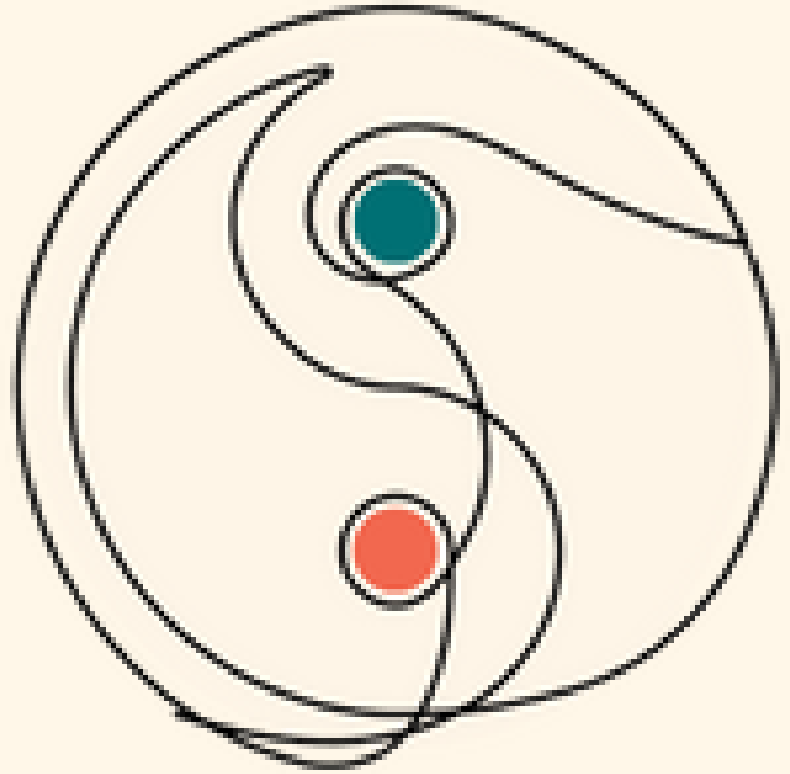


Leadership of the Future

The Power of AND

Wendy Smith, Ph.D.
The Wexner Foundation
2024



Some Either/Or moments..

(Us/them; win/lose; clear arguments)

- XXXX
- XXXX



Our goals together

- Identify the limitations of either/or
- Explore the possibilities of both/and



Tensions

alternative expectations, demands, priorities
in competition with one another

a tug of war



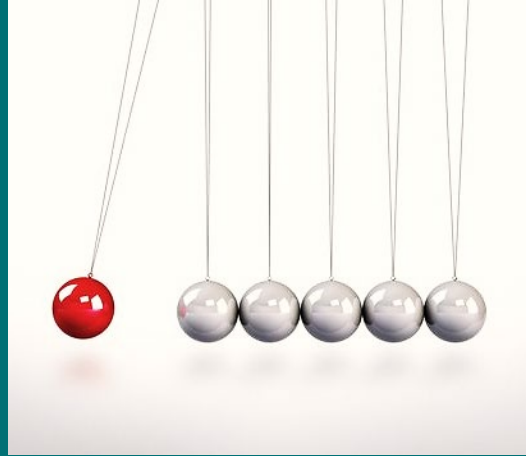


The challenge is
not **IF** we face tensions,
but **HOW** we do so.



