

# The Circle of Impact Leadership Guides

**Leadership begins with the individual initiative to make a difference that matters.  
Impact is change. Leaders create change.**

*The Circle of Impact Leadership Guides are designed for conversation and reflection. They are not formulas to implement. Rather, they provide a way to see the whole spectrum of an organization or a person's life.*

If you need help learning to use the Guides, send me an email, and we'll work on it together. If after a little instruction, you'd like to formalize a coach relationship around the use of the Guides, we can make arrangements for that too.

**Dr. Ed Brenegar**

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# 12 Transition Points

How to know when you are in transition or it is time to make some changes.

1. What used to be easy is now hard.
2. We find that our performance has reached a plateau, neither getting better or worse.
3. We are clearly not doing well, as our life and work are in decline.
4. We lose our job, and are forced to rethink who we are and what we have to offer an employer.
5. We are unhappy in our current life and work situation.
6. We are tired of doing the same thing over and over.
7. We don't know how to spend our time at work.
8. Our relationships are not healthy.
9. We are confronted with life decisions that have no easy answer or application.
10. We are thrust into a leadership role in which we feel unprepared.
11. We are entering a new stage of life.
12. We have a general uncertainty about life and work purpose.

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# Creating Impact In Life & Work During Times of Transition

## A Circle of Impact Guide

### 1. TRANSITION, NOT CHANGE

Every person and organization is in transition from what they once were to what they will be. We experience this transition as change. We see it as performance plateaus and decline. It requires us to change.

### 2. TRANSITION POINTS

What these Transition Points (T) show us is that what created growth at one stage may not at the next. Sustainability is the result of growth, not trying to remain at the same level. To grow requires us to make changes.

