networks
- Access to and control of the agenda
- Control of the framing of meaning and symbols

Organizational Politics: Often called "power in action," organizational politics might be better understood as "powers in action." Often perceived as people manipulating situations for their own personal gain, *politics* originally carried the meaning of acting in service of society. The definition we suggest for organizational politics is this: formal and informal human influence on people, resources, and outcomes by persons in an organization. The motivations underlying this influence are deeply affected by the culture of the organization, the stake people have in specific goals and outcomes, and the personal needs of those in the organization.

Empowerment: Empowerment efforts in organizations are those efforts that locate decision making and action as close as possible to those the organization serves, to the organization's stakeholders, and/or to those who are closest to the work and, therefore, closest to the specific problems, solutions, and opportunities that emerge. Additionally, Peter Block and others also define empowerment as a state of mind in which people adopt a stance of responsibility for outcomes no matter where they are situated in the organization.

"The Political Frame"

Bolman and Deal describe "the political frame" as one way among a number to view organizations and to understand the kind of behaviour needed to guide an organization in helpful directions. A typical traditional organizational frame sees organizations as created and controlled by legitimate authorities who set goals, design structure, hire and manage employees, and ensure the pursuit of the right goals. In contrast, within the political frame, organizations are viewed differently:

1. Organizations are understood as coalitions of assorted individuals and interest groups.
2. Coalition members have enduring differences in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality.
3. Most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources—who gets what.
4. Scarce resources and enduring differences put conflict at the center of day-to-day dynamics and make power an important asset.
5. Goals and decisions emerge from bargaining and negotiation among competing stakeholders jockeying for their own interests.

Mapping the Political Terrain as a Way to Inform Action

Bolman and Deal describe four steps for developing a political map:

1. Determine channels of informal communication.
2. Identify principal agents of political influence.
3. Analyze possibilities for mobilizing internal and external players.
4. Anticipate counterstrategies that others are likely to employ.

Peter Block's Work on Power

In his book *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work*, Peter Block describes politics as the pursuit of power to get what you want to happen. How much power you have is a function of both (1) your position in the hierarchy and (2) your state of mind. Block believes that although positional power is real, it is routinely overrated, while the impact of state of mind is underrated.

Positional Power

To illustrate how people at the top of a hierarchy can feel as powerless as those at the bottom, Block tells of a personal experience in which he discovered that every supervisor in a corporation's structure, up to and including the CEO, felt frustrated and blocked from getting what he or she wanted—by each other. In reality, Block says, the apparent power of those at the top is much less than absolute. What they can do from their position of authority depends on the will and whim of those "below" them or more on the periphery. While those in authority can use their authority to tighten up or limit the organization, they can encourage an organization to open up, invent, learn, or evolve only by coaxing others to assume responsibility and leadership.

State-of-Mind Power

The state of mind that multiplies power (at any position in the hierarchy) is what Block calls an "entrepreneurial" one. Block contrasts an entrepreneurial state of mind with a bureaucratic state of mind. An entrepreneurial state of mind involves deliberately and systematically countering the feelings of vulnerability, helplessness, and loss of control that bureaucracies arouse. It rests on three assumptions:

1. Our survival is in our own hands. We take full responsibility for our situation. No one else is to blame.
2. We have a purpose. The meaning we make of our lives matters.
3. We commit ourselves to achieving that purpose, not just wishing for or talking about it.

When we take these assumptions seriously, Block says that we renegotiate (unilaterally) the bureaucratic contract we have with our organizations. Instead of seeing our role as submitting to authority, we choose to be our own authority. Instead of denying self-expression and exercising self-restraint out of a belief that doing so keeps order in the organization, we choose to create a setting in which people invest passion, energy, excitement, and motivation in what they do. Instead of concentrating our energy on manipulating others so that we can "move up the ladder" in some way, we refocus our energy on linking ourselves with the good of the organization and with other people. Instead of engaging in manipulative tactics, we engage in authentic tactics that are both political and positive.

Claiming our power through this entrepreneurial state of mind positions us (wherever we stand in the hierarchy) to use authentic tactics to ask for what we need (on behalf of our mission) and to take steps to advance the good things we believe will help the organization move in the direction of its mission.

Block's Political Analysis

Peter Block's *Empowered Manager* offers this diagram as a way of describing five different kinds of relationships. He suggests differing strategies for each relationship.

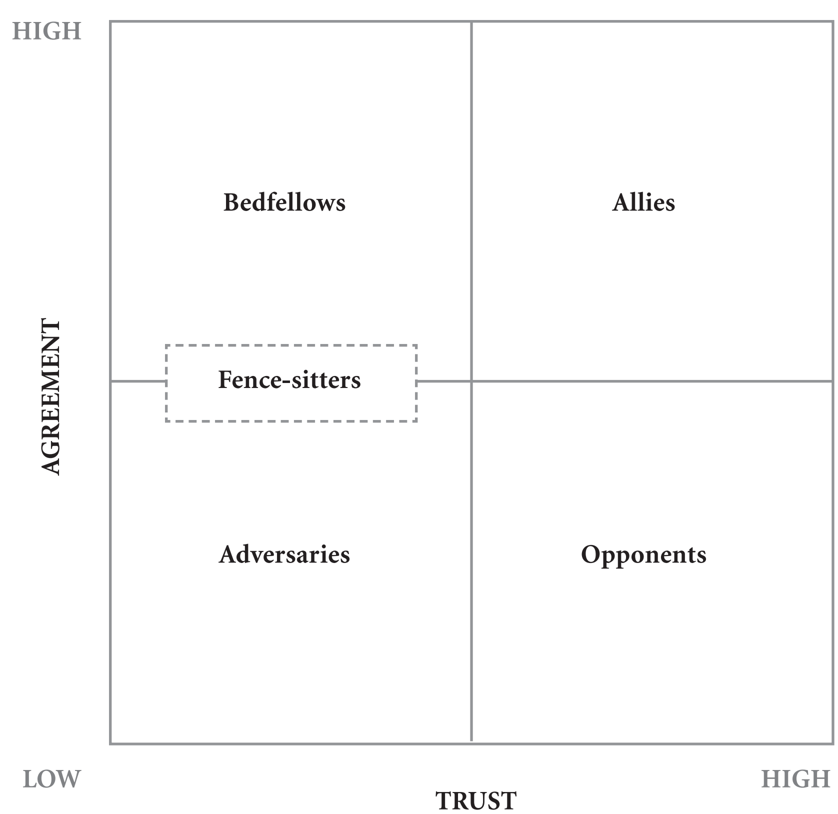

FIGURE 3-1: BLOCK'S POLITICAL ANALYSIS

In Block's analysis, we begin with the idea that those we need to influence in the adoption and support of any change will differ with each other based on two dimensions: agreement and trust. As Block says, "We either agree or disagree about where we're headed, and we either trust or distrust each other about the way we operate in pursuit of the future."

The first step is identifying which people, out of everyone in the organization, we need for the success of an effort. The next step is asking where each of those people stands in terms of (1) agreement with the idea and (2) trust of those carrying the idea forward. For most of the five types of relationships, the approach will include working through three steps:

- Exchange vision, purpose, or goals.
- Affirm or negotiate agreement.
- Affirm or negotiate trust.

For each group the three steps are approached differently:

With Allies *(High Agreement/High Trust)*

Affirm both the relationship and your agreement. Discuss shared doubts and vulnerabilities and ask for advice and support.

With Opponents *(High Trust/Low Agreement)*

Affirm the relationship, and state your own position. Check out your perception of his or her differing position. See if you can find a way to problem-solve together.

With Bedfellows *(High Agreement/Low Trust)*

Affirm the agreement. Acknowledge that reasons for caution exist, and then try to be as clear as possible about what you'd want from your bedfellow in terms of working together. Ask what he or she wants from you. See if you can reach agreement.

With Fence-Sitters *(Low Trust/Unknown Agreement)*

State your position and ask where the fence-sitter stands. Press gently for an answer if he or she delays. Ask the fence-sitter to let you know what it would take for him or her to support your position and work with you.

With Adversaries *(Low Agreement/Low Trust)*

State your position. Check out your understanding of his or her position. Own up to your own contribution to the disagreement. Let the adversary know your plans, and end the meeting with no demand.

EXERCISE ON POSITIONAL AND STATE-OF-MIND POWER

Trainer selects a participant to read this parable to the plenary:

> Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.
>
> —Matthew 15:21–28

Dividing into pairs or triads, work on the following questions as you think about the characters in or mentioned in Matthew's story, for example, Jesus, the Canaanite (non-Judean, thus, an outsider) woman, the disciples, the woman's daughter.

1. Who has positional power in this story? Describe how the positional power of some characters is expressed in the story.

2. Who does not have positional power in the story? How is this lack of positional power expressed in the story?

3. What are the possible actions for the Canaanite woman in this story? What is at stake for her in her interaction with Jesus and the disciples?

4. How would you describe what the Canaanite woman does to change Jesus's mind? How is this related (or not) to what Block calls "state of mind" power (see below)?

State-of-Mind Power

The state of mind that multiplies power (at any position in the hierarchy) is what Block calls an "entrepreneurial" one. It rests on three assumptions:

1. Our survival is in our own hands. We take full responsibility for our situation. No one else is to blame.
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5. Where are you in this story and why?

Developed by Stephen Crippen and Melissa Skelton

TEAM EXERCISE:
WORKING WITH CHANGE, POWER, AND INFLUENCE

Learning Goal: Using Peter Block's Political Analysis model (see figure 3-1 on page 138) to learn more about and gain experience in political analysis for action connected to a desired change

Task for each "round"

1. Choose a facilitator and a focus congregation or organization. The focus congregation or organization identifies one change it wants to make. Phrase/frame the change this way: "I/we want to go from ______________ to ______________."

2. The facilitator and group members explore these factors with the focus congregation or organization:
   - How "good" and important is this change? How confident are you that you can make a case for it? How much will it contribute to the mission or health of your congregation or organization?
   - How popular will it be with those in power or those necessary for the change to occur?
   - List people or groups important to making the change occur, and explore each person's or group's agreement with the change and trust in those making the change.
   - Drawing on Block's concepts, identify three important strategies or actions those making the change may need to consider to strengthen the likelihood that the change effort will succeed.

3. Debrief the facilitator, with a group member leading.

TANNENBAUM AND SCHMIDT MODEL OF LEADER-TEAM WORKING STYLE

Background

Kurt Lewin recognized that one of the factors that determines a leader's choice of leadership style is the need to make decisions. In 1939 he and his co-workers identified three styles of leadership decision making: the "autocratic," the "democratic," and the "laissez-faire."

Lewin said that "autocratic leaders" make decisions themselves. They do not typically consult their followers or involve them in the decision-making process. Having made a decision, they announce it and expect others to go along with it.

"Democratic leaders" take an active role in the decision-making process, but they involve others too. Despite the term *democratic,* they don't necessarily put decisions to the vote. In many cases, they still carry the responsibility for seeing that decisions achieve the desired outcomes.

What Lewin called "laissez-faire leaders" have very little involvement in decision making themselves, pretty much leaving matters to their followers. The success of this approach is often connected to the maturity and capabilities of the specific followers.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Continuum

In 1958 Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt took Lewin's three styles one step further and developed a continuum of control and decision making, shared between leader and followers.

At all points on their continuum, both the leader and the followers have some control. The amount of control each party has depends on what the followers are able to take on and the degree to which the leader is able to give power over to the followers.

The Tannenbaum and Schmidt Continuum is a simple model that shows the relationship between (1) the level of freedom/empowerment a leader chooses to give to a team and (2) the level of authority used by the leader. As the team's freedom is increased, so the leader's authority decreases. This model provides a framework so that leader and team can understand what the working and decision-making parameters are in any given situation. A leader can choose different places to be on the continuum depending on his or her sense of the abilities of the team he or she is working with.

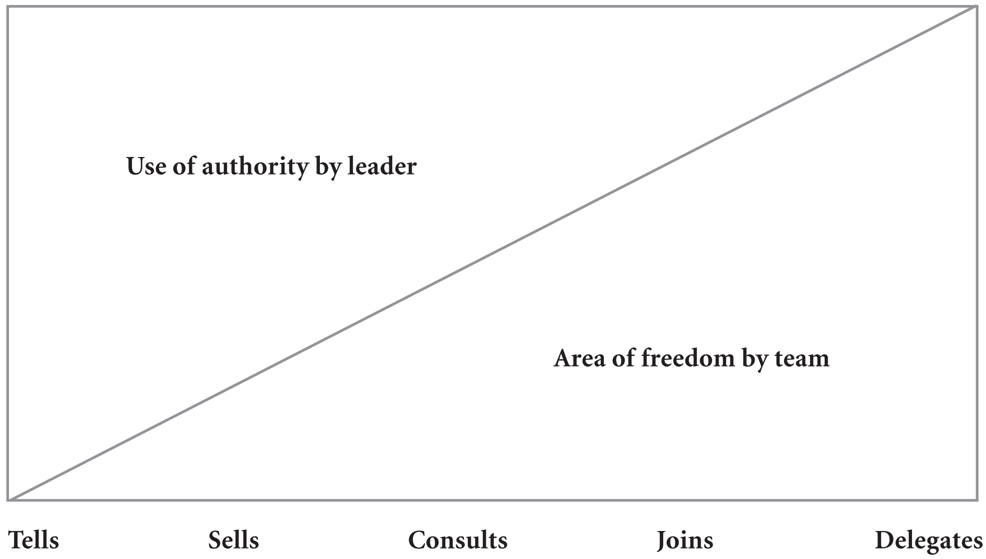


FIGURE 3-2: TANNENBAUM AND SCHMIDT CONTINUUM

1. **Tells**
   The leader decides and announces the decision. The leader reviews options in light of aims, issues, priorities, timescale, etc., then decides the action and informs the team of the decision. The leader may have considered how the team will react, but the team plays no active part in making the decision.

2. **Sells**
   The leader decides and then "sells" the decision to the group. The leader makes the decision as in level 1, then explains reasons for the decision to the team, particularly the positive benefits that the team will enjoy from the decision.
   Or the leader presents the decision with background ideas and invites questions. The leader presents the decision along with some of the background that led to the decision. The team is invited to ask questions and discuss with the leader the rationale behind the decision, which may enable the team to understand and accept or agree with the decision more easily.

3. **Consults**
   The leader suggests a provisional decision and invites discussion about it. The leader discusses and reviews the provisional decision with the team on the basis that the leader will hear the views of the team and then finally decide. This enables the team to have some real influence over the shape of the leader's final decision. This greater involvement acknowledges that the team has something to contribute to the decision-making process.
   Or the leader presents the situation or problem, gets suggestions, then decides. The leader presents the situation, and maybe some options, to the team. The team is encouraged and expected to offer ideas and additional options and to discuss implications of each possible course of action. The leader then decides which option to go with. This approach involves the team at a high level, assuming specific expertise. It is appropriate particularly when the team has more detailed knowledge of or experience with the issues than the leader.

4. **Joins**
   The leader explains the situation, defines the parameters, and asks the team to decide. At this level the leader has effectively delegated responsibility for the decision to the team, albeit within stated limits. The leader may or may not choose to be part of the team that decides. While this approach appears to give a huge responsibility to the team, the leader can control the risk and outcomes to an extent, according to the constraints that he or she stipulates. This level of team involvement is typically very motivational and requires a mature team for any serious situation or problem.

5. **Delegates**
   The leader allows the team to identify the problem, develop the options, and decide on the action, within the leader's stated limits. In this option, the team is effectively doing what the leader did in level 1. The team is given responsibility for identifying and analyzing the situation or problem; guiding the process for resolving it; developing and assessing options; evaluating implications; and deciding on and implementing a course of action. The leader also states in advance that he or she will support the decision and help the team implement it. The leader may or may not be part of the team. If the leader does join, he or she has no more authority than any other team member. The only constraints and parameters for the team are the ones that the leader has outlined. Not surprisingly, the team must be mature and competent and capable of acting at what is a genuinely strategic decision-making level.

References

Lewin, K., Lippit, R. and White, R. K. (1939). "Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created social climates," *Journal of Social Psychology,* 10, 271–301.

Tannenbaum, A. S. and Schmidt, W. H. (1958). "How to choose a leadership pattern," *Harvard Business Review,* 36, March–April, 95–101.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION ON POWER AND POLITICS

1. In your congregation what changes or efforts do you have the greatest stake in?

2. Write about yourself as a political person. What kind of positional power do you have? What is the state of your "state of mind" power? What else affects you as a political person and your basic stance about politics in your congregation or organization?

3. What, if anything, excites you/gives you energy about the prospect of exerting influence and power in your congregation? What frightens you?

4. List any actions that are on your mind vis-à-vis your congregation and your own ability to influence things.

CHAPTER 17
IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR DECISION RULES

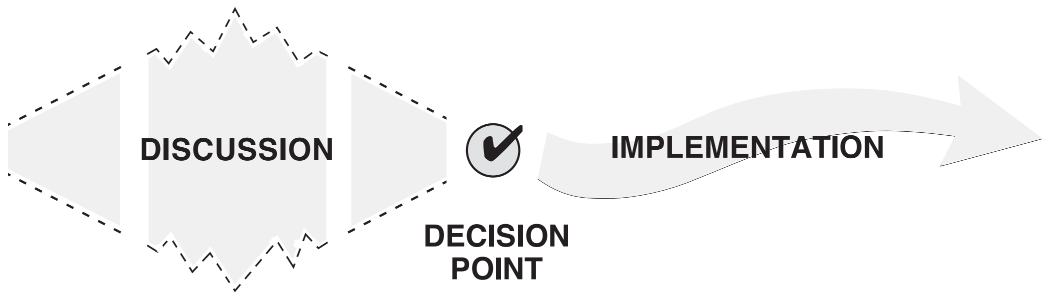
by Sam Kaner
with
Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi,
Sarah Fisk and Duane Berger

– Reproduced from –

Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making, 2nd edition
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007

DECISION RULES

INTRODUCTION



This diagram depicts two entirely different domains of group behavior: the period of discussion and the period of implementation. During a discussion, people think. They discuss. They consider their options. During the implementation, people act on what they've decided. Thus, for example, during a discussion, participants might *figure out the budget* for a project; in the implementation of that project, *people spend the money*.

During the discussion, in other words, a group operates in *the world of ideas;* after the decision has been made, that group shifts into *the world of action*.

In the world of ideas, people explore possibilities; they develop models and try them on in their imagination. They hypothesize. They extrapolate. They evaluate alternatives and develop plans. In the world of action, the group has made a commitment to take an idea and make it come true. Contracts are signed. People are hired. Departments are restructured, and offices are relocated.

The *Decision Point* is the point at which a decision is made. *It is the point that separates thinking from action.* It is the point of authorization for the actions that follow. Discussion occurs *before* the point of decision; implementation happens *after* the point of decision.

The *Decision Point* is the formal marker that says, "From this moment on, our agreement will be treated as the officially authorized reality. Disagreements will no longer be treated as alternative points of view. From now on, objections are officially out of line."

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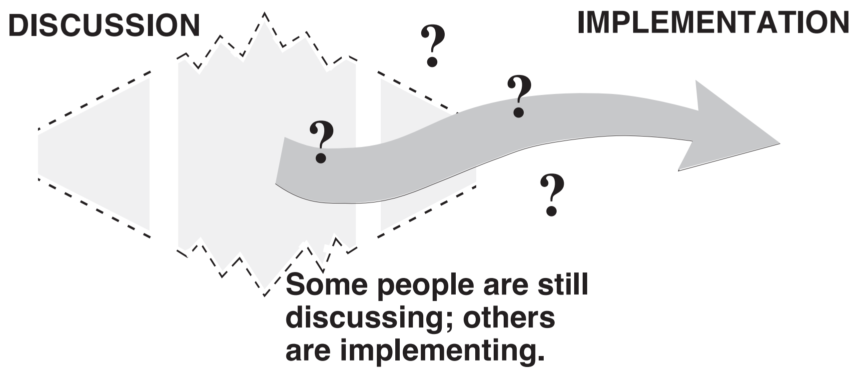
DECISION RULES

THE CLASSIC PROBLEM



In practice, however, group members are often not sure whether a decision has actually been made.

This can produce much confusion. Someone who thinks a decision has been made will feel empowered to take action in line with that decision. But if others think the decision has not yet been made, they will view the person who took the action as "impulsive" or "having their own agenda" or "not a team player." In such cases, however, the person accused of acting prematurely will frequently justify his or her action by saying, "I was sure we decided to go ahead with that plan."

The same is true in reverse. Inaction after the point of decision is often perceived as "insubordinate" or "passive-aggressive" or "disloyal." In such cases, it is common to hear people defend themselves by saying, "I don't recall us making an actual decision about that" or "I never agreed to this!"

These examples remind us that people need a clear, explicit indicator that a decision has been made. Some groups *can* clearly tell when a decision has or has not been made. For instance, groups that make decisions by majority rule know they are still in the discussion phase until they vote and tally the results. But most groups are fuzzy about how they make decisions. *They lack clear rules for bringing their discussion to closure.*

This chapter describes the six most common *decision rules* and explores the implications of each one.

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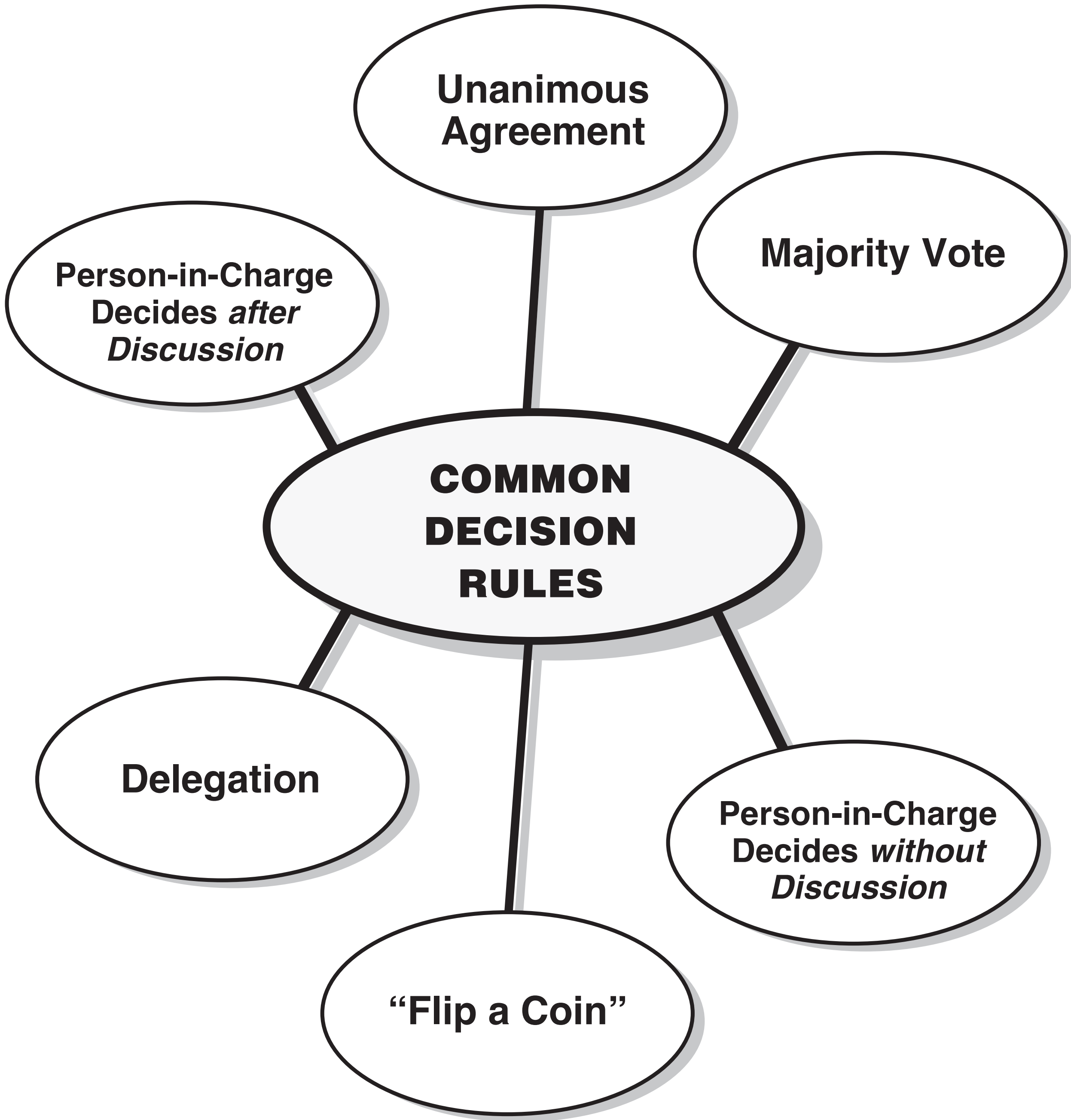

A decision rule is a mechanism that answers the question, "How do we know when we've made a decision?" Each of the six rules shown above performs this basic function.