rabbit holes

we get stuck
and can't change
course



wrecking balls

we change course
and swing in the opposite
directions



trench warfare

we defensively dig into
our own position and fire
at the other side

Either/Or



Both/And



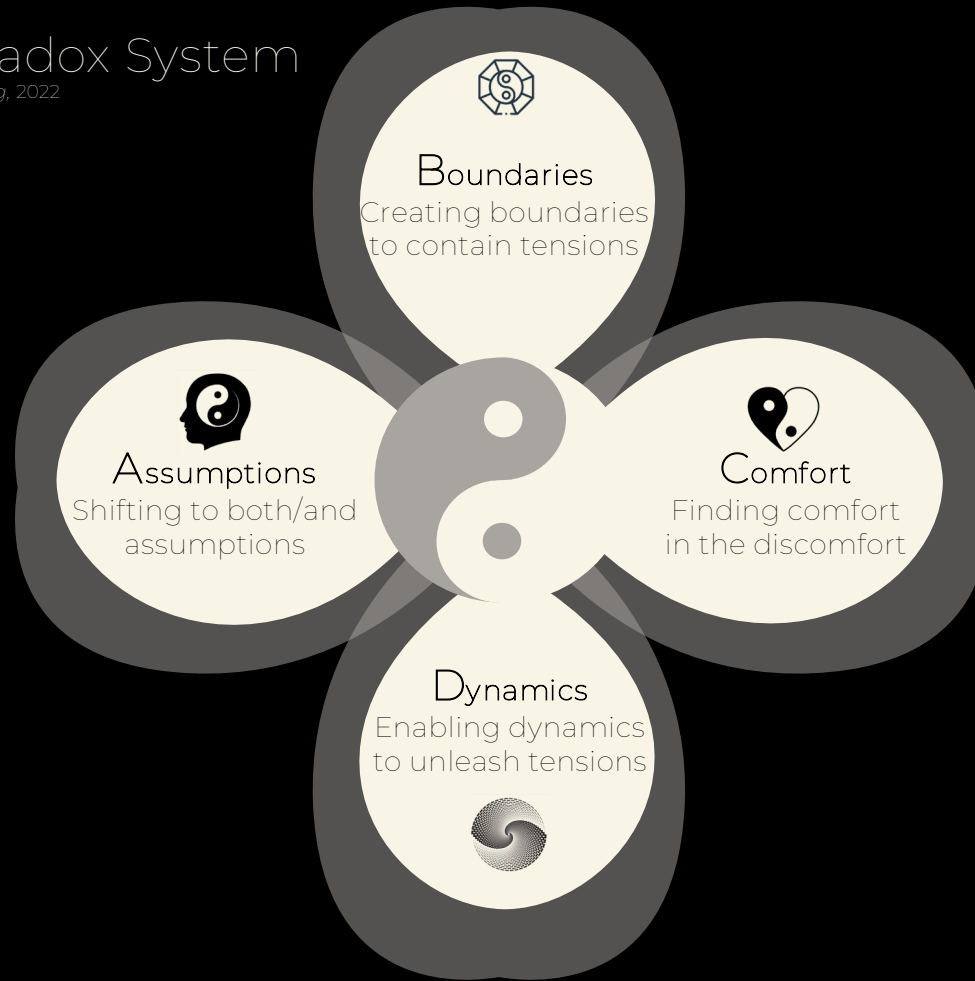
Our goals together

- Identify the limitations of either/or
- Explore the possibilities of both/and
- Build skills to embrace both/and
 - Introduce the ABCD Paradox System
 - Apply ABCD tools



The ABCD Paradox System

Smith and Lewis, *Both/And Thinking*, 2022



Stay or Go?

You are the leader of a team tasked with accomplishing a high-profile project. In the past month, you recruited other team members and believe that you have an all-star team. In recruiting and developing the team, you stressed the value of teamwork, respect and commitment to one another and to the team. Your team has the potential to be a high performing team, but still relies heavily on your leadership and guidance. You have another two months left to deliver the project.

In the meantime, you have been offered a promotion into a new job. In some ways, the new job could be your dream job, with greater responsibility, challenge and authority. There are also uncertainties to this job, especially whether you would be working with supportive colleagues. These opportunities are infrequent, but someone just left the job unexpectedly. As a result, this new job would require you to leave your team and start in the next two weeks.

What do you do?



Stay

32%

- Collaboration means everything; its all about the people – dream team!
- New job is uncertain. Existing job has great people; better quality of life; your word is your bond – LOYALTY
- Another opportunity will come along.
- ‘Lacking info’; want to see things through; reputational preservation; DEDICATION
- It’s the right thing to do at this phase of life; something in the hand now, risk-avoidant

Go

• 68%

- Could feel resentment if you stay; miss a chance; no one is irreplaceable; IMPACT; AMBITION;
- ‘extraordinary opportunity’- is your employer loyal to you; SPECIAL
- SELF ACTUALIZATION
- TRUST – trust your dream team to outlast me; creating opportunity for your team
- New challenges when you are ‘at the top’; make change when you are successful; courage
- LEARNING, growth, adventure;



Traditional Approach

(Either/Or)

Framing

A OR B?

