Beyond Conflict

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Avoiding and dealing with conflict
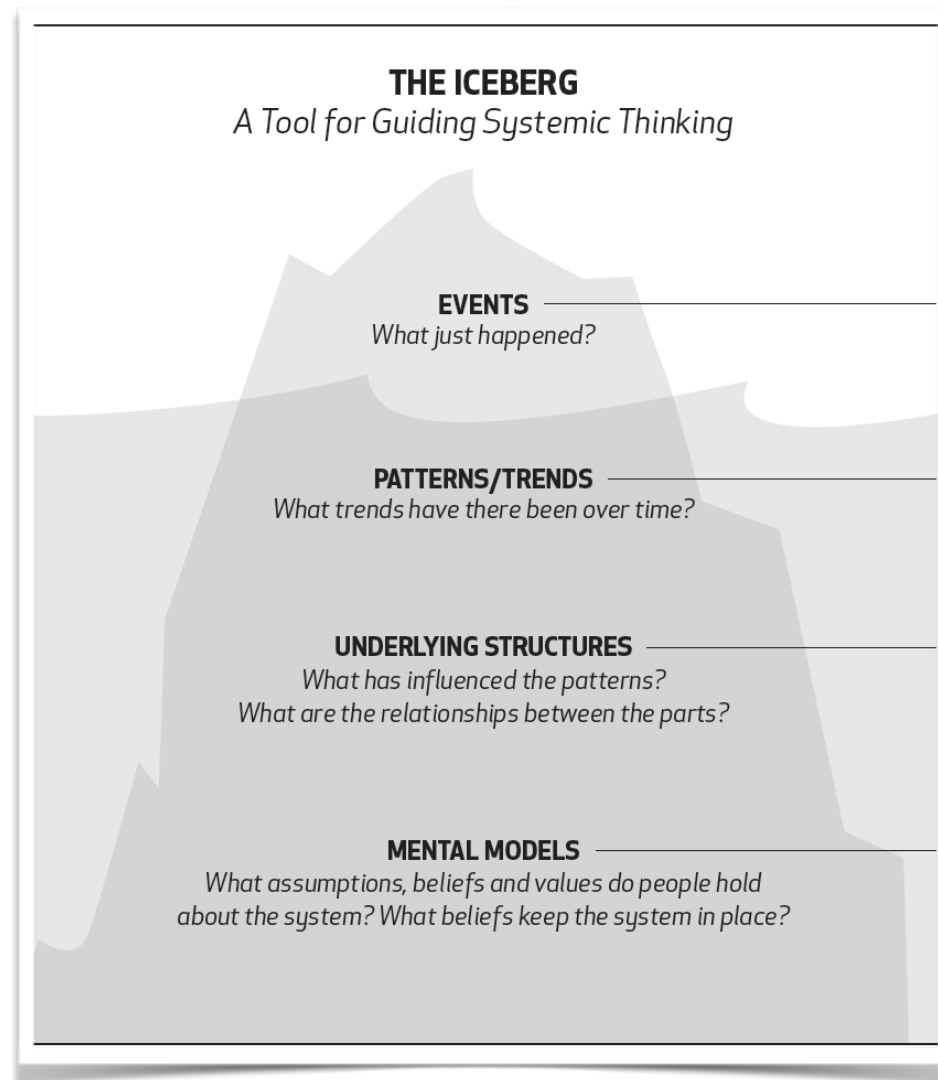
- Generating buy-in to process and avoiding false consensus in groups

- Reframing problems and complaints

- Navigating the built-in dynamics of asking for or offering help (trying to ensure that help is helpful)

- Bridging across different conflict styles

- Finding what else to do when a process isn't working

- Reducing and suspending judgement

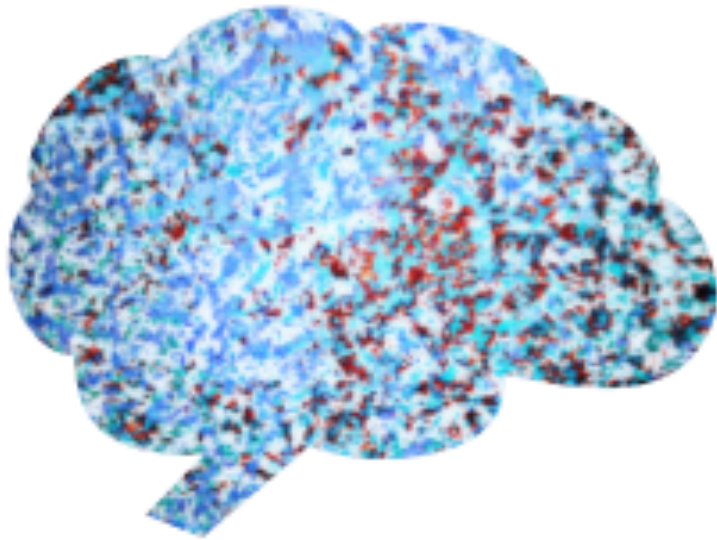# Workshop overview

❖ Why is the conflict (still) there?

