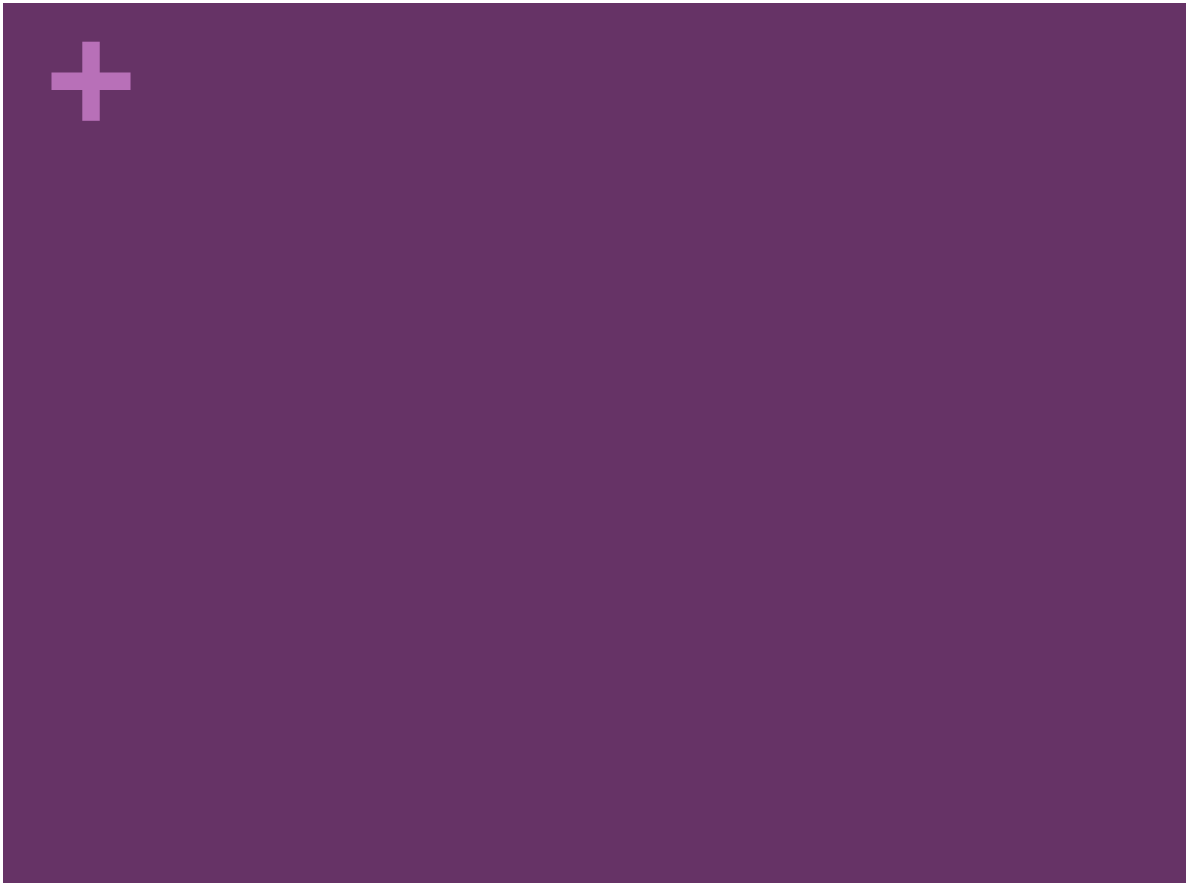# Narcissists, Psychopaths, and Bullies: Oh My!

