FORMING HEALTHY TEAMS:

What makes a healthy team?

- Take a few minutes to think of one of the best teams you were on in your lifetime. It can be any kind of team- sports, choir, or session, etc.

- In your break out groups have each person describe the type of team and the characteristic/s that made it such a successful team. About 3 minutes each.

- You will be brought back into the main group in 20 minutes.

TEAM EXERCISE

FEEDBACK TO THE WHOLE GROUP

- Repeat the exercise but this time think of one of the worst teams you have ever been on. What were the characteristics of that team that made it such a negative experience.
- Describe the team and share the characteristics with your group.
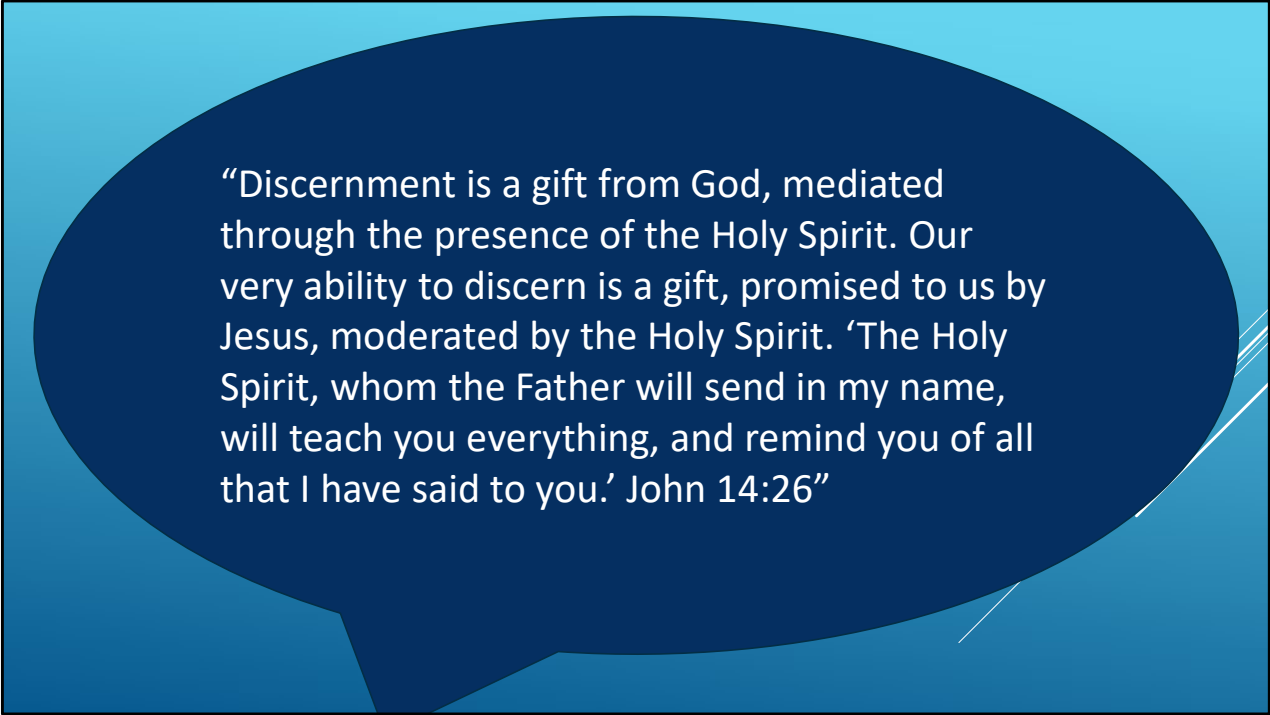- You will be brought back to the main group in 20 minutes.