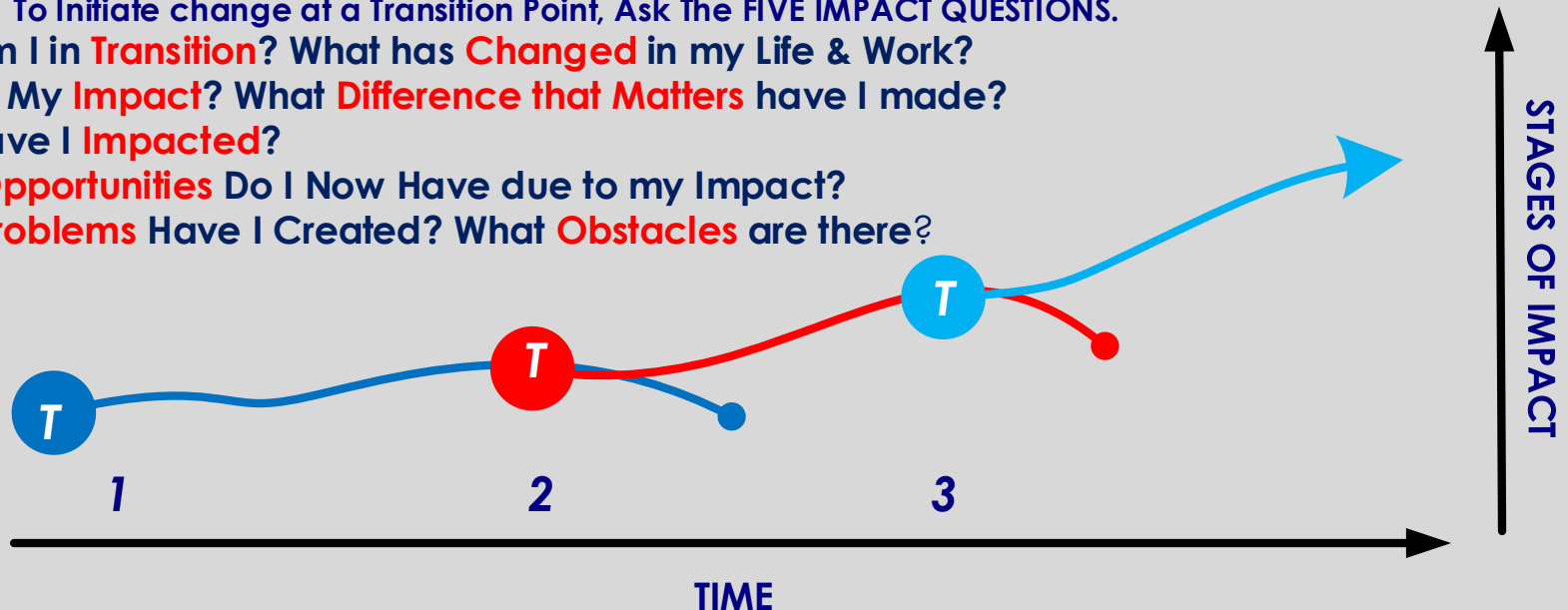
### 3. CREATING IMPACT THROUGH TRANSITION POINTS

People manage Transition Points (T) by initiating change to create impact. People do this through the Three Dimensions of Life & Work - Ideas, Relationships and in Social & Organizational Settings. These three dimensions form the Circle of Impact where growth occurs.

### 4. FIVE QUESTIONS EVERY PERSON MUST ASK

To Initiate change at a Transition Point, Ask The FIVE IMPACT QUESTIONS.

1. How am I in **Transition**? What has **Changed** in my Life & Work?
2. What is My **Impact**? What **Difference that Matters** have I made?
3. Who have I **Impacted**?
4. What **Opportunities** Do I Now Have due to my Impact?
5. What **Problems** Have I Created? What **Obstacles** are there?



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# Four Attitudes Towards Change

## CHANGE RECEPTIVE

Adapt to Changes in  
Circumstances

## CHANGE INITIATOR

Initiate Change to Make a  
Difference

Impact is the Difference Created Through  
Change.

Impact is the Difference that Our Mission,  
Values and Vision make with Our Ideas,  
through Our Relationships and in  
Organizations.

## Change-phobics

resist Change

## Change Junkies

only want Change.

Change Tolerance Spectrum

Low

High

*Security and Stability Focused.  
Avoids Risk.  
Resistant to Change.  
Continuity is Impact.*

*Open, Pragmatic, Receptive.  
Calculates Risk in relation to Impact.  
Adapts to and Initiates Change.  
Impact is Change that Makes a Difference.*

*Embraces the excitement of Change.  
Loves the adrenaline of high risk.  
Resists Continuity & Commitment.  
Change is Impact.*

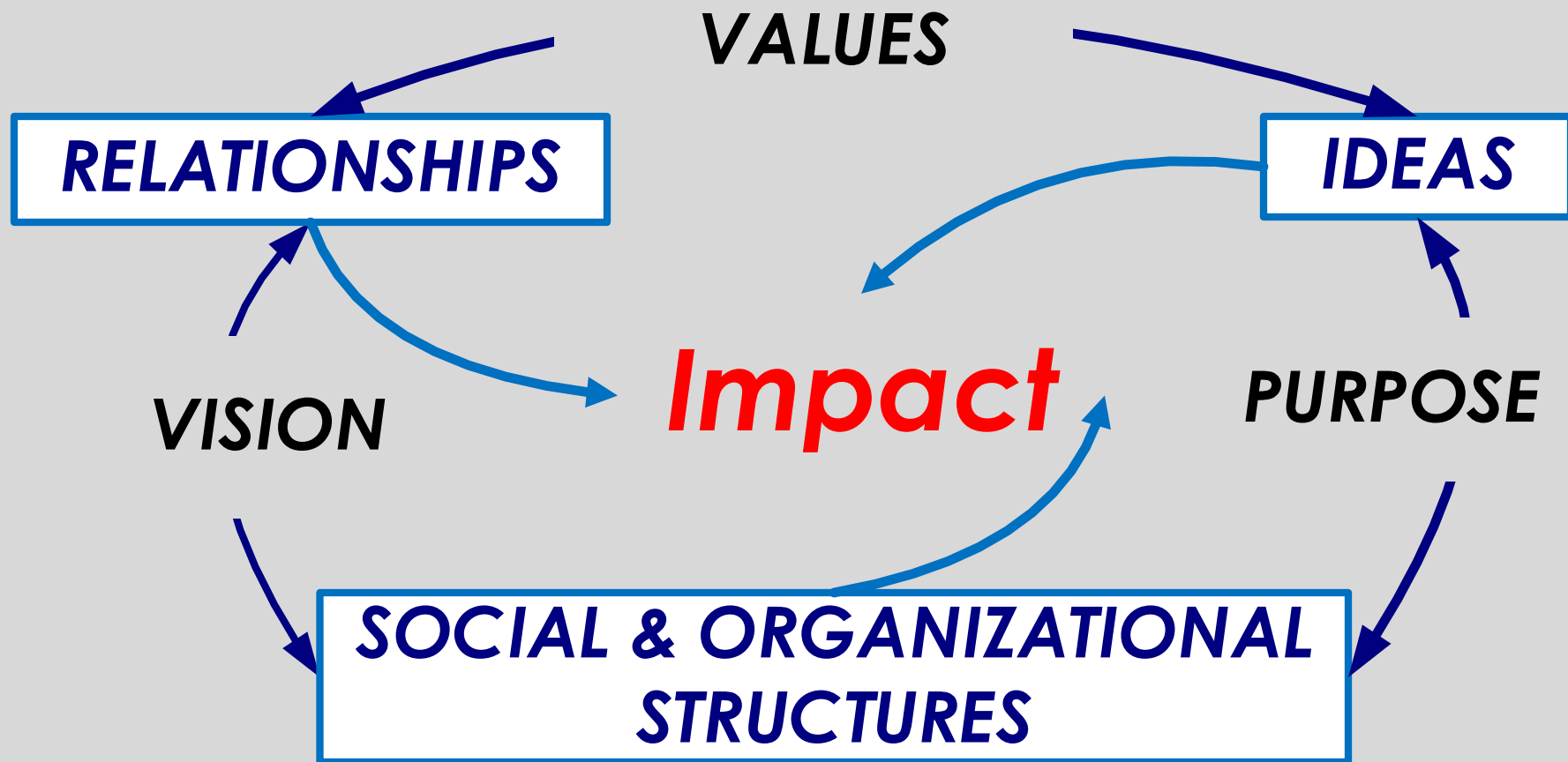
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# THE CIRCLE OF IMPACT

