NATURAL THINKING METHODS
By David L. Burger, Ph.D.
Boulder, Colorado – September 2016

Introductory Context

From post-modern, constructionist, or pyscho-spiritual perspectives there are two paradigms that all thinking falls into. Method I Thinking occurs in what is called *Fundamental Reality,* and Methods II & III include what is called *Constructed Reality* (Stephen Bacon, Ph.D.). In short, *Fundamental Reality* is objective reality, what we can measure, predict, and to some degree control. *Constructed Reality* is subjective reality, as in 'perception is reality' or 'we create our own reality,' and is subject to change and unpredictability. The 'fundamentals' require more advocacy than inquiry, thus we look to experts to find the right answer, the 'right stuff' in Method I. In Methods II & III we find that beliefs drive behaviors not facts, requiring a method of thinking that will integrate both. Methods #2 & #3 naturally adapt to the subjective context for more successful outcomes.

The *context* of these realities and *methods* includes leadership and management development, both personal and professional, and is an inside-out process. We develop first by knowing who we are, then by understanding the impact of our behaviors on others.

➢ Management is a reactive science to remove variants from a system in order to predict and control it.

➢ Leadership is a proactive art that introduces variations into a system to create opportunity.

In Method I Thinking we *analyze* data in our external reality and react to it, e.g., what is in our cupboards before we make the grocery list? In Method II Thinking we add subjective data, what food is healthy for us, and proactively *synthesize* what will work in the store and in the home. In Method III Thinking we also consider the environmental impacts, ethical ramifications, and the ecosystem we are living in, and our intuitions for such choices.

What does the science tell us? Amplifying this objective context is what neuroscience teaches us about how the brain functions. Neuroscientists estimate over 80% of brain function is devoted to survival, specifically avoiding threats. Which means the human brain is wired to run away from danger and walk toward rewards. A beautiful design when humans had to run from saber-tooth tigers, but in our current condition this can translate to distressing over unrealistic fears and, importantly being distressed diminishes health of individuals and organizations. Shifting from risk-reacting 'what could go wrong' to more opportunistic 'what might work better' will enhance each "thinking method." And, examining basic principles helps us know when to utilize which thinking method, within what context, for what outcomes and establishes the *why, what,* and *how* for getting things done.

Method I – *Either\Or Thinking*
Either\Or Thinking works for tasks or solving problems that have ONE right answer or TWO or more right answers that are independent. When young, this is the way most of us are first taught to think and process ideas, problems, and cultural issues. Problems with one right answer are essential topics for passing key knowledge on to

other team members, family members, or developing our culture (business and social communities). When we use or teach this method, we typically cover the "big six" elements of "either\or" problems or questions:

1. *Manners* – When you receive a gift, you say _____!
2. *Mathematics* – 2 + 2 = _____?
3. *Language* – How do you spell and pronounce your name _____?
4. *History* – The first CEO of our company was _____?
5. *Science* – Do skiers fall down slopes or up? _____!
6. *Laws & Morals* – According to scriptures & courts, murder is: Right ___ or Wrong __ - Legal___ or Illegal___?

Either\Or Thinking works best for working with "things" and concrete, material world, transactional tasks such as budgets, spreadsheets, directions, decisions, and so forth. The neuroscience behind this method of thinking tracks logical problems that passes through our prefrontal cortex, the physiological home of our awareness of the outer world. This is where neurons go when they're not on automatic pilot to "think things through." Either\Or Thinking helps us understand content, how things work, decision-making, remembering, how to be socialized, memorizing, techniques, logic, protocols, and managing unnecessary variables out of a system to control it. This part of the brain is used for Management issues, but that does not mean Either\Or Thinking is simplistic; rather, it uses the scientific method to simplify.

The major limits and benefits with Either\Or Thinking is that it is mostly effective with objective, measurable facts and thus good for the 'bottom-line.' This method of thinking can deliver a singular strategy for a start-up business with a short-term goal of selling soon, but not solve the long-term desire for a sustainable business model. It is the same for Western Individualism, striving for immediate satisfaction in the material world often resulting in long-term unfulfilling lifestyles. When we attempt to solve a *subjective* problem with logic not only does it not work, we create a false dichotomy of 'good OR evil' that can separate or polarize people. Not an effective method of thinking if you fail to connect with employees, customers, or loved ones. However, if you run a stable manufacturing business or are producing a concrete product/service, the Either\Or method of thinking provides precision and long-term marketable items by vetting unnecessary variables.

I begin with Method I Thinking as it seems the most obvious and familiar to people. However, this method is the least used by most cultures as it is slow thinking. Whenever we need to look at the details, do the math, gather data about ramifications, or learn that we don't know what we don't know it slows us down and is considered a 'waste of time.' Advertisers and politicians often take advantage of this by simplistic promises with no facts to back up their claims. Method I can be over-done by analysis paralysis, or under-done by using old facts or not gather objective or especially subjective data at all. So most of us think we are thinking logically, rationally, and thoroughly, yet with a little observation facts are not a part of the process or facts are not integrated.

What does the science tell us? Interestingly, this method of thinking is highly energy consumptive as the frontal lobes (logic, tasks, objectivity) consume glycogen making it easier for the brain to "run out of gas". Either/Or Thinking involves very complex physiological interactions in the brain that require billions of neurons. Have you ever noticed how tiring a problem-solving or decision-making meeting is? Compare that to going for a walk to think about a loved one, typically energizing rather than energy draining. One method tends to use up a measurable and limited resource while the

other generates resources and likewise 'mental energy.' Energy management is core to success.

Either\Or Thinking focuses on prioritizing workloads through spreadsheets, pert-charts, goals & objectives, fish-scale diagrams, force-field analysis, etc., and rewards content experts. How familiar does this sound: we start our workday knowing a few strategic items need our time and attention but before getting to these things we decide to check our emails. By noon we are exhausted and feel farther behind than when we started, as this method of thinking consumes our energy and time. The classic adage of "time" management is a bit misleading once you understand more about the science behind this method of thinking, as what we truly need is "energy" management.