❖ Knowing what's available – the processes

❖ Tools and techniques

Why is the conflict still there?

Ongoing conflict is a system

THE ICEBERG
A Tool for Guiding Systemic Thinking

EVENTS
What just happened?

PATTERNS/TRENDS
What trends have there been over time?

UNDERLYING STRUCTURES
What has influenced the patterns?
What are the relationships between the parts?

MENTAL MODELS
What assumptions, beliefs and values do people hold
about the system? What beliefs keep the system in place?

Northwest Earth Institute, https://nwei.org/iceberg/. Accessed August 9, 2019.

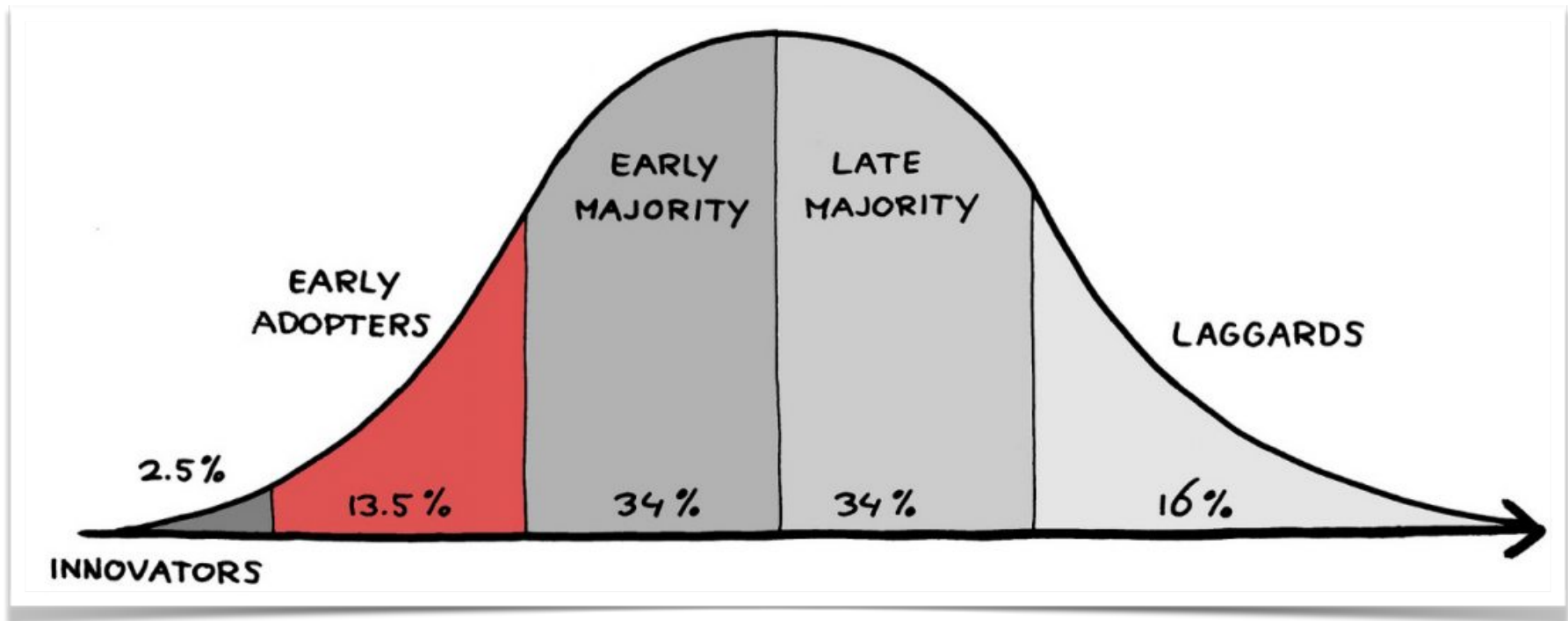*"Two heads will only be better than one if their contents differ."* Scott E. Page

Cognitive diversity

"The art of conversation is the art of hearing as well as of being heard."

–William Hazlitt

Systems thinking again

Culture

Behaviors

Experiences

Who to convince?

