



Introduction to JustConflict: Tools for Transformation

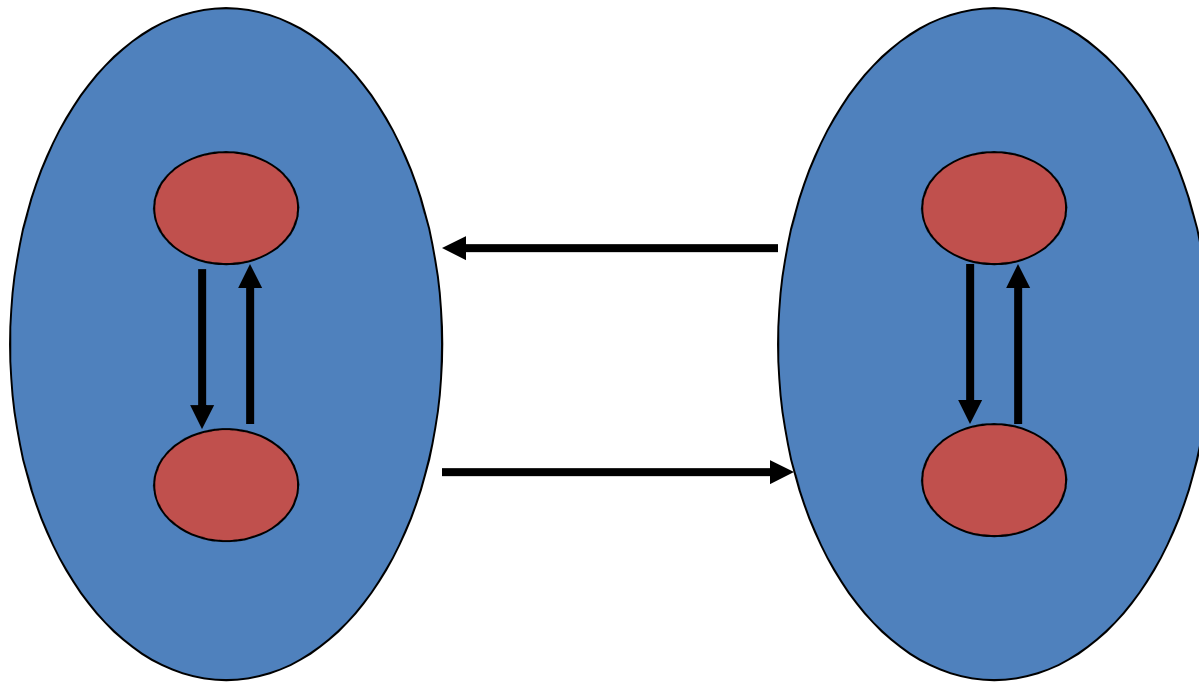
Rev. Dr. Mark Lee Robinson

www.JustConflict.org

Repairing Relationships

- Remember or imagine a time when you had an issue arise in an important relationship and you both cared enough about the relationship to name the problem, hear each other's perspective, and agree to work together to create what you both need.
- How does that event affect your relationship with the other?





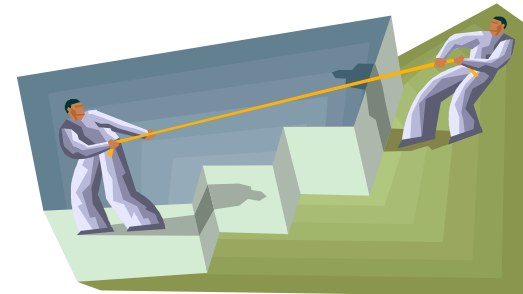


What is Conflict?

- When the other is not as we want the other to be, or...
- When we are not as the other wants us to be.

Or

- When a circumstance causes us to get a “bad” feeling...
...and we don't already know what to do about it.