Integrating the Three Dimensions of Leadership for Making a Difference That Matters



*Leaders Take Initiative to Create Impact with Ideas, through Relationships within Social & Organizational Structures.*

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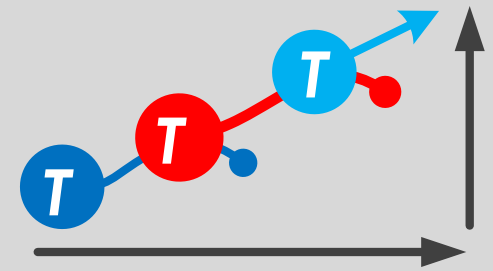
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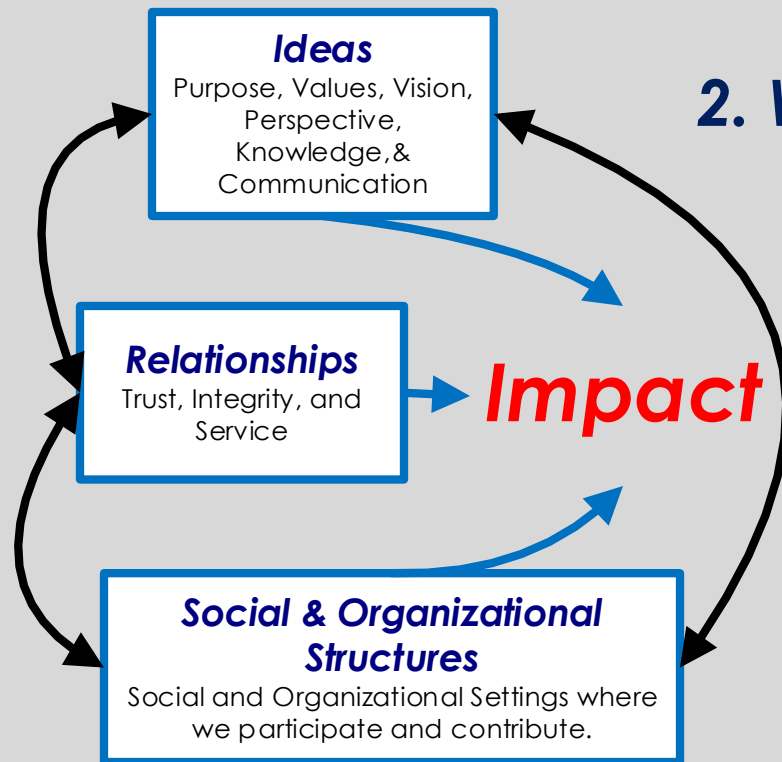
# The FIVE QUESTIONS Every Person Must Ask

