

Developing a Sustainable State of Mind



By: Mark Daugherty
Collaborative Energy Ventures

Outline



- Sustainability
- View, Practice and Action*
- Conflict, Taking Whole, Forming
- Social Drama**

*James Gimian and Barry Boyce, *The Rules of Victory*, 2008

** Victor Turner

Sustainability is a fundamental transformation of society.

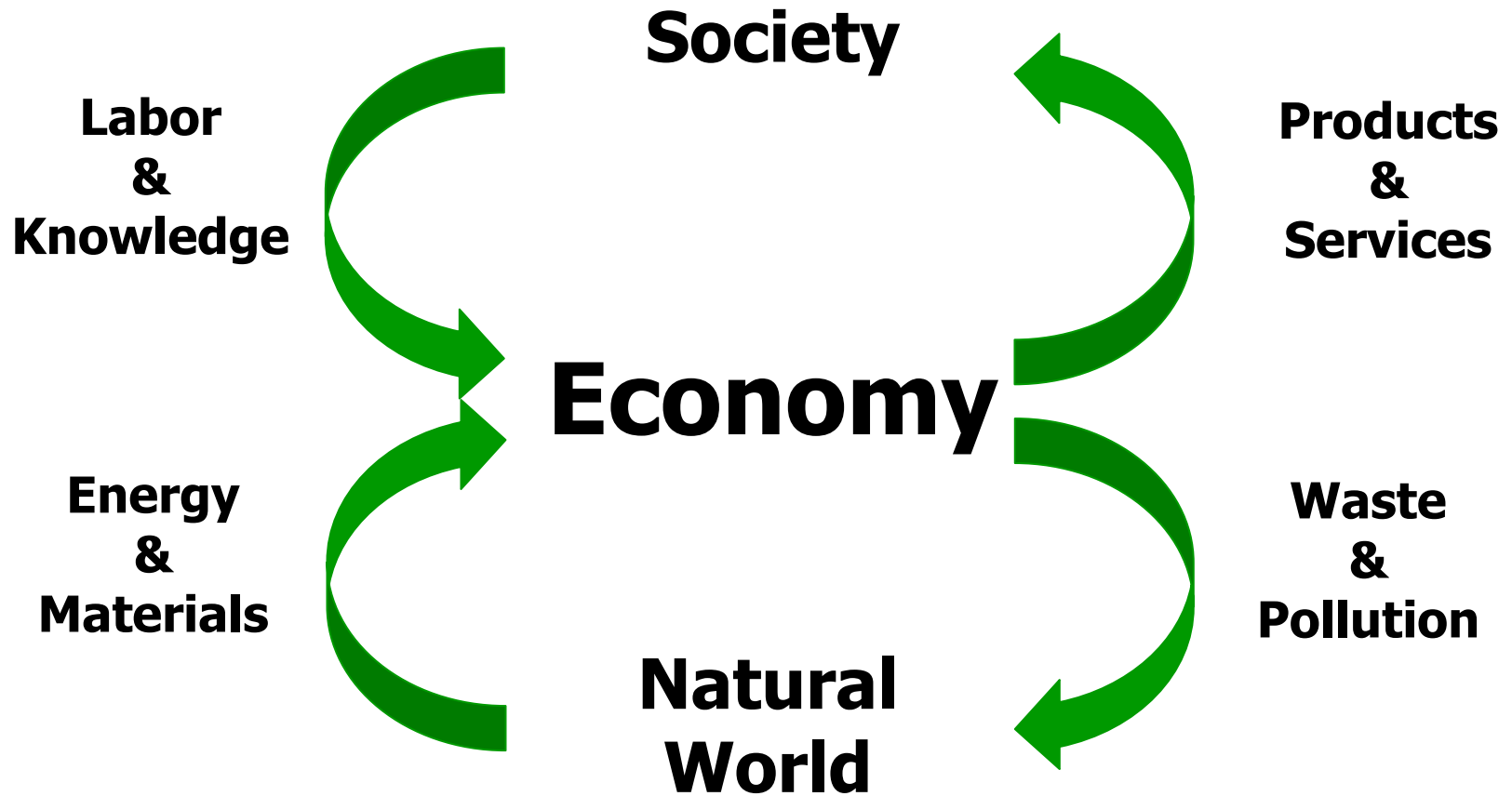
Similar in scope to earlier fundamental transitions.

- Agriculture
 - Industry
 - Sustainability
- 



See: John Ikerd, University of Missouri

The Industrial economy assumed the natural world had infinite capacity.



We are beginning to transition from an industrial to a sustainable worldview.

- **Industrial worldview**

- World as factory: extract, exploit, specialize, standardize and control.
- Increase entropy - do not waste time and energy on restoring or renewing.

- **Sustainable worldview**

- World as living system: interact, invest, diversify, communicate and relate.
- Decrease entropy locally – put energy into restoring and renewing.



Sustainable systems are more complex

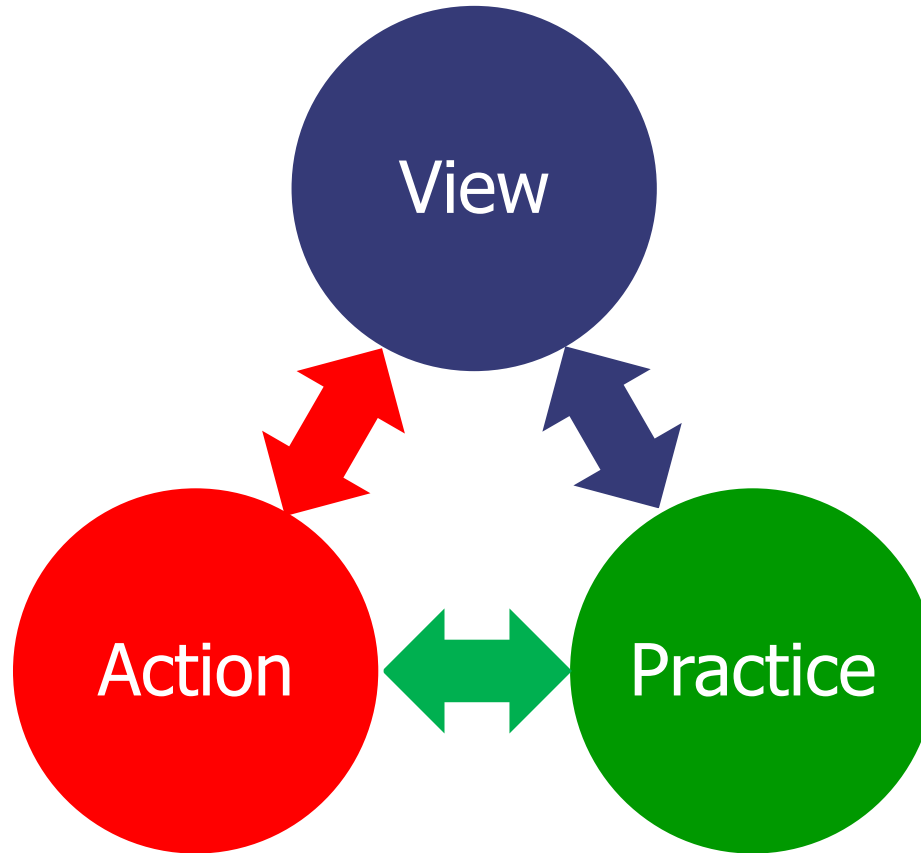
Must meet both present and future needs.