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DECISION-MAKING WITHOUT A DECISION RULE

Individual members act on their own idiosyncratic perspectives. Soon, the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

Those who whine or raise their voice get what they want.

Someone says, "Let's put this on next month's agenda and pick up where we left off." But at the next meeting, the item is superseded by urgent new business.

Just as time runs out, someone makes a new suggestion. This becomes "the decision."

People assume that since the issue was discussed, a decision was made.

Someone's name gets vaguely attached to a poorly defined task (as in, "Duane, why don't you check into that?") Later, that person gets blamed for poor follow-through.

After the meeting ends without agreement, a few people meet behind closed doors and make the real decisions.

The person who has the most at stake makes an independent decision; later, people resent him or her for taking actions that did not meet other people's needs.

Certain people *always* get their way.

When a quick decision has to be made or an opportunity will be lost, conservative members exercise a pocket veto by stalling the discussion. Thus, "no decision" becomes a decision not to act.

The person-in-charge says, "Is everyone okay with this idea?" After a few seconds of silence, the person-in-charge moves to the next topic, believing that every member's silence meant "yes," rather than "no" or "I'm still thinking."

The meeting goes overtime; the discussion drags on and on. . .

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MAJOR DECISION RULES: USES AND IMPLICATIONS

UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT

High-Stakes Decisions

In groups that decide by *unanimous agreement,* members must keep working to understand one another's perspectives until they integrate those perspectives into a shared framework of understanding. Once people are sufficiently familiar with each other's views, they become capable of advancing innovative proposals that are acceptable to everyone. It takes a lot of effort, but this is precisely why the unanimous agreement decision rule has the best chance of producing sustainable agreements when the stakes are high.

The difficulty with using unanimous agreement as the decision rule is that most people don't know how to search for Both/And solutions. Instead, people pressure each other to live with decisions that they don't truly support. And the group often ends up with a watered-down compromise.

This problem is a function of the general tendency of groups to push for a fast decision: "We need unanimous agreement because we want everyone's buy-in, but we also want to reach a decision as quickly as possible." This mentality undermines the whole point of using unanimous agreement. Its purpose is to channel the tension of diversity, in service of creative thinking – to invent brand-new ideas that really do work for everyone. This takes time. In order to realize the potentials of unanimous agreement, members should be encouraged to keep working toward mutual understanding until they develop a proposal that will receive enthusiastic support from a broad base of participants.

Low-Stakes Decisions

With low-stakes issues, unanimous agreements are usually comparable in quality to decisions reached by other decision rules. Participants learn to go along with proposals they can tolerate, rather than hold out for an innovative solution that would take a lot of time and effort to develop.

One benefit of using the unanimous agreement rule to make low-stakes decisions is that it prevents a group from making a decision that is abhorrent to a small minority. Other decision rules can lead to outcomes that are intolerable to one or two members, but are adopted because they are popular with a majority. By definition, such a decision will not be made by unanimous agreement.

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MAJOR DECISION RULES: USES AND IMPLICATIONS

MAJORITY VOTE

High-Stakes Decisions

Majority vote produces a win/lose solution through an adversarial process. The traditional justification for using this rule when stakes are high is that the competition of ideas creates pressure. Thus, the quality of everyone's reasoning theoretically gets better and better as the debate ensues.

The problem with this reasoning is that people don't always vote based on the logic of the arguments. People often "horse-trade" their votes or vote against opponents for political reasons. To increase the odds that people will vote on the merits of a high-stakes proposal, the use of secret ballots is worth considering.

Low-Stakes Decisions

When expedience is more important than quality, majority vote strikes a useful balance between the lengthy discussion that is a characteristic of unanimous agreement, and the lack of deliberation that is a danger of the other extreme. Group members can be encouraged to call for a quick round of pros and cons and get on with the vote.

"FLIP A COIN"

High-Stakes Decisions

"Flip a coin" refers to any arbitrary, random method of making a decision, including common practices like drawing straws, picking numbers from a hat or "eeny-meeny-miney-moe." Who in their right mind would consider using this decision rule to make a high-stakes decision?

Low-Stakes Decisions

Knowing the decision will be made arbitrarily, most members stop participating. Their comments won't have any impact on the actual result. However, this is not necessarily bad. For example, how much discussion is needed to decide whether a lunch break should be 45 minutes or an hour?

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MAJOR DECISION RULES: USES AND IMPLICATIONS

» PERSON-IN-CHARGE DECIDES *AFTER DISCUSSION*

High-Stakes Decisions

There is strong justification for using this decision rule when the stakes are high. The person-in-charge, after all, is the one with the access, resources, authority, and credibility to act on the decision. Seeking counsel from group members, rather than deciding without discussion, allows the person-in-charge to expand his or her understanding of the issues and form a wiser opinion about the best course of action.

Unfortunately, some group members give false advice and say what they think their boss wants to hear rather than express their true opinions.*

To overcome this problem, group members can design a formal procedure to ensure or include "devil's advocate" thinking, thus allowing people to debate the merits of an idea without the pressure of worrying whether they're blocking the group's momentum. Or group members can schedule a formal discussion without the person-in-charge. They can then bring their best thinking back to a meeting with him or her to discuss it further.

Low-Stakes Decisions

There are three decision rules that encourage group discussion: unanimous agreement, majority rule, and person-in-charge decides after discussion. With low-stakes issues, all three decision rules produce results that are roughly equivalent in quality.

Low-stakes issues provide a group with the opportunity to practice giving honest, direct advice to the person-in-charge. When the stakes are low, the person-in-charge is less likely to feel pressured to "get it right," and is therefore less defensive and more open-minded. Similarly, group members are less afraid of being punished for taking risks.

* Irving Janis, in his ground-breaking classic on the group dynamics of conformity, *Victims of Groupthink* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), describes many case studies demonstrating this problem. For more suggestions on ways to overcome this problem, see pages 207-224.

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MAJOR DECISION RULES: USES AND IMPLICATIONS

PERSON-IN-CHARGE DECIDES WITHOUT DISCUSSION

High-Stakes Decisions

When a person-in-charge makes a decision without discussion, s/he assumes full responsibility for analyzing the situation and coming up with a course of action. Proponents argue that this decision rule firmly clarifies the link between authority, responsibility, and accountability. Detractors argue that this decision rule creates a high potential for blind spots and irrationality.

The most appropriate time for a person-in-charge to make high-stakes decisions without discussion is in the midst of a crisis, when the absence of a clear decision would be catastrophic. In general, though, the higher the stakes, the riskier it is for anyone to make decisions without group discussion.

How will group members behave in the face of this decision rule? The answer depends on one's values. Some people believe that good team players are loyal, disciplined subordinates who have the duty to play their roles and carry out orders. Other people argue that group members who must contend with this decision rule should develop a formal mechanism, like a union, for making sure their points of view are taken into account.

The fundamental point is that whenever one person is solely responsible for analyzing a problem and solving it, the decision-maker may lack essential information. Or those responsible for implementation might sabotage the decision because they disagree with it or because they don't understand it. The more the person-in-charge understands the dangers of deciding without group discussion, the more capable s/he is of evaluating in each situation whether the stakes are too high to take the risks.

Low-Stakes Decisions

Not all decisions made this way turn out badly. In fact, many turn out just fine. And when the stakes are low, even bad decisions can usually be undone or compensated for.

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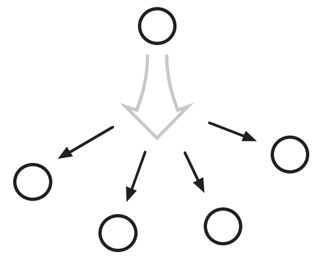
THE EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT DECISION RULES ON PARTICIPATION

Person-in-Charge Decides *Without* Group Discussion

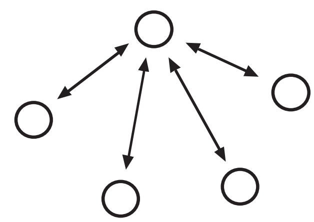
This decision rule gets group members in the habit of "doing what they are told."

At meetings, they listen passively to the person-in-charge, who talks and talks without being challenged.



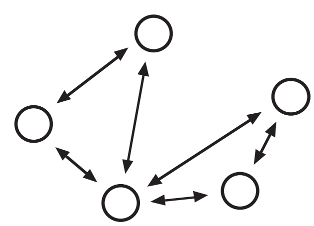
Person-in-Charge Decides *After* Group Discussion

When the person-in-charge is the final decision-maker, s/he is the main person who needs to be convinced. Everyone tends to direct their comments to the person-in-charge.



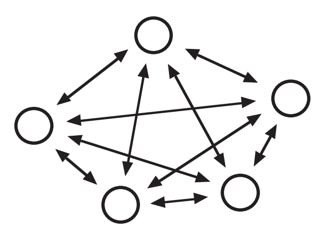
Majority Vote

Since the goal is to obtain 51% agreement, the influence process is a battle for the undecided center. Once a majority is established, the opinions of the minority can be disregarded.



Unanimous Agreement

When everyone has the power to block a decision, each participant has the right to expect his or her perspective to be taken into account. This puts pressure on members to work toward mutual understanding.



Each decision rule has a different effect on group behavior. Individual group members adjust the quantity and quality of their participation depending on how they think their behavior will influence the decision.

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CHAPTER 18
STRIVING FOR UNANIMITY

by Sam Kaner
with
Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi,
Sarah Fisk and Duane Berger

– Reproduced from –

Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making, 2nd edition
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007

STRIVING FOR UNANIMITY

INTRODUCTION

THE POWER OF UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT

The word *unanimous* comes from two Latin words: *unus*, meaning "one," and *animus*, meaning "spirit." A group that reaches unanimous agreement is a group that acts from one spirit. By this understanding, a unanimous agreement can be expected to contain wisdom and soundness of judgment, because it expresses an idea that is felt by each person to be true. As the Quakers say, the decision speaks for everyone.

To reach unanimity, everyone must agree. This means that everyone has an individual veto. Thus, anyone who perceives that his or her interests are *not* being taken into account can keep the discussion alive for as many hours or weeks or months as it takes, to find a solution that works for everyone. This veto capacity is the crux of the power of unanimous agreement. When a group is committed to reaching unanimous agreement, the members are in effect making a commitment to remain in discussion until they develop a solution that takes everyone's needs into account.

UNANIMITY AND CONSENSUS

Consensus also has Latin origins. Its root word is *consentire,* which is a combination of two Latin words: *con,* meaning "with" or "together with," and *sentire,* meaning "to think and feel." *Consentire* thus translates as "to think and feel together."

Consensus is *the process* – a participatory process by which a group thinks and feels together, *en route to* their decision. Unanimity, by contrast, is the point at which the group *reaches closure*. Many groups that practice consensus decision-making use unanimity as their decision rule for reaching closure – but many groups *do not*. For example, the Seva Foundation uses "unanimity minus one." So does the renowned collective, the Hog Farm. Some chapters of the Green Party use 80% as their acceptable level of agreement. Yet all such groups consider themselves to be sincere adherents of a consensus decision-making process.

In these cases, no single member has personal veto power. Nonetheless, individual voices wield significant influence – enough to ensure that the group will engage in a genuine process of thinking and feeling together.

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STRIVING FOR UNANIMITY

IDEALISM vs REALITY

A SILENCE IS NOT AN AGREEMENT

Many managers want their teams to be strongly aligned in relation to the high-stake, high-impact issues that most affect their work. When tackling such issues, these managers come to meetings with statements like, "I need to get everyone's buy-in today." Clearly, these managers *want* their groups to achieve unanimous agreement.

Yet if we look at how such meetings play out, what actually happens? The discussion may go well for a time, but once the group becomes mired in the *Groan Zone,* the person-in-charge often feels pressure to bring the discussion to closure and make a decision.

To close discussion, it's common for a person-in-charge to summarize a key line of thought and say something like, "It sounds like people want to do such-and-such." Then s/he will follow with, "Does everyone agree with this proposal?" Typically, after a few seconds of silence, this person will say, "All right, we're agreed. That's what we'll do. Now let's move on."

Is this actually a unanimous agreement? Not really. The manager has no idea, really, what the people who didn't respond were thinking.

THE PROBLEM WITH YES AND NO

Unanimity means that every person has said "yes." But "yes" does not necessarily mean, "Yes, this is a great idea." It could also mean, "Yes... well... I have reservations, but I guess I can work them out when we implement it," or even, "Yes, though actually I don't much care for this idea, but I'll go along with the majority. I want to be seen as a team player."

Moreover, someone who says "no" is saying, in effect, "I require the group to spend more time on this discussion." This causes most group members to be very hesitant to say "no." They do not want to feel responsible for dragging out a discussion.

Thus, the "yes-no" language is a fundamental problem. To strive for unanimity, group members need a way to accurately and authentically convey the extent of their support (or nonsupport) for a proposal.

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GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT

BETTER VOCABULARY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Whole-hearted Endorsement	**Agreement with a Minor Point of Contention**	**Support with Reservations**	**Abstain**	**More Discussion Needed**	**Don't Like But Will Support**	**Serious Disagreement**	**Veto**
"I really like it."	*"Not perfect, but it's good enough."*	*"I can live with it."*	*"This issue does not affect me."*	*"I don't understand the issues well enough yet."*	*"It's not great, but I don't want to hold up the group."*	*"I am not on board with this – don't count on me."*	*"I block this proposal."*

This is the *Gradients of Agreement Scale*. It enables members of a group to express their support for a proposal in degrees, along a continuum. Using this tool, group members are no longer trapped into expressing support in terms of "yes" and "no."

The *Gradients of Agreement Scale was* developed in 1987 by Sam Kaner, Duane Berger, and the staff of Community At Work. It has been translated into Spanish, French, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic and Swahili, and it has been used in organizations large and small throughout the world.

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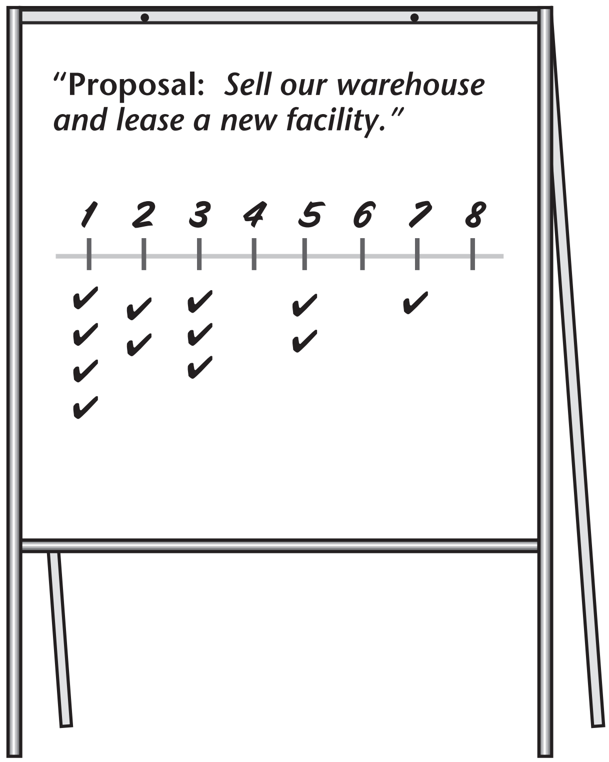
HOW TO USE THE GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT SCALE



Before the meeting, post the *Gradients of Agreement Scale* on a flipchart. Some facilitators show the chart to the group at the beginning of the meeting and obtain the group's agreement to use it. Other facilitators don't introduce it until the group is ready to make a decision.

When the time comes to take a poll, follow these steps:
- Step 1: Record the proposal under discussion on a flipchart.
- Step 2: Check to see that everyone understands the proposal.
- Step 3: Ask for final revisions in the wording of the proposal.
- Step 4: Draw a scorecard below the proposal, as shown on this page.
- Step 5: Ask, "How do you like this proposal?"
- Step 6: Take the poll. Capture everyone's positions on the scorecard.

Note that the result is not a vote or a decision; it's just the record of a poll. It indicates the extent to which a group supports a proposal.

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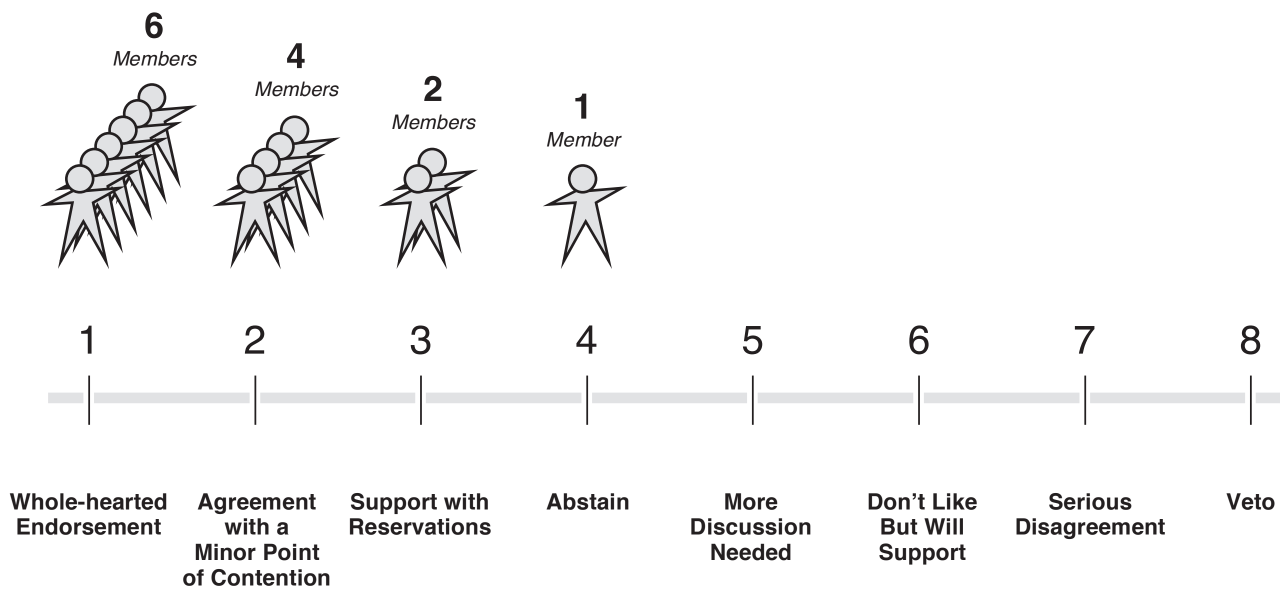
GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT IN ACTION: ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT



This diagram portrays the result of a hypothetical poll, taken in a group of 13 members. The pattern of responses – also known as "the spread" – indicates a high level of enthusiastic support for the proposal.

An agreement based on this much support will usually produce a successful implementation. After all, six members of the group are whole-hearted in their endorsement, and the others are not too far behind. One could reasonably expect that these participants would care about the results they produce.

Words like *buy-in* and *ownership* carry the same connotation as *enthusiastic support* – they express the depth of enthusiasm and commitment groups experience when they engage in a high-quality thinking process that results in high levels of endorsement.

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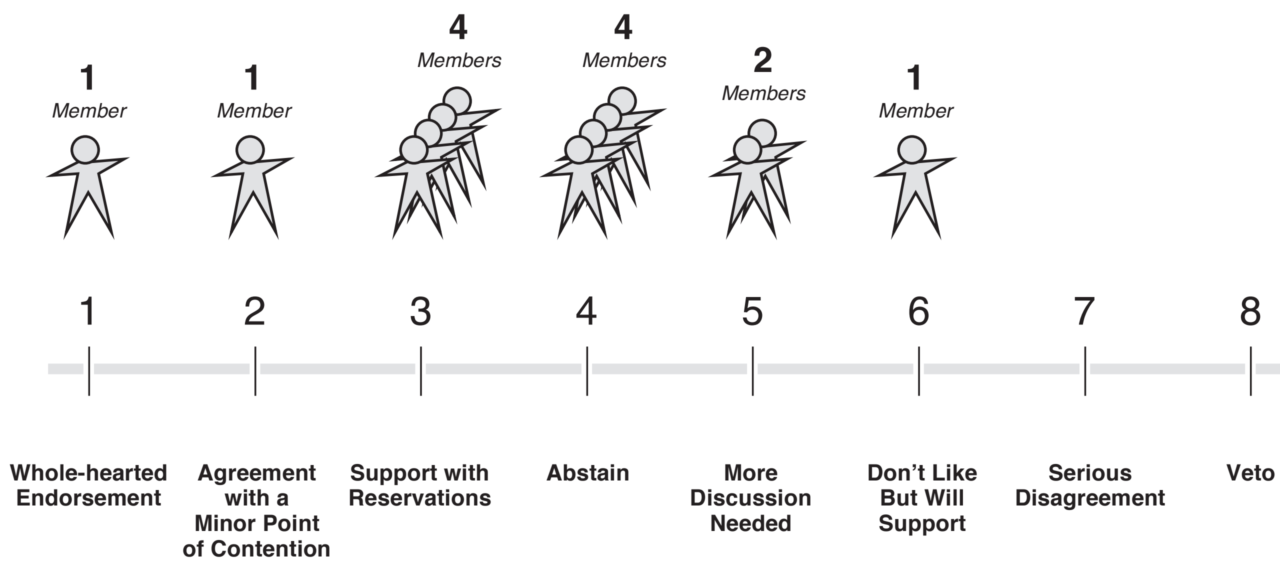
GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT IN ACTION: LUKEWARM SUPPORT



This diagram portrays the result of a different poll, taken of the same 13-person group. Here, the spread indicates significantly less enthusiasm for the proposal. Nonetheless, this spread also indicates unanimous agreement. Not one person would veto this proposal and block it from going forward. In fact, there is no serious disagreement with it whatsoever.

For many purposes, lukewarm support is perfectly adequate. For example, when the stakes are low, it is usually not worth pushing for a higher level of support. But in other cases, when achieving a goal will require high motivation and sustained effort, lukewarm support just won't do the trick.

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WHEN TO SEEK ENTHUSIATIC SUPPORT

When does a group need to seek enthusiastic support? And when is lukewarm sufficient? Here are some variables that help to answer this question:

OVERALL IMPORTANCE

Enthusiastic support is desirable whenever the stakes are so high that the consequences of failure would be severe. By contrast, when the stakes are lower, a group may not wish to invest the time and energy it takes to develop enthusiastic support.

DURATION OF IMPACT

Some decisions are not easily reversible – for example, the decision to relocate headquarters to a new city. Decisions like these are worth spending whatever time it takes to get them right. But others decisions – such as the question of how to staff a project during an employee's two-week vacation – have a short life-span. To get such a decision perfectly right might take longer than the entire lifetime of the decision.