Summer Session Illinois ICMA: Galena, 2024

Abusive People and Workplace Disruption
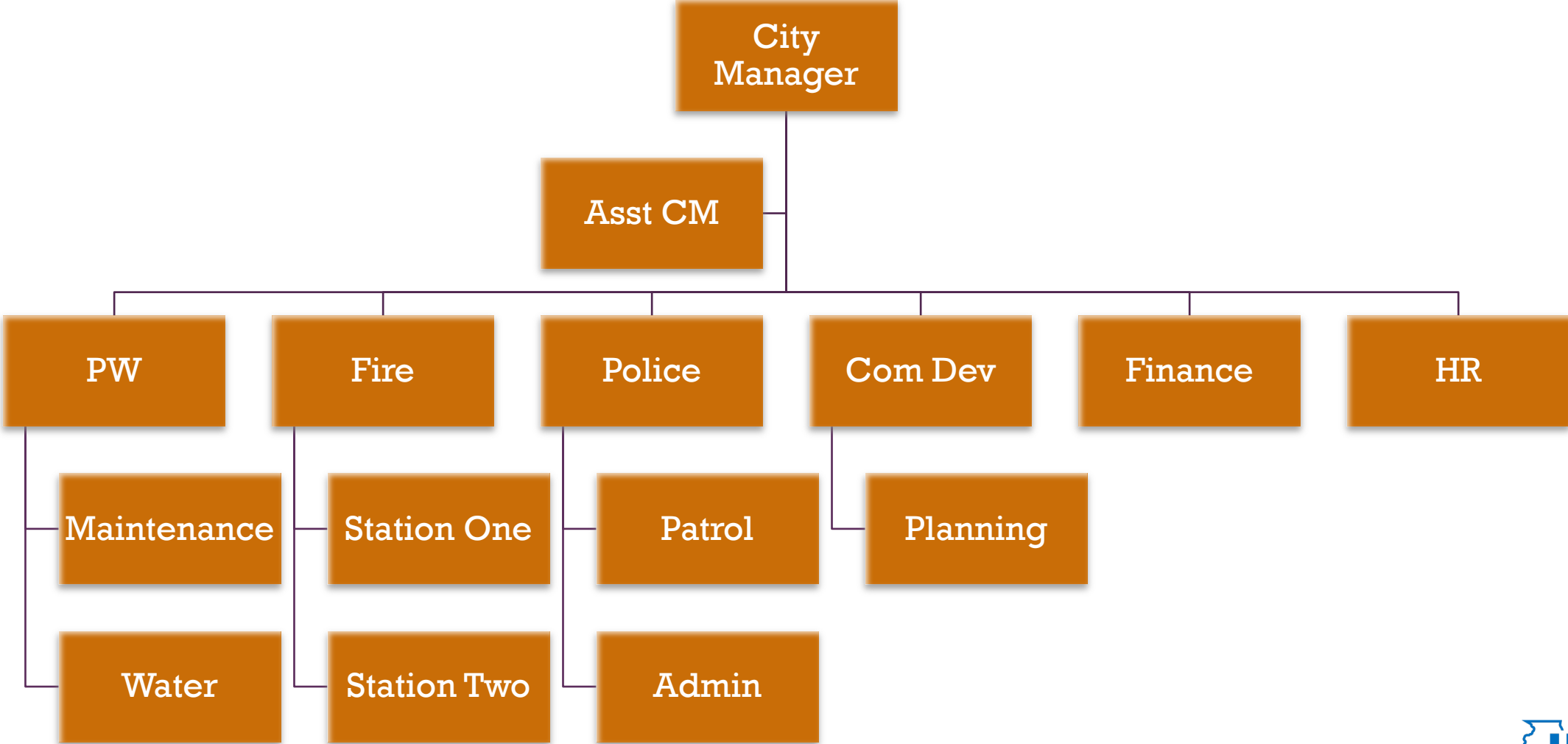

1. **What is it**
2. **Why it bothers us**
3. **Why now**
4. **What can be done**
✓ *Further Resources*

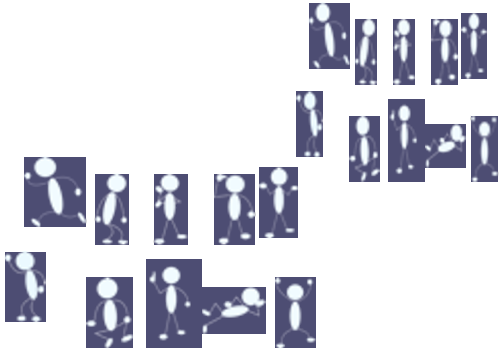# What is it?

What people? What Behavior?

Your Town USA

The Media

The Council

The LEADER

The Citizens
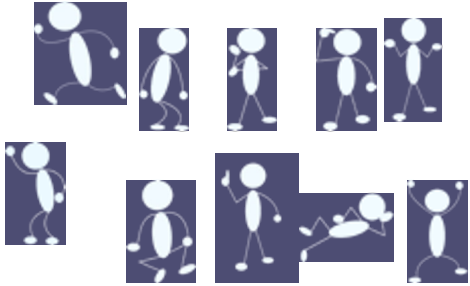
Leadership Team

What is it?

- ➢ Performance Appraisals?
- ➢ ERP Conversions?
- ➢ New Technology?

Angels and Devils: Tired Minds and Splitting
Good/bad, right/wrong, fun/buzzkill, smart/stupid

The Finance Department never _____

City Managers always _____

The Bad Apple
When Behavior Becomes a Crisis

Three Behaviors	

- Chronic negative emotion
  - "Eeyore"

- Free-loading

- Behavior out of group's norms
  - Bullying
  - Biased cruel comments (prejudiced)

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Pathology of "The Dark Triad"