Analysis

Separate and Analyze

Emotions

Minimize Discomfort

Outcomes

Make a Choice



	Traditional Approach (Either/Or)	Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)
Framing	A OR B?	A AND B?
Analysis	Separate and Analyze	Higher Purpose Separate and Connect
Emotions	Minimize Discomfort	Find comfort in the discomfort
Outcomes	Make a Choice	Mules and Tightrope Walkers



Assumptions



Assumptions: Change the Question



Assumptions: Change the Question

- Notice the either/or (win/lose; us/them)
- Explore the alternative options
- Change the question – “how can we accommodate...”

Traditional Approach (Either/Or)

Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)

ASSUMPTIONS

Change the question

A OR B?

A AND B?



Paradoxical Approach

(Both/And)

ASSUMPTIONS

Change the question

A AND B?

How can I.... Stay and go?

Be loyal to others and achieve for myself?
Move to the new job but stay connected to
the people?





Boundaries

Structures
Scaffolding
Roles
Rules

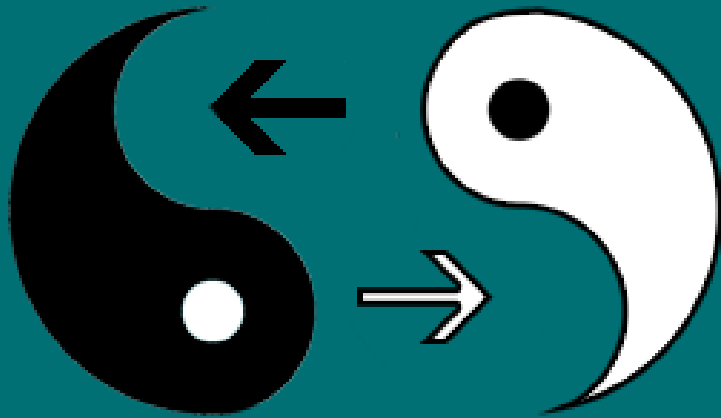


Boundaries: Higher Purpose

What is important in the big picture? Long term?

How does your higher purpose bring together the competing demands?

