



YOU Are the Key to Resolving the Chaos




2026




Me before coffee

Me after coffee

LEAdEARNship Institute

- Better Leaders = Better Lives -



Leaders are those who, regardless of title, lift up others around them.

What is Covered

- Current Macro Environment
- Reasons for Change Failure
- The Trough of Chaos
- Addressing Emotions Throughout change
- 6 Levers of Effective Change
- 6 Trauma-Informed Care Principles Applied to Change

1. YOU Are the Key to Resolving the Chaos



2. Perspective = Reality and Environment (for you and those around you)



3. Extend Compassion - Person-centered, Trauma-informed care principles to staff



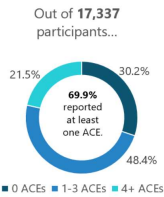
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What changes are you expecting within your team/organization in the next 12 months?

Starting Story




Trauma ACEs and Beyond



Original ACE Study

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010117708855>

Vs. 100% of people/staff were affected by COVID



Why Trauma-Informed Approach?

- Those who have been through trauma may react differently through situations
- Triggers for individuals will be unique – sight, smell, touch, sound etc.
- Those with a history of trauma may have an overactive nervous system
- View the world differently (child picture perspective)



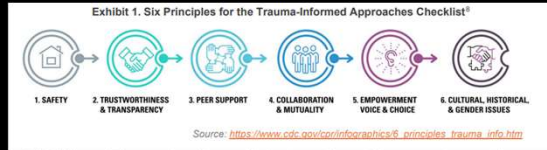
Employees' ability to cope with change is

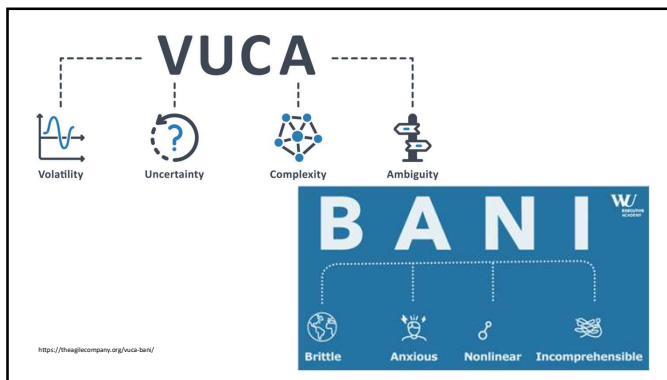
50%

of pre-pandemic levels.

Source: <https://www.td.org/content/talent-development-leader/the-science-behind-change-fatigue-and-burnout>

- 2 vs 10





Pop Quiz!

What percentage of organizational change initiative fail?

What do they have in common?



Graveyard of Companies Past



Graveyard of Companies Past

Kill the company exercise

In 2 minutes write down as many factors inside and outside your organization that would completely shut your organization/facility down

Ex. funding pulled, lawsuits, regulations, zombie apocalypse



Change Failure

- Not setting clear goals/overall picture
- Not changing fast enough
- Failure to recognize and address emotion in change
- Lack of support and training
- Lack of buy-in
- Others?



6 Levers of Effective Change

1. Leadership's own willingness to change
2. A shared vision of success
3. A culture of trust and psychological safety
4. A process that balances execution and exploration
5. A recognition that technology carries additional emotional challenges
6. A shared sense of ownership over the outcome



Review psych
safety

Another Pop Quiz



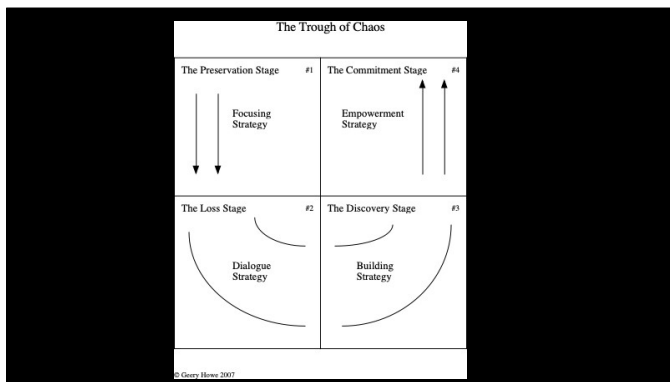
- A. Your GrandMama's Basement
- B. A living room straight out of the 70s
- C. The hotel I stayed at that reminded me of The Shining and hasn't been updated since at least the 1970s...