To manage our energy we can 'spend' the energy first on *what matters most*; for example, vet the best strategy for business fundamentals first, then drill down on the precious few effective techniques, procedures, tactics, and complete decisions by delivering results. If we still run low on energy we can take a break by moving the body and ingesting glycogen rich calories (glass of organic lemonade), after all studies show sitting is killing us.

Remember, Method #1 Thinking is very SLOW, and many people avoid statistics, math, details and even subjective data because of it. It is necessary to utilize this method in order to be an *Independent* thinker, seeking more and new data through disciplined inquiry. Without this SLOW discernment we risk Egocentric, narrow-minded, and rigid approaches to thinking. If that happens we experience 'analysis paralysis,' limited or fragile data sets, or waiting for all the data before we can act. Better to *slow down early AND speed up later!*

Finally, be mindful to utilize Either\Or Thinking for objective or the Fundamental Reality where it fits, at least finding 'best possible' answers for incremental change. Focus on managing things and utilizing transactional leadership with this method of thinking. Being mindful means you will improve tangible results more efficiently by focusing more [51 to 80%] on opportunities and less [20 to 49%] on threats. In most business environments technical expertise and discipline are rewarded, which is appropriate yet can cause people to work harder on concrete results and lose sight of the value that comes with less tangible rewards when working smarter. The other methods offer different focuses for a smarter, holistic approach.

Method I *Tools*

The following are three tools to help you apply Method #1 Thinking. For Method #1 think of how your team has made decisions and implemented them in the past. This is to help you understand what constitutes effective decision-making and executions, plus assess your current state. Next is a simple tool to assess if your ideas, strategy, or project is implementable. Finally, a common tool, RACI, helps you assign stakeholders.

NATURAL THINKING METHOD I
DECISION-MAKING AND EXECUTION

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."
Aristotle

▣   STEP 1 - begin by recognizing what you already do well! Have a dialogue on viewing points of your decision-making process to date. Then, later, assess your team's decision-making effectiveness. How does your team affect that? What decisions did you deliver on? Outline what processes work and which ones need improvement.

▣   STEP 2 - have a session to score your team's effectiveness. Measure quality, speed, results, and effort. Each are on a continuum, for example there can be too little effort, too much effort, or a bunch of fun and appropriate effort between the extremes. See "Decision Effectiveness Score Card" for the whole process.

QUALITY

low	high

SPEED

slow	fast

RESULTS

low yield	high yield

EFFORT

too little effort	too much effort

▣   STEP 3 - ask what are your critical decisions, which decisions have the most value, and which ones are strategy-centric? Decisions fall on a continuum from simple to complex, from daily operational to top strategic priorities. Be sure to include both. Day-to-day decisions are important when they attend to core strategic initiatives, core values, or solid business practices.

▣   STEP 4 -   redesign critical decisions for success by applying best practices. Include checks to be certain people know what the decision is, what their roles are, and that those involved know others' roles. How will you communicate these upgrades and when? Publish a timetable and check for understanding.
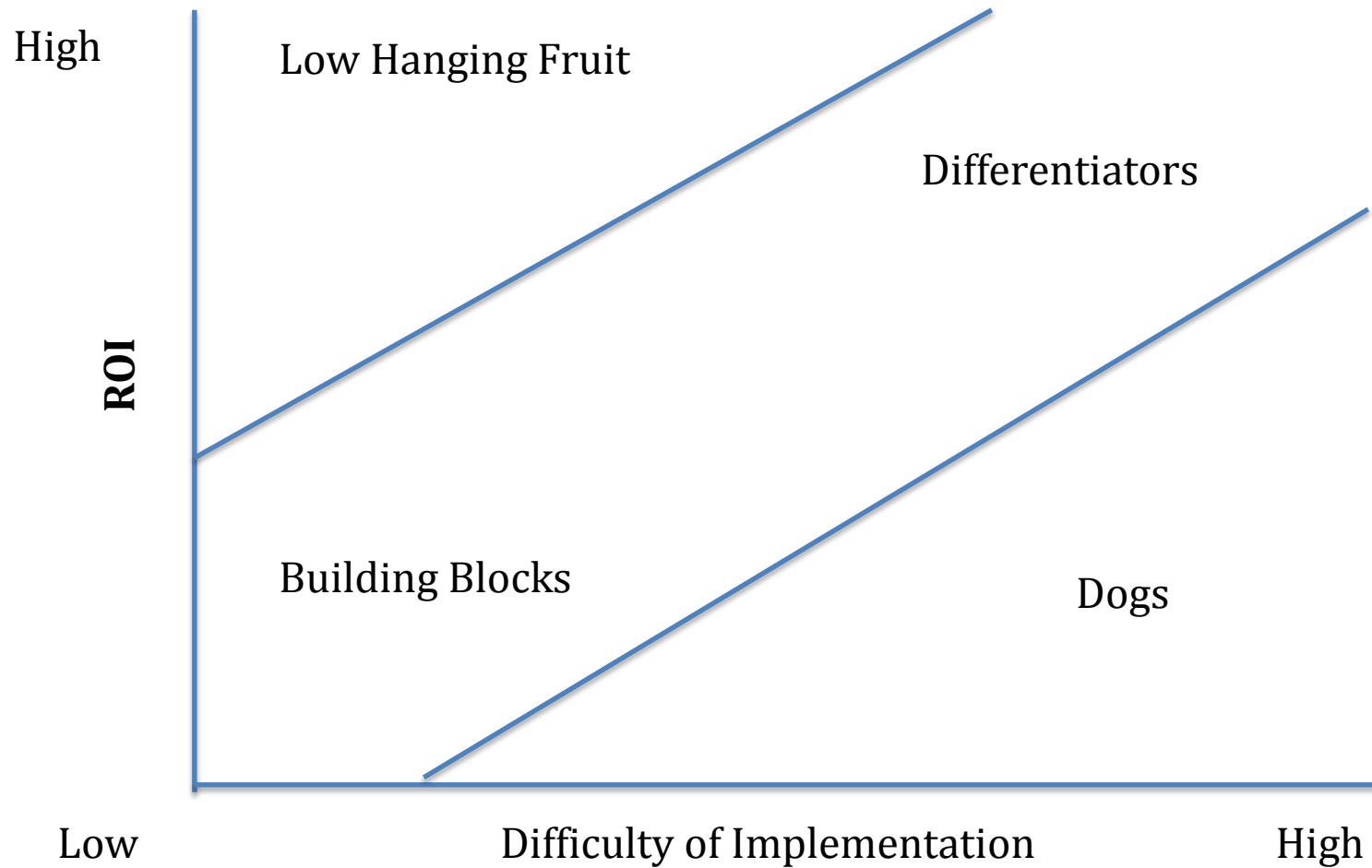
▣   STEP 5 - make sure the Organization supports and reinforces effective decisions and execution processes.