DIFFICULTY

The chief factors that make problems hard to solve are complexity, ambiguity, and the severity of conflict.* The tougher the problem is, the more time and effort a group should expect to expend. Routine problems, by contrast, don't require long-drawn-out discussions.

STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN

When many people have a stake in the outcome of the decision, it is more likely to be worth the effort to include everyone's thinking in the development of that decision. When the decision affects only a few people, the process need not be as inclusive.

EMPOWERMENT OF GROUP MEMBERS

The more likely it is that members will be expected to use their own judgment and creativity to implement a decision, the more they will need to understand the reasoning behind that decision. The process of seeking enthusiastic support pushes people to think through the logic of the issues at hand.

* Source: Paul C. Nutt, *Solving Tough Problems* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989).

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WHAT LEVEL OF SUPPORT IS OPTIMAL?

Enthusiastic Support **is necessary when the issue involves:**		***Lukewarm Support*** **is good enough when the issue involves:**
HIGH STAKES	⟵ OVERALL IMPORTANCE ⟶	LOW STAKES
LONG-TERM IMPACT	⟵ DURATION OF IMPACT ⟶	SHORT-TERM ONLY
TOUGH PROBLEM	⟵ DIFFICULTY OF THE PROBLEM ⟶	SIMPLE PROBLEM
HIGH INVESTMENT	⟵ STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN ⟶	LOW INVESTMENT
HIGH AUTONOMY	⟵ EMPOWERMENT OF GROUP MEMBERS ⟶	LOW AUTONOMY

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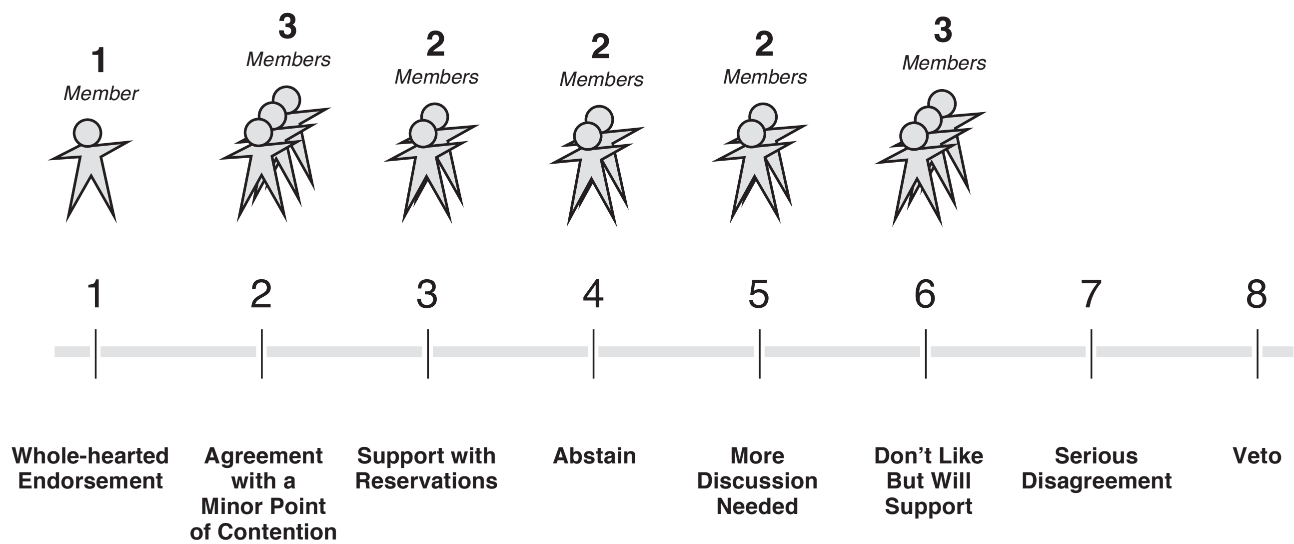
GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT IN ACTION: AMBIGUOUS SUPPORT



This diagram portrays a group of people who are all over the map in their response to the proposal. Ambiguous results frequently indicate that the original problem was poorly defined. Michael Doyle and David Straus say, "You can't agree on the solution if you don't agree on the problem."* This group would definitely benefit from more discussion. Yet many groups would treat this result as indicating unanimity, since no vetoes were exercised.

* Source: M. Doyle and D. Straus, *Making Meetings Work* (New York: Berkeley Books, 1993).

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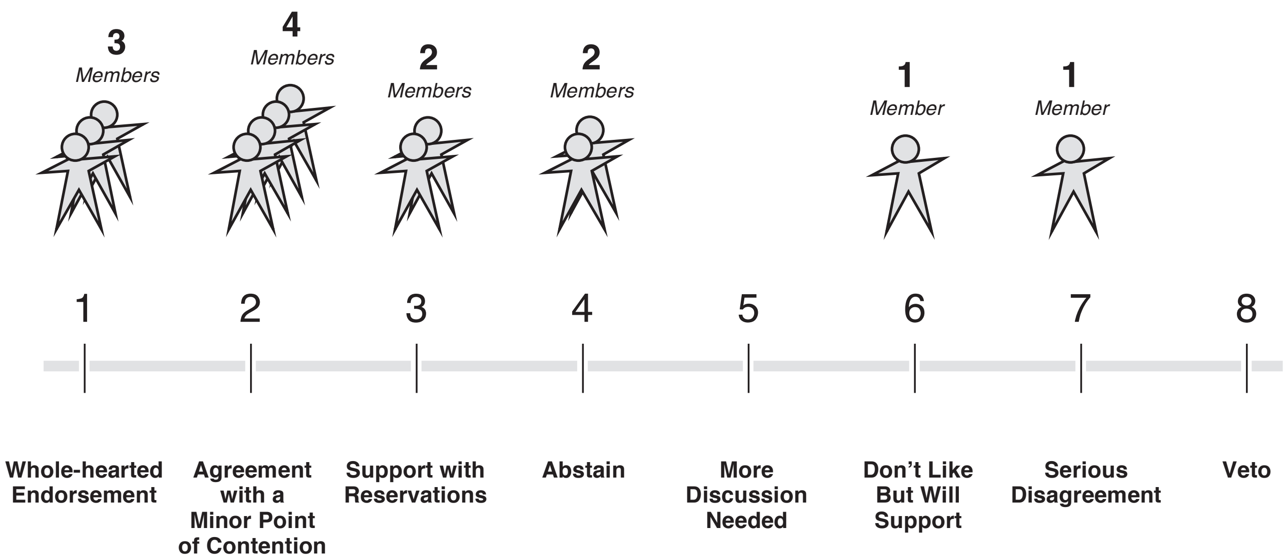
GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT IN ACTION: MAJORITY SUPPORT WITH OUTLIERS



This spread is surprisingly common. When it occurs, the question arises as to whether the group should disregard the objections of the outliers or whether the group should keep making efforts to resolve those objections.

Often the person-in-charge of the group will try for a compromise, asking those with objections if they can suggest remedies that would increase their level of support. Sometimes this works.

But not always. It depends on whether the situation requires enthusiastic support. When everyone's strong support is needed, lukewarm compromises will not do. In those cases, the group must continue searching for a genuinely inclusive solution.

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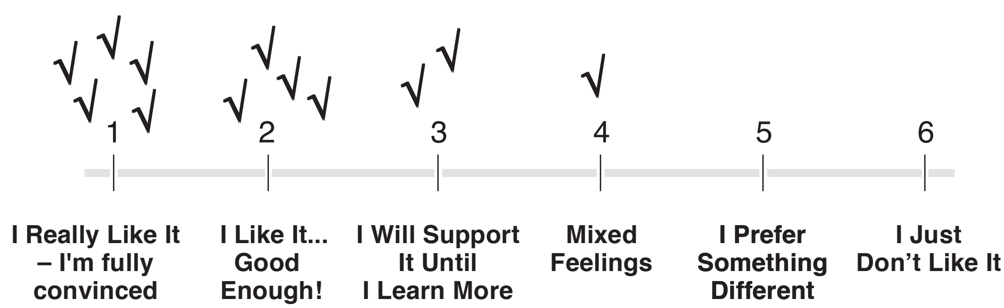
ADAPTING THE GRADIENTS OF AGREEMENT SCALE



This *Gradients of Agreement Scale* was created by Pierre Omidyar, as an adaptation of the generic scale shown on page 278. The scale is used by several planning groups at Omidyar Network.*

* Used with permission.

Many group leaders prefer to create their own set of gradients, whether to suit their leadership style or to fit the group's culture. To assist in this effort:

1. Explain the benefits of using *Gradients of Agreement.*

2. Show the person-in-charge the scale on page 278.

3. Ask whether s/he would like to customize the scale.

4. Once the person-in-charge has revised the scale, have him or her present the scale to the group, soliciting further revisions if desired.

Even when a group uses the generic scale for the first few decisions, it is entirely fine for the leader (or the participants) to propose modifications at a later time.

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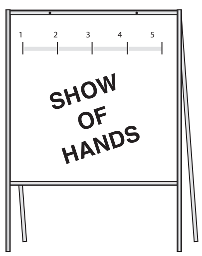
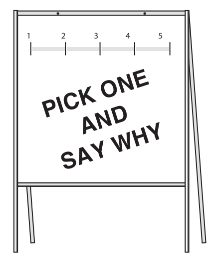
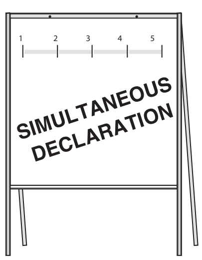
METHODS OF POLLING THE GROUP



Say, "Please raise your hands if you endorse this proposal." Count the raised hands. Record the data on a flipchart. Now say, "Please raise your hands if you agree with minor reservations." Count hands and record. Repeat for all gradients.

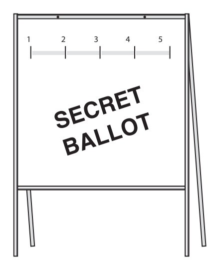
Go around the room, one person at a time, and ask each person to state which gradient s/he prefers and why. No discussion is allowed. As everyone declares his or her preference, record the data on a flipchart.

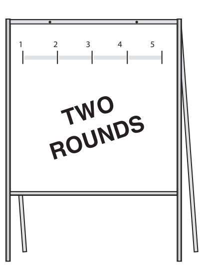




Have each person write the gradient (word or number) of his or her preference in block letters on a large piece of paper. On cue, have everyone hold up his or her card. Record the data on a flipchart.

Have each person write his or her preference on a slip of paper. When everyone has finished, collect the ballots and tally the results. Post the data on a flipchart.





Before beginning the poll, let people know that the first poll is a preliminary round and that it will be followed by a brief discussion and then a final poll. Next, gather the data in any of the ways listed above. After a brief, time-limited discussion, poll again. This method lets a person see where others stand before registering a final preference.

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All congregations have groups where some of the work of the congregation is done. These groups—for example, vestries, bishop's committees, and property and finance groups—all can contribute to the productivity of a congregation and the broad participation of many in the life of a faith community.

Sometimes, however, leaders are not very thoughtful about which group structures to put or to keep in place or how best to use them given the group's competence for its task. Sometimes we keep groups in existence that no longer serve a real need or we're reluctant to refocus an existing group and to clarify how the group's work fits with the broader congregation and its leadership, the culture of the congregation, and the areas of emphasis that need attention in the life of the congregation.

Working groups are much more effective when leaders thoughtfully choose the organizational group structure that fits the specific work that needs to be done now in the life of the congregation, with decision-making authority based on (1) canons, constitutions, and by-laws where they apply and (2) delegation reflecting the competence of group members to do the work. In every case, it's important to "charter" each group or team, specifying and making sure members share a common understanding of these parameters:

- The group's purpose
- The group's membership
- The group's leadership and leaders' responsibility to the group
- The group's authority—is the group empowered to make decisions and, if so, how will the group make decisions?
- The group's connection to other groups and people—is the group responsible to another group or person, and how is the group going to keep others informed and/or seek the input of others where appropriate for any decisions?
- The group's communication to others
- The group's life span—a year? a certain number of meetings? until a specific piece of work gets done?
- The group's norms

If we were to survey a number of congregations, we'd find the following kinds of groups at work:

Parish Council or Bishop's Committee: Must take on the canonically required roles and tasks (e.g., finances, property, relationship with clergy). May do other things in collaboration with the rector or vicar. Work might change depending on who is on the parish council or bishop's committee and where the congregation is in its size and development. May create special groups or teams to share in their work.

Board: Carries out roles as specified in by-laws, managing the employment relationship with the leader and typically collaborating with the leader regarding the external face of the organization, fund-raising, policies, etc.

Committee: A group with broad and oftentimes administrative duties that is delegated responsibility by a larger group and reports to that other group. Often made up of members representing different constituencies. Longer term and often more bureaucratic in its tone and orientation. Milton Berle said, "A committee is a group that keeps minutes and loses hours."

Commission: A fancy and highfalutin name for a committee. A committee that has responsibility for an area, often in a larger congregation or system, but sometimes in a matter that has special prominence or broader scope in a smaller congregation.

Team: A cooperative group, short term or longer term, committed to a specific purpose and actively involved in making progress toward that specific purpose. The focus of a team is getting a specific thing done rather than representing specific constituencies. Teams also typically pay attention to how something gets done, giving special care to both the task and the relationship among the members. Teams often employ facilitation as a way to strengthen both the quality of ideas and the way the ideas are put into action.

Task Force: A short-term team that is all about getting a specific task done. Typically lasts only as long as it takes to get the task done.

Study Group/Advisory Group: A short-term or longer-term group that explores and researches a specific question. Reports back to another person or group who may make decisions based on the report. An advisory group may simply function as a counsel of advice to another person or group on a specific issue.

Cabinet: A formal or informal counsel of advice for a leader.

Circle: A group that uses "circle processes" as the core of how they do their work as they come together to learn about some area and/or to act. Sometimes these groups are called "circles," and other times they are called by other names (boards, committees, teams, commissions) and decide to use circle processes as their primary way of conducting their life as a group.

Groups within Groups: Groups can also have groups, teams, or committees within their scope that have special functional areas of oversight or decision-making power.

An Organizational Example of Intentionality about Decision-Making Processes

True North: Maine's Center for Functional Medicine and the Healing Arts

Circle Process

We believe that our intentional use of circle process as our model of governance has made us healthier individuals, stronger colleagues and has enhanced our work with patients.

What Is Circle Process?

At True North, circle process is a model of governance based on a combination of the ideas presented by Christina Baldwin in her book, *Calling the Circle*, the teachings of Paula Underwood, and guidelines on Relationship Centered Care by the Fetzer Institute.

True North is also proud to be featured in *The Circle Way: A Leader in Every Chair*, a new book by Christina Baldwin & Ann Linnea. The authors highlight True North in "Chapter 11: Organizational Experiments in Circle Governance" in "Part IV: Circle as Paradigm Shift."

How Does Circle Process Work?

Circle process informs our conduct in meetings and also our organizational chart.

Principle Ideas of Circle Process

As we conduct the business of True North, we are guided by the following principles:

- Speak from the heart, listen from the heart
- All voices are important to be heard
- What is said in the circle remains in the circle
- Practice compassionate self-monitoring

Compassionate self-monitoring means being considerate of the impact of our thoughts, words, and actions before, during and after we interact. Because circle process is a practice of discernment, not judgment, we use this with ourselves and others. Here we also remain conscious of the dynamics of co-opting and passivity and address them so that every voice is heard.

The above tenets yield increasing authenticity from each individual as the comfort and trust level in the circle increases. Creating a safe container is critical to this work.

The rest of the work involves:

- **Rotating Leadership:** Here we level the playing field. All titles, experiences and gifts are as important as another's. Leadership shifts according to the needs of the circle. We continually find that the resources to accomplish our goals exist within the group.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Each person asks for what s/he needs and offers what s/he can. It is based on the trust that someone will come forward to provide what the circle needs.
- **Reliance on Spirit in the Sacred Center:** We created a sacred center with objects that were meaningful to members of the group. Through simple ritual and consistent re-focusing, the center, literally and figuratively, becomes a sacred space, and reminds us of the need for spiritual guidance.
- **Consensus Decision Making:** Voting by consensus, which doesn't always mean unanimous, where it is important to hear all the points of view and vote when everyone present is able to agree on the action. Thumbs up or down for agree or disagree. Thumbs sideways for an undecided vote or needing more information to consider. Covenants, agreements, decisions must be revised as goals of the group and the group itself change.

Meetings

Whenever we meet, we breathe together 4 times at the start of the meeting as a way to prepare ourselves to be fully present to the work at hand. Each breath is connected to an action— i.e., letting go of what has come before the meeting, becoming fully present in the room, inviting in what's next, and stepping into action. We then facilitate a brief check in with each individual present and move to the business at hand.

Organizational Chart

In a typical organizational chart, the lines of responsibility and hierarchy are established. Using circle process, our "organizational chart" looks different. In True North's "organizational chart," we start from the notion that we are responsible to each other rather than to one person (e.g., a direct supervisor). Starting here, as a group we "charge" individuals or smaller groups to carry on the work of the organization in specific ways. When there are conflicts or questions about authority, we reflect back to the charges and if necessary, take the issue back to the larger group for feedback.

What Is the Value of Circle Process?

We feel that circle process is healing our multidisciplinary wounds and that it is the container for the momentum of our strong and fearless group to nurture a professional experience that is beyond our wildest dreams (and keeps getting better). The continuous work of the circle has provided us with the most functional place we have ever worked, where we have fun and take risks because of the trust we have in each other and in spirit.

OPTIONS FOR HOW WARDENS, PARISH COUNCIL, INCUMBENT (AND OTHERS) FUNCTION IN THE PARISH

Some Basic Assumptions under Any Option

1. The purpose of a parish is to gather God's people into the life of a faith community, to transform those gathered more and more into the image of Christ, and to send them into their Christian life in the world (workplaces, society and civic life, families and friends).
2. We are also trying to create and maintain parish health, allowing energy and activity to flow out of this health.
3. The incumbent is responsible for worship, including music. "The Minister in charge of the Parish, subject to the Rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the direction of the Bishop, shall control the conduct and ordering of all Services, rites and ceremonies of the Church including the music to be sung or used" (Diocesan Canons).
4. Wardens are responsible for buildings, finances, and records, and for "guiding the implementation of the programs of the Parish and generally share with the Minister in charge the pastoral and spiritual concerns of the Parish" (Diocesan Canons). Wardens may delegate responsibilities. The incumbent and wardens share responsibility for personnel management.
5. Members of the parish council "assist the Minister in charge and the Wardens in the general business of the Parish and in all aspects of the life and business of the Parish" (Diocesan Canons). The treasurer "reports to and takes direction from the church wardens." Parish councils are also charged with reviewing and recommending people for Holy Orders.

Other Notes

1. **Information and communication**: Parish councils seem to like "being in the know." This might be for reasons of (*a*) having responsibility for specific areas, (*b*) simply wanting to know about things out of curiosity (in the same way any parishioner would), or (*c*) wanting to be able to answer others' questions about the direction and activities of the congregation in a supportive way. If a parish council wants to do this last thing, the issue is not only getting information in a council meeting but also participating in other congregational development activities and communications that mean council members are well informed about the totality of what's going on in the parish.
2. **Input of entire congregation**: Under each option, it's important to work through expectations about how often and on what issues there will be broader information-gathering from and engagement of the entire congregation before making decisions or acting on important issues.
3. **Wardens**: A variety of roles can be played by wardens. Typically, the role of wardens is to collaborate with the incumbent on (*a*) shaping parish council discussions/meetings relative to the role the council is playing in the parish and (*b*) dealing with other issues that arise that have to do with the overall health of the congregation. In addition, in some congregations, wardens take on more specific functions (e.g., the assistant warden is responsible for property).

Wardens' and Council's Focus	Broader Implications	Time Needed from Parish Council	Rector's Focus	Other Notes
The (canonical) basics Oversees and focuses on money and property of the congregation	Strategic work and ministry development take place through the initiative of the rector and other individuals and groups in the parish	Meeting once a month, with parish council members delegated to work on business and property issues in between meetings	Rector interacts with parish council on congregational business and works out strategy alone or with other individuals or groups. Rector directly interacts with other groups or individuals initiating ministries.	Parish council members are free to participate in other ministry groups apart from the parish council
More power and responsibility taken on by the parish council Parish council takes on the responsibility for strategy work, approving and overseeing all ministry efforts	Parish council members typically take on additional responsibility for overseeing a ministry area in the congregation (a "commission" or ministry leadership model). In addition to this, parish council and rector need to do developmental/ strategy work that ties everything together.	More time needed from the parish council to learn about models of congregational development, to oversee and support ministry areas, and to do planning and discuss progress. Necessitates 2–3 hour meeting once a month as well as time meeting with and supporting commission or ministry area and additional time for training and planning: at a minimum, 3–4 additional days a year as parish council.	More of rector's time spent focusing on and working with the parish council and less time spent interacting with groups or individuals initiating ministries	Often used in larger and more complex congregations. Creates sense of an organized parish. Can create a culture where some feel left out of where "the action" is.
More power and responsibility out in the congregation Parish council approves and supports a team structure (may approve all at once or as they emerge) along with broad team role descriptions. Teams carry out needed functions in the congregation.	Congregational strategy and development emerges from and is created by whole parish in collaboration with the rector. The congregation's energy is focused more in the teams.	Meets at least once a month or as needed to make any decisions that come forward from the teams and to work on how to support the teams	Rector's time spent interacting with the congregation's teams and playing a very active role making sure things are integrated into a coherent whole as everything goes forward	**Examples of teams:** Finance Team Buildings Team Adult Formation Team Children's Team Strategy Team Outreach Team Arts Team Membership Growth Team

Figure 3-3: Options for Parish Council

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

COMMON UNIT 4

WHAT IS AN OD INTERVENTION?

- *Intervention* is a term OD/CD practitioners use for any intentional action we take to improve the health, faithfulness, and effectiveness of our organizations.

- The word *intervention* is a term practitioners use. We don't necessarily use it to describe what we're doing to the people and system within which we're working.

- Interventions can be small or large; high visibility or low visibility; a departure from what is "normal" or "organic"—that is, actions that come across as a departure from the organization's ways of operating—or actions that seem to arise "naturally" in the organization's life.

CHRIS ARGYRIS'S INTERVENTION THEORY

Internal Commitment
to the
Choice of Action

↑

Free
and
Informed Choice

↑

Valid
and
Useful Information

FIGURE 4-1: ARGYRIS INTERVENTION THEORY

First, an intervention must **generate valid and useful information**. Such information will describe those factors that lead to organizational ineffectiveness, and cause the specific problems identified by the organization and its leaders. Such information allows the intervener to provide the client with the second requirement, **free, informed choice**. This means that the client/system, and not the consultant, selects the paths toward a more effective organization and the solution of its problems. The third requirement of intervention is that the client have **internal commitment** toward the course of action chosen. Such commitment should be internalized by all members of the organization, who should have a feeling of responsibility about the choice and its implications.

—*Chris Argyris*

an example of argyris's intervention theory

The Issue Needing Intervention: The congregation is running a significant deficit in its operating budget and needs to engage this issue and make some decisions to reduce its deficit while protecting its core purpose.

Internal Commitment

After choosing a particular option(s), move toward implementation with those implementing. Be committed to and supportive of doing what they have chosen to do.

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Free and Informed Choice

List the array of actual options the parish might pursue in response to the issue and allow some people to choose (in some way) their preferred options for action.

- Increase giving
- Cut specific costs (list as options)
- Shut down a particular operation that is not central
- Move some operations to volunteer rather than paid staff
- Do a fundraiser
- Etc.