REPEAT THE EXERCISE

FEEDBACK TO THE WHOLE GROUP

#1 THE REAL TASK IS DISCERNMENT

The church is not a democracy. It is a theocracy, and the task of Christian leadership is to discern the will of God for the sake of the purposes of God.
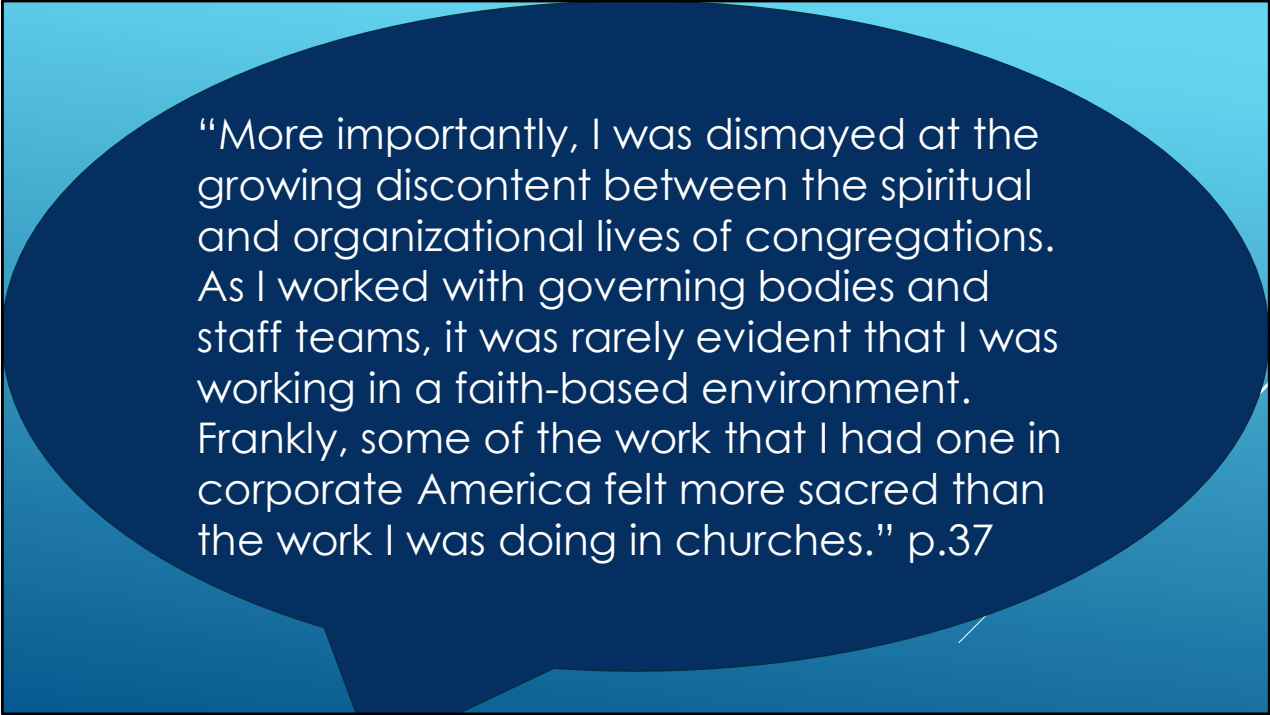
Phil **2** If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, **2** make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. **5** Let the same mind be in you that was[a] in Christ Jesus… As the passage continues it is clear that the mind of Christ was to do the will of the Father, which required obedience and humility.

"Discernment is a gift from God, mediated through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Our very ability to discern is a gift, promised to us by Jesus, moderated by the Holy Spirit. 'The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.' John 14:26"

Susan Beuamont in How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You are Going p.75
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Susan Beaumont
"More importantly, I was dismayed at the growing discontent between the spiritual and organizational lives of congregations. As I worked with governing bodies and staff teams, it was rarely evident that I was working in a faith-based environment. Frankly, some of the work that I had one in corporate America felt more sacred than the work I was doing in churches." p.37

PRAY TOGETHER – REFLECT ON SCRIPTURE TOGETHER
GOOGLE FORM

If the goal of a session meeting is to get it over with as soon as possible, you don't really need to hold that meeting. We need to combine organizational ability with spiritual maturity. Jen De Comb gave a talk about teams last week on a different zoom meeting and she mentioned that in their teams they take time to read a scripture passage and then ask two questions:
1. What does this verse teach us about our lives and ministry?
2. How can we embody this teaching into our ministry?

Our goal in the our congregations, our sessions, our presbyteries has to be that we are as focused on spiritual maturity as we are on organizational maturity.

We do this well.
We could do this better.
We don't do this.

Someone said to me recently that goal is to at least build support because it takes a long time to build trust. And that's makes sense. But the goal needs to be to move from support to trust.

That leads to the obvious question: how do you build trust?

Let's take a minute to think about that?

Put your thought in the chat box.

"The kind of trust that is necessary to build a great team is what I call vulnerability-based trust. This is what happens when members get to a point where they are completely comfortable being transparent, honest, and naked with one another, where they say and genuinely mean things like "I screwed up," "I need help," "Your idea is better than mine," "I wish I could learn to do that as well as you do," and even, "I'm sorry." (p. 27)
"When everyone on a team knows that everyone else is vulnerable enough to say and mean those things, and that no one is going to hide his or her weaknesses or

mistakes, they develop a deep and uncommon sense of trust. They speak more freely and fearlessly with one another and don't waste time and energy putting on airs or pretending to be someone they're not."

If there isn't a freedom to be honest without being judged then trust is not possible. You might have collegiality, but you do not have trust.

Compassionate Communication: Conflate observation with interpretation.

'the fundamental attribution error.'

"At the heart of the fundamental attribution error is the tendency of human beings to attribute the negative or frustrating behaviors of their colleagues to their intentions and personalities, while attributing their own negative or frustrating behaviors to environmental factors." (p. 32) In other words, we give our selves the benefit of the doubt and assume the worst of others.

Compassionate communication: we conflate observation with interpretation. E.g the student who had registered for an economics course without permission of the Dean.