Sustainability will require changes.

- Greater complexity will require more local responsibility.
- Meeting both present and future needs will require more foresight.
- Depleted resource bases and saturated waste sinks will require more efficient and coordinated economic activity.

We need a more effective mental technology.



See: James Gimian and Barry Boyce, *The Rules of Victory*, 2008

View

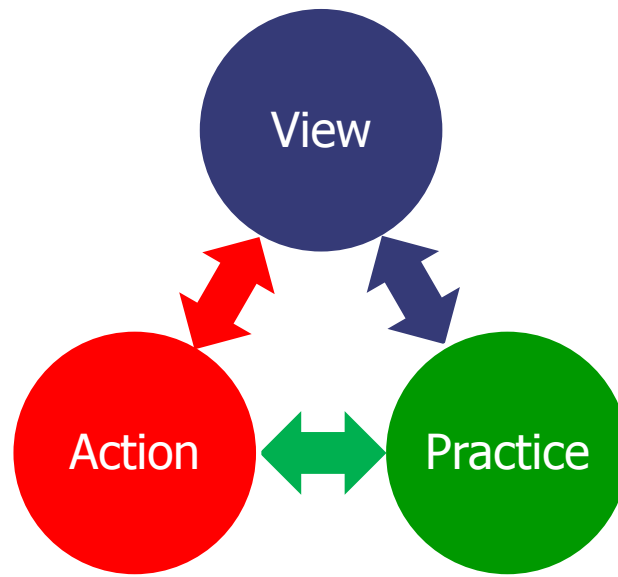
- View is how we see ourselves and the world,
- What we believe about how it works,
- What we take for granted.
- View is how we create order out of chaos.

Practice

- Practice is the methods we employ and the act of repetition until we master.
- A good system of habitual practices keeps us fresh and engaged.
- A bad system keeps us locked in internal conflict.

Action

- Action is the way we engage the world
- View, practice and action form an interconnected whole and an upward spiral



Internal View

- We all construct internal belief systems that define our world.
 - Our view of “truth” and “reality”
- We collect beliefs from our parents, teachers, society, friends, media ...
- We are not consciously aware of many of them, yet we believe them completely.

Typical Industrial Era Beliefs

I will be happy if I can have:

- Wealth
- Independence
- More Cheap Stuff
- Control

I will be successful if I can:

- Get Rich

Sustainable Era Beliefs

I will be happy if I can have:

- Permanence
- Interdependence
- Better Relationships
- More Connections

I will be successful if I can:

- Get a Life

Can we change our belief systems? Can we change the belief system of others?

Industrial Era

- Wealth
- Independence
- More Cheap Stuff
- Control
- Get Rich



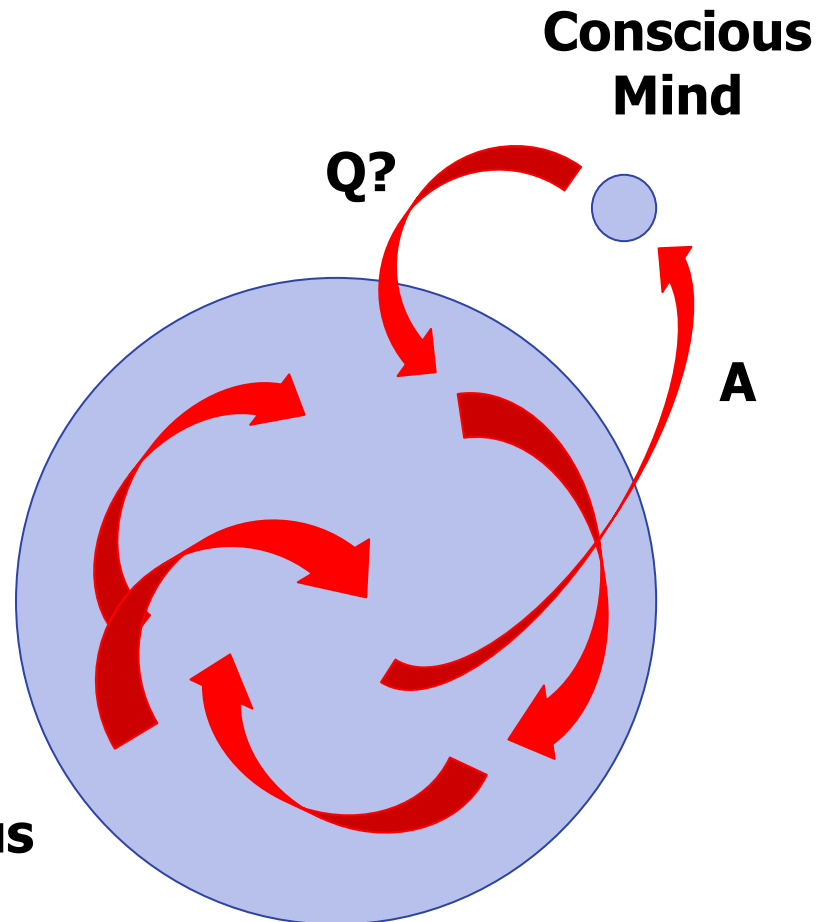
Sustainable Era

- Permanence
- Interdependence
- Better Relationships
- Connection
- Get a Life

Where are our beliefs located?

