



Adaptive Leadership

Mastering your inner game

Welcome

Welcome to Lift - a sponsorship and advocacy program enabling diverse talent to aspire for leadership roles while equipping leaders to support their leadership potential.

In our first two workshops we're exploring what it takes to master the inner game of leadership as an essential step to excel at the outer game. Popularised by leadership gurus Robert Anderson and William Adams, the inner game is a game of consciousness raising (ie exploring self-awareness, mindset and identity) while the outer game is about competence (ie improving skills, talents and capabilities).

This discovery ride will be broken up into two parts over two days:

1. **Adaptive leadership** - Achieving adaptive challenges as a pathway to higher levels of consciousness
2. **Your leadership potential** - Exploring and realising your leadership potential so that your inner game effectively runs your outer game.

Adaptive leadership builds the capacity of individuals and organisations to tackle challenges and thrive through a process of evolution. The father of adaptive leadership, Ron Heifetz, describes this evolutionary process as taking the best

from your history into the future, discarding what no longer serves and creating new ways of being that allows you to flourish in more challenging and complex environments.

Today we're going to investigate your biggest adaptive challenge by exploring:

- **Your personality** – how you show up, your incredible strengths and how they are overplayed to reveal your greatest growth edge
- **Your perspective** – broadening your perspective by understanding how your ego, mindset and identity shapes your view and drives your behaviour
- **Your practice** – developing new habits to achieve your adaptive challenge

We have a stack of incredible tools to help you unlock the insights that lead to change. The Immunity to Change X-Ray created by developmental psychologists Kegan and Lahey is the backbone of this experience. We then integrate insights from your Clarity 4D personality profile and tools from the Conscious Leadership Group to support your growth.

Personality

Your strengths and greatest growth edge



Personality preferences shape our perceptions and behaviours (what you say and do). If leadership is a conversation, understanding your personality preferences and how they interact with others, provides an essential window into how you show up as a leader and how you might adapt to improve your leadership impact.

We'll be using the Clarity 4D personal profile to unlock these insights. Based on Jungian psychology, Clarity 4D generates personality insights based on our preferences for gathering information (sensing / intuition), making decisions (thinking / feeling) and responding to situations (introversion / extraversion). These preferences are then translated into four 'colour energies'.

Your personal profile will show a reading for all colour energies. That's because all of us can adapt our style to suit different circumstances. Most of us will have a strong preference for two colour energies, which reflects our default mode and where we feel most comfortable.

People who have the same colour energy preferences are likely to feel like familiar friends the moment they meet. That's because their automatic brain processes their common styles as safe and likeable (aka affinity bias).

People with opposite colour energy preferences are more likely to be perceived as a threat or annoyance. Perception means there are generally two sides to any personality trait. Decisive / insensitive, factual / cold, animated / self-promoting, caring / submissive are all examples of how two different people can perceive the same personality.

Being conscious about how your personality might be perceived and how you might be perceiving others can avoid a whole lot of misunderstandings and upset. Taking it one step further and adapting our style to suit the preferences of others can dramatically improve our ability to influence.

Exploring your strengths

Let's reflect on how our personality plays out in life's biggest moments. Discuss a career highlight and how your personality shone through. How did you leverage your strengths? How did your less dominant strengths show up, or not?

Now let's reflect on one lesson life is teaching you right now. How are you applying your strengths to this moment? What are the opportunities to dial up your less dominant preferences to more skilfully manage this moment?

Strengths overplayed and your adaptive challenge

It's helpful to understand how our personality can be perceived, particularly when we're under pressure and when we're interacting with people who are different to us.

The lists below capture the two sides of the four colour energy personality types. Take a moment to have a chuckle at your flip side traits (there will be some that really resonate) and then mark which ones most relate.

