



In Search of Eagles Inc.

*All leadership is example.
Anything else is coercion.*

Consulting & Coaching

Leading From Resonance™

The Designed Alliance

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All relationships have an alliance that defines how everyone will relate to each other. Generally it is implicit so it is easily contaminated with dissonant misunderstandings, hurt feelings and un-negotiated expectations. All too often these issues keep the relationship on the edge of Dissonance so it never flourishes.

All Resonant Relationships™ include a Designed Alliance among all of the people involved. They are designed to meet the needs of each individual and evolve as the relationship matures. It acknowledges that all healthy relationships have conflict. The Designed Alliance has five dimensions:

1. *It is Safe. Temenos exists.* This feeling of safety is characterized by honesty, openness, and trust. All communications are direct, honest, and concise heart-to-heart exchanges.
2. *All individuals take full responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and behavior.* To do otherwise is to be a victim of someone else's behavior. Individually, we each recognize that "no one but me can make me happy or unhappy, successful or unsuccessful." "No one else but me controls my life."
3. *It is based upon compatible values, goals, and belief systems.* An individual's life purpose, vision, values and goals evolve over time so it may be sad, but not unusual, when the individuals in a Resonant Relationship™ discover they no longer have the 'common ground' that was the basis for the relationship in the past.

Such a realization does not make anyone wrong. It just requires they respect and honor the diverging values and, if necessary, end the relationship with compassion and mutual high regard. When Temenos exists, this can be done in a win/win manner.

4. *No un-negotiated expectations exist in the relationship.* Expectations of each other are up-front. They are negotiated and agreed upon, not imposed. When the expectations of one individual are not agreeable to another, and an agreement cannot be reached that is enthusiastically supported by both, then the relationship must be terminated. This is sometimes a values conflict, and must be recognized and accommodated as such.

However, the inability of individuals to enthusiastically agree upon appropriate expectations of each other is generally a personal boundaries issue. A typical example is one party feels the other is asserting control over his (or her) behavior. ("I'm being micro-managed" is an example of a common boundary intrusion.)

Taking responsibility for someone's behavior, success, or happiness, even in small ways, ("I care about you and I am concerned so I want you to") is a boundary intrusion. Other examples are; giving help or telling someone what they "should" do (or not do) *without* being asked. "Help" is something for which a person must ask, otherwise it is control!

 *Eagles don't flock. You find them one at a time.*

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Everyone must be responsible for establishing their own boundaries, and everyone can rightfully expect their boundaries to be honored. No two people have the same boundaries. So Temenos (safe communication) is essential if people are going to live or work closely together without destructive boundary issues.

Boundary issues are minimized when all individuals in the Resonant Relationship realize they are never responsible *for* the another person's thoughts, feelings, or behavior, and in no way try to fix, protect, control, rescue, manipulate, direct, or persuade the other person. All parties can be responsible *to* the others by being encouraging, showing empathy, listening, and (only when asked) help, guide or advise.

5. *It is designed to meet the unique needs of each party.* Beyond the above fundamental concepts, all parties can explicitly agree to all manner of understandings on how the relationship can be beneficial and rewarding to each other in the group. If Temenos exists, the relationship can expand and grow, bringing joy and fulfillment to all individuals.

When conflict does occur, all individuals first examine their behavior for boundary intrusions, un-negotiated expectations and victim behavior. If the issue is not resolvable within the framework of those concepts, then they examine their thoughts and feelings for diverging values, goals, and belief systems. The only time when a previously successful relationship gets into fatal conflict, is when one or more individuals are unable to take full responsibility for his (or her) thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Establishing a Resonant Relationship™ grounded in a Designed Alliance

Under ideal conditions, a Resonant Relationship™ -- grounded in a Designed Alliance -- is created between the two or more people (such as a co-workers, customers or companions) early in the relationship. Ideally, the environment supports, and the culture demands, Resonant Relationships™. As individuals, we can insist that all important relationships in our life be Resonant Relationships™. We can gracefully end and move on from any unfulfilling, Dissonant Relationships.

However, conditions are seldom ideal. Seldom do we invest the time, or have the foresight to explicitly create a Designed Alliance in the beginning. It is only later we realize the relationship is not as productive or fulfilling as it needs to be for it to flourish and endure over the long term.

In this situation, the first step is to look for any values issues. If the individuals are dealing with non-compatible diverging values, then the honest and compassionate decision is to gracefully end the relationship.

The second step is for all individuals to honestly examine 1) if they are 'armored' and thus blocking effective communications, 2) if they are taking full responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and 3) if they have any un-negotiated expectations of the others. Any issues in these three areas must be cleared before proceeding to the next step.

The third step is for all parties to honestly ask the other for everything they want (that is not now) in the relationship, and be willing to hear 'NO' without being angry or defensive. Then, with all new expectations in the open, negotiate the win/win shape of a unique Designed Alliance that meets the needs of each individual.

The alternative to successfully negotiating a Designed Alliance is to continue the unsatisfactory relationship which, in effect, denies all parties the opportunity for full expression of their talents and their Authentic Being. Their Essential Core, their very Essence, is being suppressed.

"If the Essential Core of the person is denied or suppressed, he gets sick; sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later." --- Abraham Maslow

In the end, Resonant Relationships™ -- grounded in a Designed Alliance -- are essential to living in a low-stress, fulfilling life adventure of your own design. It is the only way to be happily successful, and successfully happy.