- Stored data and patterns in our unconscious mind.
- Quick exercise on belief storage

**Unconscious
Mind**



Conscious and Unconscious Mind

Conscious

- Sets goals and judges
- Thinks more abstractly
- Short-term memory: ~20 seconds.
- ~ 2000 bits of information per second, a few tasks at a time.

Unconscious

- More habitual
- Thinks more literally
- Long-term memory: decades, lifetime
- ~ 4 billion bits of information per second, thousands of tasks simultaneously.

External View

- In the visual cortex nine times as many synapses carry background information as handle signals arriving from the eyes.
- This unconscious activity is constantly creating mental images to help us interpret the world.

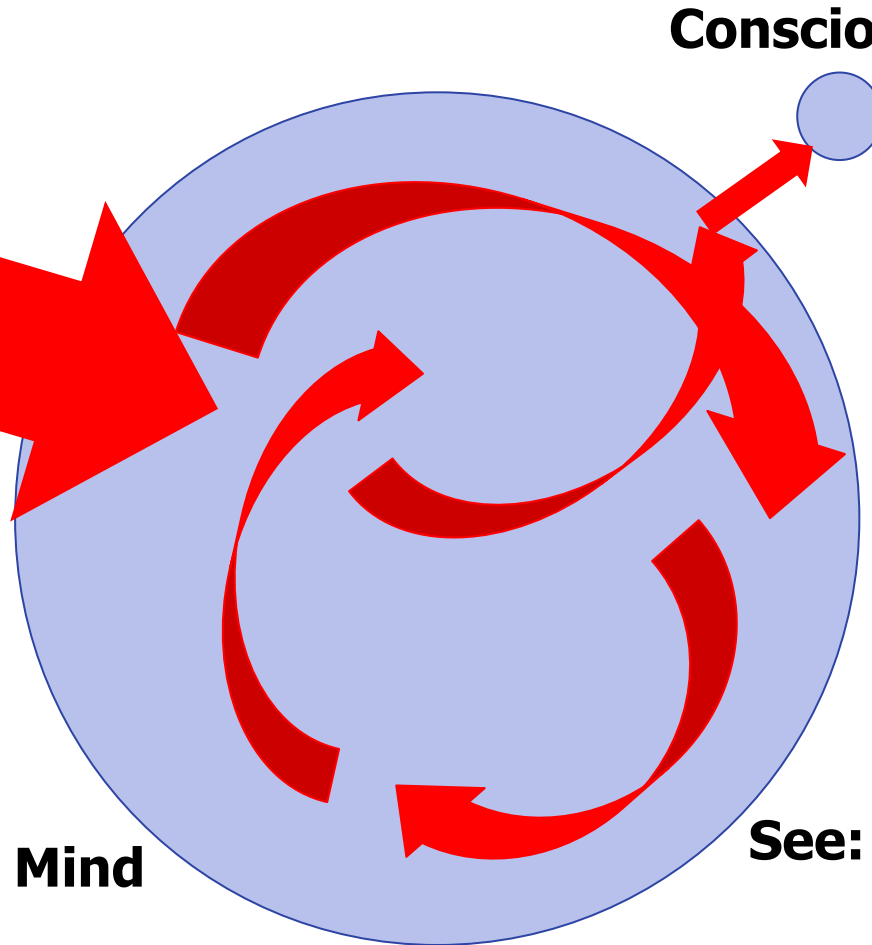
See: A. Pascual-Leone, Harvard, Newsweek, June, 2010

External view



World (Not to Scale)

Unconscious Mind



Conscious Mind

**See: Srikumar
Rao**

View: Review

- What we believe and perceive is largely a product of data and patterns in our unconscious mind.
- If we consciously decide we want to modify our beliefs (our views) we need to work with our unconscious mind.

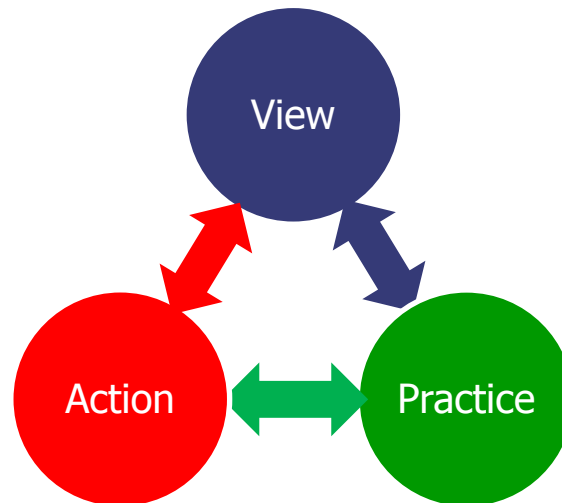
How do we modify our beliefs? Practice.

- Repetition: Affirmations, Meditation, Song, Prayer
- Intensity: Strong emotions can quickly establish beliefs.
- Awareness: Observation of our thoughts, witness mode.



Practice

- Our Practice is the Methods we employ
 - Most often habitual
 - But also chosen



Repetitive practice is necessary to break free of repetitive action.

- Having a solid method at your disposal frees you to respond to the immediate situation.



What are good patterns of beliefs?