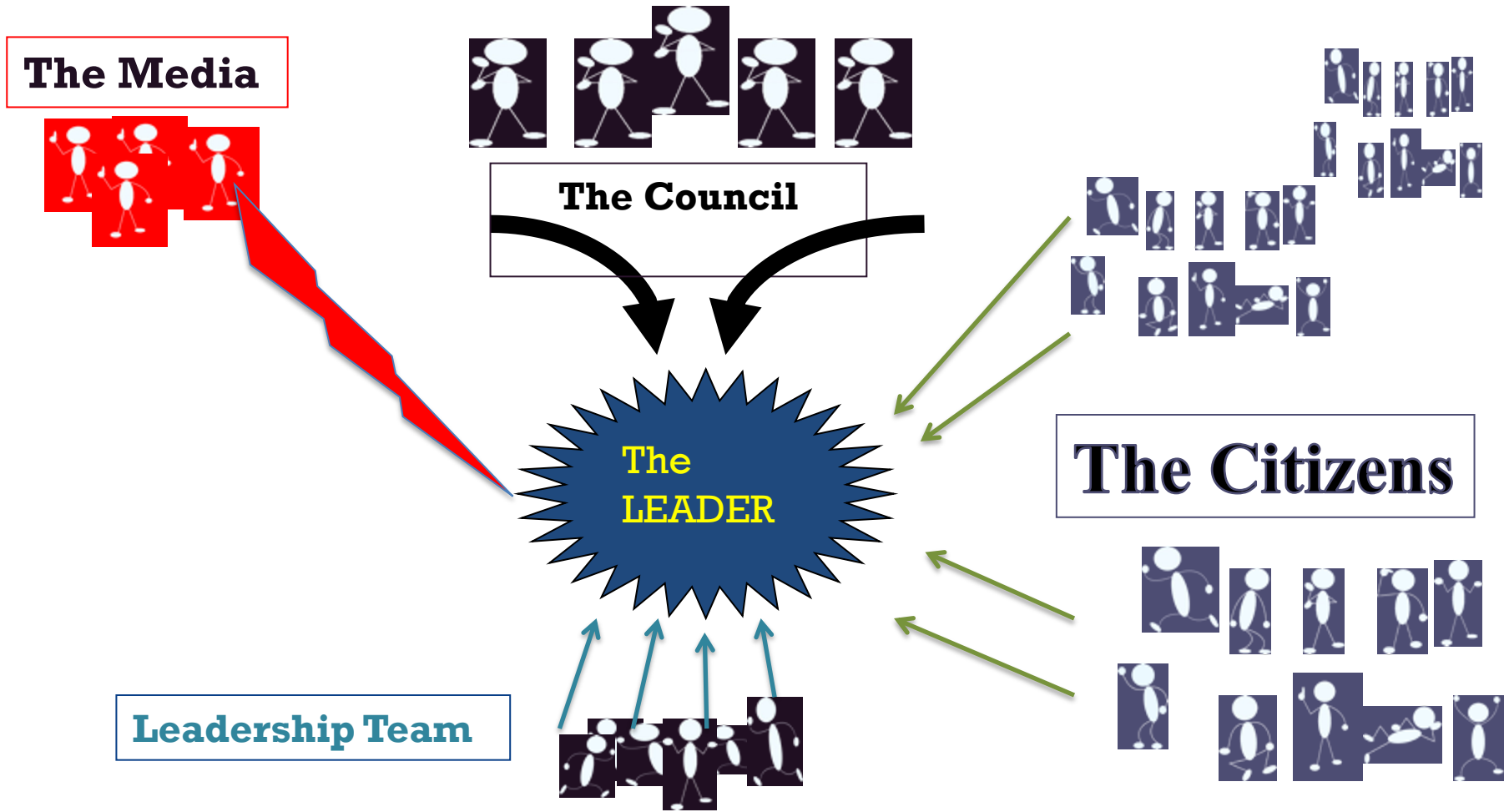In Dark Triad personalities the values, beliefs, and expectations become pathological

The Deviant Personality

- Psychopathy

- Machiavellianism

- Narcissism

➤ Fourth: Sadism?

What is it?

- Anti-social

- Anti-community

- **Anti-ICMA**

The Media

The Council

The LEADER

The Citizens

Leadership Team

✓ Amoco – Standard Oil

✓ Continental Bank

✓ Conseco

✓ Arthur Andersen

+ Experience in Municipal Advising
  …and Private Industry

What is the power play?

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Play to peoples' fantasies

Learn to keep people dependent on you

Control the options: Get others to play with the cards you deal

Play on peoples' needs to create a cult-like following

+ Experience in Municipal Advising
  ...and Private Industry

What is the power play?

