



Impact Incubator
change-making for introverts
I help you achieve meaningful, ambitious goals
Hellene Gronda, Ph.D. Dipl. PW. MA, BA(Hons) BSc.
Training, Coaching, Strategy

www.impactincubator.org

Climate Hero YOUR WAY – Beyond Power Struggle

You know you need to make a difference. Climate change is real, it is escalating and it is scary.

But you don't have time or energy for fighting with big forces that don't even seem to care, or with people who just don't get it. You hate power struggles - you want to make a positive contribution.

What if you could be a Climate Hero YOUR Way?

What if you could feel you were really making a difference? And feel connected to a huge global team - all of us acting together to save the planet?

In this innerwork, I am inviting you to an experience of transforming power struggle into empowerment so you can be the Climate Hero you need to be, feeling your deep connection to the global team of all of us.

Because the good news is that more and more of us are waking up to the challenge and working to make a difference. But one reason we can start feeling hopeless and overwhelmed is because of conflict, because of the many fights going on.

We can get caught in trying to convince people or corporations, to make them change, to make them 'get it'. Power struggles get in the way of teamwork on the climate crisis.

Power struggles escalate conflict in dangerous ways - the world around us shows that over and over again. They waste precious energy.

What if we are literally burning the fossil fuel of old power struggles instead of being moved by the renewal energy of our own creative process? We just don't have time for this.

But the thing is - all sides are fighting for survival. And no-one is letting go when they feel they are fighting for their lives. So can we get beyond a fight?

It isn't easy. This is a challenge that asks us to give everything we've got. But honestly, is there anything else worth doing? We have to facilitate the deeper transformation and evolution that is trying to happen.

The process of climate change brings awareness to our impact, our power and our connectedness. We've got this. The world needs us.



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Transforming Power Struggle

Power struggles get in the way of the teamwork we need to address the climate emergency. But we cannot transform power struggles by bypassing them. We all know that doesn't work.

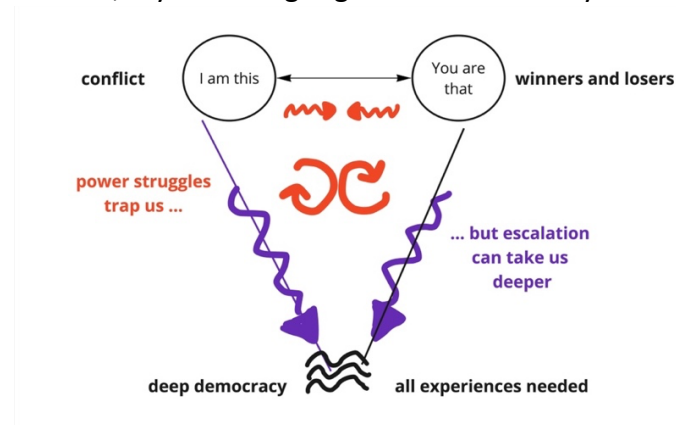
We must find another way to listen and understand all sides to get to a sustainable resolution. We need to understand our own experience and the experience of those with whom we are in conflict.

The great news is that we can use the natural process of conflict as a resource to access a deeper source of energy. This is a renewable energy source at the essence of our experience, which can give us the generosity and power to listen, to facilitate, and to help things evolve.

Conflict begins when we discover that our own experience and viewpoint occurs in relation to other experiences that do not seem to align. We find ourselves in a relationship conflict and a group process. A group process is a process that includes multiple roles and experiences. Relationship conflict and group process can only be resolved successfully, and sustainably, through the interaction of roles.

When each role and experience is fully received and understood, the group has the maximum intelligence and creative potential. The group is then able to make the best decision about how to go forward for the good of everyone involved. The process of conflict involves a natural escalation mechanism which provides energy to support role interactions.

Conflict escalation is a mechanism to support relationship interactions and group process by helping us to get our message across or to get it clarified. As I feel my experience in relation to other experiences, I notice an increase in the intensity of my need and energy level to communicate, and I notice an increase in my energy level, in my engagement – my heartbeat and breathing will accelerate, my voice might get raised. I feel my need to be heard.