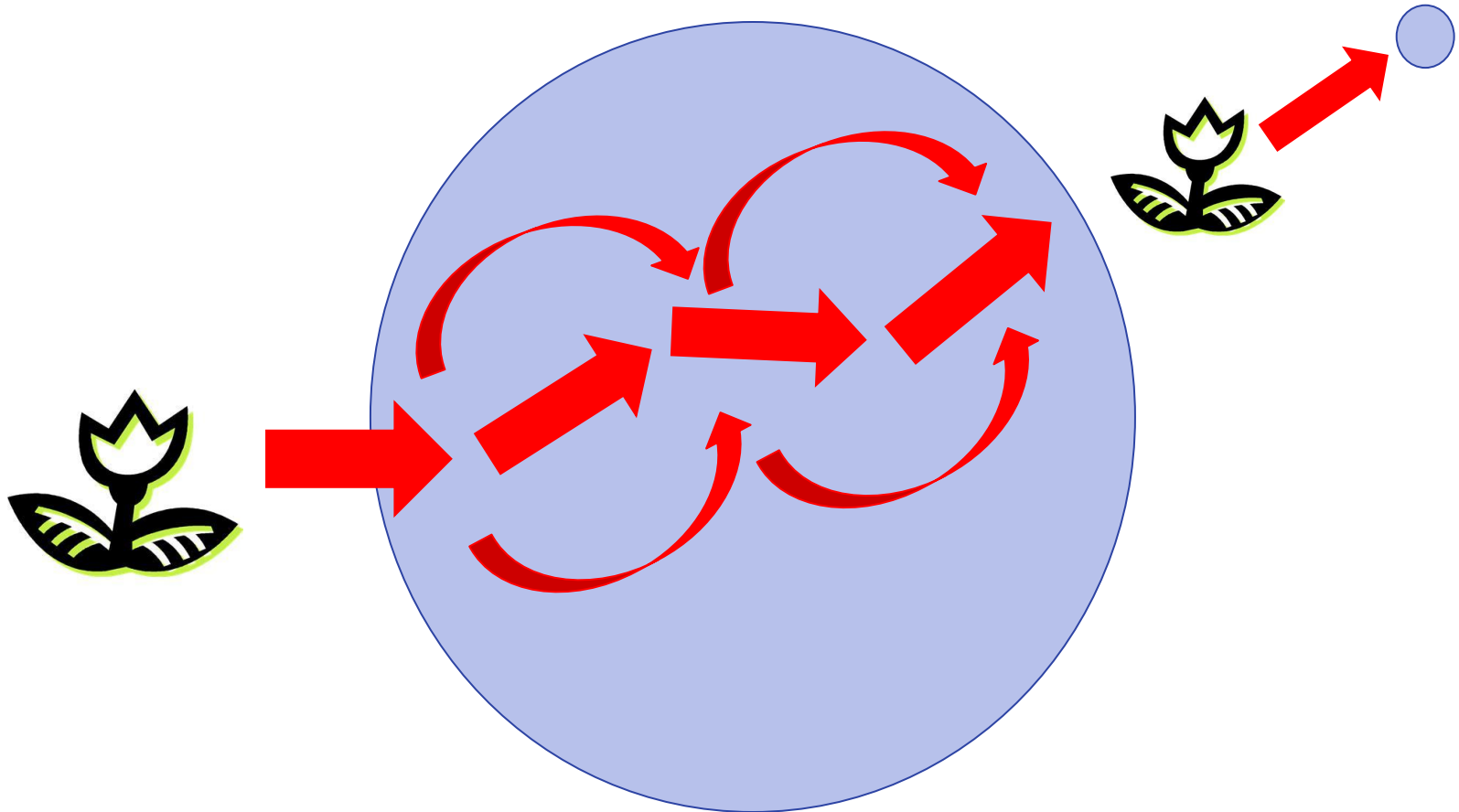
- We each live largely using a small number of patterns which we repeat.
- Dead patterns keep us locked in internal conflict.
- Patterns that are alive support each other and resolve inner conflict.

See: Christopher Alexander

Good belief system

Unconscious Mind

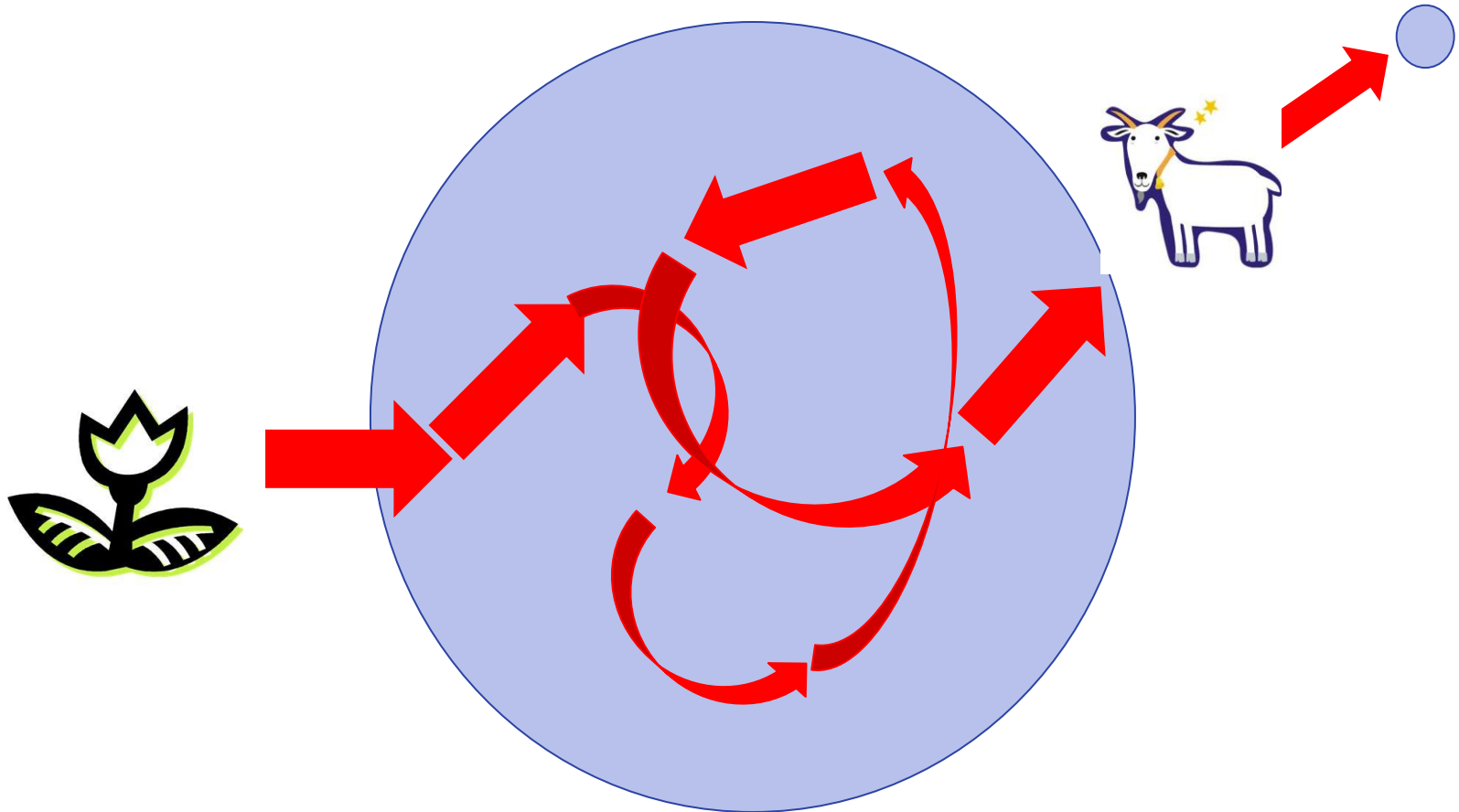
Conscious Mind



Not So Good belief system

Unconscious Mind

Conscious Mind



Action:

Determine your primary mindset.