▸We have to find the balance between getting to know people and getting the work done.

BUILDING TRUST – TAKING TIME TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

"We take teams through a quick exercise where we ask them to tell everyone, briefly, a few things about their lives. In particular, we have them say where they were born, how many siblings they have, where they fall in the order of children, and finally, what the most interesting or difficult challenge was for them as a kid." (p. 28)
1. Where did you grow up?
2. How many siblings do you have and where do you fall in that order?
3. Please describe a unique or interesting challenge or experience from your childhood.

It's hard to build a team if you don't know who is on it. E.g. pastoral care at Brandon. Thinking Styles exercise. Myers Briggs
It includes learning something about yourself.
https://www.outofservice.com/bigfive/

In our last full presbytery meeting we had 15 minutes in small groups to check in with each other. It was highly appreciated by many.

What do you know about the people who are on your team? How well do you know their gifts? How well do you know the gifts of the people in your congregation?

> ▸ Moses
> ▸ Jeremiah
> ▸ Jesus
> ▸ Peter

FOR AN ORGANIZATION THAT BELIEVES IN FORGIVENESS WHY IS VULNERABILITY SO DIFFICULT FOR US?

I know we have to be careful with this. It requires boundaries. But there is a place to also be honest with each other and surely there must be a place where we pray for each other and hold each other up in the grace of God.

When you think of vulnerability and Biblical characters a number of people come to mind: Moses – knew he couldn't speak; Jeremiah felt completely incompetent for the task due to his age; Isaiah knows he has sinned; Jesus cries openly in the garden; Peter is willing to admit that his denial of Jesus was not his best moment or who he really was (Peter do you love me….) Paul admitted openly that when it came to preaching he came in fear and trembling; Paul knew that the treasure we have is contained in cracked pots.

Q: For an organization that believes in forgiveness why is vulnerability so difficult for us?

Daring greatly: "vulnerability is not weakness. It is "uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure." P34

We Wear the Mask Paul Dunbar (1872-1906) is a poem about the difference between the creative self and the created self.

Vulnerability is actually telling the truth and takes courage. It needs to be done with boundaries but "The result of this mutually respectful vulnerability is increased connection, trust, and engagement." P. 46 Brown

"Spiritual connection and engagement is not built on compliance, it's the product of love, belonging, and vulnerability." P. 177

"Who we are matters more than what we know or who we want to be." P. 177

▶Trust occurs when our aspirational values are aligned with our lived values.

What we say and what we do match.
This is one of the great issues for the church in society. We have to rebuild that trust and we do that, not by inviting people to church, but being involved in the communities in which people live.

1 John 5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; **7** but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
E.g. lay missionary in Flin Flon. No one believed a thing he said because he had broken so many promises.

TRUST OCCURS WHEN WE ARE COMPETENT
IN WHAT WE DO.

This is why it is important to match ministries with gifts. And we match leadership style to the capabilities of the people. And why we are called to invest and resource people.

Walter Wright – who guarantees my success? You want me to invest in you, but who is going to invest in me.

There is a whole situational leadership model that we don't have time to discuss but it's worth looking at.

Advocacy

Inquiry

WE BUILD TRUST WHEN WE SPEND MORE
TIME ON INQUIRY THAN ADVOCACY

Teams deal with two main issues: advocacy and inquiry. Advocacy is when people argue for a certain course of action. "We need to cut the budget." "I recommend that we have five worship services."

"Inquiry is rarer but can be more important than advocacy. It happens when people ask questions to seek clarity about another person's statement of advocacy. Why do you think that approach is wrong? And which aspects of it are you referring to? Or, What evidence do you have that our expenses are too high? And how certain are you of this?" (p. 22) The larger the group, the less time we think we will get to speak so when we do we use our time to advocate rather than inquire.

A word of
encouragement
during a failure
is more potent
than a word or
praise after an
achievement.

©QuotesEmpire.com

WE BUILD TRUST WHEN WE
ENGAGE WITH THE WORK
OTHERS ARE DOING

Max DePree – First task of a leader is to set the vision. Last task of a leader is to say thank you.
E.G of book Love Works – previous bosses who every evening concluded their work by asking 'who do we need to thank today and then writing them a short note.'

What other things create trust?

Have people put things in the chat box.

If we do not welcome conflict "It means we learn to tolerate people rather than respect them. And respect is essential to trust." p41

#3 STRONG TEAMS WELCOME CONFLICT

Conflict, with trust, is the desire to find the best possible answer.

We are afraid of conflict in the church. Studies show that ministers are by and large conflict avoiders. Which makes sense; we want people to get along.

"Conflict without trust is politics, an attempt to manipulate others in order to win an argument regardless of the truth." p 38

But even conflict in seeking to find the best answer can be uncomfortable. "Overcoming the tendency to run from discomfort is one of the most important requirements for any leadership team—in fact, for any leader."