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Why it bothers us
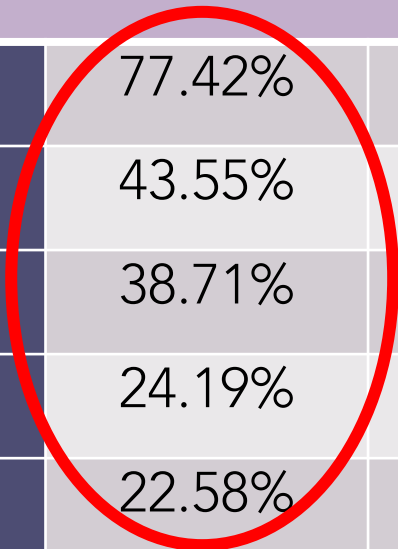
How to think about the ones "living rent free"

"I feel thin – like too little butter spread over too much bread"

Bilbo Baggins – LOTR; FOTR

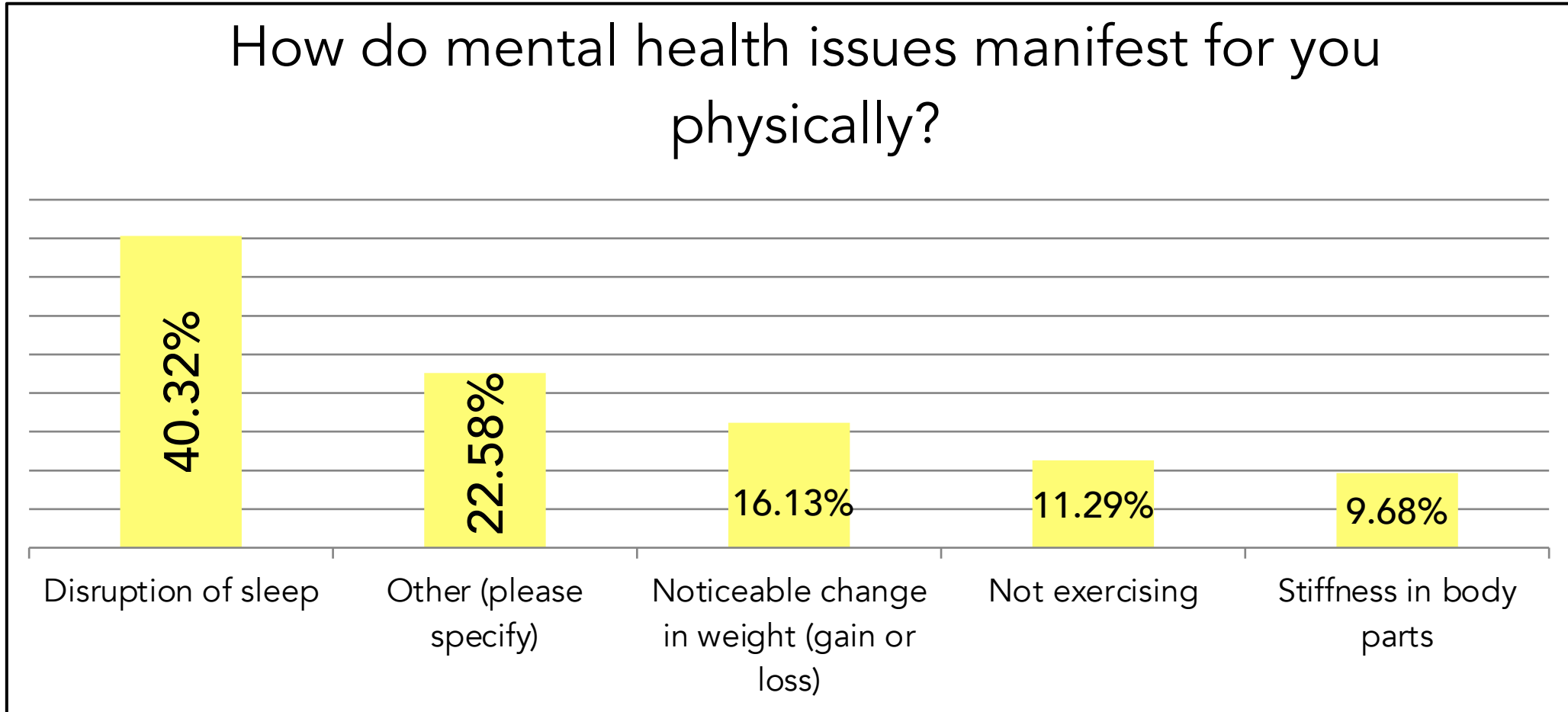# Currently, what is negatively affecting your mental health?

COVID-19 and it consequence	77.42%	48
Staffing level issues (Great Resignation)	43.55%	27
Polarization within community	38.71%	24
Disruption/uncertainty at home	24.19%	15
Other (please specify)	22.58%	14
Alignment of the council (board) and executive staff	20.97%	13
Lack of effort of council to align and make difficult policy decisions	19.35%	12
Social media related issues	16.13%	10
Non-COVID-19 health issues	11.29%	7
Nothing	3.23%	2

The physical health impact:
(Physical consequences of mental distress)

How do mental health issues manifest for you physically?