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Power struggle occurs when we get caught up in trying to get our message ACROSS to show the other side the rightness of our viewpoint. We get caught in trying to win. We lose track of the goal of having the other person RECEIVE our message and UNDERSTAND our experience.

We get caught in the escalation and intensity of our own experience and forget that we also need to reciprocate. But, of course, we know that the other person also needs to feel received and understood!

So how do we do that? How do we find the depth and power to deeply listen to each other when we are fighting for our survival? When so much is at stake?

In power struggle, we get lost in the escalation and may resort to the use of power, force, and at worst, even violence to make an impact with our message. Often because we feel hopelessness about the other side being able to receive us. Interpersonally, if conditions allow, we might start yelling. Even though we all know that yelling at the other person rarely succeeds and usually backfires!

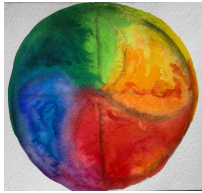
In the following innerwork, we practice catching the signals of our own escalation and then following them down deeper into our experience. The purpose is to seek the essence of our own message so we regain the generosity and space to also listen to the other.

The practice is intended to help you CLARIFY your message and HARVEST the natural energy of escalation. It is intended to (re)connect you with the deepest source of renewable energy that we have and to reach the level of our experience which has the generosity and space for the other side.

When we reach the essence level of our experience, we can access an experience of reconnection with the deepest part of ourselves and the group. We can feel oneness again. We naturally have space for the other side because we no longer feel separated in conflict.

From this essence level we can clarify our message and find the generosity to listen again. Then we can bring out our message with more clarity and without violence, in a way that the other side can hear and receive. And we feel the confidence and security that comes with reconnection to the essence level, to our deepest selves, and to the group, that allows us to receive other roles and experiences.

Use the following innerwork practice to help you find the deepest place to come from in your actions to address the climate emergency, to make your difference, and to feel part of the bigger picture, the process of evolution that is trying to happen.



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Innerwork Practice

Read through the instructions below and visualize doing the practice before you start. You can record the instructions and listen to them as you do the practice, or just have your paper nearby and refer to the exercise if you get lost. The core of this innerwork technique comes from Arnold Mindell, I learnt it at his seminars in 2017.

Find a private space and time and make yourself comfortable. You will need 15-20 minutes, some paper to write on, and some space to stand and move if that's possible for you.

Remember that we get into conflicts and power struggles because it is not easy to experience and express some parts of our process. When we work on our experience, we can get to limits in our ability to be with what is happening. We get to what processwork calls an edge and feel that we cannot go any further. If that happens, give yourself loving compassion and patient attention. Do not push, just be with what is. Allow your experience to unfold in its own time. And if today is not the day, that is ok.

Remember you belong.

Remember you are needed.

Instructions

Take three breaths, in and out, and allow your breath to bring you into your body.

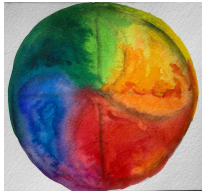
Check that your neck is relaxed and allow your head to balance freely on your spine. Invite your weight to drop you down, to help you remember and feel your connection to the earth.

Let your thoughts and awareness become a little cloudy and invite your ordinary self to recede into the background.

Allow yourself to think about climate change and the world situation. Notice anything that particularly catches your attention in the moment. Is there an area or a topic that calls you to get involved or make a difference?

Out of the complex picture which is the climate emergency, which thread or aspect feels most important to you, today?

Make some notes.



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Reflect and feel into your perspective on this topic or issue.

Consider your thoughts and feelings and try to identify what it is you want to say or do. Make some quick notes about your perspective.

Next, consider: who you are talking to? Who or what is the other role in the issue (as it concerns you)? To whom are you trying to get your message across? What do you want them to do or change?

With an attitude of respect, identify and represent your conflict partner in some form. It could be an actual person you know, or a public figure, a general role or type of person, or even an institution. Make some quick notes about your conflict partner.

Put your notes aside and then take a moment to relax again, check that your neck and shoulders are free, your belly soft, and release any unnecessary tension.