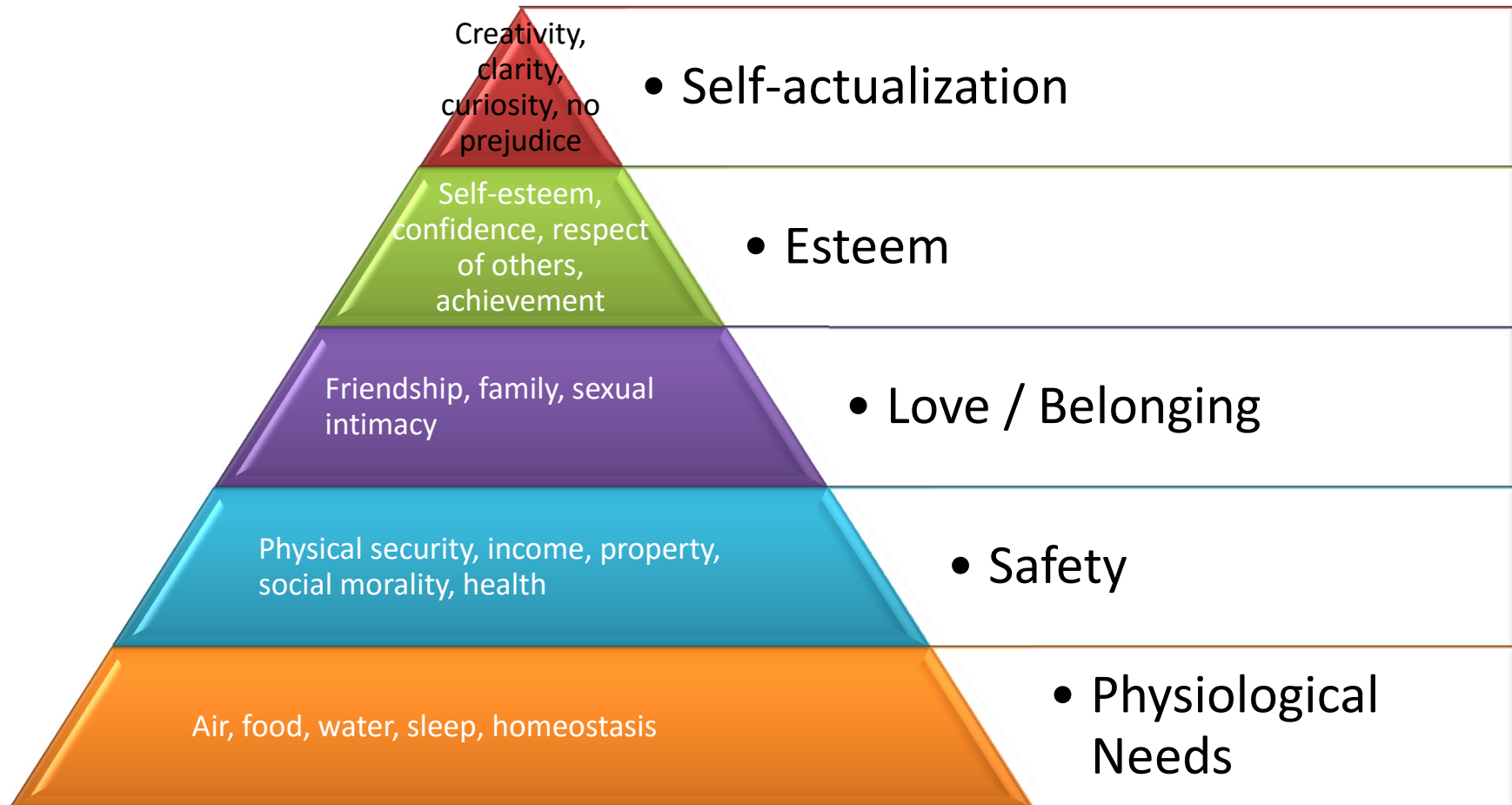
The Moment [Dualism]

Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. The last of human freedoms is to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances."

~~ Victor Frankl

- Between the stimulus of what is happening (arising) and the action that we take to address it (arousing) there is a moment in which we make a choice.
- Our power to create our lives rests within that moment.
- That moment can be a millisecond or it can be many years.

Maslow's Hierarchy [Developmentalism]



Components of Conflicts [Dimensionalism]



What might it mean to “resolve” a conflict?

Making others change

- Since the conflict arises when the other doesn't do what I want, don't I have to make them do what I want in order to resolve the conflict?

Fixing others' feelings

- Since I feel bad when there is conflict, doesn't resolution mean that I have to make sure everyone feels good?

What makes some conflicts so intense?