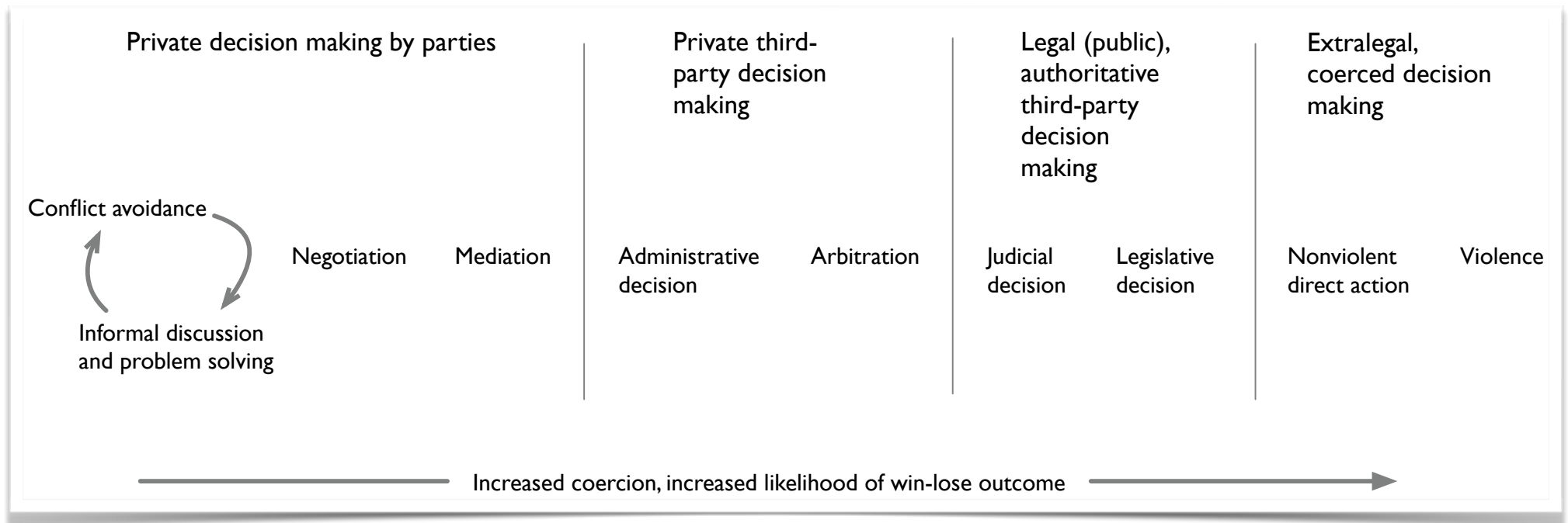Jean-Luc Boissonneault, "Finding early adopters for your new business." http://jeanlucboissonneault.com/finding-early-adopters-for-your-new-business/ Retrieved August 6, 2019.

Dispute? Conflict?

"Disputes" involve negotiable interests, while "conflicts" are concerned with issues that are not negotiable, issues that relate to ontological human needs that cannot be compromised.

John Burton, "Conflict resolution as a political philosophy"

Continuum of Conflict Management and Resolution Approaches and Procedures

Private decision making by parties		Private third-party decision making		Legal (public), authoritative third-party decision making		Extralegal, coerced decision making	
Conflict avoidance ⟳ Informal discussion and problem solving	Negotiation Mediation	Administrative decision	Arbitration	Judicial decision	Legislative decision	Nonviolent direct action	Violence

→ Increased coercion, increased likelihood of win-lose outcome →

Resilience and capacity building

Participatory decision-making

	Core values: Participatory decision making
Full participation	• all members encouraged to speak • no one is allowed to dominate • diversity of opinion leads to better decisions
Mutual understanding	• need to understand and accept legitimacy of one another's goals and needs • basic acceptance and understanding is crucial • diversity of opinion leads to better decisions
Inclusive solutions	• group is wiser than individuals • Quakers say" Everybody has a piece of the truth"
Shared responsibility	• members feel a strong sense of shared responsibility for decisions • feel responsibility for helping to implement decisions • diversity of opinion leads to better decisions

Four types of listening

❖ Downloading – listening for what you already know

❖ Factual listening – for what surprises you

❖ Empathic listening – with empathy for the other's experience

❖ Generative listening – from a deeper source that seems to embrace your truth and theirs

Otto Scharmer, *The essentials of theory U*. Berrett-Koehler, 2018.
David Peter Stroh, *Systems thinking for social change*. Chelsea Green, 2015.

