

WHY ARE WE EMPOWERING THE STATUS QUO?

Facilitator:

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Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio

*I do not resist change for I know
only God the good governs me.*

I do not resist change, however challenging it may be. When I am called on to meet it, I know this truth: As the door to a former way of life closes, another door opens. I know that only good governs me, my circumstances, and my environment, for God governs me.

I do not resist change. I maintain my poise. I do not give way to fearful thoughts. I do not persist in the feeling that I cannot be happy in other circumstances or other places.

I find that change is easy to make when I remember that God has not given me a spirit of fear but a spirit that is wonderfully flexible and adaptable. God has given me a spirit that welcomes new ideas, new ways of living, new places, new friends. God has given me a spirit that is willing to grow, a spirit that is willing to unfold and to change.

Grow in the grace of our Lord.—2 Peter 3:18

VOICES IN THE ROOM

- Parish Ministers–Pastors**
- Deacons—Parish Staffs—Liturgical Ministers**
- Evangelization Teams—Catechists**
- Youth Ministers—Teen Leaders**
- Mission Teams—Young Adults**
- Parish Councils—Finance Councils**
- Catholic Organization Officers**
- Others Interested in Enlivening the Parish**

TEAMWORK

- **My role today is to provide a lens to explore why/how we are empowering the status quo.**
- **Your role is to look through this lens and explore how you can challenge the status quo and be a good change agent.**

YOUNGSTOWN DIOCESE IN TRANSITION

*“I WILL LEAD YOU INTO THE WILDERNESS AND THERE I WILL
SPEAK TO YOUR HEART.”*

- Hosea, 2:14

FROM

INTO

TOWARD

**THE
YOUNGSTOWN
DIOCESE
IN PAST YEARS—
WHO WE WERE**

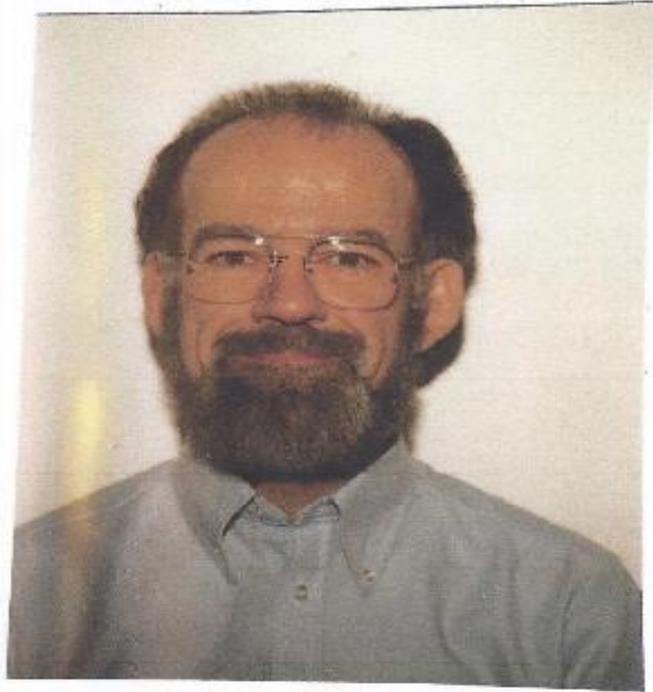
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**THE
YOUNGSTOWN
DIOCESE
IN THE FUTURE--
WHO WE ARE
BECOMING**



A Good Example of a Transition???

THE CHALLENGE OF THE YOUNGSTOWN DIOCESE TODAY

“To leave the world of certainty and courageously journey to a strange place where there are a lot of risks and much is at stake, a place where there are new problems that require us to think in new ways.”

(Robert Quinn, *DEEP CHANGE*)

LOST

STAND STILL.

The trees ahead and the bushes beside you are not lost.

Wherever you are is called here.

And you must treat it as a powerful stranger.

You must ask permission to know it and be known.

Listen, the forest breathes, it whispers

I have made this place around you.

If you leave it, you may come back again saying HERE.

No two trees are the same to Raven.

No two branches are the same to Wren.

If what a tree or a branch does is lost on you,

Then you are truly lost.

STAND STILL. The forest knows where you are.

You must let it find you.

--From: WHO SHALL BE THE SUN by David Wagner

TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

- **Transformative change differs from incremental change in that it requires a break with our inherited ways of perceiving, thinking and behaving.**
- **Incremental change and patchwork efforts are no longer sufficient to meet the awesome destabilizing forces confronting church bodies today.**

--Paul M Dietterich, "Why incremental changes won't work."