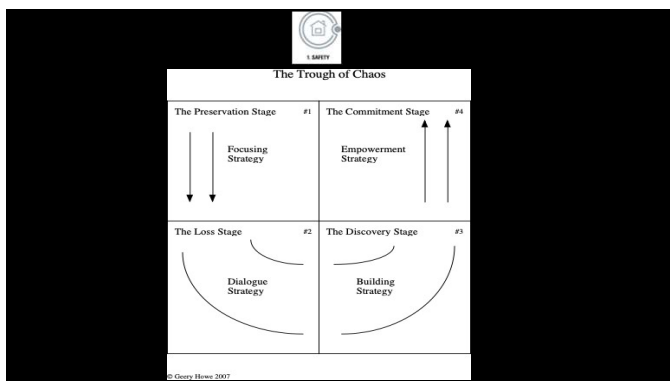
*"When you change the way
you look at things, the things
you look at change."*

MAX PLANCK – PHYSICIST



Gratitude
Study





Interpersonal Fear/Risk

- We are evolved to be social animals
- We adapted to care what people think – because it meant survival
- Our brains perceive interpersonal risk the same as physical safety risks



What is Psychological Safety?

- Psychological safety is being able to show and employ one's true self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career
- It can be defined as a shared belief that the team is safe for risk taking
- In psychologically safe teams, team members feel accepted and respected



Four Steps to Safety

- 1) Ask and Pause
- 2) Reward Risk
- 3) Role-model
- 4) Encourage On-going Learning



Preservation Stage and Emotion

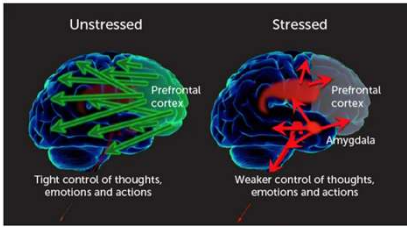


The Preservation Stage #1

Focusing Strategy

Angry, Shocked, Denial

Why do we act like that?



Unstressed Stressed

Prefrontal cortex Prefrontal cortex

Tight control of thoughts, emotions and actions Weaker control of thoughts, emotions and actions

Amygdala

Fight
Flight
Freeze
Fawn

Michael
story

Normally, an alert person's brain has moderate amounts of chemical messengers that lead the prefrontal cortex to take charge and perform high-level thinking (left). But with stress, those chemical signals can flood the brain, activating amygdala-linked brain networks involved in sensing and responding to threats (right).

J. A. ARNSTEN

Source: <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid19-stress-brain>

Feedback is not insubordinate – it is communication

- I'm scared
- I need support
- I haven't been through this before



Where you are at vs. your team members



Psychology Behind Preservation Stage

- **Negativity Bias** – tend to weigh negative experiences more than positive ones (survival instincts)
- Thinking Fast and Slow - Daniel Kahneman et al– 2-4x worth what we are losing
- **Certainty over comfort effect**- we would rather know we are losing our jobs, than be in limbo for months...



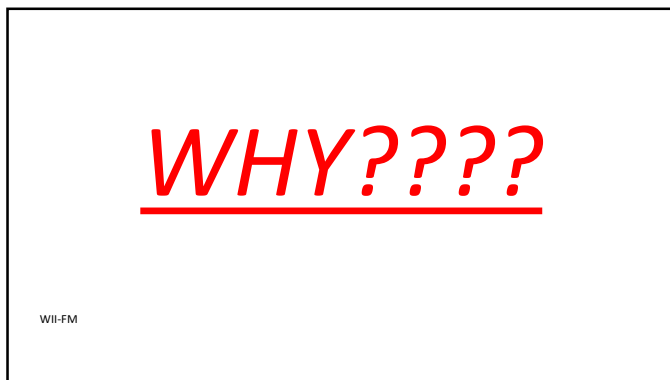
Leadership in Preservation Stage - Focus