When issues are brought up that we don't agree with, but we don't say anything, the frustration around the issues soon become frustration around the person.

Jerry Harvey – The Abiline Paradox – the greatest challenge is not managing conflict, but managing conformity or agreement – the natural aversion to going against the feelings of the group.

On a hot afternoon visiting in Coleman, Texas, the family is comfortably playing dominoes on a porch, until the father-in-law suggests that they take a [50-mile] trip to Abilene for dinner. The wife says, "Sounds like a great idea." The husband, despite having reservations because the drive is long and hot, thinks that his preferences must be out-of-step with the group and says, "Sounds good to me. I just hope your mother wants to go." The mother-in-law then says, "Of course I want to go. I haven't been to Abilene in a long time."

The drive *is* hot, dusty, and long. When they arrive at the cafeteria, the food is as bad as the drive. They arrive back home four hours later, exhausted.

One of them dishonestly says, "It was a great trip, wasn't it?" The mother-in-law says that, actually, she would rather have stayed home, but went along since the other three were so enthusiastic. The husband says, "I wasn't delighted to be doing what we were doing. I only went to satisfy the rest of you." The wife says, "I just went along to keep you happy. I would have had to be crazy to want to go out in the heat like that." The father-in-law then says that he only suggested it because he thought the others might be bored.
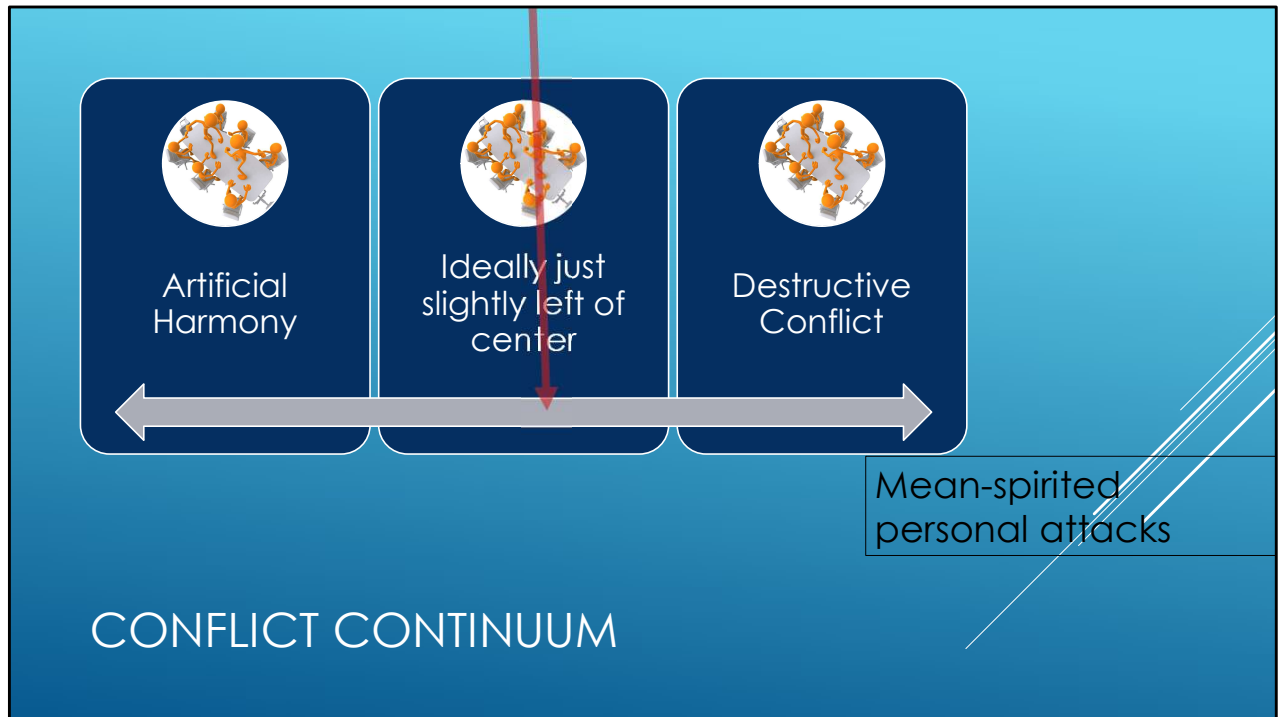
The group sits back, perplexed that they together decided to take a trip which none of them wanted. They each would have preferred to sit comfortably, but did not admit to it when they still had time to enjoy the afternoon.