## A Circle of Impact Guide

1. What has Changed in my Life and Work? How am I in Transition?

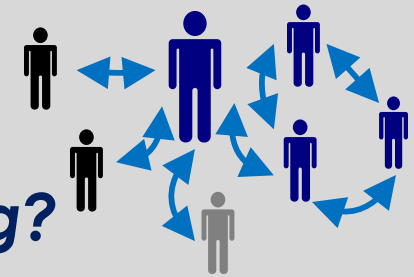


2. What is My Impact?



The Circle of Impact

3. Who am I Impacting?



4. What Opportunities Do I Have Now?

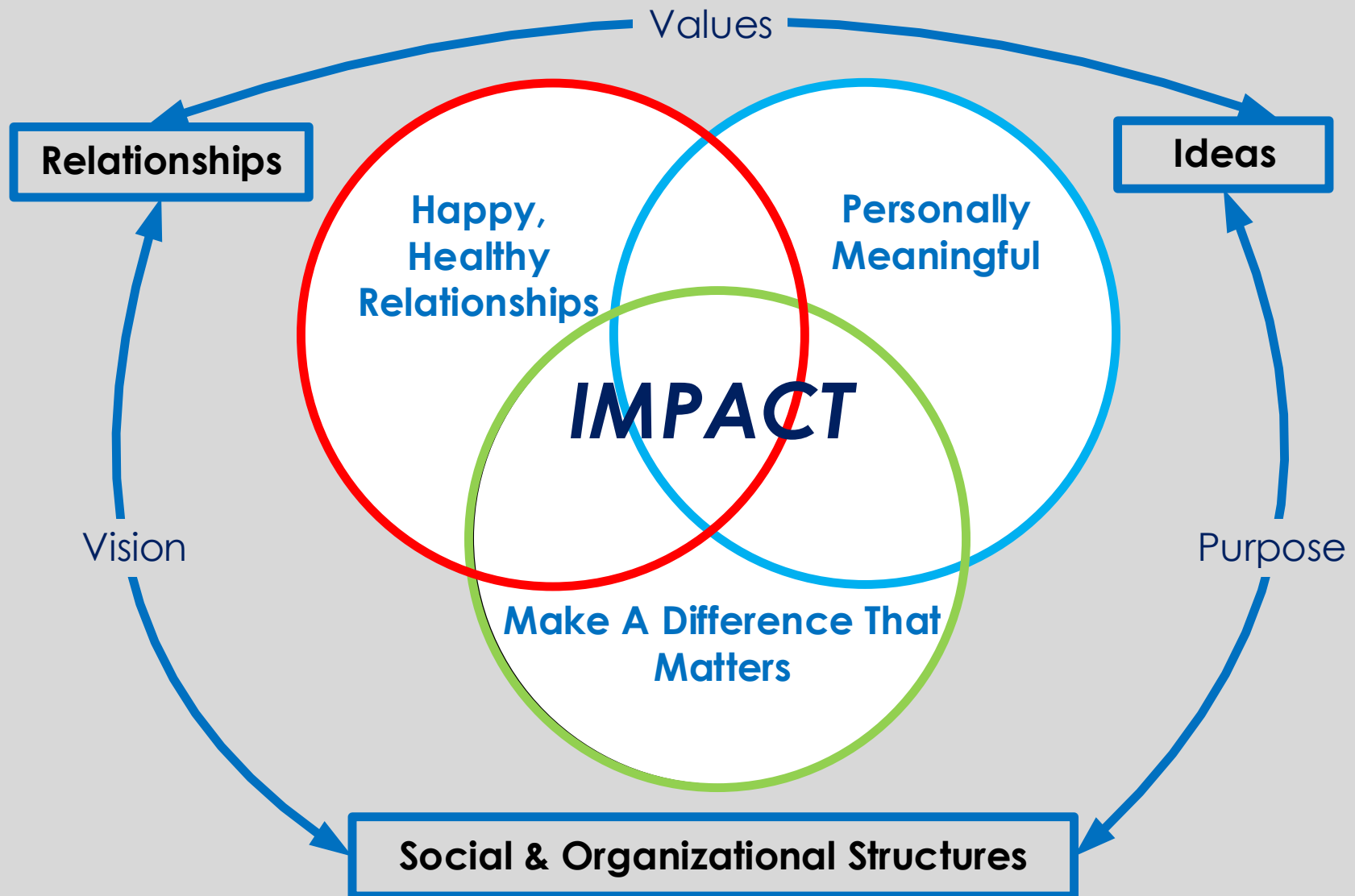


5. What Problems Have I Created? What Obstacles Do I Face?



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# The Three Desires and the Circle of Impact