▣   STEP 6 - recycle through the steps until effective decision/execution processes are an organizational norm.

Adapted from Original work of Blenko, Mankins, & Rogers

NATURAL THINKING METHOD I
Implementability Check

High

Low Hanging Fruit

Differentiators

ROI

Building Blocks

Dogs

Low   Difficulty of Implementation   High

NATURAL THINKING METHOD I
RACI ROLES & CHARTING

R - Responsible = The person *assigned* to do the work!

A - Accountable = The person with *final* decision authority & *ultimate* expertise & ownership!

C - Consulted = The key stakeholder who *must* be consulted before a decision or work activity is taken!

I - Informed = The person/s who *must* be informed a decision or action *has* been taken to gain compliance!

	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
Activity 1				
Activity 2				
Activity 3				
Activity 4				

Method II – *Both/And Thinking*

Both/And Thinking works for solving subjective or relationship problems that don't have one right answer. It is aimed at integrating objective with subjective data, content with process, for more comprehensive and sustainable outcomes. In interpersonal settings one right answer often causes more problems than it solves because absolutism works better for things than for people. For example, say you have three children with very different passions, habits, interests, worldviews, etc., and want to find the one right gift for all three. Same problem if you have three very different direct reports and want to find the one right reward system. Fundamentalism comes from clinging to Either/Or thinking, resulting in incongruent, closed behaviors that stagnate progress, and typically without any real or relevant data.

Both/And Thinking simply links two solutions together into a balanced whole yet begins with the more powerful emotional states. Specifically, this method of thinking considers both objective and subjective data, advocacy and inquiry, in a dynamic balance. Thus, this method affords a way to work with situations that are more complex, especially when there are a number of differing views or constituencies. The beauty of this way of thinking is that we don't end up in a polarized stalemate or with a shallow compromise where both sides feel like they gave a little and lost a little, or a lose\lose. With Both/And Thinking we have a *process* to "get to We," a win/win solution, which is more sustainable than a win\lose. We can also think of this as a *Market Orientation* because in a 'Membership Economy' interpersonal connections precede deciding what results, services, or products we can afford to produce, when, and at what volume while understanding that our external end-users will evaluate the added value subjectively. Prioritizing workloads beginning with emotions gives us rhythm instead of frustration found in attempting to find static balance.

This method of thinking integrates emotional intelligence, EQ, with mental intelligence, IQ. Self-awareness is core to this method of thinking, and with that one can understand the impact of their choices on others. For example, consider the pervasive business process question: should our business be centralized or decentralized? Either\Or Thinkers might stagnate by defending their one approach and vote for one over the other. However, effective organizations that include Both/And Thinking drill down on what conditions and people will work better for a centralized or decentralized approach and realize that 'one size rarely fits all' so they can concretely customize organizational structures and solutions. A leader shifts from seeing poles as opposites to seeing complements and finds unity in diversity. What would you ask if you wanted to get buy-in? The Both/And process continues to ask 'how' questions yet begins with 'what' questions:

Either\Or Questions in a Both/And process:
- How can we measure when a centralized system works from when a decentralized system works?
- What are the costs and benefits of centralizing versus decentralizing?
- How do we analyze data that are logical and rational to develop a business case that has evidence and proofs before we launch a new structure?

- How will we generate fixes, analyze solutions, and implement the changes?
- How will we order the concrete data into milestones on a timeline with date due deliverables?
- How will we know we have been successful?

Both/And Thinking Questions:
- What do you believe we are here to accomplish?
- What do you feel about moving toward 'shared systems?'
- What conditions would need to be in place for empowering the workforce closest to our customers?
- What happens to your motivation when you experience silos, turf battles, or lack of coordination?
- What would 'good' look like in this case?
- What would motivate you to make these changes in our structure?
- What do you feel would motivate customers to adapt to a new structure?
- In what ways do you express your passions and interests?

This method of thinking begins to integrate Leadership *with* Management. To integrate we must move from measuring "results" to assessing "outcomes." For example, if we can objectively measure that a technical strategy has a predictive and sound business case AND if there is an organizational or cultural strategy to effectively get buy-in and follow-through, we will gain short-term and long-term successes. Results AND Relationships = Outcomes. With this thinking method the business need becomes a process audit to ensure our communication processes, decision-making processes, and problem-solving processes are based on sound principles with known terms and authentic by allowing people to remain idiosyncratic, true to their passions, and keep autonomy. People begin to feel safe to express their ideas. A conflict management process becomes a conflict leadership process when we include a process for grieving. Every change at work includes some loss of what used to be, and letting go of what used to work is a leadership responsibility well suited for Both/And thinking.

Both/And or Process Thinking would explore setting priorities by including key stakeholders before prioritizing schedules. That means exploring "your" and "their" priorities simultaneously, "What do WE need?" This avoids solely using Either\Or Thinking and prevents polarizing where we are reduced to saying, "But that is the way we have always done it." People tell me they often get more of what they wanted in the first place when they include other's perspectives. Inquiry into multiple perspectives provides understanding, which is more effective than a linear or myopic view. Instead of relying on a singular 'point of view' we gain 'viewing points' and with that comes breadth and depth = more holistic outcomes. Working relationships depend on us understanding the 'other's' essence and them understanding ours.

The brain can better integrate motivation and logic with pictures as subjective material can be more easily interpreted individually and therefore owned. Ownership increases performance in employees, spouses, self, etc., as it is more

powerful to do what we want than what we have to do. Manage energy in this method by using symbols to remember what matters and in what order, draw a map with symbols to represent first things first. Best to schedule blocks of time for different types of thinking methods to use different parts of the brain. Thus, internal and external inquiry becomes more subjective, e.g., 'What would good look like for me?' or 'What would motivate me?' before asking others.