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Valid and Useful Information

- The amount of the operating deficit
- The feelings of people about the financial situation and the parish
- Information about parish revenue, giving, and expenses
- Other numerical information
- Relevant history and/or dynamics

figure 4-2: argyris intervention theory example

Melissa M. Skelton, 2014

ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT ROLES AND THEIR EFFECT ON A SYSTEM

Adapted from Craig Lundberg's "A Note on Role Analysis," Mid-Atlantic Training Committee

	Manager/ Leader	External Consultant	Internal Consultant	Internal Change Agent
Role	Oversees and supervises others. Has responsibility for intervening in the structures and processes of a system and making appropriate change happen.	A temporary person outside the system brought in by leader/ manager or others with leader/manager's agreement. Works with a contract.	A consultant who is inside the system	An organizational member inside the system who acts by his/her own initiative to change something in a system
Visibility	High	High	Moderate	Low
Power and Authority	Power and authority ascribed by nature of the position	Authority located in the self due to knowledge, skills, and experience about system and organizational change, as well as the role of being from outside. Authority related to role description as one who facilitates change.	Some authority located in the self due to knowledge, skills, and experience about system and organizational change. Authority related to role description as one who facilitates change. Authorized by leader or manager.	Self-authorized
Advantages	Easy to enter and initiate. Big impact can result from manager/leader's access to resources and knowledge of and influence on whole system.	Independence and outside perspective. Clear contracts. Credibility.	As part of the system, knowledgeable about the system and able to integrate change into what already is.	Sense of purpose and connection to grassroots
Disadvantages	Can become the target of those resisting the leader or the change. Can lose focus on account of demands from other areas.	May lack enough internal perspective to integrate efforts into longer-term perspective and efforts	Lower status than external consultant. Depends on others to function. Can get caught up in the politics.	Risk of punishment, termination/ isolation, loss of job or membership

FIGURE 4-3: ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT ROLES AND THEIR EFFECT ON A SYSTEM

THE OD CUBE:
IDENTIFYING AND UNDERSTANDING OD INTERVENTIONS

The OD Cube that appears in many forms in OD textbooks is a graphic that illustrates the importance of clarity about who the intervention is focused on, what the diagnostic issue is, and what kind of intervention the OD practitioner will be using. Use the cube anytime you are trying to think through an intervention in a system.

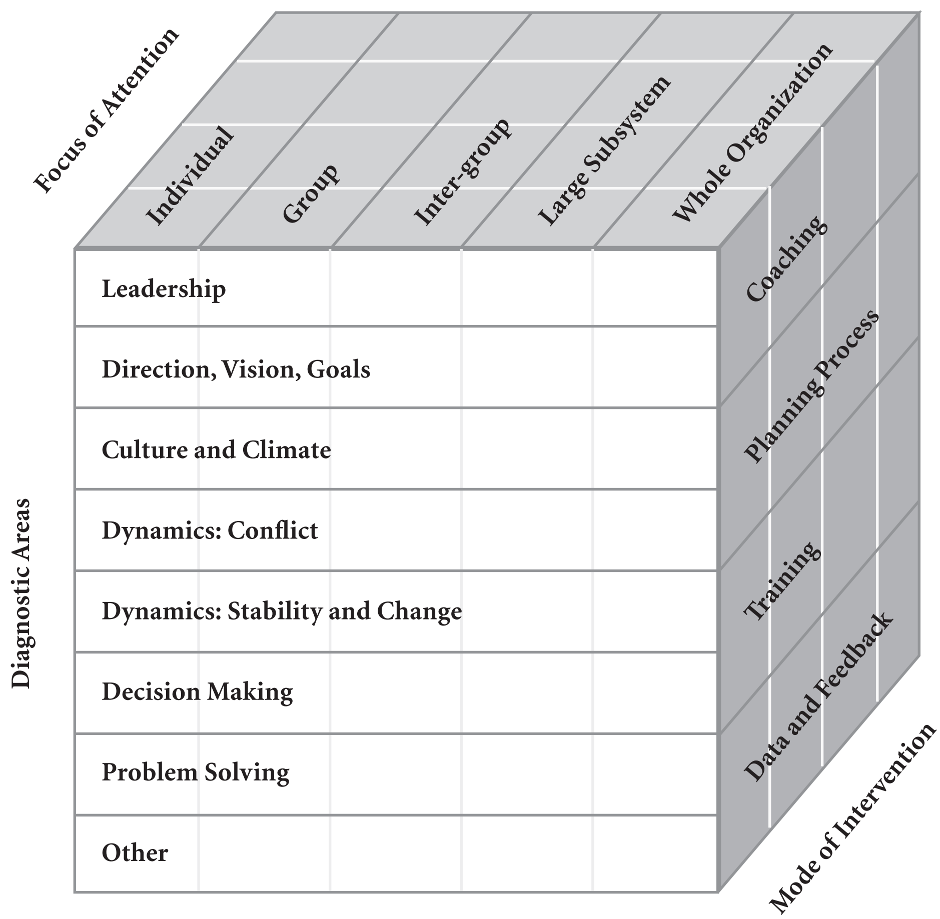

FIGURE 4-4: THE OD CUBE

A public lecture given by Br Martin L. Smith SSJE at the General Seminary, New York, on April 14, 1997, during a session of the College for Bishops

I would like to begin this lecture with a preamble which signals that we are aware of beginning to accustom ourselves to the post-modern climate. That sounds a little pompous, but these points can be put simply. I can quote Niels Bohr, the celebrated physicist, "Every sentence that I utter should be taken by you not as statement but as a question." Truth seems to have made its escape from dogmatic assertions demanding submission. Truth has reappeared somewhere else as an event occurring in conversation within communion, when we engage and respond to a speaker whose words constantly imply the questions, "Is this so? What is your experience?"

Then I could pass on the dictum, "In the post-modern world every sentence should end with the phrase *et cetera* . . ." We are learning to face the radical incompleteness and partialness of any and every statement. Every statement cries out for amplification and correction from other standpoints than the one the speaker is occupying at that moment. So let us listen for the unexpressed *et ceteras,* as well as the unexpressed question marks.

And thirdly, as we cross the post-modern divide, we are learning to be a little more realistic about claims to objectivity. All standpoints are more personal and prejudiced than we were taught to think was proper. We have to recover from the embarrassment of that discovery and realize that, once we are aware of them, we can afford to be more friendly towards our prejudices. The literary critic Anatole Broyard used to tell his writing students, "Hang on to your prejudices, they are the only taste you have got . . . Paranoids are the only ones who notice anything anymore." In thinking as in life, if you do not fix a starting point, you'll never get started. Kenneth Grahame, the author of *Wind in the Willows,* once showed his awareness of how much of ourselves we are displaying in any kind of lecture or essay in these charming words: "You must please remember that a theme . . . is little more than a sort of clothesline on which one pegs a string of ideas, quotations, allusions and so on, one's mental undergarments of all shapes and sizes, some possibly new but most rather old and patched and they dance and sway in the breeze and flap and flutter, or hang limp and lifeless and some are ordinary enough, and some are of a private and intimate shape and rather give the owner away and show up his or her peculiarities. And owing to the invisible clothesline they seem to have some connection and continuity."

Our theme this evening is Pastoral Leadership. A good deal of what I will say focuses on episcopal ministry, but I hope it is not difficult with a little recalibration of scale to apply many of the insights to pastoral ministry at the level of the parish. And in stringing out my proposals—questions—I throw up items of an intimate shape that give the owner away. My particular line, or bias, is to pursue the topic from the standpoint of what could be called roughly, interiority, or spirituality. It's what I'm used to, and it could be useful, so long as everyone recognizes that it is one lens among many for surveying a topic with many aspects.

Viewing the topic of pastoral leadership through the lens of spirituality is not the same as investigating the 'devotional life' (post-modern discourse is full of 'air-quotes') appropriate to men and women in leadership, although the equation spirituality = devotional life is regrettably entrenched in most parts of the church. Spirituality is a complex of practices and values concerned with the divine urge for our freedom. Spirituality is about setting about being set free. How do we set about living freely in the Spirit? Spirituality is not a realm of concepts and ideals but is embedded in praxis, actual ways of practicing freedom. We need lots of practice to be set free. And the consensus of all the wisdom traditions of spirituality, eastern and western, is that freedom is intimately related to awareness, to what we allow ourselves to admit into consciousness, of what we are prepared to know and face, what we don't want to know, what we repress, what we banish, or what we hand over to others to know so that we won't have to. In our Gospel of John, Jesus tells us that it is the truth that will set us free. The *Pneuma*, the Breath of God, our Advocate, the One on our side, is the Spirit of Truth.

To approach the issue of pastoral leadership in the church from the standpoint of spirituality then, is to raise the question, "How do those who are called to this ministry break through to the truth of their identity and find spiritual freedom in and through the exercise of their vocation?" And the answers are bound to be related to the question of awareness. "In order to be on the way to being free as a woman or man who is a pastor/leader, what do I need continually to learn to be aware of? How do I practice the full consciousness that enables me to live this identity authentically?"

That this is a traditional understanding of spirituality can, I think, be verified. A good example would be the book *On Consideration,* written by St. Bernard of Clairvaux for a former monk and pupil of his who was elected pope at a turbulent time when the population of Rome were in the middle of one of their frequent revolutions. The book was intended to help him hold steady and make sense of his role in the midst of very complex pressures. The fascinating thing about the book is its comprehensive range. His counsel deals with a whole spectrum of issues, about his political and social responsibilities, about comprehensive reforms as well as theology and prayer. It is fraught with a vivid sense of the inevitable and unresolvable conflicts, tensions, and polarities of the life of leadership. He wants Eugene to "consider" the whole scope, the big picture. Consideration is active, searching awareness that integrates insights gained from every area of the field of experience. "As opposed to contemplation, which deals with truths already known, consideration seeks truth in contingent human affairs where it is difficult to perceive."(Elizabeth Kennan) "It imparts knowledge of divine and human affairs. It puts an end to confusion, closes gaps, gathers up what has been scattered, roots out secrets, hunts down truth, scrutinizes what seems to be true and explores lies and deceit. It decides what is to be done and reviews what has been done." (VII 9)

It is intriguing to discover that Bernard's insights into the pressures experienced by pastoral leaders, and the counsel he gives, have in many instances a startlingly contemporary relevance. For example, the book begins with the subject of the dangers of being overburdened as a result of the tendency of the pastoral role being what we call today 'overdetermined,' saturated with an excess of superimposed responsibilities. He warns that stress will lead to the dangerous condition of "numbness"; pruning his schedule is necessary. He goes on to warn of the distortion of the pastoral office by the invasion of litigation. This constant arbitration in legal disputes is wrecking the ministry of oversight and has to be resisted. He deals with the question about what to do about a corrupt and incompetent staff that he has inherited by insisting that the only remedy is to replace them with trained and trustworthy people. Bernard even anticipates our very contemporary pastoral theme of the importance of ministering to oneself. It is encouraging to find that this isn't a piece of modern psychobabble but a traditional ascetical counsel. So he emphasizes the necessity of Eugene carving out some leisure in order to practice consideration, and he puts it in terms of including himself as part of the flock he is called to pastor. "I praise your devotion to humankind, but only if it is complete. Now, how can it be complete when you have excluded yourself? You too are a man. For your devotion to be whole and complete, let yourself be gathered into the bosom which receives everyone… You also drink with the other from the water of your own well. Therefore remember this and not always, or even often, but at least sometimes give your attention to yourself. Among the many others, or at least after them, you also have recourse to yourself." (Bk 1 4:5)

The wide-ranging and comprehensive scope of this pastoral treatise helped me realize that pastoral leadership, especially in its form in the episcopal office, requires a spirituality of wide-ranging and integrated awareness. To be a bishop is to require spiritual tools which relate to the vocation of sustaining an over-arching, inclusive, and comprehensive vision. Let us take this a little further.

The standpoint of interiority encourages us to take our images and metaphors seriously, to internalize and amplify them so that they resonate deeply. The episcopal office has at its heart a simple image. The *episkopos* has oversight. We need to feel the image in our bodies and not just rationalize it. The image is one of the body elevated or raised up so that the eyes can take in the full view of a situation, impossible if one remains at ground level. An overseer literally can see over a situation of collective endeavor from a vantage point that enables him or her to take in the whole scene. Those of us brought up to be familiar with old-fashioned factories can envisage those elevated booths which enabled an overseer to view a range or system of machines so that he or she could continually monitor the system. At the beach the lifeguards have elevated seats in order to have the panorama necessary for their task. The episcopal office is a charism of panorama, or integral view. The office is a vantage point for gaining a vision of the whole situation of a substantial Christian community, a situation that is unlikely to be so clear to specialists focusing on a particular dimension of mission, or to those who are wedded to the claims of a particular locale. The spirituality of episcopacy is especially a spirituality of panorama, or taking in the big picture. The bishop is entitled to ask all the questions that can be asked. She or he has the guardianship of all the questions. So the spirituality of a bishop should be a spirituality committed to the pursuit of a wide-range of consciousness and awareness.

The other image for pastoral leadership is, stating the obvious of course, the shepherd. We consciously carry over from an archaic herding culture an image of the pastor, the herder of sheep, supervising their breeding, birthing, nurture, shelter, their movements to and from pasture. There are many resonances and implications in this *symbol* and one of the most significant ones is the maintenance of the integrity or completeness of the flock. The force of the archaic image depends on our awareness of the artificiality and precariousness of a flock of sheep; it is in real and constant danger of unraveling, dissipating, and scattering, from the intrusion of predators and the lack of any natural force to keep the group together. Sheep wander. A flock is an unnatural and unstable entity. It requires constant arduous and unflagging work to sustain the flockness of the flock, sometimes dramatic intervention, always the work of patrol and the defining of the boundaries and orientating the collective movement. The image only works if we see that spiritual community also is something made. It has no instinctual existence. A church is something God continually creates, and we co-create and co-recreate it with God as fellow workers. And the church's pastors are ministers with special responsibility for the promotion of the fullness, wholeness, and integrity of the community. So from the beginning the bishop's ministry has been both an agent of and a prime symbol for the church's unity, its integrity and cohesion. And he or she is the agent of and prime symbol for the church's constant striving to realize catholicity, inclusiveness, all-embracingness.

All this states the obvious. Pastoral leadership is active co-responsibility with Christ for inciting, sustaining, and guarding the church's life as community. Episcopal pastoral leadership is the particular responsibility for sustaining community at the inclusive level of a diocese, which is a collective large enough to represent, to a greater or lesser degree, the church's catholicity or inclusiveness and wholeness.

Pastoral and episcopal spirituality must then consist in those practices of "consideration" (to use Bernard's term) or integrating consciousness that keeps the pastor/bishop capable of viewing and seeing the big picture on behalf of the community, taking in the full range of evidence and growing in the capacity to integrate more within his or her field of awareness. And we can say right away that it must involve a considerable readiness for conflict because many of those who are committed to a particular part of the scene or a particular aspect of it are not likely to see the view or gestalt of the whole which the bishops must cultivate precisely because they are called to sustain the overview.

I am almost tempted to say much of the loneliness of being a pastoral leader and a bishop is that this vocation to the "overview" is precisely what most people cannot be expected to grasp. Only a few get to see the whole from a vantage point of awareness that can integrate evidence from all parts. The frustration of a bishop is the continual struggle against partial and limited views, standpoints that prevent the holders from taking in a full range of evidence. It is a frustration as old as the New Testament, as we see from the exasperation of Paul in the letters to Corinth. Paul as apostle is appalled when leadership is being seized by or given to people who are committed to narrow slices of reality and lack the ability to take in connectedness and wholeness. "I hear there are divisions among you." We can see today the contradictions and confusions that arise in the cases where partisans and ideologues are elevated to the episcopate. A terrific dissonance occurs because of the contradiction between this mentality that depends on splitting off and the spiritual demands of the office itself.

Bishops tell me that they realize that not a great deal in parish or academic life actually serves as much of a preparation for the office of bishop and this makes sense too. Only the actual experience of having the overview gives you the overview. A bishop therefore has to develop a sense of identity with the help of fellow bishops and other insightful people in the face of very widespread and inevitable misapprehensions and distorted views of what a bishop is. In fact, this is one of the prime tasks of episcopal spirituality. To keep on doing the work of discernment in the midst of a force field of projections, stereotypes, precedents, traditions, and popular assumptions about leadership and pastoring, many of which are highly distorted and distorting. The work of spiritual awareness is to grow in the capacity to identify these often almost invisible forces in the environment of society, in the church, and in one's own psyche. Journalists and politicians have their ideas of what a bishop should be, different constituencies within the clergy and laity have their ideas, the episcopal predecessors had theirs and left them around as spectral forces with an afterlife of several generations, and so on.

Classic spirituality had at its heart the discipline of discernment through what was called the "manifestations of thoughts." The ancient form of spiritual direction was not asking advice about prayer but articulating one's experiences to a wise person, especially spelling out concerns that had a particular obsessive character in which one seemed to be being pulled in one direction or another by a kind of undercurrent. The idea was to bring to consciousness if possible the source of this undercurrent working against freedom. The practice is still indispensable and we will need both private and group settings in which to do it. And one can easily imagine how it might help by identifying in the environment and in the psyche forces that are exerting a distorting influence on the experience of being a pastoral leader.

From my conversations with bishops I can easily come up with examples. Let us think of the misconceptions that exert a distorting influence on the business of being a pastor. One very common one is the notion that the business of pastoring is personal, one-on-one (telling expression!) care of an individual who has a problem, is undergoing some kind of personal transition, or is in 'spiritual need.' When one is doing that, one is exercising one's role as a pastor. A slightly more sophisticated version extends one-on-one to include a family in need or in transition. In that case, being a pastor is one of the hats a bishop, for example, wears. He is also an administrator, liturgical president, teacher, etc., etc. All these are commonly misconceived as separate roles into which, with more or less versatility, he steps one after another. The bishop is 'being a pastor' when he leaves his desk, quits his meetings, to rush to the bedside of the sick wife of one of the priests of the diocese to be with the couple in their hour of need. "At last," the bishop may say, harking back to his or her days as a parish priest, "I have the chance to be a pastor again." Or the onlooker says to herself, "I now realize that Bishop X can be a pastor when he chooses to be . . . "

Well, there is probably no need to develop the scenario in more detail. No doubt the training given to new bishops keeps on underscoring the crucial transition from a ministry that devotes a lot of energy to the personal care of individuals, couples, and families to a ministry that engages with a large system or institution, the diocese as a whole. But I suspect it takes a tremendous amount of awareness before one has seen right through the distortion. The distortion is treating 'pastoring' as a discrete activity. The key thing about the identity of pastor is that *pastor* makes a better adjective than a noun. It is not that the role of bishop tends not to leave much time for being a pastor, except for occasional troubleshooting, or 'nurturing' (blessed buzzword) her or his staff. Rather being a pastor is what a bishop is being in everything a bishop does, insofar as that contributes to her or his sustaining the overview and promoting the health and integrity of the larger whole. In fact, a pastoral leader might be more faithfully pastoral in the hours spent toiling in administration that makes for progress, working with consultants, laboriously renewing vocational discernment processes with representatives from all over the diocese, than in personal ministries that seem pastoral in the popular view.

Another variant is to identify the role of pastor with the special responsibility that a bishop has for the ordained clergy. Of course, (so this version goes) the bishop cannot possibly be everybody's pastor, but he or she must be the personal pastor of all the clergy. That there is some truth in this notion is obvious, but the dangers perhaps are more hidden. Just now we are in a transitional phase halfway between an outmoded clericalism and a not-yet realized understanding of ministry as the responsibility of all the baptized. I suspect the present notion of the bishop as pastor of the clergy will have to be looked at again and again as part of examination of the tenacity of clericalism. I took part on a Tuesday in Holy Week in the renewal of priestly vows in a diocese. All the clergy were present with the bishops. But what does it mean for bishops and clergy to renew their vows as pastors, with the laity of the church utterly absent from the solemn gathering except for the cathedral verger, the organist, and one or two volunteers helping with the luncheon? What does this say theologically about our conception of pastoring? I was taken aback to be told by a liturgical expert that this liturgical ceremony was invented by the Vatican authorities in the upheavals of the early seventies when the loyalty of the parochial clergy seemed more and more at risk and it seemed good to create an occasion when they could all be seen renewing their solidarity with the hierarchy. Did we do well as Anglicans to adopt this Roman ceremony in this form?

Beneath misconceptions of pastoring there is a strong undercurrent of prejudice fueled by the value allotted to psychotherapy in our culture. Real pastoring is seen as a transaction between persons in private. By contrast, activities that concern the community are often downplayed or disparaged as "bureaucracy" or "social activism" or "maintaining the institution."

Another distorting undercurrent present in the force field of the contemporary pastoral environment is the association of pastoring with affirmation. Listening carefully to conversations we soon begin to pick up the link many people have made between pastoring and saying yes, pastoring and making someone in a situation feel affirmed and good about themselves, etc. Here pastoring has become a kind of style, specifically a style that precludes refusal. There is a chorus of pain in the church about how 'unpastoral' its processes are, such as the ordination process. No doubt there is a tremendous amount of ineptness and confusion in many of these processes and they call for constant reform. However, the link with affirmation is a cultural contamination. "Let your yes be yes and your no be no," said Jesus, and there is nothing to suggest that we do not have to say no as often as we have to say yes. Experienced bishops who have run the gauntlet of this prejudice remind us that authentic pastoring involves a great deal of saying no to a great number of bids, proposals, claims, entitlements, fantasies, and even sound and holy ideas that have to wait their turn. Care for the whole invariably means the careful refusals that keep things in proportion, husband resources, assign priorities intelligently, and so on.

Well, these and many other currents and projections are at play in the pastoral environment, and a contemporary pastoral spirituality will be concerned to help us bring them into the sphere of consciousness so that they can be seen for what they are, understood, and so that we can gain a measure of freedom from them. And this work will have to be done in constant conjunction with the bringing to awareness of what each of us as pastors bring into play, the projections, needs, distortions, and ideals that are largely unconscious. For example, an authentic pastoral spirituality will constantly seek to examine what my inner needs are doing to the business of my pastoring. I do not think most of us were equipped with a spirituality of vocation that fully acknowledged the extent that we are motivated in ministry by needs. We bring desires to ministry that cry out for fulfillment, and God, so to speak, exploits our recruitability. Most of us have to be pastors out of some inner drive and God is involved in that, messy though it often is, and gives us the Spirit of truth to transform and convert those desires. But that process of conversion involves an ascesis, a discipline of facing and bringing to consciousness the needs we bring to ministry. Needs that are not acknowledged join the shadows and work from behind as demands.

A major element in the spiritual direction of pastors is precisely this bringing into the consciousness and prayer these inner needs. The need for intimacy motivates us towards personal care of others; if that need is not faced and attended to in the rest of our lives, it will intrude upon and distort our pastoral relationships. Some of us are motivated by a deep inner need to reform and correct. We are the enlightened children who will correct the errors and heal the wounds of our parents. Unless we face into that and channel this zeal specifically, everyone who comes our way will be subjected to our need to be enlighteners and teachers.

Most obviously a bishop who has not faced quite deeply the part his need to be admired has played in drawing him into ministry is in for a rough ride. Those who obstinately withhold that liking and admiring are going to excite deep rage in him or crushing resentment and depression, all aspects of the same reaction. And of course they will withhold it from anyone exercising pastoral leadership, since a pastoral leader cannot affirm every claim or fulfill every projection, since she has responsibility for the health of the whole rather than the gratification of each part. The demand to be liked can take over; in that case gratifying and affirming all comers will involve abdication of pastoral responsibility for the larger whole.

Pastoral leadership today also requires an area of spiritual awareness that is specifically opening up because of the changes in consciousness that are taking place in our day. The spirituality of pastoral leadership has always been grounded in the gifts of ever-widening empathy, the capacity to identify with and therefore engage with the varied and different elements of the whole. Its most famous expression in scripture is in the passage in I Cor. 9 where Paul speaks of his empathic engagement with the radically different constituencies of Jews, gentiles, and those he called 'the weak,' those at an immature level of religious awareness, in order to win them. "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings." I have heard many pastors groan at this passage, as if it seemed to propel them into an impossible over commitment or held up an unattainable ideal of versatility. Or I have heard it used in a rather sarcastic tone about pastoral leaders who tend to agree with the last person who spoke to them in a kind of spineless and unprincipled affirmation. "I am afraid our suffragan bishop has turned out to be one of those 'all things to all men' type; where does he really stand on anything?" But authentically this passage points to the type of spirituality we are exploring aloud. To be responsible for catholic community, we need the spiritual gift, the charism, of a versatility of empathic identification with the distinctive constituents of the whole, many of which, because of the way they are embedded in a situation with less perspective, do not see that they need one another, as illustrated in Paul's image of the body whose various parts are tempted to think that they can do without the other organs.

