This session:
- Power and leadership
- The concept of the catalyst
- Adaptation, Accommodation
- The Catalyst Leader

Challenging ideas and assumptions about leadership

Leadership is not about power. It’s a common metaphor we use about leadership, but ultimately not very helpful. Authority only gets you so far: You can only lead the willing. Nice only gets you so far (pastoral transitions leave at least the perception of a leadership vacuum. At those times, the most willful come out of the woodworks).
Challenging ideas about Leadership

- Leadership is about influence
- There are inherent dynamics in a system that are an impediment to leadership
  - Emotional process and homeostasis
  - Chronically anxious systems
  - The burnout position

Leadership is about influence, and that's a product of relationship and emotional process---in this, the function of a catalytic leader is helpful.

There are inherent dynamics in a system that are an impediment to leadership: (1) the concept of emotional process hints that its purpose is to maintain homeostasis. (2) Chronically anxious systems are structured to inhibit the effectiveness of their leaders.

For example, one characteristic of chronically anxious systems is that they are structured to inhibit the effectiveness of their leaders. Ill. Government, Public schools.

The burnout position: trying to motivate the unmotivated

A family leader is beyond the popular notion of power. A responsible family leader automatically generates mature leadership qualities in other family members who are to follow. Michael Kerr and Murray Bowen, Family Evaluation, p. 343

The trap here is that "power" in these situations is used metaphorically. Systems theory can provide a more accurate understanding of the emotional process of "what is REALLY going on here." The former is used as a metaphor to come up with an EXPLANATION, the latter provides understanding as to CAUSE.

For example, I say that the only person I know who can authentically and accurately talk about "power" is my engineer son. He understands what power actually is, the principles that underlie how power functions (energy), and the effects of power on objects and materials, etc. (stress). At one presentation someone in the audience, who knew my son is a police officer, responded that in that case my son had the "power" to arrest someone. I responded that even in that case the issue was not about power. When my son when to court in the judication of the arrest case, the question would be did my son have the authority to make the arrest, not whether he had the power to do so.

A more accurate emotional process concept related to leadership is INFLUENCE, not power. Unless you're a toddler who can be physically picked up and moved around by a parent, no one has "power" over you. To believe so (and so many do) is to give up...
agency and self. A leader who functions out of the framework of "power" is on the short path to abuse (and will never be able to hold on to whatever she or he things "power" is). A leader who understands that leadership is about influence in an emotional systems understands that leadership is about relationship. That leader appreciates that people are influenced by things like integrity, feeling appreciated and valued, being in a meaningful and redemptive relationships, trusting the leader, etc.

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<th>Being is power</th>
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<td>&quot;...I hold that the definition of being is simple power.&quot; ---- Plato, Sophist, 247</td>
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"My notion would be, that anything which possesses any sort of power to affect another, or to be affected by another, if only for a single moment, however trifling the cause and however slight the effect, has real existence; and I hold that the definition of being is simple power." ---- Plato, Sophist, 247

In systems theory, we might say that the Self is influence that mediates change (self-differentiation, self-definition).

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<th>The Catalytic Leader</th>
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<td>&quot;...there must be a catalytic family member prepared to take advantage of catalytic family moments. Such a “family leader” must love his/her family, have a genuine desire to be with (at least some of) them and possess a sense of responsibility that enables him or her to resist resistance. Yet that sense of responsibility cannot be borne so seriously that it destroys his or her ability to introduce the playful and sometimes downright ludicrous initiatives that are necessary for maintaining a non-anxious presence. Ed Friedman, The Myth of the Shiksa, p.144</td>
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The liminal time of a pastoral transition is an example of what Friedman called a “catalytic moment.” This emphasizes that leadership is a product of the system in which it resides.
**Definition of a catalyst**

“A substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change. A person or thing that precipitates an event.”

Insight: An interim catalyst leader influences change in the system, without her or himself undergoing a permanent change as a product of that system.

**An automobile catalytic converter**

In the catalytic converter, there are two different types of catalyst at work, a reduction catalyst and an oxidation catalyst. Both types consist of a ceramic structure coated with a metal catalyst, usually platinum, rhodium and/or palladium. The idea is to create a structure that exposes the maximum surface area of catalyst to the exhaust stream, while also minimizing the amount of catalyst required, as the materials are extremely expensive. Some of the newest converters have even started to use gold mixed with the more traditional catalysts. Gold is cheaper than the other materials and could increase oxidation, the chemical reaction that reduces pollutants, by up to 40 percent.