Degree to which the parties are **attached** to the issue or outcome



Degree to which the parties see the issue from a differing **perspective**



Aspects of Conflict Resolution



Addressing Conflict [1]

“I won’t say anything because I don’t want to start a fight.”

- A conflict is the circumstance in which needs are not being met. It doesn’t go away if we don’t address it.

Addressing Conflict [2]

“I’ve tried everything.
There is nothing else I can
do.”

- There are a theoretically infinite number of ways we can address a conflict.

Addressing Conflict [3]

“The only way for me to win is for the other to lose.”

- When we try to settle a conflict by making the other lose we are starting a fight.

Don't force it



If you're forcing you're fighting!

Learn to “fight without fighting”

- The first best thing we can do to resolve conflict is to not do those things that create the opposite of what we need.

- Don’t do nothing.
- Don’t start a fight.
- Don’t try to control the other.
- Don’t lose sight of yourself.



- Being assertive, we have to learn to name the issue such that the other can see the problem.

Critical [assertive] Language

Concern – need

- Awareness that there is a quality missing in the relationship

Complaint – choices

- Acknowledging an aspect of the other's behavior which is a problem

Contempt – being

- Expressing a devaluing judgment about the other's worth

Control – non-being

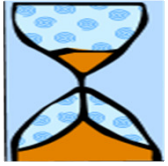
- Taking charge in an expression of who the other is not

Select a conflict to work on

- Focus on a Persistent Pattern of Conflict in a Significant Relationship
- Because it happens often you will have lots of opportunities to practice.
- Because it happens in a relationship which is important to you, resolving it will make a big difference for you and for the relationship.



Significant Relationship



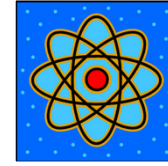
Spend time

- Who do you spend the most time with?



Emotionally important

- Who do you have strong feelings about +/-



Powerful

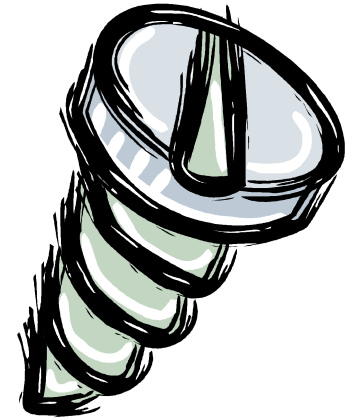
- Whose choices have a big impact on you?

Pattern of Conflict

- Rolling your eyes
- Feeling frustrated
- Getting into a power struggle
- Feeling hopeless
- Noticing how the other is resisting what you are trying to do or to tell them