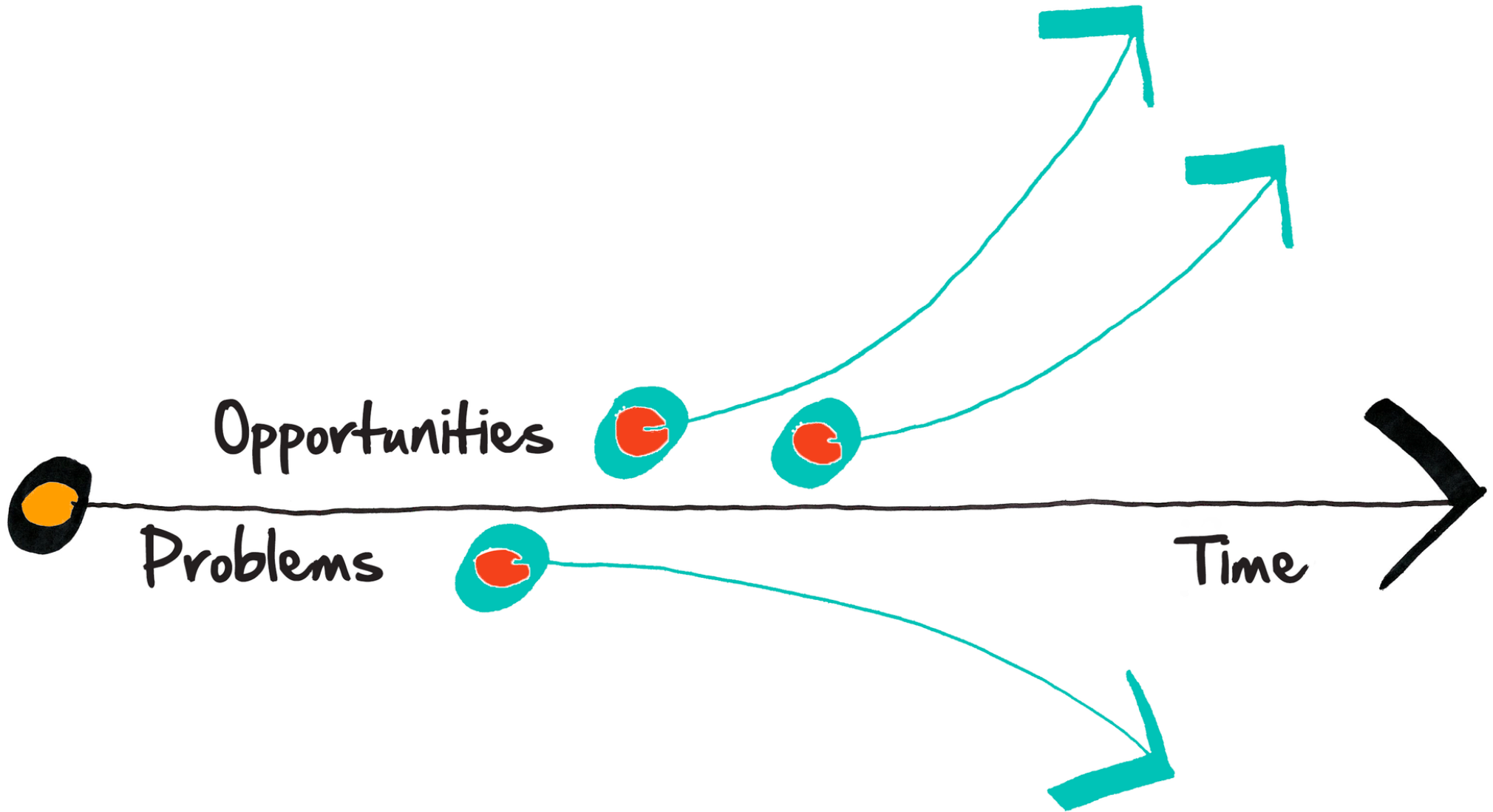# What's the difference here?

"Yes, and…"

"Yes, but…"

Tools and Techniques

Guidelines for participation

Think about how we conduct ourselves and the quality of our participation:

- ❖ focus on and listen to the speaker

- ❖ minimize distractions

- ❖ reflect: why am I talking? not talking?

- ❖ participate fully — if I don't agree, now is the time to speak

- ❖ differ respectfully

- ❖ all comments are valuable, so allow space for others to speak

- ❖ stay open to others' input

- ❖ don't take myself too seriously
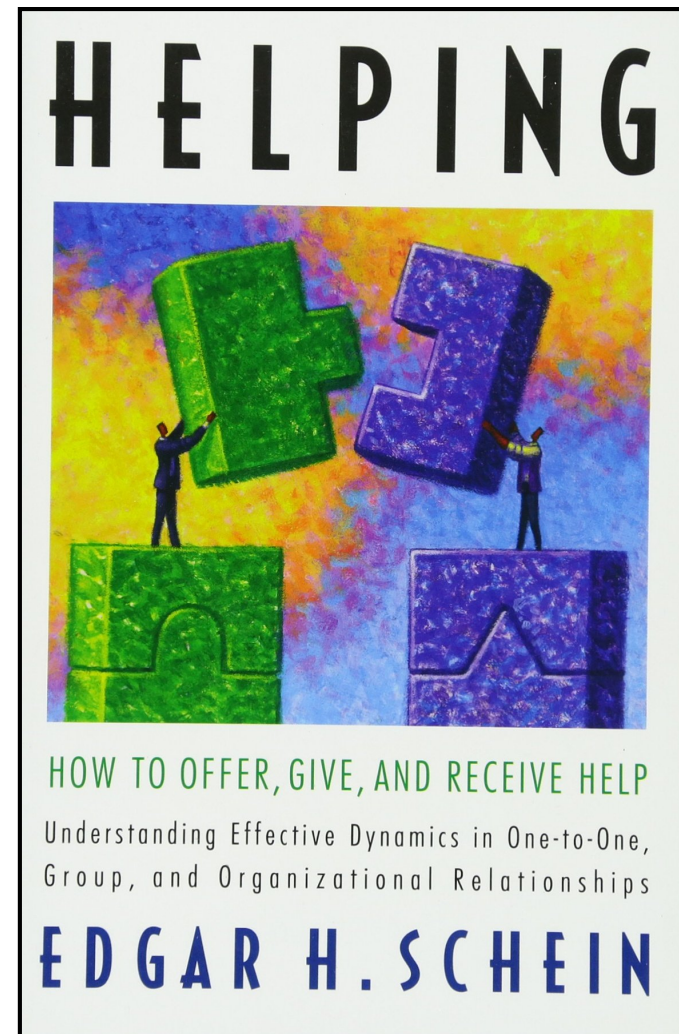
We move in the direction of our conversations