What is becoming especially clear today as we cross the post-modern divide is that this empathic versatility strictly depends on the pastor's consciousness of his or her own particularity and limitation of standpoint. In all sorts of ways, we are having to become conscious of the inevitable partiality, bias, and restrictedness of our own life-stance. It is fascinating to watch this process happening among pastoral leaders, and being chaplain to the house of bishops has given me hundreds of occasions to observe it. Suddenly it dawns on a leader that his racism is not a matter of personal hostility to people of color, but is rooted in unconscious, unacknowledged, unearned white privilege. You can see leaders turning into heterosexuals and some of them even recognizing their heterosexism. Until recently there were no heterosexuals. There was only sexuality, and then some 'perverts' did unspeakable things in some marginal twilight world of unreality. Now the visibility of gays and their claims to have being change reality; the majority sexuality has become one of the ways of being sexual instead of the only one. With the advent of every new woman bishop into the House, the maleness of the House is revealed more vividly and embarrassingly. What used to be how bishops were, what used to be the being of bishops, is now being shown up as how men have acted out being a bishop, not at all the same.

It is an authentic spiritual paradox that the more one brings into consciousness about the narrowness and bias built into one's own experience and identity and viewpoint, the more one is set free to identify with and enter into alliance with those who differ from oneself. Only when one has undergone the spiritual death whereby one brings into consciousness and then relinquishes the claim to have *the* take on reality, can one actually begin to empathize with others' take on reality, and in communion with them actually experience more reality. Now part of my motive for tackling the question of pastoral leadership from the standpoint of interiority is that the changes in consciousness that are taking place among us today mean that the connection between the way a pastor behaves and his or her own interiority is becoming more obvious and public. The awful thing is that what we refuse to be conscious of, more and more people can read. The advent of feminism is teaching more and more people to read our fear of women and our incorporation of patriarchal bias; in this new literacy, theological rationales have become paper thin, and more and more people can see through what used to seem so substantial, especially arguments from tradition. Actually because a critical mass of people can now 'see through' behaviors dictated by unconscious bias, in an almost automatic social process credibility is being withdrawn from leadership that is not based on wide-ranging and searching self-awareness.

Our reflections have led us into an area of engagement with the changes in consciousness that are occurring with such amazing rapidity at this epoch. Christian spirituality is bound to give priority to Jesus' mandate to discern the signs of the *times,* and the spirituality of pastoral leadership requires the capacity to engage with changes and developments at the interior level, at the level of soul. It would take many hours of conversation for us to explore these issues, but let me finish this lecture by taking one example of the kind of critical meditation, or 'consideration' we need to engage in as pastoral leaders.

Anglican spirituality is always at risk from the bias towards stability, a kind of homeostatic spirituality in which the Spirit constantly restores order, balance, and all godly quietness and virtue in a world peaceably governed by a providence that sets in order all things. If things are changing, prayer expresses confidence that the plan of salvation is being carried out in tranquility and that all things are being brought to their perfection. It is beautiful, but it does not provide us with the essential tools for coming to terms with our actual experience at the end of the millennium. We are in the throes of tumultuous and unprecedented changes and an intractable ecological crisis in which the peaceable governance of providence is not exactly what springs to mind. Pastoral leadership in this context is going to need spiritual resources that empower us to integrate into our overarching vision the powers of chaos and accelerating trajectories of change.

There are historic spiritualities in the Christian tradition, ascetical and mystical traditions, that experienced the soul as a sphere of passionate conflict, where a great contest continually occurs between our desire to break through to transformation and our fearful need to stay the same. It is these spiritualities that have received most confirmation and amplification from modern psychology. We have our work cut out to use these resources and others to forge a spirituality in which consciousness of this drama taking place within ourselves will better empower us to lead. For it is in this contest on the macrocosmic scale that pastors will be exercising their leadership of our communities.

It is an irony of language that one of the meanings of the word *pastoral* is "pertaining to a tranquil rustic scene." A pastoral painting depicts an idealized landscape of calm and beauty with nymphs and shepherds. Now our pastoral scene is in violent contrast, one in which we are coming to terms with the necessity of chaos and the inevitability of conflict in communities that evolve or perish. On a train journey here to New York last year, I read Michael Crichton's sequel to *Jurassic Park,* a novel called *The Lost World.* One of the characters, a mathematician called Ian Malcolm, discusses how complex systems such as corporations learn to adapt or face extinction. He goes on to say this.

But even more important is the way complex systems seem to strike a balance between the need for order and the imperative to change. Complex systems seem to locate themselves at a place we call the edge of chaos. We imagine the edge of chaos as a place where there is enough innovation to keep a living system vibrant, and enough stability to keep it from collapsing into anarchy. It is a zone of conflict and upheaval where the old and the new are constantly at war. Finding the balancing point must be a delicate matter —if a living system drifts too close, it risks falling over into incoherence and dissolution; but if the system moves too far away from the edge, it becomes frozen, totalitarian. Both conditions lead to extinction. Too much change is as destructive as too little. Only at the edge of chaos can complex systems flourish.

This passage, in which chaos theory is being filtered down to the popular level through mass-market literature, is remarkably suggestive about the role of pastoral leadership. It is scary to realize that chaos is vitally central in God's creation, and that is why leadership has to be pastoral, a ministry of encouragement and guidance. Pastoral leadership will take its stand at the place of discernment in this "zone of conflict and upheaval where the old and the new are constantly at war." The episcopal charism of maintaining unity will not consist in repressing the war between the old and the new, but encouraging and continually re-centering a community in which we know that both the resources of stability and the risks of change come from the Spirit. What kind of spirituality will enable pastoral leaders to live consciously at the edge of chaos?

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PROCESS CONSULTATION REVISITED: BUILDING THE HELPING RELATIONSHIP

By Edgar H. Schein

Process Consultation and the Helping Relationship in Perspective

In this chapter I want to summarize, comment on, and reflect on what has come before. Some of the questions I want to address were stimulated by the detailed feedback from my colleague Otto Scharmer and his wife, Katrin, who read the manuscript carefully and thoughtfully. I am grateful for their suggestions. I also benefited greatly from the reviews of our colleagues—Dick Beckhard, Warner Burke, Michael Brimm, and David Coghlan. Their thoughts and suggestions have been incorporated into this volume and have strengthened it greatly. What then is to be said in a concluding chapter? First, I want to revisit the ten principles of process consultation because I find them increasingly helpful as a diagnostic of where I have gone wrong when things do not work out as I expected them to. Then, I want to take up some remaining issues, especially pertaining to the teaching of process consultation.

Ten Principles as the Essence of Process Consultation

In reflecting on process consultation and the building of a "helping relationship," the question arises: where is the emphasis or the essence that makes this philosophy of helping "different"? Why bother to learn all of this stuff? In my reflections on some 40 years of practicing "this stuff," I have concluded that the essence is in the word *relationship*. To put it bluntly, I have come to believe that *the decisive factor as to whether or not help will occur in human situations involving personality, group dynamics, and culture is the relationship between the helper and the person, group, or organization that needs help*. From that point of view, every action I take, from the beginning contact with a client, should be an intervention that simultaneously allows both the client and me to diagnose what is going on and that builds a relationship between us. When all is said and done, I measure my success in every contact by whether or not I feel the relationship has been helpful and whether or not the client feels helped. Let us review the principles from that point of view.

1. **Always try to be helpful.** Obviously, if I have no intention of being helpful and hardworking at it, it is unlikely to lead to a helping relationship. I have found in all human relationships that the intention to be helpful is the best guarantee of a relationship that is rewarding and leads to mutual learning.

2. **Always stay in touch with the current reality.** I cannot be helpful if I cannot decipher what is going on in myself, in the situation, and in the client.

3. **Access your ignorance.** The only way I can discover my own inner reality is to learn to distinguish what I know from what I assume I know from what I truly do not know. And I have learned from experience that it is generally most helpful to work on those areas where I truly do not know. Accessing is the key, in the sense that I have learned that to overcome expectations and assumptions I must make an effort to locate within myself what I really do not know and should be asking about. It is like scanning my own inner database and gaining access to empty compartments. If I truly do not know the answer, I am more likely to sound congruent and sincere when I ask about it.

4. **Everything you do is an intervention.** Just as every interaction reveals diagnostic information, so does every interaction have consequences both for the client and me. I, therefore, have to own everything I do and assess the consequences to be sure that they fit my goals of creating a helping relationship.

5. **It is the client who owns the problem and the solution.** My job is to create a relationship in which the client can get help. It is not my job to take the client's problems onto my own shoulders, nor is it my job to offer advice and solutions in a situation that I do not live in myself.

6. **Go with the flow.** Inasmuch as I do not know the client's reality, I must respect as much as possible the natural flow in that reality and not impose my own sense of flow on an unknown situation. Once the relationship reaches a certain level of trust, and once the client and helper have a shared set of insights into what is going on, flow itself becomes a shared process.

7. **Timing is crucial.** Over and over I have learned that the introduction of my perspective, the asking of a clarifying question, the suggestion of alternatives, or whatever else I want to introduce from my own point of view has to be timed to those moments when the client's attention is available. The same remark uttered at two different times can have completely different results.

8. **Be constructively opportunistic with confrontational interventions.** When the client signals a moment of openness, a moment when his or her attention to a new input appears to be available, I find I seize those moments and try to make the most of them. In listening for those moments, I find it most important to look for areas in which I can build on the client's strengths and positive motivations. Those moments also occur when the client has revealed some data signifying readiness to pay attention to a new point of view.

9. **Everything is a source of data; errors are inevitable—learn from them.** No matter how well I observe the previous principles I will say and do things that produce unexpected and undesirable reactions in the client. I must learn from them and at all costs avoid defensiveness, shame, or guilt. I can never know enough of the client's reality to avoid errors, but each error produces reactions from which I can learn a great deal about my own and the client's reality.

10. **When in doubt share the problem.** Inevitably, there will be times in the relationship when I run out of gas, don't know what to do next, feel frustrated, and in other ways get paralyzed. In situations like this, I found that the most helpful thing I could do was to share my "problem" with the client. Why should I assume that I always know what to do next? Inasmuch as it is the client's problem and reality we are dealing with, it is entirely appropriate for me to involve the client in my own efforts to be helpful.

These principles do not tell me what to do. Rather, they are reminders of how to think about the situation I am in. They offer guidelines when the situation is a bit ambiguous. Also they remind me of what it is I am trying to do.

Can One Develop a Useful Typology of Interventions?

In previous versions of this book I attempted to categorize interventions. As I reflect on possible ways to do this, I have concluded that such categories are not really useful because they divert one from the more fundamental question of figuring out what will be helpful at any given moment in the evolving relationship. I prefer a general concept of "*Facilitative Intervention*" that implies that the consultant should always select whatever intervention will be most helpful at any given moment, given all one knows about the total situation. Certainly the consultant should be familiar with a variety of questions, exercises, survey-feedback technologies, and other forms of intervention, many of which have been illustrated in the previous chapters and well described in other books on organization development. But knowledge of many different kinds of interventions does not substitute for the know-how of sensing what is needed "right now" in terms of facilitating forward movement in the relationship. In fact, having a skill set of interventions "at the ready" makes it harder to stay in the current reality because one is always looking for opportunities to use what one believes oneself to be good at. As the saying goes, if all you have is a hammer, everything in the world looks like a nail. What then is the *essential skill* we are talking about?

Formal Knowledge, Skill, or Tacit Know-How?

When I conduct workshops on process consultation, I am often reminded that much of what I suggest to young consultants may work for *me* because of my experience and stature, but it would not work for them. This issue has two components. What exactly do I have that they assume they do not have? And how much of what is relevant to creating a helping relationship is explicit formal knowledge, skill based on formal training, or tacit know-how based on experience? The reader will have noticed that I did not distinguish these three levels of knowledge throughout the previous text. The reason is that all three are relevant to the creation of a helping relationship. Formal knowledge, such as the simplifying models presented in several of the chapters, is essential. It is especially important for the budding consultant to understand as much as possible about psychology, group dynamics, and organizational dynamics. But formal knowledge is clearly not enough. With workshop training, apprenticeships, and actual trial and error one develops the skill and—most important—the know-how that gradually becomes tacit and automatic. It is in the last two categories of knowledge that I clearly have an advantage over the novice, but I always point out that if an essential element of the philosophy is to deal with reality, then the novice must work from his reality, whatever that implies. Let me illustrate. If I am working with a manager who is familiar with my work, I know that she understands that I am supposedly expert in this from of consultation. I must appreciate that set of perceptions and make my interventions accordingly. If a younger, novice consultant goes to that same manager, he knows that the manager is relatively unfamiliar with the consultant's experience or skill, and he must therefore operate from that reality. Consequently, we would make quite different interventions, but we each would be trying to build a helping relationship, and we each could succeed. The relationship might evolve differently, but there is nothing in each of our experiences that would automatically determine that I would be more successful than the novice. When I have observed novices in these situations, their lack of success is invariably connected to not sticking to the principles, of trying to be prematurely expert, or of giving advice when none was called for. Of course, those errors themselves are the result of lack of experience; but this does not invalidate the principles. If the novice does stay in the helper role, if he stays focused on what has been described here, he will be just as successful as I would be in the same situation.

I have observed this over and over again in my classes on managing planned change where project groups are from time to time trying to help each other with their projects. If I play the role of consultant, I can help, but—more importantly—when I encourage fellow students to try their hand at being helpful, the ones who operate by these principles are as or more helpful than I could have been. It is their insight that is crucial, not their length of experience. It is their willingness to give up the expert role and deal with current reality that is crucial, not how many hours of practice they have had. It must also be acknowledged that the helping relationship is a product of two personality styles. Two equally experienced consultants might produce two quite different kinds of relationships, each of which would be helpful. It is not accidental that a number of my clients did not want to proceed only on the basis of what contact clients had told them about me. They wanted to meet me and test the "chemistry" between us for themselves. From that point of view, in any relationship, a novice with the right chemistry could do as well or better than an experienced consultant with the wrong chemistry.

In conclusion, tacit know-how and skill are important even when the novice consultant has some history of human experiences to draw on. Lack of experience is not nearly as predictive of problems as is not understanding what it means to help someone and not doing one's best to operate by those principles.

A Concluding Personal Note

I sometimes ask myself why I am so passionate about preaching the stuff. My experience has taught me some lessons that I want others to understand. In watching my own helping efforts, and especially in observing the helping efforts of others, I keep rediscovering the same simple truths. We have learned much about these truths in related fields—psychotherapy, social work, teaching, coaching. Yet we persist in treating organizational consultation as something different. Consultants tell me over and over how important it is to make a formal diagnosis, to write reports, to make specific recommendations, or they feel they have not done their job.

I cannot really figure out why the learning we have acquired in the other helping professions about client involvement, about people having to learn at their own pace, about helping clients to have insights and solve their problems—has not generalized more to the field of management and organizational consulting. If I take a cynical view, I think it is easier to sell products, programs, diagnoses, and sets of recommendations than it is to sell a helping attitude. Consulting firms are businesses and they must survive financially, so there is inevitably a great pressure to have products and services that clients are willing to pay money for. However, once consulting becomes a business, I believe it ceases to be consulting in the sense I mean it. It becomes transformed into the sale of some expert services. Consulting firms sell information, ideas, and recommendations. But do they sell help? For me that is the tough question. Helpers also have to make a living and charge for the services. But therapists and social workers do not define their work at the outset in terms of specific longer-range projects involving formal diagnostic methods and formal programs of therapy. They first build a relationship and only recommend other services as they decide jointly with their client that something else is needed. What I find missing in so much managerial and organizational consulting is that initial relationship-building that would permit clients to own their problems and make sensible decisions about whether or not to do a survey, or have an off-site confrontation meeting, or engage in a two-year formal change program run by the consulting firm.

The strength of my feeling about the need to build a relationship first derives from the experience of working with organizations that have previously been subjected to an expert consultant who had formal programs to implement. As a result, I have to confront again my own reality that help will not happen until the kind of relationship has been built with the various levels of clients we may have to deal with, and that the building of such a relationship takes time and requires a certain kind of attitude from the helper. In the end, then, this book is an attempt to articulate what that attitude is all about.

This new volume builds on the content of the two books that precede it and explores the critical area of the helping relationship. Process Consultation, Volume I *(2nd edition) explains the concept of PC and its role in organization development, focusing on the behavior of the* *consultant rather than on the design of the OD program itself.* Process Consultation, Volume II *reaffirms PC as a viable model for working with human systems and explores additional theories of PC relevant to experienced consultants and managers. Now,* Process Consultation Revisited *focuses on the interaction between consultant and client, explaining how to achieve the healthy helping relationship so essential to effective consultation. Whether the advisor is a consultant, therapist, social worker, manager, parent, or friend, the dynamics between advisor and advisee can be difficult to understand and manage. Drawing on over 40 years of experience as a consultant, Schein creates a general theory and methodology of helping that will enable a diverse group of readers to navigate the helping process successfully.*

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From "Creating Critical Mass for Change," *OD Practitioner,* vol. 20, p. 2

Creating Critical Mass

by John Adams

Most likely every one of us has had the frustrating experience of helping to create an action plan during an off site session, only to have it filed away and forgotten upon return to the work site. We have also probably felt frustrated at how much longer major organizational changes take than was originally anticipated. It should be axiomatic to us by now that any social system will develop a tremendous amount of "status quo" inertia in its patterns of operation. Individual habit patterns, group norms, and organizational culture are all expressions of this axiom.

This inertia, or investment in the status quo, extends the time it takes to complete reorganizations and mergers, frustrates managers who want to implement new programs or policies, and frequently causes the various cultural change and development programs propounded by organization development practitioners to receive "flavor of the month" response.

There are many reasons for this inertia. The dynamics of any organizational system will create self regulating and self correcting mechanisms which tend to protect the status quo. It is essential that these mechanisms are addressed if any significant change effort is to succeed. But that exploration in NOT the purpose of this article.

There are also a number of "cognitive structures," such as beliefs, assumptions, expectations, etc., plus the norms which all groups and organizations evolve, which also contribute to the inertia in the status quo. This article suggests ideas for working through the status quo inertia via these less tangible structures. In the following paragraphs, three problems arising from ignoring these processes are introduced. One way of addressing these problems, the creation and development of a "critical mass" network is then presented. Next, a five step influence process for working with status quo inertia is described. The article closes with a summary check list of ideas for use by those who wish to implement changes in organizations.

Three Common Reasons Change Efforts Take So Long

One of the most frequent reasons for slowness in implementing organizational changes has to do with people's non-conscious but habitual mental patterns. This "Automatic Pilot Mindset" creates a non-conscious inertia in thinking and individual behavior patterns. A second reason is the frequent bias towards training which assumes that the ideas agreed to in the classroom will find ready acceptance on the shop floor. The third reason is a general absence of support for managing the "novelty" engendered by changes. The following paragraphs explore each of these reasons for continued inertia and then develop a basic set of criteria for creating a critical mass network of people who are fully in support of the desired changes.

The Automatic Pilot Mindset

To illustrate what I mean by this phrase, please put this paper down and quickly fold your arms. Now, reverse the way they are folded, placing your other arm on top and note how this feels. Most of you will experience the second way of folding your arms as being awkward or uncomfortable. It would probably take you quite a long time to get used to folding your arms this new way, and to cease folding them in the now familiar way. This illustrates how our habit patterns work. We don't have to think about how we fold our arms, and when we do consciously choose to fold them in the reverse way, it just doesn't feel right. Every one of us has myriads of beliefs, values and attitudes that are operating in a similarly non-conscious way at all times, subtly influencing how we act and the results we get. The longer we hold a belief, the more consistently it tends to be supported in our experience, and the more it is reinforced as the truth. This is the essence of the self fulfilling prophecy. First we must raise our "automatic pilot" patterns to consciousness, and then we must be quite disciplined if we are to succeed in creating new habits.

The same thing is true on the group and organizational levels. Here is an example. In reviewing the results of an attitude survey several years ago with a research and development (R&D) client, it was determined that the most negative item on the survey was, "You only get feedback around here when you screw up." There was unanimous agreement that this must change. Everyone felt that in order to be more innovative and do better R&D, an occasional "thank you" or "well done" were desirable. In a follow-up meeting six weeks later, we found that no one was giving any positive performance feedback. Supervisors felt they might be taken advantage of if they gave out strokes, and subordinates felt they were being manipulated whenever they heard good news. Even though there was still unanimous agreement that a change was needed, they had slipped back to their original patterns! The group still wanted to balance their performance feedback, so we required that there be a feedback review as the first item on the agenda of every meeting held in the group. The top management team went one step further and required that each person at the table give someone an honest, positive compliment before carrying on with the meeting agenda. This structuring of the desired new habit into the daily lives of everyone was what was needed to generate the desired new habit patterns.

If we are to disrupt the automatic pilot mindsets and create desirable new patterns of operations, we must reward the desired changes, formalize them in our everyday lives, and create ways to monitor and reinforce them.

Bias towards Training

Training has become a huge operation employing thousands of people. A great many organizations use various kinds of training activities as the primary vehicle for attempting major organizational changes or productivity improvements. In many organizations, training comprises virtually the entire development program and, as a colleague in the UK says, "Bums in seats" is the primary measure of success for the Human Resources Department.

When there is too much bias towards training as development, an excellent **means** often becomes an **end** in itself. Training has an absolutely essential role in supporting most kinds of changes in organizations, but it must always be provided in the service of clearly articulated change outcomes to be of real value in overcoming status quo inertia.

Absence of Support for Novelty Management

Any new change has the potential to create distress (and a desire to cling to the status quo) to the extent that it creates novelty (surprise, unfamiliarity, uncertainty). In order to be most effective in implementing changes, we must do so in ways which minimize surprises, and we must develop mechanisms for clarifying and familiarizing employees with the new way of operating.

Support for novelty management needs to come in four areas:

1. information needed to adjust to the change;
2. skills needed to adjust to the change;
3. attitudes and values which must be developed to support the change;
4. reward mechanisms for adopting the change.

The Virtue in Preaching to the Choir

The cliché of "Preaching to the choir" has long been used to suggest that an activity is a waste of time. I contend that it is sometimes the most important mechanism for creating a critical mass of people who are solidly behind a change program, and who will ensure that the change process becomes self-sustaining. As the diagram in [figure 4-5] suggests, for any new idea, there are likely to be about 10–15% of the employees who think it is a fantastic idea, and about an equal number who will probably never buy in. Our normal tendency is to go after the hard core resisters and attempt to change their minds, rather than creating a network of those who are already sold on the idea.

Finding out who in the organization, regardless of formal role, are solidly in support of an intended change and bringing them together can be one of the most important factors in successful change implementation. Their shared interest in the change virtually always leads to some highly innovative ways to enroll the early adopters. As a result, a critical mass favoring the change is generated rather quickly, and with little "forcing."

This network of sold supporters is the "choir." Frequent "choir practices" will generate lots of new choir members from the early adopters. The main consideration relative to the hard core resisters is to encourage them to stay tuned, and to avoid any confrontations which may cause the skeptics to throw their support to the "underdogs."