**The function and characteristics of a catalyst**

1. A catalyst is something which speeds up a chemical reaction, but the end of the reaction has the same mass as it had at the beginning of the reaction. Meaning: the outcome is the same. (In the interim situation, the outcome is the successful search of the “right” pastor).

2. The catalyst is not used up in the reaction—(does not adapt or accommodate to the system in the process. For the interim, is not done in by seduction).

3. It must, however, take part in the reaction (is fully invested in the process and stays connected).

4. A catalyst works by providing an alternative pathway for the reaction to occur.

5. This alternative pathway has a lower activation energy than the pathway without the catalyst.
PROCESS REFLECTION: What connections are you seeing with your work as an interim pastoral leader?

Here are the two pathways for a reaction:

(1) the green pathway is the energy profile for the reaction without the catalyst

(2) the brown pathway is the energy profile for the reaction with the catalyst.

With the catalyst, the activation energy is lower, hence the reaction is faster.

The catalyst just changes the path to the new chemical partnership. It builds the equivalent of a paved highway to bypass a bumpy dirt road.

A catalyst doesn’t get used up in the reaction, though. It encourages other molecules to react. Once they do, it bows out. (Like an effective interim leader)

In other words, a catalyst works by providing an alternative pathway for the reaction to occur, then gets out of the way.

This alternative pathway has a lower activation energy (lower anxiety, work, effort) than the pathway without the catalyst.

Alternative pathways to: grief and mourning, conflicts, unresolved issues, a search process, decision-making

Lower activation energy: less stress; lowered anxiety; less conflict, more dialogue; increased capacity to reflect; less confusion, more clarity in decision-making

NOTES: A catalyst speeds up chemical reactions. With a helping hand from a catalyst, molecules that might take years to interact can now do so in seconds.
Natural catalysts in the body — known as enzymes — play important roles in digestion and more.

During any chemical reaction, molecules break chemical bonds between their atoms. The atoms also make new bonds with different atoms.

Sometimes, those bonds are easy to break. A molecule may have certain properties that let it lure away atoms from another molecule. But in stable partnerships, the molecules are content as they are. Left together for a very long period of time, a few might eventually switch partners. But there’s no mass frenzy of bond breaking and rebuilding.

Catalysts make such a breaking and rebuilding happen more efficiently. They do this by lowering the activation energy for the chemical reaction. Activation energy is the amount of energy needed to allow the chemical reaction to occur.

The Interim as Catalyst

- Speed up the process (but does not change the outcome). Note that as with a catalyst this is not a matter of changing outcome (not being willful). At the end of the catalytic process, the outcome is a result of following the natural course of things. With the help of the catalyst leader, that natural course of things is smoother, clearer, more efficient, and faster than it might otherwise be.

- Does not get used up in the reaction. Leave as optimistic (and sane) as you entered. Does not get enmeshed in the emotional issues of the system (personalities, seduction, triangles, etc.)

- Is a vital part in the process. Be fully present, committed to good outcome, engaged, and help things happen. (ILL. L.T. defecting in place; reactivity broke out.)

- Provides an alternative pathway for the reactions to occur. By focusing on process and not content; providing information, experience, process. The alternative pathway has a lower activation energy than the pathway a congregation may have gone through due to grief, conflict, lack of vision, poor process, inexperience, etc.
Homeostasis

Systems that are:

Grieving and unresolved issues, in trauma, have a low tolerance for discomfort, unwilling to change, immaturity, presumption, low capacity (the talent is not in the room)

What challenges homeostasis:

Nodal events (pastoral transition; normative, developmental, unexpected)

Trauma that results in resilience

Healthy adaptation and accommodation

All involve transitions, resilience, adaptation, and accommodation

Adaptation vs. Accommodation v. Assimilation

Adaptation is a biological process

Accommodation is an emotional process

Assimilation is a social process

Accommodation is an emotional and social process, adaptation is a biological process.

Taken together, assimilation and accommodation make up adaptation, which refers to the person’s or group’s ability to adapt to his or her environment.