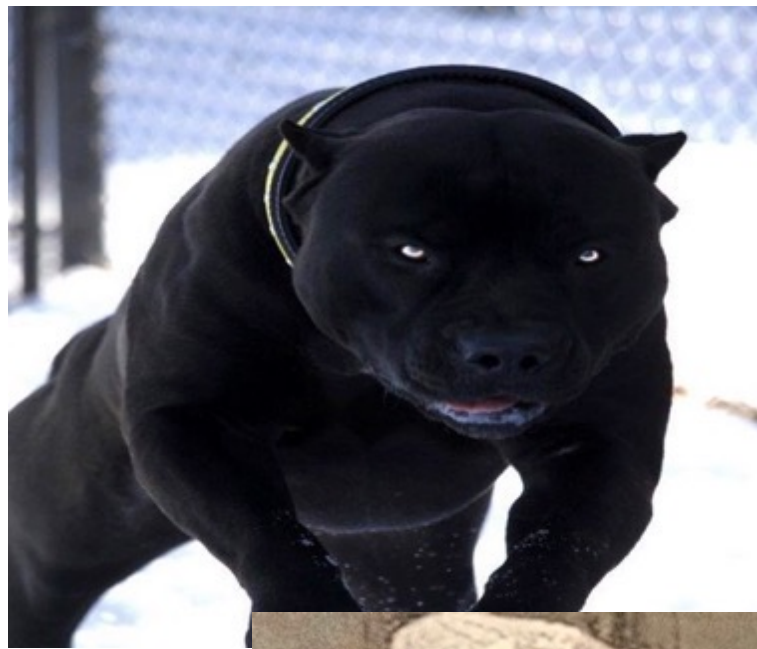| Category	Percentage
Disruption of sleep	40.32%
Other (please specify)	22.58%
Noticeable change in weight (gain or loss)	16.13%
Not exercising	11.29%
Stiffness in body parts	9.68%

What's troubling and different?

Menace

Verb: to threaten, especially in a malignant or hostile manner.

Noun: a person or thing that is likely to cause harm; a threat or danger.
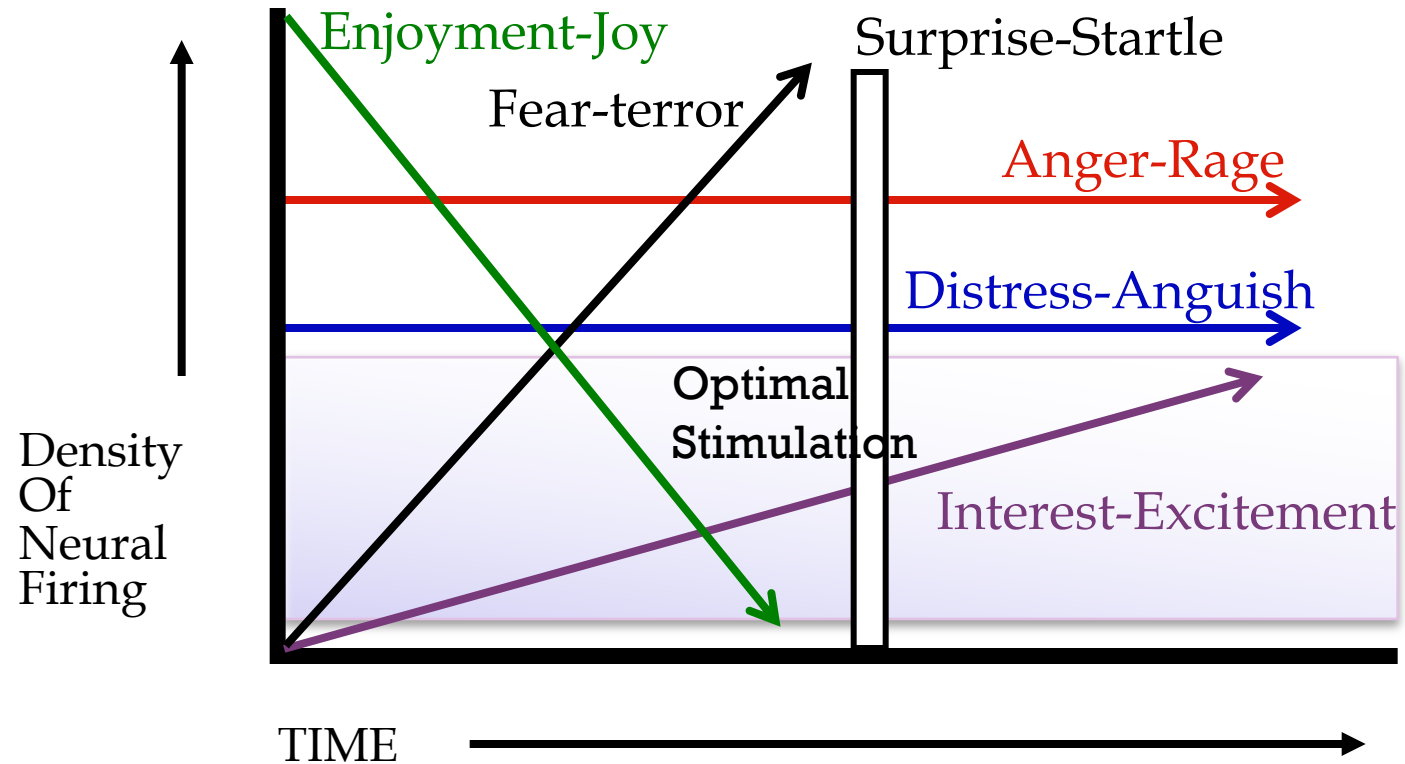
Anger:
a tool to manipulate

"If you can map an electorate's fears and then turn those into anger by moralizing your opponents' sins, they'll show up at the polls.