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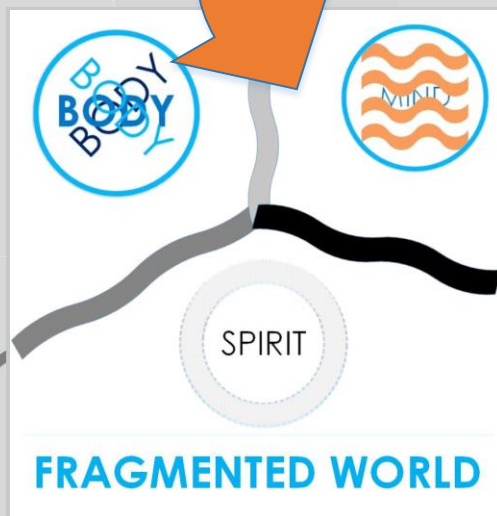
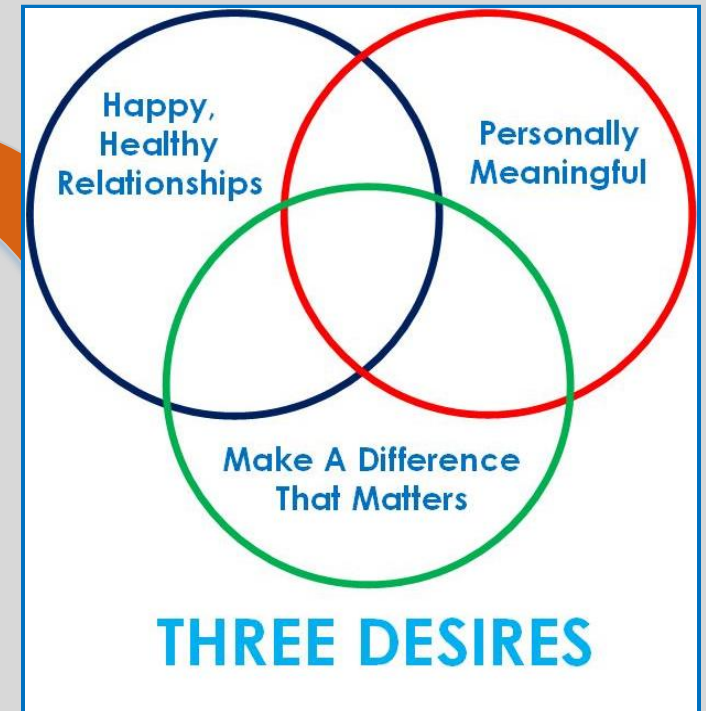
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# The Three Desires and the Call to Wholeness



*Three Desires Define Who We Are as Human Persons.*  
We desire our lives to have Personal Meaning, for Happy, Healthy Relationships to be Happy and Healthy, and to Make a Difference That Matters.