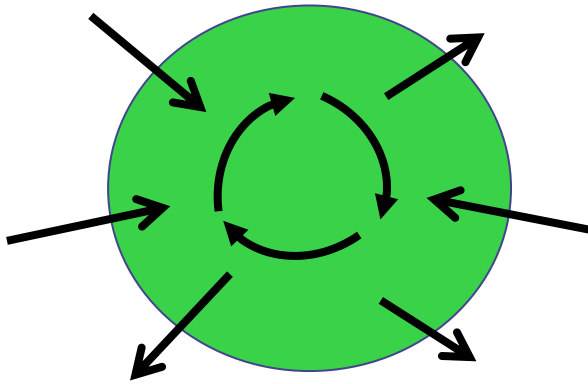
- For 4-8 hours Set a timer for every half hour.
- Quickly write down your immediate thoughts (group them).
- These groups represent your primary attitude and approach to the world.

Changing Beliefs

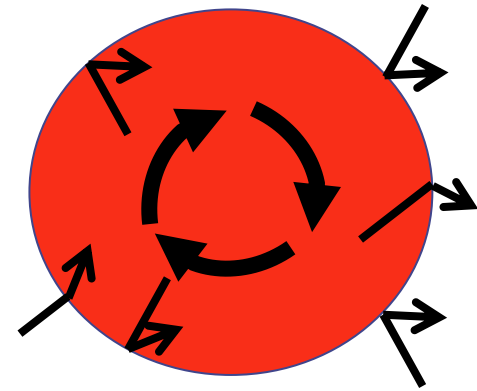
- Beliefs have a life of their own.
- They will not go away unless we redirect them or starve them with lack of attention.
- Meditation or affirmations redirect (reprogram) belief patterns.

Practice:

Develop a Positive Mindset



Positive Mindset
Growth & Interaction
Free flow of
information



Negative Mindset
Protection
Restricted flow of
information

Single most important view.

Action: Positive Mindset

- Developing the habit of gratefulness
- Several times a day pause and think of 2-3 things you're grateful for.
- Most traditional cultures do this:
 - Before each meal
 - On awakening and going to sleep.
- Effect can be profound.

Practice: Witness mode

- Impossible to consciously understand all beliefs.
- Witnessing your stream of thought indicates your beliefs.
- Usually simply observing negative beliefs is enough to cause them to begin to dissipate.

Action: Awareness and Witness

- Meditation and Self Reflection are powerful tools.
- Goal is to become aware of your stream of thought, to “Witness” it.
- Over time this will cause negative patterns to dissipate.

Practice:

Non attachment to outcomes

- You can control your actions.
- You can't control outcomes, so don't attach to them.
- Attach to the process, do your best and continuously work with whatever outcomes the world gives you.

Action: Do your best

- Under all circumstances do your best.
- It will vary.
- Don't try to do more than your best.
 - It will drain energy
 - It is not good enough.
- Accept responsibility, but don't attach to outcomes.

See: Miguel Ruiz

Review: Practice

- A practice is the habit of repeating something until you master it.
- Good patterns reinforce each other.
- Components are:
 - Firm intention
 - Will
 - Action

Action

- Skilled action is not working hard by yourself to make things happen.
- Skilled action is working with the forces and momentum in the world.

Action: Conflict As A Guide

- Appreciate the inevitability of conflict.
- Conflict is simply an opportunity to engage and take leadership.
- It is the messenger showing us where we should focus our efforts.

Action: Taking Whole

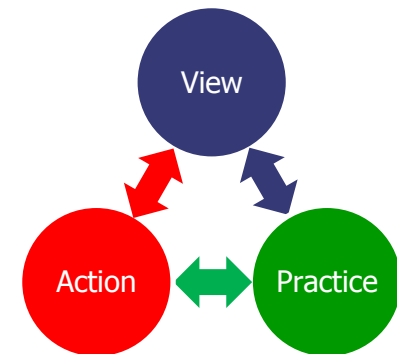
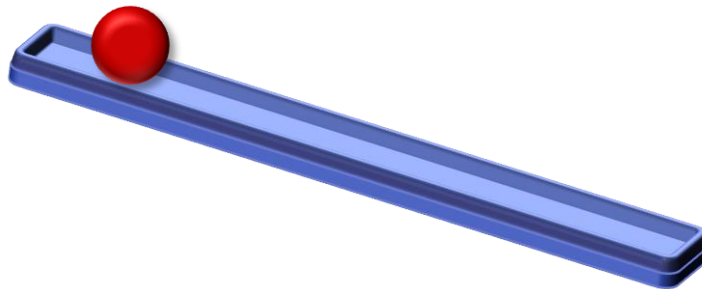
- It's not about I win, you lose.
- Create something larger than either side, that neither side envisioned at the outset.
- Then there's no residue from the conflict and you can build a lasting solution.

Taking Whole

- Problems are difficult to solve at the level on which they arose.
- Need to step back from fixed ideas and view the problem from a higher perspective.
- A higher perspective is obtained by learning and knowledge.

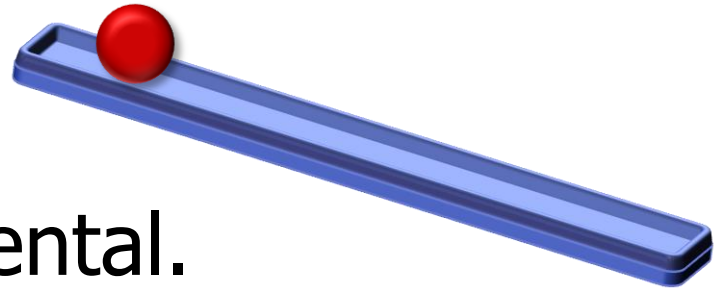
Action: Forming

- Forming is any gesture shaping the environment.
- It can start with a simple arrangement of things.
- Mousetrap Game – an excellent example of forming.