Boundaries: Separate and Connect



Separate

Pull apart options to
understand and value each

Ask questions
Listen
Engage

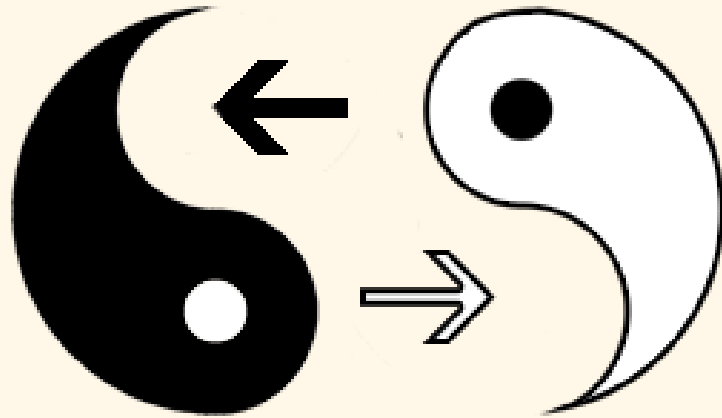


Connect

Seek points of
integration and synergy

Exploring connections
Sharing

Separate



Stay

Today

Short Term

Loyalty

Teamwork

Commitment

Go

Tomorrow

Long Term

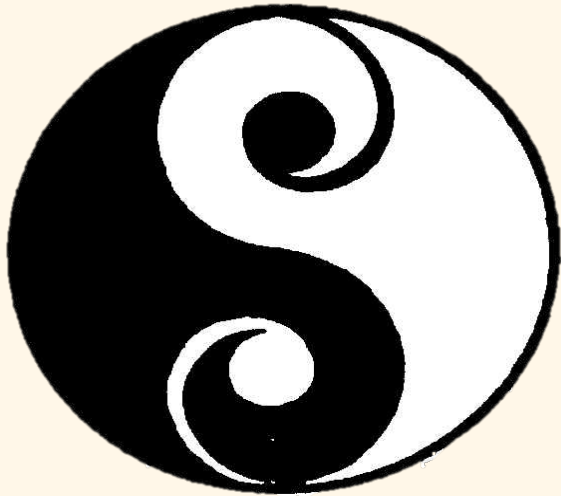
Growth

Individual

Achievement



Connect



How could completing my current campaign impact the new campaign?

How could allowing myself to move forward create new opportunities for my existing team and its members?

How could my existing team inform the work on my new team?



	Traditional Approach (Either/Or)	Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)
ASSUMPTIONS <i>Change the question</i>	A OR B?	A AND B?
BOUNDARIES <i>Separate & Connect</i>	Separate and Analyze	Higher Purpose Separate and Connect



Paradoxical Approach

(Both/And)

ASSUMPTIONS

Change the question

A AND B?

How can I.... Stay and go?

Be loyal to others and achieve for myself?
Move to the new job but stay connected to
the people?

BOUNDARIES

Separate & Connect

Higher Purpose
Separate and Connect

My life goal is impact.
Separate and Connect



Comfort



Comfort

Finding comfort in the discomfort

- Surfacing/naming anxiety
- Talking through uncertainty
- Pausing/breathing



	Traditional Approach (Either/Or)	Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)
ASSUMPTIONS <i>Change the question</i>	A OR B?	A AND B?
BOUNDARIES <i>Separate & Connect</i>	Separate and Analyze	Higher Purpose Separate and Connect
COMFORT <i>Comfort in the Discomfort</i>	Minimize Discomfort	Find comfort in the discomfort



Paradoxical Approach

(Both/And)

ASSUMPTIONS

Change the question

A AND B?

How can I.... Stay and go?

Be loyal to others and achieve for myself?
Move to the new job but stay connected to
the people?

BOUNDARIES

Separate & Connect

Higher Purpose
Separate and Connect

My life goal is impact.
Separate and Connect

COMFORT

*Comfort in the
Discomfort*

**Find comfort in the
discomfort**

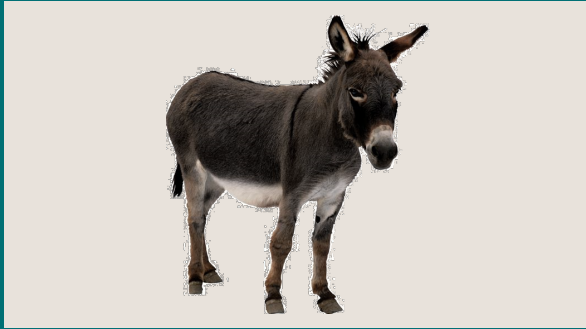
Naming the uncertainty
Honoring the anxiety



Dynamics: Rethink the Outcome

Creative integration

The mule



Take the new job and bring some of my current team along

Use the new job offer to negotiate with my current organization to move into a more senior role

Consistent Inconsistency

The tightrope walker



Delay my start date in order to spend more time to ensure succession planning to take over my current role

Consult to the old job for a period of time until they have trained a new leader

	Traditional Approach (Either/Or)	Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)
ASSUMPTIONS <i>Change the question</i>	A OR B?	A AND B?
BOUNDARIES <i>Separate & Connect</i>	Separate and Analyze	Higher Purpose Separate and Connect
COMFORT <i>Comfort in the Discomfort</i>	Minimize Discomfort	Find comfort in the discomfort
DYNAMICS <i>Choosing</i>	Make a Choice	Mules and Tightrope Walkers



Paradoxical Approach

(Both/And)

ASSUMPTIONS

Change the question

A AND B?

How can I.... Stay and go?

Be loyal to others and achieve for myself?
Move to the new job but stay connected to the people?