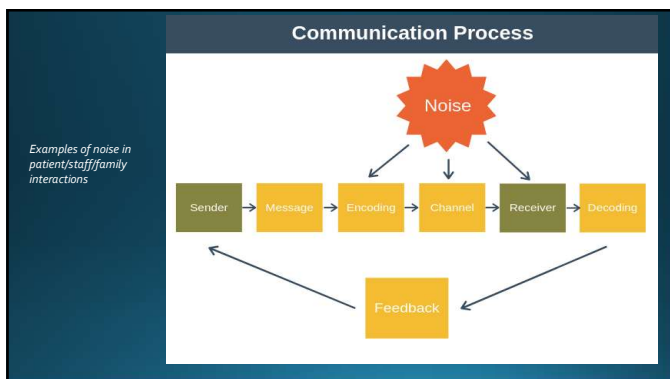
- Direct – lead the path, paint the picture
- Tell – what is changing, what is staying the same
- Structures
- Prioritizing – break into small steps

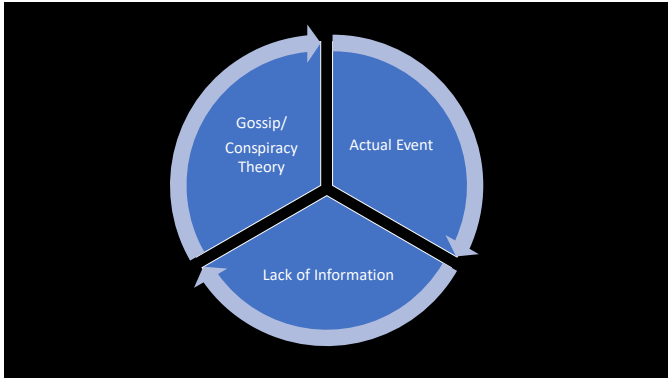


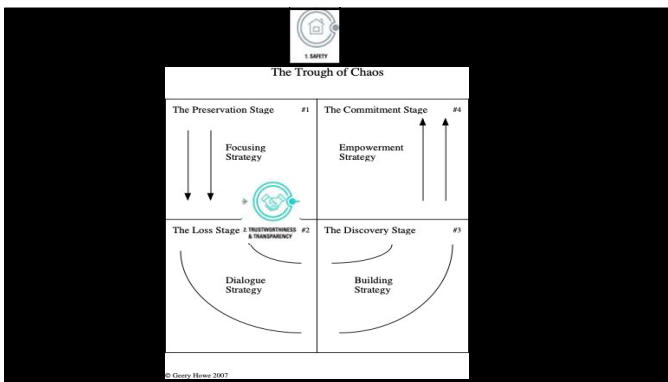
Levers:
1. Leadership's own willingness to change
2. A shared vision of success











Loss Stage

What are they losing:

- Confidence
- Competence
- Control!
- Relationship(s)
- Expectations





Values card Exercise, **Ending** vs Beginning

Leadership Strategy - Dialogue

- Patience and Empathy
- Coaching – asking questions
- Selling – the problems with the old system
- Resolving – why the new way is better

What is changing, what is staying the same...

Leadership Lever
3. A culture of trust and psychological safety

GE Story

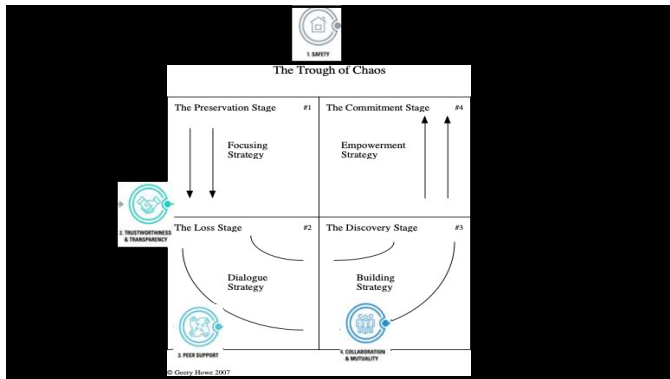
Small Group Discussion

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE THAT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM MEMBERS THROUGH THE LOSS STAGE?

People only willingly change when the pain of staying the same exceeds the pain of change

Do they even make these anymore?

What has changed.. What has stayed the same?