Science tells us that imagination requires less brain energy than memorizing does and further, the way the brain uses memory to understand new things it results in keeping us stuck in the past with miniature iterations producing the same old results. This the common confusion between 'activity' and 'productivity.' It is less common to find people who can imagine a different approach than what they are used to or have used in the past, and who can think independently and empathetically, they are often called "leaders."

Method #2 Thinking is dependent thinking. We fall in love with an idea, a methodology, an instinctive answer and our thinking becomes very FAST! It is great to go on automatic pilot with political, romantic, or emergency responses. However, the risk is that we can gather data unconsciously through seeing only half-truths repeated constantly and end up with a fundamentalist's attitude, or become ideological, both shutting out all data but that which is FAST or easy. If we go to a meeting at work, make a decision quickly with agreement; we later wonder why some have changed their minds? Their *Constructed Reality*, which for most is socially constructed and not conscious, never aligned with the decision, never articulated that disparity, and later when they had to act on it they regressed to their habit as if it were 'absolute truth' – surprising their team members. As we learned in Method #1 Thinking, one can over-do or under-do the approach by staying in automatic pilot without facts or not trusting emotions enough to consider them. Over-doing this method is perhaps the most common approach to thinking in America.

Emotions are a stronger driver than facts or logic; thus, Method #2 pays attention to subjective data first, gaining multiple viewing points, and then performs reality testing before taking action. Get more data, both subjective and objective! In sum, Both/And or Process Thinking is similar to integrating hardware AND software in our computer systems, in this case human computers. Perhaps it should be Both/And Feeling, but the main point is that while it takes longer to measure *process* results the potential for more reward is also greater.

Method II *Tools*

The following are four tools to help you apply Method #2 Thinking. First there is a diagram to help you map out the Both and the AND, based on collective Purpose. Next you can think of how your team is currently doing in terms of Decisions and Execution, a process check in case you learn of a need for corrective actions. Next is a simple tool to assess if your ideas, strategy, or project is implementable. Finally, a common tool, RACI, helps you include key stakeholders.
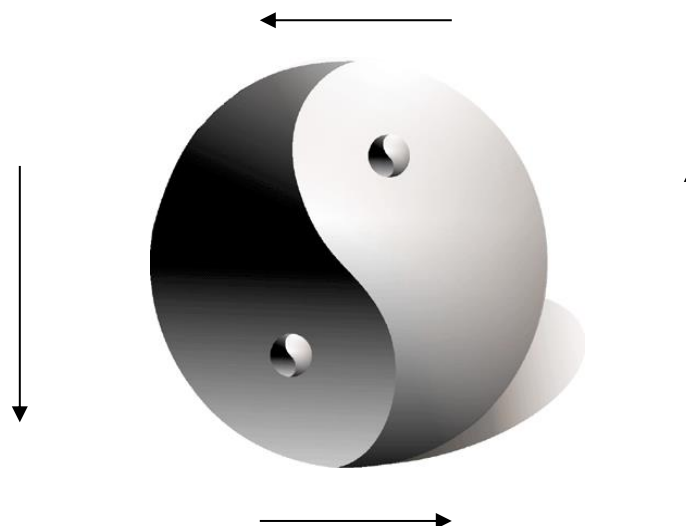
DIAGRAMING OR MAPPING POLARIZED SITUATIONS

1 – Begin by labeling or defining the polarized situation that is preventing Both/And Thinking

2 – Design your Method II solutions based on an integrative Purpose (top) for resolving the polarized situation, AND what you risk with further disintegrations (bottom) as sort of a cultural benefit\costs analysis

<u>**Integrative Purpose:**</u>

**Fall: List the things that motivate
an internal focus (a move toward this pole):**

**Summer – List the actions the
Spring motivators would lead to;**

**Winter: List the actions that Fall motivators
would inform and lead to:**

**Spring: List the things that
motivate an external focus (a move
toward this pole):**

<u>**Disintegrating Outcome:**</u>

NATURAL THINKING METHOD II
DECISION EFFECTIVENESS

☐When we make critical decisions, do we choose the right course of action?

QUALITY

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Low quality decisions   High quality decisions

☐When we make critical decisions, or speed of process is:

SPEED

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Speed is slower than competitors   Speed is faster than competitors

☐We execute critical decisions as intended, having:
RESULTS & RELATIONSHIPS

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Poor execution of decisions   Strong execution & yield from decisions

