

Insights about our chosen “Integral approaches to facilitation or facilitative leadership” topic

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...The meeting where the boss is asking for everyone's opinion, but it is unclear if there will be consequences for disagreeing...The team situation where men are taking charge, women are tasked with note-taking, and no one is talking about it...The organization that claims to be inclusive but there are no people of color or women in roles of leadership...The challenging conversation where people are too afraid of not being “politically correct” that nobody says what they are actually thinking...The project where a few people hijack the group process and the only way people stand up to it is by insisting on “getting back to the agenda and the project”...The boss who insists she is a great partner and doesn't see her own power plays... What do you do when the power dynamics and levels of development present in a group are obstructing the goals and values of the group?

Our pod decided to take on this question and ask, “What Integral perspectives, lenses, and tools can support holding space for vulnerability and trust (create psychological safety) and support people to show up fully when there are different levels of development and power dynamics present?”

When we look at this question through different Integral lenses, important aspects are brought into focus. In this paper, we will walk through a few of the key Integral lenses and show how they can be used to support a deeper understanding of the questions and illuminate some clear paths forward.

SHADOW & LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

We will start by showing the importance of bringing what is in the shadow into the light. When we are in a meeting or group discussion, we are often in cultural spaces that have assumed or expressed values, intentions, and commitments...Whether spoken or not, there is often an assumed set of cultural values and commitments coming from different levels of development (Integral Levels/Spiral Dynamics).

A few examples of cultural values are:

- We value the simplicity and certainty of everyone deferring to and honoring the power of the Alpha, the boss, the unquestionable leader. We are committed to maintaining this clear power dynamic, and that certainty is what will make us safe and successful.
- We value hierarchy, order, traditional power structures. We are committed to operating in a way that supports the social order.
- We value productivity, innovation, facts and initiative. We are committed to goals and processes that move us toward our stated goals and outcomes. We are committed to being flexible in the face of new facts and changing course for the sake of productivity and efficiency.
- We value equality. We believe all groups should operate in a way where everyone feels safe and heard, and all opinions are valued equally. We value inclusivity and pay special attention to the voices that are not normally heard. How we treat each other is more important than how productive we are. We are committed to equality and inclusivity and honoring the validity of all perspectives and voices (unless they are voices that question our values).
- We value wholeness and an unfolding of evolution. We value the importance of all the other impulses, values, and commitments and we contextualize them in a natural hierarchy of wholeness. We are committed to self management in service to a shared evolutionary purpose that expresses an integral wholeness.

When these values and commitments are conscious and clearly stated, people have more room to make choices like: “Do I want to work for this person? Do I want to be a part of this team? Do I want my