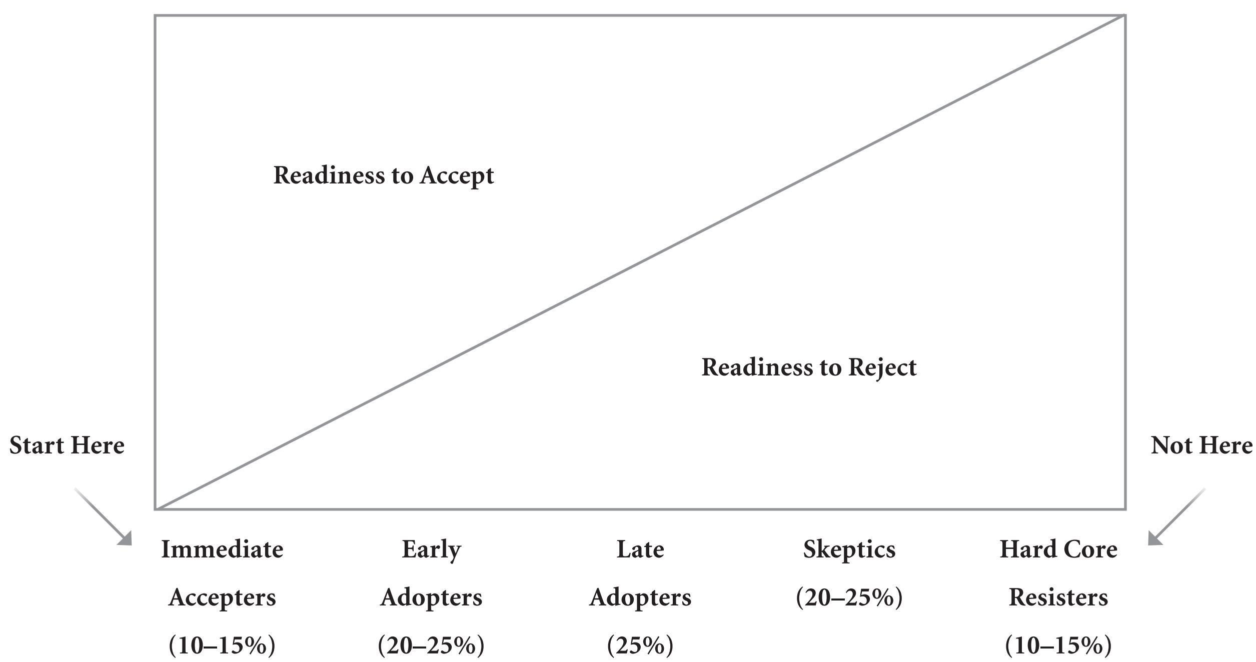

FIGURE 4-5: PREACHING TO THE CHOIR TO CREATE A CRITICAL MASS

How Many Does It Take to Have a Critical Mass?

A critical mass of supporters is that number required for a change goal to be sure of being reached. The effort becomes self sustaining, and no longer needs to be kept alive through constant vigilance. It is unclear just what percentage of an organization's employees constitute a critical mass, but it is often said that when 20% of the employees get solidly behind an idea, success in implementing that idea is assured. There is probably a lot of variance around this figure, depending on the following three criteria: ownership, direction and purpose, and versatility. It is my hypothesis that the more completely these criteria are developed, the lower the percentage needed for critical mass; and the less well developed these criteria, the higher the percentage needed.

Ownership

By ownership for an idea, I mean the degree of responsibility one feels for the idea, the amount of energy one makes available in service of the idea, and the degree of commitment one feels for the idea. The stronger the expression of ownership, the lower the percentage needed to create a critical mass for change (Adams, ODP, 1971)

Direction and Purpose

In almost every working unit, there are about as many subtly different interpretations of the group's mission and purpose as there are group members. It can be a very valuable team development exercise to have everyone in a group complete the statement "We behave as if our mission were…," compile the responses anonymously, and discuss the differences until agreement is reached. In the absence of this clarification and alignment exercise, everyone in the group is likely to be moving in a slightly different direction based on her/his understanding of the purpose and mission. This same phenomenon is likely to be true relative to the goals of any change effort. The clearer the direction and purpose, and the higher the degree of alignment, the lower the percentage needed to create a critical mass for change.

Versatility

Most of us operate under the assumption that if others would only behave and see the world the way we behave and see the world, we'd be much happier, more productive, etc. In fact, if everyone DID operate exactly like we operate, we'd only be able to function in a rather narrow arena. Different people have different perspectives, different styles of operating, and different strengths to offer. We won't be able to access these fully if we don't operate with a high degree of behavioral versatility. (I'm defining versatility as appropriate flexibility.) In general systems theory, Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety states that the subsystem with the greatest repertoire of responses will eventually control the entire system.

The same principle applies on the level of individuals' automatic pilot mindsets. The most effective leaders are those who can hold short term and long term perspectives simultaneously. That is, they are able to think strategically about implications and consequences while operating on immediate issues and priorities. They can also be responsive to pressures arising in the environment while simultaneously creating innovative approaches and longer term visions.

The greater the degree of behavioral and mindset versatility, the lower the percentage required for creating a critical mass for change.

In summary, whenever we are contemplating changing the way things are in an organization, we need to develop a foundation of supporters large enough to cause the change effort to be self sustaining. We can probably do this more easily if we develop strong ownership, alignment with clearly articulated direction and purpose, and high behavioral and mindset versatility. I predict that the more successful one is at developing these qualities, the smaller the choir has to be.

Essential Steps in Overcoming Inertia

In the 1960's, David Gleicher, then at Arthur d. Little, postulated that in order to bring about change, three variables had to be developed so that their combined effort was greater than the investment in the status quo. In the last few years, with input from several colleagues, I have been using Gleicher's idea with the additional variables added. The five essential steps to overcoming inertia, in my present way of thinking, are described below.

Think of a change effort or influence situation you are currently involved with, and explore how you could be more effective by enhancing each of these five variables. Choose anything from changing a personal habit to renegotiating a personal relationship to implementing a major reorganization.

Belief That Change Is Possible and Desirable

If the people in a system do not feel that it is possible to make the desired change, or if they don't think the change is a desirable one, then this is the place to work. In your personal example, what could you do to increase the sense that the desired change is both possible and desirable?

Sufficient Disenchantment with the Status Quo

Kurt Lewin taught us that we first have to unfreeze a situation before we can expect any movement. This means operating in ways that will destabilize the status quo. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways including: increasing dissatisfaction, threatening adverse consequences, and (preferably) building a vision of a better way of being that people can relate to. In your personal example, what could you do to increase disenchantment with the status quo?

Clear Goals and Outcomes

This step is much like the Purpose and Direction criterion already described. People may be sufficiently disenchanted with the status quo, but they aren't likely to make any changes if they aren't clear about what is expected or what the desired outcomes are. In your personal example, what could you do to clarify the goals and outcomes of the change you want to make? Are there actions you could take to ensure that everyone both understand and agrees with the goals and direction?

Success-Oriented First Steps

When the previous three steps are sufficiently well developed, there still may not be any movement if people don't know what the first steps are. Developing some small steps that you are sure will succeed, such as a thirty day trial of a new policy, or giving each person in a group a specific and easily completed assignment, can create a great deal of momentum towards the desired change outcomes. Succeeding steps become obvious as the early steps are carried out. In your personal example, what are one or two steps you could initiate which you know would be successful?

Role of Others in Ensuring Success

Even when the focus of our change or influence is ready to move, the effort can be defeated if people at the "boundary" of the effort aren't informed and perhaps negotiated with. For example, if a group decides to implement a new time management scheme, those individuals from other groups who habitually interact with members of the group may need to be informed about the new practice, so as not to "interrupt' at the wrong time. In some cases, one can maintain the momentum of change by negotiating moral support or setting up an agreement whereby another person can provide monitoring, challenge, expertise or access to resources.

A Checklist for Creating Critical Mass for Change

In summary we may unwittingly prolong the time it takes to implement a change if we overlook the normal individual and group tendencies to maintain status quo, expect too much from training interventions, and overlook the need for novelty management. Conversely, we may reduce the time it takes by focusing most of our energy on those who favor the change and by promoting ownership, clarity of direction, and versatility among these "choir members." And, when we need to be influential in our dealings with others, we can improve our effectiveness by focusing on the five variables for overcoming status quo inertia.

The following represents a summary of these points in the form of a checklist of things to attend to when you need to implement a change or influence a situation.

1. Are you aware of your own and others' non-conscious cognitive patterns (automatic pilot mindsets) which may be operating to reinforce the status quo?

2. If a training program is called for or contemplated, is it being implemented as a means, or is it being viewed as an end in itself?

3. How well are you anticipating and managing the resistance to change which arises from excessive novelty (surprise, uncertainty, unfamiliarity)?

   - Avoidance of unnecessary surprises
   - Availability of mechanisms for creating clarity and/or familiarity
   - Identification and dissemination of information which can reduce novelty
   - Provision of the skills needed to be effective in the new situation
   - Identification of attitudes and values which need to be created and/or reinforced
   - Development of tangible and/or intangible rewards for adopting the new state

4. Have you identified those people in the system who are already "on board" and in strong support of the change (the choir)? Once they have been identified, they can be brought together for "choir practice," to discuss strategy for implementation and for bringing in new choir members from those in the system who are waiting in the wings (the early adopters in [figure 4-5 on page 199]).

5. Do the choir members feel a strong sense of ownership (responsibility, energy, and commitment) for the change?
   - What can you do to further enhance their feelings of ownership?
   - Are there ways to increase people's responsibility for successful implementation?
   - In what ways can you help people feel even more committed to a successful outcome?

6. How clear are you about the direction and the purpose of the change? Can you state the results or outcomes that you want in very specific terms? Have these been clearly articulated—especially to the "choir"? Are you confident that all they key supporters understand the direction and purpose and agree that they are appropriate?

7. Do your core supporters in the choir represent a diversity of operating styles and personalities? Are they aware of their differences and do they value them and recognize the potential contributions of each to the overall effort? Are they able to shift their styles of operating appropriately to support the overall effort?

8. Are your core supporters in the choir able to simultaneously hold the vision of the outcome and the immediate priorities in their minds? Are they able to both anticipate future contingencies and be innovative from moment to moment?

9. What can you do to spread the feeling that the desired change is both desirable and possible?

10. Are those in the system to be most affected feeling sufficiently dissatisfied with the status quo to welcome the intended change?

11. Do the people to be most affected share the same clear understanding of the goals for the change? Do they agree that these goals are worthy?

12. What are some small steps that can be taken towards the goal? Are you confident that these steps will be successful? Which ones will be highly visible?

13. Can you identify the people, both within the system and around the edges of it, who can in some way contribute to the success of the change or influence effort?

Note: Herb Shepard was a National Training Lab (NTL) member and pioneer in the application of NTL change approaches to the development of organizations. This article, introduced to NTL lab participants in one of the numerous learning laboratories Herb conducted for NTL, was later published in the November 1975 *Organizational Development Practitioner,* a publication of the National Organization Development Network. It is classic advice to all change agents.

Rules of Thumb for Change Agents

by Herb Shepard

The following aphorisms are not so much bits of advice as things to think about when you are being a change agent, a consultant, or an organization or community development specialist—or when you are just being yourself trying to bring about something that involves other people.

RULE I: Stay alive.

This rule counsels against self-sacrifice on behalf of a cause that you do not wish to be your last.

Two exceptionally talented doctoral students came to the realization that the routines they were being put through to get their credentials were absurd, and decided not to complete the degree because they would be untrue to themselves to conform to and support an absurd system. That sort of reasoning is almost always self-destructive. Besides, their gesture was unlikely to have any impact whatsoever on the system they were taking a stand against.

This is not to say that one should never take a stand, or a survival risk. But such risks should be taken as part of a purposeful strategy of change, and appropriately timed and targeted. When they are taken under such circumstances, one is very much alive.

But Rule I is much more than a survival rule. The rule means that you should let your whole being be involved in the undertaking. Since most of us have never even been in touch with our whole being, it means a lot of putting together of parts that have been divided, of using internal communication channels that have been closed or were never opened.

Staying alive means loving yourself. Self-disparagement leads to the suppression of potentials, to a win-lose formulation of the world, and to wasting life in defensive maneuvering.

Staying alive means staying in touch with your purpose. It means using your skills, your emotions, your labels and positions, rather than being used by them. It means not being trapped in other people's games. It means turning yourself on and off, rather than being dependent on the situation. It means choosing with a view to the consequences as well as the impulse. It means going with the flow even while swimming against it. It means living in several worlds without being swallowed up in any. It means seeing dilemmas as opportunities for creativity. It means greeting absurdity with laughter while trying to unscramble it. It means capturing the moment in the light of the future. It means seeing the environment through the eyes of your purpose.

RULE II: Start where the system is.

This is such ancient wisdom that one might expect its meaning had been fully explored and apprehended. Yet in practice the rule—and the system—are often violated.

The rule implies that one should begin by diagnosing the system. But systems do not necessarily *like* being diagnosed. Even the term *diagnosis* may be offensive. And the system may be even less ready for someone who calls himself or herself a "change agent." It is easy for the practitioner to forget that the use of jargon, which prevents laymen from understanding the professional mysteries, is a hostile act.

Starting where the client is can be called the Empathy Rule. To communicate effectively, to obtain a basis for building sound strategy, the change agent needs to understand how the client sees himself and his situation, and needs to understand the culture of the system. Establishing the required rapport does not mean that the change agent who wants to work in a traditional industrial setting should refrain from growing a beard. It does mean that, if he has a beard, the beard is likely to determine where the client is when they first meet, and the client's curiosity needs to be dealt with. Similarly, the rule does not mean that a female change agent in a male organization should try to act like one of the boys, or that a young change agent should try to act like a senior executive. One thing it does mean is that sometimes where the client is, is wondering where the change agent is. Rarely is the client in any one place at any one time. That is, he or she may be ready to pursue any of several paths. The task is to walk together on the most promising path.

Even unwitting or accidental violations of the Empathy Rule can destroy the situation. I lost a client through two violations in one morning. The client group spent a consulting day at my home. They arrived early in the morning, before I had my empathy on. The senior member, seeing a picture of my son in the living room, said, "What do you do about boys with long hair?" I replied thoughtlessly, "I think he's handsome that way." The small chasm thus created between my client and me was widened and deepened later that morning when one of the family tortoises walked through the butter dish.

Sometimes starting where the client is, which sounds both ethically and technically virtuous, can lead to some ethically puzzling situations. Robert Frost described a situation in which a consultant was so empathic with a king who was unfit to rule that the king discovered his own unfitness and had himself shot, whereupon the consultant became king.

Empathy permits the development of a mutual attachment between client and consultant. The resulting relationship may be one in which their creativities are joined, a mutual growth relationship. But it can also become one in which the client becomes dependent on the consultant and is manipulated by the consultant. The ethical issues are not associated with starting where the system is, but with how one moves with it.

Are the use of complacency shock, pulling out the rug of familiar structure, and two-by-four confrontations of differences violations of the rule? Of course, but they do help to determine and to reveal where the client is, sometimes at the cost of the relationship. They are often productive if the client is committed to the scene and the consultant.

RULE III:
Never work uphill.

This is a comprehensive rule, and a number of the other rules are corollaries or examples of it. It is an appeal for an organic rather than a mechanistic approach to change, for a collaborative approach to change, for building strength and building on strength. It has a number of implications that bear on the choices change agents make about how to use themselves, and it says something about life itself.

RULE III Corollary 1:
Don't build hills as you go.

This corollary cautions against working in a way that builds resistance to movement in the direction you have chosen as desirable. For example, a program which has a favorable effect on one portion of a population may have the opposite effect on other portions of the population. Perhaps the commonest error of this kind has been made in the employment of T-group training in organizations—turning on the participants and turning off the non-participants in one easy lesson.

RULE III Corollary 2: Work in the most promising arena.

The physician-patient relationship is often regarded as analogous to consultant-client relationship. The results for system change can be unfortunate. For example, the organization development consultant is likely to be greeted with delight by executives who see in his specialty the solution to a hopeless situation in an outlying plant. Some organization development consultants have disappeared for years because of the irresistibility of such challenges. Others have whiled away their time trying to counteract the Peter Principle by shoring up incompetent managers.

RULE III Corollary 3: Build resources.

Don't do anything alone that could be accomplished more easily or more certainly by a team. Don Quixote is not the only change agent whose effectiveness was handicapped by ignoring this rule. The change agent's task is an heroic one, but the need to be a hero does not facilitate team building. As a result, many change agents lose effectiveness by becoming spread too thin. Effectiveness can be enhanced by investing in the development of partners.

RULE III Corollary 4: Don't overorganize.

The democratic ideology and theories of participative management that many change agents possess can sometimes interfere with common sense. A year or two ago, I offered a course, to be taught by graduate students. The course was oversubscribed. It seemed that a data-based process for deciding whom to admit would be desirable, and that participation of the graduate students in the decision would also be desirable. So I sought data from the candidates about themselves and copied their responses for the graduate students. Then the graduate students and I held a series of meetings. Then the candidates were informed of the decision. In this way, we wasted a good deal of time, and everyone felt a little worse than if we had used an arbitrary decision rule.

RULE III Corollary 5: Don't argue if you can't win.

Win-lose strategies are to be avoided because they deepen conflict instead of resolving it. But change agents should build their support constituency as large and deep and strong as possible so that they can continue to risk.

RULE III Corollary 6: Play God a little.

If the change agent doesn't make the critical value decisions, someone else will be happy to do so. Will a given situation contribute to your fulfillment? Are you creating a better world for yourself and others, or are you keeping a system in operation that should be allowed to die? For example, the public education system is a mess. Does that mean that the change agent is morally obligated to try to improve it, destroy it, or develop a substitute for it? No, not even if he or she knows how. But the change agent does need a value perspective for making choices like that.

RULE IV: Innovation requires a good idea, initiative, and a few friends.

Little can be accomplished alone, and the effects of social and cultural forces on individual perception are so distorting that the change agent needs a partner, if only to maintain perspective and purpose.

The quality of the partner is just as important as the quality of the idea. Like the change agent, partners must be relatively autonomous people. Persons who are authority oriented—who need to rebel or to submit—are not reliable partners; the rebels take the wrong risks and the good soldiers don't take any. And rarely do they command the respect and trust from others that is needed if an innovation is to be supported.

The partners need not be numerous. For an example, the engineering staff of a chemical company designed a new process plant using edge-of-the-art technology. The design departed radically from the experience of top management, and they were about to reject it. The engineering chief suggested that the design be reviewed by a distinguished chemical engineering professor. The principal designers were in fact former students of the professor. For this reason he accepted the assignment, charged the company a fee for reviewing the design (which he did not trouble to examine), and told the management the design was brilliantly conceived and executed. By this means the engineers not only implemented their innovations, but also grew in the esteem of their management.

A change agent experienced in the Washington environment reports that he knows of only one case of successful interdepartmental collaboration in mutually designing, funding, and managing a joint project. It was accomplished through the informal collaboration of this young change agent and three similarly minded young men, one from each of four agencies. They were friends and met weekly for lunch. They conceived the project and planned strategies for implementing it. Each person undertook to interest and influence the relevant key people in his own agency. The four served one another as consultants and helpers in influencing opinion and bringing the decision makers together.

An alternative statement of Rule IV is as follows: find the people who are ready and able to work, introduce them to one another, and work with them. Perhaps because many change agents have been trained in the helping professions, perhaps because we have all been trained to think bureaucratically, concepts like organizational position, representativeness, or need are likely to guide the change agent's selection of those he or she works with.

A more powerful beginning can sometimes be made by finding those persons in the system whose values are congruent with those of the change agent, who possess vitality and imagination, who are willing to work overtime, and who are eager to learn. Such people are usually glad to have someone like the change agent join in getting something important accomplished, and a careful search is likely to turn up quite a few. In fact, there may be enough of them to accomplish general system change, if they can team up in appropriate ways.

In building such teamwork the change agent's abilities will be fully challenged, as he joins them in establishing conditions for trust and creativity; dealing with their anxieties about being seen as subversive; enhancing their leadership, consulting, problem-solving, diagnosing, and innovating skills; and developing appropriate group norms and policies.

RULE V: Load experiments for success.

This sounds like counsel to avoid risk taking. But the decision to experiment always entails risk. After that decision has been made, take all precautions.

The rule also sounds scientifically immoral. But whether an experiment produces the expected results depends upon the experimenter's depth of insight into the conditions and processed involved. Of course, what is experimental is what is new to the system; it may or may not be new to the change agent.

Build an umbrella over the experiment. A chemical process plant which was to be shut down because of the inefficiency of its operations undertook a union-management cooperation effort to improve efficiency, which involved a modified form of profit-sharing. Such plans were contrary to company policy, but the regional vice president was interested in the experiment, and successfully concealed it from his associates. The experiment was successful; the plant became profitable. But in this case, the umbrella turned out not to be big enough. The plant was shut down anyway.

Use the Hawthorne effect. Even poorly conceived experiments are often made to succeed when the participants feel ownership. And conversely one of the obstacles to the spread of useful innovations is that the groups to which they are offered do not feel ownership of them.

For example, if you hope to use experience-based learning as part of your strategy, the first persons to be invited should be those who consistently turn all their experiences into constructive learning. Similarly, in introducing team development processes into a system, begin with the best functioning team.

Maintain voluntarism. This is not easy to do in systems where invitations are understood to be commands, but nothing vital can be built on such motives as duty, obedience, security seeking, or responsiveness to social pressure.

RULE VI: Light many fires.

Not only does a large, monolithic development or change program have high visibility and other qualities of a good target, it also tends to prevent subsystems from developing ownership of, and consequent commitment to, the program.

The meaning of this rule is more orderly than the random prescription—light many fires—suggests. Any part of a system is the way it is partly because of the way the rest of the system is. To work toward change in one subsystem is to become one more determinant of its performance. Not only is the change agent working uphill, but as soon as he turns his back, other forces in the system will press the subsystem back towards its previous performance mode.

If many interdependent subsystems are catalyzed and the change agent brings them together to facilitate one another's efforts, the entire system can begin to move.

Understanding patterns of interdependency among subsystems can lead to a strategy of fire setting. For example, in public school systems it requires collaboration among politicians, administrators, teachers, parents, and students to bring about significant innovation, and active opposition on the part of only one of these groups to prevent it. In parochial school systems, on the other hand, collaboration between the administration and the church can provide a powerful impetus for change in the other groups.

RULE VII: Keep an optimistic bias.

Our society grinds along with much polarization and cruelty, and even the helping professions compose their world of grim problems to be worked through. The change agent is usually flooded with the destructive aspects of the situations he or she enters. People in most systems are impressed by one another's weaknesses, and stereotype each other with such incompetencies as they can discover.

This rule does not advise ignoring destructive forces. But its positive prescription is that the change agent be especially alert to the constructive forces, which are often masked and suppressed in a problem-oriented, envious culture.

People have as great an innate capacity for joy as for resentment, but resentment causes them to overlook opportunities for joy. In a workshop for married couples, a husband and wife were discussing their sexual problem and how hard they were working to solve it. They were not making much progress, since they didn't realize that sex is not a problem but an opportunity.

Individuals and groups locked in destructive kinds of conflict focus on their differences. The change agent's job is to help them discover and build on their commonalities, so that they will have a foundation of respect and trust which will permit them to use their differences as a source of creativity. The unhappy partners focus on past hurts and continue to destroy the present and future with them. The change agent's job is to help them change the present so that they will have a new past on which to create a better future.

RULE VIII: Capture the moment.

A good sense of relevance and timing is often treated as though it were a gift or intuition rather than something that can be learned, something spontaneous rather than something planned. The opposite is nearer the truth. One is more likely to capture the moment when everything one has learned is readily available.

Some years ago my wife and I were having a very destructive fight. Our nine-year-old daughter decided to intervene. She put her arms around her mother and asked, "What does Daddy do that bugs you?" She was an attentive audience for the next few minutes while my wife told her, ending in tears. She then put her arms around me, asking, "What does Mommy do that bugs you?" and listened attentively to my response, which also ended in tears. She then went to the record player and put on a favorite love song ("If Ever I Should Leave You") and left us alone to make up.

