The Four Player System – 4 Action Positions

Move
Without Movers
there is no Direction

Bystand
Without Bystanders
there is no Perspective

Oppose
Without Opposers
there is no Correction

Follow
Without Followers
there is no Completion

Advocacy

Inquiry
Variations of Dynamics / Sequences

Serial Monologues: M–M–M–M

Courteous Compliance: M–F–F–F

Point–Counterpoint: M–O–M–O

Hall of Mirrors: M–B–B–B

Covert Opposition: M–F/O, M–B/O

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Action Positions –
Personal Assessment and Practice Suggestions

- What is my preferred/strong Action Position in ideal team situations or conversations?

- What is my preferred/strong Action Position in high stakes situations when under stress? How does it differ from my ‘in ideal situations’ one?

- What is my weak Action Position?

- What is my stuck Action Position?

Proposed Individual Practice Assignments:

1. In the next meeting you attend, notice what are the Strong/Weak/Stuck Action Positions that various participants engage in. Notice what Action Position is missing. Notice what Action Position you are taking.

2. In a following meeting, notice what Action Position is missing and choose to provide it in order to move the meeting forward.
# Action Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabled or Strong: Action Intends</th>
<th>Disabled or Weak/Stuck: Action comes across as</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mover</strong></td>
<td><strong>Opposer</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Correction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Courage</td>
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<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perfection</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Survival</td>
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<td>Perspective</td>
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<td>Patience</td>
<td>Preservation</td>
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<td>Preservation</td>
<td>Moderation</td>
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<td>Moderation</td>
<td>Self-Reflection</td>
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<td>Omnipotent</td>
<td>Critical</td>
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<td>Impatient</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
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<td>Indecisive</td>
<td>Blaming</td>
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<td>Scattered</td>
<td>Attacking</td>
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<td>Dictatorial</td>
<td>Contrary</td>
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<td>Placating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indecisive</td>
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<td>Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wishy-Washy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over accommodating</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bystander</strong></td>
<td><strong>Follower</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td>Completion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderation</td>
<td>Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection</td>
<td>Continuity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disengaged</td>
<td>Placating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judgmental</td>
<td>Indecisive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deserting</td>
<td>Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>Wishy-Washy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent</td>
<td>Over accommodating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought, but not said</td>
<td>What was said</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Could be trouble…</td>
<td>She: What do you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh oh. Haircut</td>
<td>He: About what?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I did…</td>
<td>She: You didn’t notice…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal faster now…</td>
<td>He: You look very nice!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re not doing yourself any favors</td>
<td>She: You hate it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big trouble…</td>
<td>He: No, its great…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improved Advocacy and Inquiry

Phrases for Clear Advocacy

“Let me tell you where I am right now…”

“This is what I was thinking while you were talking..”

“Let me tell you my reaction to that.”

“I’m uncomfortable right now, and I’d like to tell you why.”

Phrases for Clear Inquiry

“How do you see this?”

“Help me understand…”

“What am I not seeing?”

“What is your reaction to what I have said?”
Four Dialogic Practices

There are four practices or behaviors, in particular, that you can work on, to help you develop your understanding of moving towards creative engagement and dialogue.

- **SUSPENDING**
  Stepping back (to the balcony) to perceive what is taken for granted; Letting go certainties; stopping the flow of thought

- **LISTENING**
  Listening without resistance; Listening from the other’s point of view

- **RESPECTING**
  Honoring and witnessing the legitimacy and dignity of another’s stance and point of view; honoring boundaries

- **VOICING**
  Speaking from one’s authentic Self and true authority; Living from the source of one’s being
Action Positions: Advocacy and Inquiry

The four practices suggest two central actions: advocacy and inquiry.

The challenge is to keep these in balance in all your conversations:
Left Hand Column Diagnosis

**VOICING:** *Was the quality of voice authentic?*
- Did you say what you thought, felt, and wanted?
- If not, what was it that really needed to be said?
- What kept you from saying it?
- What was at risk in bringing out what really needed to be said?
- How much Advocacy was in your part of the conversation?
- If you had created this situation in order to learn, what might you have been intending to teach yourself?

**LISTENING:** *Did you listen well?*
- How well did you listen?
- How did you feel?
- What does your intuition tell you about this situation?
- If you could articulate it, what was it that the other was trying to say beyond the words?
- How able were you to appreciate and empathize with the other person?
- How much Inquiry was in your part of the conversation?

**RESPECTING:** *Did you respect the other?*
- Did you reject/judge what was said? What is this telling you about yourself?
- What hard truths about your own behavior do you need to state?
- What was missing from the exchange?
- Did you discount the other’s view? Why or why not?
- What really disturbed you about what the other said?

**SUSPENDING:** *Did you release certainty?*
- What mental models and beliefs did you have about yourself, the other, and the situation?
- What judgments would you make about someone who acted like this?
- Can you see new ways to change your perspective on this situation?
- In what ways were you (and are you still) blind about this situation?
- What’s at risk in letting these models and beliefs go?
Container

Defining the Container: System change is activated through the creation of a “container.” In its most generic form, a container is “that which contains.” A container is a holding environment for the thinking and energy of core group of people. It is a “pattern of relationships among people that enable them to sustain a high level of shared goals, energy, and coordinated actions.” This step requires an act of leadership: the creation of a container made up of a core of leaders able to envision and sustain a long term commitment to system change.

Container as Core Matrix:
The container is the “matrix” of awareness in which there is energy, possibility and safety.

Container “Orbits” – degrees of proximity to our “core” or “court”:

Clean Talk

1. Data
   - Describe your observations
   - When I saw/heard/observed.....

2. Feelings
   - State your personal feelings
   - I felt...
   - (sad, glad, afraid, mad, ashamed,)

3. Perceptions, Judgments
   - State how you interpret or evaluate
   - Focus on how you make sense of what is happening
   - I think/believe/assume.....
   - I interpret this as...

4. Wants, Desired Outcome
   - Request clear actions
   - Be aware that a request is different from a demand
   - What I want is.....
   - It is important to me that...
   - I would like to be.....

4b. What does the other person see?

LHC

LHC

LHC

Lol
Fields for Conversation

Reflective Thinking

Flow

Primacy of the Whole
(Collective)

Inquiry

Primacy of the Parts
(Individual)

Politeness (downloading)

Blaming and Non-Reflective

Disturbance Breakdown

I.

II.

III.

IV.