BOUNDARIES

Separate & Connect

Higher Purpose
Separate and Connect

My life goal is impact.
Separate and Connect

COMFORT

Comfort in the Discomfort

Find comfort in the discomfort

Naming the uncertainty
Honoring the anxiety

DYNAMICS

Choosing

Choosing

Shift over time
Bring people with you
Negotiate with existing job

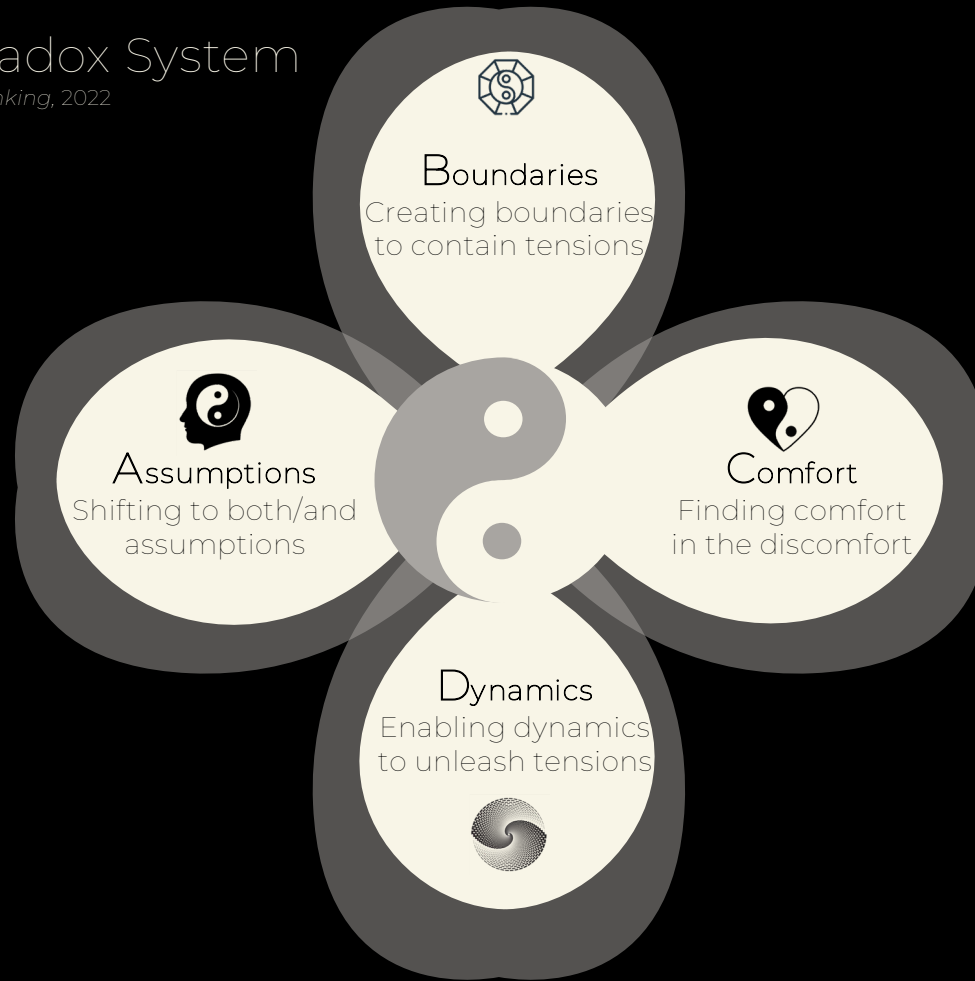


YOUR Tension	Paradoxical Approach (Both/And)	
ASSUMPTIONS <i>Change the question</i>	A AND B?	<p>What is the tension? What are the competing demands (your perspective/their perspective; option A and option B? Write a both/and question... how can I accommodate...?</p>
BOUNDARIES <i>Separate & Connect</i>	Higher Purpose Separate and Connect	<p>What is your higher purpose – big picture/long term – goal? What is valuable about each option? About your perspective? The other perspective? What are possible synergies?</p>
COMFORT <i>Comfort in the Discomfort</i>	Find comfort in the discomfort	<p>How do you feel about this decision? How would you feel if you didn't make a decision? What is your worst fear? What would happen if the option that you did not want emerged?</p>
DYNAMICS <i>Choosing</i>	Choosing: Mules/Tightrope Walking	<p>Is there a mule – a win/win that brings together opposing ideas? Is there a way to walk the tightrope - accommodate competing demands over time? What other options exist – 'option C'?</p>