The elements of my daughter's intervention had all been learned. They were available to her, and she combined them in a way that could make the moment better.

Perhaps it's our training in linear cause-and-effect thinking and the neglect of our capacities for imagery that makes us so often unable to see the multiple potential of the moment. Entering the situation blank is not the answer. One needs to have as many frameworks for seeing and as many strategies for acting as possible. But it's not enough to involve only one's head in the situation; one's heart has to get involved too. Cornelia Skinner once said that the first law of the stage is to love your audience. You can love your audience only if you love yourself. If you have relatively full access to your organized experience, to yourself, and to the situation, you will capture the moment more often.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR PROJECTS

You will need to plan, complete, and reflect on two projects for the School. Both projects should be something you and the team can complete in the time allotted. Often the second project builds on the first. Each member of the team completes his or her own report and submits it separately. Trainers will read and comment on your reports.

Deadlines for the projects are ______________________________

All reports are to be sent to ______________________________

1. **Identify an improvement in congregational life from the list provided on the following pages.**

2. **Think about the issue of readiness. Is your congregation ready for the improvement you want to make? If not, what could you do to help increase readiness?**
   If, for example, you want to deepen the congregation's ability to listen to God in Sunday liturgy via the introduction of silence, and you're in a congregation where silence doesn't currently occur, you may want to start small and work around the edges. Begin a class on prayer that includes a segment on silent prayer, and give people experience with it. Begin to use silence in meetings. Teach and coach people about what to do with silence in liturgy. All of this happens before you make the actual change you want to make.

3. **Think about your own skills as individuals and teams. Do you as a team have the competence to handle what you want to do?**
   The best interventions are the ones that are (*a*) needed to improve the health of the system, (*b*) realistic in terms of what they seek to improve given the readiness of the system, or done in a way that creates readiness, and (*c*) led by those who have the knowledge and skills to do the intervention. If you feel shaky about the skills needed, get coaching from others, bone up and practice the skill needed (for instance, facilitation skills), or get outside help or advice if needed.

4. **Be prepared to be flexible once you actually get into the doing of the project**.
   Remember the best way to learn about a system is to intervene in it. When you begin the project, you may quickly find out how you could've done it better. Don't be dismayed, just course correct!

Melissa M. Skelton and the Diocese of Olympia, 2009

PROJECT AREA IDEAS

Remember: Most of these ideas could be implemented at any level in the congregation. (Hint: use the OD Cube.)

Data Gathering and Assessment Based on a Model

1. Expand the Gather-Transform-Send interview assignment from Year A (with any specific group or a representative group from the congregation). Collect and collate the data, and identify and potentially work one improvement based on the learning.
2. Collect data on the "Send" portion of Model 1: Gather-Transform-Send.
   - Choose a large, representative group or one particular subgroup and develop an interview guide to learn about people's life in the world with an eye toward learning and actions related to how congregational life could better support their everyday life as Christians.
3. Collect data on the "Gather" (Invite, Greet, Orient, Incorporate) portion of Model 1: Gather-Transform-Send and explore actions to improve "Gathering."
4. Plan and execute data gathering among new members, investigating questions such as these:
   - What drew you to St. _____ and how did you hear about the congregation?
   - What was easy and what was hard about getting connected here?
   - Why have you stayed here?

   Once the learning has been completed, explore ideas for action.
5. Teach a model (any of the models in the Models section of the manual) to a group and guide the group in using it to assess its life. Explore actions for improvement coming out of the assessment.

Facilitation and Working in Groups and Teams

6. Plan and facilitate a meeting between two different groups in the congregation that need better collaboration (inter-group work).
7. Teach facilitation skills to leaders of ministry areas, and assist them in assessing their meetings.
8. Run a mutual expectations process between two groups or a between a leader and a group in the congregation.
9. Teach "Group and Team Dynamics" from Year A or the Group Needs Model from Year B and create a meeting assessment tool that you use with a group or team.

Strengthening Sources of Transformation

10. Initiate or strengthen the Daily Office in the congregation, either corporately or for use in individual life.
11. Use the "mind-heart-practice" approach from Model 2: Sources of Transformation to create an adult formation class or series, exploring one other part of Sources of Transformation (for example, a class on prayer taught with mind, heart, and practice in mind).
12. Develop and implement a plan to prepare the congregation for silence in liturgy, and then do it!
13. Plan and implement some other improvement in Sunday morning/evening liturgy.
14. Assess the quality of the congregation's life in community, and identify an idea or ideas to strengthen this dimension of the congregation's life.

Marketing

15. Do the process on Episcopal/Anglican identity with the congregation, identifying any actions to deepen congregational identity.
16. Plan and lead an overall congregational identity process, and identify next steps to implement related to this identity.
17. Plan and implement some way by which the congregation or another group within the congregation can explore the congregation's neighborhood/local context.

Cultural Analysis

18. Using the cultural tools in Year B (Schein), engage a group of people in identifying artifacts (ways of working), what they might suggest about the values of the congregation, and what actions for improvement this analysis might suggest.

Work on Self

19. Work on deepening your own prayer life as a leader.
20. Set up a process of getting regular feedback on preaching, presiding, or some leadership function, and identify learning for implementation.

MBTI

21. Using the Bridges book on typology and organizations, work with a group to develop a working hypothesis of your congregation's typology and identify any needed actions.

Melissa M. Skelton, CCD trainers, and the Diocese of Olympia, 2009

HOW TO SPEND THE TIME IN COLLEAGUE GROUPS AND IN CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS

Trainers will be circulating and will be available for consults and coaching on any part of this process.

1. As a colleague group, spend some time building your life as a community. Remember some of the tools to do this!

   Time slot __________ to __________.

2. In congregational teams, or on your own if you're here without other congregational teammates, spend time thinking and writing about a potential project. Try to generate options, choose one for a start, and then be ready with a statement of what you want to accomplish in the project. Work on developing your "From __________ to __________" statement.

   Time slot __________ to __________.

3. Reconvene in colleague groups, and taking one project at a time, choose a facilitator and with one team (or single) as a presenter, do the force-field analysis process (see page 68) on the proposed project. Other team members are to help the presenter generate and explore their driving and restraining forces. This analysis allows the presenter (whose proposed project is being explored) to delve more deeply into what he/she/they might focus on in actually making the proposed change happen. Be sure to take some time at the end of each facilitation to give the facilitator some feedback.

   Time slots __________ to __________ and __________ to __________.

4. After each person/team has a turn as a presenter, allow some time for each person/team to do more detailed work on the steps of his/her/their project, using the Congregational Project Planning and Report Form found on page 22 of this manual.

   Time slot __________ to __________.

5. Reconvene in the colleague group and share the project in greater detail and ask for feedback. Choose a facilitator to facilitate the Likes, Concerns, Wishes assessment process found on page 71 of this manual—identifying what others appreciate, what concerns they have, and what wishes they might have—to give some final feedback to the person/team sharing the project.

   Time slot __________ to __________.

6. This is all input for the project owner(s), who will then go back home and finalize his/her/their project.

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

COMMON UNIT 5

Whenever people meet who don't share fundamental assumptions about how the world works, intercultural communication takes place. Sometimes the difference in culture is external, superficial, and obvious—for example, differences in dress or language. Other times people may share artifacts of culture such as language or religious denomination but have cultural orientations that cause them to see the world differently.

Communications researcher Myron Lustig suggests that when intercultural communication takes place, it is considered **competent** if it is perceived as (1) **effective** in fulfilling certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also (2) **appropriate** to the context in which it occurs.

- Appropriate communication is proper and suitable to the cultural context.
- Effective communication achieves the desired outcome.

Competent intercultural communication is also affected by the knowledge, motivation, and skills of the communicators.

Factors influencing competent communication…	Increasing your effectiveness as an intercultural communicator…
Knowledge: your information about the culture group with whom you are interacting	You can increase your **knowledge** of other culture groups by participating in cultural events and learning about validated cultural patterns.
Motivation: your overall intentions and emotional response to intercultural communications	You can increase your **motivation** to engage in intercultural communication by identifying your own cultural patterns and reflecting on positive aspects of past communications.
Skills: your ability to perform effective and appropriate behaviours	You can increase your **skill** by practicing behaviours in new cultural frameworks and receiving feedback from trusted colleagues.

FIGURE 5-1: COMPETENT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

MY CULTURAL ORIENTATION WORKSHEET

For each pair of statements, circle the number that reflects your values and behaviour.

Assertiveness

1. Being pushy is unacceptable. Tenderness and modesty are better.		↔		Everyone should say what they are really thinking.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Cooperation is the best way to get a job done.		↔		Competition produces the best results.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. It's better to be ambiguous and subtle when talking about something important.		↔		It's better to be clear and to the point when talking about something important.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. I want to live in harmony with the world around me.		↔		I want to be able to control the world around me.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. I trust someone when I know what they will do or say.		↔		I trust experts who produce results.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

FIGURE 5-2: MY CULTURAL ORIENTATION WORKSHEET

(page 1 of 6)

Future Orientation

1. I prioritize activities that are required or that fulfill social obligations.		⟷		I prioritize activities that help me meet my goals.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. I can live with a rigid leader.		⟷		I need a leader who adapts.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. You can't have wealth and happiness.		⟷		You can achieve a healthy balance between personal fulfillment and wealth.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Leaders should follow procedures in a predictable way.		⟷		Leaders should look for patterns that help navigate uncertain future events.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

Gender Egalitarianism

1. Women should contribute to society by focusing on traditional roles.		⟷		Women should contribute to society through economic output and innovation.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. I feel most comfortable with male leaders.		⟷		I feel comfortable with leaders of any gender.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. There are some roles only men should occupy.		⟷		Social roles for different genders should be less rigid.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

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Humane Orientation

1. People should behave in ways that are best for them.		⟷		People should behave in ways that are best for others.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. It's best to feel comfortable and enjoy yourself.		⟷		It's best to be altruistic, kind, and generous.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. People should work hard to earn money and accumulate wealth.		⟷		People should work hard to build relationships with each other.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. The government's role is to provide for society's well-being.		⟷		The government's role is to facilitate people providing for one another.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

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Collectivism (In-Group and Institutional)

1. What I think and believe should govern my public behaviour.		⟷		My duties and obligations to others should govern my public behaviour.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. People should try not to judge others based on what groups they belong to.		⟷		People should recognize differences between groups.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. When communicating, people should be direct and speak for themselves.		⟷		When communicating, people should be delicate and general in order to reflect the group's perspective.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Rules and laws should protect the individual's interest and freedoms.		⟷		Rules and laws should promote safety and what's best for everyone.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

Performance Orientation

1. Members of a group should be loyal to each other and value group identity.		⟷		A group should accomplish its goals.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Performance reviews should emphasize integrity, loyalty, and cooperation.		⟷		Performance reviews should emphasize measurable results of work.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. I value the unique gift brought by each person working with me.		⟷		I value the skills and results members of my team contribute.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

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4. I begin events at the scheduled time.		⟷		I begin events when important participants have all arrived.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. It's important to get things done as soon as you can.		⟷		It's ok to get things done when you get around to them.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

Power Distance

1. It's better for people to have equal access to wealth and power.		⟷		It's better to have clear roles for each person in a society.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. A person's power and wealth is dependent on their knowledge and skill.		⟷		A person's power and wealth is dependent on how valuable their resources and holdings are.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. I feel uncomfortable when people exercise authority over me or I must exercise authority over others.		⟷		I feel uncomfortable when it's unclear who has power and authority.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

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Uncertainty Avoidance

1. I don't care much for social rituals.		⟷		I don't like it when people don't behave the way we were taught.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Someone's promise is good enough for me.		⟷		Promises are good, but I want to see it in writing.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. When I'm working in a group, we remember the important things we decided.		⟷		When I'm working in a group, we record and save the details of our decisions.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. I'm willing to take risks without a lot of planning.		⟷		When I take risks, I spend a lot of time planning and considering the consequences.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. I try to go with the flow.				I try to keep things in order.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

6. It's better to talk through expectations and disputes than to make rules.		⟷		It's better to make rules so that everyone has the same understanding.	
1	2	3	4	5	6

(page 6 of 6)

Geert Hofstede developed the first well-researched cultural taxonomy, or method of categorizing cultural preferences and practices. In the intervening years, some have developed other models that correspond in whole or in part to Hofstede's work.

In the late 1990s, researchers at Project GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organization Behavior Effectiveness) refined a cultural taxonomy based on Hofstede's work and tested working groups within organizations in 62 countries. Their methodology sought to address some criticisms of Hofstede's earlier research.

Project GLOBE identifies the following nine dimensions of culture.

Assertiveness

The degree to which people are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships

Low		**High**
View assertiveness as socially unacceptable; value modesty and tenderness	⟷	Value assertive, dominant, and tough behaviour for everyone in society
Value cooperation	⟷	Value competition
Value ambiguity and subtlety of language	⟷	Value being explicit and to the point in communications
Value harmony with environment over control	⟷	Try to have control over the environment
Build trust based on predictability	⟷	Build trust based on capability or calculation

Future Orientation

The degree to which people engage in future-oriented behaviours such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification

Low		**High**
Have individuals who are less intrinsically motivated	⟷	Have individuals who are more strategically motivated
Have inflexible and maladaptive managers	⟷	Have flexible and adaptive managers
See material success and spiritual fulfillment as dualities requiring a trade-off	⟷	See material success and spiritual fulfillment as an integrated whole
Emphasize leadership that focuses on repetition of reproducible and routine sequences	⟷	Emphasize visionary leadership that is capable of seeing patterns in the face of chaos and uncertainty

Gender Egalitarianism

The extent to which people minimize gender-role differences and gender discrimination while promoting gender equality

Low		High
Low education level among women and girls and low workforce participation levels among women	⟷	High education level among women and girls and high level of workforce participation among women
Fewer women in positions of authority	⟷	More women in positions of authority
More rigidity of social roles of women	⟷	Less rigidity of social roles of women

Humane Orientation

The degree to which people encourage others to be fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind

Low		High
Self-interest is important	⟷	Others are important (family, friends, strangers)
Values of pleasure, comfort, self-enjoyment are a priority	⟷	Values of altruism, benevolence, kindness, love, generosity have a higher priority
Power and material possessions motivate people	⟷	Need for belonging and affiliation motivates people
State sponsors public provisions and sectors	⟷	State supports private sector and maintains balance between public/private

In-Group Collectivism

The degree to which people express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their families/tribes

Low		High
Attitudes and personal needs determine an individual's social behaviour	⟷	Duties and social obligations determine an individual's social behaviour
Communication is direct, emphasizing • specific topics • perspective of individual	⟷	Communication is indirect, emphasizing • the concepts/narrative • perspective of group
Individuals make fewer distinctions based on in- or out-groups	⟷	Individuals make more distinctions based on in- or out-groups

Institutional Collectivism

The degree to which a culture's institutional practices encourage collective actions and the collective distribution of resources

Low		High
Organizational and political decisions (rules, law, process) are made based on individual interest	⟷	Organizational and political decisions (rules, law, process) are made based on collective interest
Individual goals take precedence over group goals • self-interest • personal fulfillment	⟷	Group goals take precedence over individual goals • community's well-being • safety
Communication is direct	⟷	Communication is indirect

Performance Orientation

The extent to which people encourage others to improve their task-oriented performance and excel

Low		High
Emphasizes loyalty and belonging	⟷	Emphasizes results more than people
Shows high respect for quality of life	⟷	Rewards performance
Performance appraisal emphasizes integrity, loyalty, and cooperative spirit	⟷	Performance appraisal emphasizes achieving results
Values "who you are"	⟷	Values "what you do"
Has a polychronic approach to time	⟷	Has a monochronic approach to time
Has a low sense of urgency	⟷	Has a high sense of urgency

Power Distance

The degree to which people believe power should be stratified, unequally shared, and concentrated at higher levels of an organization or government

Low		High
Large middle class	⟷	Society stratified on several criteria (e.g., race, class, caste, gender)
Power base is transient and sharable (knowledge, skills)	⟷	Power base is stable and scarce (e.g., land)
Power is seen as social dominance	⟷	Power provides social order and role stability

Uncertainty Avoidance

The extent to which people strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on social norms, rules, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events

Low		High
Prefer informal interaction	⟷	Prefer formal interaction
Prefer word/verbal agreement to contracts	⟷	Prefer written contract to word/verbal agreement
Less record keeping regarding decisions	⟷	Meticulous record keeping
Less calculated risk-taking	⟷	More calculated risk-taking
Less resistance to change	⟷	More resistance to change
Less desire to make/enforce rules	⟷	More desire to make/enforce rules

Why use taxonomies of culture?

- Cultures systematically vary. Individuals differ in their expression of those culture(s).
- You can use taxonomies like Project Globe to gain **culture-general** knowledge of patterns of cultural behaviour and review the data to gain **culture-specific** knowledge of other groups.
- You can study your own cultural preferences to increase your awareness of your cultural expression.
- You can predict differences in assumptions and social expectations and adjust your behaviour and style of communication.

CASE STUDY AND TASK 1

Objective

The group examines a case of intercultural conflict using Dimensions of Culture (see page 224).

The Task (35 minutes, plus 5 minutes to debrief facilitator)

1. The group identifies a facilitator and debrief leader for this case study.
2. Pick two or three dimensions of culture to use as a lens to examine this case study. Which congregation do you think is higher on the dimension, and what data in the case study causes you to think this? Which is lower?
3. Why might this dimension be important or helpful in diagnosing what is happening in the conflict in this case? How do you see the differences contributing to the conflict?
4. As a consultant or coach, what approaches might you advise leaders to use that could deescalate or manage the conflict more effectively?

Case 1: St. Monica and Holy Name Episcopal Churches

St. Monica's was delighted three years ago when Father Fred approached them about hosting Holy Name, a new church plant targeting new immigrants from Northern Africa. Mother Charlotte and other leaders had talked often about how the congregation of St. Monica's was mostly older, White, and shrinking in numbers while the neighborhood was increasingly full of young families from areas affected by the Arab Spring and regional civil wars. During parish council meetings, leaders often wondered how they could reach out to these new neighbors. Father Fred was himself a new immigrant, making a living interpreting and translating for a local hospital and courthouse. Mother Charlotte liked his entrepreneurial spirit and was impressed that he had received a grant from the diocese to begin working in the community. Father Fred's proposal to the parish council included a nominal building-use fee to offset the cost of Holy Names worshiping in the sanctuary on Sunday afternoons and occasionally using the parish hall or classrooms for community events. Father Fred and leaders of St. Monica's signed an agreement outlining their mutual expectations for building use.

A couple months after the 3:00 service began, Mother Charlotte started hearing complaints from members of the altar guild and the junior warden. The altar guild director noticed things were out of place in the sanctuary and sacristy on Monday mornings. Despite signs clearly indicating food was prohibited in the nave, during his weekly walkthrough the junior warden repeatedly found evidence of kids' snacks there and unemptied garbage in the parish hall. He suspected that Holy Name was to blame.

Mother Charlotte decided to stop by one Sunday unannounced to see what the service was like and discovered that there was no one at church but Father Fred at 3:00. Father Fred assured her that if she waited for a while people would arrive, so she contacted a friend she had planned to meet for dinner to say she might be late. The liturgy began about 3:45. Mother Charlotte appreciated that the service had both English and members' native language but found herself distracted when she observed members casually strolling in during the lessons. After church, she noticed parents focused on their own animated conversations while their children ran down hallways. After taking Safeguarding God's Children training, she wondered if there were safety or liability issues for St. Monica's if the Holy Name parents weren't supervising their kids properly. Dinner plans prevented her from talking at length with Father Fred that evening, so she called him later in the week to discuss her concerns.

Father Fred seemed very receptive. Mother Charlotte explained her liability concerns and reminded him that he had signed an agreement that Holy Name would clean up according to St. Monica's standards. When she suggested he instruct the community about the rules for cleanliness and supervising children, Father Fred assured her that he would do it. Mother Charlotte was relieved.

Two months later Mother Charlotte received a call Sunday at dinnertime from a member of the parish council who had stopped by to pick up an umbrella she had forgotten in the morning. The parish council member was curious when she saw an unusual number of cars in the parking lot. She hadn't heard that any big events were planned. Inside, she found a handful of rowdy kids playing in the parish hall, and when she peaked through the sanctuary window to see what was going on, she saw a standing-room-only crowd dressed up in traditional African clothing as if it were a special occasion. When Mother Charlotte arrived at church Monday morning, she found books left on tables and garbage left in cans and discovered that the kitchen had been used without notification.

Mother Charlotte began to suspect Father Fred had no intention of following the agreement he had signed. Members of the parish council started approaching Mother Charlotte asking to add Holy Names to the agenda so they could discuss how to get them to behave or ask them to leave.

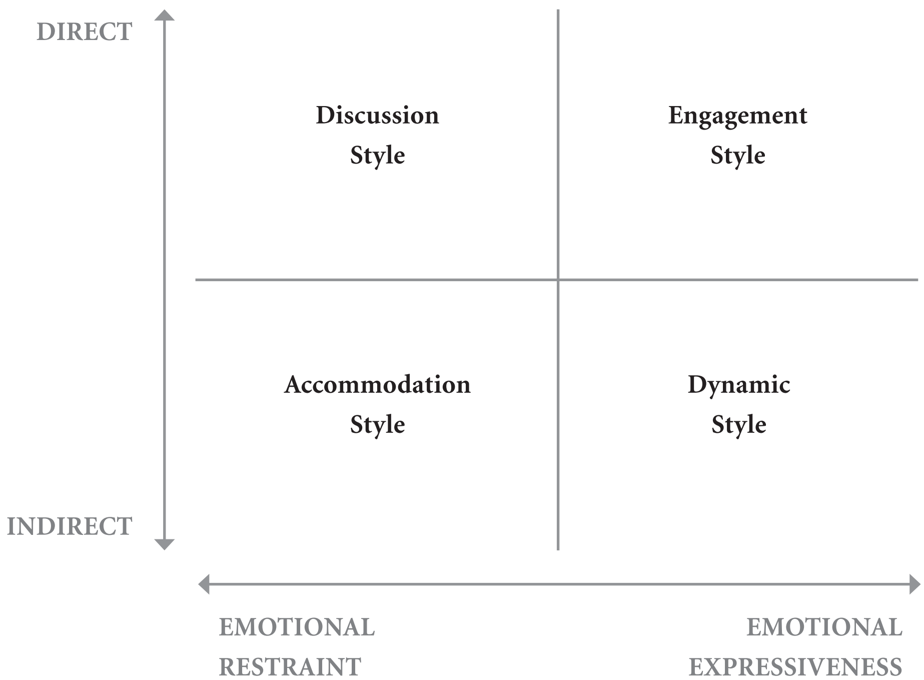

FIGURE 5-3: A MODEL OF INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT STYLE

Objective

The group examines a case of intercultural conflict using the Intercultural Conflict Styles Model (see page 230).

The Task (35 minutes, plus 5 minutes to debrief facilitator)

1. The group identifies a facilitator and debrief leader for this case study.
2. The facilitator draws the Intercultural Conflict Styles Model on newsprint and leads the group in identifying the conflict styles of individuals and groups in the case study. What evidence from the case suggests each conflict style?
3. Where did differences in conflict style lead to escalation of the conflict?
4. As a consultant or coach, what approaches might you advise leaders to use that could deescalate or manage the conflict more effectively?

Case 2: St. Francis Episcopal Church

The wardens at St. Francis Church have just begun discussing whether they should ask their new rector to resign out of a sense that things have just "gone too far."

Prior to the calling of the new rector, St. Francis was a church with an average Sunday attendance of 110 between two liturgies—a Rite 1 8:00 a.m. congregation and a Rite 2 10:00 a.m. congregation. The previous rector, who had been there for 15 years and had retired from the parish, had created a rather typical "broad church" style of worship there: solid, reliable, and on account of his preaching style, a little boring. The parish was made up of people mostly in their 40s and 50s who were professionals—business people, physicians, teachers, attorneys.