Steve Jarding

Harvard 's Kennedy School

AFFECT & STIMULATION
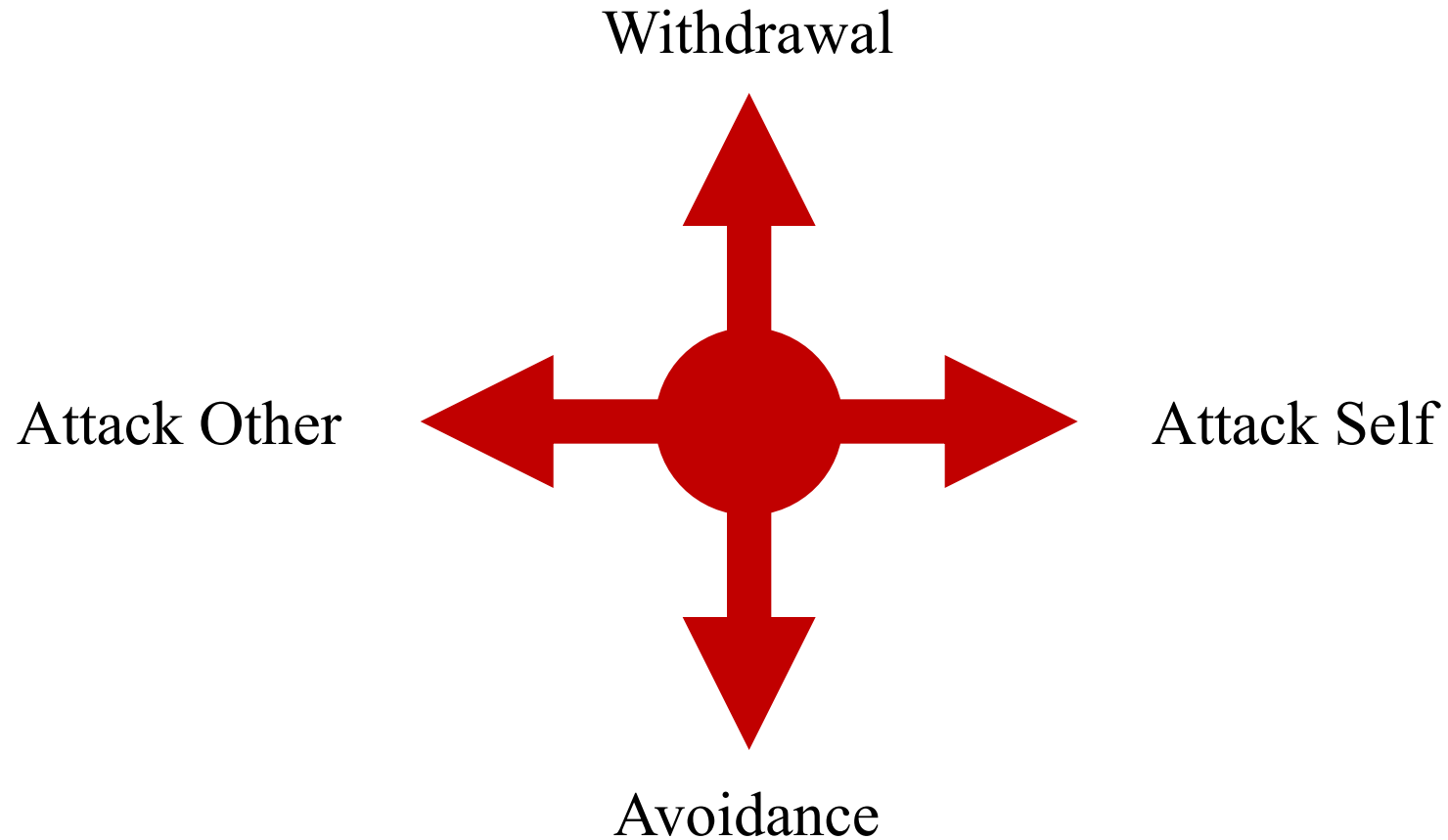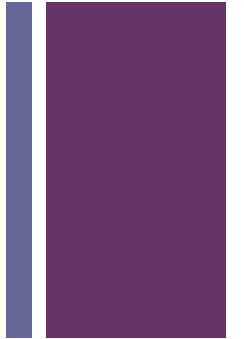
THE COMPASS OF SHAME

D. L. Nathanson, M.D.

Withdrawal

Attack Other

Attack Self

Avoidance

Dissmell/Contempt

Why now?