The ABCD Paradox System

Smith and Lewis, *Both/And Thinking*, 2022





US Founding Fathers 1789-1797

George Washington
Alexander Hamilton
Thomas Jefferson

US Suffrage Movement – 1868-1914



Carrie Chapman Catt



Alice Paul



Ida B. Wells

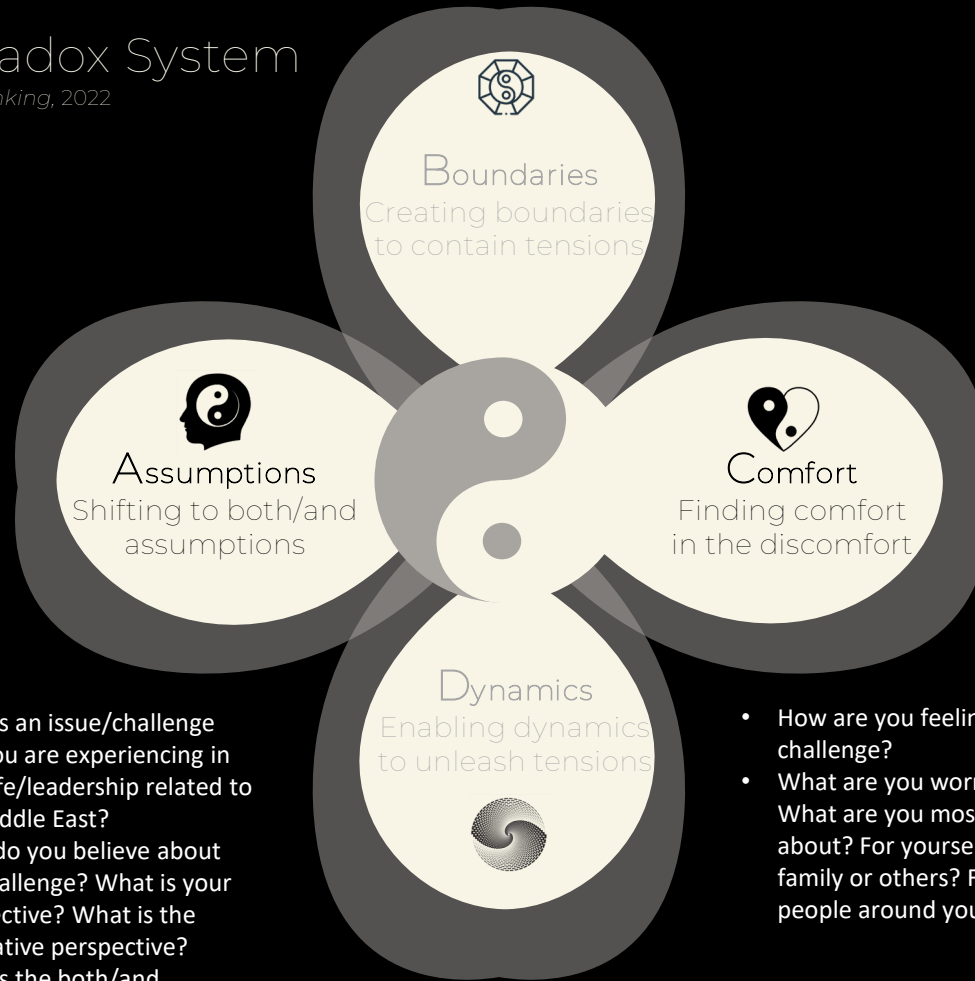


Mary Church Terrell



The ABCD Paradox System

Smith and Lewis, *Both/And Thinking*, 2022



- What is an issue/challenge that you are experiencing in your life/leadership related to the Middle East?
- What do you believe about this challenge? What is your perspective? What is the alternative perspective?
- What is the both/and question?