(in *Transformation*, Vol. II, No. 2)

TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE: WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

“Transformative change is not about the preservation of an institution but about participating in God’s transformative purpose: bringing about the new creation of justice, peace and hope in the midst of the old creation of alienation, hostility and despair.”

**--Paul M Dietterich, “Why incremental changes won’t work.”
(in *Transformation*, Vol. II, No. 2)**

WHAT DOES TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE DO?

“Transformative change raises fundamental issues of calling, identity, basic vision, commitments and mission.”

--Paul M Dietterich, “Why incremental changes won’t work.”
(in *Transformation*, Vol. II, No. 2)

YOUNGSTOWN TODAY—THE CHOICE:

WILL WE EMPOWER THE

STATUS QUO LEADING TO **BURNOUT OR
SLOW DEATH?**

AND/OR

**WILL WE EMPOWER THOSE LEARNING
SKILLS** THAT WILL LEAD TO

**LIFE-GIVING, TRANSFORMATIVE
CHANGE?**

**WILL WE HOLD ON TO THE
STATUS QUO LEADING TO
BURNOUT OR SLOW DEATH?**

- Settling for a “don’t rock the boat”, “business as usual” mentality.
- “Why can’t we just keep things the way they are?”
- “Putting new wine in old wineskins
- It will diminish morale in the Diocese and will impact commitment, presence and generosity.

**AND/OR ARE WE WILLING TO CHALLENGE THE STATUS
QUO AND CREATE A DIOCESE/PARISH THAT WILL LEAD TO
LIFE-GIVING AND TRANSFORMATIVE
CHANGE?**

- Are we willing to journey into unknown territory? Into the land of uncertainty?
- Can we leave our comfort zones and step outside our normal roles, our training, our experience?
- Can we forget what we know and discover what we need at this time in our diocese?
- Can we reinvent ourselves at this time in our diocese?

Competencies Needed in a Learning Community

- **1. A Culture of vigilance**
- **2. Learning to learn**
- **3. Learning through debate and conflict**
- **4. Learning through risk-taking**
- **5. Learning from the barriers**
- **6. Learning from mistakes**

--From: Gerard Egan's ADDED VALUE

TABLE DISCUSSION

In your involvement in parish life

- **Where do you see signs of life-giving and transformative change challenging the status quo?**
- **Where do you see signs of burnout or slow death due to maintaining the status quo?**

HOW THE STATUS QUO FORMS

- **The status quo forms when people get comfortable—with their jobs, their role, being on “auto pilot.”**
- **The status quo enables people to play it safe. They won't stick their necks out or try anything too drastic or risky.**
- **The status quo often upholds mediocrity and supports lack consciousness.**

HOW TO BREAK THE STATUS QUO

- **1) Recognize that almost no issue is black-and-white. As a parish community, can we come to a consensus, or agree to disagree?**
- **2) Embrace diversity--can we learn to celebrate the differences in people and their views? How well do we relate with the different ethnic/cultural, theological and gender differences in the parish? How can we stop the alienating and intolerant behaviors we find in our parishes?**
- **3) As one author says, "The best thing we can do to oppose the status quo is this: Learn to recognize it as often as possible and actively resist the urge to mindlessly support it."**

Questions To Ponder

- **As you see it, what are some of the root causes of maintaining the status quo?**
- **How can you be a good change agent?**

CHANGE AGENT ROLES

Domain: Parishioners Demand: People Role: Motivator	Domain: Future of Parish Demand: Innovation Role: Vision Setter
Domain: Parish Operations Demand: Efficiency Role: Analyzer	Domain: Parish Life Demand: Performance Role: Taskmaster

YOUR ROLE AS A CHANGE AGENT

In the following four roles, divide 100 percentage points across the roles, indicating the percentage of time you spend in each role. Share with one person at your table.

_____ **Vision Setter:** I attend to the future, remain up-to-date with emerging trends, focus on purpose and direction, and communicate a sense of where the parish will be over the long term.

_____ **Motivator:** I attend to commitment, emphasize Gospel values, challenge people with new goals and aspirations, and create a sense of excitement.

_____ **Analyzer:** I attend to the efficiency of operations, evaluate proposed projects, and integrate conflicting perspectives and needs.