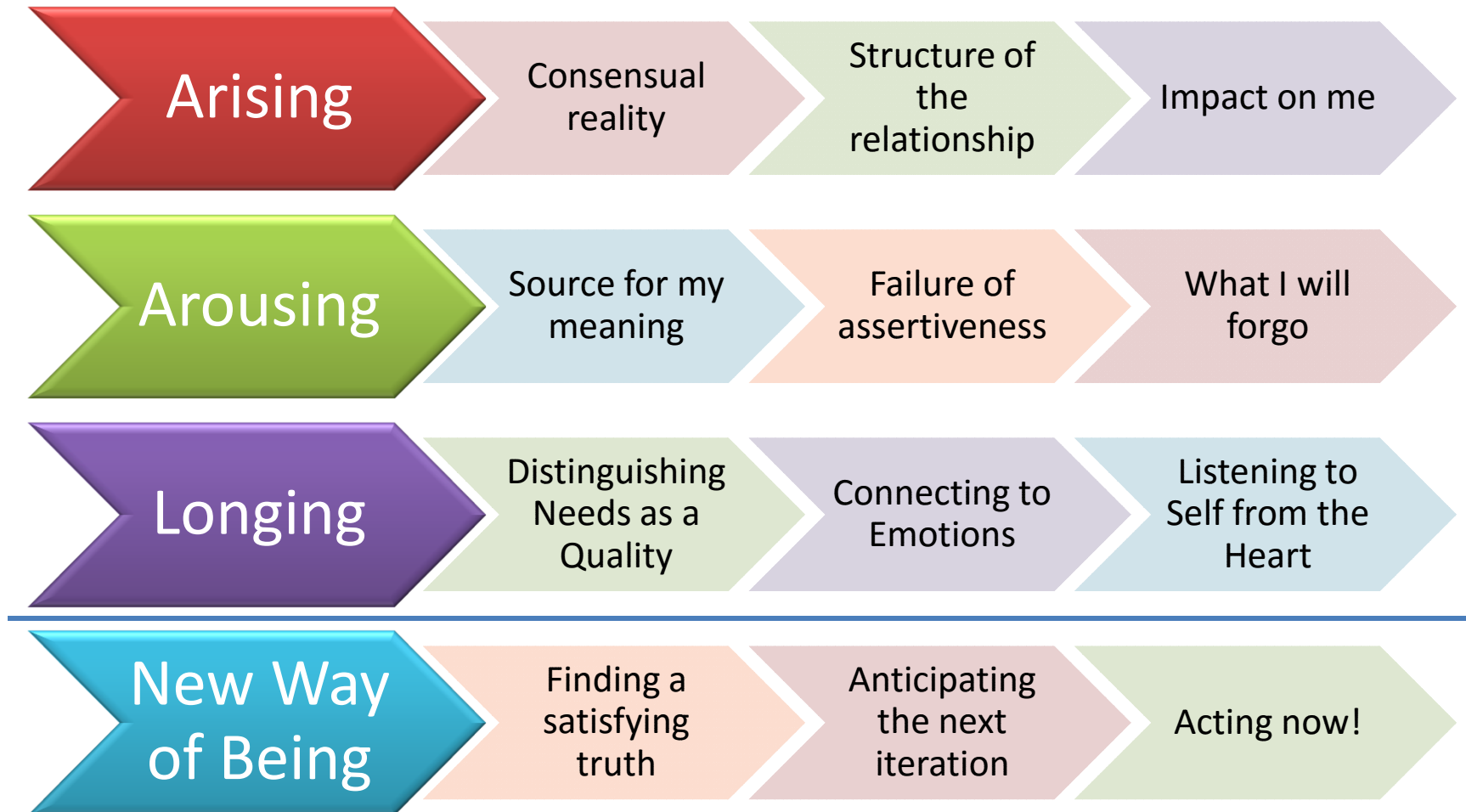
Tightening the relationship



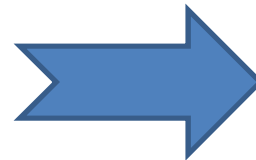
Relationship transformation spiral: constructing a New Way of Being



Sequence for resolving conflict



New Way of Being



Last
time

What might I have
done?

- What is true?
- Is there a part which isn't comfortable with this truth?
- Is it safe to say this truth?

Next
Time

What will next time look
like?

Right
Now

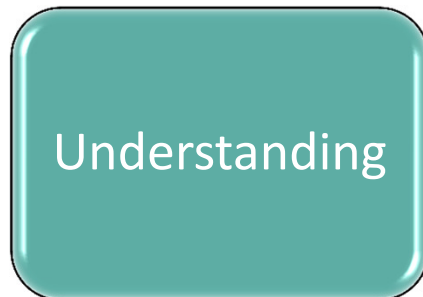
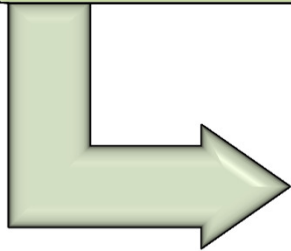
What can I do now to be
ready?

- How will I stop myself from acting?
- What agreements do I need to create with others?

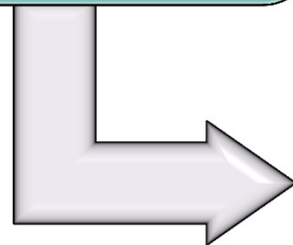
Toward Agreement



- To create an agreement we have to be in the same relationship with each other: same structure, same rules and process



- We have to be addressing the same issue and able to hear how each other is different is a valid way of being for the other



- We share the same goals and are each making commitments toward them

Coming to an agreement

Relationship

- Who are we to each other and what are our respective roles [rights and responsibilities]?

Circumstances

- What actually happens? Can we agree on the issues?

Effect on each of us

- How are we each affected by the circumstances?