Conditional language

Ellen J. Langer, *Mindfulness*. Addison-Wesley, 1989.

The helping relationship

- Helping is a social process

- Status and vulnerability

- Teamwork can be viewed as ongoing, reciprocal helping

- Balcony and dance floor

HELPING

HOW TO OFFER, GIVE, AND RECEIVE HELP

Understanding Effective Dynamics in One-to-One, Group, and Organizational Relationships

EDGAR H. SCHEIN

Possible traps for the helper

❖ Dispensing wisdom prematurely

❖ Meeting defensiveness with more pressure

❖ Accepting the problem and over-reacting to the dependence

❖ Resisting taking on the helper role

Edgar Schein, Helping. Berrett-Koehler, 2009.

What to do when "it" isn't working

BATNA

Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement

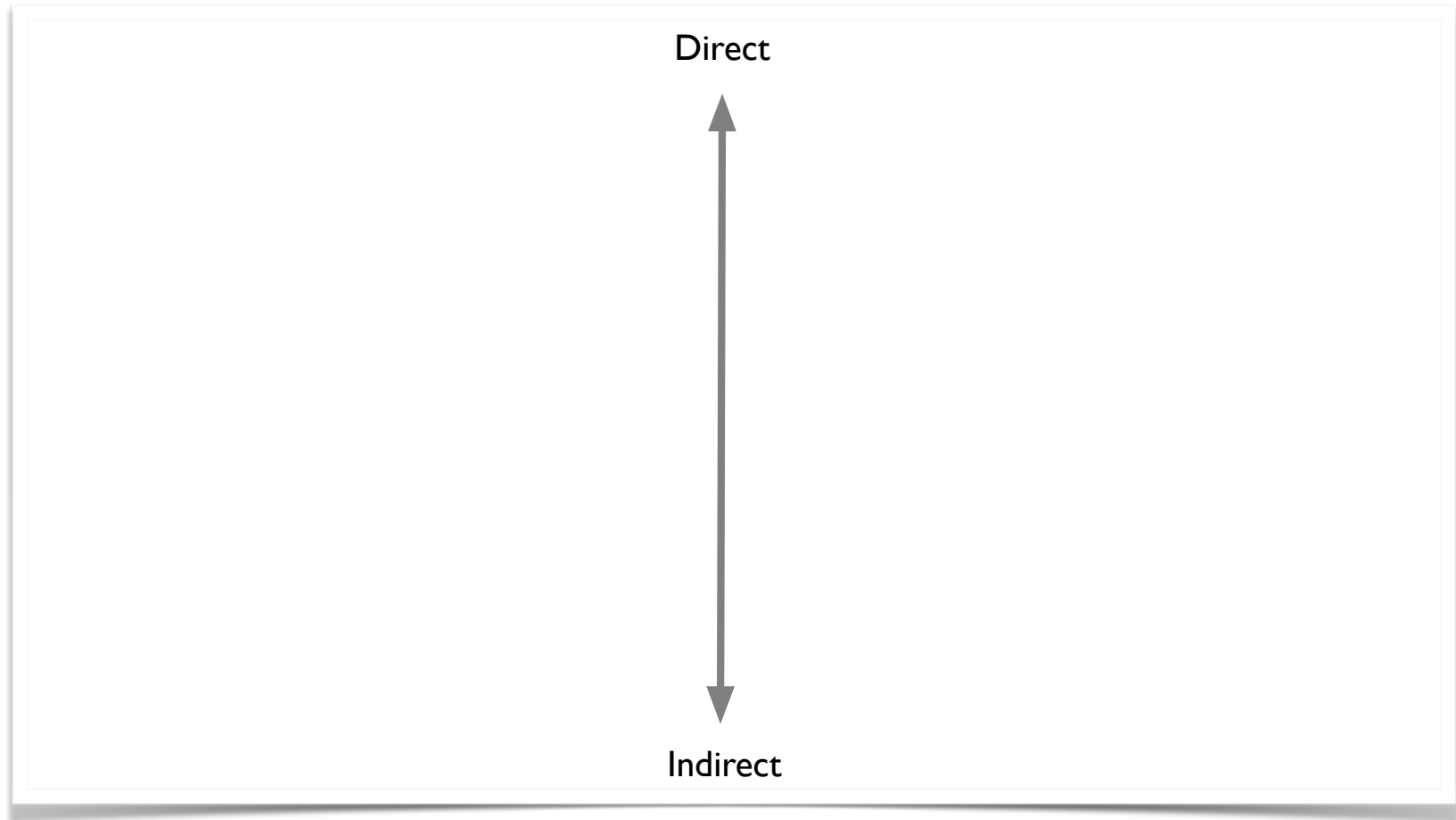Fisher, Ury, and Patton, *Getting to yes*. 3rd ed. Penguin, 2011.

