

Oshrey's Dance of the Blind Reflex

Relationship Breakdowns in a Nutshell

| <u>System</u> | <u>Environment</u> | <u>Survival Process</u> | <u>Overlooked Processes</u> | <u>Relationship Breakdown</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Top Groups | Complexity and Responsibility | Differentiation | Dedifferentiation Integration | Turf |
| Middle Groups | Diffusion | Individuation | Integration | Alienation |
| Bottom Groups | Shared Vulnerability | Integration | Individuation Differentiation | GroupThink |

The Blind Reflex:

- Tops (*are the creators of the system*) feel burdened by unmanageable complexity, but cling to it, in fear of losing control. “It is easier to do it myself.”
- Bottoms (*are the recipients/victims*) feel oppressed by insensitive higher-ups. They refuse to accept roles as central players. “Why should I? I am just a bottom. They get paid to take the heat.”
- Middles feel torn—they become weak, confused, fractionated, with no minds of their own.
- Customers feel screwed by an unresponsive system.
- None of the players see their part in creating any of the above.

WE tend to experience ourselves as whole and autonomous rather than being in a relationship. As a result we blindly fall into unproductive and destructive dances with one another. We fall out of the possibility of relationships and into misunderstandings, opposition, antagonism, and destruction.

Being more aware of the dances as we are living them, coaching one another, standing for partnership, and using our feelings as clues to the dance.

- Top group members become territorial and fall into turf battles with one another.
- Middle group members become alienated from one another; they never become a group.
- Bottom group members become a cohesive entity, and they fall into pressuring one another into conformity or GroupThink
- When relationships among group members break down, the explanations are tied to the personal characteristics of the individuals involved.
- Sometimes we are tops, bottoms, ends, customers, middles and providers.

Common Symptoms of relationship breakdown:

- Lack of support. Status/importance differences. Resentment. Control Battles, Relationship breakdowns.

Transformation – Choose to end the dance:

1. See it
2. End it
3. Transform culture.

How can we see our dance?

- Monitor our behavior and feelings
- If oppressed, be aware of it and examine our own responsibility for resolving own issues.
- If unsupported (you may be an end), take responsibility
- Can't please anyone (you are a middle)? Get distance, let ends resolve issues.
- Feeling done to? Find ways to become more involved in delivery process.
- Coach one another; be aware of dances take stand for partnership, use feelings and clues.

Solving the Dance of the Blind Reflex.

| <u>System</u> | <u>Pitfall</u> | <u>Need to Work On</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Top | Over-Differentiating (Turf) | Integration and Dedifferentiation |
| Middle | Over-Indifferentiation (Alienation) | Integration, then Differentiation |
| Bottom | Over-Integration (GroupThink) | Indifferentiation and differentiation |