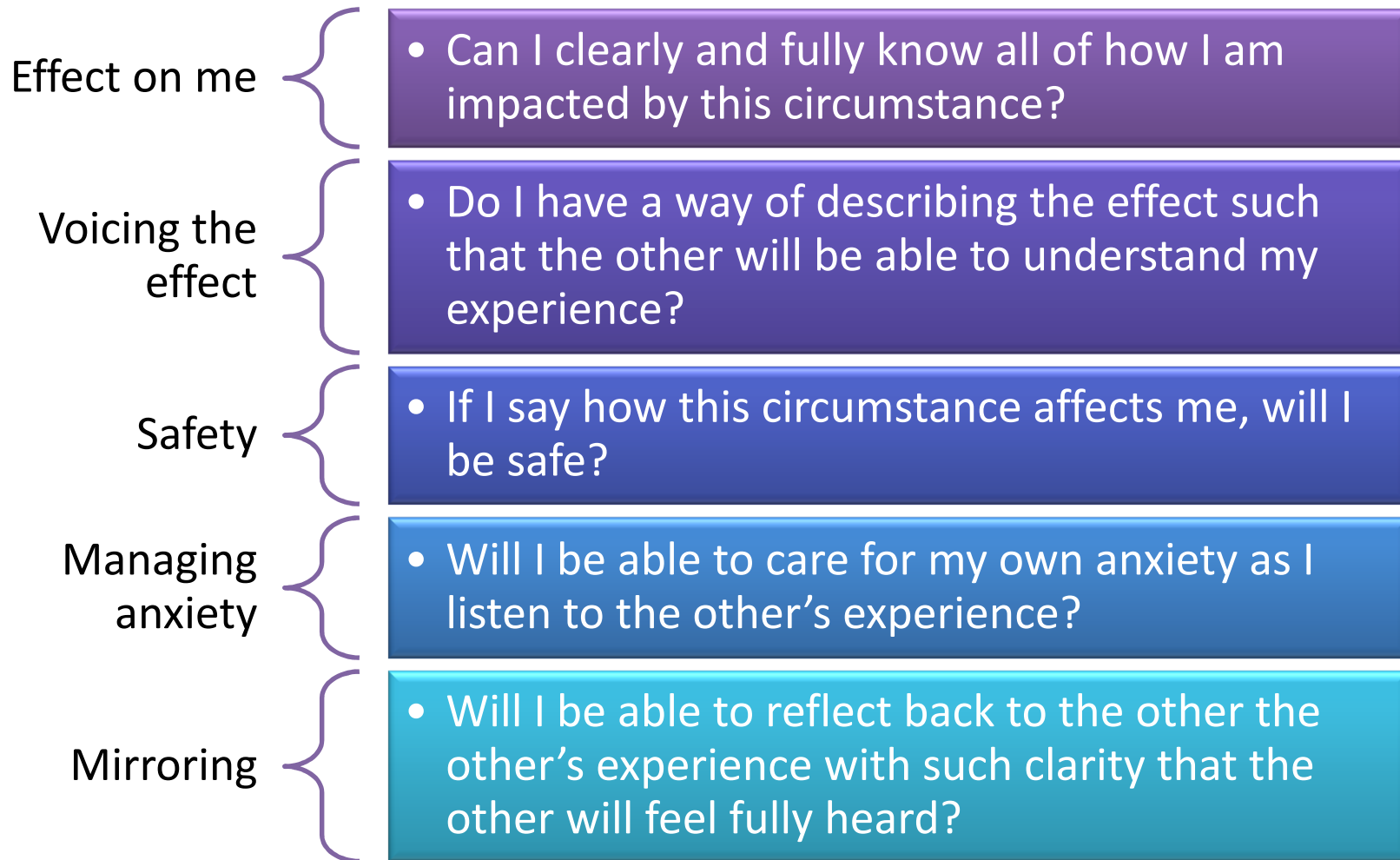
Shared Needs

- What is it we both need when this circumstance arises?

Commitments

- What are we each willing to do to create what we both need?

Effect on each of us



Coming to an agreement

Relationship

- Who are we to each other and what are our respective roles [rights and responsibilities]?

Circumstances

- What actually happens? Can we agree on the issues?

Effect on each of us

- How are we each affected by the circumstances?

Shared Needs

- What is it we both need when this circumstance arises?

Commitments

- What are we each willing to do to create what we both need?