What's making it worse?

What is going on – why now?

- *What are the big forces?*

- *The Little ones?*

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
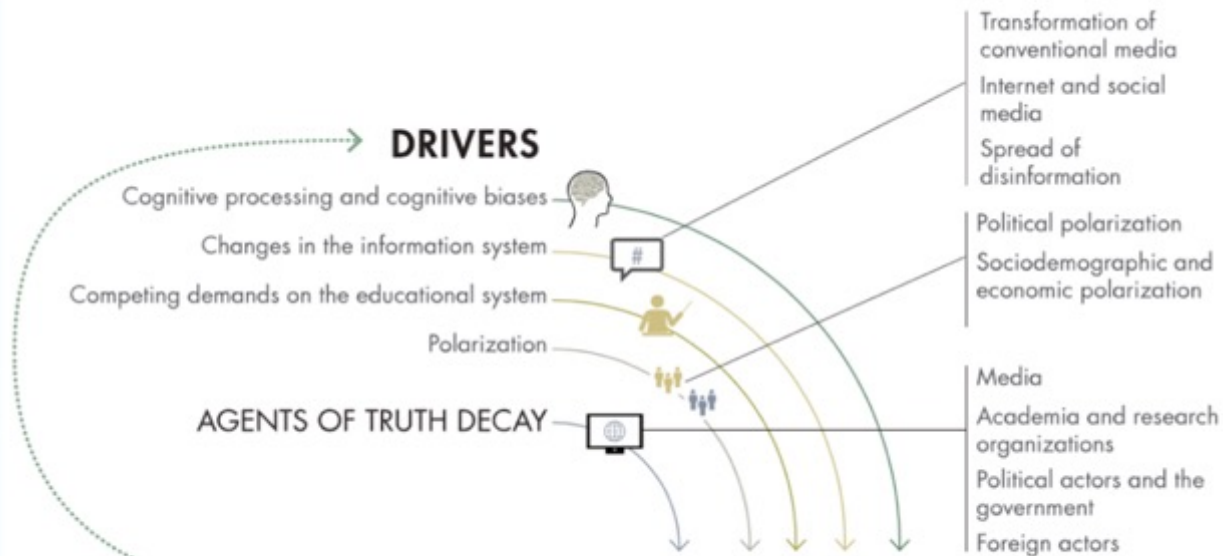
"Things fall apart, **the center cannot hold.**

…

The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity."

+ William B Yeats

The Second Coming

Truth Decay

Truth Decay as a System

DRIVERS

Cognitive processing and cognitive biases

Changes in the information system

Competing demands on the educational system

Polarization

AGENTS OF TRUTH DECAY

Transformation of conventional media

Internet and social media

Spread of disinformation

Political polarization

Sociodemographic and economic polarization

Media

Academia and research organizations

Political actors and the government

Foreign actors

TRUTH DECAY'S FOUR TRENDS

Increasing disagreement about facts and data

A blurring of the line between opinion and fact

The increasing relative volume and resulting influence of opinion over fact

Declining trust in formerly respected sources of factual information

CONSEQUENCES

at the personal, community, national, and international levels

Erosion of civil discourse

Political paralysis

Alienation and disengagement

Uncertainty

The Rand Corporation

Artificial Empathy: "apps for loneliness"

Sherry Turkel, PhD

"(AI Chatbots for loneliness) are the greatest assault on empathy"

Carin-Isabel Knoop*

Much like the proverbial frogs in the pot, the intensity of the presence of machines and our willingness to give up more and more of ourselves to them is increasing incrementally.
We may not fully know the effects until it is too late.
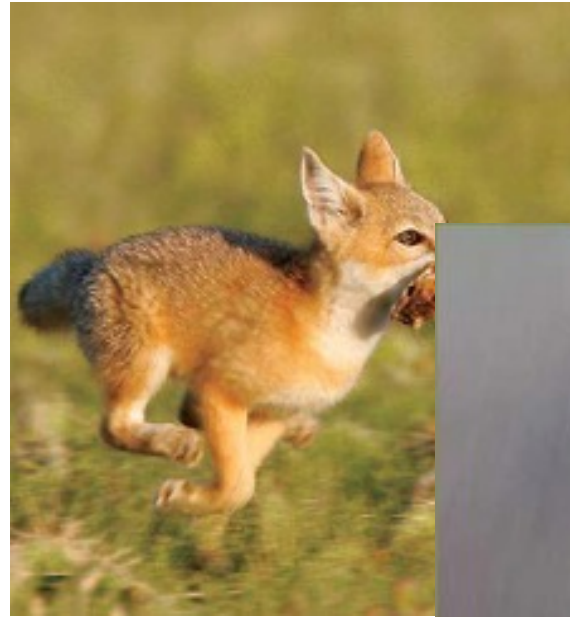
What's at risk:
Why now?