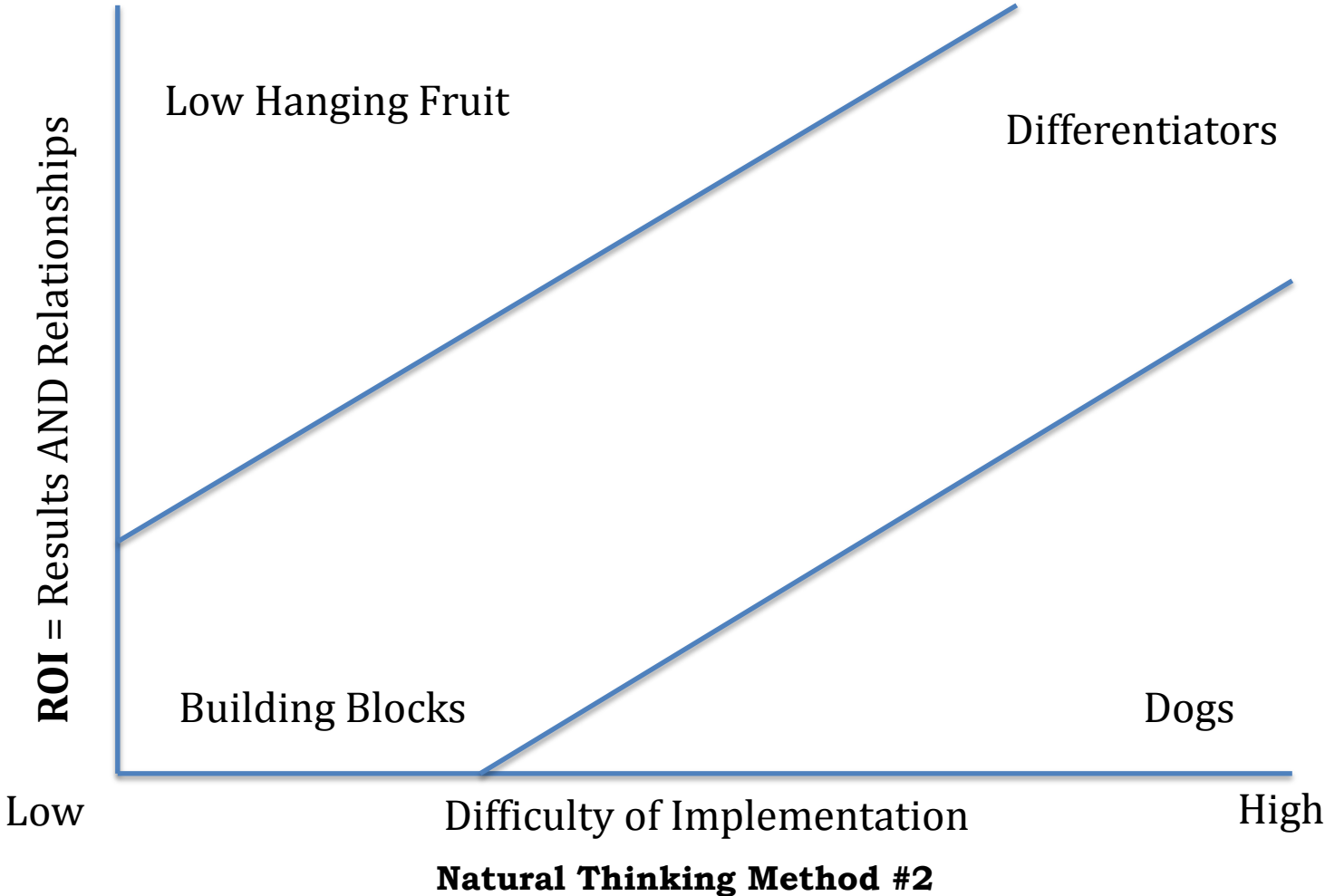
☐In making and executing critical decisions we experience:

EFFORT

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Too much/too little effort   Appropriate amount of effort

Have Disciplined Inquiry around what folks do to achieve these scores?

NATURAL THINKING METHOD II
Implementability Check

ROI = Results AND Relationships (y-axis)

Difficulty of Implementation (x-axis) — Low / High

Low Hanging Fruit

Differentiators

Building Blocks

Dogs

Natural Thinking Method #2

NATURAL THINKING METHOD II
RACI Roles & Charting

R -Responsible = The person/s working closely on the activity

A -Accountable = The person/s with decision authority & passion for the activity

C -Consulted = The key stakeholder/s who should be included & consulted in the decision or work activity to gain perspectives

I -Informed = The person/s who *needs* to know of decisions or actions in order to gain buy-in and commitments . . .

	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
Activity 1	R	A	C	I
Activity 2	C	A	R	I
Activity 3	C	R	C	A
Activity 4	R	A	I	C

Method III – *Ecocentric Thinking*

Ecocentric Thinking is most appropriate for unstructured or ambiguous situations because it is the most creative and intuitive. This method of thinking is for solving systems problems that are more complex than polarized and that are in motion with multiple, moving targets. This method has multiple levels of business and relationship issues, levels of status, and multiple parts of personalities that the leader must orchestrate. This next step is taken by using both Either\Or with Both/And thinking approaches yet goes further by leading in a random or non-linear fashion toward less tangible aims, using goals and objectives to support higher purposes. We learn how we learn and act. This method is more adaptable and increases in value as organizations or issues increase in complexity, uncertainty, size, diversity, speed of change, in resistance to change, or in time because it includes and creates *meaning.*

This form is art, the expression of human spirit, and therefore is based less on our past, but rather on what we can imagine in the present. We fall in love with something outside of ourselves, within a community and get into a flow state in that ecosystem. For example, a musical, art, writing, gardening, even language communities have us transcending the drudgery of learning by being drawn to learn for the love of learning. Ecocentric Thinking actually produces energy as it is requires all of the brain to work in concert, not just emotion and logic, and does not stagnate thinking by defending either the objective or subjective sense of 'self.' The aim of an ecocentric leader is to think and act with 20% ego and 80% humility. When one surrenders individual ego it is subsumed into the greater whole of the ecosystem. Carl Jung called that *synchronicity.* Leaders move from being apart from the system to being a part of the system. We become more drawn to purpose than driven by ego. No longer is this a thinking or problem-solving approach, it is more of an *open* leadership – organizational - cultural life style producing *Interdependent* outcomes in a state of "FLOW."

This method of thinking is often over-looked due to its non-rational (not irrational) qualities and because it is more transformational or revolutionary than incremental. This method is *Consciousness Raising.* Leaders ask "Why" first, but human habit seeks "How" first for the one right answer. The human fear of the unknown and impermanence results in an attachment to concrete, tangible results and people become nostalgic. Social Biologist claim that is because we suffered "un-wilding" with the industrial revolution and now need "re-wilding" of our hearts. What is sometimes called NDD is the same = Nature Deficit Disorder. Either\Or & Both/And Thinking can measure either objective realities or subjective realities, which gives us a sense of certainty but not openness to transformation. Ecocentric Thinking, nature's method, embraces and utilizes the subtle, if not invisible aspects of Constructed Reality and opens us to a transcendent experience. Buddhists say, "Keep a child-mind, a beginner's mind!" C-Level people ask, "What does that have to do with business?" It does insofar as we can see more opportunities, more innovations with our natural self (human nature), when it remains innocent, open, beautiful, compassionate, adaptable, and childlike we achieve compassionate interconnectedness. When we rely on 'human habit,' we live in a trance that is socially constructed to support moralistically the glories of war, fear, hate and profit over the purity and clarity of purpose. Ecocentric Thinking adds questions of purpose:

- Why are we in this business?
- Why am I on this team, what do I add, what am I good at contributing?