Action: Benefits of Forming

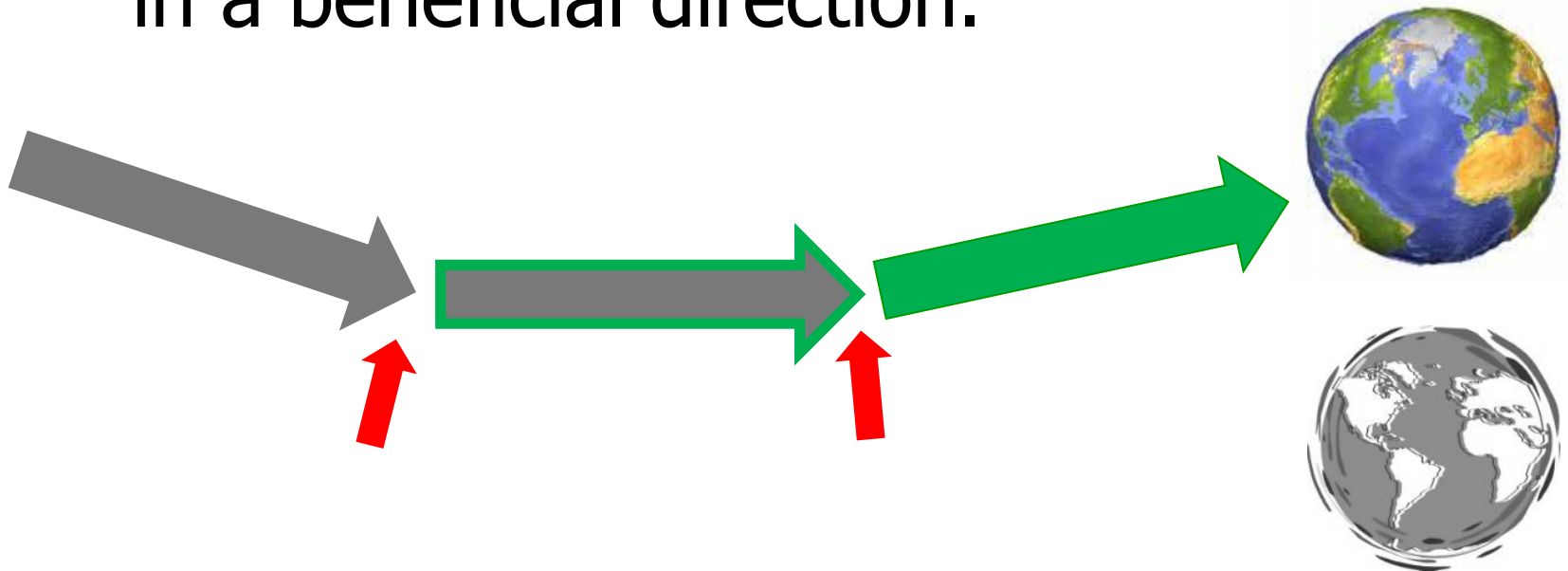
- Forming can be indirect and environmental.
 - Not direct and confrontational.
- Invites others to read and understand the ground of the situation for themselves.
- Gets beyond the battleground of my truth versus your truth.



Action:

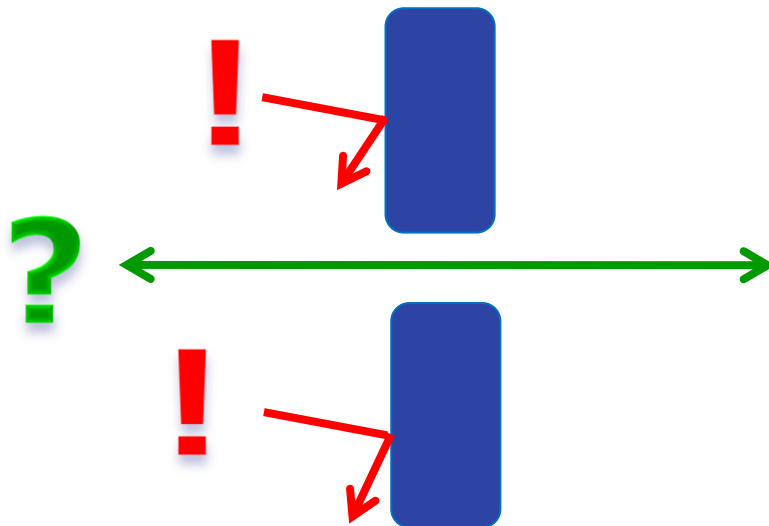
Leave intact as much as possible.

- Don't demand people alter their basic nature.
- Skill relies on working with things the way they are and adjusting their course in a beneficial direction.



Action: Container Principle

- Concepts have walls and gates.
- Flow through the gates.
- Asking a gently probing question can slip past fortified defenses.



Action: Buildup & Timing

- Buildup: Work with it and influence it
- The fulcrum is always shifting – nudge it.
- Act just at the tipping point.
 - Move quickly when required.



Repeat Patterns, Not Actions

- Patterns that are alive have the quality of nature.
- The repetition of patterns is different from the repetition of actions.
 - The environment is constantly changing
 - The same action that successfully resolved forces earlier may not do so now.