Reducing and suspending judgment

D – Describe

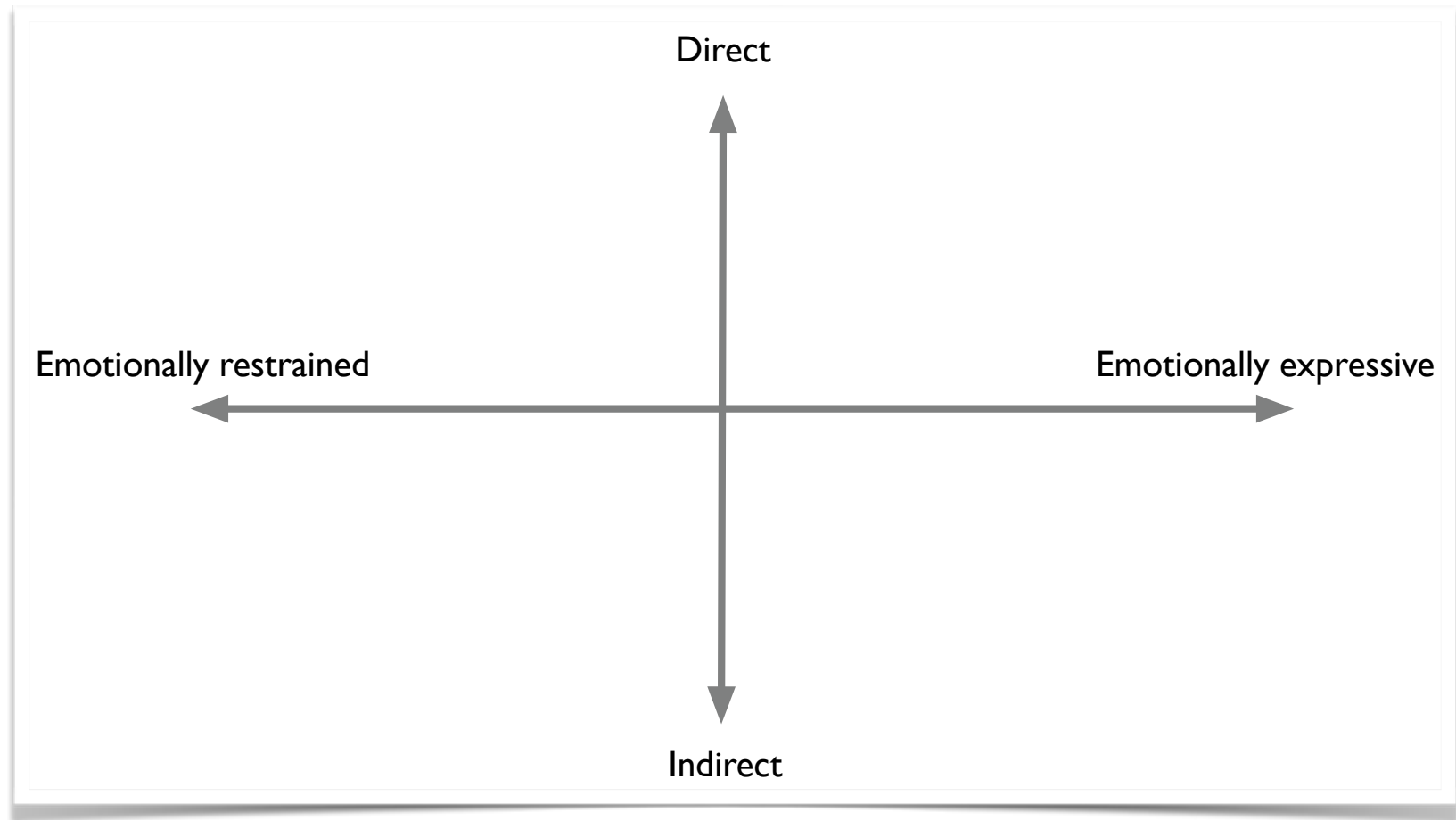I – Interpret…Now, imagine *another* interpretation