- Why should we work together on this?
- What is our central purpose for this project, what matters most?
- Why are employees motivated to accomplish this, why are our customers motivated to purchase from us?
- Why not produce products or services that positively impact the communities we do business in?
- What is ethical about what we are planning?
- Are we doing what matters for our ecosystem?

And include questions that illicit imagination, intuition, even healthy skepticism:
- Imagine if you had a magic wand and could wave it over this situation, what would it become?
- I understand your plate is full and you have tried everything and things should just be different. What could be different?
- Why not keep the traditional approach and add a few original ideas? What else could we try?
- When you feel 'one with your work' what is your experience?

People often ask, "Why use this method of thinking?" Researchers suggest that it is because there are limits to prediction and control, specifically change and chance, that require a less tangible approach lest people feel like work is meaningless and become disempowered, disassociated, and under-motivated. When humans are internally motivated they commit. When we commit we find a way. When we are externally motivated we comply but do not commit. When we do not commit we find excuses, effective yet short lived.

One key example of moving from egocentric to ecocentric thinking comes from Paul Tillich, America's famous existential theologian. He said, "Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned: the dynamics of faith are the dynamics of man's *ultimate concern*. Man, like every living being, is concerned about many things, above all about those that condition his very existence, such as food and shelter. But man, in contrast to other living beings, has spiritual concerns – cognitive, aesthetic, social, and political. Some of them are urgent, often extremely urgent, and each of them as well as the vital concerns can claim ultimacy for human life or the life of the social group. If it claims ultimacy it demands the total surrender of him who accepts this claim, and it promises total fulfillment even if all other claims have to be subjected to it or rejected in its name."

Wisdom is a key outcome of Ecocentric Thinking, to integrating all three methods, and while wisdom is difficult to measure objectively we experience the transformative nature of it. Many even see the integration of all three methods of thinking as magic, perhaps but it is powerful even spiritual. In business, where we spend more time than at home or at play, spirituality is demonstrated by having depth. What do you do when you don't know what to do? Depth, inspiration, enthusiasm, creativity, synergy, etc., are qualities people look to their leaders to have. Religion is an individual methodology for a spiritual path, more content than process, and has little value in the workplace. What we can expect from wisdom is inner peace, which provides 'effortless effort' as when an athlete is being one with their skis, their bike, their boat, etc. Ecocentric Thinking is about progress or continuous improvement, not perfection, so it is not religious but meaningful and even Atheists and business people seek meaning and have Tillich's *ultimate concerns*.

Use Ecocentric Thinking for experiencing, understanding, evolving and transforming 'love,' 'freedom,' 'fairness,' 'what works' in relationships and unifying the diversity of individual realities. While this seems fuzzy it is merely dynamic and less tangible, which requires leaders and organizational cultures to embrace more meaningful aims and not bow to pressures of, "Too touchy feely," "Too heavy," "Spirituality doesn't make money," "Can't make goals with ambiguous ideas," or "We will get to that after the real work." No need to be seduced by the tyranny of the urgent when we have an 'ultimate concern.' A key skill would be forgiveness, not condoning a poor behavior or work performance just letting go of it. Staying attached to such becomes toxic, and while self-forgiveness is more difficult than forgiving others' behaviors, the ability to lead reminds us that the way we treat ourselves eventually becomes the way we treat others. Achieving acceptance allows us to move on.

We all have had experiences with art, community, inspiration, higher power, etc. While some would like to separate these higher qualities from the business world, the consistent result would be a dull and boring experience full of fear and stress. Maturing into Ecocentric Thinking provides an ability to embrace our visions, purposes, missions, strategies, succession plans, entrepreneurship, etc., in terms of impact on our selves, our internal culture, our customers, impact on the communities we do business in, impact on our industry (as role models), impact on our nation, and in fact impact on humanity and our global environment. Short term, concrete ways to measure this state of being evade us but understanding the change achieved from meaningful processes such as non-linear thinking (natural cycles), dialogue, collective visioning, and town hall meetings that inquire about individual motivations and meaning can connect us to far greater outcomes. Narrative can be added to development plans to capture proactive behaviors, attitudes and creative actions. Artists utilize portfolios as one form of metrics.

The call to leadership is to be present and stay in motion, and not to expect anyone to buy into ecocentric thinking without experiencing it for them selves. For equity of power we must live deliberately with tenacity of pursuit toward more connected and meaningful holistic systems = *community*.

Method III *Tools*
The following are three tools to help you apply Method #3 Thinking. First, Consciousness Raising for your team uses Decisions and Execution as a Cultural process check. Next is a simple tool to assess if your ideas, strategy, or project is implementable. Finally, a common tool, RACI, helps you include key stakeholders from an ecocentric organizational perspective.

METHOD III – ORGANIZATIONAL/CULTURAL DECISION EFFECTIVENESS SCORE CARD

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."
Aristotle

Step I – Read each of the ten statements below and circle the number that aligns with your level of agreement. 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree more than agree, 3= Agree more than disagree, and 4= Strongly Agree:

☐ Our structure helps (not hinders) the decisions most critical to our success.

STRUCTURE

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ Individuals are clear on their roles and accountabilities in our most critical decisions.

ROLES

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ Our processes are designed to produce effective, timely decisions and actions.

PROCESSES

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ The people in critical decision roles have the appropriate information they need when and how they need it.

INFORMATION

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ Our metrics and incentives (rewards/recognitions) focus people on making and executing effective decisions.

METRICS & INCENTIVES

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ People understand their top priorities clearly enough to be able to make and execute the decisions they face.

PRIORITIES

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

Organizational Scorecard continued

☐ We make decisions using the approach that is most effective for the type of decision being made; we integrate impact of the business with impact on the people.