- Critical Election

- Deep Fakes

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What can be done

- Work
  - Reality based
  - Supports Mental Health

- Learn, practice, discuss, repeat

- Everything in moderation

Core Organizational Leadership Concepts

Relational Expertise

Play to peoples' fantasies

Learn to keep people dependent on you

Control the options: Get others to play with the cards you deal

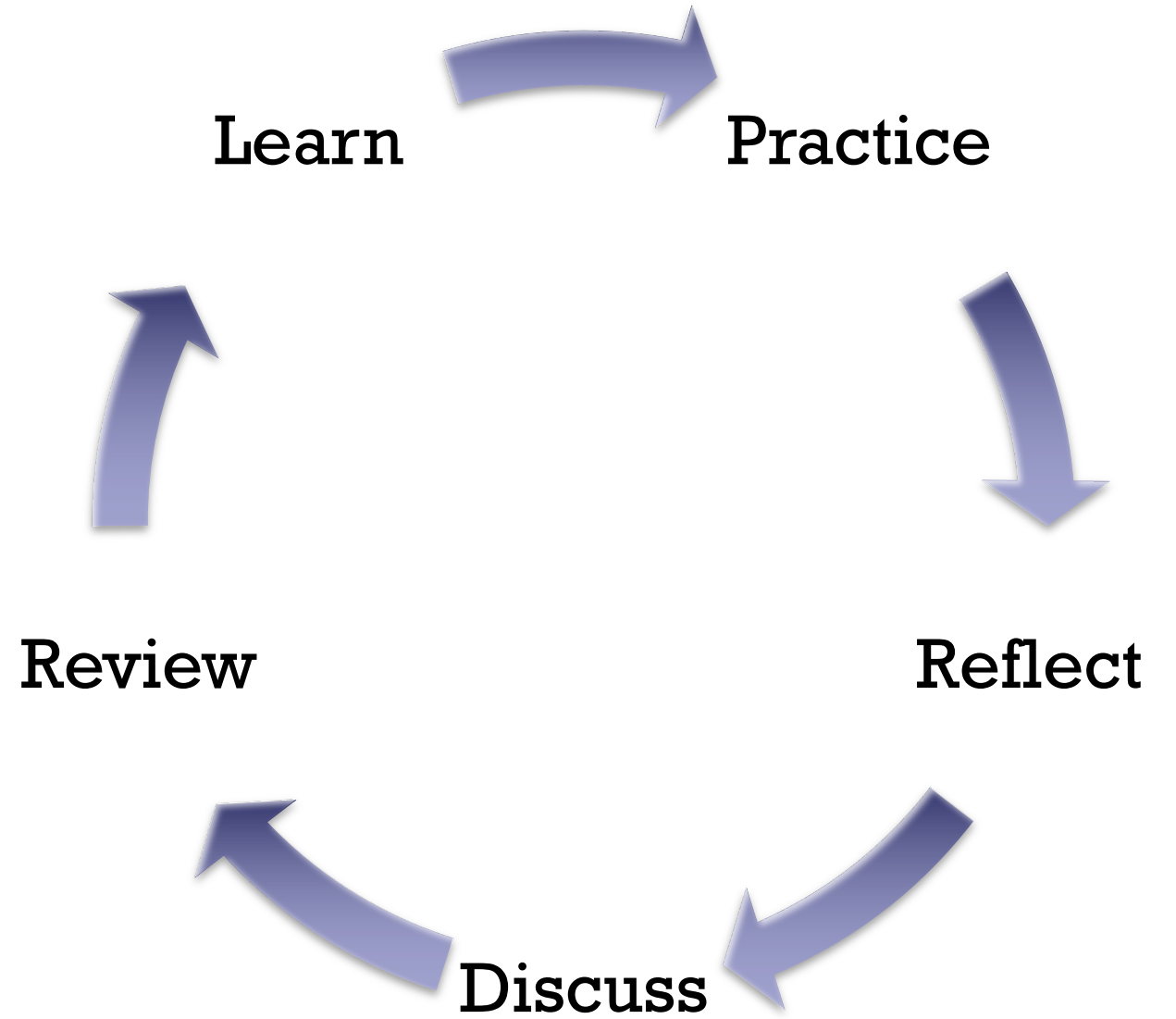Play on peoples' needs to create a cult-like following

+

The 48 Laws of Power

What is the power play?

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Mastery

Learn → Practice → Reflect → Discuss → Review →

One more thing…

As with all things, moderation

Too much self-awareness destroys not just spontaneity, but the quality that makes things live; the performance of music or dance, of courtship, love and sexual behaviour, humour, artistic creation and religious devotion become mechanical, lifeless, and may grind to a halt if we are too self-aware.

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+ *Question and Response*