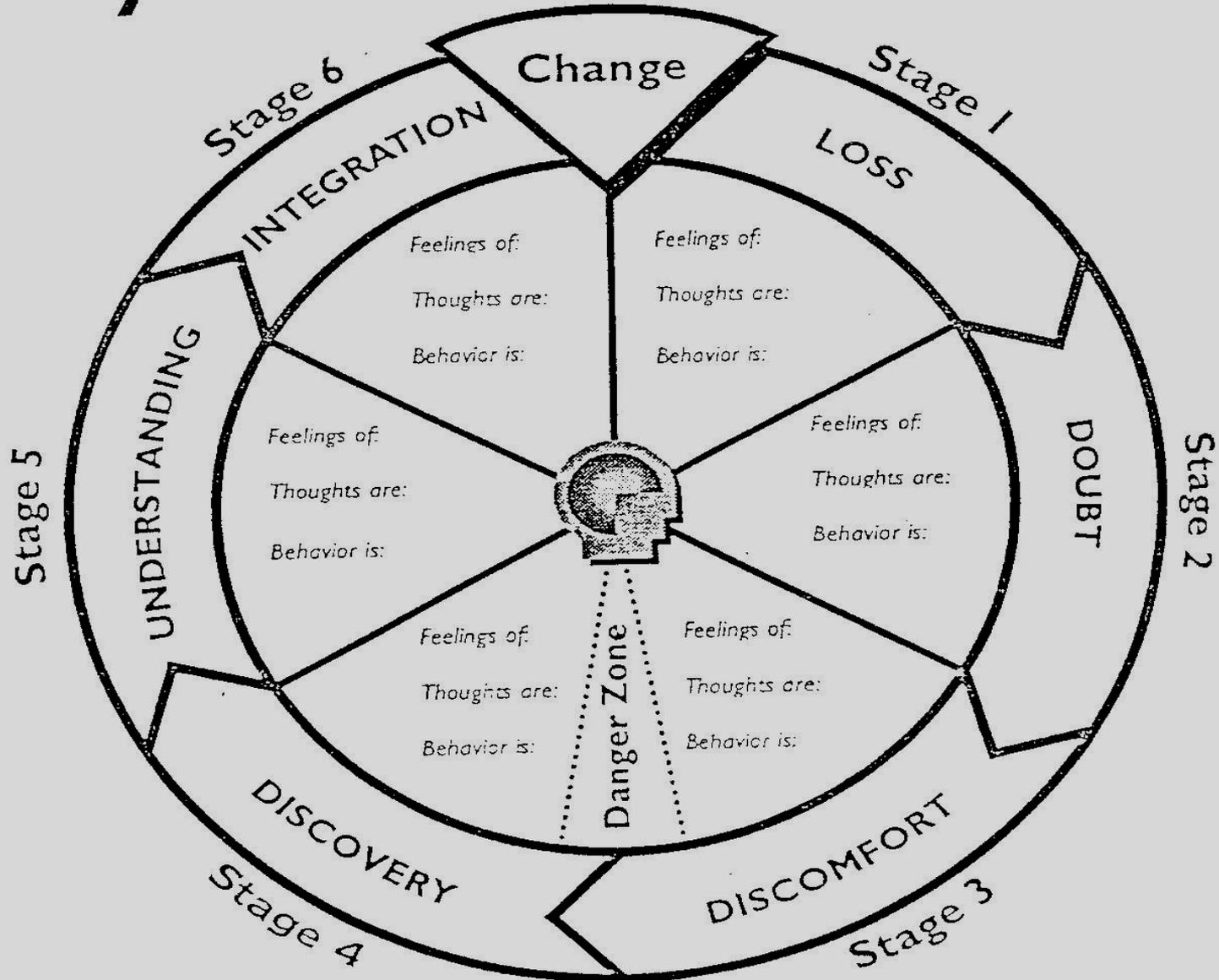
_____ **Taskmaster:** I attend to performance, focus on results, solve problems, and enable decision-making.

CHANGE CYCLE

*Created By Lillie Brock and Mary Ann Salerno, Consultants at
Interchange International*

- **A map through change.**
- **Helps to determine where you are and what direction you are moving in.**
- **Alerts you to anticipate possible problems or slow-downs**
- **Helps to measure the distance from where you are to where you want to be.**
- **Enables you to plot the quickest, easiest lowest-risk way to get where you want to go.**

The C H A N G E C y c l eTM



CHANGE CYCLE DISCUSSION

- Using the Change Cycle, chart where you feel **you are** in terms of your ministry/involvement in the Diocese.
- Using the Change Cycle, chart where you feel **your ministry/involvement in your parish** is at present.
- Do you notice congruence or dissonance?

WHAT I WILL BRING HOME FROM TODAY'S CONFERENCE

- How can I challenge the status quo in my parish?**
- Something I needed to hear today is.....**
- What is one thing I will do in my parish as a result of this conference?**

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.

We are quite naturally, impatient in everything

To reach the end without delay

We should like to skip the intermediate stages.

We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new, and yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability, and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you. Your ideas mature gradually. Let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste. Don't try to force them on as though you could be today what time will make you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be. Give our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.

--Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.