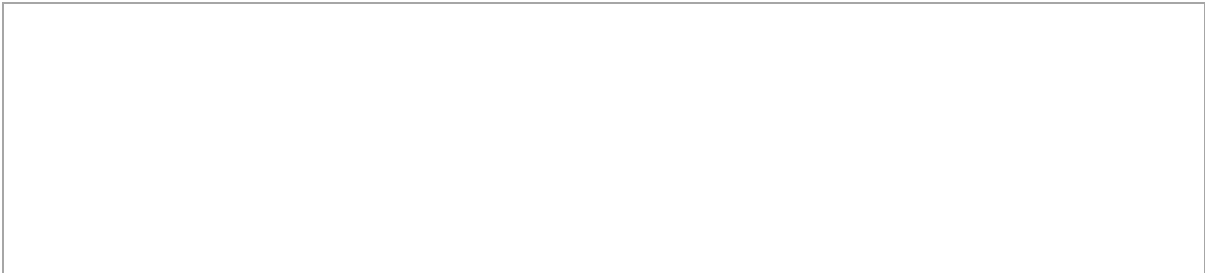
Blue	Light Blue	Red	Dark Red
 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication
Factual Careful Quiet Conventional Organised Deep thinking Logical Self-disciplined Meticulous Reflective Analytical Conscientious	Preoccupied Remote Over-exacting Unenthusiastic Distant Rigid Conformist Sceptical Overcritical Cold Unbelieving Resistant	Decisive Proactive Passionate Focused Assured Direct Bold Achieving Brave Persistent Striving Forthright	Insensitive Arrogant Impatient Self-opinionated Controlling Domineering Aggressive Hot-tempered Relentless Inconsiderate Reckless Dismissive
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Green	Light Green	Yellow	Dark Yellow
 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication	 Clarity4D clear colourful communication
Loyal Thoughtful Supportive Empathetic Attentive Tactful Steady Unassuming Committed Caring Appreciative Understanding	Obstinate Slow Undecided Stubborn Submissive Morose Disapproving Unforgiving Resentful Passive Hesitant Listless	Animated Lively Engaging Optimistic Entertaining Articulate Expressive Energetic Creative Persuasive Friendly Spirited	Exaggerating Chaotic Self-promoting Unrestrained Impulsive Selfish Shallow Frantic Showy Noisy Careless Tactless
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I encourage you to think about your flip side traits as strengths overplayed. It's not bad or wrong, just the fully human expression of who you are. That said, these flip side traits can impact our ability to connect with and influence others.

Have a think about what these strengths and flip sides mean for your immunity to change commitment and the behaviours that are currently working against your goals. Capture your thoughts here or on your Immunity to Change X-Ray.

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Next, have a look on page 9 of your personal profile and the recommended development opportunities. Does anything stand out?

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Perspective

Broadening your perspective by understanding how your ego, mindset and identity shapes your view and drives your behaviour

Kegan and Lahey's ground-breaking model on adult development reveals how our identity, ego or insecurities drive and entrench existing behaviour, and impair our ability to change and evolve. Ultimately, these create a fixed perspective that limit are growth and leadership potential.

Deeply connect with the nature of our ego and identity, how they serve us and how they don't, provides the awareness and insight to gain new, broader perspectives, which is essential to achieving our adaptive challenge.

In the context of the Immunity to Change X-Ray, connecting with our ego or identity reveals:

- the behaviours that work against our goals
- our hidden commitments
- assumptions that drive our current behaviour
- our progress map - what we can do over time to achieve our adaptive challenge

I use [The Line](#) and related tools from The Conscious Leadership Group to playfully and powerfully explore how our ego works. Follow the steps below to see when your ego is triggered and you go below the line, and what you can do to get back above it.

The Line: Exploring the nature of your ego and identity

How you go below the line, what you do when you're there, and how to soothe and shift.

Step 1

The first step of seeing how you go below the line is to pick any relationship issue or persistent complaint. Preferably it is one that you have struggled with for some time and has "juice" for you. Name the person and your core complaint about them, or the issue.

My biggest complaint is about _____ is _____.
(name)

Example: My biggest complaint about Sarah is that she doesn't listen to me
My biggest complaint about the sales team is they don't value our work
My biggest complaint about leadership is they don't respond to our feedback
My biggest complaint about customers is they're rude and ungrateful

Step 2

As you think about this issue, "Where are you?"

Above the line ____ or below the line ____?

Step 3

What do you do when you go below the line on this issue?

___ I gossip / vent with others

___ I withdraw and / or avoid the person or avoid confronting the issue

___ I blame this person / believe they are wrong and I am right

___ I become critical

___ I become angry / become aggressive / anxious

Other:

Step 4

Acknowledge the payoffs that you are getting from keeping this issue going below the line.