So, looking forward, a church’s and the new pastor’s capacity to accommodate a new relationship; to assimilated each to a changed context or relationship, is the extent to which the system can adapt to a new condition (developmental or evolutionary).

Developmental: the same, only more (larger, more efficient, etc.)

Evolutionary: becomes something different in response to context (environment)
Accommodation

1. Accommodation is the process by which individuals and groups adjust their relationships to each other in order to overcome the difficulties which arise in competition, contravention or conflict (Gillin and Gillin (1948)).

2. In accommodation people also accommodate new information by changing their mental representations to fit the new information. When people encounter information that is completely new or that challenges their existing ideas, they often have to form a new schema to accommodate the information or alter their existing mental categories.

3. In education and learning we call this “concepts attainment.”

4. The accommodation process tends to be much more difficult than the assimilation process. People are often resistant to changing their schemes, particularly if it involves changing a deeply held belief.

Most conflicts must be resolved for making social life peaceful (and if there’s anything most churches desire it’s peace at any cost). Accommodation is resolution of conflicts which generally means adjusting oneself to the new environment. Accommodation is achieved by an individual or group through the acquisition of behavior patterns transmitted to socially and through the adoption of new ways of behaving, and is termed accommodation.

The following are the five forms of accommodation by which rivalries are resolved and reduced in a society or group.

Truce. In this process, the rivalries are stopped for a definite or indefinite period while the issues are not settled. It means the problem remains unsolved and the fighting parties stop their hostility for a fixed period.

Compromise. The parties in this process come to an agreement of granting certain concessions with respect to each other. In this field of common concession a mutual understanding is created in which the rivalries are subdued momentarily and the problem faced is taken jointly.

Temporary Sub Ordination and Super Ordination. Either of the two parties seeks 'upper hand' in a certain conflict and this super-ordination of the dominant party is recognized by both sides. (All wars in which the decision of defeat and victory was established get into this...
type of agreement). The defeated party admits the victory of its rival party. The winning party dictates the terms of agreement which has to be accepted by the defeated one.

**Arbitration.** The conflict is resolved by the mediatory efforts of a third party. Accommodation by arbitration is very common in social life. Two parties indulging in conflicts are brought to peaceful relations by the third party.

**Toleration.** By toleration, we reduce tension and minimize conflict and differences in our social life. We ignore the tyranny of our rival and adopt the condition of non-conflict by tolerance. We forgive so much interference of the rival and by adopting toleration continue to live in accommodation with the rivals. In many cases, toleration is tolerated only for so long.

Since conflict disturbs the integration of the group and since social stabilities are required for social order, therefore, in all societies efforts have been made to bring about the resolution of conflicts between antagonistic groups. Society can hardly go on without accommodation. Accommodation checks conflicts and enables persons and groups to maintain co-operation which is the sine qua non of social life.

Moreover, it enables the individuals to adjust themselves to changed conditions. Thus, it not only reduces or controls but also maintains the necessary security of a social order without which it may be difficult for the individuals to carry on their life activities together.

So many different interests and points of view are represented in our heterogeneous, complex society that accommodation is required if social life is not to be greatly disturbed. Society is essentially the result of accommodation.

Park & Burgess mention two types of adjustments - adjustment to new natural conditions and adjustment to new social conditions. The first involves coming to terms with a new climate, type of soil etc. and is often referred to as acclimatization.

The second includes adjustment to a new social milieu; that is, new folkways, mores and institutions and is usually called naturalisation. Thus in acclimatization, the person has to change more or less physiologically, a process which we have termed above as adaptation; and in naturalisation, he has to undergo changes in attitude and behaviour which fundamentally involve psychological modification.

The following characteristics of accommodation may be pointed out:

(i) Accommodation is the natural result of conflict. If there were no conflicts, there would be no need of accommodation.
(ii) Accommodation is mainly an unconscious activity.
(iii) Accommodation is universal.
(iv) Accommodation is a continuous process.
(v) Accommodation is a mixture of both love and hatred.

Share reflections on your experience as an interim:

1. In what ways have you been a catalytic leader?
2. How do you strive to bring about change in the interim context?
3. What has been your most fruitful interim outcome? Share why.
4. What has been your least fruitful interim experience? Share why.
5. What might you do different informed by the metaphor of catalytic leadership?
What is vital to changing any kind of “family” is not knowledge or technique or even pathology, but rather the capacity of the family leader to define his or her own goals and values while trying to maintain a non-anxious presence with the system.