Name the issue
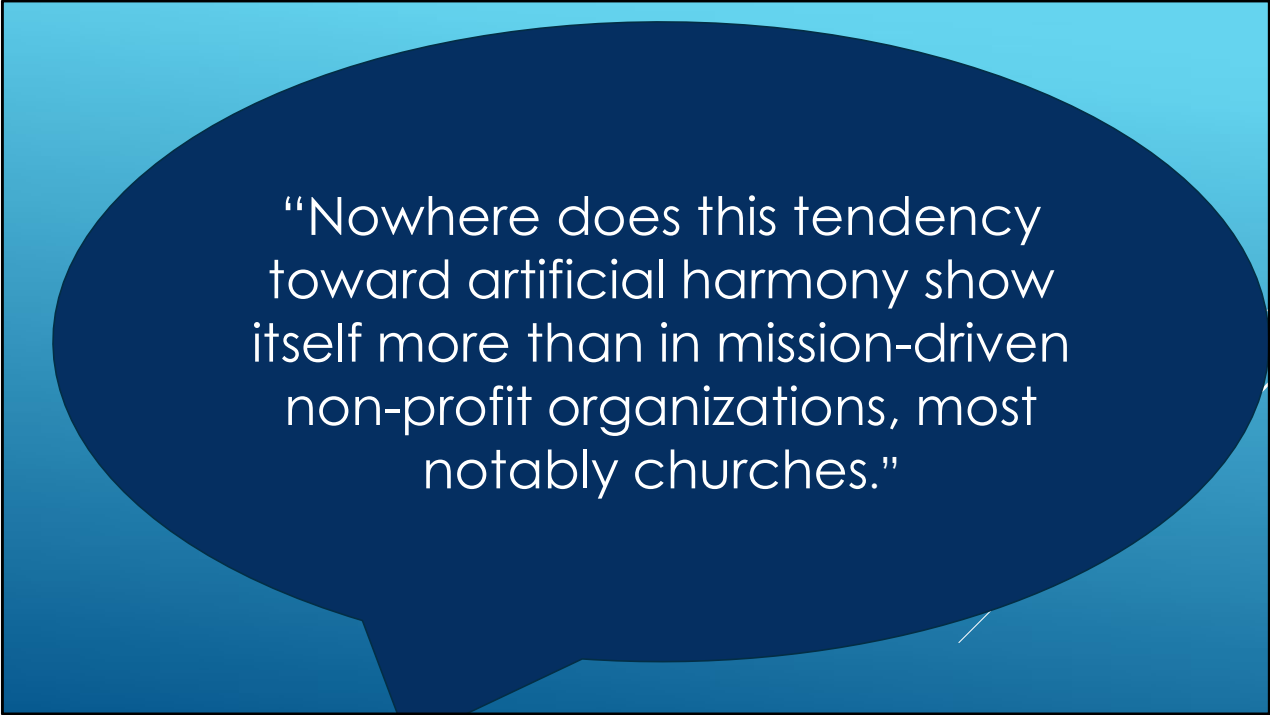Ask for want you want from the other person
Check in to see if they are willing to do that

Learning to listen is one of the hardest leadership skills to learn.

CONFLICT CONTINUUM

Artificial Harmony — Ideally just slightly left of center — Destructive Conflict

Mean-spirited personal attacks

You won't always get it right so "They must be willing to live through the messiness of recovering from slightly inappropriate conflict, so that they will have the courage to go back to the best place again and again. Eventually they'll develop the confidence that they can survive an occasional step over the line and can even get stronger and build greater trust with one another when they do." p43

"Nowhere does this tendency toward artificial harmony show itself more than in mission-driven non-profit organizations, most notably churches."

Would you agree? Respond in the chat box.

<mark>Complete Google Form</mark>
When leadership team members fail to disagree around issues, not only are they increasing the likelihood of losing respect for one another and encountering destructive conflict later when people start griping in the hallways, they're also making bad decisions and letting down the people they're supposed to be serving. And they do this all in the name of being "nice." p45

‣Bring out the conflict that is probably there: "I'm not sure we are all on the same page."

‣Look for the subtle disagreements and get them on the table

‣Have clear rules of engagement

HELPFUL STEPS

Have clear rules of engagement: if people don't speak to an issue assume they disagree and a decision cannot be made or at the end of every discussion go around the room and ask every person for a formal commitment to the decision. But remember that you can't have meaningful conflict without trust being built first. This brings us back to advocacy vs inquiry.

E.g. When we went to term eldership at Bradon

#4: ACHIEVING COMMITMENT

> ▶ "If people don't weigh in, they can't buy in."

ACHIEVING COMMITMENT

You can't achieve real commitment without conflict. People will not actively commit to a decision if they have not had the opportunity to provide input, ask questions, and understand the rationale behind it. P48

Another way of saying it, is if you want people in the landing you better have them in the take off.

From a Christian point of view, there is more to be said. It's not only about buy in. It's about the role of the Holy Spirit in the midst of God's people. Again, to go to Acts 15 they were able to conclude "it seemed right to us and to the Holy Spirit."

> ▶ Never confuse compliance for commitment
>
> ACHIEVING COMMITMENT

This is the artificial agreement again and it happens frequently in the church. I don't know how many churches I know that decided to start a second service with everyone's agreement only to find within a year or two the whole thing went south.

"A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus."