___ I get to avoid my core feelings, especially the feelings of (fear, sadness, anger)

___ I get to stay connected

___ I get enlivened by adrenaline

___ I get to stay in the familiar and avoid the unknown

___ It gives me something to do or a compelling story to tell

___ I get to avoid taking responsibility for my issues

___ I get to be right about the following:

Step 5

Can you accept yourself for being just where you are? Yes _____ No _____

Step 6

Are you willing to shift? Ask yourself these willingness questions to find out. Your learning moment comes from the questions you answer 'no' and the questions that are hard to answer 'yes'. These will reveal how you go below the line.

Are you willing to end all blame regarding this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to let go of being right about?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to feel your (sadness, anger, fear) related to this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to see that the opposite of your story is as true?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to reveal anything you're withholding about this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to stop all gossip about this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to clean up all broken agreements related to this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to shift from entitlement to appreciation about this issue?	Yes	_____	No	_____
Are you willing to let go of taking this issue seriously?	Yes	_____	No	_____

Based on your responses above, are you willing to shift? (any No above is a No)

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, move on to step 6 and 7. For most of us, getting above the line on relationship conflict takes further work. Head to the deep dive section to keep going, then revisit if you're willing to shift.

Step 6

Based on your current commitment in this moment regarding this issue, complete this sentence.

Today is _____ and I am committed to _____.

Step 7

If you are willing to shift, "How will you shift?" What is one action step you can take and by when will you take it?

My measurable action is: _____

I will do it by: _____ at _____

(Date)

(Time)

Unpacking your drama triangles

Unpacking your drama triangles provides rich insights for your inner game.

Almost all conflict, including inner conflict, arises out of drama where well-worn scripts of victims, villains and heroes drag us below the line. I invite you to map out your drama triangle for this relationship issue / persistent complaint. Refer to your drama cards for inspiration. I encourage you to be as dramatic as you can be!

My personas

My victim personas are

Shift moves

From victim to creator

My villain personas are

From villain to challenger

My hero personas are

From hero to coach

Persona interview

Chose a persona that you think is running the issue. Take on the posture, voice and attitude of this persona, and give it a name. Then answer the following:

[Persona name], What is the most important thing to you?

[Persona name], What are you most proud of in how you served (person's name) in his/her life?

[Persona name], When did you make your first appearance in (person's name)'s life?

[Persona name], who did you learn your style from?

[Persona name], what are you most afraid of?

[Persona name], in your heart of hearts, what do you MOST want?

[Persona name], What is your gift?

Teaching your drama class

In the exercise above, you've mapped out your drama triangle and you might have started to see your role in the relationship conflict you're experiencing. Now we're going to bring that to life with a fun exercise by pretending you have been hired by a university to teach a class on how to create the EXACT same issue that you are having in your life.

Your students need you to give them very specific instructions that they can follow to create the outcome you are currently experiencing. Using the questions below as prompts, define the five or so steps they would need to take to recreate your issue in their life.

Questions to answer to help you create your drama:

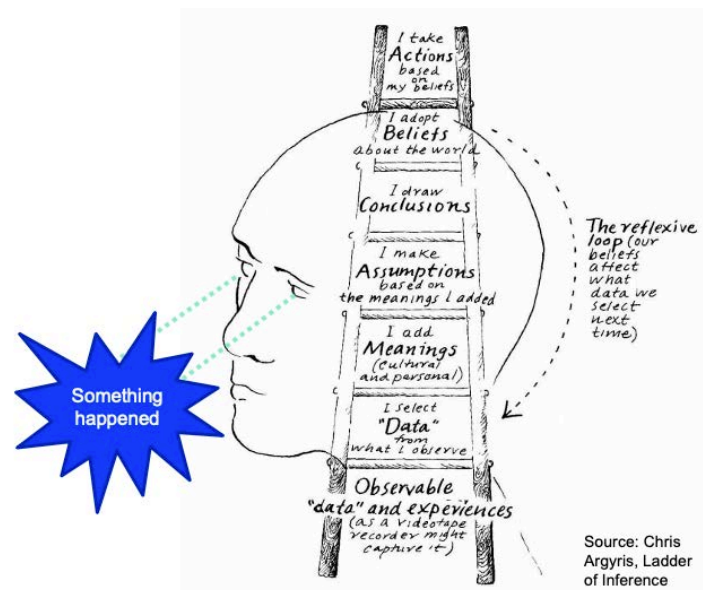
- | | |
|---|---|
| What actions do you take or not take? | What "shoulds" do you have to believe? |
| What do you have to believe about yourself, others and the world? | To what do you feel entitled? |
| What feelings do you repress/conceal? | What do you believe you do not have enough of? |
| What are you trying to control that is NOT in your control? | What either/or story do you have to hold about this issue? |
| What do you have to be right about? | Who do you blame? |
| What do you withhold and from whom? | How do you fix it, but only temporarily? |
| What do you not face? | Who do you have to be better/less than? |
| How do you numb yourself from the discomfort? | What agreements do you have to make and/or break with yourself or others? |
| | What do you have to be afraid of? |