*These Desires Are a Call To Live Lives of Wholeness in a Fragmented World.*

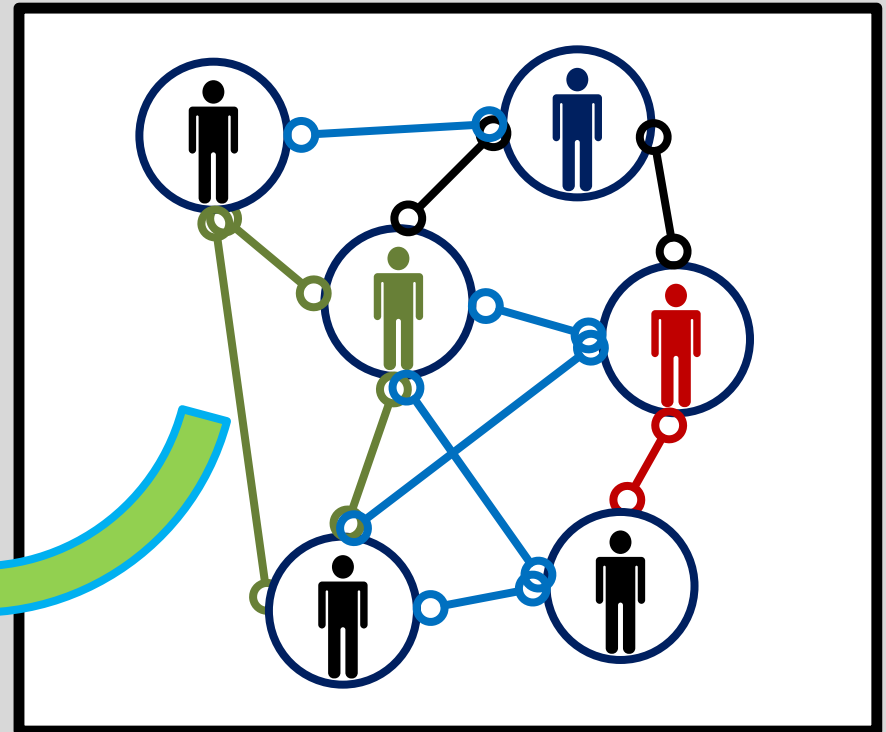
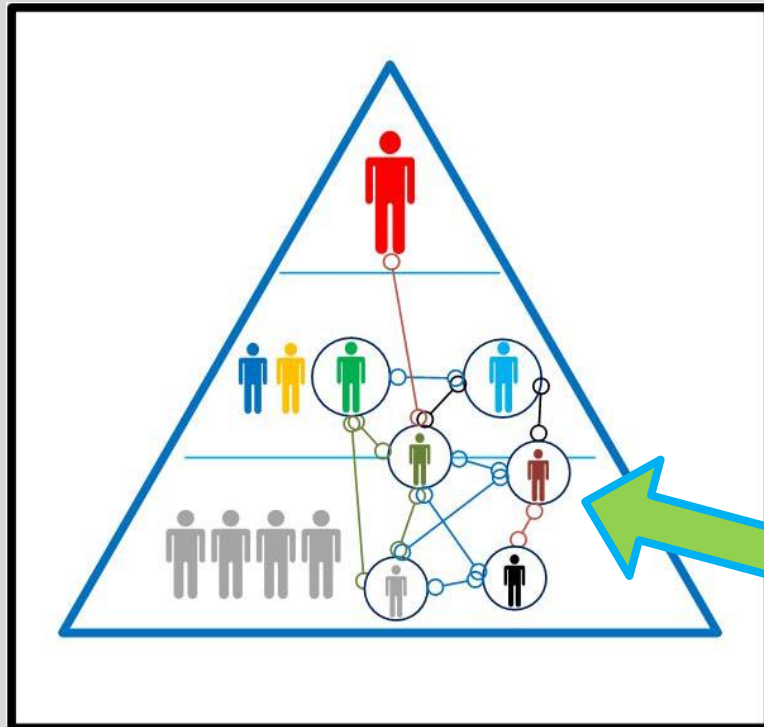
A Call to Create a Life of Meaning.  
A Call to Share Our Lives in Community.  
A Call to Take Personal Initiative to Make A Difference with One's Life.

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# Bringing Networks of Relationships into Traditional Structures



## HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE

*Leadership by Institutional Authority  
Impact through Delegated Responsibility  
Mission = Institutional Integrity*

## NETWORK OF RELATIONSHIPS

*Leadership by Social Trust  
Impact through Personal Initiative / Shared Responsibility  
Mission = the Difference that Matters  
through Individual and Collective Action*

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# Say Thanks Every Day

## The Power of Gratitude in Life and Work

The Five Actions of Gratitude Create a Difference that Matters

### Give Back



Serve people and communities who have made a difference to you.

### Honor Others



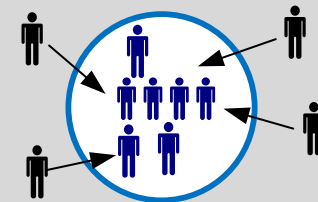
Treat people with dignity and respect, honoring their participation and contributions to their organizations and communities.

### Say Thanks



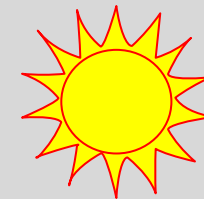
Say Thanks Every Day in appreciation for the contributions that people and communities make.

### Make Welcome



Practice a hospitality of openness and opportunity for people to make a difference.

### Create Goodness



Foster an environment for the creation of goodness through personal initiative.

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## The Circle of Impact Leadership Guides.

### Introduction

The core message of the Circle of Impact model is that leadership begins as individual initiative to create impact. That impact creates change that makes a difference that matters. My perspective on leadership is that it is less a function of organizational structure, like as a role played with the title of leader, and, more a product of human functioning.