E – Evaluate

Cultural conflict styles framework
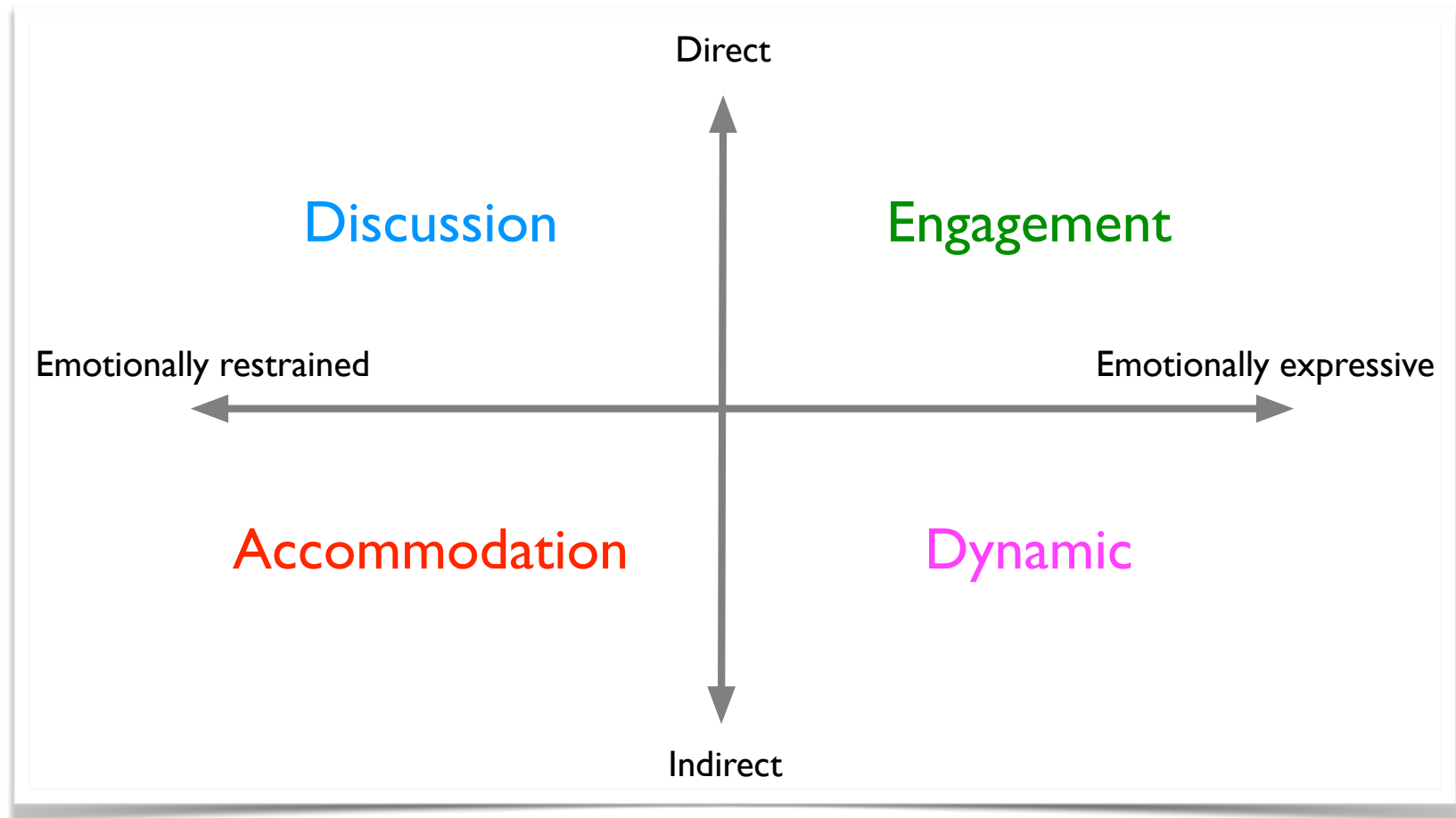
Direct

↕

Indirect

Hammer, Mitchell, "The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory: A Conceptual Framework and Measure of Intercultural Conflict Approaches." IACM 17th Annual Conference Paper. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=601981 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.601981

Cultural conflict styles framework

Direct

Emotionally restrained   Emotionally expressive

Indirect

Hammer, Mitchell, "The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory: A Conceptual Framework and Measure of Intercultural Conflict Approaches." IACM 17th Annual Conference Paper. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=601981 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.601981

Cultural conflict styles framework

Direct

Discussion

Engagement

Emotionally restrained

Emotionally expressive

Accommodation

Dynamic

Indirect

Hammer, Mitchell, "The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory: A Conceptual Framework and Measure of Intercultural Conflict Approaches." IACM 17th Annual Conference Paper. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=601981 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.601981

