Theory U: Consciousness Based Systems Change
2016

Otto Scharmer
MIT Sloan School of Management
Presencing Institute
www.ottoscharmer.com
SYMPTOMS

ECOLOGICAL DIVIDE
SELF ≠ NATURE

SOCIAL DIVIDE
SELF ≠ OTHER

SPIRITUAL DIVIDE
SELF ≠ SELF

STRUCTURES & SYSTEMS
PARADIGMS OF THOUGHT

1.0 STATE CENTRIC
   (1 SECTOR) → HIERARCHY & CONTROL → TRADITIONAL AWARENESS

2.0 FREE MARKET
   (2 SECTORS) → MARKETS & COMPETITION → EGO-SYSTEM AWARENESS

3.0 SOCIAL MARKET
   (3 SECTORS, CONFLICTING) → NETWORKS & NEGOTIATION → STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS

4.0 CO-CREATIVE
   (3 SECTORS, CO-CREATING) → SEEING/ACTING from the WHOLE → ECO-SYSTEM AWARENESS

SOURCE

ONE EARTH IS PLANET

1% OF NATURE

ALMOST 50% OF ECONOMY

COLLECTIVE PARALYSIS

HAPPINESS

WEALTHLESS VS.

BEST

SOCIAL USE

Presencing Institute - Otto Scharmer - www.presencing.com/permissions/
“The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervenor.”

- William O'Brien, Former CEO of the Hanover Insurance Company

DOWNLOADING PAST PATTERNS

OBSERVE,
OBSERVE,
OBSERVE

ACT in an
INSTANT:
PROTOTYPE

RETREAT & REFLECT:
ALLOW the INNER KNOWING to EMERGE
"The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervenor."

- William O'Brien, former CEO of the Hanover Insurance Company

- Downloading past patterns
- Suspending
- Seeing with fresh eyes
- Redirecting
- Sensing from the field
- Letting go

- Performing by operating from the whole
- Embodying
- Prototyping the new by linking head, heart, hand
- Enacting
- Crystallizing vision and intention
- Letting come

- Presencing
- Connecting to source
Namibia: Maternal Health

U-Process

Co-initiate: Stop and listen to others. Learn through listening and diagnosis.

Co-evolve: Integrate this new in practice. Scale-up what is working in the prototypes to create deeper impact.

Co-create: Develop prototypes and innovations. Learner by doing to become aware through small-scale practices.

Co-inspire: Connect to the spaces of inspiration and will. Moments of deep reflection.

Co-sense: Observe, observe, observe. Learn through observation.

One Process Five Movements

Visit places of greatest potential
Observe with both mind and heart wide open: listen to others, the pantry client
Connect: experience your part in the system you want to change
Make sense of what you’ve experienced

“Retreat and reflect; allow inner knowing to emerge
“I simply knew something, I had no way of knowing”
“Seeing through different eyes, I discovered purpose and meaning in what I do!”
“And there it was: the a-ha moment!”

Grows successful innovations: improved interactions between service providers and patients
“It’s not about renewing documents, it’s about growing personalisation” (Deputy Permanent Secretary, WHO)

“Geo Localisation: a precursor of the new to explore future possibilities by doing
Improve access to services (CHW-teams and others)
Increase community awareness radio talk shows
Develop skills and capabilities (in-service training; ambulance service)
(Placenta Regional Delivery Unit)
IDEAS Indonesia
Global Wellbeing Lab 2.0
U.Lab: Transforming Business, Society, and Self
U.Lab MOOC:
75,000 Participants, 185 Countries
#ULab 2.0 features joint work of 44 ImpactHubs and @presencing_inst that emerged from the group we hosted in Jan-Feb pic.twitter.com/cnxgofyUhi
ECOLOGICAL DIVIDE: SELF ≠ NATURE

SOCIAL DIVIDE: SELF ≠ OTHER

SPIRITUAL DIVIDE: SELF ≠ SELF

ATTENTION

1.0 HABITUAL

DOWNLOADING HABITUAL

2.0 EGO-SYSTEM

FACTUAL OPEN-MINDED

DEBATE "I AM MY POINT OF VIEW" SPEAKING MY VIEW

3.0 STAKEHOLDER

EMPATHIC OPEN-HEARTED

DIALOGUE "I HAVE A POINT OF VIEW" SPEAKING FROM THE WHOLE INQUIRY

4.0 ECO-SYSTEM

GENERATIVE OPEN-PRESENCE

COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY: PRESENSING FLOW SPEAKING FROM WHAT IS MOVING THROUGH

MACRO: ORGANIZING

CENTRALIZED HIERARCHY

DECENTRALIZED DIVISIONS

NETWORKED STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

ECO-SYSTEM CO-CREATING

MUNDO: COORDINATING

10 HIERARCHY

2.0 COMPETITION

3.0 NETWORKS

4.0 ECO-SYSTEM AWARENESS
U.Lab Evaluation (self reported)

- 60% “inspiring”
- 33% “life changing”
Case Clinic Circle