Course title _____

Example: How to have a dissatisfying relationship with your boss 101

Questioning beliefs to shift perspectives

How we adopt beliefs and take actions based on our beliefs



Believing our stories are true is one of the most common ways we go below the line, stay stuck in drama and impede our development. Indeed, it's the source of most human suffering. That's a big call! Let me explain.

Neuroscientists and developmental psychologists have shown that the human brain adopts beliefs or stories about the world by applying their personal and cultural meanings to the data they select from what's observed. We then take action and tend to collect more data that confirms our beliefs. This is how confirmation bias occurs.

Suffering and conflict occurs when the stories we tell ourselves are critical and negative – about ourselves, others or our environment. The tighter we hold onto

those stories, the more suffering and conflict created.

You might be asking: What if those stories are objectively or morally true? Like people shouldn't be racist? Or bullying is bad? Or that manager really is incompetent (insert list of evidence)?

The problem arises when we tightly hold onto these beliefs and so engage with that person or issue from a place of being right, setting ourselves up for a war that no-one wins. In the process we shut down our ability to learn and be curious, and achieve a win for all outcomes. Our ability to influence is diminished.

If we have these conversations from above the line, we invite a shared understanding that is more likely to create outcomes where everyone learns and grows.

Fact vs story

Let's apply this concept now to the issue you're working with by following the steps below.

Step 1 Define a recurring issue that you are willing to shift

Step 2 Write down all the facts related to the issue. Facts are what a video camera would record (without music and interpretation of tone)

Step 3 Write down all the stories you have about the facts. These are what you make up about the facts. Look for 'shoulds', judgements, interpretations and emotions.

The issue is _____

Facts

What a video camera records

Stories

What you make up about the facts

The next step follows [The Work of Byron Katie](#). Katie (as she is known), encourages a meditative approach where we reflect on a limiting belief we're currently holding onto.

Pick one of the stories above that resonates the most and write it down here:

Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and contemplate that statement. Then ask yourself four questions:

1. Is it true?

2. Can you absolutely know it's true?

3. How do you react, what happens when you believe that thought?

4. Who would you be if I could erase that thought from your mind?

Once you connect with how much being right is costing you, it becomes easier to see how a whole range of opposites might be equally as true, not necessarily more true, but equally as true. This is where the turnaround comes in. Here's how turnarounds work:

Current belief: Jill is unkind to me. Alternate stories: I am unkind to Jill. Jill is kind to me. I am unkind to me.

Write down all of the opposites of your story and any evidence you can find that supports these alternate views. There won't always be four opposites and sometimes there may be more than four.

Alternate stories	Evidence of alternate stories
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

This exercise helps us let go of limiting beliefs by constructing a range of new ones, which in turn dissolves our commitment to being right, helping us to shift above the line.

Practice

Developing new habits to achieve your adaptive challenge

The next step to achieve your adaptive challenge is to map out the habits and practices that will sustain your mindset and identity shift and support you in achieving your adaptive challenge.

These should follow the good old SMART principle and be both practical short term actions as well as new longer-term habits.

For example, if you're working on having difficult conversations, practical steps might be:

- list the conversations you're avoiding
- lean into the fears you have about having them
- prepare some notes to have a feedback conversation,

recognising the stories you're making up (I can give you a good structure for this)

- set up the feedback meetings
- have meetings

Because achieving adaptive challenges requires us to fundamentally change at the level of mindset and identity, you might also like to consider habits that improve self-awareness and nudge new behaviours. The willingness questions outlined earlier, also provide a range of ways you can make progress.