See: Christopher Alexander

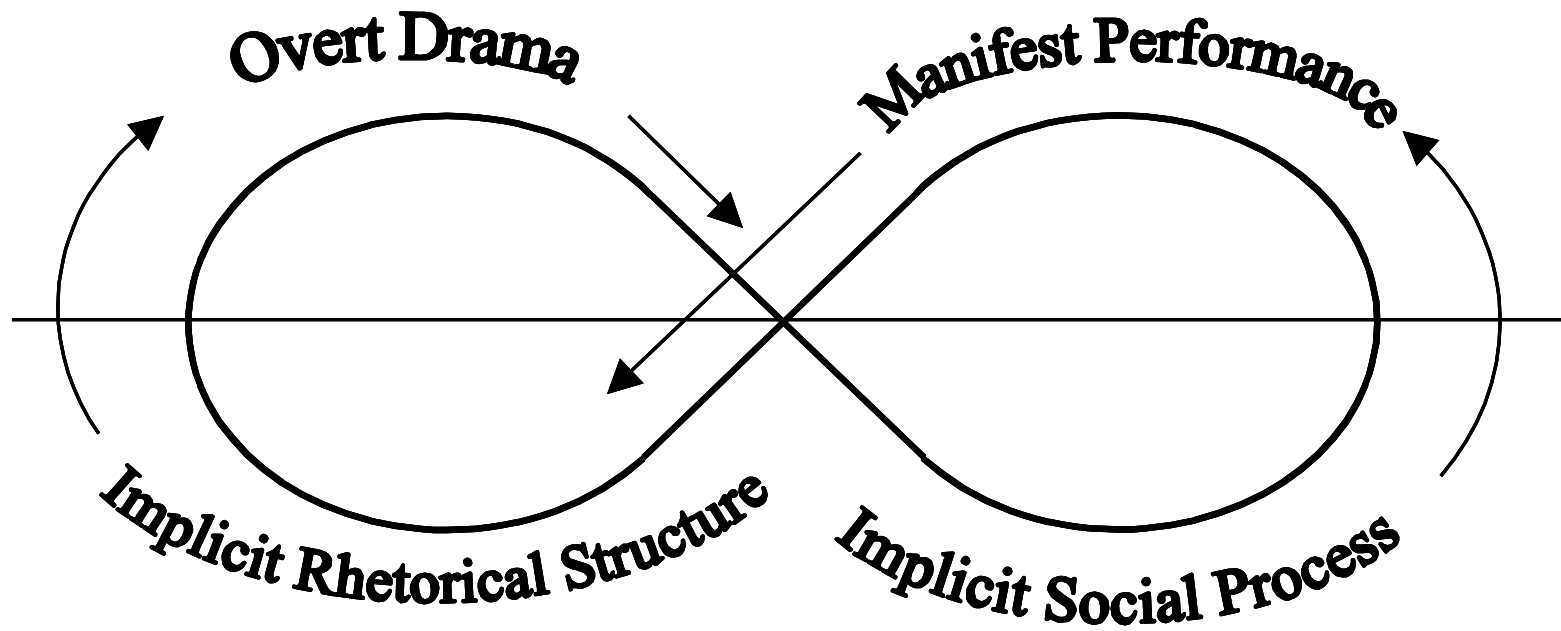
Review: Action

- Conflict as a guide
- Taking whole
- Forming/environment
- Leaving intact
- Container principal

Working with a community

Social Drama

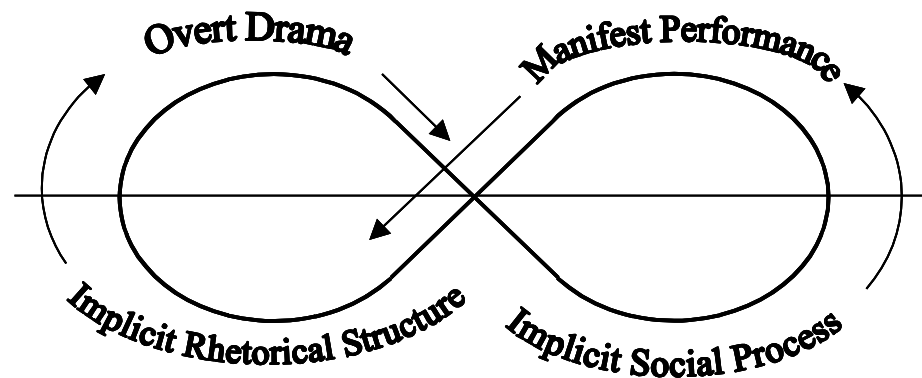
Stage Drama



See: Victor Turner - Social Drama As a Theory of Change

Social Drama as Transformative Process

- Social drama is an inherent response of human social systems to crisis.
- Performance has the ability to modify the script, and in this way can serve to guide social transformation.



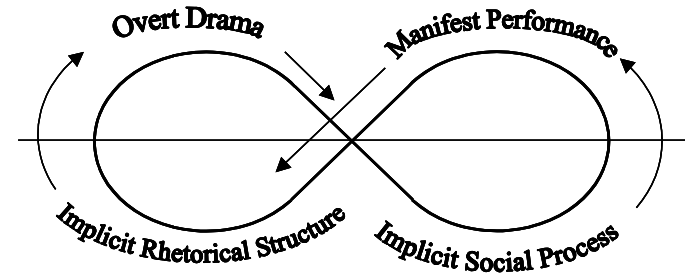
Victor Turner divides Social Drama into four phases

- Public **breach** of a norm, law or custom
 - Result of heated emotions or cool calculation
- Escalates into a **crisis** or tipping point
- Group brings **redressive mechanisms** into play.
 - This is where transformation largely occurs.
- **Reintegration or Creation of Factions**

A well know example

Overt Drama:

- Breech (Boston Tea Party)
- Crisis (Disobeying the King)
- Redress (Revolution)
- Reintegration or Creation of Factions (Creation of United States)

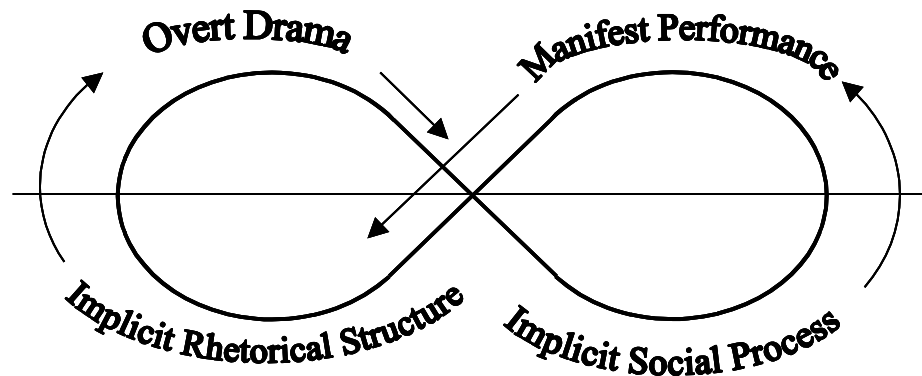


Performance: Common Sense, Thomas Paine

- Written like a sermon, largest relative circulation of any book in American History.