DECISION APPROACH

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ We use the best people in jobs where they can have the greatest impact on decisions

PEOPLE

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

☐ Our leaders, at all levels, exhibit mature decision behaviors

BEHAVIORS

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

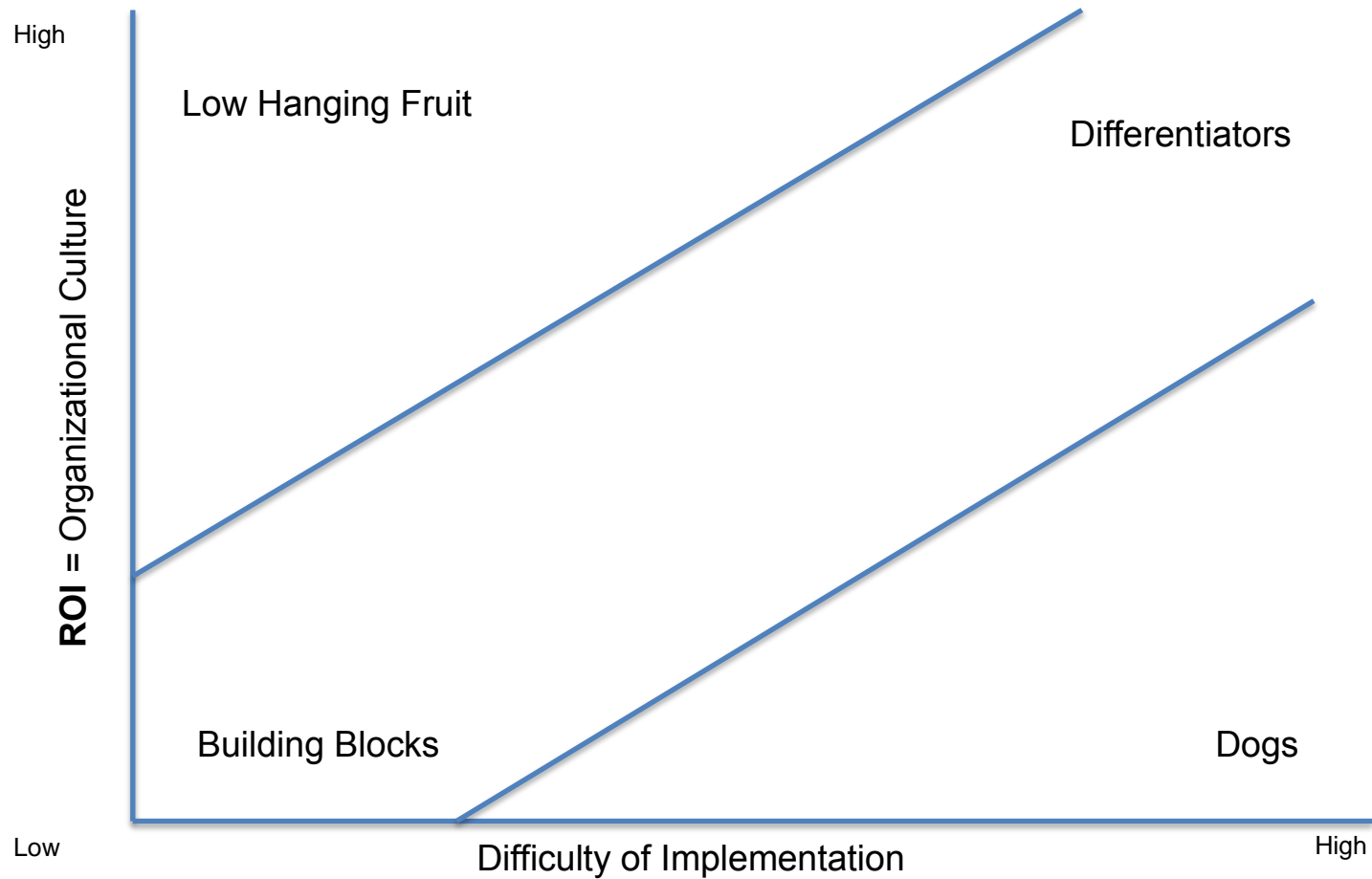☐ Our culture reinforces prompt, effective decisions and actions throughout our organization

CULTURE

1_____2_____|_____3_____4
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

Step II – Add up your individual scores   Total _____

Step III – Get with your decision-making team and discuss scores by using examples you drew from to score your organization. Provide a multi-voting process to get a consensus on aggregate scores for the team and eventually for your organization.

Step IV – If individual scores are above 35 the database would say your organization is supporting effective decisions and implementations. If individual scores are 31 to 35 you have what is good that can go to great. If under 30 you have identified a challenge needing your attention. Thus, this step is meant to create action plans to take good to great and stop ailments in your process, or close the gaps! Apply the 80/20 rule = 80% of your focus on what works and 20% on what is not working well enough.

NATURAL THINKING METHOD III
IMPLEMENTABILITY CHECK

Natural Thinking Method #3

NATURAL THINKING METHOD III
RACI Roles & Charting

R - Responsible = The person/s working closely on the activity

A - Accountable = The person/s with decision authority, purpose, & passion for the activities and the business culture . . .

C - Consulted = The key stakeholder/s who should be included & consulted in the decision or work activity to gain organizational acceptance, meaning, & understanding . . .

I - Informed = The person/s who *need/s* to know of decision or action in order to gain community . . .

	Person/s A	**Person/s B**	**Person/s C**	**Person/s D**
Activity 1				
Activity 2				
Activity 3				
Activity 4				

Context Summary

Constructed Reality is more than simply made-up mental maps or simply emotions. Most of our belief systems are socially constructed based more on half-truths of objective facts than whole truths. For example, think of the stock market and why is it that no objective strategy works? The answer is emotions are driving decisions to buy or sell and when to do so such that an individual's constructed belief will ignore facts. "I know my stock is going down but I can't sell as it may go back up!" Another example of *Constructed Reality* lies in the question, "Why would a nurse or physician smoke cigarettes, haven't they seen the data?" Certainly these professionals have seen the objective data, yet in interviews they claim, "It won't happen to me because I only smoke 6 cigarettes a day!" or "That won't happen to me!" In both these examples belief drives behavior not science. These are examples of unconscious constructed reality.