Martin Luther King Jr.

WHAT ABOUT CONSENSUS?

When leadership teams wait for consensus before taking action, they usually end up with decisions that are made too late and are mildly disagreeable to everyone. This is a recipe for mediocrity and frustration. Great teams avoid the consensus trap by embracing a concept that Intel, the legendary microchip manufacturer, calls "disagree and commit." Basically they believe that even when people can't come to an agreement around an issue, they must still leave the room unambiguously committed to a common course of action.

It is disagree and commit and **people can't commit if they can't disagree. P48**
For elders it is important to remember that that is our system.

Most people are generally reasonable and can rally around an idea that wasn't their own as long as they know they've had a chance to weigh in. But when there has been no conflict, when different opinions have not been aired and debated, it becomes virtually impossible for team members to commit to a decision, at least not actively. P49

When a decision is made that people don't agree with and they have had no opportunity to express their own views, they will simply leave the meeting and do as little as possible to support the idea. It is the price of passivity.

▸ "Never leave a meeting with ambiguity on what was decided."

KEY TAKE AWAY

#5: EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

Savage Chickens — by Doug Savage

YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH AVOIDING PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

YA, AND WHOSE FAULT IS THAT?

© 2006 BY DOUG SAVAGE

www.savagechickens.com

Accountability is an issue in the church. I don't know how many ministers I've heard say to their sessions or elders, "I'm not accountable to you. I'm accountable to the presbytery." Being accountable to the presbytery doesn't mean you have no accountability to the congregation.
But then when the presbytery acts, people say to the presbytery, "Who do you think you are?!"

The Scripture is clear that loving one another includes holding each other accountable. Think of Nathan holding King David accountable. Or the words in Matthew 18 **15** 'If your brother or sister[a] sins,[b] go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.

That's why I believe in job descriptions for everyone including volunteers. If people take on a ministry they have a responsibility to that ministry or to resign from it.

But the accountability belongs to all of us. EG Elder who was going to quit over the attitudes of another elder and the minister.

Lack of accountability results on being on a team where results don't matter.

#6: ACCOMPLISHMENT

But there is no getting around the fact that the only measure of a great team—or a great organization—is whether it accomplishes what it sets out to accomplish.

I know that is tricky language for the church. If you want to send chills down the backs of Presbyterians just start talking about success! Usually the answer you will get is "I'm not here to be successful. I'm here to be faithful." It's as if faithfulness and fruitfulness have nothing to do with each other. However, Jesus' words in John 15:

[5] 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [6] If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. [7] If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. [8] This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

Now we have to be careful here, because we have to go back to Peter Block's question: What measurement has meaning for me?

To answer that question we need to think about how the church grows.