Now give yourself permission to feel your own side, your sacred and precious one-sidedness.

What are you called to stand for in this issue? What is your side of this story?

Stand if you can and fill yourself with the feeling of your perspective. Allow yourself to feel fully on your own side.

Notice what happens to your body. How do you sit or stand? Where does energy of that perspective live in or around your body? Does it have color, weight, texture, movement, an image, or a sound?

Look out for any signals of escalation. Your heartbeat, your breathing rate, tension in your muscles, tightness in your belly, any signals of nervous system activation. Notice the energy in your body that wants to communicate, to make an impact, to make change, no matter how minor or subtle. Give these signals your attention, with curiosity and love, like a precious treasure you might find on the beach.

In the next step, you are inviting yourself to find the essence of the energy that goes along with your perspective. You are going to 'burn it' down to find the very deepest essence of the experience.

Notice any signals of escalation and everything that is happening to your body as you explore an embodied experience of your perspective.



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Then, put this experience into an imaginative furnace, put it into a hot place and heat it up. With care and respect for your body, focus all the attention that you can on heating and intensifying the experience until it 'catches fire'.

Notice any movements that spontaneously occur. Use sound if it comes to you. Notice if any images arise as you move and explore. Allow yourself to feel the energy and embody it as fully as you can in the moment.

You are inviting yourself to use the escalation energy to drop you down below the level of power struggle, and into the deepest level of our experience.

Turn up the heat with your imagination until the energy intensifies and compresses and transforms as if it were burning down to its most pure form.

Burn the energy down to its pure essence, like you are extracting the essential oil from a precious herb. Or like you are making a diamond out of coal.

Allow yourself to take the time it takes.

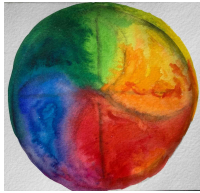
It is a practice.

You will know you are there because you will feel a sense of relief, expansion, and a release from the power struggle.

If you get stuck, remember to relax and breathe and appreciate yourself. Encourage an attitude of curiosity, playfulness and exploration.

Once you feel finished, or the time that you have is completed, give yourself three breaths of appreciation.

Then turn to the following page for Integration and Next Steps.



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Integration and Next Steps

Wherever you get to, as our last practice, invite yourself to make a hand gesture that in some way expresses the essence of the energy that you found. Go back on your notes from the beginning of the exercise and explore the following questions to find your next steps.

1. **Clarify your message.** Can you clarify or refine the content of your message, or the way you express it, or both. Can you bring out more of the deeper *why* of your perspective?
2. **Use your imagination to listen and relate to your conflict partner.** Can you hear anything new from their role experience or perspective? Can you understand anything more about why they are struggling with you/your role?
3. **Brainstorm some possible next steps in your climate hero journey.** With a clarified message and any new insights into your conflict partner, what might you do next? It might be a subtle change of tone, attitude or atmosphere in what you are doing, or it might be a whole new creative direction. Give yourself permission to dream a new way forward beyond the power struggle.

*Remember your actions do not need to be big to be effective and powerful.
They need to be connected to the whole.*

Climate Hero YOUR WAY is the way of deep connection.

Each time we practice, we clear a little more of the power struggle.

*We offer respect to the deep democracy of all beings.
We feel our part in the whole.*

About Hellene

Hellene is an experienced leader, educator, coach and facilitator with 20 years management, consulting and training experience in academic and nonprofit sectors, and a strong record of business development and complex project delivery. She has held executive leadership roles in the US and Australia and currently leads and teaches at an independent graduate school in Portland, Oregon, Executive Director since 2017. Hellene has a life-long interest in personal and social change, based in a commitment to awareness, authenticity and contributing to a world in which we all belong. Her passion is sustainable social change, using process oriented strategy toward a liveable future for all beings on earth.

Services Offered

Training, coaching, facilitation and strategy consulting.

- Techniques for personal and professional effectiveness, productivity and impact.
- Marketing literacy (strategy and tactics), business development, leadership support, communication, relationship facilitation and conflict techniques.