- How are you feeling about this challenge?
- What are you worried about? What are you most afraid about? For yourself? For your family or others? For the people around you?



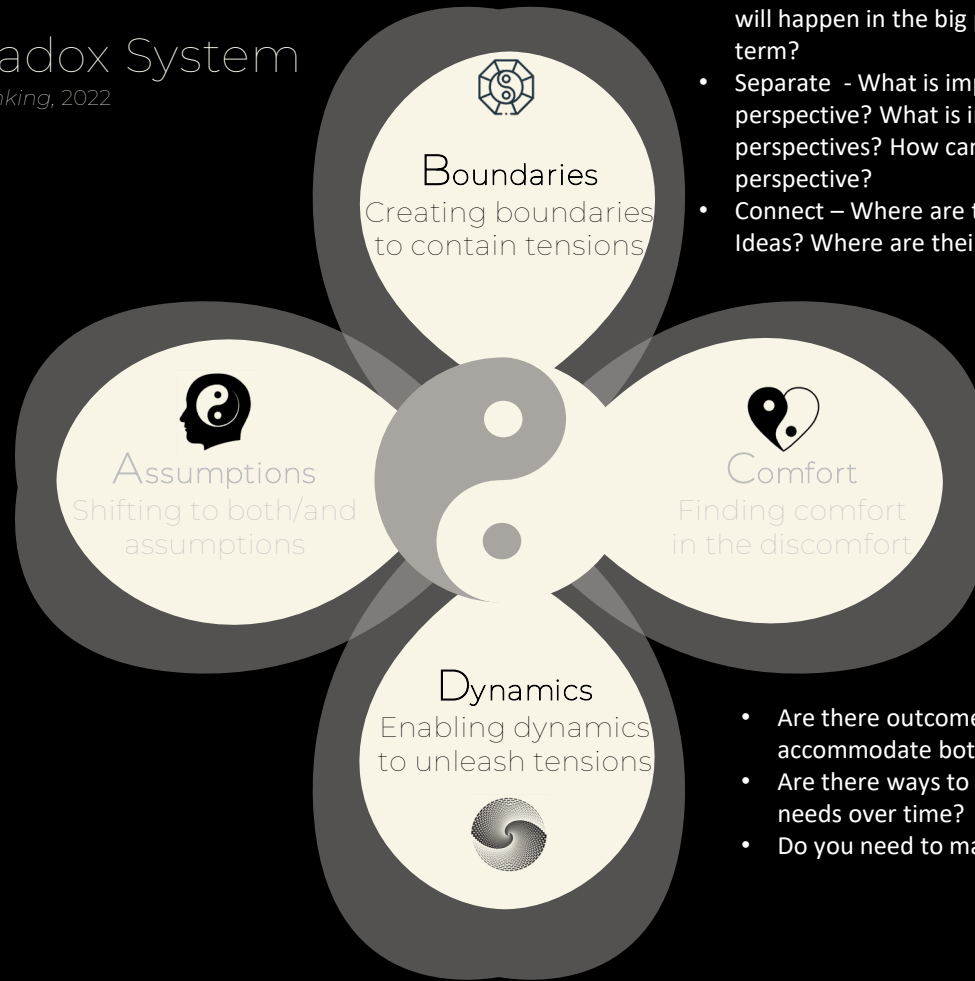
Breakouts

Assumptions and Comfort

Share.
Each person has 3 minutes.
Listen with openness.

The ABCD Paradox System

Smith and Lewis, *Both/And Thinking*, 2022



- What is the higher purpose – what do you hope will happen in the big picture? Over the long term?
- Separate - What is important about your perspective? What is important about other perspectives? How can you learn about other perspective?
- Connect – Where are there shared goals? Values? Ideas? Where are their points of connection?

- Are there outcomes that can accommodate both needs?
- Are there ways to accommodate both needs over time?
- Do you need to make a decision?