In education, researchers know that "retention" does not work. Kids will get better via maturation and by repeating a grade any student would improve due to repetition and maturation, yet studies show that students fall behind the following year mostly due to the social stigma attached to retention (flunked, too stupid, or being held back for some unspoken reason). Regardless, when educators are interviewed, after analyzing the research data, they claim views such as, "I don't want to send this student unprepared to the next grade, and besides Johnny will do so much better if he stays one more year." In sum, what we believe, or our *constructed reality*, holds more power over behavior than facts. Multiple believers in an unconsciously constructed reality create co-dependence. Challenging the belief system will create more blind faith in it.

People resist change and being changed, which makes it imperative to use more process skills to effect positive change. We can take in more data, suspend our assumptions, and provide non-judgmental feedback to help grow connections. Another practice would be to integrate emotions with reason by adding a "pause" before acting on a passion. Because emotion comes from the limbic system of the brain and reason from the pre-frontal cortex, most brains can't integrate until they have matured into their mid-twenties. We can accelerate that development by practicing more "pauses." For example, marketing and sales people can get very excited about a new promotion, and that is what we want them to do. However, without a pause there is no inclusion of how the promotion will be manufactured, how the retail end of the business will deliver on it (including a service), how their passion is measured in ROI, or will the product improve lives versus be bought. As leadership is an inside first, process we begin with monitoring our self-talk for pausing before acting. Both/And Thinking uses inquiry, with advocacy to understand motivations in others and designs alignment before launching new ideas, processes, or products resulting in efficient results and effective outcomes. Still incremental yet more sustainable change comes from artful process, e.g., decisions that stay made.

Edward Lorenz set out to follow in the traditions of Determinism, Newtonian Physics, Logical Positivism, and so on by being more precise. However, he found that the smaller the deviations analyzed (i.e., from 6 decimal points to 12) the less predictive the analysis. Thus, Ecocentric Thinking embraces Chaos Theory, Lorenz's Butterfly Effect, Quantum Physics, Fractals, Strange

Attractors, and Metaphysics as these models further establish the non-predictability of *Constructed Reality* of real life. As a simple example, the practicality of not making weather forecasts reliable for more than two days.

This perspective presents a profound paradox in that beyond *Fundamental Reality* no techniques work AND at the same time, all techniques work (Scott Miller, Ph.D.). Not only are humans idiosyncratic, when one believes something is or is not true, intrinsic motivation to support and act on that belief is created as if 'will or won't' are absolutely true and factual. We construct reality to prove our belief, which is followed by self-fulfilling prophecy to protect and sustain the belief and related behaviors; meaning people see what they want to see and hear what they want to hear. We unconsciously convince ourselves, and rely on the co-dependent beliefs of others, that we are getting the outcomes we are seeking, without factual evidence, and continue to behave in the same way assuming we are being successful (under-utilizing Method #1 Thinking).

It is a profound shock to leaders to realize that techniques do not work across all three methods of thinking, nor are there metrics that are predictive or repeatable. Rather than over-doing Method #1 Thinking by finding techniques that limit us to deciding between this verses that, often 'the lesser of evils' belief, we can be liberated to choose and create. Granted, it doesn't make sense that a so called 'proven technique' is not proven at all, yet understanding that we are no longer limited to false dichotomies we can create *ritual* and *ceremony* that draws on different perspectives of shared meaning. For example, a wedding ceremony can be no more than a technically orchestrated event based on data about where, what season, how many bride's maids and groomsmen, what music, what vows, best attire, and so on; but none of that predicts a happy or effective marriage. When the couples are *in* Love, they are internally motivated and commit. The ceremony becomes a ritual transforming their lives in ways they can't even articulate, they just 'know it is the right path.' Likewise, the friends and family that join in the ceremony are also transformed as they let go of their attachments to what they see as a "good" wedding and focus on what binds us all together.

Such is the aim for development work, workshops, and other work experiences, which all deserve interconnected ritual in order to find common Purpose. Consciously constructed reality creates *community* and *interdependence.*

Finally, these contexts call us to let go of our attachments to what used to work and be open up to possibilities of deeper meaning and more fulfilling, whole lives, at work and at home. A common attachment to a belief is that 'there is nothing new under the sun.' Letting go of that a more effective belief/behavior package can be chosen, 'child's mind or beginner mind' will open us up to new probabilities. The conscious use of *Constructed Reality* is fast and dependable, making Methods #2 & #3 very effective; and, effective leaders begin with Natural Thinking Method #3 so they are driven by collective Purpose and not their ego.

Be present and stay in motion! May what you love be the work you do professionally and personally, remembering life is always, already, all right!

References

Bacon, Stephen, 2016, *Dancing With the Abyss, currently being published.*

Blenko, Marcia; Mankins, Michael; and, Rogers, Paul, 2010, *Decide and Deliver: 5 Steps to Breakthrough Performance in Your Organization,* Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston, Massachusetts.

Burger, David, 2003, *The Interdependence Paradigm, In Search of What Works! 3rd edition,* The Concinnity Group Press & Commercial Communications, Inc., Hartland, Wisconsin.

Eagleman, David, 2011, *Incognito, The Secret Lives of the Brain,* Pantheon Books, USA.

Gergen, Kenneth J., 2009, *An Invitation to Social Construction 2nd Edition,* Sage Publications Ltd, London, England.

Hesselbein, Francis; Goldsmith, Marshall; Beckhard, Richard; and Schubert, Richard F. ed. 1998, *The Community of the Future,* The Drucker Foundation.

Janclaes, John, 2016, *Doing What Matters, How Leaders Help Individuals and Organizations Thrive,* The CEO Corner, Temecula, California.

Kahneman, Daniel, 2011, *Thinking Fast and Slow,* Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, New York.

Lorenz, Edward, 2005, *Designing Chaotic Models,* Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences: Vol. 62, No. 5, pp. 1574-1587.

Miller, Scott, 2009, *The Heart & Soul of Change: Delivering What Works in Therapy, 2nd edition,* American Psychological Association, USA.

Pink, Daniel H., 2009, *Drive, The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us,* Riverhead Books, New York.

Rock, David, 2009, *Your Brain at Work,* HarperCollins Publishers, New York.

Sisodia, Rajendra; Sheth, Jagdish; and Wolfe, David, 2014, *Firms of Endearment, 2nd edition,* Pearson Education LTD, USA.

Sinek, Simon, 2009, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action,* Penguin Books Ltd., London, England.