Ed Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, pp. 2-3

The basic concept of leadership through self-differentiation is this: If a leader will take primary responsibility for his or her own position as “head” and work to define his or her own goals and self, while staying in touch with the rest of the organism, there is more than reasonable chance that the body will follow.

Ed Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, p. 229

Be authentic—Your actions mirror what you believe and feel, with no contradiction between what you say and what you do.

You should interact with your team confidently, honestly, and openly, and show integrity through consistent and honest conversations to build trust.

Some examples of authenticity include:

- Function out of your principles and values
- Differentiate and know role from function
- Do what’s right, even in difficult situations
- Admit mistakes
- Display confidence but avoid arrogance.
- Treat people with respect
- Tell the truth, even if they don’t want to hear it.

Bring out the best in people—Great leaders know that their own success relies on the success of their team.

To bring out the best in people, great leaders must:

- Unite others towards a common goal.
- Encourage others to take risks
- Recognize people on their efforts.
- Value others’ perspectives
- Cultivate maturity and responsibility
- Challenge is better than coddling
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<td>• Do your FOO homework. You’ll get no better insights on your functioning than revisiting your family of origin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pay attention to your functioning. There’s the thinking life (the story we tell ourselves) and the functioning life (how we are actually doing)---and they don’t always match. Monitor your bias. Watch your overfunctioning and other reciprocity patterns in your emotional process repertoire. Remember, the system likes your neuroses more than they like you, personally.</td>
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<td>• Monitor your level of emotional accommodation. Perhaps no greater threat to sabotage than seduction. Remember, you’re the interim, not the pastor.</td>
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<td>• Regulate your reactivity. As the leader you do not have the luxury of giving in to your feelings. Don’t take it personally---it’s never been about you.</td>
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<td>• Differentiate while staying connected. Work out of your principles and values.</td>
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Leadership Through Differentiation

A differentiated leader:
- matures the system and maximizes strengths
- invests energy and resources in those who will do the most with it
- values imagination, adventure and integrity
- respects the power of the presence of leadership

How to challenge the strengths in the system?
- Be responsive yet maintain good boundaries
- Get clear about what I’m willing to do and not willing to do
- Ask for help
- Use the triangles

- Look for and call out leaders
- Trust that what is needed is already here

The Presence of Leadership

 Thinking always involves the self of the entire organism.

Ed Friedman,  A Failure of Nerve, p. 119

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Look for and call out leaders

Trust that what is needed is already here

 Thinking always involves the self of the entire organism.

Ed Friedman,  A Failure of Nerve, p. 119
### The Catalytic Leader

*Actually, if it is possible to get some differentiation started in one family member, it can loosen up the entire family system.*

Murray Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, p.176

### Leadership Through Differentiation

A differentiated leader:

- works on own growth and differentiation
- observes and values emotional process
- stays in touch with the system
- is able to deal with anxiety, resistance, seduction and sabotage
- allows processes to develop
- has a sense of timing

### Change is a word... for a journey with stress.

You get the journey and you get the stress. At the end, you’re a different person. But both elements are part of the deal.

There are plenty of journeys that are stress-free. They take you where you expect, with little in the way of surprise or disappointment. You can call that a commute or even a familiar TV show in reruns.

And there's plenty of stress that's journey-free. What a waste. We can grow beyond that, achieve more than that and contribute along the way. But to do so, we might need to welcome the stress and the journey too.

### A differentiated leader:

- works on own growth and differentiation
- observes and values emotional process
- stays in touch with the system
- is able to deal with anxiety, resistance, seduction and sabotage
- allows processes to develop
- has a sense of timing
A differentiated leader:
- lets go of expectations about outcomes
- focuses on what’s most important
- asks good questions
- hears and weighs feedback
- takes clear positions and is decisive

A differentiated leader:
- matures the system and maximizes strengths
- invests energy and resources in those who will do the most with it
- values imagination, adventure and integrity
- respects the power of the presence of leadership

Most important, perhaps, the concept of an emotional triangle describes how clearly self-differentiation can be a more powerful influence on others than any one technique or method for moving them forward. The art is to remain a part of the triangle without getting “triangled”.

Ed Friedman
A Failure of Nerve, pp. 207,183