Breakouts

Boundaries and Dynamics

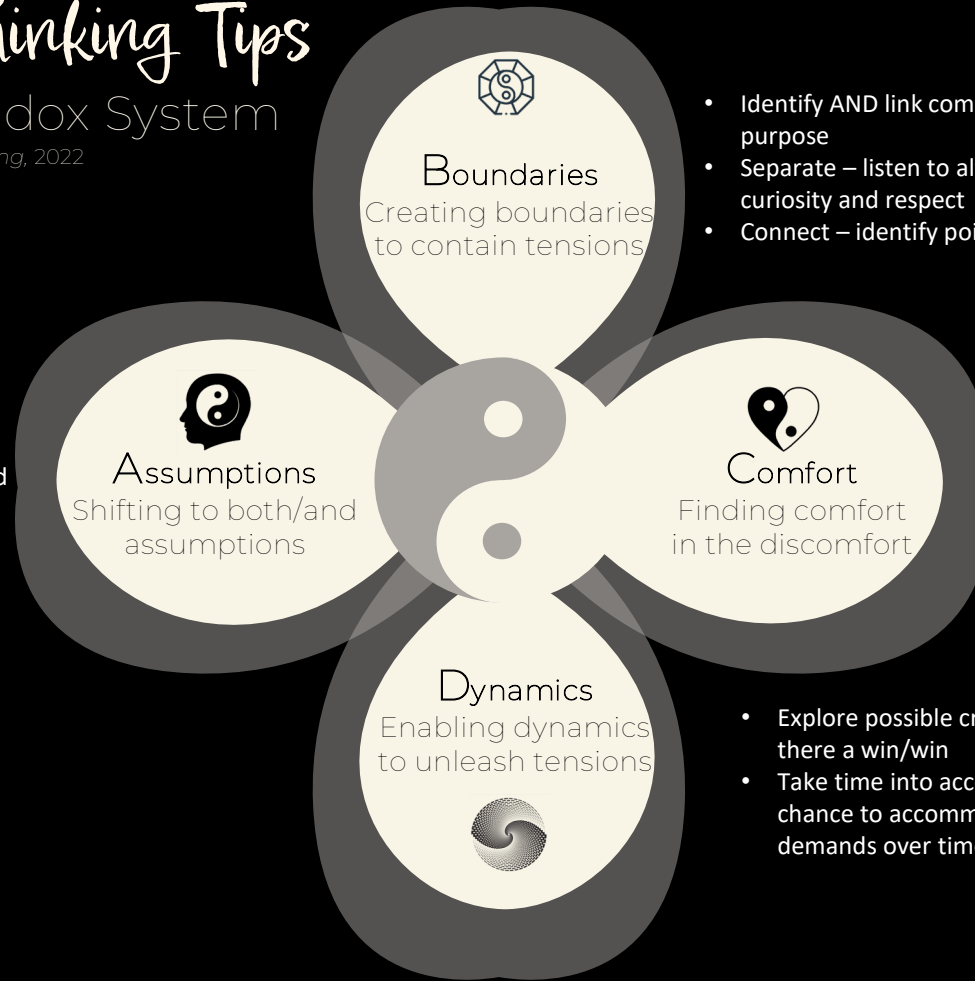
Share.
Each person has 3 minutes.
Listen with openness.

Both/And Thinking Tips

The ABCD Paradox System

Smith and Lewis, *Both/And Thinking*, 2022

- Notice the Either/Or
- Change the question
- [Create language, metaphors for a shared assumption]



- Identify AND link competing demands to a higher purpose
- Separate – listen to alternative perspectives with curiosity and respect
- Connect – identify points of connection

- Pause
- Name/Accept the discomfort

- Explore possible creative solutions; is there a win/win
- Take time into account – is there a chance to accommodate competing demands over time

We stand in a turmoil of contradictions without having the faintest idea of how to handle them: Law/Freedom; Rich/Poor; Right/Left; Love/Hate—the list seems endless. Paradox lives and moves in this realm; it is the art of balancing opposites in such a way that they do not cancel each other but shoot sparks of light across their points of polarity. It looks at our desperate either/ors and tells us they are really both/ands—that life is larger than any of our concepts and can, if we let it, embrace our contradictions.

- Mary C. Morrison