 seem to counter that idea. "Some leaders of teams that don't regularly succeed will still insist that they have a great team because team members care about one other and no one ever leaves the team. A more accurate description of their situation would be to say that they have a mediocre team that enjoys being together and isn't terribly bothered by failure. See, no matter how good a leadership team feels about itself, and how noble its mission might be, if the organization it leads rarely achieves its goals, then, by definition, it's simply not a good team. Keep in mind that a football team most likely will measure itself in terms of wins and losses, a school in terms of how well it prepares students for their next step in education, and a church based on how many parishioners are growing in their faith. P 65-66
When members of a leadership team feel a stronger sense of commitment and loyalty to the team they lead than the one they're a member of, then the team they're a member of becomes like the U.S. Congress or the United Nations: it's just a place where people come together to lobby for their constituents.
Shifting from individual to collective goals.
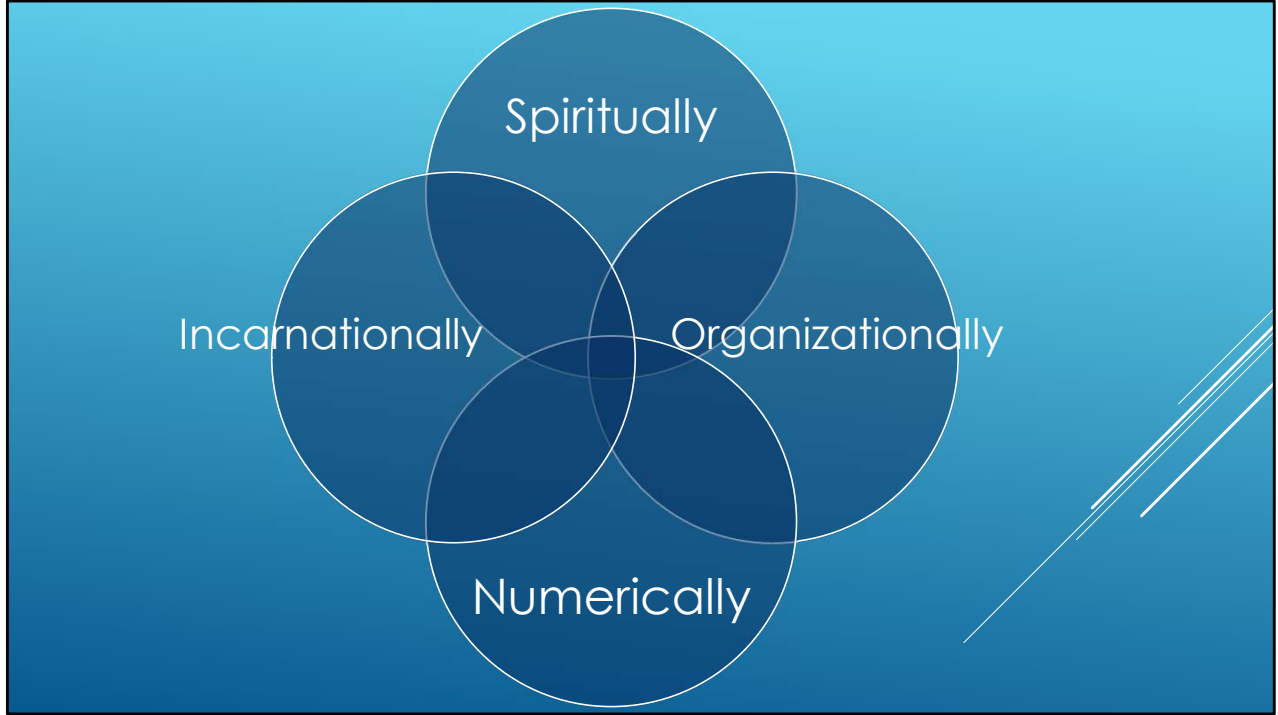
Accomplishment requires there are plans, we monitor progress, we deal with the problems. PPP
Winnipegosis a three year plan.
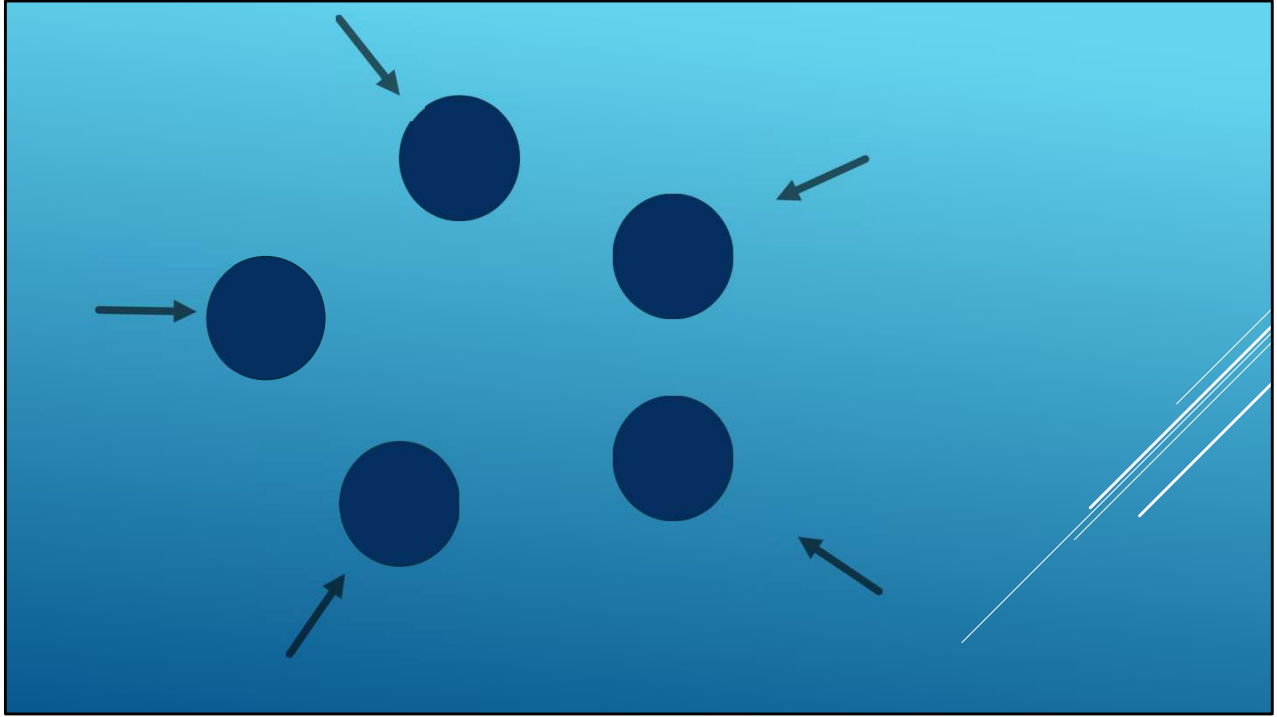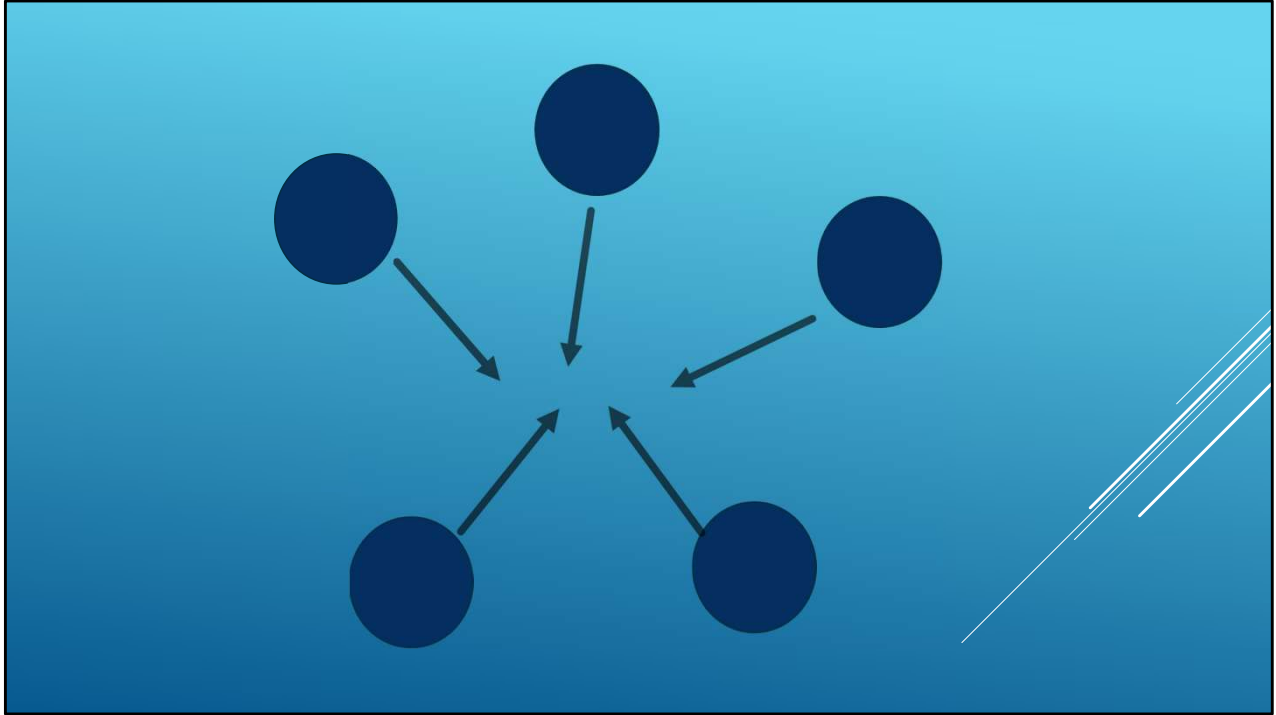
Clarity of purpose and commitment to the purpose shifts the arrows from isolated work to integrated work.