Action: Implement a new belief

- Pick an issue that is important (conflict).
- Build a positive belief based on this.
- Act "as if" this belief were true
 - "Stage" an event, "Perform" a song
 - Repetition, repetition, repetition



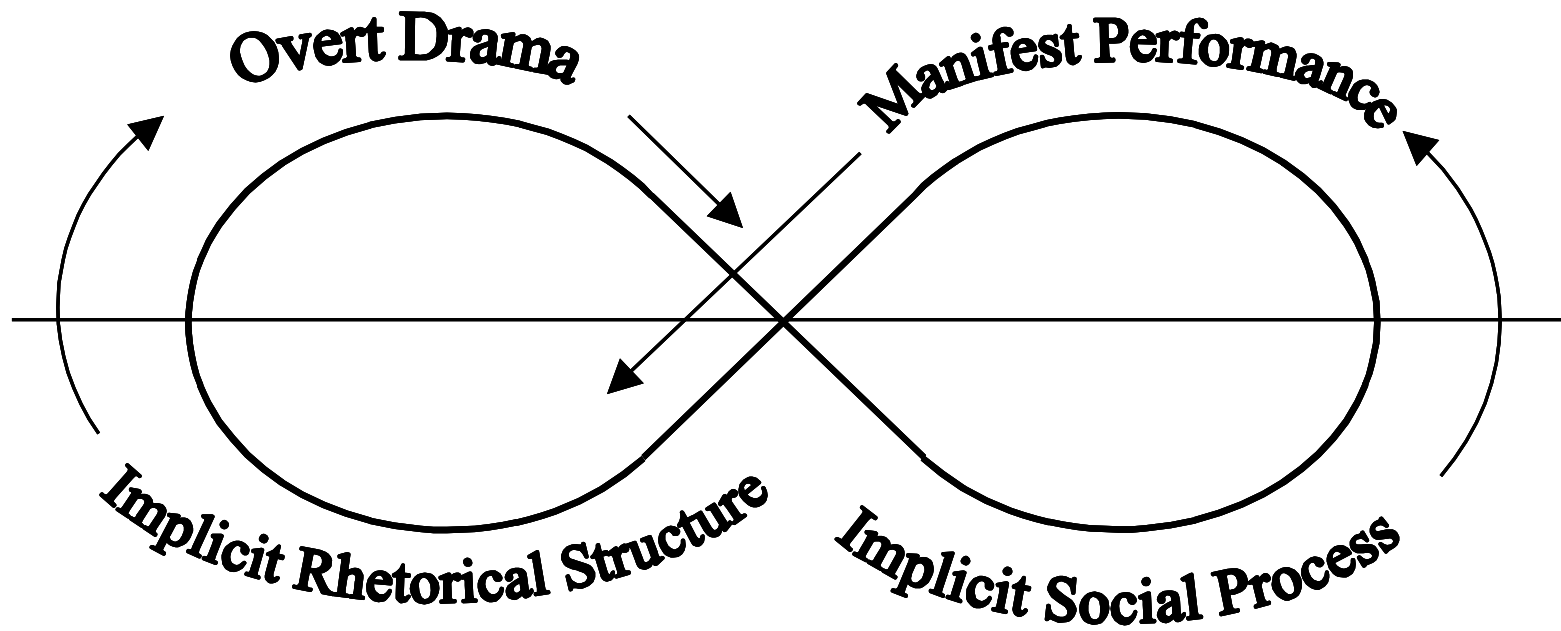
Practice: Acting effectively

- Have a clear understanding of what you would like to happen.
- Attempt to benefit all parties.
- Act, do your best.
- Remember your view is not perfect, you do not know all of the forces at play.
- Accept the outcome, so you can work with it instead of being trapped by it.

A continuous cycle

Social Drama

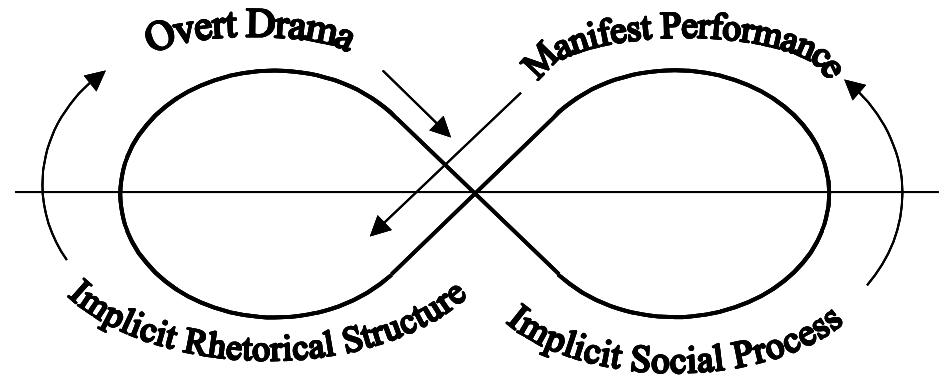
Stage Drama



See: Victor Turner - Social Drama As a Theory of Change

View: Feeling Alive

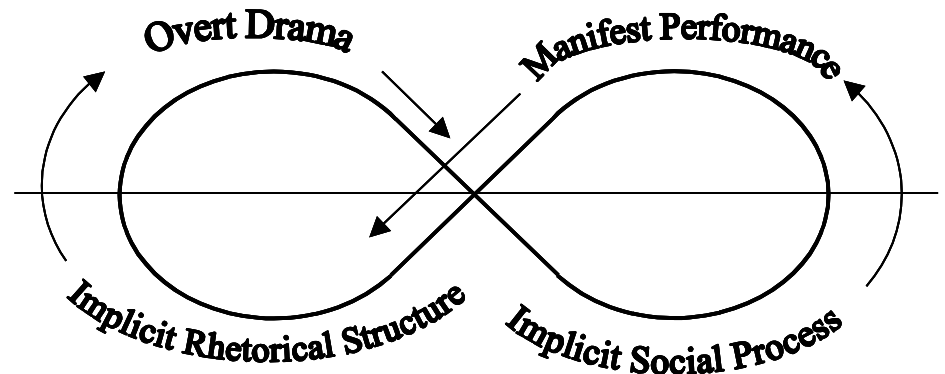
- The central search in our lives is to find those moments when we feel the most alive.
- We all have the power to create these moments by setting up productive patterns.



See: Christopher Alexander

Practice: Feeling Alive

- Patterns and belief systems that are healthy and productive free us from internal contradictions.
- We need to develop healthy, whole, and self-maintaining patterns before we can feel alive.



See: Christopher Alexander

Action: Feeling Alive

- We are most fully alive when we are on the edge.
- When you engage conflict with productive patterns you can let go and feel alive.