### 12 Transition Points

In my interactions with people, clients and their organizations over the past three decades I came to realize that everyone of us and our organization are in transition. There is no static state where we remain the same year in and year out. Instead we are constantly evolving or changing from what we were in the past to what we will be in the future. The 12 Transition Points are simply a way to help people see how they are in transition. Typically, when the 12 are presented to someone or a team, they are able to recognize 4 or 5 of these transition points that they are currently experiencing.

### Creating Impact in Life & Work During Times of Transition

This page provides a simple way of understanding that change is a process of transition, therefore we can manage change by seeing it as a transition that brings opportunity for impact.

### Four Attitudes Towards Change

Regardless of the setting people have distinct attitudes towards change. This diagram identifies four that I found in my work. The key for teams is to attract as many Change Receptive and Change Initiator types as possible, and, avoid the Change-phobics and Change Junkies, who are destructive of team cohesion.

### The Circle of Impact model

This is a complex picture of what is actually taking place in our lives and work. Every one of us must address ourselves to the Three Dimensions of Leadership: Ideas, Relationships and Social and Organizational Structures. Unfortunately, these three dimensions are not aligned well. It may be because we are not clear about our values or purpose. It may be because our relationships are not healthy. And, quite possibly, the social and organizational structures in which we live and work are not well suited to our goals and how we approach those goals. I have learned through the development of the Circle of Impact that the key to aligning these dimension is to clarify and act upon the Four Connecting Ideas: Values, Purpose, Vision and Impact. Values inform how our relationships are function. Purpose defines what our desired impact is to be, therefore determining what sort of organizational structures are needed to achieve our goals. Vision is simply what do we do together through our social and organizational structure to achieve impact. And Impact is the change we wish to create or the difference that we want that matters.

### The Five Questions Every Person Must Ask

These five questions are how the Circle of Impact is managed on a regular basis. The questions function on two levels. The first is as a quick picture of where we are. Answer the questions in no more than ten minutes. The first time they are used may simply show what is not known. A more in depth treatment will ask the questions in the following manner. Question 1: To understand the transition I'm in, go back to a point in time where everything seemed to be working well. What has changed since that point in time. What has change about my ideas, my purpose, my values, my perception of who I am, and what is important? What has changed about my relationships? What has changed about the social and organizational context that I'm in?

The more specific the answer the great clarity will result. These questions should be asked on a regular basis and responses written down in a journal.

### **The Three Desires and the Circle of Impact**

The Circle of Impact is not just a tool for organizational leaders, but also is rooted in an understanding of human purpose, ambition and desire. I have identified in my interactions with people three desires that we generally all share. We all want our lives to be Personally Meaningful, to have Happy, Healthy Relationships, and, to Make a Difference that Matters. These desire correspond to the Three Dimensions. The benefit of this perspective is that in our working with people, whether they are family members, co-workers or clients, we can better understand how to apply the Circle of Impact by understanding these three desires that people have.

### **The Three Desires and the Call to Wholeness**

Just as the Three Dimensions of the Circle of Impact can be misaligned, so too, can the individuals with whom we live and work experience as similar kind of misalignment. I describe this as a fragmenting of our Mind, Body and Spirit. If we can create social and organizational structures which provide the opportunity for people to find wholeness in their lives and work, then we also have an opportunity to not only align the Three Dimensions, but also create an environment of wholeness that enhances and expands our opportunities to create impact.

### **Bringing Networks of Relationships into Traditional Structures**

Through the development of the Circle of Impact model, I have learned that organizational structures are highly resistant to change. In fact, when an organization lacks alignment, the structure dictates the conception of the not only the other dimensions but also the Four Connecting Ideas. I see this in particular in hierarchical organizational structures. The key to shifting an organization from a focus on institutional integrity to impact is to create networks of relationships whose shared work and leadership transcend the structure's limitation.

### **Say Thanks Every Day: The Power of Gratitude in Life and Work**

It has been my experience that gratitude and generosity are fundamental aspects of any healthy relationship or social setting. For many, gratitude is a feeling that gives them a sense of personal satisfaction or validation. I take a different approach focusing on Five Actions of Gratitude: Say Thanks, Give Back, Make Welcome, Honor Others and Create Goodness. When these are acted upon, in particular the social context of families, communities and organizations change. In each action, impact that makes a difference is achieved. For this reason, I see these five actions as a strategy for change within organizations.