Four-step bridging process

1. Bring your **own** behavior into awareness

2. Bring the **other's** behavior into awareness

3. **Suspend** judgment
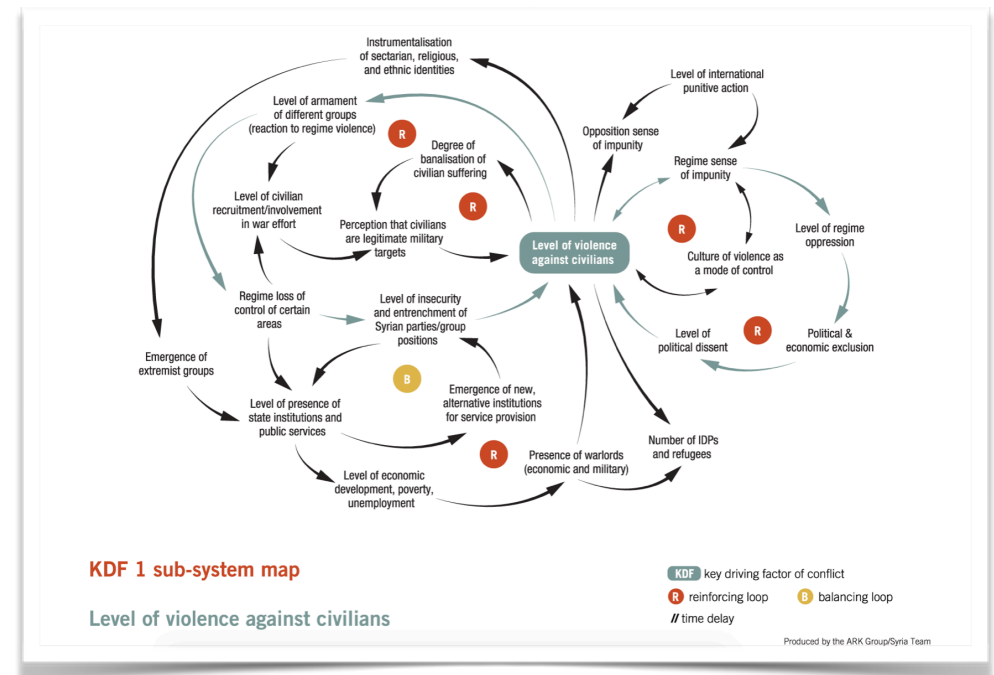
4. **Adapt** your behavior

Summing up

Identifying scope

Dispute

Conflict

Four approaches

Avoid

Recognize

Cope

Recover

Tools and methods

Bypass soreheads
(Bell curve)

Conversations, problem solving
(Left side of process continuum)

Listen at a higher level
(Scharmer's *Theory U*)

Develop participation capacity
(Kaner, guidelines, thumbs up)

Reframe along appreciative lines
(Strategic Doing)

Use conditional language
(Langer's *Mindfulness*)

Develop BATNA
(*Getting to Yes*)

Know the processes that are available
(e.g. Mediation)

Be mindful of communication styles
(Hammer's conflict styles framework)

Suspend judgment in practical ways
(D-I-E and 4-part bridging technique)

One more…

Invite feedback
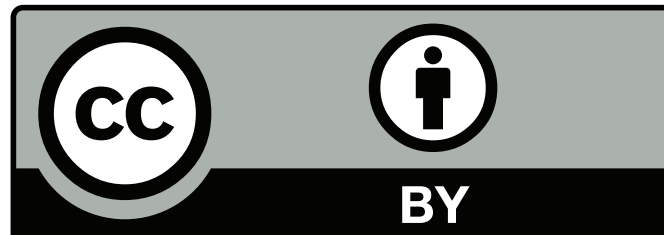
Thank you

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Recommended resources:

- C. W. Moore, *The mediation process: Practical strategies for resolving conflict*. 4th ed. John Wiley & Sons, 2014.
- Sam Kaner et al, *Facilitator's guide to participatory decision-making*. 3rd ed. Jossey-Bass, 2014.
- Otto Scharmer, *The essentials of theory U*. Berrett-Koehler, 2018.
- David Peter Stroh, *Systems thinking for social change*. Chelsea Green, 2015.
- Ellen J. Langer, *Mindfulness.* Addison-Wesley, 1989.
- Edgar Schein, *Helping*. Berrett-Koehler, 2009.
- Fisher, Ury, and Patton, *Getting to yes*. 3rd ed. Penguin, 2011.
- Strategic Doing – <u>strategicdoing.net</u>
- Global Competence Certificate – https://sentionetwork.org/certificate/

Doug Dunston, "Beyond Conflict"
Keynote workshop, New Mexico Tech Faculty Development Week 2019
August 13, 2019