

# Questions Leaders Should Be Asking Now

Leading with questions...at  
this moment of sustained  
disturbance


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What  
question  
will you ask  
now?





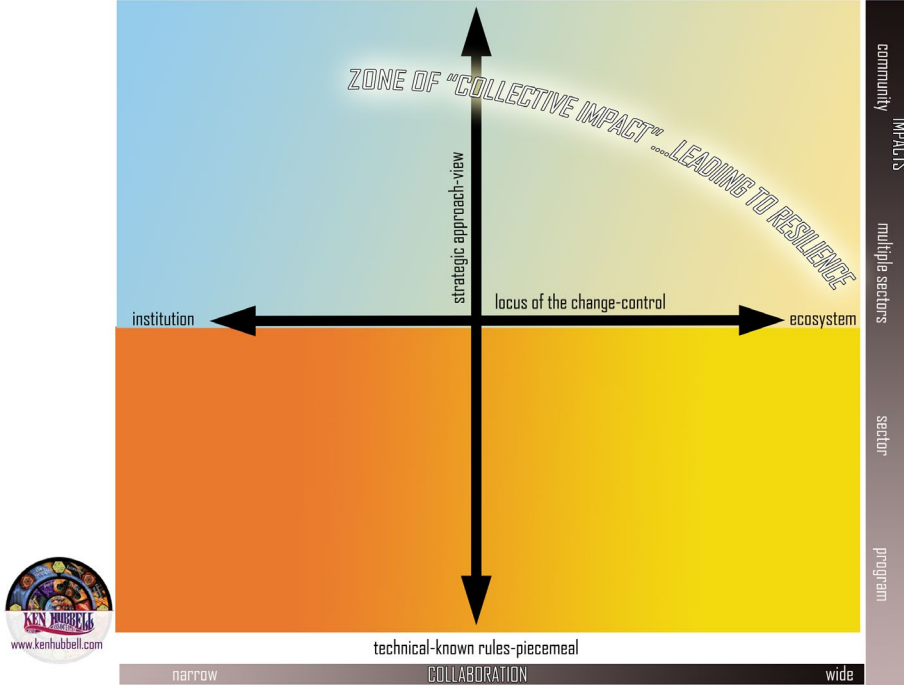
Observe a moment of silence  
to come into this social  
presencing together...



Questions matter...  
...more than ever?

# Lenses to view *this* moment?

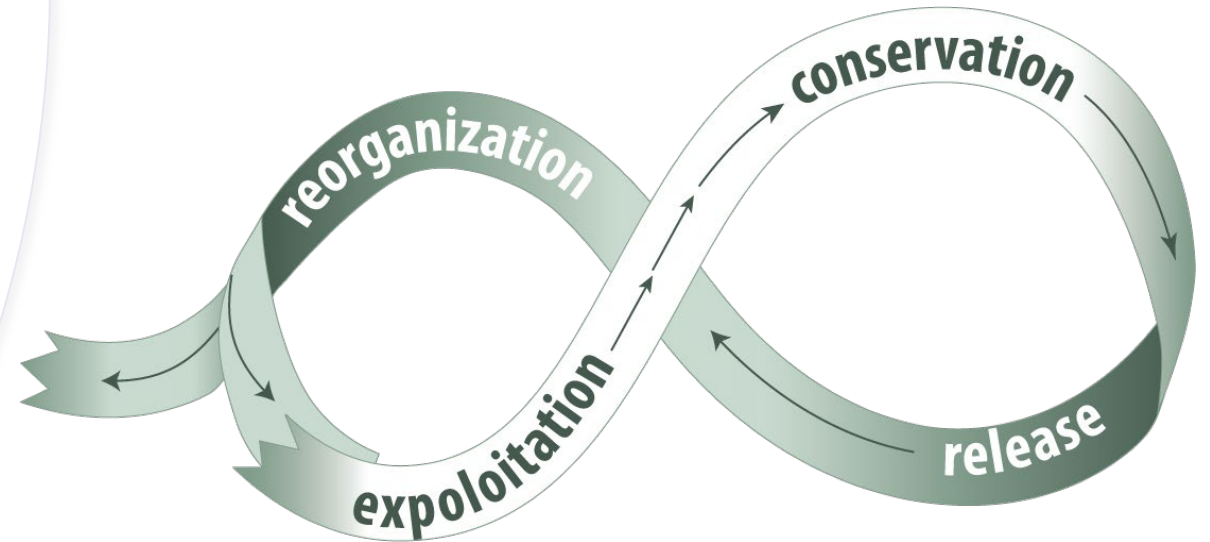
THE ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE Making a more lasting impact on persistent challenges  
adaptive-visionary  
integrated-concerted



Scenario mapping



Theory U - Acting from the future as it arises



Panarchy - resilience of complex systems



Questions precede action.

The questions we ask set the stage for what we "find"... and what we find becomes the knowledge out of which the future is constructed.

# Beyond default...to inflection?

## Default mindset:

“Fix” a problem; “find” solution; protection; fear; scarcity; etc.

- *“Without \_\_\_x\_\_\_, how can we achieve \_\_\_y\_\_\_?”*
- *“When will we get back to ‘normal’?”*

Helpful, but limiting; solutions stem from the familiar. Produces incremental gain?

## Generative mindset:

Embraces present as a mystery; welcomes curiosity; acknowledges risk/pain while choosing to focus on what’s available/what’s working.