Here are some other thought starters for how progress happens. See what resonates and what you can commit to before adding them to your progress map.

Progress area	Inspiration
Accountability and feedback	Who can you share your adaptive challenge and Immunity to Change X-Ray with? What feedback can you request? How can they hold you accountable to progress?
Conversations	The more you discuss and explore the topic, the most you internalise and adapt this extraordinary way of living and leading. Who can you talk to about adaptive challenges, ego threats and drama triangles? Perhaps your intimate partner, children, a friend who's into personal and leadership development?

Self-reflection	Research shows leaders and teams who self-reflect are more productive. Yet most don't. The key is to identify a few important questions that stimulate higher order thinking and diarise the time either at the end of the day or week. Ten minutes is a good starting point, longer will take your deeper and yield more insight. Here are some good questions to get you started: When did I go below the line today? What pay-off did I get? Can I accept myself for going below the line? Am I willing to shift? What do I need to do to shift? What am I avoiding / not facing? What's the hardest thing to accept? What do I really want? What do I choose now? What's an easy step I can take to start creating what I really want?
Reading	What can you read to immerse yourself in these ideas? Here are some pointers: Immunity to Change: How to Overcome It and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organization The 15 commitments of conscious leadership Chatter: The Voice in Our Head, Why It Matters, and How to Harness It Transcend: The new science of self-actualisation
Listening	Podcasts are an excellent way to absorb new ideas. Here are some of my favourite episodes on leadership and personal growth that you might find inspiring: Jim Dethmer: Leading from above the line Jim Collins: Relationships v transactions Kris Cordle: Releasing the ego Caroline Webb: How to have a good day during a global pandemic
Mindfulness	Everything we feel, think, say and do is a function of our mind. Everything we have discussed in this workbook requires us to be present to how we're thinking, feeling and behaving, before we can shift. That's why observing and training your mind is arguably the most valuable gift you can give yourself and others. This is the art and science of mindfulness. The Waking Up app by Sam Harris offers a range of great meditations and inspiring talks. He also puts lots of talks in front of his paywall. Here are some of my favourites: The science of meditation, Meditation in an emergency, The science of happiness

Inspiration pages

Locating yourself: Above or below?

Statements

What can I learn from this?
How is the opposite as true?
How is this familiar?
I appreciate you for....
I take responsibility for...
I agree to...
I choose to...
I created...
How is this for me?
What I hear you saying...
My body sensations are...
I feel (sad, angry, scared, joyful, sexual/creative)

Behaviours

Breathe
Significantly change my posture
Take responsibility
Question my beliefs
Feel emotions
Listen consciously
Speak unarguably
Make impeccable agreements
Appreciate
Create win for all solutions Play

Beliefs

I am the creator of my well-being
There are more than two possibilities
It is valuable to question my thoughts and beliefs
My feelings are intelligent
Approval, control and security are something I already have
All people and circumstances are my allies
Revealing creates connection and vitality
Play and rest are key to peak performance

("BY ME")

Responsive / Curious / Growth & Learning

ACCEPTANCE AND TRUST

("TO ME")

Reactive/Defensive/Recycling drama

RESISTANCE AND THREAT

Statements

I/You/They should
I/You/ They can't
I'm right/They're wrong
It's hard
I'm trying
It's not my fault
I'm confused
The "truth" is
I have to
You made me
I'm sorry (with an excuse)
Always/Never
"Why" questions
You're not listening to me
It's no use/I give up
My way or the highway
They don't get it

Behaviours

Hold your breath
Fight/Flee/Freeze/Faint
See others as needing help
Find fault/Blame
Cling to an opinion/argue
Rationalize/Justify
Gossip
Get overwhelmed
Suppress emotions
Use distractions to relieve pain (food, sex, drugs, media, work)
Enrol others to affirm my beliefs
Avoid all disconfirming
Be sloppy with your agreements
Avoid conflict
Be judgmental

Beliefs

Being right is the most important thing
There is a threat to me
There is not "enough"
I need another's approval
Safety and security come from outside myself
I need to be in "control" (of things I can't control)
There are only two options
To get to a solution, I have to be serious
I am better than/less than
There is a right/wrong way
There is no choice
My story about the situation is true

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