Three years ago, the parish hired an organist-choirmaster who had come to the area from a cathedral position in another city to care for his ailing parents. Thus, for its size, St. Francis had developed an extremely high-quality traditional music program and a liturgy that was more musically rich (more singing of the liturgy, chanting of the psalms, monthly Evensong, etc.). At the same time, the parish was in need of revitalizing—the development of a more welcoming spirit that could continue to attract people, especially younger people with children. In their profile and in their conversations with potential candidates for rector, much of this was said.

A year ago, St. Francis called a new rector, Father John, who in his last position as rector grew his church, its programs, and its finances considerably through a "renewal" spirituality and approach. The call committee at St. Francis included two members who had had powerful renewal-based experiences and who heavily influenced the choice of Father John as the new rector at St. Francis. The rest of the committee were persuaded that Father John's new energy had the potential to boost St. Francis's attendance and finances while retaining the best of what the parish had been to date, including the music program.

Father John's Celebration of a New Ministry liturgy created quite a stir. What many noticed was that the liturgy had a different feel to it—the people who came to visit were different, the music chosen for the event was not music that the congregation was familiar with, even the sermon by a visiting colleague of Father John's had a different, more energetic tone. Some also noticed that the organist-choirmaster seemed ruffled and unhappy. Most assumed this change in the feel of the liturgy was just because the event was a "special occasion."

Father John and his family began settling in at the parish. Father John's wife joined the choir. Within a month or so, people began to notice that the Sunday morning liturgy began including simpler, more energetic hymns not in the hymnal and the service music had also shifted to music that was simpler and easier to sing. Simultaneously, Father John initiated a mid-week Bible Study and healing service that at first was attended by a broad group in the parish but then began attracting a smaller group when some who had attended became uncomfortable with the emphasis on spontaneous prayer.

Rumblings in the parish began. Some were saying that the beauty of the traditional liturgy seemed to be fading and was being replaced by something more simple minded. Complaints began surfacing about Father John's sermons as well—too much Holy Spirit talk some said; not intellectual enough, others said. Father John was not visiting people enough, others said. Some even began to speculate that Father John had an "agenda" and was trying to turn the parish into something other than what it was. In the meantime, the organist-choirmaster was clearly unhappy, though the most he did when people tried to engage him in conversation about this was roll his eyes.

After a few months, the wardens went to Father John with some concerns about what was going on. They let him know that people were unhappy and worried about the direction things were going. Father John listened politely, pointed out to the wardens that some new people had come to the parish and liked the current style of worship, and reminded the wardens that worship is the rector's prerogative. He then ended the meeting with a prayer for openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Other things begin to happen: Father John's sermons became more pointed and, some believed, scolding of the parish. Sunday attendance, which had increased slightly when Father John first came to St. Francis, began to level off and then go down slightly. Attendance at the monthly Evensong service traditionally led by a member of the choir began to exceed attendance on Sunday morning, something that had never happened before.

Then at choir practice one night, an incident occurred. While the choir was practicing a new hymn to be sung for the following Sunday, one of the choir members made a negative comment about the hymn. In response to this, Father John's wife got her things together, said "I quit!" and left choir practice.

After the rehearsal, the senior warden, who was a member of the choir, called the junior warden and told her about the incident. It was then that the wardens began talking for the first time about whether Father John should stay at St. Francis.

Intercultural Development Continuum

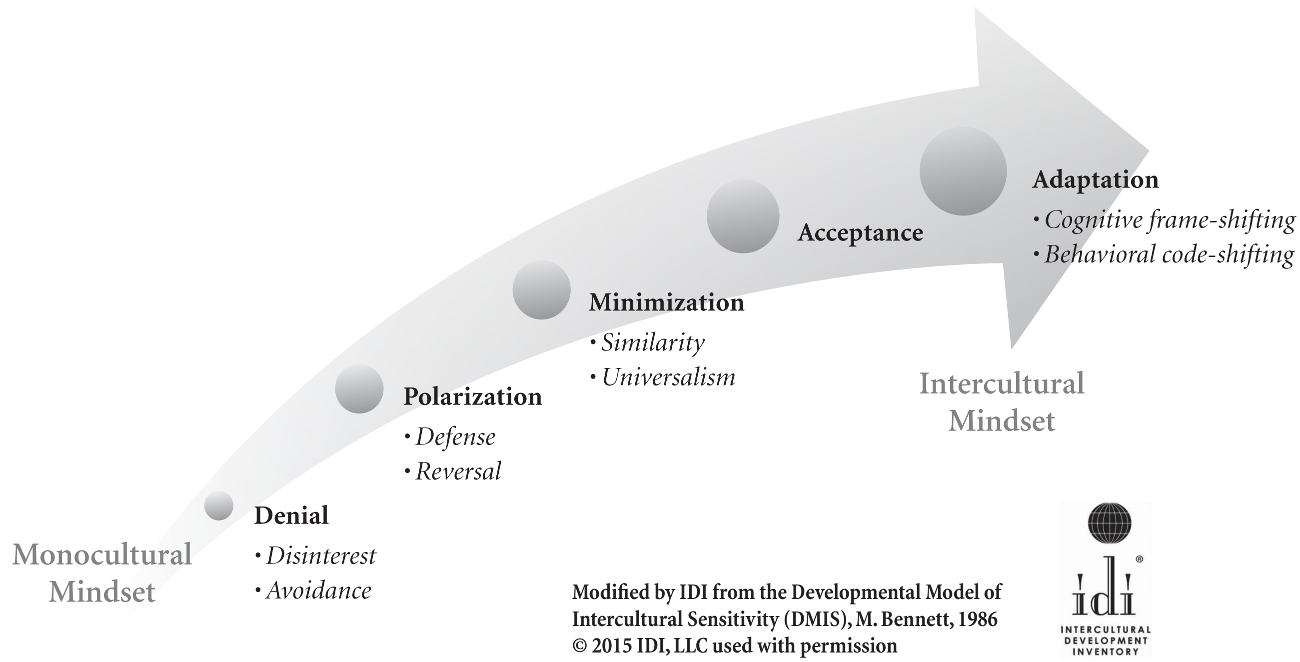

FIGURE 5-4: INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

Similarity and Difference

The writings of the New Testament include a lot of examples of evangelists navigating cultural difference and seeking similarity.

> For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I might by all means save some. —1 Corinthians 9:19–22, NRSV

> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? —1 Corinthians 12:27–30, NRSV

Intercultural Development Continuum: Primary Orientations

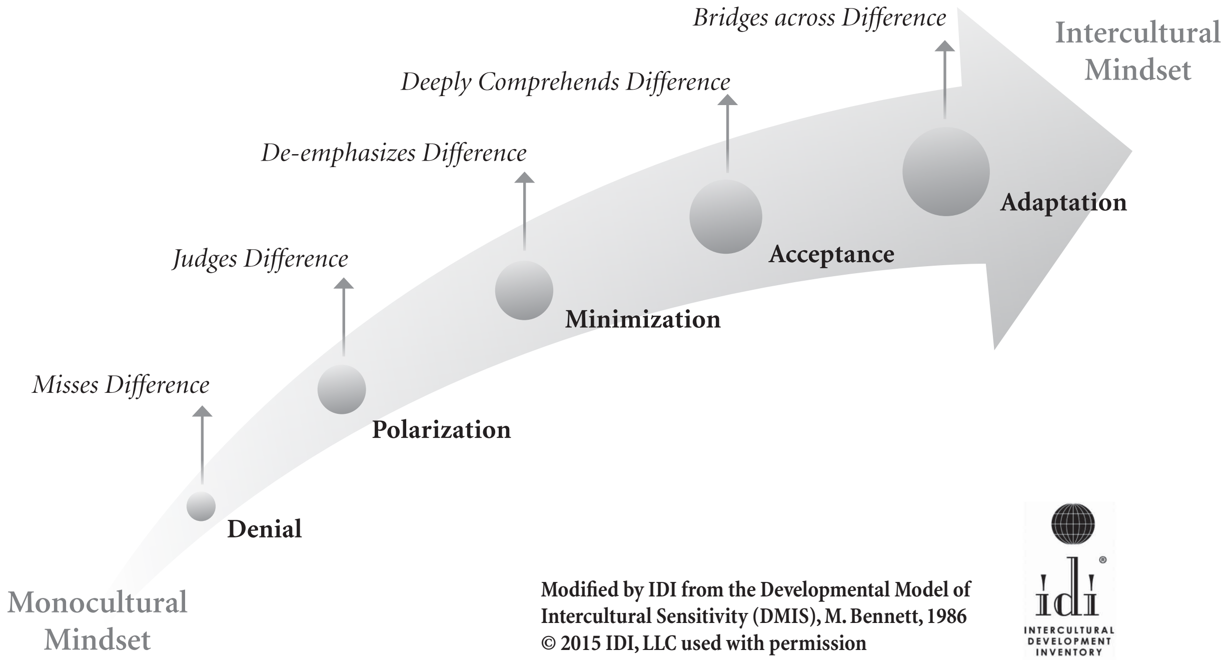

FIGURE 5-5: INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM: PRIMARY ORIENTATIONS

Denial: An orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but may not notice deeper cultural differences (e.g., conflict resolution styles) and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences

Polarization: A judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of "us" and "them." This can take the form of defense or reversal.

Defense: An uncritical view toward one's own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices

Reversal: An overly critical orientation toward one's own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices

Minimization: An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences

Acceptance: An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one's own and other cultures

Adaptation: An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behaviour in culturally appropriate and authentic ways

Cultural Disengagement: A sense of disconnection or detachment from a primary cultural group

Preaching a Message about Racism Your Congregation Can Hear:
A Developmental Approach Using the Intercultural Development Continuum

by the Rev. Canon Arienne Davison, Canon for Multicultural Ministries, Diocese of Olympia

JULY 2016

Preachers are often challenged by how to teach about racism and discrimination. We would be derelict in our duty to proclaim the gospel if we ignored the cultural impact of systemic racism and interpersonal violence on our local communities and national politics. As pastors, many of us also struggle with how to manage the controversy and conflict that may arise when deeply held attitudes and behaviors within individuals we serve are challenged—attitudes and behaviors that may contribute to wider patterns of racism in our communities and the world.

As I write this in early July 2016, we have faced a week of violence toward Black men and the Dallas police that has revealed deep animosity between ethnic and racial groups in the United States, hostility we often try to ignore. Many clergy I know reported they scrapped sermons mid-week because they felt they couldn't in good conscience fail to address the sadness and anger that emerged from the week's events.

Mostly, I have seen resources on preaching and racism focused on what we might say from our biblical and theological tradition. These resources are excellent and can be very helpful. Another, sometimes overlooked, source for preaching and teaching is the emerging field of intercultural competency. Intercultural competency as an area of inquiry can help us understand how our patterns of thinking and behavior about intergroup relationships are formed and function. Particularly when it comes to preaching and teaching, developmental perspectives like the Intercultural Development Continuum can be used to craft relevant, theologically appropriate, and "hearable" messages about God's activity in our time and place.

The Intercultural Development Continuum

The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) was developed by Mitchell Hammer and heavily influenced by the work of Milton Bennett. Hammer's developmental approach emphasizes that our orientation to think and behave in certain ways in relation to other groups changes over time as we gain experience. We can become more or less open to other cultures' fundamental assumptions and practices over time.

The IDC charts human development through five "developmental orientations" toward intergroup relations: denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation.

Denial is a blindness to the reality that cultures differ in valid and healthy ways. Folks with a developmental orientation toward denial may insist that people who fail to conform to their culture are wrong or disrespectful. They may also try to separate themselves from other cultures or annihilate cultural patterns that don't conform to their primary cultural orientation.

Polarization is characterized by "us/them" thinking in which people with this orientation recognize and judge differences. Polarization may take the form of defense or reversal. People oriented toward defense sees their culture as the "right" one and others as "wrong." Those oriented toward reversal will tend to be overly critical of their own culture while uncritically embracing other culture(s). These patterns often take on a different shape and may be more or less ethically appropriate depending on whether someone is part of majority (privileged) culture or a minority culture.

Minimization is a developmental orientation that understands difference exists but focuses on human universals and similarities. People with a minimization orientation are likely to deemphasize differences between groups, especially when intergroup conflict emerges or decision-making processes require urgency. My own hunch is that minimization is strongly tied to “tolerance” ideology and prevails in my diocesan context within the Episcopal Church. That is, many Episcopalian leaders I encounter function well in a post–Civil Rights era American culture that has tended to teach and norm people to tolerate differences in the public square. This tolerance attitude uses the language of fairness and equity to talk about and manage difference. Without careful attention and reflection, this “tolerance” stance can mask real differences in assumptions and behaviors that shape differential outcomes within our church and in the world.

Acceptance is the ability to wear the lenses of someone else’s culture. People with a developmental orientation toward acceptance recognize and value the fundamental differences in seeing the world our cultures provide.

Adaptation takes the orientation of acceptance a step further. Not only can folks with an adaptation orientation see and appreciate cultural difference, they are also able to shift how they behave in ways that seem appropriate and natural to folks from other cultures (sometimes called code-switching).

Preaching with Developmental Orientation in Mind

Identifying the Orientation of Your Congregation

If we think of our congregations as organizational systems, it’s likely that we can identify the overall orientation of the congregation. To identify your congregation’s overall developmental orientation, you might begin by considering the sort of language or behaviors that emerge in conflict or when there’s an emergency. Do we quickly divide the congregation into groups that are right or wrong?

You might also think about how your congregation identifies itself in relation to the wider community: Do we see outsiders to the church as an existential threat to “the way we do things”? Do we easily incorporate different ways of thinking and doing things that newcomers add to our congregation?

You could examine your congregation’s decision-making practices and processes: Do we focus more on what’s fair to everybody? When one person requires an accommodation, do we make a reasonable, appropriate exception or do we change the way everyone works to create a new norm?

If you have more time and can go into greater depth, a qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory can be contracted (for the cost of the inventories and debrief) to assess a representative group within the congregation.

When assessing your group, be aware that most people and groups *overestimate* their developmental orientation. This is largely due to the negative moral judgment American culture and our theology places on racism and discrimination. We say we are not prejudiced or that we are able to easily recognize and understand other cultures. Research reveals that without intentional development and intervention, our unconscious biases and patterns of behavior tend toward a more ethnocentric way of seeing the world.

Framing Teaching on Racism Using the IDC

One critical insight for teaching about discrimination and racism that we can gain from using the IDC is this: people have different orientations toward questions about race and prejudice, and that orientation stems from their experience and development. Asking someone with a denial orientation to do a natural behavior for someone with an adaptation orientation would be a bit like me asking my three-year-old to drive a car. His development simply hasn't prepared him for the fine motor skills and judgment required.

A preacher who attends to her congregation's developmental orientation toward intercultural relations is more likely to preach a message that the congregation is able to hear and that can help move individuals further along in their development. Alternatively, failure to acknowledge the developmental orientation of our listeners may lead to a sense of futility and defensiveness. If a hearer doesn't have the capacity to understand or behave the way a religious authority figure deems "righteous" they may either (1) disengage from conversations about racism or (2) openly sabotage attempts to engage in conversations about racism.

The most common orientations I've encountered in my anti-racism work in the region are polarization, minimization, and acceptance. What follows are some brief observations based on Janet Bennett's work[1] on directing intercultural-skills training at specific orientations.

Polarization

Because individuals and groups with a polarization orientation recognize difference and judge it negatively, the primary goal for development at this stage is beginning to see the similarities between different cultures in an appreciative way. The preacher's ability to frame the worldview of other groups in a way that decreases the hearer's fear of the other and increases her empathy may be critical to the congregation's ability to move toward minimization or acceptance. Examples and object lessons that do not directly address cultural or racial differences may be more effective at helping people in polarization see similarities between the folks they fear or dislike and themselves.

This approach can be challenging for folks who function in an acceptance or adaptation orientation. Since many contemporary thinkers in anti-racism and emerging identity movements stress the importance of embracing particularity and difference, it may seem like this approach reinforces systemic racism. One example of this in the current political discourse are the hashtags #blacklivesmatter and #alllivesmatter. If the message from the pulpit continued to universalize human experience year after year, less development toward anti-racism would likely take place. However, preaching that demands an unrealistic level of spontaneous development from folks in polarization might ultimately be counterproductive. If your long-term strategy involves moving folks out of a universalizing impulse, it can be appropriate to focus on similarity as a starting point.

Minimization

Individuals with a minimization orientation are likely to discount difference as superficial, even when those differences powerfully shape our everyday lives and ways of thinking and being. Preachers can address the blind spots of minimization by emphasizing the importance of empathetic listening, a greater awareness and integrity of self/group identity, and the development of cross-cultural experience and skill.

Because folks with a minimization orientation tend to focus on similarity or an unspoken norm, it can be difficult for groups functioning in minimization to explicitly identify their own culture. Preachers may want to talk about moments they realized their individual cultural experience was valid but not universally shared by others. A preacher may also acknowledge positive aspects of the congregation's culture and juxtapose that culture with other positive examples of different congregational cultures. Sermon illustrations may involve explicit examples of cultural and racial differences. Language that acknowledges preferred identity terms should be used, with explanation if needed, to help the group become increasingly comfortable with the self-identification of differences.

Acceptance

Folks functioning in an acceptance orientation are more comfortable with their own and other cultures and not only tolerate but want to experience more cultural difference. Preachers with a congregation in acceptance orientation can offer specific examples of intercultural relationships or conflicts within the congregation or between the congregation and others to help refine the group's ability to recognize how culture operates in their specific congregational context. A group oriented toward acceptance can process more nuanced and challenging illustrations of cultural difference and the effects of racism.

Since groups with an acceptance orientation are moving toward adaptation, identifying specific ministries that might build the group's skill in appropriate intercultural relations can help move the congregation forward (e.g., concrete outreach opportunities with a large local ethnic or religious minority group in the neighborhood, intercultural dialogue between distinct racial and ethnic groups within the congregation, or community organizing as a partner with other groups).

Mixed Groups

Groups will tend to function in the orientation in which the majority of members are comfortable. That being said, individuals in a group will have different orientations and experiences. While I have found it helpful to begin to think about my congregation as a group with a developmental orientation on the IDC, I know that not everyone is in the same place developmentally. Some at different levels of development will experience preaching toward defense or minimization orientation as backward or frustratingly slow. Identifying folks who are ready to exercise more intercultural muscle and creating opportunities for them to do that work outside of Sunday morning can keep the whole congregation moving forward.

Closing Thoughts

In 2016, we cannot fail to talk about the sin of racism. We also cannot say the same thing over and over expecting a different result or a new shift of consciousness. Though our laments may be exquisitely beautiful and our rhetoric crafty, if we fail to acknowledge the broken places where Christians live, our words will ring hollow. The people whose lives need to be transformed won't know that they can begin wherever they are.

As preachers and congregational leaders, we are often dividing our attention between pastoring in the places we are and setting a direction for the new place God is leading us. Using tools that help us gain greater pastoral awareness and sensitivity can increase our effectiveness as preachers and help us move our communities toward the fullness of God's justice and peace.

1. Bennett, J. M. 2009. "Transformative Training: Designing Programs for Culture Learning" in *Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence,* edited by M. A. Moodian. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The best way to gauge your organization's orientation is to have a significant number of people take the IDI instrument and receive results from a qualified administrator. For the sake of this exercise, let's look at some organizational traits related to intercultural dynamics—remembering that an organization tends to function where a majority of its members are comfortable and/or where leadership is most comfortable.

Denial: There is only one way to pray and live. If others aren't willing to conform, they have transgressed against the truth and we will do our best to change them into us or make them leave.

Polarization (Defense): There are different ways people pray and live, but ours is the right one. If others aren't willing to conform to our way of doing things, we will make their time with us uncomfortable until they choose to leave or become enough like us to tolerate.

Polarization (Reversal): There are different ways people pray and live, but the way other people pray and live seems so much more just and right than ours. If we don't change what we are doing to conform to the way others do it, we are doing something wrong.

Minimization: There are different ways people pray and live, but it's really uncomfortable to try to reconcile them, so let's focus on what we have in common and get things done. While we tolerate differences, we make our decisions based on what is fair and represents the majority view. People will figure out how or if they fit in our church.

Acceptance: There are different ways people pray, live, and think. The world is richer for having all of them. While we value different ways of doing things, we still aren't sure how to incorporate different views and practices into our common life and worship.

Adaptation: There are different ways people pray, live, and think. We are richer for celebrating and participating in them. We value different ways of doing things and have systems that help us easily incorporate new perspectives into our prayer and common life.

Some Key Questions

- How does your congregation approach outreach and evangelism? Do these activities transform "the way we see or do things" (Acceptance/Adaptation) or are they meant to transform the other into "members" (Polarization-Defense, Minimization)?
- How does your congregation make decisions? Do you have intentional structures in place to highlight minority culture views—for example, youth presence on the parish council or bishop's committee (Acceptance/Adaptation)? Do you ever have parish council or bishop's committee votes that are not unanimous?
- Are multiple cultures (age groups, languages, ethnic/racial groups) reflected in your worship? By what process do you include these symbols, words, and rituals?

INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Select a number that reflects your interest in working on the three factors that influence intercultural communication. Reflect on the questions for each area and make notes, focusing where you have the greatest interest.

1. *Based on what you've learned about intercultural development, how much do you want to increase your **knowledge** of other culture groups?*

Not at all		⟷			**A great deal**
1	2	3	4	5	6

Consider these questions about cultural knowledge, especially if you identify this as an area of interest.

Name any culture groups you interact with that you'd like to understand better.

Are there cultural activities or learning opportunities that might help you increase your knowledge of those groups?

2. *Based on what you've learned about intercultural development, how much do you want to increase your **motivation** to engage in intercultural communication?*

Not at all		⟷			**A great deal**
1	2	3	4	5	6

Consider these questions about your level of motivation, especially if you identify this as an area of interest.

What experiences have caused you to be more tentative about talking to or working with people from other cultural groups?

What intercultural experiences have you had that left you feeling good or satisfied?

3. *Based on what you've learned about intercultural development, how much do you want to increase your **skills** in intercultural communication?*

Not at all		⟷			**A great deal**
1	2	3	4	5	6

Consider these questions about intercultural skills, especially if you identify this as an area of interest.

What tools do you currently use to reflect on your social behaviour? (e.g., feedback from trusted colleagues, coaching)

Describe opportunities you might have in your ministry or work to try out new intercultural behaviours.

UNIT 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hammer, M. R. 2015. "The Developmental Paradigm for Intercultural Competence Research." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 48: 12–13.

House, R. J., P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, et al. 2004. *Culture, Leadership and Organizations: the GLOBE Study of 62 Societies,* 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- A detailed research-based cultural taxonomy, or method of categorizing and studying the ways culture systematically varies. Research publication.
- Available on Amazon.com in hardcover or electronic version

Lustig, M. and J. Koester. 2012. *Intercultural Competence,* 5th–7th ed. Boston: Pearson.

- This textbook on intercultural competency contains a lot of good basic information on the topic.
- Suggested addition to curricular reading list

Moodian, M. A., ed. 2009. *Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

FACILITATOR ASSESSMENT SHEET

Give each facilitator a rating using a 1 to 5 scale

1 = little use of skill

5 = frequent use of skill

Skill	Facilitator 1	Facilitator 2	Facilitator 3	Facilitator 4	Facilitator 5
Task States the task or gets the group to state the task up front. Keeps people on task.					
Materials Effectively uses materials: newsprint, markers, tape. Keeps newsprint visible and writing legible.					
Words Records in the speaker's own words. Asks permission/ checks out wording.					
Energy and Pace Keeps the energy going. Maintains a comfortable pace.					
Time Provides for doing the task in the time allotted					
Participation Encourages the participation of all					

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