- *Disrupts current beliefs (“What’s the positive opposite?” “what do you want more of?”)*
- *Creates reflective space (“how might we reimagine what we have?”)*
- *Fosters openness/vulnerability (“what if we could...”)*
- *Looks for the true, the good, and the possible*

Leverage for solutions stems from the reimagined possible

# The questions you develop:

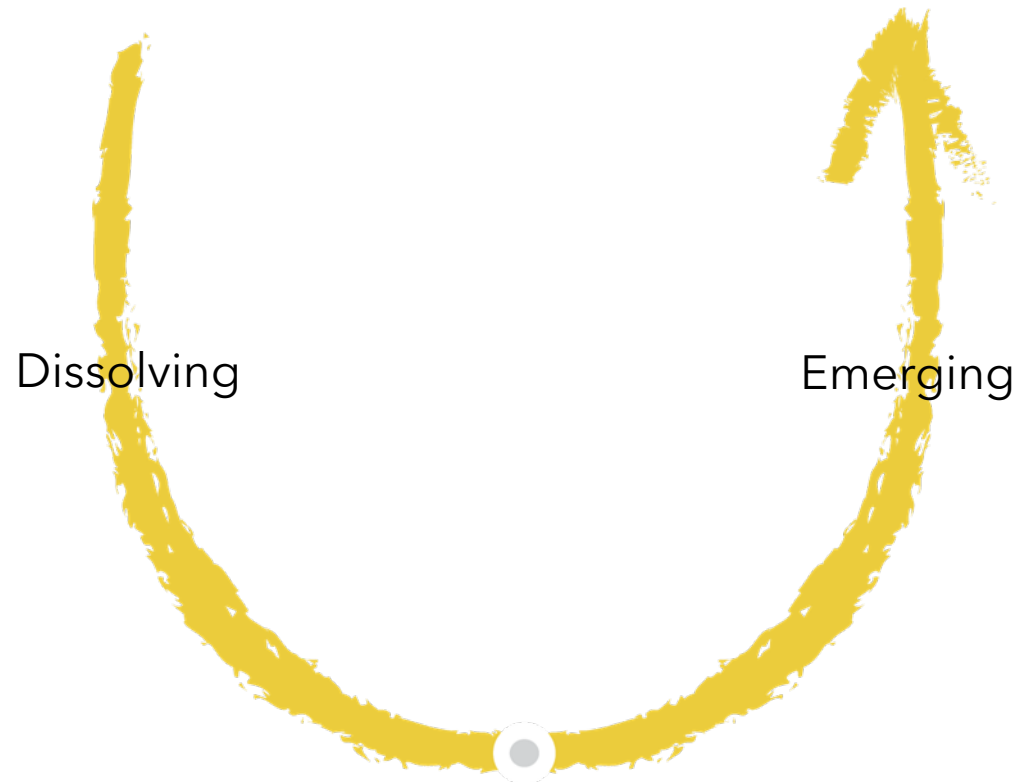
- Shape conversations...which...
- Deepen relationships...which...
- Align intention...which...
- Propels common action and reinforces collaborative resolve

## **Three key principles**

1. Our expectations inform what we look for, what we see, and what we hear.
2. Our questions inspire images, and imagery compels action.
3. What we believe to be true is informed by and evolves through conversation.



# Dissolving and emerging assumptions?



- Colocation and connection
- Value proposition
- Competitor universe
- Nature's ever-present lessons
- Systems collapse yet people rise
- Other

# Discussion Groups

## Process

- Assigned breakout groups
- Accept assignment to join
- **Note your group # (odd or even)**
- Introductions
- Everyone who wishes participates
- Volunteer report outs
- Prompted to return to plenary

## Discussion Focus

Odd # Groups:

1. What assumption about your work / environment has been illuminated by this pandemic?

Even # Groups:

2. What question about your work / environment is most important for you to consider now?



# Groups report

“Inquiry is the most direct, simplest, and fastest way to foster engagement and generate responsibility for the future. Asking a question is an act of engagement.”

Listening to people’s ideas and opinions validates them, supporting the only real kind of empowerment—self-empowerment.

Illuminate the blind spots  
(unspoken assumptions).

Questions of strategy follow  
mindset shifts from "me" to "we" -  
and curiosity about the possibilities  
at the intersections.

# Further resources

1. McKinsey's [Getting Ahead of the Next Stage of the Coronavirus Crisis](#)
2. McKinsey's [A leader's guide: Communicating with teams, stakeholders, and communities during COVID-19](#)
3. Bain & Company's [A CEO Plan for Coronavirus: Actions You Can Take Now](#)
4. Deloitte's [The World Remade by COVID-19: Scenarios for Resilient Leaders](#)
5. USA Today's [How Experts See the World After Coronavirus](#)
6. McKinsey's [COVID-19: Implications for Business](#)
7. McKinsey's [How to rebuild and reimagine jobs amid the coronavirus crisis](#)
8. Otto Scharmer's [A New Superpower in the Making: Awareness-Based Collective Action](#)



Sought after as an adaptation, transformation, and growth accelerator to those seeking:

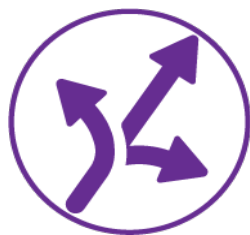
### **Organizational Adaptability**

*so that...* you grow a culture of cascading possibilities



### **Direction & Inflection**

*so that...* you achieve previously unimagined results



### **Regenerative Philanthropy**

*so that...* all your relationships reciprocate trust, appreciation, and investment



### **Leading from Strength**

*so that...* your leadership amplifies the core conditions of your success



### **Robust Practices**

*so that...* your brand grows amidst nourishing client partnerships that achieve good things for society