Discovery - Employees

- A realm of experimentation
- Dipping a toe in the water
- Discovering positive elements



Discovery Leadership - Building

- Cheerleader
- Barrier buster
- Keep what is working, change what is not



Leadership Levers
 4. A process that balances execution and exploration
 5. A recognition that technology carries its own emotional journey

Stuck and Backwards

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What gets people stuck or drives them backwards in the change process?

The Trough of Chaos

The Preservation Stage #1 Focusing Strategy	The Commitment Stage #4 Empowerment Strategy
The Loss Stage #2 Dialogue Strategy	The Discovery Stage #3 Building Strategy



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The Trough of Chaos

The Preservation Stage #1 Focusing Strategy	The Commitment Stage #4 Empowerment Strategy
The Loss Stage #2 Dialogue Strategy	The Discovery Stage #3 Building Strategy






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Commitment – Employees

- The changes are accepted and respected
- Excitement about moving ahead
- Involve everyone in short-term win celebrations



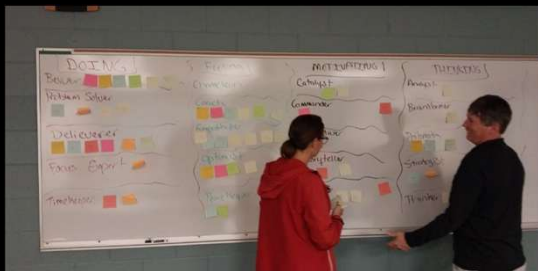
Empowerment

- Give team members as much control as you can – support strengths – High 5 Test
- Delegate and validate
- Support the decision they have made to journey through the change

6. A shared sense of ownership over the outcome

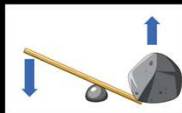


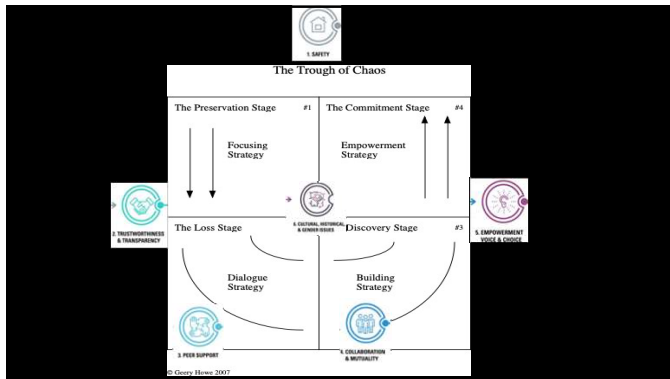
Mapping Team Strengths



6 Levers of Effective Change

1. Role Model!
2. Paint the picture of shared vision of success
3. Create culture of trust and psychological safety
4. Accept that change balances execution and exploration
5. Recognize that technology carries additional emotional journey
6. Share the sense of ownership over the outcomes





1. YOU Are the Key to Resolving the Chaos



2. Perspective = Reality and Environment (for you and those around you)



3. Extend Compassion - Person-centered, Trauma-informed care principles to staff



See me after the session



Would this training or other leadership training be beneficial for leaders at your organization?

- Molly J. Mackey
- Connect with me on LinkedIn
- Hand me your business card
- 319-210-3593 cell
- leadernshipinstitute@gmail.com



• "Leading After the Hurt – A Practical Guide to Trauma-Informed Leadership in Today's Workplace" – published this year, now available on Amazon!

LEAdERnShip Institute
- Better Leaders > Better Lives -

We have a few Leadership Bootcamp seats still open for the
Des Moines, IA Oct 21-22
Omaha, NE Nov. 3-5
Cedar Falls, IA Nov. 10-12



The Rest of the Story

H.O.P.E.
HOLD ON. PAIN ENDS.



Sources:

- Change Is Hard. Here's How to Make It Less Painful - <https://hbr.org/2022/04/change-is-hard-heres-how-to-make-it-less-painful>
- 6 Levers of Effective Change : <https://hbr.org/2023/05/6-key-levers-of-a-successful-organizational-transformation>
- Vision to Action Training Geery Howe – 2023, and mentorship
- Atomic Habits James Clear
- Shatterproof – Tara Eurich
- Harvard Business Review