"More important than the quest for certainty is the quest for clarity." Francois Gautier

A CRITICAL FACTOR

WITHOUT CLARITY
WE DON'T KNOW
WHERE WE'RE
GOING

We get clarity by asking key questions:
Why do we exist?
How do we behave?
What do we do?
How will we succeed?
What is most important, right now?
Who must do what?

That's true from an organizational point of view. But the church is more than an organization. It is the body of Christ with Christ as the head. It gains clarity as it spends time in prayer and discernment.

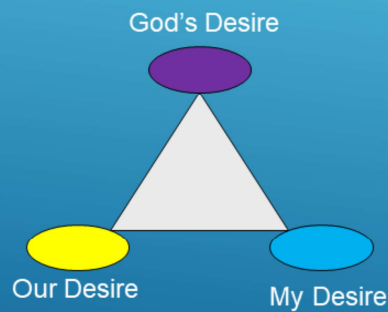Cascading Questions

Who are we now?
Who is our neighbour, now?

Cascading Questions

What difference do we believe God has called us to make in the next three to five years?

It's not about getting the right answer, it's about getting an answer that people can identify with.

COMMITMENT TO THE GREATER MISSION

When members of a leadership team feel a stronger sense of commitment and loyalty to the team they lead than the one they're a member of, then the team they're a member of becomes like the U.S. Congress or the United Nations: it's just a place where people come together to lobby for their constituents.

It provides the mind-set that individual goals, issues, and interests are set aside to focus on what's best for the organization. P 70

Accomplishment

Accountability

commitment

conflict

trust

SUMMARY

Over against a group that is less than honest with each other, hold back during difficult conversations, feign commitment, hesitate to call each other on unproductive behaviours, pursue own agenda vs greater organization.

- Look at the padlet screen and choose one positive characteristic you would like to add to your session.
- Choose one negative characteristic you would like to see lessened in your session.

CHOOSING A MORE EFFECTIVE TEAM