

Stellating Sadness

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(Revised: 13th September 2013 by Nicola Neumann-Mangoldt)

FORMAT:

Whole group process. Big feelings process.
Duration: 60 minutes

PURPOSE:

To learn and practice the skill of taking that first little step off the end of the pier of being right.

SETUP:

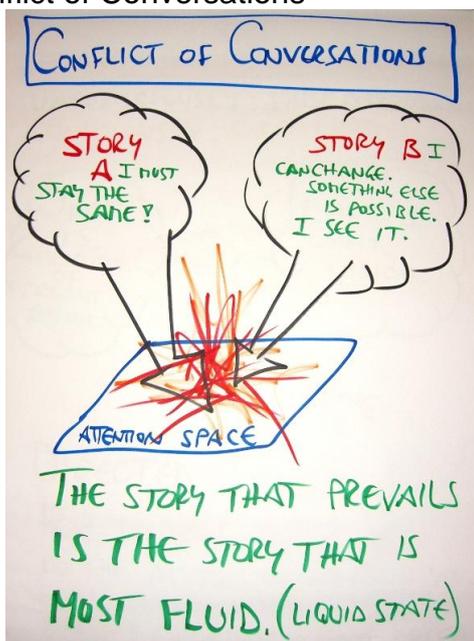
Put chairs in a circle with their back towards the center as close together as possible. Around the chairs place many boxes of tissues, several puke buckets and red towels.

CONTEXT:

(Note: The below context setting with regard to “conflict of conversations” is optional. If during a check-in sadness is already in the space, you can also jump directly to the stellating sadness process, by putting people in big circle and starting with the map of archetypal sadness).

The four feelings territories are neutral, impersonal and archetypal. By letting go of your position of “I’m right” it looks like you lose. But you are actually shifting to a higher purpose than “I win – you lose.” You are the sacrifice going into the liquid state taking the whole situation into breakdown in order to create possibility in the relationship or group.

1. Conflict of Conversations



2. Paradoxical Story Holding



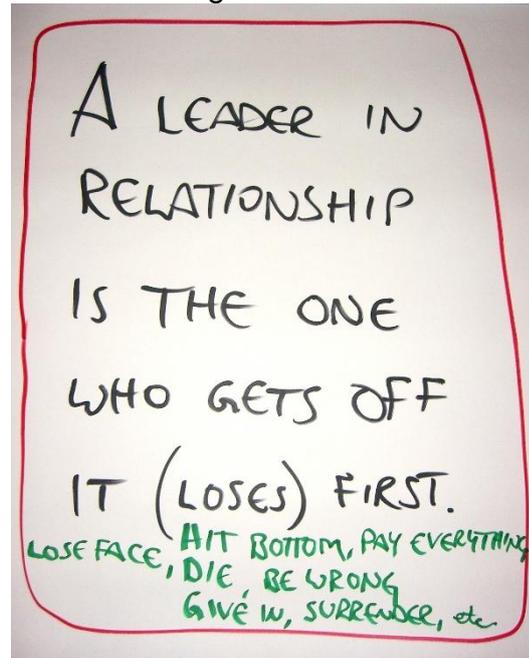
1. Two stories cannot occupy the same space at the same time. There will be a conflict in the space of attention. In a conflict of conversations (stories) the reality that wins is the reality that is most fluid (liquid state).

2. When you hold two paradoxical stories at the same time (present reality and the vision/what is wanted), a tension occurs. You can take this tension as engine fuel and direct it for taking actions. But this is intense. If you cannot navigate inner feelings you won't hold an use the tension.

3. Repackaging



4. Getting Off First



The tool you use for reinventing reality is the paint brush. You say "YES, AND..." rather than "NO". No is a killer phrase.

A leader in relationship is the one who gets off it first. Get off it means:

- Lose face
- Die
- Go liquid
- Look bad
- Be wrong
- Don't know
- Back off
- Surrender (to a higher purpose such as being one rather than being right)

In short it means take responsibility, be humble.

INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURE:

Trainer sets context with maps and distinctions for perceiving the value of being able to get off it first in a confrontational situation.



Then change to set up position. People sit in the chairs in a close circle facing outwards. Shoulders touch. The way to learn this skill of going liquid is to enter the territory of sadness together and stay there for 15 to 20 minutes.

This sadness is different from other sadness in that this sadness is impersonal, neutral not about you. It is archetypal and conscious.

This is not catharsis. It is cathexis. You don't want to get rid of the sadness by having a good cry, but widen the space it can take in side of you. Go through the different chakras starting at the 7th chakra. Every chakra has its own sadness. When you get to the first chakra there might be really big sadness. It is the survival chakra.

Warnings:

Use your inner navigating to keep your intention and stay in sadness. The mind will come up with very believable and convincing reasons to stop. But don't stop then. Go the full 15 to 20 minutes. Also do not be tempted to go into the other feeling, such as anger, or laughing and joy, or fear. If these come up, you can go there for a short moment and express them, but don't stay there. They are just covering the sadness. Go back to sadness. Do not make inner jokes to laugh and leave the territory of sadness.

Trainer says "You might need to think of something that makes you sad to get started, such as species dying, losing whales and polar bears, or children lost on the streets of Dafur, but then keep exploring archetypal sadness while seeing that you are okay."

To wrap up, trainer can reach out and find the hands of people sitting on each side of him and spend the last 5 minutes in sadness with all holding hands in a circle.

To end trainer exits sadness and waits. People will come to a stop.

DEBRIEF:

Optional: Then have participants turn chairs around and invite people to share what they are sad about. There will be many common sad things.

IN SORROWS WE ARE ONE

Take a silent break.